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Latina Mothers' Expectations and Perceptions about a Dual Language Education in the Rio Grande Valley

Rosalinda A. Cobarrubias
The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

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The Dissertation Committee for the University of Texas at Brownsville Certifies that this is the Approved Version of the Following Dissertation:

Latina Mothers’ Expectations and Perceptions about a Dual Language Education in the Rio Grande Valley

By

Rosalinda Alvarez Cobarrubias

A Dissertation Presented to the Graduate Faculty of the College of Education In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education
In the Field of Curriculum and Instruction

Approved By:

[Signatures]

Alma Rodriguez, Ed.D.
Dissertation Chair

Sandra Musanti, Ph.D.
Committee Member

Laura Jewett, Ph.D.
Committee Member

Dr. Charles Lackey
Dean of Graduate Studies

University of Texas at Brownsville
August 2015
Latina Mothers' Expectations and Perceptions about a Dual Language Education in the Rio Grande Valley

Dissertation
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Doctorate of Education in Curriculum and Instruction with Specialization in Bilingual Studies

The University of Texas at Brownsville

By

Rosalinda A. Cobarrubias
DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my husband, Arturo Cobarrubias and my children, Vanessa and Alex. May my work inspire you to always believe that it is never too late to make your dreams come true. To believe that persistence pays off and that God always helps you obtain the desires of your heart.

To my mother Leonila Alvarez who instilled in us that education is a gift that can never be taken away.

To the memory of my father Jose A. Alvarez who taught us to dream big and always go for the gold.
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I would also like to thank all my participants. I am grateful that all of you were willing to take personal risks and share your stories with me. You have taught me so much in the process. I feel privileged and humbled to use your stories in this dissertation. All of you have made a great contribution to the field of education. Por eso y mucho más les doy mis más sinceras gracias.
ABSTRACT

Latina Mothers' Expectations and Perceptions about a Dual Language Education in the Rio Grande Valley

The initial purpose of this study was to identify Latino parents’ expectations and perceptions of a dual language program in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. All of the Latino parents of children in one dual language program were invited to participate in the study. The parents who agreed to participate in the study were all mothers. Consequently, only the perceptions and expectations of Latina mothers were explored.

The chosen method of this study was qualitative research to explore the expectations and perceptions of the dual language program of twenty Latina mothers of Mexican descent. There were eleven English dominant Latina mothers and nine Spanish dominant Latina mothers of kindergarteners and first graders who participated in the study. The mothers were asked to fill out a questionnaire, participate in an individual interview and participate in one of two focus groups to facilitate the data collection.

The data was analyzed using Creswell’s (2007) method of reading and rereading the transcript. The data from this study produced five predominant themes that the twenty Latina mothers spoke about when asked about the dual language program. The first research question explored Latina mothers’ expectations of the dual language program. Two major themes emerged from research question one: their own professional goals for their children's future and the goals of the dual language program that would help them realize those goals. The second research question explored Latina mothers’ perceptions of the dual language program. Three major themes arose from research question two: an opportunity to validate the home language and maintain their culture including mothers
benefiting from the dual language program along with their children, and the mothers’ role in their children’s education to ensure their success in the program.

The implications of this study propose building a knowledge base for parents about the dual language program so that their expectations and perceptions are grounded in the theory and principles of a dual language education. Efforts must be made to inform the parents of the goals of the dual language program. School administrators and teachers should offer trainings to help the parents understand the implementation of the dual language model and how it unfolds throughout the year. Furthermore, school administrators and teachers need to validate families’ cultures and encourage parents to become involved in whatever capacity they feel most comfortable.

Furthermore this study recommends further research on how parents make educational decisions for their children, including what they expect from a dual language program and what they perceive the program entails. Since one school in the school district was the focus of the study it would be interesting to compare parental expectations and perceptions of a dual language program to other schools in the same district that are now implementing the dual language program. One relevant follow-up study could be to investigate how parental attitudes towards a dual language education change as students’ progress to higher-grade levels and how parents support their children in higher-grade levels.
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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Introduction

Latinos are changing the face of the United States and of its educational system. The U.S. Census Bureau (2010) predicts that by the year 2025 one in every four students will be Latinos/as and the population will continue to triple. In this dissertation the term Latino will be used to refer to the participants and their children because all the participants in this study are of Mexican descent. The term Latino/a refers to a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish cultures or origin regardless of race (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). According to the US Census Bureau (2010), 16 percent of the U.S. population is of Latino origin. This accounts for about 50.5 million out of the total 308.7 million people living in the U.S. In addition, more than half of the growth in the total population between the year 2000 and 2010 could be attributed to the growth in Latino population.

Latinos/as are the largest minority group in more than half the states within the U.S. Texas has the second largest Latino population in the country. The findings of U.S. Census Bureau report (2010) highlighted that approximately 37 percent of the total population of Texas is Latino. In the Rio Grande Valley, where this study was conducted, more than 95 percent of the population is Latino. This percentage represents 1,055,215 people. Surveys estimate that the Latino population in the Rio Grande Valley will reach up to 2,349,660 people by the year 2050 (US Census Bureau, 2010). The Latino population is the largest and the most rapidly growing ethnic minority in the U.S. and it is also the population that is behind the most academically (Gándara & Contreras, 2009). With this growth in the Latino population, and considering Latino’s low academic
achievement, it is critical to consider what Latina mothers expect and perceive about their children’s education and what their role in the school entails.

**Need for the Study**

Students who come from different backgrounds and cultures, and communicate in varying languages, fill the halls of our schools on a daily basis (Lindholm-Leary, 2000). Lindholm-Leary (2000) stated that in the U.S., a fifth of the middle school-aged children reside in households in which languages aside from English are spoken. These children go to school with a different language, but also with a wide range of abilities in their native language. Gándara and Contreras’ (2009) study on *The Latino Education Crisis* contend that although the Latinos are the largest ethnic minority group they are also lagging significantly behind academically. They must learn English while simultaneously attempt to learn the curriculum thus facing a significant challenge (Gándara & Contreras, 2009). Knapp and Shields (1990) claim that linguistically and culturally diverse students are not given the same opportunities to become successful as the students whose native language is English in spite of the objective of public education to enable all students to achieve high academic standards. This early study called for schools to afford the English language learners with the same opportunities as those being received by students whose native language is English. According to a more recent study by Sullivan (2011), the inequity against culturally and linguistically diverse students continues today.

One attempt to offer linguistically and culturally diverse students with equal learning and success opportunities by schools was to create bilingual education programs. Schools have to deal with the challenge of meeting these students’ linguistic and cultural needs. Specifically, a major challenge faced by U.S. schools today is the need to find
effective ways to educate the growing number of Latino/a children, especially English language learners, who are at a higher risk of academic failure than any other ethnic group in the U.S. (Bridgeland, Dilulio, & Morrison, 2006; Freeman & Freeman, 2001; Gándara & Contreras, 2009; Garcia, Kleifgen, & Falchi, 2008).

In Texas the basic language is English and schools are responsible for providing all ELLs the opportunity to become proficient in speaking, writing, reading and comprehending the English language (Texas Education Agency, 2011). Although legislation does not stipulate the type of program that districts must implement to accomplish this goal,

(c) Each district with an enrollment of 20 or more students of limited English proficiency in any language classification in the same grade level shall offer a bilingual education or special language program (Texas Education Agency, 2011, p. 25).

At the heart of South Texas is a place along the border where its people are often labeled as neither Mexican nor American (Guerra, n.d). This area is the Rio Grande Valley, which consists of 95% Latinos, 90% whose households identify as either purely Spanish speaking or bilingual (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006). The four counties making up the Rio Grande Valley, Starr, Hidalgo, Cameron, and Willacy, are also four of the poorest areas in the nation (Guerra, n.d). The majority of the public schools located in Rio Grande Valley offer either bilingual programs cater to the needs of the English language learners in Rio Grande Valley. The popularity of dual language programs in Texas schools, as well as in schools nationwide makes for an exciting time to study dual language programs (Guerra, n.d).
Dual language programs, which are the main focus of this current study, require both the support and involvement of the mothers Hidalgo, Bright, Siu, Swap and Epstein (1995). Pena (2001) contend that mothers play an essential role in the academic success of their children. With the considerable increase of language minority children in U.S. public schools, we need to understand that their mothers have different perceptions and expectations of the programs in which their children are enrolled, and of what their role is in the schools as opposed to the mainstream English speakers’ mothers.

**Statement of the Problem**

Latina mothers tend to have less formal education and/or reside in lower socioeconomic communities where the schools have fewer resources and fewer teachers that are well prepared to meet the challenges of teaching a diverse population (Emory, Caughy, Harris, & Franzini, 2008; Gándara & Contreras, 2009; Valdes, 1996). According to Gamble and Modry (2008), there is a need to reach out to Latino parents who do not trust the school system. As the Latino population in the U.S. continues to grow, forming a bridge to help parents assist their children in achieving academic success becomes even more crucial (United States Department of Commerce Census Bureau, 2010).

According to recent educational research studies, parental involvement can improve children’s educational experience because parents are instrumental in their children’s academic achievements, behavioral outcomes and their sense of well-being (Anderson & Minke, 2007; Catsambis, 1998; Gonzalez-DeHaas, Willems, & Doan Holbein, 2005; Jeynes, 2005; Mo & Singh, 2008). However, not only are parents instrumental to their children’s education and are invaluable to their children’s
educational experience, their perceptions and expectations about a school program can also tremendously shape their decisions and the decisions of other parents toward the dual language program (Giacchino-Baker & Piller, 2006; Wesely & Baig, 2012) and even shape the success and effectiveness of other programs and the school itself (Heining-Boynton, 1990).

There are gaps in the existing literature on Latino families and their connection to schools and/or their views on education (Gándara & Contreras, 2009; Rodriguez & Olswang, 2003; Suarez-Orozco, Suarez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008; Valdes, 1996). In the literature that is available on Latino parents, certain themes emerge. For instance, there is a myth that Latino parents are often characterized as uncaring about their children’s education because they are often not involved in school activities. This leads to the perception that Latino parents do not value education (Rodriguez & Olswang, 2003). It is important to conduct studies that can help dispel this myth. Reese and Gallimore, (2000) and Valdes, (1996) explored Latino mothers’ perceived role in their children’s education but did not assess Latino mothers’ expectations and perceptions about dual language programs and what motivates them to enroll their children in the dual language programs, especially in Rio Grande Valley where the current study took place. The current study seeks to close this literature gap.
Purpose of the Study

The original purpose of this research study was to identify Latino parents’ expectations and perceptions about dual language education in the Rio Grande Valley. Although all the parents of the children in the dual language program in grades kindergarten and first were invited to participate in the study, the parents who agreed to participate were all mothers. Only the mothers responded to the contact information and agreed to be interviewed and be part of the focus groups. Some of them spoke in the plural form to include their husbands in their comments, but no fathers participated in the study. Therefore, although the purpose of the study originally intended to study the perceptions and expectations of Latino parents only the perceptions and expectations of Latina mothers could be explored.

Research Questions

Given the above-mentioned purpose and participants, the study focused on answering the following questions:

RQ1: What expectations do Latina mothers have about a dual language education?

RQ2: What perceptions do Latina mothers have about dual language programs?

- What perceptions do Latina mothers have of their role in their children’s education?

Latino parents, community-based organizations, schools, and school districts’ parental involvement programs can utilize the findings from this study with similar student populations to assist them in the development of parenting classes that will
inform parents regarding the goals of the dual language program. This study might also assist parents in learning how to help their children who are learning in two languages. Semi-structured interview questions were developed in order to better understand what perceptions and expectations Latina mothers have about a dual language program.

**Researcher’s Perspective**

I became interested in conducting this study both as an educator and as a parent. My two children and I attended schools within the same district of the study. The district was a strong proponent of total English-only immersion and early exit models of bilingual education. My first language is Spanish and I am a product of total immersion into the English language. My recollections of my first year in school are of total silence. We were not allowed to speak Spanish, as it would result in corporal punishment. I learned to use coping mechanisms, such as asking to go to the restroom and when it came time to read aloud I would calculate what I would be expected to read and practice silently before it was my turn. I practiced speaking in English so I wouldn’t have an accent or make mistakes in the pronunciation of English words. As the years progressed I used less and less Spanish. My primary language was maintained at home via one-sided conversations. I would speak to my mother in English and she would always respond in Spanish. It wasn’t until I went to college that I experienced first-hand how many people spoke Spanish outside of my community. It was then that I realized that I would need Spanish if I wanted to have an upper hand in the job market. I began to really focus on developing my Spanish during my college years.

When I traveled to Mexico for a university summer based program I met a girl from Guadalajara and she asked me where I was from. She told me I had an accent. I was
appalled! She told me that I spoke Spanish like the Indians from the mountains. I knew then that my Spanish needed to improve and fast. Again, I felt like I did in my first year of school as a child, only it was with Spanish and not with English.

Professionally, being bilingual has proven to be a definite asset in my career as a school administrator. I am assigned to a Title I school and almost all of my parent conferences are in Spanish. Had I not made an effort to really learn Spanish I would definitely be at a disadvantage in my workplace. I have been an ESL teacher, counselor and now a principal of a Title I school. I see first-hand the need for a strong bilingual program for our English Language Learners (ELLs) and the need to enrich our English speaking students such as my own children with a second language so that they can compete in today’s world. Serving in the district’s bilingual committee, I was a part of a group of educators whose charge was to redesign the district’s bilingual program. A major charge given to the committee was to change the perceptions of the community regarding bilingual education and what bilingual education should look like in a district that is predominately Latino. After observing the dual language program for two years and its implementation, in my opinion as an educator, parents are an integral part of the dual language program. What parents expect and perceive to be the goals of the dual language program and how they participate in the education of their children has become a personal purpose for me undertaking this study.
Definitions of Terms

These are the definitions of the key concepts and terms that were used throughout the study.

Beliefs. Culturally defined desirable traits typically passed on from one generation to the next. Elements to which individuals attach high worth (Rodriguez & Olswang, 2003).

Bilingual Education. An academic program that incorporates two languages with the goal of either developing both languages or transitioning to the new language (Baker & Pryns Jones, 1998).

Dual Language Programs. Programs that cater to a linguistically heterogeneous student group. In the United States, the group is comprised of a language majority, or English speakers as well as a language minority, which is composed of specifically Spanish language speakers (Fortune & Tedick, 2008; Genesee & Gándara, 1999). It has many labels and interpretations, according to where the program takes place and what is the specific design of the instruction (Christian, Howard & Loeb, 2000; Freeman, Freeman & Mercuri, 2005).

English Language Learners (ELLs). ELLs are students whose primary language is not English. These students come to school speaking a language other than English and are learning English. ELLs receive direct daily services or those who receive services and are being monitored based on their achievement on academic assessments (García, Kleifgen, & Falchi, 2008).
**Enrichment Education.** Educational program based on challenging academic standards in the curriculum while offering more than the traditional curriculum. In this study, teaching the curriculum in two languages thus enriching students’ development in both their first and second language (Cloud et al., 2000).


**Heritage Language.** “a student of language who is raised in a home where a non-English language is spoken. The student may speak or merely understand the heritage language and be, to some degree, bilingual in English and the heritage language.” (Valdes, 2005, p. 412).

**Immersion Education.** A language-learning program where the student’s second language is utilized as the main tool to teach subject content. This type of education seeks to make the students become proficient and efficient in using this language while maintaining and developing their first language, and to offer cross-cultural understanding (Fortune & Tedick, 2008).

**Latino/a.** “refers to people originating from or having a heritage related to Latin America.” (Comas-Diaz, 2001, p. 116.)

**One-way Immersion Programs.** These programs cater to a linguistically homogeneous student group. In the United States, this group is generally composed of language majority (English speaking) students with no background on the immersion language (Fortune & Tedick, 2008).
**Perceptions.** The way in which something is regarded, understood or interpreted (Cherry, 2011).

**Two-way Immersion Programs.** This program serves a student body where half of the students in each class are members of the majority language group, English speakers, and half are members of a minority language program, Spanish speakers (Genesee, 2008, p. 27).

**Value.** “is a belief upon which a man acts by preference”(Allport, 1961. P. 454 as cited in Rokeach, 1973).

**Summary**

The expectations and perceptions that Latino mothers have about a dual language education greatly influence the academic success of their children. Latino/a students face a host of factors shaping their academic experiences, ranging from personal (individual and family difficulties), institutional (school and peer difficulties), as well as environmental or community barriers. Therefore, it is important to understand what Latino parents expect and perceive about a dual language program. This study seeks to understand Latina mothers’ understanding of a dual language program in an elementary school in the Rio Grande Valley and will also explore their view of their role in the program and the school. There is a gap in the research about parental expectations and perceptions of a dual language program and their participation in their children’s education (Carreon, Drake & Calabrese-Barton, 2005). This study will serve as a means to bridge that gap.
Chapter one provided an introduction to the study, the need for the study, the statement of the problem, and the purpose of the study. The research questions along with the researcher’s perspective were also presented. Finally, the definitions of the terms most pertinent to this study were defined.

Chapter two provides a description of bilingual education, the history of dual language models of bilingual education and models of dual language. Specifically, the key features of the Gómez & Gómez Dual Language Enrichment Model are presented as this is the model chosen by the school in the study. Chapter II also provides an overview of studies on Latino parents; the role of Latino parents in dual language programs and specifically to this study, studies on Latina mothers.

Chapter three describes the qualitative methodology used to carry out the current research. This includes the method used for selecting the participants and the data collection procedures. Finally, the analysis procedures and the limitations to the study are presented.

Chapter four discusses the findings that resulted from the research. The findings are presented according to the research questions and then separated into the categories that appeared from the findings. Question one examined the mothers’ expectations of a dual language program. Question two considered the mothers’ perceptions of a dual language program including their perceptions of their role in education.

Chapter five presents the interpretations and conclusions of the study, as well as the implications for practice. Finally, it proposes recommendations for future research.
CHAPTER 2 – REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this research study is to identify Latina mothers’ expectations and perceptions about dual language education in the Rio Grande Valley. Semi-structured interview questions were developed to examine how Latina mothers’ educational goals, language beliefs, aspirations for their child’s future, program perceptions and expectations impact the educational decisions they make for their children. In this study the original intent was to assess Latino parents’ expectations and perceptions, but because only the mothers accepted to participate in the study, the study now specifically aims to assess Latina mothers’ expectations and perceptions about dual language education in the Rio Grande Valley. The researcher hopes that the findings from this research can help mothers, educators, community-based organizations, and policymakers assist Latino/a students in their educational experience. The perceptions and expectations of Latina mothers can help shape dual language programs

A review of the literature pertaining to parents’ expectations and perceptions about dual language programs can be separated into several categories. First, a brief overview of Bilingual education along with the history of dual language education will be provided. Second, the literature review will provide an overview of the different models of dual language education. Third, the key features of the Gómez & Gómez Dual Language Enrichment Model will be presented, as this is the model that the school in this study chose to adopt. Fourth, an overview of Latino parents and their role in U. S. schools including some studies on Latino parents’ expectations and perceptions of dual language
programs will be provided. Finally, the role of Latina mothers in their children’s education will be presented particularly in the dual language program their children are enrolled in.

**Bilingual Education**

Bilingual education programs were developed to meet the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse students providing equitable opportunities for success (Krashen, 1996). Bilingual education signifies teaching in two languages and is offered in the home language and English. (Garcia, 2009). Crawford (1999) writes that “language-minority children are achieving at or near grade level by the time they leave well-designed bilingual programs, even in urban schools where failure was once the norm” (p. 12). Thomas and Collier (2002) asserted that historically highly effective dual language programs could potentially deliver the most powerful form of bilingual education for ELL students.

**Historical Background on Dual Language Programs**

In the United States, bilingual education is not new. In the beginning of 19th century, immigration in the United States had reached an all-time high and that brought several areas of the country asking that bilingual education be brought into the schools (Baker, 2001). The Supreme Court, in 1924, ruled that putting restrictions on foreign language is a violation of the 15th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and unconstitutional. Cases such as *Meyer v. Nebraska* (1923) and *Farrington v. Tokushige* (1927) protected schools’, both private and public, rights to use heritage language to assist with instruction (Baker, 2001). The cases of *Alvarez v. Board of Trustees* (1931) and *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) determined that segregation in the schools unconstitutional and unequal due to sub-standard provisions made for schools and for the
children’s cognitive and social development (Baker, 2001). Hence, the path toward tolerance of diverse ethnic groups and languages began.

In 1998, the U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley proposed the No Child Left Behind legislation and was approved in 2001. This act refers to bilinguals as English Language Learners (ELLs) only and focuses on language development. It annulled 40 years of progress of bilingualism and put pressures on schools to develop English proficient students regardless of the effect on their primary languages (Baker, 2001). Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Act, which provided funds for innovative programs was replaced by Title III English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement Act. The purpose of Title III is to ensure that limited-English-proficient (LEP) students also known as English Language Learners (ELLs), including immigrant children and youths, attain English proficiency and meet the same challenging academic content and achievement standards that all other students are expected to meet. Crawford (2004) argues that the greatest challenge will be how to provide an education to children that will prepare them for global understanding, languages included, which will be required in the 21st century. Helping meet the challenge were Thomas and Collier (2003) who conducted bilingual education studies and established that there was positive achievement when dual language models were implemented.

The Dade County Public Schools in Miami, Florida was the first district to implement a Spanish-English dual language program in 1962. In the 1970’s dual language programs started in Washington, D.C. and extended to Chicago, Illinois and San Diego, California Dual language programs have been in existence since then and are still being implemented across the country including the setting of this study.
Dual Language Models of Bilingual Education

Freeman and Freeman (2006) contend that English–language learners are faced with the challenge of learning to speak English as they demonstrate grade level mastery of content areas at the same time. Furthermore, they concluded that the research of Cummins (2000) and Thomas and Collier (1997, 2002) noted that bilingual education that incorporated a considerable amount of native language instruction was the best method of teaching non English speakers. There are different names for dual language programs in the United States. They are known as bilingual immersion, two-way bilingual, two way immersion, dual immersion and dual enrichment, depending on the state or the district. They are designed so that the students get the optimal benefits of learning in two languages. Schools with a large ELL population use the dual language model whose original intent was to teach English speaking students a second language through immersion in the minority language (Francis, Lesaux & August, 2006).

In many states—especially in Texas, New Mexico, New York, California, Washington, Illinois, and the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area—dual language is expanding (Honigsfeld, 2009). The Center for Applied Linguistics defined the dual language programs as those that “provide literacy and content instruction to all students through two languages” and promote “bilingualism and biliteracy, grade-level academic achievement, and multicultural competence for all students” (Howard, Sugarman, Christian, Lindholm-Leary, & Rogers 2007, p. 1). Some two-way dual language programs include classrooms with half native English speakers and half native speakers of another language Spanish, Mandarin or other languages (Howard, Sugarman, & Christian, 2003). Students acquire the academic content through both languages and work
toward developing oral and written skills in their target language and native languages (Freeman, Freeman, & Mercuri, 2005). The reading environment of the child’s home impacts the child’s ability in both languages. Educators need to build on the children’s literacy experiences in both languages regardless of the provision of reading materials in the home (Hammer, Scheffner, Miccio, & Wagstaff, 2003).

Of late, dual language education programs have achieved a great deal of attention from parents, researchers, and policymakers, attaining reputation as an educational model that not only lead to high academic achievement, but also facilitates a strong multicultural appreciation in all students (Collier & Thomas 2004; Howard et al. 2007; Lindholm-Leary 2001). Studies have consistently showed that students in dual language programs attain a high level of proficiency in their core curriculum while gaining bilingual skills (Calderón & Minaya-Rowe, 2007; Freeman, Freeman, & Mercuri, 2005; Howard & Christian, 2002).

Clearly dual language education is a school reform whose time has come. It is a school model that even the English-only parents endorse, because it is an inclusive model for all students, and all student groups benefit from participating (Collier & Thomas, 2004). In Dual language education programs students are taught literacy and academic content in English and a partner language. The goals of dual language are for students to develop high levels of language proficiency and literacy in both program languages while demonstrating high levels of academic achievement (Francis, Lesaux, & August, 2006). Under language immersion programs such as dual language programs, students who are usually at elementary, acquire another language by learning content, such as language arts, mathematics, and social studies in the second language (Fortune & Tedick, 2008).
Dual language programs successfully allow the students to achieve bi or multilingualism or literacy in two languages by improving their levels of intercultural sensitivity (Fortune & Tedick, 2008). Many studies have demonstrated that this form of language learning is successful and effective ever since it was implemented in the United States back in the 1970s (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2004; Genessee, 1987).

Lorenz and Myriam, (1990) exert that there are six characteristics which define immersion programs such as dual language:

1. The target language is acquired primarily by using it for meaningful communication within the school—that is, for instruction in other subjects (math, social studies, science, etc.).

2. The students all begin not knowing the target language, and instructional strategies and materials are designed with that in mind.

4. The program begins with intensive instruction in and via the target language by teachers fluent in that language, with instruction via English often increasing in later years.

5. The instruction on subject material is never repeated in the two languages.

6. The program objectives are intended to be achieved by end of Grade 12.

Enrichment bilingual education focuses on teaching students academic proficiency through a second language thus attaining literacy in the second language (May, 2008). Enrichment models are designed to support cross-cultural understanding among the students who learn their academic subjects using two languages. These models
are one-of-a-kind because the students subjected to this model include native English speakers. Examples of enrichment programs include two-way or dual language models, where two languages are utilized simultaneously within the classroom.

**One-way Immersion Programs**

According to Collier and Thomas (2004), one-way programs refer to demographic contexts where there is only a language group experiencing bilingual education. One example is the one that can be observed in the US-Mexican border, where many students of mainly Latino-American heritage are enrolled in the school districts. While some of the students are proficient in English and others are more proficient in Spanish, the enrichment dual language programs bring these students together to teach both of the groups the curriculum using their two heritage languages. Collier and Thomas (2004) claimed that implementers of one-way programs should make curricular decisions that would cater to the needs of the student population. The resulting program design therefore cannot be similar to a two-way program, even though the two types follow similar principles, such as having a minimum of six years of bilingual instruction, separation of the two languages of instruction, targeting the core academic curriculum instead of imposing a watered down version, high cognitive demand of grade-level lessons, and offering a collaborative type of learning (Collier & Thomas, 2004).

**Two-Way Immersion Programs**

The other dual language model refers to the bilingual or two-way immersion (TWI) programs. Under these programs, the student body enrolled is ideally split into half: one half being the students that are members of the majority language group (most
of the time, English speakers) and the other half being the students that are members of the minority language group (such as Spanish or German speakers) (Genesee, 2008). In two-way immersion programs, the use of the minority language ranges from 90% to 50% in the Kindergarten level, to 50% instruction time in each language in the rest of the elementary grade levels. Collier and Thomas (2004) claimed that two-way programs also include native-English speaking students in the bilingual classroom. Native-English speakers, bilingual students, and ELL students comprise of the integrated bilingual classroom. Two-way classes include any student who desires to enroll, even those who already forgot their own heritage and speak the English language only. Compared to one-way immersion programs, two-way bilingual classes offer enhanced second-language acquisition, and also address certain persistent sociological concerns resulting from segregated transitional bilingual classes. Moreover, two-way programs with sensitive instructors can lead to students who also know how to respect their classmates and consider them as their valued partners in the learning process, both mutually learning from each other (Genesee, 2008).

According to Roberts (1995), two-way programs encounter various obstacles such as complexity of structures, difficulty of setting up and overreliance on team-teaching, which can lead to significant limitations. In addition, in two-way programs, English has the tendency to dominate the instructional activities tasked to the students. Moreover, these programs are criticized for not efficiently using time because there is repetition of instruction in two languages (Roberts, 1995). Moreover, research by Valdes (1997), which studied one two-way program, found that Mexican-origin students experience lower test scores on the Spanish-language reading tests compared to their native English-
speaking peers. Therefore, Valdes claimed that paying attention to problems of power and language are important for two way programs to be successful. The differences among two-way students were exemplified through the study by Howard and Sugarman (2001). The researchers discovered that even though both native-English and native-Spanish speakers experienced progress in their language and literacy skills, the native-Spanish speakers experienced more balanced language and literacy in both English and Spanish. According to the Center for the Applied Linguistics (2009), for the past years, steady and significant increases of two-way immersion programs can be observed across the United States.

According to earlier studies (August & Hakuta, 1997; Calderón, Hertz-Lazarowitz & Slavin, 1998), two way bilingual education programs or dual language programs are most successful in promoting academic success of the students. Moreover, a comprehensive approach works the best. Students who are involved in these programs even perform better than their mainstream classmates (Hakuta, 1986; Krashen, 1982). For instance, Christian (1994) performed a study of more than 160 schools between 1991 and 1994 and discovered that students of two-way bilingual programs not only acquired second-language skills, they also enhanced their relationships with their peers, and improved their appreciation and understanding of other cultures. Moreover, according to Colon, Hidalgo, Nevarez and Garcia-Blanco (1990), the two way model can be the only model that puts both English and non-English speakers at a common starting point, allowing the English speakers to develop sensitivity for the complex process of learning a second language, and becoming more aware of how others think. Both one way and two way immersion models are subgroups of dual language education and both cater to
different purposes and situations (Cloud, Genesee & Hamayan 2000; Fortune & Tedick, 2008; Genesee, 2008).

**Effectiveness of Dual Language Programs**

According to Christian (1996), a dual language bilingual program reflects a pluralistic view of language. Dual language programs can be successful if they satisfy several factors, such as administrative and home support, school support, expert instructional personnel, professional development, and quality instructional designs (Lindholm-Leary, 2001).

Dual language programs can be more effective compared to transitional and sheltered immersion programs for the bilingual students in the United States (Baker, 1998). The findings of the different studies are conflicting as to how fast the students mastered English and how well they achieve in the long-term. According to Ramirez (1991), when English only immersion programs are compared to bilingual programs, it can be observed that students under the bilingual programs learned at par or even better than the students in English-only programs.

**Gómez & Gómez Dual Language Enrichment Model**

In 1995, Dr. Leo Gómez and Dr. Richard Gómez developed the Dual Language Enrichment (DLE) Model. The model was first implemented in 1996 in the Pharr-San Juan-Alamo ISD in South Texas. The Gómez and Gómez DLE model has expanded to other parts of the United States and is being implemented across the state of Texas, Washington, and Nevada and has since expanded to over 450 schools across these states. Today, it continues to demonstrate its effectiveness based on successful short and long-
term student achievement (Gómez & Gómez, 1999).

In this study the school district chose to follow the Gómez & Gómez Dual Language Enrichment Model – Pk-5th. The key features of this model for both One-Way and Two-Way dual language classrooms include the language of instruction, key components for language development and content learning and enrichment. Instruction in the subject areas is conducted in only one of the two languages. See table 1.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Areas</th>
<th>PK-1st</th>
<th>2nd – 5th</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading/Language Arts</td>
<td>Native Language</td>
<td>Spanish and English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The model contains six key components that are divided across seven grade levels. All contribute to the overall success of the model.

a) Grade Level

b) Heterogeneous Instructional Grouping

c) Separation of Languages for Content Area Instruction

d) L1 and L2 Technology Support

e) Quality Teaching Staff

f) L1 and L2 Conceptual Refinement

In this model as adopted in this study, similarities in each component are shared in two groups of grade levels PK-2nd and 3rd-5th. Heterogeneous instructional grouping is
encouraged mixing English dominant and Spanish dominant students together throughout the grade levels. Students are grouped in bilingual pairs or groups for all subject area instruction and participation in bilingual learning centers and other activities. The bilingual pairs or groups consist of two students, one that is English dominant and one that is Spanish dominant. In the event that there is a need to increase the pairs to a group of three, the students still need to be dominant in different languages. Typically, the pairing or grouping changes weekly. The language for content area instruction is similar throughout the grade levels. Language arts are always in the students’ native language in grades PK-5th but include a second language arts period in the second language, English or Spanish, beginning in 2nd grade. Math is always taught in English and social studies and science are always taught in Spanish. Technology use supports the language of instruction in PK-2nd. Beginning in 3rd grade the instructional software is used in the opposite language of instruction. Math would be in Spanish and social studies and science would be in English. Teachers need to be very familiar with the model and its instructional strategies. They must understand the theories in bilingual education, second language development, cooperative learning, and assessment and education equity. Ideally, they should be very fluent in both languages (Lindholm-Leary, 2004).

Conceptual refinement is a strategy used by Pk-5th grade teachers at the end of each lesson cycle to support L2 learners of respective content while at the same time support consistent academic rigor. In this model, the central goal of a subject area lesson is the learning of the concept, while the secondary goal is the development of the language of that subject (Gómez & Gómez, 1999). For example, during conceptual refinement, L2 learners of math, science or social studies that need additional concept review are
homogeneously grouped and provided L2 reinforcement immediately following the end of each lesson for about 15-20 minutes. Conceptual refinement is conducted in the same language of instruction, using different examples and working with the L2 learner on a closer one-on-one basis (Gómez & Gómez, 1999).

This model is unique in that: 1) it provides instruction of subject areas in only one of the two languages, 2) it calls for conceptual refinement activities that support the learning of content in the L2 in respective subject area and promotes academic rigor PK-5th grade, 3) it encourages the development of content-area biliteracy by the end of 5th grade, 4) it practices the concept of bilingual pairs for better student engagement in all classroom learning activities, 5) it uses bilingual learning centers in grades PK-2nd, and bilingual research centers beginning 3rd grade, and 6) it requires the use of the language of the day for all non-instructional school language used throughout the day by all students and school staff. The language of the day entails that that everyday conversations and interactions occur using one language. In this model, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, the language of the day is Spanish. Tuesdays and Thursdays, the language of the day is English. The goal is to have morning announcements, daily greetings, and daily conversations using the language of the day. The goal is to have the whole school participate by using the language of the day. The primary goal of using the language of the day is to increase conversational skills in both languages (Gómez & Gómez, 1999).

L. Gómez and R. Gómez (Gómez, 2000) have developed this model for dual language education because it is well suited for areas with high numbers of ELLs such as the school for this study. In this study half of the students are native English speakers and
the other half are native Spanish speakers. They come from different social and economic backgrounds and all are Latino of Mexican descent. However, like their parents some are English dominant and some are Spanish dominant. Regardless of the parents primary language, the Gómez and Gómez Dual Language Enrichment Model relies on parental support for the success of the model.

**Latino Parents**

For many years, some Latino parents have been left out from their children’s education, either because some of the schools simply did not know how to reach out to them or because some of the Latino parents themselves felt uncomfortable in the schools and they chose not to get involved (Gándara & Contreras, 2009). Some Latino parents’ perception of education lies on the most important parental duty which is the moral upbringing of their children while they expect for the academic side of education be left to the teachers and schools (Delgado-Gaitan, 1993; Reese, 2002; Reese, Balzano, Goldenberg & Gallimore, 1995). Not all Latino parents expect teachers and administrators to be the experts in regards to their children’s educational needs but some do prefer that those that are most qualified should educate their children (Ritter, Mont-Reynaud & Dornsbusch, 1993). Some Latino parents perceive their involvement in the school as an infringement on the authority of the teachers or simply interfering with their children’s education (Chavkin & Williams, 1993; Goldenberg, 1987). Although the exception, these reasons lead to some parents’ acceptance of teachers as the experts in their children’s education and their minimal role in their children’s education within the school setting (Reece, 2000).
Gándara and Contreras (2009) assert that Latino parents who may be newly established in the U.S. may have problems with English proficiency, which may limit their abilities to help their children with homework. They cite that children often serve as interpreters for their parents, which may result in confusion about school-related activities or obligations. A lack of familiarity with the American education system and traditional subjects taught in the classroom might also restrict Latino parents’ ability or motivation to become involved thus getting more and more isolated from their children’s academic success (Delgado-Gaitan, 1993; Gándara & Contreras, 2009). Furthermore, Gándara and Contreras (2009) state that, “Dual Language, or two-way, programs have the added advantage of helping to reduce the linguistic isolation that so many Latino students experience” (p. 131), which would also benefit the parents.

Role of Latino Parents in Dual Language Programs

Lindholm-Leary’s (2001) book on dual language education provides a well-reasoned historical and theoretical base for dual language education. She also provides an analysis of parent attitudes toward the dual language program, which she contends has been the missing link in language education research. Furthermore, she contends in a comprehensive study of dual language education that all the parents in her study wanted their children to become bilingual. These parents were consistently positive about the program and would recommend it to others. She explains that many Latino parents wanted to reverse the integrative motivation of their own parents’ English only instruction mentality. She describes the earlier generation’s motivation for their children to learn English was one based on fear that speaking Spanish would interfere with their children’s academic progress and career opportunities. Likewise, she contends that this
English first generation of Latino parents had chosen the dual language program in hopes that their own children would identify more closely with the Latino culture.

When choosing to enroll their children in a Two Way Immersion (TWI) program, also known as a dual language program, both English-speaking and Spanish speaking parents believe that children and families would benefit from the experience in a TWI program (Giacchino-Baker & Piller, 2006). Thomas and Collier (2001) suggest that,

TWI programs are the only programs that assist all participating students to reach the 50th percentile (or higher) in both their native language and a second language in all subjects and maintain that level of high achievement through the end of schooling. Their study investigating dual language schooling in the United States reported that students who were in the program for at least 5–6 years reach the 50th percentile in the second language by fifth or sixth grade and maintain that level of performance. It further indicated that there are no negative effects to the native language development or academic achievement in both languages of students in TWI programs (Giacchino-Baker & Piller, 2006 p. 8).

Parents in many communities recognize that their children will have social, academic and economic advantages if they are bilingual (Craig, 1996; Lambert & Taylor, 1990). Parents want their children to develop competency in two languages (Lee, 1999). Latino parents want their children to continue speaking Spanish and maintain their customs and culture of their home countries. Most importantly communicate with friends and families in their home country.

Giacchino-Baker and Piller’s (2006) study on parental motivation, attitudes, support and commitment for a two-way immersion emphasized that parents believed their
children would benefit from the program. These parents’ motivation was strong; focusing on what they felt was best for their children’s economic and academic futures and the continuation of their families’ heritages. The findings from this study referred to the parents’ opinion referring to their children’s need to be biliterate to function in a diverse multilingual society in the United States. Furthermore, Giacchino-Baker and Piller (2006) insist that the parents of the small border community in their study expressed a desire for their children to continue to learn a third and fourth language to broaden their global perspective as well as expand on the same economic, academic and social advantages attached to being bilingual.

In a study of Mexican immigrant families by Goldenberg and Gallimore (1995), parents’ definitions of educación (education) did not center exclusively on academics, but included morality, proper behavior, good manners, and respect for elders. Although a large body of work attests to the high value placed upon education among immigrant families (Ceballo, 2004; Fuligni, 1997; Valdes, 1996), this more broad definition of education may conflict with that held by most educational professionals, who are overwhelmingly white and of Euro-American descent, in terms of its implications for how parents socialize children to education and learning. For example, some research with immigrant Mexican families has shown that parents’ conceptions of their role in their children’s education is disagreeing with the view held by teachers; that is, teachers often expect parents to engage in academic activities and support their (i.e., teachers’) efforts at home, while Latino parents view themselves as responsible for children’s social and moral development, with the teacher being the sole academic instructor (Goldenberg...
& Gallimore 1995; Valdes 1996). In other words, many Latino parents associate parental involvement in their child’s education with involvement in their lives (Zarate, 2007).

**Parental Involvement**

Feuerstein (2000) defined parent involvement as an activity including a wide range of behaviors, ranging from discussing school with their children to attending parent-teacher conferences. Beginning in the 1970s, researchers stressed the importance of parent involvement. Pena (2000) summarized earlier research citing the benefits of parent involvement for not only students, but also schools and parents. The student benefits include enriched achievement, better positive behaviors and emotional development (Pena, 2000). Schools with greater levels of parent involvement tend to outpace schools without higher levels involvement. Parent involvement improves the school-community relationship while increasing teacher efficacy. These schools have more volunteers and more support from parents. Parents who become involved at their children’s school have healthier attitudes and support school activities. Their involvement also increases communication between parents and their children (Pena, 2000).

Parental involvement also refers to parents’ participation in meaningful communication within their children educational setting (Boethel, 2003). As such, parental involvement would encompass interaction among the students, administrators, and parents (Boethel, 2003). One form of involvement incorporates parents’ clear communication with their children about their personal and family values, goals, expectations and aspirations for student learning (Hoover Dempsey & Sandler, 1997).
Henderson and Berla (1994) argue that when schools work together with parents to support learning, children tend to succeed not just in school, but also throughout life. When parents are involved at school and have realistic expectations, their children go further in school. Furthermore, they state that the most accurate predictor of a student’s achievement in school is not financial income or social status, but the extent to which the parents are apt to become involved in their children’s education. Olsen and Fuller (2008) build on their research on the benefits of parental involvement. They agree that income and social status is not what detects the success of a student; rather, it is the home environment, future realistic goals, and parental involvement in school and community. Ngeow (1999) shows that the most accurate predictor of a child’s academic achievement is the extent to which the child’s family creates an environment where learning is encouraged, communicates high, but reasonable expectations, and becomes involved in the school and the community.

Zarate (2007) contends that Latino parents’ perception of parental involvement is grouped in two distinct categories. The first category is academic involvement, which encompasses activities associated with homework, educational enrichment and academic performance. The second category is life participation, characterized by the ways parents provide life education. Furthermore, when she asked the Latino parents in her study to define parental involvement, they mentioned life participation concerning their beliefs and values.
Latina Mothers' Involvement

Latina mothers of Mexican-origin have been described as the primary person responsible for maintaining cultural beliefs and values, and structuring the family environment to support and maintain those values (Valdes 1996). Women’s status rises when they become mothers, due to the belief among Mexican–Americans that maternal love is greater and more sacred than anything else in the world (Falicov 2005). However, the view that Mexican–American mothers are the primary caregivers and fathers the only disciplinarians is changing due to the mothers’ increasing participation in the labor force (Gándara & Contreras, 2009). The decision-making in Mexican-American families is shared by the parents, or involves a process in which the mother assumes much of the responsibility due to the father’s long working hours or absence from the family (Falicov, 2005).

Ramos’ (2014) study on Latina mothers reflected that they support their children’s education in ways that reflect Latino cultural values and beliefs or cultural forms of parental engagement. Ramos (2014) interviewed forty-three Latina mothers who had a child enrolled in a public preschool serving three- to five-year-olds. The sample for this study was restricted to foreign-born parents. In her Study, Ramos (2014) explained the Latina mothers’ cultural forms of parental engagement in education through the prism of Latino cultural values and beliefs. The responses of the participants in the study resulted in three themes emerging regarding culturally embedded parental engagement: sacrificios (sacrifices), consejos (advice), and apoyo (moral support). These themes are explained below using the voices of Latina mothers to highlight how each theme relates to parental engagement. Sacrificios (sacrifices) refers to a mental state of struggle and sacrifice in the interest of enhancing or supporting children’s education and learning. Consejos (advice) refers to advice parents give their young children about school that reinforces
values, such as resiliency and perseverance. *Apoyo* (moral support) refers to the emotional and moral support parents offer their children to boost their self-esteem and encourage their perseverance so that they do well in school. Ramos (2014) contends that Latina mothers who are engaged in their children’s education do so in the hope that their engagement may increase their children’s motivation to do well in school. Thus, mothers’ *sacrificios* (sacrifices), *consejos* (advice), and *apoyo* (moral support) are all directed toward their children’s educational success.

Latina mothers reported supporting their children’s education through typical forms of engagement. Like other parents, Latina mothers reported engaging in home-based activities such as reading books with their children, school-based activities included volunteering in the classroom, and the home-school partnership activities meant attending parent-teacher meetings. Latina mothers reported engaging in home-based activities more so than school-based activities and home-school partnership activities (Ramos, 2014).

Guadalupe Valdes’ book *Con Respeto* (1996) focused on the lives of ten immigrant Mexican families particularly focusing on the mothers. The study took three years in a place in a town called Las Fuentes, along the US-Mexico borderlands, focusing on the poorest area of the town known as “el barrio”. Most families were left on their own, or with their family to navigate through unfamiliar territory, including the educational system. Valdes hoped to show that Mexican parents do know how to parent, but their parenting styles are a product of their class, culture, and experiences. They are very unlike the ‘standard’ American family (p. 39). What seemed to stand out was the fact that the women were the ones who kept things together. They did not seek individual fulfillment, instead focused on their families. As Valdes (1996) says, “They were directed at living out their roles in life as they understood them” (p. 93). Money, prosperity and materialism is not the primary goal for these families. Mothers considered the moral
education of their children to be their primary responsibility. She found that by the age of 4, children were taught at home the verbal and non-verbal rules of respect such as politely greeting elders, not challenging an elder’s point of view, and not interrupting adult conversations.

The mothers prioritized the values of obedience and respect over independence, and being assertive in Gonzalez-Ramos, Zayas, and Cohen’s (1998) study. This study on childrearing and the educational beliefs of six immigrant Latina mothers, five Mexican and one South American, of first-grade children were examined, as well as their beliefs about their roles in their children’s lives. They saw themselves as important teachers of their own children but not in the academic sense. They described how they regularly talked to their children about how to behave and find help in school if they needed it. They wanted their children to keep them abreast of any potential dangerous situations at school or anywhere else. These mothers viewed their role as constant guardians and protectors of their children and they felt they were responsible for disciplining their children at home. They weren’t as confident regarding their role in facilitating their children’s academic development at home. They did not mention questioning or challenging the teachers about any aspect of their children’s education. Although some mothers acknowledged their limitations in respect to language and their own educational backgrounds, all six mothers commented on their effort to provide instructional support for their children at home.

The study by Calzada, Fernandez and Cortez (2010) examined cultural values of thirty-one Dominican mothers and seventeen Mexican mothers of preschoolers through focus groups in which they described their core values as related to their parenting role.
Results showed that *respeto* (respect), family and religion were the most important values that mothers sought to transmit to their children. *Respeto* (respect) is manifested in several domains, including obedience to authority, deference, decorum, and public behavior. More generally, *respeto* (respect) serves as the basis for mothers’ expectations of child behavior across all situations. A focus on family (*familismo*) was evident across the groups, with extended family serving a primary role in providing social and emotional support. The conviction that family always comes first and that the family stays united is very important to these Latino families. The importance of religion was brought up by the Dominican and Mexican mothers but was particularly emphasized by Mexican mothers, who spoke of their veneration of the Virgin Mary and of the *Virgen de Guadalupe*. They want their children to commit to go to church. In addition to the values of *respeto* (respect), *familia* (family), and religion, mothers reported on the importance of maintaining their culture and heritage language.

**Maintaining Heritage Language**

Latino parents prefer that their children maintain the Spanish language and some form of Latino cultural values and identity (Farruggio, 2010). Farruggio, (2010) refers to the parents in his study who supported bilingual education but not a particular bilingual model. They wanted their children to appreciate their heritage, the culture and values of the parents’ home country that were different from the United States. Those parents who were interviewed spoke about heritage and agreed that the Spanish language would serve as a means to preserve Latino values and family unity. They associated bilingual education and Latino cultural maintenance and none of them expressed the desire to remove their children from bilingual education.
Reasons Parents Choose Dual Language Programs

Parents are choosing dual language programs to maintain their culture and heritage language. The following studies on parental motivation, perceptions, expectations, attitudes, support and commitment of dual language education confirm their reasons for choosing a dual language program. In these studies, the mothers were the ones who overwhelmingly participated by answering the surveys and participating in the interviews.

In Worthy and Rodriguez-Galindo (2006) study on Latino parents’ perspective on their children’s bilingualism, nine of the sixteen parents interviewed were Latina mothers. In this study, parents wanted to be involved in their children’s education but time proved to be a challenge not their willingness or capabilities. These parents were virtually an untapped resource of positive, powerful language models. The parents spoke about the importance of their children learning English while maintaining both the Spanish language and the culture of their home countries. In this study they focused on the impact of English and Spanish on their children’s present and future lives and the roles they played in their children’s language learning. Parents wanted their children to have all the academic, social and economic success that being bilingual could offer them.

Ramos’ (2007) study, based solely on a survey to elicit information on the parents’ satisfaction of a dual language education, reasons that led them to select it and their perception of and support for the program, also showed that the mothers were more apt to respond to surveys and take part in the study. Ninety four percent of the respondents identified themselves as Latino. Three hundred sixty six surveys were sent out and two hundred eighty six were completed and returned by the mothers. Forty-nine
fathers responded and thirty-one did not answer the question that identified them as either parent. As a result of the survey a large majority of the parents were very supportive of the dual language program because of its academic and linguistic focus. They perceived that the program had a positive impact on their children and that it exposed them to two languages and cultures.

Similar to Ramos’ (2007) study, Shannon and Milian’s (2002) study was based solely on a survey on why parents chose a dual language program in the state of Colorado in which Ron Unz, a California politician, was attempting to get voters to amend their state constitution and eliminate bilingual education. In response to this threat, a consortium of dual language programs met for their monthly meeting and the claims made by the proponents of the initiative against bilingual education was brought up for discussion. Mostly Mexican mothers were present at the meeting. They knew that these claims did not reflect their reality of parents who had willingly chosen to place their children in a dual language program. They understood the purpose of the program and their expectations of their children becoming both bilingual and biliterate were brought to fruition. A total of one thousand forty three surveys were completed and returned. The quantitative information gathered through this survey provides evidence for the strong support parents have for dual language programs in Colorado. Besides educators, parents are the strongest allies of well implemented bilingual education programs such as dual language programs.

Furthermore, Giacchino-Baker and Piller’s (2006) study of a border community in California reported that all participating parents who were of Mexican ancestry, wanted their children to become bilingual, were uniformly positive about the program and would
recommend it to others. The researchers sent surveys in English and Spanish to parents in kindergarten and first grade. The goal of the survey was to determine the attitudes, motivation, support and commitment behind both English and Spanish-speaking parents’ decisions to enroll their children in the dual language program. Eleven participants, nine of which were mothers, volunteered to be interviewed. All interviewees were bilingual with varying degrees of fluency and interviews were conducted in their dominant language. These parents referred to their perceptions that their children needed to be biliterate to function in a diverse and multilingual society in the United States. Their statements showed that they valued and perceived the dual language program to function as an educational enrichment program for English-first and Spanish-first students. Parents in this study expressed support and commitment for what they perceived to be an excellent educational enrichment experience for their children.

Parents’ Expectations and Perceptions of a Dual Language Program

Research about parental expectations and perceptions about a dual language program is relatively scarce (Christian, Howard & Loeb, 2000; Lindholm-Leary, 2001), with most of what exists focuses on why parents chose the dual language program (Craig, 1996; Shannon, 1996) or more recent research on how parents participate in their children’s education (Block, 2007; Flynn, 2006; Smith, 2005). In addition, current research focuses more on parental involvement (Campoverde, 2007; Dorner, 2006). In a dual language program, the two groups of parents whose children are in the program may have very different ideas of what parental involvement is consequently shaping their expectations and perceptions about a dual language program.
Davies and Kandel (1981) and Teachman and Paasch (1998) define parents’ expectations for their children’s future educational attainment as a measure of hopes and aspirations. Rubio’s (1994) study focuses on the values, beliefs and aspirations of a group of parents whose children attend a dual language school. In Rubio’s (1994) study nineteen Puerto Rican parents whose children attended an enrichment bilingual-bicultural program related to the parents’ expectations and aspirations for their children’s future. These parents showed a wide range of aspirations for their children and they valued schools and had high expectations for their children. When these parents were asked to discuss their hopes and plans for their children, they consistently responded that they wanted “una buena educación” (a good education) for their children.

They had high aspirations for their children. They wanted them to be college graduates and specifically mentioned professions such as doctors, teachers, engineers, nurses, firefighters and police officers. They expected their children to be better than themselves. They wanted them to learn as much as they could about both languages and be able to talk to anyone regardless of their language. They wanted them to feel comfortable about their heritage. “In this world it’s difficult enough a job in one language— but if you have two you go one step further… the more languages you know the further ahead you are” (Rubio, 1994 p. 67). The nineteen parents interviewed for this study expressed a strong interest in their children’s schooling and believed that there was and is an interrelationship between education and a better life. These parents wanted their children to learn both languages, to comprehend the Spanish language and understand each other. They wanted them to learn how to read and write in both languages correctly and without hesitation. The school and its dual language program goals are very much
connected with their expectations to help their children get ahead in life and be better than themselves.

Cherry (2011) defines perceptions as the way in which something is regarded, understood or interpreted. Doherty’s (2008) qualitative study investigated parental perceptions of a dual language program in a suburban area in an elementary school. This school served both high-income neighborhood White parents and working class Hispanic immigrants. The purpose of the study was to examine perceptions and beliefs of English and Spanish speaking parents whose children were enrolled in an elementary dual language program. Nineteen participants were interviewed for this study. Along with twelve parents whose children were enrolled in the dual language program, the principal, assistant principal, the district coordinator, three teachers and the family liaison were all interviewed.

Through observations and interviews of the participants four themes emerged about parental perceptions of the dual language program. The comments from both sets of parents portrayed dual language as a positive learning experience for their children. Both sets of parents know that their children are in an academic program in which they are learning a second language. Parents acknowledged that their children were exposed to another culture through dual language and that they are together with their friends in their neighborhood school. However, the two parent groups differed from one another in their interpretations of what these themes meant based on their own cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
Summary

Chapter two provided a brief overview of bilingual education, the history of dual language education, the different models of dual language education, and the key features of the Gómez & Gómez Dual Language Enrichment Model. This chapter also elaborated on the role of parents in dual language programs and included some studies on Latina mothers’ support and engagement in their children’s education. It also included some studies on why parents chose a dual language program for their children. Finally this chapter included studies on parents’ expectations and perceptions of dual language programs.

The methodology of the study will be described in chapter three including the research design chosen, the participants who were involved, the instruments that were used, the data collection procedures that were performed, followed by the data analysis procedures, and the limitations of the study.
CHAPTER 3 - METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this research study is to identify Latina mothers’ expectations and perceptions about a dual language education in the Rio Grande Valley. The methodology I chose to approach this study was qualitative (McLeod, 2001; Polkinghorne, 1995; Silverman, 2001). I developed semi-structured interview questions to help me understand Latina mothers’ dual language program expectations and perceptions and how they impact the educational decisions they make for their children. In this chapter, I describe the methodology of the study, specifically the research design I chose, the participants that were involved, the data collection procedures I performed, the data analysis procedures that I followed, and the limitations of the study.

Research Design

In this study, I examined the expectations and perceptions of twenty Latina mothers of a dual language program. Two groups emerged from the original twenty interviews of Latina mothers whose children participated in the dual language program, an English dominant group and a Spanish dominant group. There were eleven English dominant Latina mothers and nine Spanish dominant Latina mothers. I used a qualitative approach, gathering data through surveys, individual interviews and small group interviews.

The qualitative method was appropriate because qualitative research methodologies can aid the researcher in acquiring a more profound understanding of
various phenomena experienced by humans (McLeod, 2001), which in the current study is the Latina mothers’ expectations and perceptions of a dual language program.

Silverman (2001) added that researchers should use qualitative research when they believe that they could provide a more intense understanding of certain societal issues. Furthermore, according to Miles and Huberman (1994), a qualitative approach is recommended when the researcher wants to discover expectations and perceptions about everyday occurrences.

McMillan and Schumacher (2001) suggest that qualitative inquiry should be used when the researcher wants to present data using authentic and representative remarks from the participants rather than the researcher. In this study the Latina mothers discuss in their home language their expectations and perceptions of a dual language program. The Latina mothers’ points of view are also described in their own phrasing and style. I interviewed each mother in the language they were most comfortable using.

According to Creswell (2005), data in qualitative research is collected from a smaller sample using general questions answered with narratives. For the current study, I played a dual role (Hollins & Torres Guzman, 2005), first as a researcher, and second, as the school principal of the other elementary school offering a dual language enrichment program not involved in the current study. Being the principal of the other school among the two offering the dual language enrichment program, I opted to study the other school to avoid conflicts of interest. While I, as a principal, do not contend that bias or coercion would take place if the study would involve the school where I am the principal it is best to avoid such circumstances.
Setting

I focused on a predominantly Latino serving South Texas school district, where there are 17 elementary schools, two of which are offering a dual language program. I chose as the setting for this study one of the elementary schools PK-5 offering a dual language program. As previously mentioned, I selected this school because at the other elementary school that offers a dual language program I am employed as the principal. This elementary school was chosen to avoid bias and feelings of coercion from participants. The selected elementary school serves 555 students, 28.1% of them are Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students, 76.8% are economically disadvantaged, 67.0% are at-risk students, 91.7% Latino and 6.1 % White (TEA, 2012).

Participants

The participants involved in this study were drawn from the Latino parents whose children were enrolled at one of the elementary schools offering a dual language program. These Latino parents had to have at least one child attending the respective program during the time of the interviews and would be willing to share their experiences, beliefs, and attitudes. All of the children were either in Kindergarten or first grade because the dual language program in this study is in its second year of inception and only the Kindergarten and first grade classes are participating in the program. Five kindergarten parents and fifteen first grade parents participated in the study.

To gather the participants for the study, I, the researcher performed a non-probability sampling method. “The goal of this method is not to be statistically representative” (Ritchie, Lewis & Elam, 2003, p. 78). This form of sampling is termed as
convenience sampling, wherein participants are chosen depending on their availability and their willingness to participate in the study (Gravetter & Forzano, 2009).

In order to collect the data, I visited the school’s website and gathered information about the dual language program. I contacted the superintendent for his approval to contact the principal (Appendix A) of the dual language school and the parents from the respective school. After corresponding with the principal and giving the information that is pertinent to the current study, I sent a contact letter (Appendix B) to all the Latino parents of the dual language students via their teachers. The contact letter included the researcher’s request to obtain contact information from the Latino parents to invite them to participate in the study. The contact letter consisted of statements involving the research intent, the research purpose and the IRB approval. The teachers then collected the contact letters from the students and turned them into the principal’s office. I then collected the letters from the principal.

Although all the Latino parents were invited to participate in the study only the Latina mothers responded to the invitation. I then contacted the Latina mothers who provided their contact information to invite them to participate in the study. The Latina mothers who agreed to participate were asked to sign the Informed Consent Form (Appendix C) approved by the University’s IRB committee and then fill out a demographic questionnaire (Appendix D). Through this questionnaire, the Latina mothers supplied their basic information, such as their level of education, income, and native language. The Latina mothers were selected based on being Latinas, having a child in the dual language program and their willingness to participate in the study. Table 2 illustrates some characteristics of the participants.
### Table 2

**Demographic Data: Sources of Data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Child’s Gender</th>
<th>Child’s Grade</th>
<th>Parent Interviewed Level of Education</th>
<th>Household Income</th>
<th>Language Used</th>
<th>Focus Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>Under 25,000</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Graduate School</td>
<td>100,000 and above</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Graduate School</td>
<td>100,000 and above</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Graduate School</td>
<td>75,000 – 100,000</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A5</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>College 4 years</td>
<td>25,000-50,000</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A6</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Kinder</td>
<td>Vocational</td>
<td>50,000-75,000</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A7</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>College 4 years</td>
<td>75,000 – 100,000</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A8</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Kinder</td>
<td>Vocational</td>
<td>25,000-50,000</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A9</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>4 year college</td>
<td>50,000-75,000</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A10</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>4 year college</td>
<td>75,000 – 100,000</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A11</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Graduate School</td>
<td>100,000 and above</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A12</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Vocational</td>
<td>50,000-75,000</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A13</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Kinder</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>25,000-50,000</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A14</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>25,000-50,000</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A15</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Kinder</td>
<td>4 year college</td>
<td>50,000-75,000</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A16</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>25,000-50,000</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A17</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td>Under 25,000</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A18</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>Under 25,000</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A19</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Kinder</td>
<td>College 4 years</td>
<td>25,000-50,000</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A20</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Graduate School</td>
<td>100,000 and above</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The eleven English dominant participants all grew up in homes that spoke English and Spanish. Their parents spoke Spanish and English and their grandparents spoke Spanish. These participants understood Spanish and spoke it at varying levels. They did not feel comfortable speaking in Spanish for the interview. They preferred to use English on a daily basis and as time continued they began losing their heritage language. The nine Spanish dominant participants grew up with Spanish as their first language. Their parents spoke only Spanish, as their grandparents. They continued using Spanish throughout their lives and still do so on a daily basis. They maintained their heritage language and preferred to use Spanish for the interview.
Data Collection

Face-to-Face Interviews

For the current study, data was collected through open face-to-face interviews. Interviewing is one of the most appropriate data collection methods for this study because the mothers’ expectations and perceptions of a dual language program cannot be merely observed (Merriam, 1998). Through the interviews, I was able to study the phenomenon of interest through the eyes of the participants (Marshall & Rossman, 2010). Open-ended questions are recommended because this type of questions can allow respondents to construct answers collaboratively with the interviewer in a manner that they find meaningful (Marshall & Rossman, 2010). I asked various questions during the interview that were adapted from Choy’s (1993) study of a Japanese bilingual bicultural program. The questions (Appendix E) that were asked were designed to elicit information on the mothers’ expectations and perceptions of a dual language program and their educational goals for their children. The questions were intended to guide the flow of conversation.

Face to face interviews produced the important insight and behavioral themes (Marshall & Rossman, 2010) associated with the perceptions and expectations of Latino mothers about a dual language program. I conducted face to face interviews with twenty Latina mothers, all of Mexican descent for this study. The interviews were uninhibited and relaxed. Interviews were held at the participants’ choice of location. They all selected a convenient place for them that was quiet and conducive to audio recording and available for the time of the interview. The interviews were conducted in their language preference, either English or Spanish. The interviews did not last more than 90 minutes. Each interview sought to establish a context from which to consider the participants’
expectations and perceptions about a dual language program. During the in-depth interviews I asked participants about what their expectations of a dual language program were and how they perceived it would benefit their child. I asked them about their own school experiences and how it compared to their child’s. Most importantly, I wanted to know if they were bilingual and whether it helped them or not. I also asked if their parents participated in their education and how they participated in their own child’s education.

This provided a background on how mothers themselves formed their own set of expectations and perceptions about a dual language education and their transference to their children. After completing the data collection, I wrote to the participants to thank them for their participation. Marshall and Rossman (2006) contended “being respectful of people and relationships is essential for being an ethical researcher, one does not grab the data and run” (p. 91). For the current research, I recorded the data from the interviews using the participant’s own voices and I transcribed the data verbatim. I then emailed or hand delivered the transcript to each person interviewed. They read the transcript and confirmed via a telephone conversation that they indeed answered what I wrote in the transcript. They were given the opportunity to clarify and provide additional information through this telephone conversation to better capture their intent of their responses. I specifically allowed the participants to affirm that the summaries reflect their views, feelings, and experiences, or that they did not reflect those experiences (Marshall & Rossman, 2010). None of the interviewees provided additional information. When the participants affirmed the accuracy and completeness, then the study is said to have credibility.
Focus Group Interviews

Using the focus groups was another source of data. The focus groups were selected based on participants’ language preferences and willingness to be part of the focus group. Each participant was asked what language preference they had for the initial interview and was then placed in a focus group determined by their language preference. A Spanish language dominant group of five Latina women of Mexican descent and an English dominant group of six Latina women of Mexican descent formed the two focus groups. Focus group discussions have become a common research technique since such method was used in the 1920s for measuring public morale in the duration of the Second World War (Greenbaum, 1993; Morgan, 1988). The focus groups responded to specific predetermined primary questions derived from the first interview (Vaughn, Schumm, & Sinagub 1996). I asked them what the term education meant to them and what their role in their child’s education entailed, how they helped with homework and what parental involvement meant for them. I asked them what they envisioned for their child’s future and why it was important for their child to maintain or learn Spanish.

Through the focus groups, I was able to assess the interaction between participants and note at the same time, their responses to the questions (Vaughn et al, 1996). The discussions were held in a predetermined place and date, in the school’s conference room and ran for approximately two hours. I personally started and guided the discussions; however, to prevent personal influence, I only played the role of observer and moderator. The discussions were audio taped. Participants were asked to state their names for the record. I also kept notes from these discussions, specifically the order in which the participants answered. Parents were encouraged to respond to the answers of
other interviewees. I transcribed all of the information verbatim. At the end of the focus group discussions I asked the members of the group for two volunteers who would be willing to validate the information that I would transcribe from the discussion. After I transcribed the audiotapes, I then contacted the two members that volunteered from each group to validate the transcript. I emailed each of the members the transcript and they confirmed through a telephone conversation that the transcript was true to the conversations that were held. These members confirmed the transcript and did not make changes and they accepted the transcript as accurate. Marshall and Rossman (2010) argue that through member checks, the participants can correct the researcher’s representation of their worlds.

Data Analysis

I continuously reviewed the data to provide a solid insight into the study and analyzed it through descriptive analysis (Creswell, Tashakkori, Jensen & Shapely, 2003). The data provided important contextual background for the analysis. The data was examined from the bottom up following Creswell’s (2005) bottom up approach. The specific data is examined to identify general themes that will be used to understand the meaning of the data.

To best demonstrate the rich significance of the data and to allow participants to speak for themselves, an in depth analysis is vital. First, I read through all the data to try to get a sense of all the information. I transcribed all of the data. Second, I started exploring the data by reading the transcript a multitude of times. I began to sort the data and take notes on the side of the transcripts. I tried using a qualitative computer software program, NVivo 10. The process proved to be lengthy and time constraining because I
had to create nodes. Instead I chose to use the program to run a word frequency query. I used the words that emerged from the interviews and the focus group discussions the most to develop codes for the English–speaking parents and the Spanish-speaking parents for the analysis. See Table 3.

Table 3

**Initial Codes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English-Speaking Parents Codes</td>
<td>Spanish-Speaking Parents Codes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals for their children</td>
<td>Goals for their children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good education</td>
<td>Good education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ role</td>
<td>Parents’ role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement</td>
<td>Involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrichment</td>
<td>Learn English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn the culture</td>
<td>Maintain the culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>Homework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language of the day</td>
<td>Language of the day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn the Spanish language</td>
<td>Maintain the Spanish language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>Better jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gratitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Help others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parents also getting help</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Third, I analyzed the data by using Creswell’s (2007) method of reading and re-reading the transcript making notes in the margins and then I moved to “lean coding” creating a shorter list of two categories under question one and three categories under question 2. See Table 4. I rigorously compared the responses of the participants to establish categories with respect to parental expectations and perceptions of a dual language enrichment program and to the data gathered from the audio taped focus group discussions. I triangulated the data by creating a spreadsheet with three columns. Each column represented the different sources, the surveys, interviews and the focus group interviews. The spreadsheet also had thirty five rows with high frequency words that I
acquired using the NVivo computer software. I then checked to see where the same word surfaced in all of the data sources by placing a check in each row and in the corresponding column that the word appeared in.

Table 4
*Categories by Research Question*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Research Question 1 Expectations</th>
<th>Research Question 2 Perceptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Goals for their children</td>
<td>Opportunity to validate the home language and maintain their culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Goals of the Dual Language Program</td>
<td>Mothers benefiting from the dual language program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mothers’ role in their children’s education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I used selective coding to refine the categories under the two research questions. For research question one, all of the Latina mothers spoke about their expectations of a dual language program and I chose two categories to apply to the data, 1) goals for their children and 2) dual language programs. The two were used to analyze the data. The data that resulted from question one was presented using the two groups of parents since some of the results varied according to each group. Some of the results were similar and that was also noted. See Table 5.
Table 5

*Categories for Research Question 1 by Participant Groups*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>English dominant mothers codes</th>
<th>Spanish dominant mothers codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goals for their children</td>
<td>Attend a college/university</td>
<td>Attend a college/university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Surpass their educational</td>
<td>Get better jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>levels</td>
<td>Be bilingual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals of the dual language program</td>
<td>Enrichment</td>
<td>Maintain and promote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High academic expectations</td>
<td>home language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learn a second Language</td>
<td>High academic expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Learn a second language</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Likewise, for research question 2, all of the Latina mothers spoke about their perceptions of a dual language program and I chose three categories to apply to the data, 1) opportunity to learn a second language and 2) mothers benefiting from the dual language program and 3) mothers’ role in their children’s education. The three were used to analyze the data. The data that resulted from question two was also presented using the two groups of parents since some of the results varied according to each group. Some of the results were similar and that was also noted. See Table 6.

Table 6

*Categories for Research Question 2 by Participant Group*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>English dominant mothers code</th>
<th>Spanish dominant mothers code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to validate the home language and</td>
<td>Learn Spanish</td>
<td>Validate the home language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain their culture</td>
<td>For better job opportunities</td>
<td>To communicate with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To communicate with</td>
<td>grandparents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers benefiting from the dual language</td>
<td>Review of Spanish for</td>
<td>Learning English along with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>program</td>
<td>mothers</td>
<td>children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers’ role in their children’s education</td>
<td>Visible</td>
<td>Activities at home to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication with school</td>
<td>support going to school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>personnel</td>
<td>Attend parent teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Role models</td>
<td>conferences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fourth, I reviewed the data to make sure there were no discrepancies. Fifth, I selected quotes that best fit in each category. I then sorted them into each of the categories using both Word and Excel applications to place the quotes onto the proper category. I then reviewed the data to make sure the quotes were placed under the proper research questions on the Latina mother’s expectations and perceptions of a dual language program.

**Limitations of the Study**

A significant limitation in this study is that the study intended to study Latino parents’ perceptions and expectations of a dual language program but instead the mothers were the ones who participated in the study. Moreover, a small sample of only the Latina mothers in one school is another limitation because the study only sampled this specific population. Another limitation is that another researcher cannot replicate the study because the study was very specific to one school and their population. The study was also very specific to the Gómez & Gómez dual language enrichment model and did not include other models of a dual language program therefore making it difficult for other researchers to compare the findings to other models.

**Summary**

The chosen method to understand the expectations and perceptions that influenced the decision making process of Latina mothers who chose to enroll their children in a dual language program is the qualitative method of research. As Luetkehans and Robinson (2000) argued, qualitative research is not simply a methodology; it represents a
perception of the world, a paradigm, or a viewpoint. Those authors contended that qualitative researchers should approach research questions with a broad perspective, which would allow them to study the reality of a complex societal issue. The present chapter discussed why the qualitative method was the most appropriate, the participants who participated in the study, the data collection, the data analysis and the limitations of the study. The next chapter will present the findings and the analysis of the data.
CHAPTER 4 - RESULTS

This study investigated the expectations and perceptions of twenty Latina mothers of a dual language program in a neighborhood elementary school in the lower Rio Grande Valley. Twenty Latina mothers were interviewed, eleven of them were English dominant and nine of them were Spanish dominant. Although all twenty of the mothers are Latina of Mexican descent, all twenty participants automatically began speaking in the language they were most comfortable using at the first interview. After the initial interview, two focus groups were formed, an English dominant group consisting of six mothers and a Spanish dominant group consisting of five mothers. The mothers that preferred to speak in English were grouped in the English dominant group. Although they also spoke Spanish, they were most comfortable speaking English. Likewise, the mothers that preferred to speak in Spanish were grouped in the Spanish group. The mothers in the Spanish group also spoke English; however they preferred to speak in Spanish.

Using the data obtained from individual and small focus group interviews, I have organized the presentation of the findings in two parts. Each part addresses findings from the research questions relating to the expectations and perceptions of the Latina Mothers:

**RQ1:** What expectations do Latina mothers have about a dual language education?

**RQ2:** What perceptions do Latina mothers have about dual language programs?

- What perceptions do Latina mothers have of their role in the dual language program?
In the following sections, I present each of the points that emerged in each research question according to the Latina mothers’ expectations and then on their perceptions of a dual language education for their children focusing the analysis on the literature presented in chapter two. While the existing literature points to why parents choose dual language education, (Craig, 1996; Shannon, 1996) how parents participate in their children’s education (Block, 2007; Flynn, 2006; Smith, 2005) and on parental involvement (Campoverde, 2007; Dorner, 2006). There is nonetheless a scarcity of research about parental expectations and perceptions about a dual language program (Christian, Howard & Loeb, 2000; Lindholm-Leary, 2001). To address this scarcity in the literature, this particular study was conducted to specifically explore Latina mothers’ expectations and perceptions of a dual language program.

The following section, based on question one on Latina mothers’ expectations about a dual language education, will address the following findings: 1) goals for their children and 2) the goals of the dual language program. In addition, the next section based on question two on Latina mothers’ perceptions of a dual language education will address the following findings: 1) the opportunity to validate the home language and maintain their culture, and 2) the mothers benefiting from the dual language program. In addition, a sub question was used to fully address research question two: 3) the parent’s role in their child’s education.
Research Question One:

What expectations do Latina mothers have about a dual language education?

It is important to first define expectations as used in this study in order to have a clear understanding of what the Latina mothers’ expectations are for a dual language education. Davies and Kandel (1981) and Teachman and Paasch (1998) define parents’ expectations for their children’s future educational attainment as a measure of aspirations. Goldenberg, Gallimore, Reese and Garnier (2001), also clearly defined expectations as realistic goals and aspirations as ideal goals. Trusty (2002) made a similar distinction, classifying aspirations as representing “a more abstract, ideological goal or hope,” while expectations as reflecting “a more concrete or realistic plan” (p. 332).

All the mothers spoke about their expectations of a dual language program. In order to analyze the data I began by choosing the words most frequently used to develop initial codes. I then moved into lean coding creating a shorter list of two categories to apply to the data, 1) goals for their children and 2) goals of the dual language programs. These two categories were used to analyze the data. The data that resulted from question one is presented separately for each of the two groups of mothers, the English dominant group and the Spanish dominant group since some of the results varied according to each group. Some of the results were similar and that is also noted.
Table 7

Latina Mothers' Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>English dominant mothers codes</th>
<th>Spanish dominant mothers codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goals for their children</td>
<td>Attend a college/university</td>
<td>Attend a college/university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Surpass their educational</td>
<td>Get better jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>levels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For better job opportunities</td>
<td>Be bilingual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals of the Dual language program</td>
<td>Enrichment</td>
<td>Maintain and promote home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learn a second Language</td>
<td>language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Learn a second language</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Goals for their Children’s Future

During the interview the mothers expressed what they wanted and expected for their children in the future. All of the mothers identified their expectations of their personal and professional goals for their children. Both sets of mothers aspired for their children to attend college or a university. Nine of the eleven English dominant mothers hold a four-year degree or a graduate degree. Inevitably they hold conversations about attending college.

Parent A2: “We talk about college all the time, we are UT alumni and fans. We go to UT games, tailgate and wear all the orange and white we can. We don’t expect our kids to go to UT but we do tell them they have to go to college. It would really be hard for us if our kids didn’t go to college. We’ll cross that bridge when we get there.” [Focus group interview]
Parent A3: “I want them to go to college. They really don’t have any other options. I will encourage them to work in the summers and in between degrees but they will need to finish. A Bachelor’s degree is not enough anymore.”

[Focus group interview]

Parent A20: “I think college is more than academics. They will meet people they can later network with. Meet people who will be important in their lives after college. I had the best time in college. When I went to grad school I was more settled and I was more focused on what my career would be.”

[Focus group interview]

Resembling the English dominant mothers’ aspirations for their children to attend college the Spanish dominant mothers also resonated their goals for their children. Four of the nine Spanish- dominant mothers conveyed their aspiration that their children would attend the university.

Parent A18: “Como madre, yo quiero más para mis hijos. Quiero que avancen poco a poco. Que suban en su escuela y en todo. Yo me los imagino en la universidad graduándose. Yo quiero que agarren toda la educación que puedan. Si se gradúan se me hace que yo estuviera muy emocionada. Se me lloran los ojos solo pensando en eso. Nadie en mi familia se ha graduado del colegio.”

[Focus group interview]

[As a mother, I want more for my children. I want them to advance little by little, for them to rise in school and in everything. I imagine them graduating from the
university. I want them to get as much education as they can. If they graduate I would be very emotional. My eyes tear up just thinking about that. No one in my family has graduated from college."

Parent A13 agreed with A18: “Así como dijo ella, yo miro a mis hijos en la universidad. Tienen que estudiar para que sean alguien – que salgan adelante. Esa es mi meta para ellos – que hagan algo en la vida.” [Focus group interview]

Parent A13 agreed with parent A18: "Just like what she said, I see my children in the university. They have to study in order to be somebody- to get ahead. That’s my goal for them –to do something in life."

The data indicates that all of the mothers expected their children to graduate from college and/or graduate school as an expected part of their growth into adulthood. Additionally, all six English dominant mothers’ comments indicated that they expect their children to at least reach their level of education or surpass it. They expected that their futures would be better than theirs based on the level of education that they would attain. As Kezar (1997) noted, “Nearly everyone in America, indeed the world over, believes in a powerful connection between education and occupational success” (p. 5).

Parent A1: “I want my child to be better educated than me. Go to college and be a professional. It’s hard to make a living earning the minimum. If he goes to college he can get a better job.” [Focus group interview]

All of the English-dominant mothers expected their children to be in careers that required college degrees. They felt it was too early to tell what their children wanted to
be because of their children’s age and they expected that they would probably change their minds many times before they actually chose a career.

When speaking about the future, the Spanish-dominant mothers hoped for and dreamed about their children’s future but one of these mothers conveyed that the future was not in their hands.

Parent A17: “Lo que Dios quiera” [What God wants]. [Interview]

“Uno decide pero Dios dispone” [One decides but God commands].

All twenty mothers were willing to give their children all their support to ensure their success for the future.

Parent A18: “Como padre de familia, mi papel es el de proveer a mi hijo con las herramientas necesarias para ser un adulto exitoso. Estas herramientas son la educación que adquiere tanto en el hogar como en la escuela y los valores éticos y morales.” [Focus group interview]

[As a parent, my role is to provide my child with the tools to be a successful adult. These tools are acquiring education both at home and at school and the ethical and moral values.]

All twenty mothers want their children to be successful and be better than them. They stated they would give their children all their support and help them anyway they could. As in Reese, Balzano, Gallimore, and Goldenberg’s (1995) study. those mothers yearned that their children would stay on the right path but would not predict the choices their children would decide on for their future. The mothers in this study indicated that
their obligation is that of giving their children the experiences and knowledge necessary for them to choose a respectable path in life. Though their children make their own decisions they still had their own goals for their future.

Question one considered the expectations of personal and professional goals both sets of mothers had for their children. Spanish-dominant mothers expressed their expectations for their children to have better jobs than they do because they are bilingual and surpass their own educational levels.

Parent A8: “Yo quiero que mi hija se beneficie de saber más de una idioma. Tengo amigos en otros estados y los que saben inglés y español tienen mejores trabajos”. [Interview]

[I want my daughter to benefit by knowing more than one language. I have friends in other states and the ones that know English and Spanish have better jobs.]

The findings in this study are very similar to Thiede’s (2009) study, which states that the number of employment opportunities for those who are bilingual or multilingual is greater than for those who are not.

The responses from the nine Spanish-dominant mothers indicate that they see a direct correlation between what their children were learning in the dual language program and their children’s future just like the English dominant group. They expected that if their children become truly bilingual and biliterate they will be better equipped for any job they aspire to have or acquire in the future.
Parent A17: “Yo quiero que mi hija alcance lo que yo no pude. Yo quiero que tenga una vida mejor, un trabajo mejor. Ella puede trabajar en una escuela o en un hospital. Ella puede trabajar donde los dos inglés y español se necesitan.”

[Interview]

[I want my daughter to achieve what I didn’t. I want her to have a better life, a better job. She can work in a school or a hospital. She can work in places where both English and Spanish are needed.]

The nine Spanish dominant mothers expected for the dual language program to provide a course toward bilingualism, which would be appreciated by their children when start looking for employment later on in life. These nine Spanish dominant mothers expressed that being bilingual would enhance their future as Thiede (2009) states, “The possibility of having a better future is greater as a bilingual person than a monolingual person as a result of better opportunities available to those who speak more than one language. Bilingualism and multilingualism are very marketable skills” (p. 15). The parents in this study wanted their children to learn a second language, either English or Spanish challenging the assimilationist view that in America everyone speaks in one language agreeing with Banks’ and Banks’ (2003) findings.

Goals for Dual Language Program

In this category both sets of mothers expressed what they wanted and expected from a dual language program. They all expected their children to learn a second language. Both the English and the Spanish- dominant mothers said they expected their children to know both English and Spanish.
Parent A2: “My husband and I agreed that our children must be bilingual. We want our children to embrace diversity and to be able to communicate in a language other than English.” [Interview]

Parent A1: “El español es mi lengua materna y ha sido mi único idioma la mayor parte de mi vida. El aprender inglés fue un reto para mí, pero ahora veo que el conservar mi idioma me ha abierto puertas que no se hubieran abierto sin él. Me siento muy orgullosa de mi hijo como va aprendiendo el inglés y el español al mismo tiempo. Él le empieza a dar el valor a las dos idiomas.” [Interview]

[Spanish is my native language and has been my only language most of my life. Learning English was a challenge for me, but now I see that my language has opened doors that would not have opened without it. I feel very proud to see how my son is learning English and Spanish at the same time. He is beginning to value both languages.]

During the interviews the English-dominant mothers talked about how important it was for their children to get a good education. Eight of the eleven English-dominant mothers expect the dual language program to be challenging and serve as enrichment for their children. Comparably, the parents in Cloud et al (2000) also viewed the dual language program as a challenging and enriching option for their children.

Parent A11: “I believe the goals of the Dual Language program are to help my child become truly bilingual in subjects such as reading. I know it is more challenging and the teachers are always getting trained. So that’s good because they are also learning.” [Interview]
Parent A7: “I attended a dual language meeting explaining a little bit about what the program was about and decided that since my daughter did not understand or speak a lot of Spanish, I felt this program would help her. My daughter is very smart so I thought the program was better planned and challenging. My older girls didn’t have it.” [Interview]

Parent A6: “We felt that early exposure to a second language would benefit our son we felt that it would be easier to learn a second language at an early age. The program is better it challenges the kids.” [Interview]

They wanted the rigor that the dual language program would offer so that they could achieve professional success. These mothers saw a direct correlation between the rigor of the dual language program and what they expected for their children to achieve in terms of their future aspirations. They believed that their children would be challenged learning a foreign language in agreement with Cloud, et al’s (2000) research on effective schools that show successful outcomes as a result from a curriculum associated with an enriched, not remedial, instructional model, which is critical in a dual language program.

All nine Spanish-dominant mothers expected the dual language program would help to maintain their home language while learning a new language, English.

Parent A13: “Es importante que mantengas sus raíces y saber dos idiomas les ayuda en el futuro y más importante la comunicación con los abuelos.”

[Focus Group Interview]

[It is important to keep their roots and know two languages it helps them in the future and most importantly to communicate with grandparents.]
Parent A16: “Para mi es importantes que mantenga el español ya que en mi familia ese es el idioma principal al ser de México. Aparte de eso, creo que el saber más de un idioma te abre un mundo de posibilidades sociales, culturales y profesionales. Uno como padre siempre quiere lo mejor para sus hijos y que sus logros y metas sean aún más grandes que los nuestros. Al fomentar la importancia y el aprecio a los idiomas lo estoy ayudando a que sea una persona culta y con un futuro mejor.” [Focus Group Interview]

[For me it is important to keep the Spanish because in my family that is the main language as we are from Mexico. Other than that, I think that knowing more than one language opens up a world of social, cultural and professional opportunities. As parents we always want the best for our children and for their achievements and goals to be bigger than ours. By promoting the importance and appreciation of languages I'm helping him be more cultured and have a better future.]

All of the families valued having two languages but the Spanish speaking mothers really emphasized that their children must maintain the heritage language in agreement with Gay’s (2000) study who states that validating their home language and culture using Spanish as the language of instruction for part of the day there is a bridge of understanding between home and school.

This section examined the expectations of the English and Spanish- dominant mothers had about the dual language program. All of the mothers expected their children to learn a second language either Spanish or English. There was a direct correlation between their expectations of a dual language program and the future goals of their children. They expected the dual language program to provide for their children the
essential tools they will need for a good job in the future. They expected that bilingualism is an advantage the program is providing for their children. Their reasons suggest that they see their children accomplishing more than they had, both academically and professionally. They conveyed hope and expected that their children would be able to get better jobs and have a much better life than they do because of their bilingual abilities.

The next section will address the mothers’ perceptions of a dual language program.

**Research Question Two**

*What perceptions do Latino mothers have about dual language programs?*

Latina mothers have different expectations and perceptions about their children’s education. It is important to first define perceptions as used in this study in order to have a clear understanding of what the mothers’ perceptions are for a dual language education. Cherry (2011) defines perceptions as a way in which something is regarded, understood or interpreted. Parent perceptions about their children’s education are formed by a number of factors over a period of time. Those factors that shape parent’s perceptions are demographic which include age, gender, income, occupation, education, language, attitudes, values, personality and interests (Amarl, 2001).

Amaral (2001) captured the importance of parental perceptions, finding that, overall, parental perceptions of bilingual programs directly affected student success. I chose three categories that arose from the data that resulted from research question two. See Table 5. Both the English and the Spanish-dominant mothers spoke about their perceptions of the dual language program as one that included the following:
Table 8

*Latina Mothers’ Perceptions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>English dominant parent code</th>
<th>Spanish dominant parent code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to validate the home language and culture</td>
<td>Benefits of being bilingual to maintain their culture</td>
<td>Maintain the home language to communicate with grandparents and validate culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Benefits of being bilingual to communicate with grandparents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers benefiting from the dual language program</td>
<td>Review of Spanish for mothers</td>
<td>Learning English along with children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers’ role in their children’s education</td>
<td>Visible</td>
<td>Activities at home to support going to school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication with school personnel</td>
<td>Attend parent teacher conferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Role models</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activities at home to support going to school</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In response to research question two, the mothers expressed their perceptions about the dual language program and about their children learning a second language. Then their comments about how they, as the mothers, are benefiting from the dual language program were explored including their role in their children’s education.

**Opportunity to Validate the Home Language and Maintain Their Culture**

Six of the eleven English-dominant mothers brought up the benefits of being bilingual or of developing literacy skills in both languages. They recognized that by learning Spanish their children would validate their home language and identify with and maintain their culture. The following quotes are representative of the references English-dominant mothers made about learning Spanish and how happy they were that this would help their children communicate with their grandparents. They want to preserve their
heritage language and expect that their children will be the catalyst for doing that through the dual language program.

Parent A15: This is my child’s first year in the dual language class and it’s great. He is reading fluently in English and he is learning and picking up the second language very quickly. It is amazing to hear him answer his grandparents in Spanish. [Interview]

A9: “I think it is important that we should all be able to speak more than one language. Especially because we live in South Texas and a lot of people speak Spanish. My mom used to babysit my older daughters so they knew Spanish. My youngest who is in the dual language program went to daycare so she doesn't know Spanish. I’m happy my daughter is learning Spanish. I was afraid she wasn't going to be able to speak to my mother or know what they were saying to her.” [Focus Group Interview]

The Spanish-speaking parents in this study also wanted their children to maintain their Spanish so that they could communicate with the grandparents. They also wanted them to maintain their culture and not forget their roots.

Parent A19: “El idioma español es necesario saber especialmente viviendo en Texas y en los Estados Unidos. Mis padres no hablan en inglés y yo quiero que hijo pueda platicar con ellos.”

[The Spanish language is necessary especially living in Texas and the United States. My parents don’t speak English and I want my son to be able to speak to them.” [Interview]
Parent A8: “Nosotros que venimos de familias hispanas es muy importante no olvidar nuestras raíces e inculcarle a nuestros hijos la riqueza del español. Se abren más caminos de oportunidades cuando una personal es bicultural.”

[Focus Group Interview]

[We who come from Latino families – it is very important not to forget our roots and instill in our children the richness of Spanish. More avenues of opportunity open up when you are bicultural.]

The nine Spanish dominant mothers expressed satisfaction with the dual language program because their home language and culture were validated through the program as in several studies including Au (2001); Banks and Banks (2003) and Valdes (1998).

All of the mothers perceived the program in a positive way. The English dominant mothers viewed the dual language program as a means to revive the Spanish language so that their children could communicate with their grandparents. The Spanish-dominant mothers viewed the dual language program as an opportunity to learn English and maintain their Spanish. In the next section I reiterate the Spanish-dominant mothers’ perceptions about how they benefited from the dual language program.

**Mothers Benefiting from the Dual Language Program**

Both sets of mothers felt they, as mothers, were benefiting from their children being in the dual language program. Each group had perceptions about the second language. For some, the benefit was learning a second language along with their child. For others, the benefit was developing and or improving their own language skills.
Eight of the eleven English-dominant mothers voiced that they were benefiting from the dual language program. They voiced that they were regaining the language they had lost growing up.

Parent A6: “Spanish was my first language so naturally I think everyone should know Spanish. I have to admit that I lost some of the Spanish by not using it. I am glad my son is in the program. I am regaining what I had lost by reading to him in Spanish.” [Interview]

Parent A5: “This program was not available to me as a child so I grew up exposed to Spanish but I never had a formal education in Spanish. This made it more difficult to learn later on because I have a hard time with the verb conjugations in Spanish. I feel like if I had learned Spanish at a young age, it would be a more natural part of me. At least now I can learn what I didn’t learn before along with my son.” [Interview]

Parent A3: “My son’s first year in the dual language program was incredible. He learned so much from it being his first year in the program. We all learned.” [Interview]

All nine of the Spanish dominant mothers said they were benefiting from the program learning along with their children.

Parent A18 “La maestra dice que debemos de leer si quiera veinte minutos todos los días con los niños. Yo le digo a mi hija que me lea en inglés así yo aprendo también. Las dos estamos aprendiendo al mismo tiempo.” [Interview]
[The teacher says we are supposed to read at least 20 minutes every day with our children. I tell my daughter to read to me in English that way I learn too. Both of us are learning at the same time.]

**Mothers’ Role in their Children’s Education**

To fully address the second research question, a sub-question was explored:

What perceptions do parents have of their role in the dual language program?

In response to this sub-question, both sets of mothers spoke about their perceptions regarding their own role in their child’s education and their involvement in their schools. Both the English and the Spanish-dominant mothers concur that they perceive their involvement as essential for their child’s success.

Ten of the eleven English-dominant mothers described their role in the school as falling into three categories. They felt that they needed to be visible in the school, to establish and maintain lines of communication with their children’s teachers and be role models for their children. Each parent discussed why these ways of participation were important and necessary.

Parent A10: “I really make an effort to get to know the teacher. I attend parent teacher conferences and I make sure I say hello to the principal. I walk my daughter to class every morning. I pick her up every day unless I have an emergency. I always ask the teacher if there is anything that she needs to call me. I go on field trips with the class and I volunteer to help with the book fair. I just want to be visible.” [Interview]
Ten of the eleven English-dominant mothers commented on wanting to be visible to the school staff, equating face-to-face contact as involvement supporting Scribner, Young and Pedroza (1999) study on parental involvement stating that mainstream involvement entails contact with school personnel with the perception that visibility translates into concern.

They also expressed the need to maintain communication as well as personal contact with teachers and staff. The English-dominant mothers discussed how important it was to have direct access to teachers. They also started an email list for communication among dual language mothers.

Parent A3: I keep an open line of communication with the teacher; I email her if I have a question. That’s the best way for me to communicate with her. We also started an email group among some of the mothers of the children in my son’s class. We communicate via email, if we have a question about something in the class, homework or just to invite them to birthday parties. I also help my son with his homework and I make sure my son has what he needs for school. [Focus Group Interview]

Six of the eleven English-dominant mothers in this study stated that they wanted to make an impression and that they wanted to model for their children how to be involved in their education.

Parent A9: I make sure my child sees me at the school; I want to be an example for her. I make sure she sees that I call the teacher and ask about her progress, that I communicate with her via email and I make sure to discuss school daily with my
daughter. I go to parent teacher conferences, PTA meetings and I help out at the school carnival - I take her with me and I make it a point to go on field trips with her class. [Focus Group Interview]

They wanted to communicate to their children what they had learned from their own mothers. These mothers expressed the desire to convey to their children the motivation to get a good education and to stay in school through college and graduate school just as they received from their own mothers.

Parent A9: My mother was very involved in making sure we graduated high school and graduated college. She participated as much as she could to make sure we succeeded in everything that we did. I want to do the same for my child. I am working on my MBA now. I hope I am being a good role model for my daughter. I want to show her that going to school is important. [Interview]

Eight of the eleven English-dominant mothers mentioned that at home they talk about college and graduate school as a way to motivate their children and show their high expectations. They also talked to their children about what they were learning in school to make sure they were being challenged academically.

Parent A12: “I think that the most important thing I do for my children is to listen to them. I ask about homework and what’s going on at school. I try to listen to see if any major issue surface whether it’s about classmates or the teachers. By talking and listening to them- showing interest- to me that’s the best way to get involved.” [Interview]
The English-dominant mothers indicated that they were very aware of what their child was doing in school and what work they brought home. They sat down with them to help them if they needed it. In the home, parental involvement and support expressed by the English-dominant mothers focused on helping their children succeed academically and being a good role model for them.

Similarly, the nine Spanish-dominant mothers commented that they were also involved in the education of their children. They related their involvement in the school to communicating with teachers by attending parent-teacher conferences.

Parent A13: “Trato de involucrarme en todos los aspectos de la educación de mis hijos. Les ayudo con sus tareas y estoy en comunicación constante con sus maestras, siempre mantengo una relación cordial especialmente cuando asisto a las conferencias de padres. Estoy para ayudarles en las áreas y destrezas donde tienen deficiencias o están teniendo dificultad.” [Focus Group Interview]

[I try to get involved in all aspects of the education of my children. I help them with their homework and I am in constant communication with their teachers, I always maintain a cordial relationship with them especially when I attend parent teacher conferences. I am there to help them in areas where they have deficiencies and skills or are having difficulty]

Both the Spanish-dominant mothers and the English-dominant mothers spoke about what education meant to them. I asked them to reflect on what education meant to them, their own schooling and how their parents participated in their school. The
responses showed varying degrees of involvement of their own parents in their children’s education.

The English-dominant mothers discussed how their parents showed their involvement in various ways.

Parent A4: “My mom and dad were not involved in my education at the school. They made sure I was ready for school. My mom made sure we had clean clothes, had breakfast in the morning and lunch ready for the day. They signed our report cards but didn't really ask questions. I had good grades because that's what was expected. I don't think my mom ever went to the school.” [Interview]

Parent A6: “My parents were very involved. They made it a point to meet my teacher and even though they didn't call her every day or see her every day I knew that if I got in trouble in school my teacher would call my parents.” [Interview]

In this study, five of the twenty mothers interviewed said their own mothers were very active and others said their mothers were not active at all. Some mothers served as volunteers thus their presence was very obvious on a daily basis.

Four of the nine Spanish-dominant mothers’ stated that their parents were present in the schools to perform duties that were expected of them such as sending food that was needed for the class.

Parent A14: “Mi mamá nos llevaba desayuno cuando era su turno. En México las mamás tienen que llevar comida para la escuela. Ella nos llevaba tortillas de maíz y frijoles con huevos. Casi no nos ayudaba con la tarea, vivía ocupada.” [Interview]
[My mom would take us breakfast to school when it was her turn. In Mexico the moms have to take food to the school. She would take us corn tortillas with beans and eggs. She hardly helped with homework, she was always busy.]

They believed that their parents were involved in their education by sending them to school, volunteering, helping them with their homework and making sure they were always in attendance.

Parent A17: “Me mandaba a la escuela todos los días, para ella no podía faltar solo si estaba enferma. Me ayudaban con las tareas y era voluntaria en la escuela.”

[Interview]

[She would send me to school every day, for her I could not miss unless I was sick. She would help me with homework and she volunteered at school.]

When both sets mothers discussed what kind of involvement they had with their children’s education at home, the mothers expressed that they supported, motivated and encouraged their children as was also evident in in Kling (2001) and Smith’s (2005) studies. In this study, the eleven English-dominant mothers briefly talked about their activities in the home. Seven of the nine Spanish-dominant mothers elaborated on how they supported and prepared their children for school

Parent A16: “Me aseguro de que tengan ropa limpia cuando los preparo para la escuela por la mañana. Aseguro de que ellos tengan su tarea y otras cosas que puedan necesitar para el día. Me aseguro de que desayunen y que se acuesten temprano en la noche para estar listo para el día siguiente. Voy a sus programas,
hablo con sus maestras, envío cosas cuando tienen fiestas y hablo con ellos sobre su día.” [Interview]

[I make sure they have clean clothes when I get them ready for school in the morning. I make sure they have their homework and other things they might need for the day. I make sure they eat breakfast and go to bed early at night to be ready for the next day. I go to their programs, I talk to their teachers, I send things when they have parties & I talk to them about their day.]

The Spanish dominant group of mothers felt that they were involved in their children’s education as much as they could, and they felt that what they did for their children at home was an important piece to their education. The data suggests that all nine Spanish-dominant mothers saw their activities at home as being an important part of their involvement in their children’s education as in Trumball, Rothstein-Fisch, Greenfield and Quiroz’s study (2001) which validates Latino parents different forms of parental involvement.

One area that was really important to all the participating mothers was helping their children at home with their homework, asking their children questions about what they were studying and providing additional resources to help them understand their homework and/or helping with organizational skills.

Nine of the eleven English dominant mothers stressed the importance of academics and by getting involved at home during the focus group discussions and the individual interviews. They expected to make a difference in helping their children set goals for their future.
Parent A4: “The time goes so fast in the afternoons. I make sure homework is done before my daughter takes out her iPad. It's hard for her to get off her games and do homework. So I have to make sure that she does her homework first.”

[Focus Group Interview]

These mothers felt that by putting aside their own responsibilities it would make a difference and they would reinforce their expectations by modeling their priorities to their children.

Parent A11: “I usually try to sit as much as I can with him when he's doing his homework. I like to see what they're doing in class so I ask him questions. Most of the time I let him do his homework and then I check it once he's done to make sure he's done it right.” [Focus Group Interview]

The Spanish dominant mothers also expressed many of the same sentiments. Six of the nine Spanish dominant mothers helped with homework and stressed the importance of also getting involved with their children at home. They voiced that they expected it would make a difference in their children’s education knowing they are involved.

Parent A8: “En mi caso, todos los días repaso la tarea con mi hijo/hija. Lo difícil es el tiempo, ya que el trabajo de las madres nos impide estar con los hijos, pero el tiempo que pasamos juntos lo valoramos y nos enfocamos en sus necesidades y educación. La calidad de tiempo es lo importante, y sobre todo buena actitud hacia la escuela.” [Focus Group Interview]

[For me, every day I review my son / daughter’s homework. What's difficult is finding time, work prevents mothers from being with our children, but the time we
spend together we value and focus on their needs and education. Quality time is important, and especially a good attitude towards school.]

Parent A18: “Trato de dedicarle un tiempo todos los días a mis hijos, no solo con las tareas escolares, sino también platicando con ellos y compartiendo hobbies y actividades especiales que les hagan sentir y saber que cuentan conmigo en todo lo que necesiten.” [Focus Group Interview]

[I try to spend some time every day to my children, not just homework, but also talking to them and sharing hobbies and special activities that make them feel and know that they can count on me for everything they might need.]

All twenty mothers stated they were involved in various aspects of their children’s education especially helping with homework as in Zarate’s (2007) study whose participants’ perception of parental involvement was to be involved in various aspects of their children’s homework.

The sections above covered research question two: What perceptions do Latino mothers have about dual language programs? Including the sub-question: What perceptions do Latino mothers have of their role in the dual language program?

Both sets of mothers articulated their perceptions of the dual language program, their children given the opportunity to validate the home language and maintain their culture, validate communicating with their grandparents and both sets of mothers benefiting from the program including their perceived role in their children’s education
Summary

Chapter Four presented the results of this study for each of the research questions. Question one examined parental expectations of a dual language program. Question two considered parental perceptions of a dual language program and their perceptions of their role in the dual language program.

Both English dominant and Spanish dominant mothers spoke about their expectations of a dual language program, and two major categories emerged from the data that answered research question one. Mothers conveyed what they wanted and what they expected for their children’s future and spoke about their personal, academic and professional goals for their children.

Three major categories arose from the data that resulted from research question two. Both sets of mothers’ spoke about their perceptions of the dual language education program and these mothers also talked about their own role in their child’s education and their involvement in the school. Both the English and the Spanish- dominant mothers also spoke about their perceptions of the dual language program as one that would give their children the opportunity to validate their home language and maintain their culture. They perceived that both the mothers and the children were benefiting from the dual language program.

Chapter Five gives a brief summary of the study. It examines conclusions and implications for practice. It also suggests further research on the topic of dual language education.
CHAPTER 5 – DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this research study was to examine Latina mothers’ expectations and perceptions about dual language education in the Rio Grande Valley. This study investigated the expectations and perceptions expressed by mothers whose children were enrolled in a dual language program. This study also sought to understand how mothers viewed the dual language program and their own goals for their children. This chapter includes a brief overview of the study, a discussion of the findings presented in chapter four and the conclusions that were drawn from those findings. Based on this study’s findings, included in this chapter is also a set of implications for practice and further research organized by the main two questions.

RQ1: What expectations do Latina mothers have about dual language education?

RQ2: What perceptions do Latina mothers have about dual language programs?

- What perceptions do Latina Mothers have of their role in the dual language program?

This study explored the expectations and perceptions of twenty Latina mothers. The methodology that was used in this study was qualitative inquiry. Twenty Latina mothers agreed to be individually interviewed. Eleven English dominant mothers and nine Spanish dominant mothers were interviewed individually. The interviews with all the participants consisted primarily of open-ended questions. The objective was to have mothers talk about their child’s education and their own involvement and participation in
their child’s education. The mothers’ experiences in school with the Spanish language and their own ideas about the dual language program were also explored through open-ended questions. The answers to these questions provided insight into how the Latina mothers participated in the academic success of their children. From the twenty interviews, two focus groups were formed, a Spanish group of nine Latina mothers and an English group of eleven Latina mothers, based on the mother’s language preference.

The study took place in a public school in South Texas in the Rio Grande Valley. The school began a dual language program in the 2012-2013 school year with pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classes. The following year first grade was added to the number of classes offering a dual language program. In this study the dual language classes combined English language learners (ELLs) and English dominant students. The existing literature on dual language education emphasizes the goals of bilingualism, biliteracy, and a well-designed dual language program (Cloud et al., 2000; Freeman, Freeman & Mercuri, 2005; Lindholm-Leary, 2003). The literature is also clear about the benefits of a dual language education (Thomas & Collier, 2002) in terms of academic achievement for both English speakers and ELLs and the importance of parental involvement for student success (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997; Pena, 2000).

The findings of this study revealed that the Latina mothers’ spoke highly of the dual language program and considered themselves to be involved in their children’s education. They wanted to be involved in their children’s education as much as any other parent yet the forms of involvement they chose may not be among those typically expected or observed by schools and teachers in many communities as emphasized in Delgado-Gaitan’s study (2004).
Discussion

The data from this study produced five predominant themes that the twenty Latina mothers spoke about when asked about the dual language program. Two major themes emerged from research question one:

1) Professional goals for their children.
2) Goals of the dual language program.

Three major themes arose from research question two. All twenty Latina mothers spoke about their perceptions of the dual language program that included the following:

1) Opportunity to validate the home language and maintain their culture.
2) Mothers benefiting from the dual language program.
3) Mothers’ role in their children’s education and their involvement in school.

The findings show Latina mothers’ expectations and perceptions included their children being able to read, write and speak in both English and Spanish. Meanwhile, in the process the children would gain a deep appreciation for their culture. A discussion of the findings follows.

According to both groups of Latina mothers, bilingualism is one of the keys for their children’s success. Both sets of mothers define bilingualism as learning a second language. These mothers see bilingualism as a way for their children to preserve their heritage language as well as validate it and most importantly as a way to communicate with their grandparents. In Farruggio’s (2010) study, the parents also expressed their desire for their children to maintain and/or develop Spanish, which is their language. They voiced their anxiety towards losing Spanish and along with that the ability of
intergenerational communication. This study also coincides with Craig’s (1996) findings about the Spanish-dominant parents. Craig writes that the Latino parents view dual language as a way to maintain their heritage language while learning English. Likewise in this study, the mothers wanted their children to learn Spanish to communicate with grandparents. Vygotsky (1978) explains that language serves as a tool accessible to a child and is used for social interaction. The participating mothers’ views in this study are aligned with Vygotsky’s claims, that in order to communicate and interact with relatives who only speak Spanish, the home language, children must also be able to express themselves in that language. They also perceived and expected that bilingualism would better prepare their children for attending college.

The Latina mothers voiced their desires for their children to attend college and/or attaining better employment than they themselves had been able to attain; further connecting the direct relationship of knowing two languages. In this study 80% of the mothers had received a high school diploma, attended college or graduated from college. Compared to the statistics presented by Gándara and Contreras (2009), these mothers had a higher level of education than other Latinas in the United States, which is not the norm. Gándara and Contreas (2009) contend that Latina mothers are the least formally educated group among other ethnic groups of mothers. Furthermore, they add that because they did not graduate from high school or attend college they more likely not to encourage their children to attend college, which is not the case in this study. The mothers in this study who attended college and graduated from high school want their children to attain the same level of education as they did or go beyond. These mothers compare to the parents in Spera, Wentzel, and Matto’s (2009) study where they examined parental aspirations
for their children’s educational attainment in relation to ethnicity African American, Asian, Caucasian, and Latinos they also expected and aspired for their children to go to college, “parents of all ethnic and educational levels have high educational aspirations for their children” (p. 1150).

By ensuring that their children are bilingual and biliterate both sets of mothers in this study expect that their children will be competitive in the future by attending college and having better job opportunities. These mothers’ expectations were very similar to Craig’s (1996) study. In Craig’s (1996) survey on parental attitudes toward bilingualism, Craig found that one of the main reasons the English-dominant parents chose a dual language program was for the enhanced career opportunities their children would have in the future. Both in this study and in Craig’s, the parents state that being bilingual will increase their children’s employment potential.

My findings also revealed that both sets of mothers expected the dual language program to help their children in the future. Inasmuch as Spanish-dominant mothers insisted that English is what their children need to be successful in school and in the workplace, my findings also revealed that the Spanish-dominant mothers pointed to professions that needed two languages and where their children could help those that didn’t speak English. The English-dominant mothers did not emphasize the English at all. They knew that their children know the English language and did not fear that learning Spanish at the same time would compromise it. They did refer to their children having a competitive edge by knowing Spanish, which is needed for the workplace and also for increased global opportunities. They did not mention that their children could help someone who didn’t speak English or Spanish. Both sets of mothers voiced that their
children were learning a second language. They were positive about the program and were eager to recommend it to other parents. Although some parents were English dominant and some Spanish dominant, they shared the Spanish language and culture at different levels yet they valued it and did not want it to end with their children.

The findings in this study showed that both sets of mothers stated that they were also benefiting from the dual language program. The English-dominant mothers voiced that they were benefiting from the dual language program by redeveloping or improving their own Spanish skills by helping their children with their Spanish homework. The Spanish-dominant mothers expressed that they were learning English. They felt that they were improving their verbal and writing skills in English by helping their children with their English homework. The school helped by providing materials such as newsletters in English and Spanish and the teachers’ notes and homework instructions were provided in both languages encouraging parent participation and involvement.

Henderson and Berla (1994) reviewed and analyzed eighty-five studies that documented the comprehensive benefits of parent involvement in children's education. Their study shows that parent involvement activities that are effectively planned and well implemented result in substantial benefits to children and parents. Furthermore, Olsen and Fuller (2008) contend that parents are more confident in their parenting and decision-making skills as they increase their interaction and discussion with their children. They are more responsive and sensitive to their children's social, emotional, and intellectual developmental needs. In addition, they state that when parents are aware of what their children are learning in school they are more likely to help them at home.
The findings from this study show that both sets of mothers stressed their committed involvement with their children and their children’s education although there were nuances in the ways the mothers carried their involvement. The mothers in this study demonstrated a deep commitment to their children. Furthermore these results revealed that they volunteered at school as much as possible and that they especially spent time on educational activities at home.

The outcomes in this study conveyed that the English-dominant mothers expressed that they needed to be visible, establish and maintain lines of communication with the teachers and be role models for their children. My findings also revealed that these mothers stayed abreast of their children’s day-to-day lessons to make sure they were being challenged. This study also revealed that the Spanish-dominant mothers stated that they were involved in their children’s education and were also physically present in the school. They also related their involvement as staying in communication with the teachers via parent teacher conferences. Both sets of mothers talked about their own parents’ involvement in their education and how they hoped to emulate the same involvement. The English-dominant mothers quickly touched on their activities at home while the Spanish-dominant mothers detailed how they supported and prepared their children for school. The results of this study coincided with Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) who state that parents believe that their involvement will make a positive difference in their children’s education. Furthermore they contend that there are different levels and degrees of parental involvement. Ngeow (1999), reinforced Hoover-Dempsy and Sandler’s findings contending that an accurate predictor of a child’s academic achievement is the extent to which the child’s family creates an environment where
learning is encouraged, communicates high, but reasonable expectations, and becomes involved in the school and the community.

Conclusions

The ultimate goal of the mothers involved in this study enrolling their children in a dual language program was to build on their child’s foundation of knowledge in order to challenge and enrich their children for a brighter future. English and Spanish dominant mothers were pleased with the dual language program at their children’s elementary school. More specifically, both groups of mothers were satisfied with the Dual Language Program because it preserves each child’s native language while making them more diverse individuals.

The mothers in this study were very similar despite the language they preferred to use. They all wanted what was best for their children. They expected their children to learn a second language, to attend college and to be better prepared for their future. Their perception of their children being bilingual meant that being bilingual would make their life better than their own and that they would have a better future.

The mothers in this study believed that a dual language education would be the value added part of their education, providing an enriched curriculum and the acquisition of a second language, either English or Spanish. These results were very similar to Garcia and Jensen’s (2007) study who asserted that dual language education holds promises of academic, social and economic gains for students, schools, and the larger society. The students in their study, as in mine, who are in the dual language program are given a
multitude of tangible cognitive, academic and social advantages through the unique opportunities such as validating and maintaining their culture.

In this study the school followed the Gómez & Gómez Dual Language Enrichment Model (1999) and established a dual language program as a means of meeting the goal of bilingualism and biliteracy for both Spanish and English dominant students. It has also evolved as an enrichment program to meet the desires of English dominant parents for their children and a means to validate the Spanish language that the Spanish-speaking parents desired for their children. These goals are aligned with the expectations of participating mothers. All of the mothers agreed that there would be better opportunities and benefits if their children in the future if they were bilingual. They would have an advantage over others who were not bilingual when it came to getting better jobs. They would be more marketable as far as employment is concerned, not only in the city they grew up in but in the state and across the country.

Some unexpected goals of the program expressed by the mothers participating in the study included their own benefit of learning Spanish or English along with their children. Another unexpected goal was helping the parents become more involved in their child’s education. These findings, along with those of others, such as Knopf and Swick (2008), reveal many parents are ready to move beyond traditional ideas of parental involvement to a higher level that fosters a collaborative relationship between school and home. The next step is for parents and schools to work together in order to better understand how to build a united relationship to expand involvement and open the door to true teamwork between parents, teachers, and students. We need to continue to examine
and monitor dual language programs that are set up to meet the needs of English language learners and Latino students who are English dominant.

**Implications for Practice**

Based on the results of my study, I recommend that when a school district is contemplating implementing a dual language program, there must be efforts to inform the parents of the goals of the dual language program. The mothers in this study expected that through the dual language program their children would learn a second language, maintain their heritage language, and be afforded an enriched curriculum by learning in two languages. I recommend that school administrators and teachers offer trainings to also help parents understand the implementation of the dual language model and how it unfolds throughout the year. The following is a proposal of some mini-sessions on the dual language program specific to the Gómez & Gómez Dual Language Enrichment Model (1999):

a. Language of the day and subjects taught in which language.

b. Learning in Bilingual pairs and groups.

c. Specialized content area vocabulary and enrichment activities.

d. Bilingual learning centers.

For schools not using the Gómez & Gómez Dual Language Enrichment Model (1999) I recommend the following mini-sessions:

a. Goals of Dual Language Education.

b. Using English and/or Spanish – when?

c. Bilingual enrichment activities.
These sessions will serve as a viable venue for both parents and teachers to establish rapport, offer parents the opportunity to learn about the dual language program and to communicate with parents about their children’s progress. In this study, although all the mothers were bilingual, they were either English dominant or Spanish dominant and had a language preference. I recommend that parents be separated in the two language groups for the mini sessions so that the information is disseminated in their dominant language or language preference and is fully understood by both sets of parents.

The mothers in this study had the perception that the dual language program would give their children the opportunity to validate their home language and culture. My recommendation is that schools can formally validate families’ cultures by hosting “meriendas” [afternoon tea or picnic] so children can walk their parents through the daily routine using the appropriate language connected to the activity. The teachers can also highlight Spanish-speaking countries and invite parents to participate in a Saturday, Carnaval de Países [Carnival of Countries] giving them the opportunity to talk about their own country or the ancestral country. Most importantly, schools can create parent committees for each of the above to help with planning, implementation and follow-up.

Another perception of the participating mothers in this study was that they benefited from the dual language program as well. The English dominant mothers were learning Spanish along with their children or it served as a review for them. The Spanish dominant mothers also benefited by learning English or were given the opportunity to use the English language more. I would recommend that the schools create literacy centers in both languages to help parents learn or improve a second language and formalize the learning experiences that were already taking place at home. The administrators can
enlist the help of volunteers, district parent liaisons or teachers from the secondary campuses to teach. These teachers would collaborate with the dual language teachers to align the instruction with the goals of the dual language program.

In this study participating mothers were involved in their children’s education. They were visible in the school and they established and maintained the lines of communication with the teachers. I would encourage school administrators that are implementing a dual language program to help the teachers form stronger relationships with the dual language parents. This will lead to better and more frequent communication with parents including conferences and newsletters in both English and Spanish. Abe Feuerstein (2000) defined parent involvement as activities encompassing a wide range of behaviors, ranging from discussing school with children to attending parent-teacher conferences. School administrators and teachers need to encourage parents to become involved in whatever capacity they feel most comfortable in by informing them that there are different levels of involvement and all levels are equally important. This understanding will provide parents’ guidance for the best way to capitalize on their children’s phases of learning a second language and the academic development through the dual language program.

Although the study took place in one school district and in one school in that district, these recommendations are applicable to other districts or schools contemplating establishing a dual language program. Any school must make sure that the parents understand the goals of the dual language program and be a part of the process (Gándara & Contreras, 2009). Basic information about second language acquisition theory can be disseminated well before the parents register their children for the dual language
program, and parental involvement in the program should be constantly encouraged. Parents will be the best advocates for promoting the Dual Language Programs and be positive about it if they understand the program and its goals (Linholm-Leary, 2001).

**Recommendations for Further Research**

This study explored Latina mothers’ expectations and perceptions of a dual language program. Future research is needed to continuously learn how parents make educational decisions, what they expect from and how they perceive their children’s participation in a dual language program. Parents are partners to schools and vital not only to children’s education but to the improvement and support of dual language programs.

Since this study was limited to Latina mothers whose children were in the dual language program from one school in the school district it would be interesting to compare parental expectations and perceptions of a dual language program to other schools in the same district. Conducting a similar investigation but on a larger scale, such as a survey study with a larger participant pool from the additional three schools in the district who have since adopted a dual language program, may allow for more generalizability of the findings.

It would also be interesting to conduct a longitudinal study of these parents, especially if programs expand from Kindergarten to middle school and even further. One relevant purpose could be to investigate how parental attitudes towards a dual language education change as students’ progress to higher grade levels. Another purpose could be to investigate how parents support their children in higher-grade levels.
Lastly, this study focused on families who were fully supportive of a dual language education, who could greatly involve themselves in their child’s education and felt that dual language education was working for their children. However, families who left these programs after their first year or thought it did not work for their children merit investigation. It may benefit school districts to hear from parents who may feel disenfranchised in dual language programs or who felt their child did not do well in a dual language program.

**Summary**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the Latina mothers’ expectations and perceptions of a dual language program in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. This study also sought to understand how mothers viewed the dual language program and how it would help them realize their own future goals for their children.

The findings of this study showed that participating mothers supported the dual language program involving themselves in their children’s education so they could ensure their children’s success in school. These Latina mothers also wanted their children to maintain their heritage language to ensure cross-generational communication. Latina mothers wanted what is best for their children and believed that a dual language education would be the catalyst for better opportunities for their children in the future.
REFERENCES


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Farrington v. Tokushige, 273 U.S. 284 (1927)


Meyer v. Nebraska, 262 U.S. 390 (1923)


Appendix A

Mrs. Elizabeth Maldonado, Principal
Lee Means Elementary
1201 E. Loop 499
Harlingen, Texas 78550

Dear Mrs. Maldonado,

My name is Rosie Cobarrubias and I am a doctoral student in Curriculum & Instruction with an emphasis in Bilingual Education at The University of Texas at Brownsville. My dissertation research focuses on the motivation parents have for choosing a dual language enrichment education for their child.

For my dissertation study, I plan to send out a survey to all parents who currently have a child enrolled in the dual language immersion program at your school. I will then conduct an in depth interview and focus groups with those parents who are willing to participate in the study.

I was hoping you could assist me by sending out the contact information letter with your dual language students and have them return it in the envelope provided to their respective teachers. I will then collect all the envelopes from your teachers and contact the parents who are willing to participate in the study.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns you might have regarding my study.

E-mail: rosie.cobarrubias@hcisd.org
Phone: 956-454-1726

I greatly appreciate your time and do sincerely hope to hear from you.

Rosie Cobarrubias

Ed.D candidate in Curriculum & Instruction
The University of Texas at Brownsville
Appendix B

Parents of Dual Language Students
Lee Means Elementary
1201 E. Loop 499
Harlingen, Texas 78550

Dear Parents,

My name is Rosie Cobarrubias and I am a doctoral student in Curriculum & Instruction with an emphasis in Bilingual Education at The University of Texas at Brownsville. My dissertation research focuses on the motivation parents have for choosing dual language enrichment education for their child.

For my dissertation study, I plan to send out a demographic questionnaire, conduct in depth interviews and focus groups with parents who currently have a child enrolled in the dual language enrichment program at Lee Means and are willing to participate in the study. The study has not been approved by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Texas Brownsville yet. This approval should be granted in the summer; therefore I need contact information before the end of the school year so I can contact you in the summer. Providing your contact information does not make you a participant in the study.

Please assist me by returning this letter with your child to his/her respective teacher.

**You are not obligated to participate in the study because you are providing contact information.**

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns you might have regarding my study.

E-mail: rosie.cobarrubias@hcisd.org                  Phone: 956-454-1726

I greatly appreciate your time and do sincerely hope to hear from you.

Rosie Cobarrubias

Ed.D candidate in Curriculum & Instruction
The University of Texas at Brownsville

Your signature: ___________________________ Date: _______________

Your Name (printed): __________________________

How may the researcher, Rosie Cobarrubias, contact you to send you a demographic questionnaire?

___ By E-mail: e-mail address __________________________
Estimados padres de familia,

Mi nombre es Rosie Cobarrubias y soy una estudiante de doctorado en Currículo e Instrucción con énfasis en Educación Bilingüe de la Universidad de Texas en Brownsville. Mi tesis doctoral se centra en los padres y su motivación para la elección de una educación de enriquecimiento del lenguaje dual para su hijo/a.

En mi estudio de tesis, tengo la intención de enviar un cuestionario demográfico, y entrevistar individualmente y en grupo a los padres que actualmente tienen un niño/a inscrito en el programa de enriquecimiento de lenguaje dual en la escuela Lee Means y que estén dispuestos a participar en el estudio.

El estudio no ha sido aprobado por la Junta de Revisión Institucional de la Universidad de Texas Brownsville todavía. Esta aprobación debe conseguirse en el verano y por eso necesito su información antes de que el año escolar termine para poder ponerme en contacto con usted en el verano. El proporcionar su información para contactarlo no lo convierte en participante en el estudio.

Favor de regresar esta carta con su hijo/a si es tan amable.

**Usted no está obligado a participar en el estudio solo por enviar su información de contacto.**

No dude en ponérse en contacto conmigo por cualquier duda o pregunta que pueda tener acerca de mi estudio.

E-mail: rosie.cobarrubias@hcisd.org       Teléfono: 956-454-1726

Estoy muy agradecido por su tiempo y sinceramente espero tener noticias de usted.

Rosie Cobarrubias

Candidata a Doctora en Educación en Currículo e Instrucción
La Universidad de Texas en Brownsville
Su firma: _____________________________________ Fecha: ______________________

Su nombre (impreso): ______________________________________

¿Cómo puede la investigadora, Rosie Cobarrubias, ponerse en contacto con usted para enviarle un cuestionario demográfico?

___ Por E-mail: e-mail _________________________________

___ Domicilio: _________________________________
Appendix C

2012-2013 Dual Language Parents’ Study Consent Form

You are being asked to take part in a research study conducted by Rosalinda A. Cobarrubias, doctoral student in conjunction with the University of Texas at Brownsville. You are being asked to take part in this study because you have chosen to enroll your child in a dual language enrichment program. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to take part in the study.

What is the study about: The purpose of this study is to identify the factors that influence the decision making process of Latino parents who chose to enroll their children in a dual language program.

What you will be asked to do: If you agree to participate in this study, I will send you a demographic questionnaire. Then, I will review your answers from the questionnaire and possibly select you to be part of the rest of the study. I will use parts of your questionnaire answers as I report on my study. In addition, you will be asked to participate in a one on one interview, lasting no more than 1½ hours, to talk about specific aspects of your decision to enroll your child in a dual language immersion program. The semi-structured interview will help to understand how Hispanic parents’ educational goals, beliefs and values about education, as well as dual language program perceptions and expectations impact the educational decisions they make for their children. The interview will also be tape-recorded and then transcribed. You may also be asked to participate in a focus group consisting of 8 other parents who also enrolled their children in a dual language program.

Answers will be confidential: The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report made public I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you. Research records will be kept in a locked file. I will be the only person who will have access to your records.

Taking part is voluntary: Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. If you decide to take part in the study you are free to withdraw at any time. You may skip any questions that you do not want to answer. If you decide to skip some of the questions or choose to stop participating in this study, it will not affect your current or future relationship with the researcher.

Risk and Benefits: I do not anticipate any risks to you for participating in this study other than those encountered in day-to-day life. There are also no benefits to you, although the results of the study may benefit other parents in their decision making process to enroll their child in a dual language program. I hope to learn more about what has helped you decide to enroll your child in a dual language program.

If you have any questions: You should feel free to ask questions now or at any time during the study. I will be the only researcher taking part in this study. If you have any questions, you can contact me at 956-454-1726 anytime and/or my advisor Dr. Alma
Rodriguez  at 956-882-7657 or via email alma.rodriguez@utb.edu. I will discuss the study with my dissertation committee members including Dr. Alma Rodriguez, Dr. Sandra Musanti, and Dr. Laura Jewitt, but I will not divulge any personal or identifiable information about you to anyone else. If you have any questions please ask them, before signing this document. If you have any questions later, after signing, you may contact me personally via e-mail at acobar75@aol.com or by phone at 956-454-1726. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a subject in this study you may contact the Chair of the UTB IRB-Human Subjects at (956) 882-8888 (Dr. Mathew Johnson) or the Research Integrity and Compliance Office at (956) 882-7731 (Lynne Depeault). You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent: I have read the above information, and have received answers to any questions I asked. By signing below I am here by providing my consent to take part in this research study.

Your signature: __________________________________Date: ___________________

Your Name (printed): __________________________________________

This consent form will be kept by the researcher for at least three years beyond the end of the study and was approved by the IRB on December 6, 2013.
Forma de consentimiento del estudio 2012-2013 de padres de lenguaje dual

Se le pide que participe en un estudio de investigación realizado por Rosalinda A. Cobarrubias, estudiante de doctorado de la Universidad de Texas en Brownsville. Se le pide que participe en este estudio porque usted ha decidido inscribir a su hijo/a en un programa de enriquecimiento del lenguaje dual. Por favor, lea esta forma cuidadosamente y haga cualquier pregunta que usted pueda tener antes de aceptar participar en el estudio.

¿Sobre qué es el estudio?: El propósito de este estudio es identificar los factores que influyeron en el proceso de los padres latinos al inscribir a sus hijos en un programa de lenguaje dual.

Lo que se le pedirá que haga: Si usted acepta participar en este estudio, le enviaré un cuestionario demográfico. Después, voy a revisar sus respuestas del cuestionario y, posiblemente, usted sea elegido para ser parte del resto del estudio. Voy a utilizar partes de sus respuestas del cuestionario como reporte en mi estudio. Además, se le pide que participe en una entrevista uno a uno, que no durará más de una hora y media, para hablar de los aspectos específicos de su decisión al inscribir a su hijo/a en un programa de lenguaje dual. La entrevista será semi-estructurada y ayudará a comprender las metas educativas de los padres hispanos, creencias y valores acerca de la educación, así como las percepciones del programa dual y las expectativas que impactan las decisiones educativas que hacen los padres por sus hijos. La entrevista también será grabada y luego transcrita. También se le puede pedir que participe en un grupo de discusión formado por otros 8 padres que también inscribieron a sus hijos en el programa de lenguaje dual.

Las respuestas serán confidenciales: Los datos obtenidos de este estudio serán privados. En cualquier tipo de informe hecho público no voy a incluir ninguna información que permita identificar las personas. Los datos de la investigación se mantendrán en un archivo bajo llave. Voy a ser la única persona que tendrá acceso a estos archivos.

La participación es voluntaria: La participación en este estudio es completamente voluntaria. Si usted decide participar en el estudio es libre de retirarse en cualquier momento. Cualquier pregunta que no quiera contestar será libre de no responder. Si decide omitir algunas de las preguntas u optar por dejar de participar en este estudio, no afectará su relación actual o futura con la investigadora.

Riesgos y Beneficios: No se anticipa ningún riesgo para usted por participar en este estudio que no sean las que se encuentran en la vida diaria. Los resultados del estudio pueden beneficiar a otros padres que quieran matricular a sus niños en un programa de
lenguaje dual. Espero poder aprender más acerca de lo que le ha ayudado a decidir a usted para que su niño/a participe en un programa de lenguaje dual.

Si usted tiene alguna pregunta: Usted debe sentirse libre de hacer preguntas ahora o en cualquier momento durante el estudio. Seré la única investigadora que participa en este estudio. Si usted tiene alguna pregunta, puede contactarme al 956-454-1726 en cualquier momento y / o mi asesora Dra. Alma Rodríguez, a 956-882-76570 por correo electrónico alma.rodriguez @ utb.edu. Voy a discutir el estudio con los miembros de mi comité de tesis entre ellos la Dra. Alma Rodríguez, Dra. Sandra Musanti, y la Dra. Laura Jewitt, pero no voy a divulgar ninguna información personal o identificable sobre usted a nadie. Si usted tiene alguna pregunta por favor hágala, antes de firmar este documento. Si usted tiene alguna pregunta más tarde, después de la firma, puede ponerse en contacto conmigo personalmente a través de correo electrónico a acabar75@aol.com o por teléfono al 956-454-1726. Si usted tiene alguna pregunta o inquietud acerca de sus derechos como participante de este estudio puede comunicarse con el Presidente de la IRB UTB-Sujetos Humanos al (956) 882-8888 (Dr. Mathew Johnson) o a la Oficina de Cumplimiento a la Integridad de la Investigación (956) 882-7731 (Lynne Depeault). Se le entregará una copia de este formulario para que usted la guarde.

Declaración de Consentimiento: He leído la información anterior y he recibido respuestas a las preguntas que hice. Al firmar abajo estoy dando mi consentimiento para participar en este estudio de investigación.

Su firma: _____________________________________ Fecha: _________________

Su nombre (impreso): ________________________________________

Este formulario de consentimiento se mantendrá por el investigador por tres años después del final del estudio y que fue aprobado por la IRB el 6 de diciembre de 2013.
Appendix D

Demographic Questionnaire
Dual Language Parents
2012-2013

Please take a moment to answer the following questions.

1. Name: __________________________________________

2. My child’s name: ________________________________ Child’s Grade: _____

3. What is your ethnic background?
   _____ Hispanic/Latino
   _____ Caucasian/Anglo
   _____ African-American
   _____ Asian-American
   _____ Other ________________

4. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?
   _____ Elementary School
   _____ Junior High/Middle School
   _____ High School or GED
   _____ Community college or Vocational School
   _____ 4 Year college/University Degree
   _____ Professional Degree/Graduate School

5. What is your native language? ______________________

6. What language is most often used in your home? ________________

7. Have you studied and/or do you speak a foreign language?
   __________________________________________________

8. Have you lived and/or studied and/or worked abroad? If so, where?
   __________________________________________________

9. How high is your yearly household income?
   _____ under $25,000.00
   _____ $25,000.00 - $50,000.00
   _____ $50,000.00 - $75,000.00
   _____ $75,000.00 - $100,000.00
   _____ $100,000.00 and above
10. Do you agree to be part of the study which would entail a short face to face interview and possibly participation in a focus group?

_____ Yes

_____ No
Apéndice D
Cuestionario demográfico
Los padres de lenguaje dual
2012-2013

Por favor tome un momento para responder a las siguientes preguntas.

1. Nombre: ______________________________________________
2. El nombre de mi hijo/a: __________________________________

Grado del niño/a: _____
3. ¿Cuál es su origen étnico?
   _____ Hispano / Latino
   _____ Europeo / Anglo
   _____ Afroamericano
   _____ Asiático-Americano
   _____ Otro ________________

4. ¿Cuál es el nivel educativo más alto que ha completado?
   _____ Escuela Primaria
   _____ Secundaria / Escuela
   _____ High School o GED
   _____ Colegio comunitario o escuela vocacional
   _____ Colegio de 4 años / Título Universitario
   _____ Título Profesional / Escuela de Postgrado

5. ¿Cuál es su lengua materna? ________________________
6. ¿Qué idioma se utiliza más a menudo en su casa? ________________
7. ¿Ha estudiado y / o usted habla un idioma extranjero? ________________

8. Ha vivido y / o estudiado y / o trabajado en el extranjero? Si es así, ¿dónde?

9. ¿Qué tan alto es su ingreso anual?
   _____ Menos de $ 25,000.00
   _____ $ 25,000.00 - $ 50,000.00
   _____ $ 50,000.00 - $ 75,000.00 $
   _____ $ 75,000.00 - $ 100,000.00
   _____ Más de $ 100,000.00

10. ¿Está de acuerdo en formar parte del estudio que implicaría una breve entrevista cara a cara y posiblemente una entrevista de grupo?
    _____ Sí  _____ No
Appendix E

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND CORRESPONDING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

What expectations and perceptions do Hispanic parents have about a dual language education in the lower Rio Grande Valley?

RQ1: What expectations do Hispanic parents have about a dual language education?

- Tell me why you decided to enroll your child in a dual language program.
- Why do you feel it was important for you to choose a school that teaches Spanish?
- What do you believe are the goals of the dual language program?
- What do you think your child will be able to do by the time he/she finishes six years in dual language?
- What are your concerns about your child in a dual language program?

RQ2: What perceptions do Hispanic parents have about dual language education?

- Tell me about your child’s first year in the dual language education program.
- Tell me about some of the things your child did this first year that indicted he/she was in a dual language program.
- Tell me about your child’s second year in the dual language education program.
  
  - How is the second year different than the first year?
Tell me about some of the things they are learning in class.

- What would you tell a parent interested in the dual language program?
- Tell me about your own school experiences.
  - How is your child’s school experience different compared to yours?
  - How did your own school experience influence your schooling decisions for your child?
- Tell me about your feelings towards the Spanish language.
- What experiences have you had with Spanish prior to enrolling your child in the dual language program?
- Tell me how being bilingual or not being bilingual has or has not affected you in life?
- What does parent participation mean to you?
  a. How did your parents participate in your education?
  b. How are you involved in your child’s education?
Apéndice E

Preguntas de investigación y preguntas de la entrevista CORRESPONDIENTES

¿Cuáles son las expectativas y percepciones de los padres hispanos sobre la educación de lenguaje dual en el Valle del Río Grande?

RQ1: ¿Qué expectativas tienen los padres hispanos sobre la educación de lenguaje dual?

- ¿Dime, porque decidiste matricular a tu niño/niña en el programa de lenguaje dual?
- ¿Por qué crees que es importante escoger una escuela que ensena español para ti?
- ¿Qué crees que son las metas de un programa de lenguaje dual?
- ¿Qué piensas que tu niña/nño va poder hacer en seis años en el programa de lenguaje dual?
- ¿Cuáles son tus preocupaciones de tu niño/niña en el programa de lenguaje dual?

RQ2: ¿Qué percepciones tienen los padres hispanos sobre la educación de lenguaje dual?

- Platícame sobre el primer año en el programa de lenguaje dual de tu niño/nina.
- Platícame de las cosas que hacia tu hijo/hija en el primer año que indicaba que era su primer año en el programa de lenguaje dual.
- Platícame sobre el segundo año en el programa de lenguaje dual.
  ○ ¿Cómo es diferente el segundo año al primer año?
- Platícame sobre las cosas que están aprendiendo en el salón.
- ¿Qué le dirías a un padre interesado en el programa de lenguaje dual?

- Platícame sobre tus experiencias propias en la escuela.
  - ¿Cómo es diferente la experiencia escolar de tu niño/niña comparado a la tuya?
  - ¿Cómo influyeron tus experiencias escolares las decisiones escolares que tomaste para tu niño/niña?

- ¿Cuáles son tus sentimientos hacia el idioma español?

- ¿Qué experiencias ha tenido el español antes de inscribir a su hijo en el programa de enriquecimiento del lenguaje dual?

- ¿Cómo ha afectado su vida el ser bilingüe o no ser bilingüe?

- ¿Qué significa participación de los padres para ti?

- ¿Cómo participaron tus padres en tu educación?

- ¿Cómo estás envuelto en la educación de tu niño/niña?
Appendix F

Focus Group English - Questionnaire

1. Tell me what the word education mean to you and/or education.

2. Tell me about your role in your child's education.

3. Tell me about what you envision for your child's future.

4. Tell me what does parental involvement mean to you?

5. Tell me how you help your child with schoolwork or in general.

6. Tell me why is it important for your child to learn or maintain Spanish.
Apéndice F
Grupo de Enfoque – Español Cuestionario

1. Dime, ¿qué significa la palabra educación para usted y/o educación.

2. Hábleme de su papel en la educación de su hijo.

3. Háblame de lo que usted imagina para el futuro de su hijo.

4. Dime, ¿qué significa la participación de padres para usted.

5. Dime cómo ayuda a su hijo/a con las tareas escolares o en general.

6. Dime por qué es importante para que su hijo aprenda o mantenga el español.