Family Literacy in Context

Exploring the compatibility of a family literacy program

with children's homes and schools

Eke Krijnen

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Thuisgeletterdheid in context:
Een verkenning van de aansluiting tussen een ouder-kindprogramma,
gezinnen en scholen

Proefschrift

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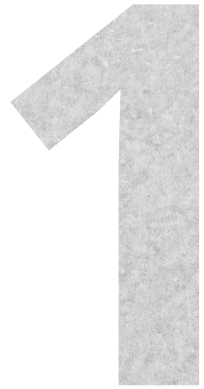Prof. dr. R. Keizer

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General Introduction

In the Netherlands, some children enter school with highly developed emergent literacy skills whereas others do not (Roeleveld, Driessen, Ledoux, Cuppen, & Meyer, 2011; Veen, Van Der Veen, Heurten & Paas, 2013). A major factor in explaining early differences in children's literacy development is the degree of literacy stimulation children receive at home (Burgess, Hecht, & Loningan, 2002; Niklas, Nguyen, Cloney, Tayler, & Adams, 2016; Niklas & Schneider, 2017; Park, 2008). At home, even very young children may explore literate materials, such as books, leaflets, newspapers, and notes. They may observe other family members use literate materials, for example while reading books, writing shopping lists, and browsing through a newspaper. Most importantly, older family members may engage children in home literacy activities, such as shared book reading, storytelling, singing songs and pointing at and talking about environmental print. All of these experiences are part of children's home literacy environments (Purcell-Gates, 1996; Phillips & Lonigan, 2009; Teale, 1986; Van Steensel, 2006; Wood, 2002). The home literacy environment is an important predictor of children's literacy development: children with rich home literacy environments tend to develop stronger literacy skills than children with more limited home literacy environments (Burgess et al., 2002; Niklas et al., 2016).

In the course of children's school trajectories, the Dutch educational system does not seem able to repair early differences in children's literacy development (Gubbels, Van Langen, Maassen, & Meelissen, 2019; Inspectie van Onderwijs, 2018, 2020). Therefore, family literacy programs (FLPs) aim to support children's emergent literacy development and diminish such early differences by helping parents to create rich home literacy environments (Anderson, Anderson, Friedrich & Kim, 2010; Hannon, 2003). Although FLPs are directed at children's homes and families, they are frequently implemented in cooperation with a school organization. Research into the effects of FLPs shows that these programs can be effective in enhancing children's early literacy skills, but that some programs are less or not effective for children with low educated parents, or with ethnic and linguistic minority backgrounds, compared to children with high-educated parents or with ethnic and linguistic majority backgrounds (Manz, Hughes, Barnabas, Bracaliello, & Ginsburg-Block, 2010; Mol, Bus, De Jong, & Smeets, 2008; Senechal & Young, 2008; Van Steensel, McElvany, Kurvers & Herppich, 2011). Conditional for these programs to be successful seems to be a good fit between the program and its implementation contexts, that is, children's homes and schools (De La Rie, 2018; Durlak & DuPre, 2008; Meyers, Durlak & Wandersman, 2012).

The aim of the current dissertation was to increase knowledge on the factors associated with the compatibility between FLPs and children's home and school contexts. The study was situated in urban areas in the Netherlands, a setting that is characterized by a highly diverse pupil population in terms of parental education, ethnicity and home languages. The studies in Chapter 2 and 3 of this dissertation aimed at describing factors that may determine the fit between FLPs and children's homes. In the study in Chapter 4, we tested the assumption that parental beliefs moderate program effects on children's emergent literacy development and thus determine program fit between an FLP and children's home contexts. The study in Chapter 5 focused on the question how to improve the compatibility between an FLP and the school organization. In the sections below, I describe the theoretical framework that forms the groundwork of this dissertation. First, I discuss children's emergent literacy development and the role of children's home environments. Next, I elaborate on different types of FLPs. Subsequently, I reflect on the importance of a good fit between children's home context and FLPs and review the factors possibly associated with this fit. Thereafter, I focus on the compatibility between FLPs and the school context and review factors thought to contribute to this fit. Finally, I describe the specific context of this dissertation and provide an outline of the different chapters.

Children's Emergent Literacy Development at Home

Although most children learn how to read and write at school, children's literacy development starts long before they enter formal education, in their most immediate environment: their homes. By being exposed to literate materials and being engaged in literacy activities with other family members, children acquire different emergent literacy skills (Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2002, 2014). Emergent literacy skills comprise a broad set of competencies and abilities (Lonigan, Purpura, Wilson, Walker, & Clancy-Menchetti, 2013; Sénéchal, LeFevre, Smith-Chant, & Colton, 2001; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998). Children's oral language, or meaning-oriented skills, encompass all skills children need to process the *meaning* of spoken and eventually written texts, such as active and receptive vocabulary knowledge, listening comprehension, narrative production and text comprehension. Children's code-oriented skills involve all skills children need to 'crack the code' of written text, such as knowledge of print conventions, letter-sound knowledge, word reading and phonological skills, that is, the ability to recognize and manipulate different sounds in words (Anthony, Lonigan, Driscoll, Phillips, & Burgess, 2003; Van Steensel et al., 2011; Whitehurst & Lonigan).

Different types of experiences in children's home literacy environments have been found to contribute differently to children's emergent literacy development. The Home Literacy Model (HLM; Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2002) is a framework describing the relations between different components of the home literacy environment and children's emergent literacy development. According to the HLM, children's meaning-oriented skills are mostly stimulated by parent-child home literacy activities that focus on the meaning of print rather than on code ('informal' or 'meaning-oriented' activities). Shared reading is an example of such a meaning-oriented activity. In contrast, the HLM states that children's code-oriented skills are stimulated by parent-child home literacy activities that focus on code of written text instead of rather than meaning. The teaching of the alphabet or practicing letter writing together are examples of 'formal' or 'code-oriented' activities (Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2002, 2014; Sénéchal, Whissel, & Bildfell, 2017).

Two aspects of the conceptualization of the types of home literacy activities in the HLM induce further discussion. First, the HLM only considers activities involving print, while meaning-oriented activities and code-oriented activities may also involve activities that do not involve print. For example, parents can also contribute to children's meaning-oriented skills by engaging them in oral language activities, such as storytelling, having mealtime conversations and teaching them about new words and concepts (Curenton, Craig, & Flanigan, 2008; Van Steensel, 2006; Weigel, Martin, & Bennett, 2006a). Similarly, parents can contribute to children's code skills by engaging them in oral language activities such as rhyming and singing songs (Levy, Gong, Hessels, Evans, & Jared, 2006). Second, the HLM does not directly address what could be labelled as 'didactic approach'. Both in meaning-oriented and code-oriented activities, parents may use different types of didactic approaches. They may expose their children in a playful, 'facilitative' (Hannon, 2000; 2003) way to language and print, for example through storytelling, shared reading, or playing letter games. Parents may also directly instruct their children about language and print, for example when teaching about the letters of the alphabet or correcting the child when s/he uses a word incorrectly (Hannon, 2000; 2003; Kalia & Reese, 2009; Skwarchuk, Sowinski & LeFevre, 2014). Parents may vary in the extent to which they prefer to undertake meaning-oriented, code-oriented, facilitative or instructional home literacy activities with their children (Phillips & Lonigan, 2009). Such preferences may play a role in parents' engagement in family literacy programs.

Family Literacy Programs

Family literacy programs aim to promote children's literacy development by stimulating children's home literacy environments. Family literacy programs exist in various forms (Anderson et al., 2010; Hannon, 2003). FLPs may differ in the extent to which they are connected to a school or child care institution: some FLPs are mostly home-based, with parent coaching occurring during home visits. Others are associated in various degrees to a school or childcare institution. Some programs, for instance, include activities that are adapted from the school's curriculum or schools are directly involved in implementation of FLPsenv (cf. Blok, Fukkink, Gebhardt, & Leseman, 2005). Furthermore, FLPs may differ in which aspects of the home literacy environment they address. Some programs aim to increase the amount and quality of literate materials in the home, for instance by providing free children's books to families (De Bondt, Willenberg, & Bus, 2020). Others address parents' own literacy skills, for example by offering parents language classes (Prins, Toso, & Schaft, 2009; Windisch, 2016). Many FLPs are directed at increasing the quality of and frequency with which parents undertake literacy activities with their children, such as shared reading, playing letter games and writing together (De La Rie, Van Steensel, & Van Gelderen, 2017; Mol et al., 2008; Sénéchal & Young, 2008).

The latter type of FLPs may differ in which of the previously introduced types of home literacy activities they aim to promote. Some programs offer mostly meaning-oriented activities to parents, while others offer mostly code-oriented activities (Van Steensel et al., 2011; Sénéchal & Young, 2008). Some FLPs encourage parents to stimulate children's emergent literacy development by undertaking facilitative, playful activities with their children, while other types of FLPs encourage parents to use direct instruction (Hannon, 2000; 2003). The compatibility of different types of FLPs with children's home contexts may be related to parental preferences for different types of home literacy activities.

Exploring the Fit Between FLPs and Children's Home Contexts

Research into FLPs suggests that some programs may better suit some families than others. Although meta-analyses on the effects of FLPs show that these programs can be moderately effective in enhancing children's emergent literacy development, effects differ across demographic groups (Manz et al., 2010; Mol et al., 2008; Sénéchal & Young,

Van Steensel et al., 2011). FLPs involving meaning-oriented facilitative activities, such as dialogic reading interventions, showed only limited or negligible effects on the emergent literacy development of children from low socio-economic (SES), ethnic minority and linguistic minority backgrounds (Manz et al., 2010; Mol, et al., 2008). FLPs consisting mostly of code-oriented activities, for example interventions in which parents were trained to teach their child about writing, showed stronger effects for children from low-SES backgrounds, albeit still smaller than for children from high-SES backgrounds (Sénéchal & Young, 2008).

Researchers have suggested that parental beliefs and behavioral preferences may determine the effects of FLPs on children's emergent literacy development (De La Rie, 2018; Manz et al., 2010). If the fit between program principles and what parents (think they should) do to stimulate children's literacy development is suboptimal, program engagement may be hampered. For example, if parents believe that supporting children's emergent literacy development implies the direct instruction of code skills (e.g. letter knowledge), they may be less motivated to participate in a meaning-oriented facilitative program. Furthermore, they may carry out program activities differently than intended by the program, in a way that better matches their own beliefs on what is important in guiding children's literacy development, instead of the program's intended implementation.

Research indicates that parental literacy beliefs may indeed guide parental literacy behavior towards their children. For example, parents who have stronger beliefs in their own influence on children's reading development, in pleasure and knowledge being the most important goals of reading, and in the pliability of children's' literacy competencies (DeBaryshe, 1995, p. 6), were found to engage their children more frequently in literacy activities in the home than parents with less strong reading beliefs (cf. Gonzalez et al., 2017; Weigel, Martin & Bennet, 2006a; 2006b). Additionally, parents who regarded literacy development as a set of skills to be trained, were reported to engage their children more frequently in code-oriented instructional activities, while parents who regarded literacy development to occur embedded in daily interaction with their children were reported to undertake more meaning-oriented facilitative activities with their children (Lynch, Anderson, Anderson, & Shapiro, 2006; Sonnenschein et al., 1997; Stipek, Millburn, Clements, & Daniels, 1992).

Parental literacy beliefs are thought to originate in parents' own experiences with literacy practices and literacy learning as children (Evans, Fox, Cremaso, & McKinnon, 2004; Gillanders & Jiménez, 2004; Reese, Arauz, & Bazán, 2012; Reese & Gallimore, 2000). Such experiences are closely connected to parents' schooling experiences and the culture they grew up in (Reese & Gallimore, 2000). Parental demographics such as level of education and income, country of birth and home language may serve as proxy variables for parental experiences that form the basis of parental literacy beliefs. Therefore, relationships can be expected between parental beliefs and such background variables. However, the current research is inconclusive as regards to the relationships between parental literacy beliefs and parental demographic variables, with some scholars finding parental literacy beliefs to be associated with parental background (cf. Cottone, 2012; Curenton & Justice, 2008; Reese & Gallimore, 2000), while others do not report such relations (Evans, Fox, Cremaso, & McKinnon, 2004; Hammer, Miccio & Wagstaff, 2003). For instance, some studies report that code-oriented beliefs were more likely to be found in lower educated parents, while meaning-oriented beliefs were more likely to be found in higher educated parents (DeBaryshe, Binder, & Buell, 2000; Fitzgerald, Spiegel, & Cunninham, 1991; Lynch et al., 2007; Stipek et al. 1992). However, other scholars did not report any relationships between parental education and literacy beliefs (Bingham, 2007; Evans et al. 2004). Additionally, only limited research exists on the relationships between ethnic background, home language and parental literacy beliefs (e.g. Hammer et al., 2003; Sawyer, Cycyk, Sandilos, & Hammer, 2018), none of which is conducted in the urban parts of the Netherlands, which is the context of this study.

The current research on parental literacy beliefs shows several shortcomings. First, most research is focused on parent beliefs on shared reading only (cf. Bingham, 2007; Boiczyk, Davis, & Rana, 2016; Davis et al., 2015; Gonzalez et al., 2017), thereby disregarding the broad range of other home literacy practices families may engage in with their children. Second, in the research on parental literacy beliefs, very limited attention has been paid to parental didactic beliefs. Third, most quantitative instruments used to measure parental beliefs may not be valid in all groups of parents. Generally, these instruments are quite lengthy, are frequently provided only in the majority language, and contain literacy jargon (DeBaryshe, Binder, & Buell, 2000; Evans et al., 2004). Such instruments may be difficult to fill out for parents with limited educational levels, literacy skills, and knowledge of the majority language. More inclusive instruments are needed, especially because FLPs are usually directed at parents with lower educational levels.

Not only parental literacy beliefs may determine the fit between FLPs and children's home contexts. More general beliefs about the impact parents have on their child's development may also affect program implementation. In their influential model of parental involvement, Hoover-Dempsey and colleagues (2005) regard parental "motivational beliefs" as one of the main factors that determine parental involvement. According to Hoover-Dempsey and colleagues motivational beliefs consist of parental self-efficacy and role construction beliefs. Parental self-efficacy for school involvement can be defined as parents' sense of their own abilities to help their children succeed in school (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). Parents are more likely to support their children's school work if they expect their efforts will result in the desired outcomes, that is, in promoting their children's learning (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara & Pastorelli, 1996; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). In research on FLPs, self-efficacy is generally considered as an outcome variable (cf. Nievar, Jacobson, Chen, Johnson & Dier, 2011) or a variable mediating the relationship between program participation and children's literacy development (cf. De La Rie, 2018). In this dissertation, however, parental self-efficacy is regarded as a moderator of program effects. We expect parental self-efficacy to affect parents' engagement in program activities: if parents feel they are sufficiently equipped to support their children's school development, they may be more inclined to engage in the activities provided by FLPs. Therefore, we expect that program effects on children's literacy development are stronger for children of parents with high self-efficacy beliefs compared to children of parents with low self-efficacy beliefs.

According to Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2005), parental role construction beliefs are parents' beliefs about their responsibilities in supporting their children's education. Parents with strong role-construction beliefs assume a large responsibility in helping their children succeed in school. Parents with weak role-construction beliefs place the responsibility for children's learning and education mostly in the hands of teachers and assume less responsibility. Similar to self-efficacy, role construction beliefs can be expected to moderate program effects: parents with a strong sense of responsibility for their children's learning may demonstrate a more intensive program participation, resulting in larger program effects on the literacy development of their children, compared to children of parents with less strong role construction beliefs.

Fostering the Fit between FLPs and the School: Building Educational Partnership

Successful implementation of FLPs not only requires a good compatibility with children's homes and families, but also a congruence between the program and the organizational context (De La Rie, 2018; Durlak & DuPré, 2008; Meyer et al., 2012). For successful implementation of an FLP in a school, it is beneficial that the school's vision on the parent-school relationship aligns with the way the parent-school relationship is approached in the program. When an FLP is introduced in a school, such an alignment between school vision and program philosophy is not always present. In implementing an FLP, a school may thus need to (re)consider its relationship with parents.

In FLPs that build on the experiences and knowledge that parents bring with them (; Baquedano-Lopez, Alexander & Hernandez, 2013, p. 151), parents and school professionals are considered as equal partners, united in the shared goal of optimally stimulating children's literacy development. Such an approach to the parent-school relationship aligns with the notion of educational partnership (Driessen, Smit, & Klaassen, 2010; Epstein, 2011; Epstein & Sanders, 2002; Oostdam & Hooge, 2013). Educational partnership refers to the cooperation between parents and school aimed at optimally stimulating children's learning both in school and at home (Driessen, Smit, & Klaassen, 2010; Oostdam & Hooge, 2013). Educational partnership is characterized by reciprocal relationships between parents and schools based on equality, inclusion and mutual trust and respect (Epstein, 2011; Epstein & Sanders, 2002; Valli, Stefanski, & Jacobson, 2016). Furthermore, educational partnership distinguishes itself from unidirectional parent-school cooperation in which schools only provide and parents only receive information (Bakker, Denessen, Dennissen, Oolbekkink-Marchand, 2013). Educational partnership is also different from types of parent-school cooperation in which parents' help is used for the school's purposes only, for example when parents help with organizing field trips or working in the school garden (Bakker et al., 2013). Finally, educational partnership can be distinguished from parent-school cooperation characterized by deficit perspectives, in which parents are regarded as problematic, lacking knowledge or skills, and needing to change their attitudes and behaviors in order to meet the schools' norms (Auerbach, 2007a; Baquedano-Lopez et al., 2013; Chavez-Reyes, 2010).

A school implementing an FLP may need to build educational partnership between parents and school. Building educational partnership in a school can be considered an educational innovation. Several elements of the school organization have been identified as beneficial for successful and sustainable implementation of innovations, such as teacher collaboration, a positive work climate including good relations and trust among staff members, supportive leadership, decisional autonomy for staff members and shared vision (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Thoonen, Sleegers, Oort, & Peetsma, 2012). Shared vision is regarded as a driving force behind successful and sustainable changes in schools: if team members share a vision on the goals of education and how to achieve them, they will be more committed to reaching those goals and applying changes in practice (Coburn, 2003; Fullan, 2007; Hammerness, 2010; Rogers, 2003; Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Lucas, Smith, Dutton, & Kleiner, 2012).

The development of shared vision in schools does not happen automatically (Auerbach, 2007b; 2009; Cooper, Allen & Bettez, 2009). Research indicates three important conditions. First, shared vision development should not follow a top-down route: not just the school leadership, but all stakeholders, including teachers, support staff *and* parents, should be involved in the process (Hammerness, 2010; Senge et al., 2012). Second, shared vision development is a collective process, in which school community members are provided with opportunities to exchange and reflect on each other's experiences, knowledge and beliefs (Hammerness, 2010; Senge et al., 2012). Third, shared vision does not only develop by *talking* but also by *doing*: according to Fullan (2007; 2011), school community members need to be exposed to meaningful new experiences in order to develop their personal visions and eventually a shared vision. As a method to create a shared vision, professionals may thus need to engage in innovative practices.

A possible way to stimulate an educational partnership vision in schools is by establishing professional learning communities (PLCs). A PLC is a community of educational professionals who engage in a collective, ongoing reflective enquiry into their own and colleagues' teaching practices in order to improve those collective practices with the final aim of fostering students' learning (Lomos, Hofman, & Bosker, 2011; Sleegers, Den Brok, Verbiest, Molenaar, & Daly, 2013; Stoll, Bolam, McMahon, Wallace & Thomas, 2006). Effective PLCs are attributed a list of positive characteristics that partly overlap with previously mentioned school characteristics conducive to educational change, such as a strong collaborative culture among participants, the presence of a shared vision, a

shared responsibility for children's learning, an enquiry-oriented perspective, collective reflection on practice, supportive leadership and a positive work climate (Schaap & De Bruijn, 2018; Sleegers et al., 2013; Stoll, Bolam, McMahon, Wallace & Thomas, 2006; Vangrieken, Meredith, Packer, & Kyndt, 2017; Voelkel & Chrispeels, 2017).

In this dissertation, I propose that, although shared vision is usually regarded as a defining element of PLCs, the relation between shared vision and PLCs may be reversed: working in a PLC may also stimulate the development of a shared vision (Fullan, 2007; 2011). PLCs that involve parents in addition to educational professionals may be an especially suitable instrument for building a shared school vision on educational partnership. It is expected that such PLCs create the conditions for a process of shared vision development to occur. First, PLCs provide the opportunity to bring representants of all segments of the school community (teachers, support staff, parents) together. Second, in PLCs, members collectively explore and critically reflect on the school's practices, providing both staff members and parents the opportunity to learn from each other's perspectives and experiences. Third, this collective reflection may provide PLC-members with meaningful new experiences, that is, experiences that differ from more traditional parent-teacher interactions. Such new experiences may then foster personal and shared vision development (Fullan, 2007; 2011).

This Dissertation

Context of this dissertation: Implementing Early Education at Home in urban Dutch primary schools

This dissertation explores the compatibility between FLPs, children's homes and schools within the implementation context of a Dutch FLP, Early Education at Home (EEH) (Dutch Youth Institute, 2020). EEH is widely used by preschools and kindergartens in the Netherlands and Flanders (Kalthoff, 2019). Limited knowledge is available on the effects of EEH, as the only two available effect studies report mixed results: positive effects of the preschool version of EEH (for children aged 2,5-4 years) on children's vocabulary development were found (Teepe, Molenaar, Oostdam, Fukkink, &Verhoeven, 2019) while the kindergarten version (for children aged 4-6 years) did not show any effects on children's emergent literacy development (De La Rie, 2018). The kindergarten version was implemented in the research described in this dissertation.

EEH is a combination of a home- and center-based program (Blok et al., 2005): the program addresses children's home environments, but the school is responsible for the implementation and organization of the program. Additionally, the content of the program is connected to the school curriculum: EEH applies a thematic approach and each of the EEH-themes can be matched with themes in the Dutch kindergarten curriculum. EEH aims to stimulate children's emergent literacy development, by supporting parents to undertake home literacy activities with their children and by strengthening the relationship between parents and school (Dutch Youth Institute, 2020). In line with the Dutch kindergarten curriculum (Stichting Leerplan Ontwikkeling, 2010), the program focuses on children's meaning-oriented skills, especially their vocabulary knowledge, and pays limited attention to children's code-oriented skills. Parents are encouraged to carry out the activities in an informal, playful way, and where possible embedded in their daily routines with their children. Direct instruction activities are not part of the program. Using the afore-mentioned distinction, EEH's approach can be characterized as meaning-oriented and facilitative.

The developers describe EEH as starting from the principle that professionals and parents are equal partners united in the shared goal to optimally stimulate children's development (Dutch Youth Institute, 2020; Kalthoff & Berns, 2014). Exchange among parents and between parents and school is a core ingredient of the intervention: during the program, teachers learn from parents about the home literacy environments of their pupils while parents learn from teachers about the ways their children's literacy development is stimulated in kindergarten and may be supported at home. As such, EEH seems to fit within a parent-school cooperation framework characterized by educational partnership (Epstein, 2011; Epstein & Sanders, 2002; Oostdam & Hooge, 2013).

Although EEH is directed at parents with lower educational levels, in reality, schools working with EEH serve families with various educational, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. The research described in this dissertation reflects this reality. It is conducted in urban parts of the Netherlands. This context is characterized by a superdiverse population, in which many variables related to diversity intersect, including ethnicity, SES, and home language (Crul, 2016; Vertovec, 2007). In such a setting, substantial variety can be expected in the literacy beliefs and practices of participating parents, and consequently, parental responses to a program such as EEH. Such variety requires the professionals to be knowledgeable about the diverse

backgrounds of the participating families and to be skilled in responding to diverse parents' needs in building educational partnership between parents and school.

Outline of this dissertation

The aim of this dissertation was to increase knowledge on the factors related to the compatibility between an FLP and its implementation context: children's homes and schools. The first two studies of this dissertation aimed at describing the factors possibly related to the compatibility between FLPs and diverse children's home contexts. The study in **Chapter 2** explored the home literacy environments of children living in urban parts of the Netherlands. Although the home literacy environment in diverse families has been the subject of much research (cf. Hart & Risley, 1995; De La Rie, Van Steensel, Van Gelderen, & Severiens, 2020; Purcell-Gates, 1996; Scheele, Leseman, & Mayo; 2010), the previously mentioned conceptualization of home literacy activities based on a distinction between code- and meaning-oriented activities and instructional and facilitative activities has not been studied before. Such a typology is especially relevant in examining the fit between FLPs and children's home contexts, as FLPs can also be categorized according to this framework. In a linguistically and socio-economically diverse sample of 214 kindergartners (mean age 4 years and 7 months, 46% girls and 29% monolingual speakers of Dutch) the study aimed to explore a refined model of home literacy activities that explicitly addressed didactic approach and was not restricted to print-only activities. We explored the validity of a conceptualization of home literacy activities consisting of four categories: meaning-oriented facilitative activities (e.g., shared reading, parent-child conversations), meaning-oriented instructional activities (e.g., teaching new words and concepts, correcting child when s/he uses a wrong word), code-oriented facilitative activities (e.g., playing letter games, rhyming), and code-oriented instructional activities (e.g., teaching the alphabet, practicing writing). Next, we analyzed whether and how different types of home literacy activities were related to children's meaning-oriented, code-oriented and phonological skills.

Parental beliefs about different types of home literacy activities may be another factor explaining the compatibility between programs and families. The study in **Chapter 3** is a mixed-method interview study in which the use of a newly developed instrument for measuring parental literacy beliefs was examined in a highly diverse sample of 35 parents participating in Early Education at Home. The instrument was directed at gaining a deeper understanding of the nature of parental literacy beliefs and exposing possible relationships between parental beliefs and parental education,

ethnic background and home language. With the instrument, we explored a new conceptualization of parental literacy beliefs, based on the refined model of home literacy activities proposed in Chapter 2. The instrument addressed parental literacy beliefs on meaning- and code-oriented, and facilitative and instructional home literacy practices. As such, the instrument focused both on parental beliefs about the nature of children's literacy development as well as on their didactic beliefs. Additionally, the instrument allowed for qualitative analysis of parental elaborations on their responses and was intended to be valid in a diverse group of parents in terms of educational background, country of birth and home language. Parental responses were analyzed through qualitative content analysis (Schreier, 2012). Associations between parental beliefs and demographic variables were explored quantitatively.

Building on the descriptive studies in Chapters 2 and 3, the study in **Chapter 4** tested the hypothesis that parental beliefs moderate program effects on children's emergent literacy development and thus play a role in program fit. In this study, we evaluated the effects of EEH on children's emergent literacy development. We hypothesized that EEH may produce larger effects for children of parents with stronger role construction and self-efficacy beliefs and for children of parents with higher meaning-oriented and facilitative beliefs. The study followed a quasi-experimental longitudinal approach with a diverse sample of 159 kindergartners (mean age 4 years and 5 months at pretest, 45% girls and 36% monolingual speakers of Dutch). For a two-year period, we compared children in eight schools participating in EEH (experimental condition) with children in four schools not participating in EEH (control condition). Children's meaning- and code-oriented literacy skills were assessed at study start, after one year and at the end of the study. Parents provided information concerning demographic background variables, self-efficacy, role construction and literacy beliefs through written questionnaires. Multi-level regression analyses were applied to test the main effect of EEH on children's growth in literacy skills and moderator effects of parental beliefs.

The qualitative case study in **Chapter 5** focused on how to improve the compatibility between FLPs and the school organizational context. We explored whether and how a professional learning community contributed to the development of a shared vision on the parent-school relation relationship. We assumed that, at the beginning of the study, PLC-members would not (yet) have a shared vision characterized by educational partnership. We examined to what extent the visions expressed by PLC-members were compatible with an educational partnership approach and whether and how

the visions developed during the project. For a two-year period, a PLC consisting of team members and parents was established in a primary school. The PLC focused on building educational partnership. Simultaneously with the start of the PLC, the school also implemented EEH to involve kindergartners' parents in the literacy development of their children. We started from the assumption that shared vision development would benefit from the collaborative reflective process in a PLC. Furthermore, we assumed that shared vision development would profit from collective engagement in a meaningful new experience (Fullan, 2007, 2011). The implementation of EEH in the school, which required PLC members to collectively reflect on their perceptions of parent involvement, may function as such a new meaningful experience. The study is a single-case study with the PLC-intervention in one school as unit of analysis (Yin, 2018). Transcripts of all PLC meetings (n = 13) and interviews with PLC-members at the end of the first and second year of the project (n = 11) enabled us to analyze the content of and developments in vision(s) on the parent-school relationship expressed by PLC-members. Based on the notion that vision entails a descriptive mental model of the current situation and a prescriptive, normative mental model of what the situation should be (Strange & Mumford, 2002; 2005), we selected data fragments that referred to PLC-members' descriptive and prescriptive mental models of parents and professionals in the parent-school relationship. These data fragments were qualitatively analyzed following a thematic analysis approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Finally, in **Chapter 6**, I summarize and critically review the findings of all four studies included in this dissertation. I discuss the strengths and limitations of this dissertation. Furthermore, I provide suggestions for practitioners in working with FLPs in the urban Dutch context in building educational partnership with parents and offer some directions for future research.

2

Exploring a Refined Model of Home Literacy Activities and Associations with Children´s Emergent Literacy Skills

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[1] In the published article, we used the terms 'oral language exposure', 'oral language teaching', 'code-related exposure' and 'code-related teaching' to refer to 'meaning-oriented facilitative', 'meaning-oriented instructional', 'code-oriented facilitative' and 'code-oriented instructional' activities. In Chapter 2, for reasons of consistency, we adapted the terminology of the published article to match the terminology used in the other chapters of this dissertation

Abstract

Based on the Home Literacy Model, this study explored a refined model of home literacy activities and their relations with children's emergent literacy skills in a linguistic and socio-economic diverse sample of 214 Dutch kindergartners (mean age 4 years and 7 months, 46% girls and 29% monolingual speakers of Dutch). The study examined a typology of home literacy activities that explicitly addressed didactic approach and was not restricted to activities involving print. Next, the study explored the relations between activity types and children's emergent literacy skills. Three activity categories were identified: code-oriented, meaning-oriented facilitative and meaning-oriented instructional activities. Results of multilevel structural equation modeling showed that all types of home literacy activities were related to children's meaning-oriented literacy skills, although the association between meaning-oriented instructional activities and meaning-oriented skills was negative. Meaning-oriented skills were associated with children's code and phonological skills. The outcomes indicate the existence of a more nuanced pattern of interrelations between elements of the home literacy environment and children's literacy skills in this diverse sample than observed before.

Introduction

The importance of the home literacy environment for the emergent literacy development of young children has been well-documented (cf. Burgess, Hecht, & Lonigan, 2002; Niklas & Schneider, 2013). A frequently used framework to describe the home literacy environment and its relations with children's emergent literacy is the Home Literacy Model (HLM; Sénéchal, 2006; Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2002, 2014). The HLM focuses on parent-child interactions with print only, whereas a wider array of activities may need to be included for a full understanding of how parent-child interactions contribute to different aspects of children's literacy development. Additionally, the Home Literacy Model does not explicitly consider the function of didactic approach adopted in the activities: the extent to which parents directly teach their children about language and print or playfully expose their children to language and print. Furthermore, the HLM has been investigated in diverse settings and populations, but to date, it has not been studied in the context of urban parts of the Netherlands. This context, in which the current study is situated, is characterized by a highly diverse population regarding home languages and educational background. Against this background, the purpose of this study was to explore a refined model of home literacy activities and their relations with children's emergent literacy skills that considers a wider spectrum of home literacy activities and explicitly addresses didactic approach.

The Home Literacy Model

When parents frequently engage children in literacy activities, this positively affects their emergent literacy skills (Burgess et al., 2002; Niklas & Schneider, 2013). Emergent literacy is often divided into two domains, meaning-oriented literacy skills and code-oriented literacy skills (Lonigan, Purpura, Wilson, Walker, & Clancy-Menchetti, 2013; Sénéchal, LeFevre, Smith-Chant, & Colton, 2001). Meaning-oriented literacy skills encompass all skills necessary to process the *meaning* of spoken and, eventually, written language, such as vocabulary knowledge, narrative knowledge, listening and text comprehension. Code-oriented literacy skills involve skills necessary to interpret the *code* of written language, such as letter knowledge and word reading. Some scholars view phonological skills, that is, children's abilities to recognize and manipulate different sounds in words (Anthony, Lonigan, Driscoll, Phillips, & Burgess, 2003) as a part of code-oriented literacy skills (Lonigan et al., 2013; Storch & Whitehurst, 2002). Others consider phonological skills to be a distinct ability (Sénéchal et al., 2001). According to a developmental conceptualization of phonological skills, different phonological

subskills varying in linguistic and cognitive complexity are acquired in different stages of development (Anthony et al., 2003). Auditory perception, children's ability to perceive and detect phonemic differences between words, is viewed as a distinct underlying phonological skill, foundational for more complex phonological awareness skills (Janssen, Segers, McQueen, & Verhoeven, 2017; McBride-Chang, 1995). The various domains of emergent literacy development are developmental precursors of formal reading development: according to the *simple view of reading* (Hoover & Gough, 1990), reading comprehension is determined by a person's comprehension skills (preceded by meaning-oriented skils in emergent literacy development) and decoding skills (preceded by early code skills).

A frequently used framework explaining the pathways along which home literacy activities contribute to specific domains of children's emergent literacy skills prior to formal literacy instruction in school is the Home Literacy Model (HLM; Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2002; Sénéchal, 2006). The HLM distinguishes two types of parent-child activities around print: formal and informal literacy activities. In formal literacy activities, the attention of parents and children is directed solely to print itself, for example, when parents teach their children to name the letters of the alphabet. In informal literacy activities, the message the print contains, instead of print itself, is the focus of attention. A prototypical informal activity is shared reading. According to the HLM, formal and informal activities are differentially related to children's code- and meaning-oriented literacy skills. The frequency with which parents and their children engage in informal literacy activities is associated with children's meaning-oriented literacy skills, while formal literacy activities are related to children's code-oriented literacy skills. According to the model, an indirect relation exists between home activities and phonological awareness, as the effect of home activities on phonological awareness is mediated by code- and meaning-oriented literacy skills.

Since its introduction, the HLM has been well studied (for an overview, see Sénéchal, Whissel, & Bildfell, 2017). Whereas a number of studies corroborated the model (cf. Hood, Conlon, & Andrews, 2008; Manolitsis, Georgiou, & Tziraki, 2013), other studies could not replicate the specific pathways from the two types of home activities to meaning-oriented and code-oriented skills (cf. Kalia & Reese, 2009; Kim, 2009a; Manolitsis, Georgiou, & Parrila, 2011). Furthermore, no consensus exists on the interrelations between meaning-oriented literacy skills, code-oriented literacy skills, and phonological awareness. According to the HLM, meaning-oriented literacy skills before

Grade 1 contribute to early phonological awareness, but does not influence early code skills. In contrast, other researchers found a direct pathway from meaning-oriented skills to code skills in young children (Dickinson, McCabe, Anastasopoulos, Peisner-Feinberg, & Poe, 2003; Kendeou, Van den Broek, White, & Lynch, 2009; Stephenson, Parrila, Georgiou, & Kirby, 2008). These researchers stress the importance of meaning-oriented literacy skills in any learning process, as children need these skills to learn from more experienced others.

The HLM across contexts

Studies into aspects of the HLM differ in settings. Studies corroborating the HLM have been mostly conducted in families from higher socio-economic backgrounds in Anglo-Saxon countries speaking languages that are orthographically complex, such as English and French (Hood et al., 2008; Sénéchal, 2006; Sénéchal & LeFevre 2002, 2014; Skwarchuk et al., 2014). Increasingly, the HLM is investigated in other populations, for instance in families from lower socio-economic backgrounds (Carroll, 2013; Sparks & Reese, 2013) and in other parts of the world, such as China, Korea, India, Greece and Finland (Chen, Zhou, & Zhao, & Davey, 2010; Kalia & Reese, 2009; Kim, 2009a; Manolitsis et al, 2011, 2013; Silinskas, Kiuro, Tolvanen, Niemie, Lerkkanen, & Nurmi, 2013; Silinskas, Leppänen, Aunola, Parrila, & Nurmi, 2010; Silinskas, Lerkkanen, Tolvanen, Niemi, Poikkeus, Nurmi, 2012). Languages spoken in the samples differ in orthographic depth, from complex orthographical languages such as Chinese and English (Chen, et al., 2010; Carroll, 2013; Kalia & Reese, 2009; Sparks & Reese, 2013) to languages with transparent orthographies, such as Korean, Greek, and Finnish (Kim, 2009a; Manolitsis et al., 2011; 2013; Silinskas et al., 2010; 2012; 2013). The studies report mixed results. Some confirm the HLM (Chen et al., 2010; Manolitsis et al., 2013), while others do not or only partly (Carroll, 2013; Kalia & Reese, 2009; Kim, 2009a; Manolitsis et al., 2011; Silinskas et al., 2010, 2012, 2013; Sparks & Reese, 2013). The specific pathways from home activities to meaning-oriented and code-oriented literacy skills could not always be replicated: some scholars found that informal activities predicted both meaning-oriented and code-oriented literacy skills (Kalia & Reese, 2009), or only code-oriented literacy skills (Sparks & Reese, 2013). In other studies, the association between formal literacy activities and code-oriented literacy skills was absent (Carroll, 2013) or negative (Kim, 2009a; Silinskas et al., 2010, 2012, 2013). Direct negative pathways from formal literacy activities to children's phonological awareness have also been reported (Kim, 2009a; Manolitsis et al., 2011). These mixed results indicate that socio-economic status and orthography are factors of importance.

The role of parental socio-economic status and parental education has been well established in the research literature. Parental socio-economic status and education have been found to be related to the quality of the home literacy environment and consequently to children's literacy development (Hart & Risley,1995; Hoff, 2006; 2013). Regarding orthography, research suggests that in opaque orthographies, the relationship between parent teaching about print and children's code-oriented literacy skills is different from this relationship in transparent languages, some researchers reporting less strong relations between teaching and code-oriented literacy skills in transparent orthographies (Manolitsis, Georgiou, Stephenson, & Parrila, 2009; Manolitsis et al., 2011) and negative relations with phonological awareness (Kim, 2009a; Manolitsis et al., 2011). These researchers suggest that parents expect children to acquire code skills in school, because they are relatively easy to master. Therefore, parents engage less in code teaching or only when they feel that their children lag behind in their code and phonological skills. Additionally, another factor of importance is children's linguistic background. Speaking a minority language at home may negatively influence children's performance in the majority language, due to lesser input in the majority language (Hoff, 2006; 2013; Scheele, Leseman, & Mayo, 2010). However, being exposed to a rich home literacy environment in their mother tongue (the minority language) may be beneficial for children's emergent literacy development in the minority as well as the majority language (Cárdenas-Hagan, Carslon, & Pollard-Durodola, 2007; Dixon, 2011; Scheele, Leseman, & Mayo, 2010).

Despite the differences in contexts, most studies into the HLM examine relatively homogenous groups. Limited knowledge is available on whether the HLM holds in diverse samples regarding educational and linguistic family backgrounds. To date, the HLM has not yet been investigated in the context of urban parts of the Netherlands. This context is characterized by a highly diverse population regarding migration background, home language, and educational level. In the Netherlands, Dutch is the majority language and the language of instruction at school. Dutch has a relatively consistent orthography compared to English, but more complex than for example Greek and Finnish.

Examining the formal-informal distinction in the Home Literacy Model
Besides the contextual differences of studies into the HLM, methodological differences among these studies might explain the discrepancies in results, such as methods of analysis with respect to the inclusion of control variables, measurement of children's

skills, and the operationalization of informal and formal literacy activities. The operationalization of informal and formal activities is further discussed in this section, as the definition and operationalization of the two activity types were the impetus for exploring a refined model of home literacy activities in this study.

Two aspects of the HLM's classification of home literacy activities into formal and informal activities are possibly problematic. First, the HLM is restricted to parent-child interactions with print. However, some researchers testing the model incorporate activities in their operationalizations of home literacy activities that do not involve print, for example teaching new words and definitions (Kalia & Reese, 2009; Skwarchuk, Sowinski, & LeFevre, 2014) and playing rhyming/singing games (Skwarchuk et al., 2014). One could argue that a broader interpretation of home literacy activities, also considering activities that do not involve print, might facilitate a more complete understanding of how children's home literacy experiences contribute to different aspects of their early literacy development. Similar to shared reading activities, other activities targeting meaning-oriented literacy skills, such as storytelling and mealtime conversations, provide opportunities for children to use and listen to new words, narratives, and other forms of elaborate language, thereby likely contributing to children's meaning-oriented literacy skills. Several studies have indeed shown that the quality of interaction during such activities and the frequency with which parents initiate them, stimulate the meaning-oriented literacy skills of young children (Curenton, Craig, & Flanigan, 2008; Van Steensel, 2006; Weigel, Martin, & Bennett, 2006a). Additionally, activities focusing on sounds and rhymes, such as rhyming games and listening to nursery rhymes, which also do not involve print, have been related to children's code skills and phonological awareness (Levy, Gong, Hessels, Evans, & Jared, 2006). Therefore, we propose a distinction between activities that support meaning-oriented literacy skills and activities that target code skills, and assume that both categories can involve print as well as non-print activities.

Second, the HLM does not directly consider didactic approach. Didactic approach can be regarded as a continuum with direct instruction activities, such as teaching the alphabet or teaching new words, on the one end. More facilitative, child-centered, playful activities in which the child is exposed to language and print, such as talking with your child and playing (educational) games, are situated on the on the other end of the continuum (Hannon, 2000; 2003; Stipek, Milburn, Clements, & Daniels, 1992). Some researchers suggest that didactic approach may be related to parental education,

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with lower educated parents more likely to engage in instructional activities and higher educated parents more likely to engage in facilitative activities (Lynch, Anderson, Anderson, & Shapiro, 2006; Stipek et al., 1992). Additionally, parents' cultural background and schooling experiences may determine their engagement in either instructional or facilitative activities (Gillanders & Jiménez, 2004; Reese, Arauz, & Bazán, 2012; Reese & Gallimore, 2000).

Although Sénéchal et al. (2017) explicitly mention that formal literacy activities can be "playful", "informative" as well as "didactic" (p. 384), nearly all studies testing the model operationalize formal literacy as direct teaching activities only. Activities exposing children to print without directly instructing them, such as playing letter games, are not included. Since informal activities are often operationalized as shared reading-related activities only, the difference between formal and informal activities not only reflects a distinction between activities focusing on print and activities focusing on meaning, as proposed by Sénéchal and colleagues (Sénéchal et al. 2017; Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2002). This difference also (maybe unintentionally) reflects a distinction in didactic approach, with activities adopting an instructional method on the one hand (formal literacy activities) and facilitative activities in which the child is playfully exposed to print (informal literacy activities) on the other hand. To consider didactic approach explicitly in a categorization of home literacy activities would enable researchers to determine whether observed relations between activity types and children's literacy skills are due to the content of the activity (focus on either code or meaning) or the way parents guide their children (instruction versus facilitation).

A refined typology of home literacy activities

We propose an alternative conceptualization of home literacy activities, based on two distinctions. First, we distinguish activities that support meaning-oriented literacy skils from those that target code skills, and assume that both c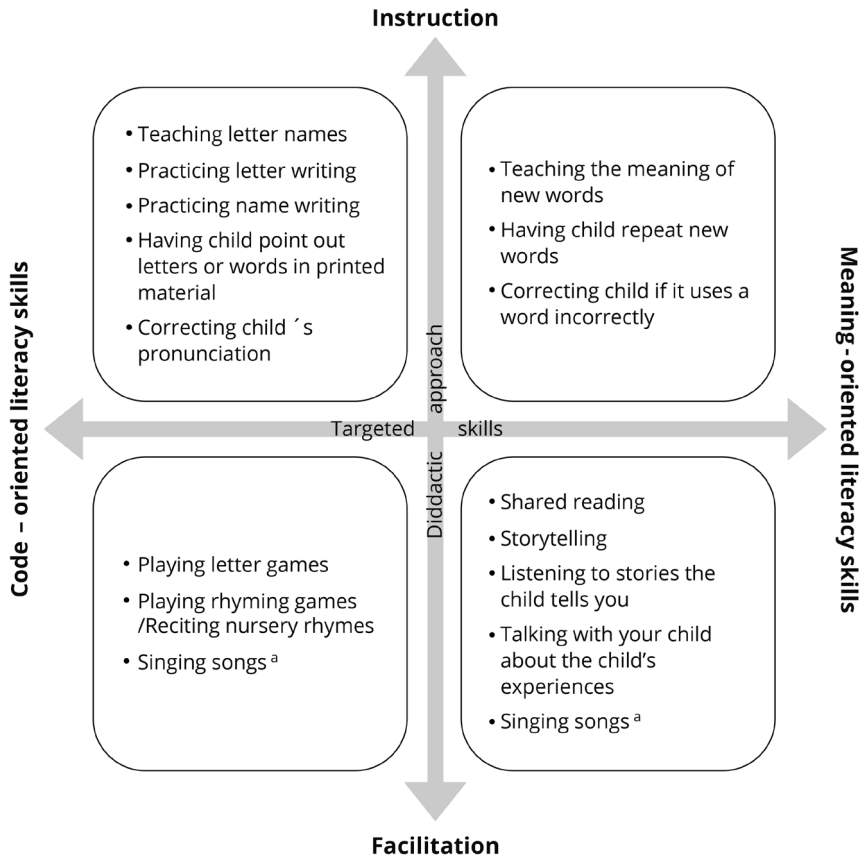ategories can involve print as well as non-print activities. Second, we propose a distinction in didactic approach, namely instructional activities versus facilitative activities. These two distinctions result in four hypothetical categories of home literacy activities: meaning-oriented facilitation (including shared reading and listening to stories the child tells); code-oriented facilitation (including playing letter games and rhyming); meaning-oriented instruction (including teaching new words and having your child repeat new words); and code-oriented instruction (including teaching the letters of the alphabet, practicing name writing) (see Figure 2.1).

Instruction

Code – oriented literacy skills

Meaning-oriented literacy skills

- Teaching letter names
- Practicing letter writing
- Practicing name writing
- Having child point out letters or words in printed material
- Correcting child´s pronunciation

- Teaching the meaning of new words
- Having child repeat new words
- Correcting child if it uses a word incorrectly

Targeted skills

Diddactic approach

- Playing letter games
- Playing rhyming games /Reciting nursery rhymes
- Singing songs [a]

- Shared reading
- Storytelling
- Listening to stories the child tells you
- Talking with your child about the child's experiences
- Singing songs [a]

Facilitation

Figure 2.1 Proposed conceptualization of home literacy activities

Current study

The aim of the current study was to explore the refined typology of home literacy activities and to analyze associations between activity categories and children's meaning-oriented literacy, code-oriented literacy and phonological skills in a highly diverse sample situated in urban parts of the Netherlands. Following the HLM, we expected that, should an exploratory factor analysis reveal categories such as defined in our refined model, those categories would be related to the skills they target, that is, meaning-oriented facilitation and meaning-oriented instruction would be related to meaning-oriented literacy skills and code-oriented facilitation and code-oriented instruction would be associated with code skill. We hypothesized all activity types to be related to phonological skill indirectly, that is, mediated by either meaning-oriented literacy skills or code skill. Figure 2.2 shows the initial model we explored.
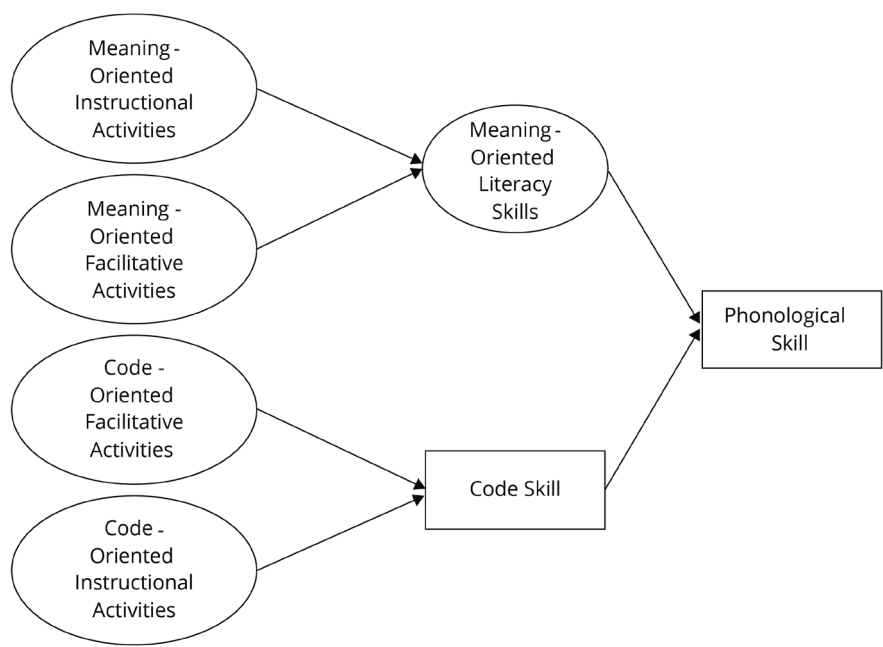
Figure 2.2 Theoretical model describing relations to be explored between different types of home literacy activities and children's emergent literacy skills, based on the Home Literacy Model (Sénéchal, 2006; Sénéchal & Lefevre, 2002)

Methods

Context of the study

This cross-sectional study was conducted as part of a larger study on the effects of a family literacy program. In the larger study, children were followed for two years, starting when they just entered kindergarten. The data reported here are based on the pre-test of that study. At that time, the children had only been exposed to formal schooling for a few weeks. Children in the Netherlands generally start in the first year in kindergarten at age four. The kindergarten curriculum explicitly targets the development of emergent literacy skills, which is reflected in the goals aspired for children at the end of their second year in kindergarten. According to this curriculum, children should know approximately 7000 (Dutch) words receptively and 3500 words productively, have acquired knowledge of the functions of print, are able to recognize and name an unspecified number of letters, are able to write symbols that resemble letters, know that letters correspond to sounds, and have mastered the Dutch phonological system, before entering Grade 1 (Stichting Leerplan Ontwikkeling, 2010).

Participants

Participants in this study were 214 children (age: 4-5 years). Parents of the children were invited to complete a parent questionnaire to provide demographic information. Hundred seventy-nine parents returned the questionnaires (response rate: 84%), of which 142 were mothers and 34 were fathers; three respondents did not indicate their role. Twenty-nine percent of the sample spoke only Dutch at home. Forty percent of the sample spoke another language at home in addition to Dutch. Ten percent of the sample did not speak Dutch at home. For 21% of the children, their home language was unknown. Forty-three different languages were spoken with the children, Dutch being most frequently mentioned, followed by Turkish, Moroccan-Arabic, and Berber languages. Twenty-nine percent of the children had parents with low levels of education, 29% had parents who were middle educated, 21% of the children had high-educated parents. Parental educational level was unknown for 21% of the children. Educational level was evenly distributed across the different language groups. Of the parents who spoke both Dutch and (an)other language(s) with their children, 34% was lower educated, 46% was middle educated and 20% was higher educated. Only in the group of parents who did not speak Dutch with their children, lower educational levels were overrepresented. Of this group, 67% was lower educated, 10% was middle educated and 23% was higher educated. The children were enrolled in 12 schools in the Netherlands, divided over 20 classes. For an overview of child and parent characteristics, see Table 2.1.

Table 2.1

Characteristics of Study Participants

Characteristic	Frequency and percentage of total sample
Total sample	
Children	N = 214, 100%
Parents (number of questionnaires returned)	n = 179, 84%
Gender children	n = 214
Female	n = 98, 46%
Male	n = 116, 54%
Gender parents	n = 176, 82%
Female (mothers)	n = 142, 66%
Male (fathers)	n = 34, 16%
Age children (in months)	n = 214
	range = 45 to 66
	M = 52.8, SD = 3.8

Table 2.1

(continued)

Characteristic	Frequency and percentage of total sample
Age parents (in years)	*n* = 167
	range = 22 to 51
	M = 34.8, *SD* = 6.1
Children's country of birth	*n* = 166, 78%
Netherlands	*n* = 154, 72%
Other	*n* = 12, 6%
Parents' country of birth	*n* = 172, 80%
Netherlands	*n* = 74, 34%
Other	*n* = 98, 46%
Home language	*n* = 169, 79%
Only other language(s) than Dutch spoken at home with child	*n* = 22, 10%
Dutch and other language(s) spoken at home with child	*n* = 85, 40%
Only Dutch spoken at home with child	*n* = 62, 29%
Parents' best language	*n* = 169, 79%
Dutch	*n* = 62, 29%
Dutch and other language(s)	*n* = 85, 40%
Only other language	*n* = 22, 10%
Educational level parent (respondent)	*n* = 170, 79%
Low[a]	*n* = 63, 29%
Middle[b]	*n* = 63, 29%
High[c]	*n* = 44, 21%
Educational level respondent's partner	*n* = 139, 65%
Low[a]	*n* = 58, 27%
Middle[b]	*n* = 41, 19%
High[c]	*n* = 40, 19%

[a] No education, primary and /or prevocational secondary education
[b] Senior general secondary education or pre-university education, and/or secondary vocational education
[c] Higher professional education or university degree

Materials

Meaning-oriented literacy skills

Children's meaning-oriented literacy skills were measured by testing children's receptive vocabulary knowledge and their narrative production skills. Vocabulary was measured using the Receptive Vocabulary Task from the validated Dutch test battery Taaltoets Alle Kinderen (TAK) [Language Test for All Children] (Verhoeven & Vermeer, 2001, 2006).

The task consists of 96 items. For each item, four pictures are shown to the child while the test administrator reads a word corresponding with one of the pictures. The child is asked to point at the picture representing the word. Difficulty level increases with every item. If a child fails to give the right answer five times successively, the administrator stops the test. A child's score is formed by the number of correct answers (Cronbach's a = .96, current study).

Narrative production was measured by the Storytelling Task from the TAK. For this task, the child is shown two sheets with eight pictures, each sheet describing a short story. The child is asked to tell the story to the test administrator, in a way that she can understand the story without looking at the pictures. The narratives were audio-recorded and later transcribed and coded using a coding scheme consisting of 32 items on which children could score up to one point per item. Points are awarded on the basis of accuracy, coherence and cohesion of the story told, as depicted by the pictures. Coherence and accuracy of the story are represented by the expression of the necessary content words to understand the story. Coherence and cohesion of the text are the expression of conjunctions and juxtaposition of story elements, expressing the main relationships depicted in the story. The maximum number of points is 32. Twenty-two percent of the narratives (n = 47) were coded independently by two coders, with 89% agreement between the coders (Cronbach's α = .86 for the main coder, current study). Disagreements were discussed between the two coders until agreement was reached.

Code skill

Code skill was operationalized as letter-sound knowledge. Due to the young age of our sample and their limited school experiences, more advanced tests of Code Skills, such as word identification or spelling, were not appropriate. Children's letter-sound knowledge was assessed with the Letter Knowledge Task from the validated Dutch test battery Toetspakket Beginnende Geletterdheid [Test Battery Emergent Literacy] (Aarnoutse & Verhagen, 2012). The test consists of 27 items. In each of the first 20 items, five lower case letters are shown to the child while the test administrator phonetically pronounces a letter sound that corresponds with one of the five letters. The child is asked to point out the letter corresponding with the letter sound. In the last seven items, the child is asked to point out letter combinations, expressing a diphthong frequently occurring in the Dutch language. The number of correct answers is the total score for this test (Cronbach's a = .73, current study).

Phonological skill

Phonological skill was operationalized as auditory perception, measured with the Auditory Discrimination Task from the TAK. Due to the relative large share of L2-speakers of Dutch and the young age of our sample in combination with the participating schools being located in neighborhoods characterized by the presence of many low SES households (Netherlands Institute for Social Research, 2017), we expected to find relatively low levels of Dutch emergent literacy skills in our sample. Therefore, it seemed more appropriate to measure an underlying phonological skill for phonological awareness than using more advanced tests, such as elision, blending, or rhyming tasks. The Auditory Discrimination Task consists of 50 items. For each item, the test administrator reads two words that are either identical (for example cat-cat) or different by one phoneme (for example bell-ball). The child is asked to indicate if the two words are the same or different. The number of correct answers is the score for this task (Cronbach's a = .92, current study).

Parent Questionnaire

Parents filled out a survey in paper format.

Home literacy activities. This scale consists of 15 items related to parent-child activities. Parents were asked to indicate on a scale from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*daily or several times a day*) the frequency with which they engaged in several home literacy activities. These activities could be performed in any language that was spoken in the home. The items included in the questionnaire are all home literacy activities shown in Figure 2.1.

Parental education. Parental education was operationalized as the mean score of the highest educational level obtained by the children's parents: low (no education, primary and/or prevocational secondary education), middle (senior general secondary education or pre-university education, and/or secondary vocational education), high (higher professional education or university degree) (Statistics Netherlands, 2017).

Child's age. Child's age was measured by asking parents to indicate the birth date of their child.

Home language. Parents were asked what language(s) they spoke with their child. Parents indicated whether they spoke only Dutch, Dutch and (an)other language(s) or only (an)other language(s) at home with their child. In the analyses, we included home

language as a dichotomous variable (0 = only Dutch spoken with the children at home, 1 = (additional) other languages spoken at home with the children.).

Child's gender. Parents were asked to indicate the gender of their child (0 = boy, 1= girl)

Procedure

Schools were recruited by advertising on social media and contacting the municipalities of the four major cities of the Netherlands. Schools were screened based on the criteria relevant for the larger study, such as the accordance of the school's population with the target group of the intervention (children with lower educated parents and /or second language learners of Dutch). The participating schools selected one or two classes in kindergarten to take part in the study. At the beginning of the school year, parents of the children received a letter from the school with information regarding the project and an invitation to take part. Parents communicated to the child's teacher their decision whether or not to take part in the study.

Between September and early November 2015, all children were tested individually at school by the first author and five trained research assistants. One test a time (duration 2-15 minutes) was administered. In November 2015, parents received the parent questionnaire from their children's teachers and were asked to return it before the Christmas break. Parent questionnaires were provided in four different languages: Dutch, English, Turkish, and Polish. Teachers were instructed by the researchers to assist parents filling out the questionnaire, if needed, without influencing their answers. Additionally, a research assistant trained in the field of Dutch language teaching offered help to parents in filling out the questionnaire if needed.

Analysis

As our main research aim was exploratory, namely to examine the validity of our refined model, the home literacy activity-items were analyzed with exploratory factor analysis (EFA). Structural relations between activity types and children's literacy skills were examined using multilevel structural equation modeling (SEM) techniques. After defining our model, parental education, home language, children's age, and gender were included in the analyses as covariates, as these variables have shown to be factors associated with the nature of the home literacy environment, the children's literacy

development, and the interrelations between them (Hart & Risley, 1995; Hoff, 2013; Scheele, Leseman, & Mayo, 2010).

Due to the nested nature of the data (pupils nested within classes), multilevel methods were applied, in which we followed the procedures described by Hox (2010). Before starting our SEM-analysis, we analyzed for all variables whether significant variance existed at Level 2, using the statistical software package HLM (Raudenbush, Bryk, Cheong, Congdon, & Du Toit, 2016). This was the case for children's vocabulary, narrative production, phonological skill, and for three of the four covariates, namely home language, parental education, and children's age. This implies that multilevel analysis is necessary (Hox, 2010). Therefore, these variables were allowed to have variance on both Level 1 and Level 2 of our SEM-model. The hypotheses this study aims to explore are situated at Level 1 (pupils). Therefore, no structural relations were hypothesized at Level 2 (classes). However, the exploratory method of analysis applied in this study can still reveal structural relations at the second level, should they exist.

All the consequent analyses were performed with the statistical software package Mplus (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2010). In the next step, the data were analyzed separately at the pupil level (Level 1) from the class level (Level 2), to obtain a preliminary structural equation model. This preliminary Level 1 model was obtained in three steps. First, we ran an EFA on the home literacy activity variables, with oblique rotation performed on the pooled within variance-covariance matrix. Next, the factors resulting from the EFA were entered in a structural model together with children's scores for receptive vocabulary, narrative production, phonological skill, and letter knowledge. Finally, modification indices were inspected and adjustments were made, provided these were supported by theory.

Next, the preliminary Level 1 model was extended to a multilevel model. The preliminary Level 1 model was fitted to the whole dataset, while allowing the variables with significant amounts of variance at Level 2 (phonological skill, vocabulary, and narrative production) to have variance at the class level, but no covariance. If this model, called the *independence model*, fits well, variance exists at the class level, but there are no structural relations of interest. If this model has inadequate fit, a structural model at Level 2 needs to be specified (Hox, 2010). After specification of this model, the final model was further refined, provided adjustments were supported by theory. Finally, to test whether the model would sustain after including covariates, home language, parental education, child's age, and gender were entered in the model at Level 1. In addition, home language, parental

education, and child's age were allowed to have variance at Level 2, as previous analyses in HLM showed that these covariates had significant variance at Level 2.

Fits of the different SEM models were evaluated using the Chi-Square test, the ratio χ^2/df, the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR). Model fit was considered good when χ^2/df < 2, RMSEA ≤ .08, CFI ≥ .95, and SRMR ≤ .08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2016; Schermelleh-Engel, Moosbrugger, & Müller, 2003). Chi-square difference tests applying the Satorra-Bentler correction (Satorra & Bentler, 2001) were used to assess whether model modifications significantly improved model fit.

Univariate skewness and kurtosis values indicated the existence of multivariate non-normality (Byrne, 2012), therefore we used Maximum Likelihood estimation with robust standard errors (MLR), which is robust for non-normality. Because 35 parents did not return the parent-questionnaire, and of the 179 parents who did return the questionnaire, some parents did not answer all questions, there are missing data in our sample. Additionally, scores for children who could not understand the test instruction (ranging from n = 2 to 22 for the four child measures) due to their limited understanding of Dutch, were regarded as missing values. MLR-estimation uses full information maximum likelihood to treat missing values. This implies that cases with missing values need not be excluded from the analyses. Hence, all 214 cases were included (Hox, 2010).

Results

Descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations

Table 2.2 shows descriptive statistics and bivariate correlation coefficients for all variables except gender and home language: associations between these two dichotomous variables and the other variables are presented in Table 2.3. As displayed in Table 2.2, parents tended to undertake fewer activities targeting code-oriented literacy skills than activities targeting meaning-oriented literacy skills. Additionally, variability in responses was larger on the code activity items, whereas for both meaning-oriented facilitation and instruction, variability on most items was small, with standard deviations < 1. Parents indicated parent-child conversations as the most frequently occurring activity. Activities targeting meaning-oriented literacy skills through instruction also occurred frequently (averages were all > 4 on a 5-point scale). Children's scores on all outcomes were generally low, in particular the scores on the letter-sound knowledge

and narrative production task. However, large differences in scores existed among the children, as shown by the large standard deviations.

Correlations between home literacy activities and children's outcomes are relatively low. Significant correlations exist between vocabulary and three of the meaning-oriented home literacy activities (parent-child conversations, shared reading, and storytelling) and four of the code-oriented activities (teaching letter names, practicing letter writing, rhyming, and letter games). Narrative production only significantly correlated with three of the code-oriented activities (teaching letter names, practicing name writing, and rhyming). Phonological skill correlated significantly with two of the meaning-oriented literacy activities (parent-child conversations and shared reading), while letter-sound knowledge correlated negatively with the teaching of new words. Child's age correlated positively with two code-oriented instructional activities (practicing name and letter writing), indicating that parents of older children were more likely to teach their children about print than parents of younger children. Child's age was positively and significantly correlated with three of the four child outcomes (vocabulary, narrative production, and phonological skill). Parental education correlated positively with two of the meaning-oriented facilitation items (shared reading and storytelling) and with one of the code-oriented instructional activities (teaching your child letter names) indicating that higher educated parents engaged more frequently in such activities. Parental education was also positively associated with phonological skill and vocabulary. There was only one difference in frequency of activities between girls and boys: girls' pronunciation was more likely to be corrected than boys'. There were differences between mono- and multilingual parents in five of the home literacy activities: scores were higher for monolingual parents on three of the meaning-oriented facilitative activities (parent-child conversations, shared reading, and storytelling), whereas scores were higher for multilingual parents on two of the meaning-oriented instructional activities (correcting the use of wrong words and pronunciation). Additionally, there were differences between mono- and multilingual children in receptive vocabulary and phonological skill, in favor of the former, and there was an association between home language and parental education: monolingual parents generally had a higher education.

Table 2.2

Means, Standard Deviations and Bivariate Correlations for All Variables

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
1. Talking with child about child's experiences[a]	4.82	.45	1																				
2. Singing with child[a]	4.28	.83	.29***	1																			
3. Shared reading[b]	4.37	.81	.31***	.14	1																		
4. Storytelling[b]	3.62	1.03	.09	.28***	.25**	1																	
5 Listening to stories of child[b]	4.79	.56	.45***	.34***	.30***	.09	1																
6. Teaching child new words[b]	4.20	.82	.27*	.19*	.26**	.14	.08	1															
7. Having child repeat new words[b]	4.09	1.00	.35***	.19*	.15	.21**	.14	.59***	1														
8. Correcting child if (s)he uses wrong word[b]	4.60	.72	.11	.30***	.29***	.28***	.04	.54***	.43***	1													
9. Correcting child's pronunciation[b]	4.58	.71	.03	.13	.12	.14	-.04	.50***	.42**	.81***	1												
10. Teaching child letter names[b]	3.91	1.14	.01	.13	.21**	.37***	.09	.25**	.18*	.20*	.19*	1											
11. Having child point out words or letters[b]	3.69	1.30	.07	.23*	.33***	.42***	.06	.36***	.40***	.37***	.28***	.54***	1										
12. Practicing name writing[b]	3.24	1.41	-.10	.13	.21**	.30***	-.02	.18*	.15	.19*	.13	.61***	.56***	1									
13. Practicing letter writing[b]	3.10	1.37	-.10	.20*	.23**	.35***	.07	.18*	.22**	.22**	.19*	.60***	.60***	.85***	1								
14. Playing rhyming games/ citing nursery rhymes[b]	3.01	1.31	.01	.28***	.29***	.44***	.12	.18*	.19*	.07	.05	.45***	.57***	.52***	.58***	1							
15. Playing letter games[b]	2.87	1.36	.08	.29***	.24**	.43***	.12	.30***	.33***	.23**	.18*	.56***	.58***	.62***	.60***	.60***	1						
16. Receptive vocabulary[c]	30.36	16.43	.18*	.01	.25*	.17*	.13	-.09	-.04	-.10	-.12	.28***	.14	.13	.15*	.27**	.21**	1						

Table 2.2
(continued)

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
17. Narrative production[d]	5.01	2.65	.02	-.05	.07	.05	-.15	-.13	-.15	-.10	-.14	.16*	.10	.23**	.15	.20*	.13	.48***	1				
18. Phonological skill[e]	27.38	10.69	.16*	.05	.18*	.05	.06	.07	.13	.02	-.01	.06	.12	.03	.08	.09	.04	.47***	.18*	1			
19. Letter-sound knowledge[f]	7.34	4.30	.03	-.10	.08	.02	-.04	-.17*	.05	-.04	-.03	.15	.15	.08	.10	-.04	.12	.20**	.19*	.20**	1		
20. Age of child	52.78	3.82	-.08	-.08	-.11	.12	-.04	-.18*	-.15	-.06	.00	.15	-.01	.21**	.17*	.07	.05	.20**	.27***	.24**	-.02	1	
21. Parental education[g]	1.84	.70	.05	.10	.18*	.23**	.10	-.04	.03	-.01	-.09	.19*	.13	.02	.11	.11	.15	.25**	.12	.16*	.14	-.06	1

Note. Parental education: 1 = low, 2 = middle, 3 = high; N = 157-214 due to missing values.

[a] Range = 1-5, Min = 2, Max = 5, n = 175
[b] Range = 1-5, Min = 1, Max = 5, n = 157-175
[c] Range = 0-96. Min = 0, Max = 69, n = 212
[d] Range = 0-32 Min = 0, Max = 14.74, n = 193
[e] Range = 0-50. Min = 5, Max = 46, n = 197
[f] Range = 0-27. Min = 0, Max = 26, n = 207
[g] Range = 1-3 Min = 1, Max = 3, n = 175

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
*** $p < .001$

Table 2.3

Means, Standard Deviations and T-Test Results for Dichotomous Variables (Gender and Home Language)

	Girls (= 1)			Boys (= 0)				Multilingual (= 1)			Monolingual (= 0)		
	n	M	SD	M	SD	T-Test	n	M	SD	M	SD	T-Test
1. Talking with child about child's experiences	175	4.80	0.51	4.84	0.40	-0.61	166	4.75	0.54	4.92	0.28	-2.69**
2. Singing with child	171	4.31	0.86	4.26	0.81	0.39	163	4.29	0.86	4.27	0.77	0.10
3. Shared reading	174	4.35	0.95	4.40	0.67	-0.40	166	4.28	0.91	4.55	0.59	-2.10*
4. Storytelling	169	3.64	1.01	3.60	1.05	0.24	161	3.65	1.10	3.56	0.90	0.56
5. Listening to stories of child	175	4.77	0.66	4.80	0.47	-0.41	166	4.70	0.68	4.92	0.28	-2.89**
6. Teaching child new words	161	4.33	0.84	4.09	0.79	1.86	152	4.24	0.84	4.11	0.82	0.94
7. Having child repeat new words	167	4.05	1.15	4.12	0.85	-0.44	158	4.06	1.07	4.07	0.90	-0.03
8. Correcting child if (s)he uses wrong words	166	4.74	0.47	4.48	0.86	2.44*	157	4.70	0.70	4.42	0.77	2.34*
9. Correcting child's pronunciation	160	4.67	0.53	4.49	0.83	1.59	152	4.67	0.61	4.39	0.83	2.21*
10. Teaching child letter names	169	4.04	1.05	3.81	1.20	1.33	160	3.82	1.29	3.97	0.88	-0.85
11. Having child point out words or letters	171	3.74	1.33	3.65	1.28	0.42	163	3.73	1.37	3.57	1.23	0.71
12. Practicing name writing	168	3.41	1.35	3.10	1.45	1.40	161	3.33	1.39	3.11	1.43	0.94
13. Practicing letter writing	168	3.31	1.31	2.92	1.39	1.85	161	3.11	1.44	3.11	1.27	-0.01
14. Playing rhyming games/citing nursery rhymes	157	2.94	1.35	3.06	1.28	-0.54	149	2.99	1.38	3.03	1.16	-0.21
15. Playing letter games	168	3.00	1.35	2.76	1.36	1.14	160	2.72	1.44	3.03	1.17	-1.52
16. Receptive vocabulary	212	31.41	16.81	29.47	16.13	0.86	168	24.34	14.97	39.35	15.17	-6.24***
17. Narrative production	193	5.21	2.75	4.85	2.57	0.93	152	4.72	2.91	5.49	2.42	-1.71
18. Phonological skill	197	28.40	11.04	26.46	10.34	1.27	157	25.81	10.74	30.95	10.00	-2.98**
19. Letter-sound knowledge	207	7.61	4.79	7.12	3.86	0.79	164	7.08	4.31	7.73	4.68	-0.90
20. Age of child	214	52.71	3.60	52.83	4.02	-0.22	169	52.90	3.89	52.77	3.24	0.21
21. Parental education	175	1.91	0.71	1.79	0.69	1.10	167	1.76	0.65	2.04	0.75	-2.56*
22. Gender of child	-	-	-	-	-	-	169	0.44	0.50	0.47	0.50	-0.36
23. Home language	169	0.76	0.69	0.76	0.65	0.00	-	-	-	-	-	-

* p < .05
** p < .01
*** p < .001

Analyses at the first level: pupils

Exploration of validity of proposed conceptualization of home literacy activities
The EFA on the home literacy activity items showed that a four-factor solution had a reasonable fit (χ^2[51, N = 192] = 126.05, p < .01; χ^2/df = 2.47; CFI = .943; RMSEA = .088, SRMR = .039), but the item storytelling loaded significantly on three of the four factors. Consequently, the EFA was run again without this item. In the four-factor solution without the item storytelling, two factors consisted only of two items, which may indicate poor determinacy of the model (Brown, 2006). Additionally, the four-factor solution was not interpretable considering our theoretical assumption. As a result, we decided to fit a three-factor model.

A three-factor solution indicated that a distinction could be made between activities supporting meaning-oriented literacy skills and activities supporting code-oriented literacy skills. Furthermore, activities supporting meaning-oriented literacy skills could be divided by didactic approach into instructional and facilitative activities. The results did not show a distinction in code-oriented activities based on didactic approach. As theoretical interpretability, complemented by statistical guidelines, should be leading in factor selection (Brown, 2006), we decided to work with the three-factor solution instead of the four-factor solution, despite of the lesser fit of the model (χ^2[52, N = 192] = 157.913, p < .01; χ^2/df = 3.04; CFI = .916; RMSEA = .103; SRMR = .047). Table 2.4 shows factor loadings and reliability coefficients (Cronbach's a) per factor. Factor 1 (items 1-4) was labelled Meaning-Oriented Facilitation. Factor 2 (items 5-8) was labelled Meaning-Oriented Instruction, and Factor 3 (items 9-14) was labelled Code-Oriented Activities.

In two cases, the item factor loadings need further explanation. First, the item 'correcting your child's pronunciation' did not load on Code-Oriented Activities, as we expected. Instead, it loaded on Meaning-Oriented Instruction, possibly because pronunciation is regarded as an meaning-oriented literacy skill, instead of a subskill of phonological awareness. Second, our expectations for the item 'singing songs' were twofold: singing songs could either be a code-oriented activity, targeting phonological awareness similar to rhyming activities, or it could be a meaning-oriented facilitative activity targeting vocabulary and narrative knowledge. According the EFA results, the latter is the case.

Table 2.4.

Factor Loadings Derived from the Exploratory Factor Analysis of the Parent-Child Home Literacy Activity Scale (scores below 0.3 not shown) and Reliability Coefficients per Factor (Cronbach's Alpha)

Items home activity scale (1-5)	1 Meaning-Oriented Facilitation	2 Meaning-Oriented Instruction	3 Code-Oriented Activities
1. Talking with child about child's experiences	**.80***		
2. Singing with child	**.33***		
3. Shared reading	**.38***		
4. Listening to stories of child	**.58***		
5. Teaching child new words	.33*	**.52***	
6. Having child repeat new words	.31*	**.37***	
7. Correcting child if (s)he uses wrong word)		**.92***	
8. Correcting child's pronunciation		**.91***	
9. Teaching child letter names			**.72***
10. Having child point out words or letters			**.64***
11. Practicing name writing	-.34*		**1.00***
12. Practicing letter writing	-.33*		**1.01***
13. Playing rhyming games/citing nursery rhymes			**.69***
14. Playing letter games			**.73***
Cronbach's Alpha	.61	.82	.89

* *p* < .05

Structural relations between home literacy activities and emergent literacy skills

Based on the results of the EFA, we adjusted our hypothesized model in Figure 2.2 Instead of the expected four, three latent variables representing the different types of home literacy activities were entered in the model. In this adjusted model, the latent variables Meaning-Oriented Instruction and Meaning-Oriented Facilitation were hypothesized to be associated with the latent variable Meaning-Oriented Literacy Skills and the latent variable Code-Oriented Activities was assumed to be associated with code skill. This model fit the data poorly (see Table 2.5). The modification indices suggested adding a covariance between the residuals of two underlying items of Meaning-Oriented Instruction ('correcting words' and 'correcting pronunciation'), and between the residuals of two items of Code-Oriented Activities ('practicing name writing' and 'practicing letter writing'), likely due to the overlap in content and wording between the items. Additionally, a pathway from Code-Oriented Activities to Meaning-Oriented Literacy Skills was suggested. An association between parent-child letter-based activities and children's meaning-oriented literacy skills has been found by Haney and Hill (2004), justifying the addition of this pathway. These covariances and pathways were added to the model, resulting in improved model fit (see Table 2.5). We settled on this model as our preliminary model at Level 1.

Table 2.5

Fit measures of structural models at within-level (pupils), between-level (classes) and multilevel (pupils within classes) and nested models

Models	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	p	RMSEA	CFI	SRMR (within)	SRMR (between)	$\delta\chi^2$	df	p
									Model fit		Chi Square difference tests
Within-level											
First model	391.20	129	3.03	<.001	.10	.81	.11	-			
Adjusted model (final model at within level)	267.24	126	2.12	<.001	.08	.90	.08	-	123.96	3	<.001
Multilevel											
Independence Model	234.43	129	1.82	<.001	.06	.90	.08	.47			
Multilevel Model 1	217.21	128	1.70	<.001	.06	.92	.08	.24	21.68[1]	1	<.001
Multilevel Model 2	206.97	127	1.63	<.001	.05	.93	.08	.24	11.53[1]	1	<.001
Final multilevel model (including covariates)	351.83	205	1.72	<.001	.06	.88	.09	.40			

[1] Chi square difference tests were calculated using the Satorra-Bentler correction (Satorra-Bentler, 2001)

Multilevel analyses

The independence model fit the data poorly (as shown Table 2.5), implying that a structural model needed to be specified on the second level as well. The modification indices suggested a covariance at the second level between vocabulary and phonological skill, reflecting a relationship between vocabulary knowledge and phonological skill at the class level. This covariation may be a demographic effect. Our sample contained many second language learners, with likely lower vocabulary skills and phonological skills compared to their monolingual peers. Possibly, second language learners were clustered in classes and monolingual pupils were clustered in classes. To account for this relationship at the second level, we included this covariance in the model as our Level 2 model (named Multilevel Model 1). This step in the analysis resulted in a reasonable and significantly improved model fit (see Table 2.5).

The fit of the complete model could be further improved based on modification indices (Hox, 2010). At Level 1, the modification indices suggested adding a pathway from Meaning-Oriented Literacy Skills to code skill (letter-sound knowledge). The relation between meaning-oriented literacy skills and code-oriented literacy skills has been found in many previous studies (cf. Storch & Whitehurst, 2002; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998), justifying the

addition of this pathway. The addition of this pathway resulted in a significantly improved model fit (see Table 2.5, Multilevel Model 2), although the pathways from Code-Oriented Activities to code skill and from code skill to phonological skill lost their significance in this latest model. Finally, covariates were added to the model. Pathways were modeled between home language, parental education, child's age, and gender and the outcome variables Meaning-Oriented Literacy Skills, code skill, and phonological skill. Home language, parental education, and child's age were allowed to have variance at Level 2. After the addition of the covariates, the model pathways remained unchanged, except for the pathway from letter-sound knowledge to phonological skill, which regained its significance. Home language was significantly negatively associated with Meaning-Oriented Literacy Skills and age was significantly positively associated with phonological skill. No other significant associations existed between the covariates and the dependent variables. Model fit decreased after adding covariates, possibly because the introduction of new parameters lead to a reduction of statistical power and because the covariates may not correspond well with the data, as shown by the many insignificant pathways between covariates and outcome variables. The χ^2/df and RMSEA fit indices were still satisfactory (see Table 2.5, final multilevel model). We settled on this model as our final model.

Figure 2.3 presents a visual summary of the final multilevel model including unstandardized parameter estimates and standard errors. In this model, Meaning-Oriented Instruction covaried with Meaning-Oriented Facilitation and with Code-Oriented Activities, while Code-Oriented Activities did not covary with Meaning-Oriented Facilitation, implying that parents who engage in Meaning-Oriented Instruction also engage in Meaning-Oriented Facilitation and Code-Oriented Activities, but that parents engaging in Meaning-Oriented Facilitation do not necessarily engage in Code-Oriented Activities. All home activities were associated with Meaning-Oriented Literacy Skills, but the pathway from Meaning-Oriented Instruction to Meaning-Oriented Literacy Skills was negative. Meaning-Oriented Literacy Skills was related to letter-sound knowledge. An additional analysis showed that Meaning-Oriented Literacy Skills partially mediated the pathway from Code-Oriented Activities to letter knowledge: the indirect effect was statistically significant (β = 0.432 [0.163], t = 2.651, p < 0.01). Both Meaning-Oriented Literacy Skills and letter-sound knowledge were associated with phonological skill. At the class level, vocabulary covaried with phonological skill. The final model explained 36% of the variance in children's meaning-oriented literacy skills , 8% of the variance in children's letter-sound knowledge, and 20% of the variance in children's phonological skill.

Figure 2.3 Final multilevel model including standardized parameter estimates and standard errors between brackets.
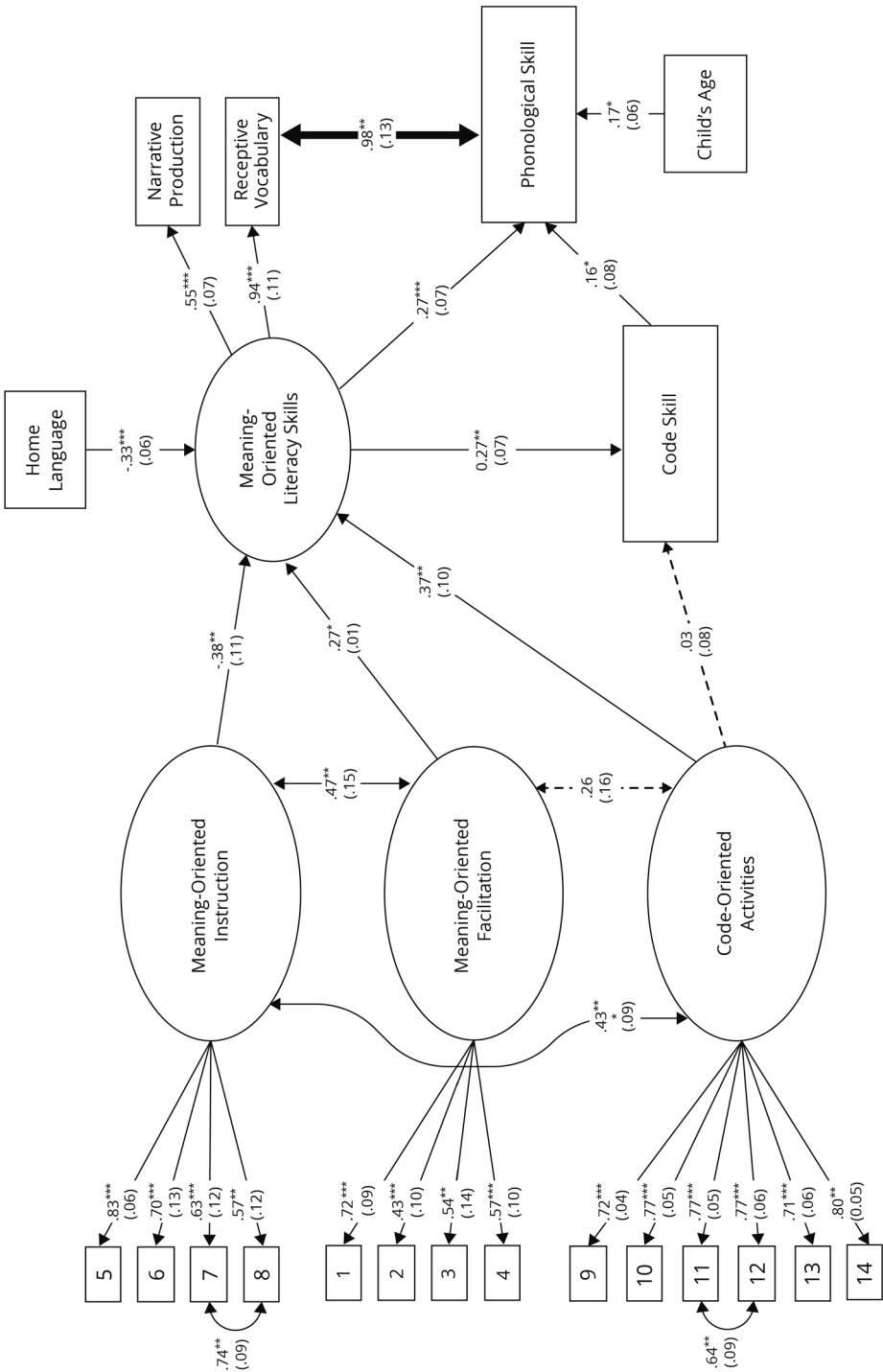
Figure 2.3 *(continued)*
The bold arrow represents a pathway at the second level (classes), the other arrows represent pathways at the first level (pupils). The solid arrows represent significant pathways. Dotted arrows represent insignificant pathways. Regarding the associations between covariates and children's outcomes, only significant pathways are shown for the sake of clarity.

1 = Talking with child about the child's experiences, 2 = Singing with child, 3 = Shared reading, 4 = Listening to stories of child, 5 = Teaching child new words, 6 = Having child repeat new words, 7 = Correcting child if s/he uses wrong word, 8 = Correcting child's pronunciation, 9 = Teaching child letter names, 10 = Having child point out words or letters, 11 = Practicing name writing, 12 = Practicing letter writing, 13 = Playing rhyming games/citing nursery rhymes, 14 = Playing letter games
[*]$p < .05$
[**]$p < .01$
[***]$p < .001$

2

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore a refined model of home literacy activities and their relations with children's emergent literacy skills, using the Home Literacy Model (HLM) as a starting point (Sénéchal, 2006; Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2002). First, we investigated the validity of a conceptualization of home literacy activities based on two variables: targeted skills (meaning-oriented/code-oriented skills) and didactic approach (facilitation/instruction). We found evidence for three activity categories. Home literacy activities were classified according to the skills targeted by the activity, resulting in activities targeting code-oriented literacy skills and activities targeting meaning-oriented literacy skills. Meaning-oriented activities were further divided into activities adopting an instructional method, such as teaching the meaning of new words, and a facilitative approach, such as shared reading. Second, relations between the different types of home literacy activities resulting from this conceptualization and children's early language and literacy skills were explored. All types of home literacy activities (including code-oriented activities) were related to children's meaning-oriented literacy skills, although the association between meaning-oriented instructional activities and meaning-oriented literacy skills was negative. In turn, meaning-oriented literacy skills were related to children's letter-sound knowledge and phonological skill, supporting evidence for the vital role of meaning-oriented literacy skills in young children's emergent literacy development (Storch & Whitehurst, 2002; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998). Besides meaning-oriented literacy skills, also letter-sound knowledge was associated with phonological skill, in accordance with the HLM.

The findings show that a broader range of activities than defined by the original HLM is associated with children's emergent literacy skills. First, also non-print activities, such as talking with children about the child's experiences and singing songs, appear to fit in a framework of activities that contribute to emergent literacy skills. Second, while nearly all previous operationalizations of formal literacy activities only included instructional activities (e.g., teaching of letter names), code activities in the refined model included activities that are more informal as well, such as playing letter games. The absence of the expected distinction in code activities between facilitation and instruction may be explained by the low levels of code skill for the children in our sample (which is also the case in several of the previous HLM studies, e.g. Carroll, 2013; Kim, 2009a; Manolitsis et al., 2011, 2013; Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2014; Sparks & Reese, 2013). Participating in playful code-activities such as playing letter games might still imply a substantial amount of parental instruction if the child's letter-sound knowledge is very limited. Third, including the didactic aspect in conceptualizing home literacy activities resulted in a new type of activities, namely those targeting meaning-oriented literacy skills through instruction, for example by teaching children new words.

The association between meaning-oriented instructional activities and children's meaning-oriented literacy skills was negative. Although the cross-sectional research design does not allow any causal interpretations of this association, we propose two possible mechanisms that might be operational in our sample and that may be tested in future research, for instance through longitudinal studies. First, parents might adjust their teaching behavior to their children's performance, implying that if children underperform in meaning-oriented literacy skills, parents increase their teaching activities in the home (Kim, 2009a; Manolitsis et al., 2011; Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2014; Silinskas et al., 2013). Second, meaning-oriented instructional activities may be indicative of an interaction style that does not contribute to language development. According to interactionist perspectives on language acquisition, children best acquire meaning-oriented literacy skills in an environment that allows them to actively interact with adults, responding to positive feedback provided by the adult (Chapman, 2000; Lonigan & Whitehurst, 1998). Whereas facilitative activities such as shared reading and parent-child conversations may create the circumstances for meaning-oriented literacy learning to occur, the direct instruction of meaning-oriented literacy skills may restrict children's opportunities to contribute to the interaction. As such, meaning-oriented instructional activities possibly limit children's meaning-oriented literacy development as they render the children passive.

In agreement with informal activities in the original HLM, meaning-oriented facilitative activities were positively related to children's meaning-oriented literacy skills. For code-oriented activities, the outcomes were different than predicted by the HLM. Contrary to studies in English and French speaking families (cf. Sénéchal & Lefevre, 2002; 2014; Skwarchuk et al., 2014), code activities were not significantly related to children's code skill. Compared to English and French, Dutch has a transparent orthography. As the Dutch code is relatively easy to master, parental teaching of code skills might not significantly add up to the input the child already receives in kindergarten (see also Manolitsis et al., 2011). Furthermore, the association between code activities and children's code skill (letter-sound knowledge) was mediated by meaning-oriented literacy skills. This implies the presence of two other unexpected effects, namely a direct effect of code activities on meaning-oriented literacy skills and a direct effect of meaning-oriented literacy skills on letter-sound knowledge.

One explanation for the observed association between code activities and meaning-oriented literacy skills is that we used a broadened construct of code activities, including the non-teaching activities rhyming and playing letter games. To test whether this choice had affected our outcomes, we ran the model without these two items. This did not change any of the pathways, supporting the coherence of the construct. The association found between code activities and meaning-oriented literacy skills might rather be explained by the nature of the interaction during these activities. Likely, engaging in code activities exposes children to richer language input: teaching about letters and print might additionally imply increased parental vocabulary use. In ABC books for instance, letters are connected to word meanings, by showing a letter combined with a picture of a word starting with that letter (for example, the T of tree, the P of pajamas). A similar observation was made by Haney and Hill (2004), who found a relationship between the teaching of letters and children's meaning-oriented literacy skills.

The association between meaning-oriented literacy skills and letter-sound knowledge is in line with previous research that has shown that especially in younger children the relation between meaning-oriented literacy and decoding skills is strong and only declines after children have started formal schooling (Kendeou et al., 2009; Storch & Whitehurst, 2002). Children, particularly this young of age, may be dependent on their Dutch meaning-oriented literacy skills to process any teaching and other input regarding letters and decoding skills (NICHD, 2005). This may be especially true for second language learners of Dutch, who represented a large part of the sample. Also, children

might remember letters more easily, when they can connect them to word meanings, thus applying meaning-oriented literacy skills. Another possible explanation for the association between meaning-oriented literacy skills and letter-sound knowledge is that letter names can be regarded as vocabulary items. Children with larger vocabularies acquire new words more easily (Verhoeven, Van Leeuwe, & Vermeer, 2011).

Due to nesting in the data (pupils within classes) this study applied a multilevel approach. This implied we also considered pathways at the class level. In this study, a covariation between vocabulary and phonological skill at class level was observed. Little is known on the interrelationships between emergent literacy outcomes at class levels, as research in the field does not always consider the nested nature of the data. The observation that class averages on the vocabulary measure covary with class averages on phonological skill may be a demographic effect. Our sample contained many second language learners for whom both Dutch vocabulary and Dutch phonology are relatively new compared to monolingual Dutch pupils. Children with stronger vocabulary skills often have stronger phonological skills. Possibly, second language learners were clustered in classes and monolingual pupils were clustered in classes. Additionally, especially in classes with many second language learners, vocabulary teaching and a focus on phonology may go hand in hand, for example by focusing both on meaning and sound in singing and rhyming activities.

While most studies confirming the HLM were conducted with samples of monolingual middle-class Anglo-Saxon children (cf. Hood et al., 2008; Skwarchuk et al., 2014), a strength of the current study is the sample of children with diverse backgrounds regarding parental education and home language, in the context of urban parts of the Netherlands. To date, the HLM has not been investigated in such a context. Most research into the HLM is conducted in homogenous samples regarding children's demographic characteristics. In urbanized parts of the Netherlands, people with all kinds of backgrounds cohabit. In their daily practice, teachers work with highly diverse groups of children regarding the socio-economic, educational, and linguistic background of their families. In this setting, including this diversity in the sample seems to be a more ecologically valid choice.

Although we entered demographic background variables as covariates in our final model, differences between the original HLM and the refined model in this study may be explained by the specific context of this study. To find further explanations

for differences between the pathways reported in the original HLM and our refined model, we explored correlations between demographic background factors and the three home literacy activity factors (using weighted means calculated from the factor loadings). Home language was significantly negatively correlated with meaning-oriented facilitation (r = -.18), implying that multilingual families engaged less frequently in this kind of activities than monolingual Dutch parents, which may be an indication of cultural differences in home practices supporting children's emergent literacy development. Children's age was negatively related to meaning-oriented instructional activities (r = -.14), indicating that parents of older children were less likely to directly teach their children about language than younger children. No other significant correlations between demographic background variables and the home literacy activity factors were found. To provide further insight into how demographic aspects may influence pathways between home literacy activities and children's emergent literacy outcomes, future research on the HLM in diverse samples is necessary.

Limitations and directions for future research

A first limitation of this study concerns the model fit. Although fit was good regarding χ^2/df and RMSEA, the CFI-value and SRMR measures were suboptimal. This requires modesty in approaching the results. This exploratory study must therefore be regarded as a first step in defining a more inclusive and nuanced model of home literacy activities and emergent literacy outcomes, but the model needs further validation in future studies. Another limitation is the cross-sectional design of the study, which precludes any causal statements regarding the relation between home literacy activities and children's literacy skills. Additionally, we did not include the child's perspective in this study, although the child's behavior may have influenced parental home literacy behavior. A third limitation of this study is that the data do not provide any information in which language parents performed the home literacy activities investigated as this was not included in our questionnaire. As such, we cannot make any statements concerning the advantages and disadvantages of performing home literacy activities in the first or second language for children's emergent literacy development in Dutch. Additionally, although we put much effort in accommodating all parents, we cannot exclude the possibility that some parents could not interpret the questionnaires due to limited proficiency in Dutch or limited literacy skills. A final limitation is the possibility of social desirability given the parent self-report data. Social desirability may partly explain the relatively low correlations between questionnaire items and child outcomes, because it may have limited the variation in parent responses on the questionnaire.

Future research, using larger samples and longitudinal designs, is needed to confirm our exploratory model. The latter would also allow analyzing the long-term relations between different types of home literacy activities and children's more advanced reading skills, such as word decoding, reading fluency, and text comprehension (Sénéchal, 2006; Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2014). Since we tested the model in a heterogeneous sample, it would be interesting to examine whether the structure we obtained holds in a more homogeneous sample (e.g., a sample of mainly higher educated parents, native parents, or monolingual parents), also because previous studies on the HLM were often limited to such samples. Furthermore, the current research suggests that participation in a wide range of both meaning-oriented facilitative and code-oriented activities at home may be beneficial for children's emergent literacy development, through its contribution to meaning-oriented literacy skills. Although experimental research exists on the impact of code-oriented approaches versus meaning-oriented approaches in center-based settings (Lonigan et al., 2013), the Home Literacy Model and the refined model proposed in this study have not yet been investigated in experimental designs. Family literacy programs focusing on either code-activities, meaning-oriented literacy facilitative activities, or meaning-oriented instructional activities at home could be designed and implemented to experimentally investigate the unique impact of different types of home literacy activities on children's emergent literacy skills. This type of research could offer more solid foundations for the relations described in this study.

As mentioned previously, the HLM is hardly investigated in heterogeneous samples of families. Future research should consider diversity, especially when this diversity is part of the context in which the study is conducted, which was the case in the current study. Existing research has shown that the literacy development of children with different linguistic, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds varies and that parents' roles in children's literacy development is associated with these backgrounds (Hart & Risley, 1995; Hoff, 2013; Scheele, Leseman, & Mayo, 2010; Van Steensel, 2006). Indeed, studies investigating the HLM using different types of samples regarding SES, linguistic and cultural backgrounds often found deviant results (Kalia & Reese, 2009; Kim, 2009a; Manolitsis et al., 2011; Sparks & Reese, 2013). However, the current study did not specifically examine the role such background characteristics might play in explaining differences in interrelations between components of the HLM. Examining such differences applying multi-group analyses could be the subject of future research. Additionally, future research with multilingual families could specifically focus on

the role of home language in home activities for both first and second language development.

Conclusion

This study explored a refined model of home literacy activities and their relations with children's emergent literacy skills. The results indicate that a broader definition of home literacy activities including non-print activities is suitable to describe children's home literacy experiences. By additionally considering didactic approach in the model, we identified a new category of home literacy activities, namely meaning-oriented instruction. The refined model of home literacy activities offered in this study enables researchers to describe differences in children's home literacy experiences more accurately. The outcomes suggest the existence of a more nuanced pattern of interrelations between elements of the home literacy environment and children's literacy skills in a diverse sample of families.

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Measuring Parental Literacy Beliefs in a Socio-Economically, Linguistically and Ethnically Diverse Sample

Abstract

The current study examined the use of a newly developed instrument for measuring parental literacy beliefs in a highly diverse urban Dutch sample of 35 parents, participating in a family literacy program. The instrument was used to explore a new conceptualization of parental literacy beliefs and associations between beliefs and parental demographic characteristics. Data were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative techniques. The instrument revealed that parents in this sample preferred meaning-oriented and facilitative practices to stimulate their children's literacy development, in which understanding the meaning of language and print is seen as the starting point in literacy development and in which teaching occurs indirectly, in an embedded child-centered approach. Parental preferences were associated with a variety of beliefs. Parents who did not speak Dutch, the majority language, with their children were more inclined towards directly instructing their children compared to parents who did speak Dutch with their children. The instrument proved to be effective in exposing the nature of and nuances in parental literacy beliefs in a diverse sample. The newly developed instrument can be used by professionals working with family literacy programs to gain insight into the literacy beliefs of diverse groups of parents.

Introduction

Already at the beginning of formal schooling, children differ strongly in their emergent literacy skills (Burgess, Hecht, & Lonigan, 2002). A vast body of research attributes these differences in children's literacy skills to differences in their early home literacy experiences (Niklas, Nguyen, Cloney, Tayler, & Adams, 2016; Park, 2008). Children growing up in rich home literacy environments (HLE) develop stronger literacy skills than children growing up in more limited HLEs (Burgess et al., 2002; Niklas & Schneider, 2013). Family literacy programs (FLPs) aim to stimulate children's emergent literacy development, by supporting parents in creating rich HLEs for their children (Hannon, 2003). Meta-analytic studies on the effects of FLPs on children's emergent literacy outcomes show smaller, sometimes even negligible effects for low socio-economic status (SES) and minority groups compared to high SES and mainstream groups (Van Steensel, McElvany, Kurvers & Herppich, 2011; Manz, Hughes, Barnabas, Braccaliello, & Ginsburg-Block, 2010; Mol, Bus, De Jong, & Smeets, 2008). To date, it remains unclear which mechanisms can explain these differences but scholars have suggested that parental beliefs on supporting their children's literacy development may be important in interpreting these differences in program effects (De La Rie, 2018; Manz et al., 2010).

Research indicates that parental literacy beliefs may guide parental literacy behavior towards their children. For example, parents who have stronger beliefs in their own influence on children's reading development, in pleasure and knowledge being the most important goals of reading, and in the pliability of children's literacy competencies (DeBaryshe, 1995, p. 6), were found to engage their children more frequently in literacy activities in the home than parents with less strong reading beliefs (cf. Gonzalez et al., 2017; Weigel, Martin & Bennet, 2006a, 2006b). However, the current research is inconclusive on the relationships between parental literacy beliefs and parental demographic variables such as educational, cultural or linguistic background, with some scholars finding parental literacy beliefs to be associated with parental background (cf. Cottone, 2012; Curenton & Justice, 2008; Reese & Gallimore, 2000), while others do not report such relations (Evans, Fox, Cremaso, & McKinnon, 2004; Hammer, Miccio & Wagstaff, 2003).

Parental literacy beliefs may partly determine parental uptake of FLPs. FLPs require parents to behave in a certain way. If parents have beliefs that induce literacy behavior that aligns less well with the behavior that a program requires from parents, there is

a mismatch between parental beliefs and program principles. If such misalignments exist, program engagement may be hampered. For example, if the program activities and philosophy agree with what parents think they can and should do to support their children's literacy development, parents may be more engaged, attend more program events and carry out program activities in a way intended by the program. Conversely, if a program does not match with parents' literacy beliefs, parental attendance of program events may be limited and parents may not carry out program activities according to program guidelines, which in turn may hamper any positive influences on children's emergent literacy development.

To find out more about differences in effects of FLPs, research into the literacy beliefs of parents from different socio-economic, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds participating in FLPs is necessary. In the extant research however, the instruments used to measure parental literacy beliefs show several substantial shortcomings, which will be discussed in more detail below. Therefore, the current study examines the use of a newly developed instrument to explore the literacy beliefs of diverse parents participating in a Dutch FLP. We investigated whether this instrument is capable of exposing possible variability in parental preferences for parent-child activities, the beliefs underlying these preferences, and possible differences in preferences related to parental education, home language and country of birth.

Measuring Parental Literacy Beliefs: Beyond Shared Reading Beliefs
Many studies measuring parental literacy beliefs focus on shared reading beliefs only. A frequently used instrument to measure such beliefs is the Parental Reading Belief Inventory (PRBI; DeBaryshe, 1995; DeBaryshe & Binder, 1994), which has been applied in many different contexts (cf. Bennet, Weigel, & Martin, 2002; Celano, Hazzard, McFadden-Garden, & Swaby-Ellis, 1998; Cottone, 2012; Curenton & Justice, 2008; Davis et al., 2015; Gonzalez et al., 2017; Radišić & Ševa, 2014; Weigel, Martin, & Bennet, 2006a; 2006b; Wu & Honig, 2010). The PRBI aims to measure several aspects of shared reading beliefs: parental affect towards shared reading; parental self-efficacy in reading to their children; beliefs about children's participation during shared reading; beliefs about the extent to which shared reading should include instruction; beliefs about the role of the environment for children's language and literacy skills; and parental perception of access to resources for shared reading. Nevertheless, most authors calculate a single composite score for the PRBI, as the underlying factor structure tends to vary across studies (DeBaryshe & Binder, 1994; Gonzalez, Taylor, Davis, & Kim, 2013; Rodriguez,

Hammer & Lawrence, 2013; Wu & Honing, 2010). This may obscure which aspects of parental literacy beliefs are actually important.

Other scholars combined the measurement of parental beliefs on shared reading with the measurement of other literacy beliefs. Bingham (2007), for instance, assessed maternal beliefs on how children become literate in addition to shared reading beliefs. Bingham (2007) found that maternal beliefs on shared reading were related to mother-child interaction quality during shared reading and that more general beliefs on how children become literate at home were associated with more general aspects of the HLE, such as the frequency with which mothers engaged their children in different types of literacy activities. Boiczyk, Davis, and Rana (2016) developed a scale to measure parental beliefs on shared reading strategies and on children's readiness for learning to read. Similar to the results by Bingham (2007), mothers' beliefs on the benefits of active contributions of children in shared reading were related to mother-child interaction quality during shared book reading. Through interaction quality, these beliefs were indirectly associated with children's expressive vocabulary knowledge.

The limited focus on shared reading does not match with what we know about the HLEs of diverse families. Numerous studies into the HLEs of families from various backgrounds have shown that parents involve their children in a multitude of activities which may contribute to children's literacy development. Families may engage their children in a wide array of oral language activities that support literacy-related skills, such as singing songs, storytelling and mealtime conversations (Van Steensel, 2006; Curenton, Craig, & Flanigan, 2008; Weigel, et al., 2006a; 2006b). Additionally, families carry out informal print-related activities other than shared reading, such as playing letter games and discussing bible texts (Purcell-Gates, 1996). Sénéchal and colleagues' influential work showed that parents may also engage their children in instructional print activities, such as alphabet teaching and practicing letter writing (cf. Martini & Sénéchal, 2012; Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2002, 2014; Sénéchal, 2006). In Chapter 2, we expanded the work by Sénéchal and colleagues and showed that parents not only perform direct teaching activities centered around letters and print, but also direct teaching activities concerning oral language, such as the teaching of new words and definitions.

Above mentioned studies have additionally shown that different types of home literacy practices contribute differentially to different types of emergent literacy skills. Activities focusing on the code of print, such as teaching the alphabet, were found to contribute

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to children's code skills, which encompass all skills necessary to interpret the code of written language, such as letter knowledge, word reading, and phonological skills. Activities focusing on the meaning of language and print, such as shared reading, were found to contribute to children's meaning-related skills, which involve all skills necessary to understand the meaning of spoken and, eventually, written language, such as vocabulary knowledge, narrative knowledge, listening and text comprehension. Nevertheless, research outcomes concerning the relations between types of home activities and children's literacy skills vary across contexts, with regards to the socio-economic, ethnic and linguistic background of the samples (cf. Chapter 2 of this dissertation; Kim, 2009a; Manolitsis, Georgiou, & Parrila, 2011; Sparks & Reese, 2013). Measures of parental literacy beliefs need to reflect the reality that parents involve their children in a variety of home literacy practices. An instrument should include beliefs on diverse relevant literacy activities, instead of focusing on shared reading beliefs only. In the current study, we therefore included a range of home literacy practices in our measurement of parental literacy beliefs.

Measuring Beliefs on Emergent Literacy Development: Including Didactic Beliefs
Besides studies focusing on parental reading beliefs, a body of research exists concerning parents' beliefs on the nature of emergent literacy development. In this line of research, generally two types of parental perspectives on emergent literacy development are distinguished (Anderson, 1995; DeBaryshe, Binder, & Buell, 2000; Evans et al., 2004; Fitzgerald, Spiegel, & Cunningham, 1991; Lynch, Anderson, Anderson, & Shapiro, 2006; Torr, 2008). In the views of some parents, deciphering the written language code is the starting point for literacy development. To become competent readers, children need to be taught specific skills and knowledge on how words are built up, such as letter knowledge, phonemic awareness and letter-sound correspondence. According to this perspective, children's code skills form the core of children's literacy development. We apply the term code-oriented perspective when referring to this view. In the views of other parents, understanding the meaning of language and print, rather than the way it is encoded, is the starting point for literacy development. Children acquire literacy skills gradually, as an integrated whole by engaging in meaningful interaction with others. Children's meaning-related skills form the core of literacy development in this perspective. We apply the term meaning-oriented perspective when referring to this view. Finally, another group of parents was found to combine code- and meaning-oriented perspectives in their views on emergent literacy development (DeBaryshe et al., 2000; Evans et al., 2004; Lynch et al., 2006). Although

these perspectives resonate some scientific insights into children's emergent literacy development, one must keep in mind that these are views by parents, thus laypersons' perspectives, on emergent literacy development. Research on the nature of reading development generally acknowledges that to become competent readers, children build on both their meaning-oriented skills as well as their code-oriented skills (Dickinson, McCabe, Anastasopoulos, Peisner-Feinberg, & Poe, 2003; Hoover & Gough, 1990).

Parental didactic beliefs, that is, how parents think they should guide their children's literacy development, may form another important dimension of parental literacy beliefs. Following Hannon (2000; 2003), didactic beliefs can be framed in terms of a continuum with a preference for a formal, instructional approach on the one end, and a preference for a more playful, 'child-centered' or 'facilitative' method on the other (Hannon, 2000; 2003; Stipek, Milburn, Clements, & Daniels, 1992). Home literacy practices that take an instructional approach are activities in which parents apply explicit instruction, such as teaching letter names, practicing writing, correcting a child's language use and teaching new words and definitions (see Chapter 2 of this dissertation). Home literacy practices that take a facilitative approach are activities in which parents expose their children to language and print in a more informal, playful way, such as shared reading, having parent-child conversations, playing letter games and citing nursery rhymes (see Chapter 2 of this dissertation). Instructional activities may include both code-oriented practices, such as teaching letter names, and meaning-oriented practices, such as teaching new words and definitions. Similarly, facilitative activities may include code-oriented practices, such as playing letter games, as well as meaning-oriented practices, such as parent-child conversations (see Chapter 2 of this dissertation). Parents may vary in how they value all these types of practices. Therefore, we propose that both parental beliefs on the nature of emergent literacy development in terms of meaning-oriented and code-oriented perspectives as well as parental didactic beliefs may be related to parental preferences for certain literacy practices.

Parental didactic beliefs have been investigated in several contexts. For instance, scholars have investigated parental beliefs on play and perceived relationships between play and academic learning (cf. Fisher, Hirsh-Pasek, Golinkoff, & Gryfe, 2008; Fogle & Mendez, 2006). Others have investigated parental didactic beliefs in the context of early math development (cf. DeFlorio & Beliakoff, 2015). These studies indicate that parents vary in their beliefs on the value of child-centered facilitative approaches for children's academic learning. In the context of literacy development, the research is

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limited. In most studies on parental literacy beliefs, parental didactic beliefs have either not been considered (cf. DeBaryshe et al., 2000; Evans et al., 2004) or instruction has been equated with a focus on code and facilitation with a focus on meaning (Anderson, 1995). The previously mentioned PRBI does include a subscale measuring parental beliefs about direct teaching, but as most authors compute a single composite score for the PRBI, the role of this dimension remains unclear (cf. Cottone, 2012; Curenton & Justice, 2008).

In their study on parental literacy beliefs and children's home literacy environments, Sonnenschein and colleagues (1997) made a distinction rather similar to the facilitation-instruction binary. They distinguished an entertainment perspective, in which literacy is regarded as a source of entertainment, from a skills-based perspective, in which literacy is viewed as a set of skills to be mastered and instructed. In the study, parents were asked what they thought was the most effective way to help their children learn to read. Parents with a preference for facilitative activities, such as shared reading and play with print, were considered having an entertainment perspective. Parents preferring instructional practices, such as activities involving flashcards and workbooks, were labelled as having a skills-based perspective. Sonnenschein and colleagues (1997) only focused on home practices involving print, while we propose that the distinction between instruction and facilitation is also present in activities that do not involve print, such as teaching your child the meaning of new words, having parent-child conversations and citing nursery rhymes.

In the current study, we add parental didactic beliefs to our understanding of parental literacy beliefs. Our instrument for measuring parental literacy beliefs allows parental beliefs not only to be classified into a preference for a meaning- or code-oriented perspective, in which either the understanding of meaning or the understanding of code is viewed as the basis of literacy development, but also in a preference for facilitation or instruction, in which parents either regard playful exposure to language and print or direct teaching about language and print as the best way to guide children's literacy learning.

Other Considerations: Aiming for Deeper Understanding and an Inclusive Approach
When using quantitative instruments of parental literacy beliefs, parental responses to questionnaires are classified into categories of parental beliefs, such as a meaning-oriented or code-oriented perspective (cf. DeBaryshe et al., 2000) and an entertainment versus a skills-based perspective (Sonnenschein et al., 1997), or, in studies using the

PRBI, placed on a continuum of low and high scores on this reading belief measure (cf. Gonzalez et al., 2017; Weigel, Martin & Bennet, 2006a). Parental explanations for their scores remain often unknown. Allowing parents to clarify their responses to questionnaires may provide a more nuanced understanding of the factors associated with parental literacy beliefs and shed light on the possible (mis)alignment between parental beliefs and different types of FLPs. In the current study, we included a qualitative component in our measurements of parental beliefs, allowing for parents to elaborate on their responses.

Furthermore, current instruments for measuring parental literacy beliefs are not suitable for all groups of parents. Quantitative studies cited above mainly use written parent questionnaires. Generally, these questionnaires are quite lengthy, are provided only in the majority language and contain literacy jargon, such as 'syllables', 'letter-combination sounds', 'world-topic-knowledge' and 'natural language' (cf. DeBaryshe, & Binder, 2000; Evans et al., 2004). This language might be difficult to follow for parents who are not used to such terms, for parents who have limited proficiency in the majority language, and for parents who have limited literacy skills. Given that the target groups of FLPs often include parents with lower educational levels and limited majority language proficiency, the development of an inclusive instrument which accommodates these parents is highly relevant when measuring the literacy beliefs of parents participating in FLPs. Such an instrument should not heavily rely on text, contain visual materials and avoid literacy jargon. For the current study, we developed an instrument that is intended to be suitable for all groups of parents.

Investigating Parental Literacy Beliefs in a Highly Diverse Context
Parental literacy beliefs are thought to originate in parents' own experiences with literacy practices and literacy learning as children (Evans et al., 2004; Gillanders & Jiménez, 2004; Reese, Arauz, & Bazán, 2012; Reese & Gallimore, 2000). Such experiences are closely connected to parents' schooling experiences and the culture the parents grew up in. For instance, in their comprehensive study of parental literacy beliefs of Latino parents in the US, Reese and Gallimore (2000) found that many parents in their study viewed literacy development from a cultural code-oriented model in which children were understood to acquire literacy skills through direct instruction starting in school. This cultural model was rooted in parents' own experiences with literacy learning when they were young. However, this model was not static, but subject to change: through contact with the school teachers and exposure to their children's school

system, parents also began to value more facilitative and meaning-oriented practices, such as shared reading, for their children's literacy development. Similarly, Li (2006) showed that middle-class Chinese parents in the US held mostly code-oriented beliefs on the literacy development of their children, originating in Chinese cultural conceptions of literacy education, in which explicit instruction of the copying of characters is the dominant approach to literacy teaching in schools (Wang & McBride, 2017). Yet also in Li's study, parents incorporated more meaning-oriented characteristic of the US school system into their understanding and support of their children's literacy development (Li, 2006).

Parental demographic background variables such as level of education and income, country of birth and home language may serve as proxy variables for parental experiences associated with parental literacy beliefs. Therefore, relationships can be expected between parental beliefs and such background variables. However, research on the relationships between literacy beliefs and demographic variable provides a complex picture. Some studies found parental beliefs to be associated with parental income and education. Sonnenschein et al. (1997), for example, found that parents with lower incomes placed more value on instructional practices such as the teaching/ practicing of letters. Similarly, in some studies code-oriented beliefs were more likely to be found in lower educated parents, while meaning-oriented beliefs were more likely to be found in higher educated parents (DeBaryshe et al., 2000; Fitzgerald et al., 1991; Lynch et al., 2007; Stipek et al. 1992). Possibly, parents with more limited schooling experiences may place higher value on the technical aspects of learning how to read because of their own experiences with such literacy instruction as children, while parents exposed to more education are more experienced in and used to reading for meaning-oriented goals, such as reading longer texts for study purposes. Additionally, some studies measuring parental reading beliefs through the previously mentioned PRBI reported that parents with higher levels of education showed higher scores on the PRBI compared to parents with lower levels of education (Cottone, 2012; Curenton & Justice, 2008). However, other scholars did not report any relationships between parental education and literacy beliefs (Bingham, 2007; Evans et al. 2004). Additionally, there is only little research on the relationships between ethnic background or home language and parental literacy beliefs. Mostly, research on the role of these background variables has focused on literacy behavior rather than literacy beliefs. The limited research available that examined differences in parental literacy beliefs across groups of parents generally did not report any significant differences in literacy beliefs

across various ethnic groups living in the same country (Boomstra, Van Dijk, Jorna, & Van Geert, 2013; Duren, 2006; Sawyer, Cycyk, Sandilos, & Hammer, 2018) and across groups speaking different home languages (Hammer et al., 2003; Hammer, Rodriguez, Lawrence, & Miccio, 2007).

The research discussed above concerning relations between parental literacy beliefs and demographic variables is mostly situated in the northern American context, with the exception of the study by Boomstra and colleagues (2013). No previous study examined parental literacy beliefs on different types of home literacy practices in the urban Dutch context. This context, which is the setting of the current study, can be characterized by a highly diverse population. In this population, many variables related to diversity intersect, including ethnicity, levels of education and home language (Crul, 2016). As parents' literacy beliefs may be shaped by parents' own experiences with literacy learning, high variability in literacy beliefs can be expected in this population.

Meta-analyses such as those by Manz and colleagues (2010), Mol and colleagues (2008) and Sénéchal and Young (2008) showed that lower educated families and ethnic minority families generally profit less from FLPs than higher educated and majority families. Therefore, it is relevant to investigate the differences in literacy beliefs between parents from different educational, linguistic and ethnic backgrounds participating in such programs. The current study not only explored whether the newly developed instrument was able to expose the variety of and nuances in parental literacy beliefs in a highly diverse sample, but also whether this variability was related to parental level of education, ethnicity and home language.

Purpose of the Study

In the current study, we examined the use of a newly developed instrument to measure parental literacy beliefs in a highly diverse sample of parents participating in an FLP. The instrument included parental literacy beliefs on a wide variety of home literacy practices and focused both on parental beliefs on the nature of children's literacy development as well as on their didactic beliefs. Additionally, the instrument allowed for analysis of parental elaborations on their responses. Finally, the instrument was intended to be suitable for a diverse group of parents in terms of education, country of birth and home language. We explored the following research questions (RQs):

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1. What does the new instrument reveal about the types of literacy activities parents prefer?
2. What beliefs possibly underlying these preferences does the instrument expose:
    a. Do these beliefs reflect the distinction between a meaning- versus a code-oriented perspective?
    b. Do these beliefs reflect the distinction between a facilitative and an instructional perspective?
    c. What other beliefs does the instrument expose?
    d. Do these beliefs differ across activity type (code, meaning, facilitative, instructive)?
3. Does the instrument expose relations between parental preferences and parental education, home language, and country of birth?

Methods

Participants

The participants were 35 parents, divided over eight schools, with children who were second year kindergartners (age in months M = 69.5, SD = 3.1), enrolled in a Dutch family literacy program named Early Education at Home (EEH; Dutch Youth Institute, 2020). See Table 3.1 for an overview of the participants' characteristics. Mostly mothers participated (n = 32) and in one case the interview was conducted with the mother together with the mother's partner, who was not the child's father. Over a third of the parents had low educational levels, one fifth of the sample was higher educated. More than two thirds of the parents were born outside the Netherlands. Dutch was the only home language in less than a third of the families, in the other families Dutch as an additional language or only another language was spoken. Sixteen different languages were spoken in the sample, of which Dutch was mentioned most frequently, followed by Sranan (lingua franca in Suriname, a former colony of the Netherlands), Turkish and Moroccan Arabic (languages spoken by the largest groups of immigrants in the Netherlands).

Measures

Parental literacy beliefs

To investigate parental literacy beliefs, we developed a new instrument based on a questionnaire used in a previous study (see Chapter 2 of this dissertation). In Chapter 2, we explored a conceptualization of parent-child home literacy activities, that distinguished

code-oriented from meaning-oriented activities and instructional from facilitative activities. We developed a questionnaire consisting of 15 home literacy activities, each describing a parent-child home literacy activity that was either meaning-oriented or code-oriented, and either instructional or facilitative. To investigate parental beliefs on different types of home literacy practices in the current study, we selected from each of the four categories in this previous questionnaire two activities that represented the categories sufficiently and would warrant a valid account of parental beliefs. This selection resulted in eight activities included in our qualitative interview instrument. We restricted this selection to eight activities to limit the complexity of the instrument. In a semi-structured interview, parents were presented eight cards, each displaying a picture of a home literacy practice with the words labeling the activity printed below the picture. Four activities were defined by us as meaning-oriented activities, namely talking with your child, shared reading, teaching your child (the meaning of) new words, and correcting your child when s/he uses a wrong word. Four activities were code-oriented activities, namely playing letter games, citing nursery rhymes, teaching your child the alphabet, and practicing letter writing. Of the above-mentioned activities, four adopted an instructional teaching approach, namely teaching your child (the meaning of) new words, correcting your child when s/he uses a wrong word, teaching your child the alphabet, and practicing the writing of letters. The other four activities adopted a facilitative approach, namely talking with your child, shared reading, playing letter games, and citing nursery rhymes. See Table 3.2 for a visual display.

Table 3.1

Participant Characteristics

Characteristic	Amount (percentage of total sample)
Parents	N = 35 (100%)
Mother	n = 31 (89%)
Father	n = 3 (8 %)
Mother and mothers' partner (not father of child)	n = 1 (3%
Interview language	
Dutch	n = 31 (89%)
Dutch and English	n = 2 (5%)
Moroccan Arabic (with interpreter)	n = 1 (3 %)
Portuguese (with interpreter)	n = 1 (3%)
Parental Education	
Low[a]	n = 13 (37%)
Middle[b]	n = 15 (43%)
High[c]	n = 6 (17 %)
Unknown[d]	n = 1 (3%)

Table 3.1

(continued)

Characteristic	Amount (percentage of total sample)
Country of birth	
Netherlands	*n* = 24 (69%)
Another country	*n* = 11 (31%)
Language spoken to child	
Dutch only	*n* = 10 (29%)
Dutch and other language(s)	*n* = 17 (48%)
Only other language(s)	*n* = 8 (23%)
Child's age (in months)	M = 69.5, SD = 3.1
Gender child	
Boys	*n* = 20 (57%)
Girls	*n* = 15 (43%)

[a] No education, primary and /or prevocational secondary education
[b] Senior general secondary education or pre-university education, and/or secondary vocational education
[c] Higher professional education or university degree
[d] Parent did not indicate educational level.

The interviewer first described the eight activities and explained them to the parents if necessary. Next, the interviewer asked the parent: "Could you rank these activities in order of importance for children's literacy development? It does not matter what you actually *do* at home with your child, but what you *think* is most important for stimulating children's literacy development. There are no right or wrong answers, it is your opinion". After the parents ranked the eight cards, the interviewer asked a set of qualitative interview questions. These questions, such as "why do you think this activity is most important for children's literacy development?", "why did you place this activity in the second position?" invited the parents to explain their ordering. A copy of the instrument is included in Appendix A.

In applying this instrument, we distinguished between parental *preferences* in supporting children's literacy development at home and parental *beliefs* underlying those preferences. Parental *preferences* are operationalized as the ranking of the eight activities in the ranking task. Parental *beliefs* are operationalized as the explanations parents provide for their rankings. After ranking, each of the eight activities was given a rank score: activities ranked in first position received a score of one point, in second position a score of two points et cetera. Based on these rank scores, variables were computed representing a meaning-oriented preference, a code-oriented preference, a preference for instruction and a preference for facilitation. These variables were

formed by averaging the scores for each of the items that represented the variables (see Table 3.2 for activity categories). For instance, the score for parents' preference for implicit teaching was computed by taking the mean of the scores for the four activities representing implicit teaching. Lower scores represent a stronger preference for a certain type of activity. Scores on each variable ranged from 2.5 ([1 + 2 + 3 + 4] / 4) to 6.5 ([5 + 6 + 7 + 8] / 4) points.

The scores on these variables allowed us to classify parental preferences according to the four categories of beliefs (meaning-oriented, code-oriented, instruction, facilitation). More importantly, parents' responses on the qualitative interview questions allowed us to examine which beliefs informed parents' preferences for the different types of home literacy practices and whether these were beliefs on the nature of emergent literacy development, didactic beliefs or possibly other types of beliefs.

Table 3.2

Home Practices Included in the Ranking Task

	Facilitative practices	**Instructional practices**
Meaning-oriented practices	Talking with your child	Teaching your child new words/concepts
	Shared reading	Correcting your child when s/he used a word incorrectly
Code-oriented practices	Playing letter games	Teaching your child the alphabet
	Citing nursery rhymes	Practicing the writing of letters with your child

Demographic information

Parents received a questionnaire at the start of the project (see Table 3.1 for an overview of families' characteristics).

Parental education. Parental education was operationalized as the highest educational level obtained by the respondent. Levels were low (no education, primary and /or prevocational secondary education), middle (senior general secondary education or pre-university education, and/or secondary vocational education), and high (higher professional education or university degree).

Child's age. Child's age was measured by asking parents to indicate the birth date of their child, on which we based the children's age in months at the time of data collection.

Home language. Parents were asked what language(s) they spoke with their child. Parents indicated whether they spoke only Dutch, Dutch and (an)other language(s) or only (an)other language(s) at home with their child.

Country of birth. Parents were asked to indicate their country of birth. Their responses were coded as a dichotomous variable (0 = *Netherlands*, 1 = *other country*).

Procedure

This study was conducted in the context of a larger study into the effects of a Dutch FLP, Early Education at Home (EEH; Dutch Youth Institue, 2020).

EEH

EEH aims to improve children's linguistic, socio-emotional and cognitive abilities by enhancing their home literacy environment. The program is a combination of a home- and center-based intervention (Blok, Fukkink, Gebhard, & Leseman, 2005). At the time of the current study, the children and their parents had been enrolled in EEH for 15 months. EEH's thematic approach matches the curriculum of early childhood education in the Netherlands. The kindergarten curriculum targets emergent literacy development, but focuses on meaning-related skills. According to this curriculum, children should know approximately 7000 (Dutch) words receptively and 3500 words productively, have acquired knowledge of the functions of print, are able to recognize and name an unspecified number of letters, are able to write symbols that resemble letters, know that letters correspond to sounds and have mastered the Dutch phonological system, before entering Grade 1 (Stichting Leerplan Ontwikkeling, 2010). In EEH, every four to six weeks the kindergarten invites parents for parent meetings, where they receive materials (prompting boards, picture books, craft work) to take home. The program philosophy can be characterized as meaning-oriented and facilitative: very limited attention is paid to the code of print, while most activities aim to promote children's meaning-oriented skills, such as listening comprehension skills and vocabulary knowledge. All activities have a playful, facilitative format; direct instruction activities are no part of the program. Parents are encouraged to follow a facilitative approach in conducting program activities.

Sampling procedure

The sample of the current study consisted of randomly selected parents who received the EEH-intervention participating in the larger effect study. To compile the sample,

we used the following procedure. From the 118 families participating in EEH, we randomly selected five parents in each of the eight schools that implemented the EEH-intervention, resulting in a sample of 40 parents. After selection, the child's teacher asked parents whether they would agree to take part. The teacher explained the aim of the project and communicated that the family would receive a gift card of 20 euros for participating. If parents did not agree to take part, another family was randomly selected and approached. Due to the many rejections by parents to take part in the project (based on various reasons: no time, personal circumstances, parents did not want to be audio-recorded, teachers were not able to reach parents, no reason), 76 parents were approached, but only 36 agreed to take part. The limited willingness for participation has been observed before in similar populations with families with lower educational and literacy levels and minority families (cf. Sadler, Lee, Lim, & Fullerton, 2011). Chi-square tests and t-tests revealed no significant differences in parental education and country of birth, home language and child's age between the group of parents who agreed to take part and parents who did not. Additionally, one parent was excluded because the oldest child mostly answered the interview questions instead of the parent. The final sample consisted of 35 parents. Informed, written consent was obtained from these parents.

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Data collection
Parents were asked whether they would prefer to do the interview in Dutch, in English, or in their home language with the aid of an interpreter. Thirty-three parents indicated they preferred to conduct the interview in Dutch, of which two parents switched to English during the interview. Two parents preferred to conduct the interview in their home language (Moroccan Arabic and Portuguese). These interviews were conducted with the aid of interpreters.

Training of research assistants
The data collection was carried out by five trained research assistants. In two group sessions and additional individual coaching, the research assistants were trained in interview techniques, transcription of the data and organizational aspects of the data collection.

Coding of parent interviews
Coding of parental responses on the parental belief instrument was conducted by the first author using ATLAS.ti (ATLAS.ti Scientific Software Development GmbH, 2019). Coding procedures are described in the analysis section.

Analysis

To address RQ 1 (what does the new instrument reveal about the types of literacy activities parents prefer?), we used descriptive statistical techniques. To address RQ2 (what beliefs underlying these preferences does the instrument expose) and sub-questions, parental responses were coded using qualitative content analysis (QCA), which allows researchers to combine inductive coding with deductive coding (Schreier, 2012). QCA is characterized by a systematic yet flexible approach that leads to data reduction through categorization. In QCA, a sequence of steps is taken: formulating research questions, selecting material, building coding frame, trying coding, modifying coding frame, main analysis and reporting results. Both theory-driven and data-driven codes can be used in the coding scheme, which implies the coding frame is not fixed and can be modified throughout the analysis to increase validity. QCA leads to data reduction because it summarizes larger data fragments into categories (codes) (Schreier, 2012).

The first author analyzed the data in several steps. First, parental responses to the interview questions were coded using theory-driven and data-driven codes. The codes that emerged from this first coding session, were further inspected and merged if possible. In addition, clear descriptions of codes and sub-codes were provided (see Table 3.4). Second, all data were coded for the second time, using the adapted code scheme. If necessary, final adjustments were made in the coding scheme. Third, two independent coders (the second and third author of the manuscript) coded five interviews (14% of the data) using the final coding scheme. Percentage agreement was computed, which was 88% between the first author and the second author and 74% between the first author and the third author. Disagreements in coding were inspected, discussed and solved between the three coders. Based on this discussion, small final adjustments were made in the coding scheme and all data were checked by the first author one final time. The final coding scheme is displayed in Table 3.4.

To address RQ3 (does the instrument expose relations between parental preferences and parental education, home language, and country of birth?) correlational analyses and Man Whitney U tests were conducted. For analyzing the relationships between literacy beliefs, parental birth country and parental education, we examined correlations. Because the distribution of most variables was non-normal, the sample size was small and contained a relatively large number of tied ranks (due to the variables based on the ranking task) we used Kendall's tau (τ) to examine associations between parental literacy beliefs and demographic variables. Kendall's tau (τ) is robust for

non-normality and is suitable for small data sets with a large number of tied ranks (Field, 2013). Because the home language variable was a tri-partite categorical variable, distinguishing monolingual Dutch parents from parents speaking both Dutch and other languages at home with their children, and from parents who speak no Dutch at home at all, a correlational analysis was not appropriate. To explore how these three language groups differed from one another in their literacy beliefs, we conducted three sets of Mann Whitney U tests. In the first set, we compared monolingual Dutch speakers with speakers of Dutch and (an)other language(s). In the second set, we compared monolingual Dutch speakers with parents who did not speak Dutch at home with their children and in the third set we compared parents who spoke Dutch and (an)other language(s) at home to parents who did not speak Dutch at home with their children.

Results

Parental Preferences: Ranking Task Scores

Parental rankings of the different activities in the ranking task in order of importance for children's emergent literacy development were analyzed. Based on these rankings we computed four variables: a variable representing a preference for meaning-oriented activities, a variable representing a preference for code-oriented activities, a variable representing a preference for instructional activities and a variable representing a preference for the facilitative activities (RQ1). Overall, parents showed a general preference for meaning-oriented activities: meaning-oriented practices received higher rankings than code practices. Talking with your child was ranked in the top two positions by more than 82% of the sample, for shared reading this was 57% (Table 3.3). Generally, facilitative activities received higher positions than instructional activities, indicating a preference towards a facilitative approach in this sample. Additionally, in the category of meaning-oriented practices, facilitative activities received higher positions than instructional activities. In the category of code-oriented practices the picture is less clear: playing letter games received higher rankings than code-oriented instructional activities, but citing nursery rhymes was on average perceived as least important for children's emergent literacy development. Table 3.3 provides the frequencies and percentages of the rankings of the eight home literacy activities included in the ranking task, the mean rankings of each of the activities, and the descriptive statistics of the four aggregate variables representing parental preferences for the four types of activities.

Table 3.3

Frequencies and Percentages of Parental Rankings of the Activities Included in the Ranking Task and Descriptive Statistics for the Four Variables Computed Based on the Rankings

		Meaning-oriented facilitative practices		Meaning-oriented instructional practices		Code-oriented instructional practices		Code-oriented facilitative practices	
		Talking with your child	Shared reading	Teaching your child new words/concepts	Correcting your child when s/he used a word incorrectly	Teaching your child the alphabet	Practicing the writing of letters with your child	Playing letter games	Citing nursery rhymes
Position in ranking / Frequency and percentage	1	24 (68%)	6 (17%)	1 (3%)	2 (6%)	1 (3%)	0	1 (3%)	0
	2	5 (14%)	14 (40%)	4 (11%)	3 (8%)	1 (3%)	3 (9%)	4 (11%)	1 (3%)
	3	3 (9%)	6 (17%)	5 (14%)	7 (20%)	5 (14%)	2 (6%)	4 (11%)	3 (9%)
	4	1 (3%)	5 (14%)	7 (20%)	8 (23%)	4 (11%)	2 (6%)	4 (11%)	3 (9%)
	5	0	1 (3%)	2 (6%)	4 (11%)	7 (20%)	9 (26%)	3 (9%)	8 (23%)
	6	1 (3%)	1 (3%)	8 (23%)	2 (6%)	5 (14%)	7 (20%)	6 (17%)	5 (14%)
	7	1 (3%)	1 (3%)	6 (17%)	4 (11%)	4 (11%)	6 (17%)	9 (26%)	4 (11%)
	8	0	1 (3%)	1 (3%)	5 (14%)	8 (23%)	5 (14%)	4 (11%)	11 (31%)
Missing				1 (3%)			1 (3%)		
Total		35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35
M (SD)		1.71 (1.43)	2.80 (1.68)	4.71 (1.88)	4.60 (2.12)	5.46 (1.99)	5.56 (1.76)	5.23 (2.09)	5.97 (1.81)
Min.-Max.		1-7	1-8	1-8	1-8	1-8	2-8	1-8	2-8

Literacy perspectives	n	Min	Max	M	SD
Meaning-oriented perspective[a]	35	2.50	5.33	3.46	.81
Code-oriented perspective[a]	35	3.67	6.50	5.54	.81
Instructional approach[a]	34	3.50	6.50	5.10	.76
Facilitative approach[a]	35	2.50	5.50	3.93	.77

[a] Lower scores represent a stronger parental preference for this perspective/approach.

Parental Beliefs: Explanations Provided for Preferences

Parents provided different explanations for their preferences in ranking the activities of the ranking task reflecting different types of beliefs (RQ2). These beliefs were coded into five main categories with underlying subcategories. The five main categories were 'activities support children's skill development', 'activities support children's wellbeing', 'parental beliefs on children's learning', 'parent factors' and 'other'. This last category consisted of all explanations that we could not interpret or that did not provide a clear reason and was not further analyzed. For an overview of main categories, subcategories, and the number of parents that mentioned explanations belonging to these (sub) categories, see Table 3.4. Below, each of the main categories of beliefs with underlying subcategories are described in more detail. In this description, we focused on whether parental beliefs reflected a distinction between code- and meaning-oriented perspectives (RQ2a), a distinction between facilitative and instructional perspectives (RQ2b) and possibly other types of beliefs (RQ2c). Additionally, we described whether and how explanation types differed for code- and meaning-oriented activities and for instructional and facilitative activities. In other words, we examined if parents offer some explanations mostly for meaning-oriented and others mostly for code-oriented activities, and some explanations mostly for instructional activities and others mostly for facilitative activities (RQ2d). Table 3.5 shows an overview of the frequency with which certain explanation types are mentioned for each activity type (meaning, code, instruction, facilitation).

Table 3.4

Coding Scheme for Types of Explanations for the Ranking of the Home Practices in the Ranking Task

Main categories	Subcategories	Mentioned by nr. of parents
Activities support children's skill development.	Stimulate meaning-related skills *Definition: explanation refers to support of meaning-related language skills, such as vocabulary, listening comprehension, speaking fluency, reading comprehension*	26
	Stimulate code skills *Definition: explanation refers to support of code skills, such as letter knowledge, word decoding, reading, phonological awareness*	14
	Stimulate learning (general) *Definition: explanation refers to support of learning in general or school readiness, content of learning is not specified.*	9
	Stimulate imagination	4
	Stimulate social skills *Definition: explanation refers to increasing knowledge of social rules, social behavior and skills in children.*	3

Table 3.4

(continued)

Main categories	Subcategories	Mentioned by nr. of parents
Activities support child's wellbeing	Enhance parent-child relationship	24
	Definition: explanation refers to parent-child contact, wellbeing of parent and child in parent-child contact, importance of knowing child, importance of child feeling safe with parent, importance of stimulating relation of trust between parent and child	
	Support self-confidence	4
	Definition: explanation refers to children's self-confidence and practices that promote or impair self – confidence	
	Play to relax / as reward for learning	8
	Definition: explanation refers to play as opposed to learning, play as an instrument to have children relax or to reward children	
Parental beliefs on children's learning	Learning/teaching depends on child's characteristics (interests/ age / development)	23
	Definition: explanation refers to parent's consideration for children's specific age, development or interests.	
	Importance of play-based learning / enjoyment/interest of child in learning activity	18
	Definition: explanation refers to parental views / observations related to children's play and enjoyment in/for learning activities	
	Teaching / learning occurs automatically/naturally	17
	Definition: explanation refers to either home practices that occur naturally/automatically in parent-child contact or to children's learning that occurs naturally, automatically (without the need to explicitly address the skills being learned)	
	Sequential process of learning/teaching	14
	Definition: explanation refers to a sequential nature of learning that some activities/skills (should) occur before others, and /or to. either home practices that are conditional/foundational to continue with other home practices or to skills that are conditional/foundational for the learning of other skills.	
	Importance of parent teaching	13
	Definition: explanation refers to the perceived importance parental direct teaching practices for children's learning	
	Learning/teaching happens at school/ not at home	13
	Definition: explanation refers to learning activities viewed by the parents as the school's (or other institution's) responsibility instead	
	Importance of evaluating child's level of development	4
	Definition: explanation refers to parents assessing children's development and skills, and the importance of assessing child's level of development	

Table 3.4

(continued)

Main categories	Subcategories	Mentioned by nr. of parents
Parental beliefs on children's learning	School is not enough for learning *Definition explanation refers to parents emphasizing the importance of learning at home, because school is not enough to acquire certain skills*	2
Importance of activities based on parent factors	Parental insecurity. *Definition: explanation refers to parents' own insecurity in performing certain learning activities well*	7
	Parental preferences *Definition: explanation refers to parents own preferences, likes and dislikes in performing certain learning activities.*	8
	Practical *Definition: explanation refers to practical reasons for a parent for the perceived importance of a learning activity.*	2
Other	Other activities are more important	7
	No or unclear motivation	10

Table 3.5

Frequency of Types of Explanations Mentioned for Each Activity Type (Meaning, Code, Instruction, Facilitation)

Main category	Explanation	Meaning-oriented activities	Code-oriented activities	Instructional activities	Facilitative activities
Activities support children's skill development.	Stimulate oral language skills	39	2	6	35
	Stimulate code skills	9	12	10	11
	Stimulate learning (general)	10	1	3	8
	Stimulate imagination	4			4
	Stimulate social skills	5		2	3
Activities support child's wellbeing	Enhance parent-child relationship	28	1, 2[a]		29, 2[a]
	Support self- confidence	4[a]		4[a]	
	Play to relax / as reward for learning		4, 4[a]	1[a]	4, 3[a]
Parental beliefs on children's learning	Learning/teaching depends on child's characteristics (interests/ age / development)	13	37	27	23
	Importance of play-based learning / enjoyment/interest of child in learning activity	7	16, 1[a]	2, 1[a]	21
	Teaching / learning occurs automatically/naturally	11	10	19	2
	Sequential process of learning/teaching	8	9	7	10
	Importance of direct teaching	9	3	10	2

Table 3.5

(continued)

Main category	Explanation	Meaning-oriented activities	Code-oriented activities	Instructional activities	Facilitative activities
Parental beliefs on children's learning	Learning/teaching happens at school/ not at home		22	14	8
	Importance of evaluating child's level of development	4			4
	School is not enough for learning		2	2	
Importance of activities based on parent factors	Parental insecurity	4	5	7	2
	Parental preferences	4	4	2	6
	Practical	2		1	1
Other	Other activities are more important	3	6	2	7
	No or unclear motivation	6	5	5	6

Note: frequencies displayed in this table are the frequency with which each explanation is mentioned for each activity type. Parents could mention the same type of explanations several times for several activities.
[a] Numbers marked with [a] represent parental responses of which the content is reversed. For example, two parents stated that the code-oriented facilitative activity playing letter games does *not* enhance parent-child relationship and four parents stated that instructional activities are counterproductive in supporting children's self-confidence.

Activities support children's skill development

In the category of skill development, parents viewed the activities as a means to stimulate the development of certain skills. The support of meaning-related skills, such as vocabulary knowledge, listening comprehension and speaking fluency, was mentioned most frequently (by 26 parents) when motivating the benefits of practices in the ranking task: "[about talking] Talking is very important. It stimulates understanding and speaking the language better. And automatically, you acquire many words"[2] (mother, middle educated, speaks both Dutch and other language with child, born outside the Netherlands).

Stimulation of meaning-related skills was mentioned across all activity types, although considerably more frequently for meaning-oriented ($n = 39$) and facilitative activities ($n = 35$) than for code-oriented ($n = 2$) and instructional ($n = 6$) activities. This suggests

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2   When quoting from the parent interviews, we translated from Dutch to English. Additionally, we made sure the language in the quotes was grammatically correct and readable, which means that in some cases we needed to adapt the literal formulations of the parents. Grammatical errors were corrected and repeated words were omitted if this did not influence interpretation. No other changes were made.

that parents are knowledgeable of the opportunities of activities such as shared reading to stimulate children's meaning-related skills. In the two cases that parents perceived a code-oriented activity to be stimulating for meaning-related skills, they were referring to citing nurse rhymes. When designing the ranking task, we categorized citing nursery rhymes as a code activity, because this type of activity targets children's phonological abilities, has been related to children's code skills (Levy, Gong, Hessels, Evans, & Jared, 2006) and has been previously categorized as a code activity (see Chapter 2 of this dissertation). However, these two parents perceived citing nursery rhymes as an activity similar to shared reading:

> [about citing nursery rhymes] I don't think it is more important than shared reading, in both activities you encounter words and sentences, but more in a singing way. And during this [shared reading] in a talking way, but I think it comes down to the same thing in learning. (Mother, middle-educated, monolingual Dutch, born in the Netherlands)

The support of code skills was mentioned by nearly half of the parents. The stimulation of code skills was mentioned nearly equally frequently for code activities (n = 12) and meaning-oriented activities (n = 9). This appears to be a result of parents' perception that shared reading is (also) a way to expose children to and teach them about letters and reading: "They look at the book when I read. I think shared reading is very important because they see many letters, that will stick in their minds" [mother, middle-educated, monolingual Dutch, born in the Netherlands]. Two parents also perceived the activity talking with your child as a way for children to learn about letters:

> Talking is important, because already when the child is still in your belly you talk to it. So, you're already talking to your child. And then, when you talk, the child starts to form letters, words. The system, it's already in the system. (Mother, middle-educated, speaks both Dutch and other language, born outside the Netherlands)

The inclusion of a wider range of home literacy practices in our measurement of parental literacy beliefs, contrary to a narrow focus on shared reading, provided a more nuanced view of the theoretical binary of meaning- versus code-oriented practices. Above-mentioned quotes indicate that the theoretical distinction between code- and meaning-oriented practices is not that clear-cut in parental beliefs: according to the parents in our

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sample, activities pre-defined as code-oriented practices, such as rhyming, can also be perceived to stimulate meaning-oriented skills, whereas meaning-oriented practices, such as talking and shared reading, can also be perceived to stimulate code skills.

In addition, the stimulation of learning in general, stimulation of imagination and the stimulation of social skills were mentioned to explain rankings. These additional skills were only or mostly mentioned for meaning-oriented activities, indicating that if parents perceive code activities beneficial for children's skill development it is specifically for literacy development, while meaning-oriented activities may serve several goals, beyond the domain of literacy: "[about shared reading] During shared reading, whether in Dutch or in the mother tongue, they take up many things. During shared reading, a whole world of imagination opens up" (mother, middle educated, speaks both Dutch and other language with child, born outside the Netherlands).

Parents' elaborations thus allow for an understanding of parental beliefs that is more nuanced than simply defining them as being characterized a meaning-oriented perspective. Our data show that parents not only appreciate meaning-oriented practices for their possible contribution to their children's literacy development, but also because they may contribute to skills and abilities in other domains than literacy development, such as social skills, learning in general and children's imagination.

Support of children's wellbeing
In this category, parents viewed the activities as a means to stimulate different aspects of children's wellbeing. Stimulating the parent-child relationship was mentioned most frequently (by 24 parents) in this category. The enhancement of the parent-child relationship was mentioned only for facilitative activities (n =29) and mostly for meaning-oriented activities (n = 28). Apparently, according to parents, facilitative learning activities do not only serve children's learning, but also provide opportunities to invest in a good relationship with their child.

> [about shared reading] I just know what a great feeling it is when you create a moment together with your child and you see how your child enjoys it. And you can do so many things during shared-reading, because mom loosens up, she loosens up. And after reading she tells you things, that she maybe wouldn't have told before reading. And it's just our moment, I think it's so important. (Mother,

middle-educated, speaks both Dutch and other language, born outside the Netherlands)

Support of the child's self-confidence was another motive in this category. This motive was mentioned for instructional activities only, but in all these cases parents indicated that instructional activities may be decreasing rather than promoting children's self-confidence:

[about correcting your child] I think correcting is a difficult one. You correct, but you don't do it all the time, like just now, I didn't. Because if you do it all the time, a child will become insecure, I think. (Mother, middle-educated, monolingual Dutch, born in the Netherlands)

A final motive in this category was play as a way to have children relax or reward them, as opposed to play as a learning activity. This motive was mentioned only for code activities, and mostly for facilitative activities. These parents viewed code-oriented facilitative activities as play-only activities rather than learning activities. A mother explains why rhyming with her child is least important in her ranking of activities. Rhyming, according to the mother, is "fun", but education comes first:

[about rhyming] Always, a child has to play, a child has to have to have fun, but a child has to take the education serious. It's very, very important. You have to learn. You have to have fun but you have to know that education is first. For me, I want my child to know that education is first. Then afterwards, you can have your fun. (mother, middle-educated, speaks no Dutch with child, born outside the Netherlands)

However, other parents indicated that code-oriented facilitative activities were not suitable for children to relax. They perceived them as too educational, instead of as "fun" play activities:

[about playing letter games] I think a child should be able to just relax without learning. If it would be really necessary, if she would lag behind in school for example and the teacher would ask me to do things at home, yes, then I would do it. But as long as that isn't necessary, I'll stick to the fun games instead of the

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educational games. (Mother, middle-educated, monolingual Dutch, born in the Netherlands)

Parental elaborations showed here that the distinction between code- and meaning-oriented and instructional and facilitative activities cannot only be explained by parents' ideas on how a child best develops literacy skills. Parental preferences for certain practices may for a large part be explained by the extent to which parents believe those practices to provide opportunities for stimulating children's well-being, by strengthening the parent-child relationship, enhancing children's self-confidence, rewarding children, or having children relax in play.

Parental beliefs on children's learning
A common factor amongst all explanations belonging to this category is that they provide information about how parents view the process of their children's learning and how to best support that learning as a parent. Explanations referring to the sequential nature of children's learning were given across all activity types. Parental beliefs in this category reflect the theoretical distinction between code- and meaning-oriented perspectives. Some parents viewed code-oriented instructional activities as conditional for further literacy development to occur: "[about teaching the alphabet] You have to learn, to write, to read, it's important. But once you know abcd, you'll learn how to write and read" (mother, middle-educated, speaks no Dutch with child, born outside the Netherlands). This type of reasoning is in line with a code-oriented perspective, in which code skills are viewed as the starting point of literacy development. Other parents, however, viewed meaning-oriented facilitative activities as a necessary first step for further learning to occur:

> [about talking with your child] I think that by talking much with your child, you'll teach him to name and explain things, increase vocabulary, and that he will understand what I tell him. And I think that if that goes well, he'll also profit from that with shared reading, but also with writing. (Mother, higher educated, monolingual Dutch, born in the Netherlands)

Teaching and learning being dependent on the children's individual characteristics, such as their interests, age and level of development, was most frequently mentioned in this main category, indicating that parents in this sample acknowledge the importance of being sensitive and responsive to their children's needs. Parental elaborations in this subcategory

also revealed a difference between the perception of the value of code- and meaning-oriented practices, as this explanation was mentioned considerably more frequently for code activities (n = 37) than for meaning-oriented activities (n = 13). This difference may indicate that parents believe that engagement in code activities is important only when these activities match their children's interests or developmental stage.

> [about practicing writing] I think the children will tell you, or really show you when they are ready to start to write. If they don't want, for example, I think we have to give them time, with the fun, like the games with the letters and then to start writing. (Mother, higher educated, speaks no Dutch with child, born outside the Netherlands)

For meaning-oriented activities, which were generally regarded as more important for children's literacy development than code activities (see Table 3.3), the child's interests or developmental stage may be viewed as less crucial.

A reason why parents in this sample on average prefer meaning-oriented activities over code-oriented activities, is that, according to the parents, it is primarily the school's responsibility to teach children code skills. This explanation type was mentioned by thirteen parents and was mentioned only for code-activities (n = 22).

> [about practicing writing] For me, this should start in school. Sometimes he does it at school and afterwards I can help at home. But for now, this can start in school. I find other things important, but not yet starting to write. (Mother, educational level unknown, speaks both Dutch and other language with child, born outside the Netherlands)

In contrast, two parents indicated explicitly that school is not enough for the teaching of code skills: extra time and support at home was perceived necessary. Such explanations reflect a very active parent role in children's literacy development. Similarly, four parents mentioned the possibility of monitoring children's development as a benefit of talking with your child:

> And then I know when he explains it, sometimes he doesn't feel like it, but then you know, you hear how far he is, what kind of things he says, how he formulates his sentences. And that is actually my intention. Of course, I want to know how his day

was, certainly, but I also ask him that to listen whether he makes correct sentences. (Mother, middle-educated, mono-lingual Dutch, born in the Netherlands)

Elaborations in this subcategory indicate that some parents view themselves as gatekeepers of their children's literacy development.

A distinction between facilitative and instructional beliefs was reflected in other types of parental responses. Parents' emphasis on the importance of children's enjoyment and play in learning occurred across all activity types, but more frequently for code activities and nearly only for facilitative activities: "[about playing letter games] If you tell children 'go write this down', because I did that with her, she doesn't like it. But if I make a game of it, she likes it" (mother, middle-educated, speaks both Dutch and other language with child, born outside the Netherlands). This parent compares the instructional approach with a facilitative, child-centered approach, in favor of the latter. In contrast, some parents emphasized the importance of direct instruction for children's learning: "[about correcting your child] Sometimes he tells a story and then he forgets something, and then you have to correct him, so he knows he did something wrong. By making mistakes he'll learn better, learn the language better" (mother, lower-educated, speaks both Dutch and other language with child, born outside the Netherlands).

Parents referred to the importance of instruction only when speaking about instructional activities, except for two parents. These parents compared an instructional approach to a facilitative approach, in favor of the former, when explaining why they perceived letter games, a facilitative activity, as less important for children's literacy development:

[about letter games] Well…, games. What I did, and I still do. I just write down those letters, I write them on a sheet of paper and she will finish the row. And then I'll correct her how she should write. That way she learns best, by writing herself. The more she practices, the better she writes. Instead of games, in which she only sees the letters but doesn't really practice herself in writing. (Mother, middle-educated, speaks both Dutch and other language with child, born outside the Netherlands)

The belief that certain skills come naturally to children or that the teaching of particular skills happens automatically during other types of activities, generally implies that no extra support at home was perceived necessary:

> [about practicing writing] Because writing will come naturally. You can teach him how to write now and then, but writing will come with time. He will start coloring and playing and then writing will come naturally. Like, by moving his hands, he will learn how to write. (mother, lower-educated, speaks both Dutch and other language with child, born outside the Netherlands)

The belief that direct instruction is unnecessary because literacy learning occurs automatically and naturally was expressed mostly in the context of instructional activities (n = 19) and only twice in the context of facilitative activities. This implies that instructional activities were not regarded as essential for literacy development, as literacy development was perceived to happen unconsciously. This, in turn, may explain the inclination towards a facilitative approach in this sample.

However, instructional and facilitative beliefs may not be mutually exclusive, as many parents who referred to the importance of direct teaching for instructional activities, also emphasized the importance of children's enjoyment and play in learning when talking about facilitative activities. This indicates that the context in which learning occurs may determine parents' preferences for certain didactic approaches. By asking parents how they value a range of different types of home literacy practices for children's literacy development, we were able to distinguish between these different contexts.

Importance of activities based on parent factors
In the category of 'parent factors', beliefs associated with parental preferences referred to certain characteristics of parents (rather than characteristics of children's development). This category contained expressions of parental insecurity in performing certain types of activities well, practical reasons, such as the perceived ease of fitting certain activities into daily family life and parents' own preferences for certain types of activities. Most of the reasons in this category were mentioned across activity types. Parental insecurity was only referred to when speaking about instructional activities or when speaking about citing nursery rhymes, indicating that these kinds of activities were perceived as most difficult.

> [about correcting your child] You can correct your child, but my problem is, I struggle a lot with 'de, het, dat, dit'[3], so I could correct, but actually I don't know

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3   'De, het, dit, dat' are Dutch articles and demonstrative pronouns. Which word should be used depends on the word gender of the word it precedes.

how to do it myself all the time. (Mother, lower educated, speaks both Dutch and other language with child, born outside the Netherlands)

Associations between Parental Preferences and Demographic Variables

In this section, we describe the results of our exploration of associations between parental literacy preferences and parental education, country of birth and home language (RQ3). Birth country and parental education did not correlate significantly with any of the preferences (see Table 3.6 for all correlation coefficients). The results of the Mann Whitney U tests to explore differences in parental preferences among the three language groups show that parents who did not speak Dutch at home perceived instructional activities as significantly more important and facilitative activities as significantly less important to children's emergent literacy skills, compared to monolingual Dutch parents. They also perceived instructional activities as significantly more important compared to parents speaking both Dutch and another language. Monolingual Dutch parents and parents who spoke both Dutch and other languages at home did not differ in their preference for instruction or facilitation. Parents of all three language groups did not differ in their preference for code-oriented or meaning-oriented activities. See Table 3.7 for the results of all Mann Whitney U tests.

Table 3.6

Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlations (Kendall's τ) for Parental Literacy Preferences and Demographic Background Variables

	N	Min	Max	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 Meaning-oriented perspective [a]	35	2.50	5.33	3.46	.81	1.00	-1.00**	.34*	-.26	.09	-.15
2 Code-oriented perspective [a]	35	3.67	6.50	5.54	.81	-1.00**	1.00	-.34*	.26	-.09	.15
3 Instructional approach [a]	34	3.50	6.50	5.10	.76	.34*	-.34*	1.00	-1.00**	-.18	.08
4 Facilitative approach [a]	35	2.50	5.50	3.93	.77	-.26	.26	-1.00**	1.00	.20	-.12
5 Migrant background	35	.00	1.00	.69	.47	.09	-.09	-.18	.20	1.00	-.28
6 Educational level	34	1.00	3.00	1.79	.73	-.15	.15	.08	-.12	-.28	1.00

[a] Lower scores represent a stronger parental preference for this perspective/approach. * *p* < .05, ** *p* < .01

Table 3.7

Results of the Mann Whitney U Tests Exploring Differences in Preferences Across the Three Language Groups

Tests	Language groups	Preference	Mdn [a]	N	U	z	p	r
Set 1	Monolingual Dutch	Facilitation	3.5	10	70	-.76	.46	-.15
	Dutch and other language(s)		3.5	17				
	Monolingual Dutch	Instruction	5.5	10	70	-.53	.61	-.10
	Dutch and other language(s)		5.5	17				
	Monolingual Dutch	Meaning-oriented perspective	3.3	10	82	-.16	.89	-.03
	Dutch and other language(s)		3.5	17				
	Monolingual Dutch	Code-oriented perspective	5.8	10	82	-.16	.89	-.03
	Dutch and other language(s)		5.5	17				
Set 2	Monolingual Dutch	Facilitation	3.5	10	12	-2.51	**.01***	-.59
	Only other language(s)		4.5	8				
	Monolingual Dutch	Instruction	5.5	10	12	-2.51	**.01***	-.59
	Only other language(s)		4.5	8				
	Monolingual Dutch	Meaning-oriented perspective	3.3	10	38	-.18	.88	-.04
	Only other language(s)		3.6	8				
	Monolingual Dutch	Code-oriented perspective	5.8	10	38	-.18	.88	-.04
	Only other language(s)		5.4	8				
Set 3	Dutch and other language(s)	Facilitation	3.5	17	38.5	-1.73	.08	-.35
	Only other language		4.5	8				
	Dutch and other language(s)	Instruction	5.5	17	31.5	-2.01	**.04***	-.40
	Only other language(s)		4.5	8				
	Dutch and other language(s)	Meaning-oriented perspective	3.5	17	67.5	-.03	.99	-.01
	Only other language(s)		3.6	8				
	Dutch and other language(s)	Code-oriented perspective	5.5	17	67.5	-.03	.99	-.01
	Only other language(s)		5.4	8				

[a] Lower median scores indicate stronger preferences. * $p < .05$

Discussion

The aim of the current study was to examine the use of a newly developed instrument for measuring parental literacy beliefs in a highly diverse sample of parents, participating in a Dutch FLP. With the use of this new instrument, we qualitatively explored to what extent parental preferences for certain home literacy practices were associated with beliefs on emergent literacy development (code- vs. meaning-oriented perspectives) and didactic beliefs (instruction vs. facilitation), or possibly with other beliefs. Second, set in the highly diverse context of urban parts of the Netherlands, we investigated whether parental literacy preferences were related to parental demographic variables. The instrument proved to be capable of exposing the nature of and nuances in parental literacy beliefs in a diverse sample. The instrument was able to reveal that parents in this sample generally preferred meaning-oriented practices in supporting children's literacy development compared to code-oriented practices and that they preferred facilitative activities compared to instructional activities. Additionally, the instrument revealed that parents used a variety of motives to explain their preferences, some of which indeed reflect code- and meaning-oriented and instructional and facilitative beliefs. A major strength of the instrument was its ability to expose a range of parental beliefs beyond the four predefined categories of parental beliefs, which allows for a deeper understanding of parents' preferences for different types of literacy activities. Finally, parents who did not speak the majority language with their children at home showed stronger preferences for instructional activities and weaker preferences for facilitative activities compared to parents who did speak Dutch with their children.

The study contributes to the literature on parental literacy beliefs in three ways. First, we examined the relevance of adding a dimension to the often-used distinction between code- and meaning-oriented perspectives on literacy development, namely didactic approach, which contrasts parental preferences for either a facilitative or an instructive stance to literacy teaching (Hannon, 2000; Sonnenschein et al., 1997). Our observations support the validity of this addition. Our qualitative analysis showed that parents indeed expressed facilitative or instructional beliefs when they motivate their choices for certain types of parent-child activities. For example, parents emphasized the importance of children's enjoyment and play in learning, which matches a facilitative approach to literacy development. In other cases, parents emphasized the benefits of directly instructing their children about language and print. In most research on parental literacy beliefs, didactic beliefs are generally not included or instructional

beliefs are equated with code-oriented beliefs and facilitative beliefs are equated with meaning-oriented beliefs (Anderson, 1995; Evans et al., 2004). Our results show that didactic beliefs in terms of instruction and facilitation form a separate dimension of parental literacy beliefs next to parental beliefs on the nature of emergent literacy development, in terms of code- and meaning-oriented perspectives. We thus suggest to include this dimension in future, more fine-grained operationalizations of parental literacy beliefs.

Second, our qualitative analysis of parental explanations revealed that the predefined theoretical distinctions between different types of beliefs and practices (DeBaryshe et al., 2000; Hannon, 2000; Lynch et al., 2006; Sonnenschein et al., 1997) were not that clear-cut in practice. Most parents in our sample did not exclusively express either code- or meaning-oriented beliefs or either facilitative or instructional beliefs. Many parents combined beliefs when discussing different types of home literacy activities. For example, a parent could express meaning-oriented facilitative beliefs when explaining the importance of shared reading, but the same parent could emphasize an instructional approach when discussing the importance of correcting your children or practicing writing. This is in line with studies into parental literacy beliefs that also found groups of parents who do not restrict themselves to one perspective, but combine several views (Evans et al., 2004; Lynch et al., 2006, Sonnenschein et al., 1997). Including different types of home literacy practices in our measurement allowed us to distinguish between the different contexts that may determine parental literacy beliefs: parents may express different kinds of beliefs when discussing the benefits of different types of activities.

Third, our qualitative analysis showed that also other types of beliefs, in which children's learning and literacy development is not a central element, are related to parental preferences in supporting children's literacy development. Examples are parental ideas about the child's well-being, in particular the parent-child relationship (Aram, Meidan, & Deitcher, 2016; Friesen & Butera, 2015), and parental self-efficacy and insecurity (see also Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005; Newland et al., 2011, Pelletier & Brent, 2002). Our exploratory approach made it possible to expose such beliefs.

Parental Literacy Beliefs

Parents in this sample were in general more inclined towards meaning-oriented and facilitative approaches. Parental views on who is primarily responsible for teaching

certain skills or offering certain types of activities may provide a possible explanation for the preference for a meaning-oriented approach. Code activities were seen by more than a third part of the sample as the school's responsibility instead of the parents', whereas many parents viewed stimulating oral language skills as an important goal of home literacy practices, a goal that was mentioned almost exclusively for meaning-oriented practices. Another reason for a preference for meaning-oriented activities appears to be that parents find that their children are not ready for learning certain skills. This reason was most often provided when explaining a lack in preference for code activities. In contrast, meaning-oriented activities such as talking with your child and shared reading were generally perceived as important regardless of the child's developmental stage. A preference for facilitation is reflected in parents' emphasis on the importance of enjoyment and play in learning. Instruction may be seen as less important, as parents reasoned that instruction occurs automatically during facilitative activities and that the child acquires certain literacy skills naturally during engagement in facilitative activities.

Parents mentioned three explanations for their preferences for home literacy practices considerably more frequently than others, namely the stimulation of oral language skills, learning/teaching being dependent on children's development and interests and stimulation of the parent-child relationship. As indicated above, the attention for oral language development implies that parents are knowledgeable of opportunities to stimulate children's oral language development and that this domain of literacy development is valued by them.

The importance of responding to children's characteristics for learning and teaching was expressed by most parents. This shows that the parents in the sample acknowledge the significance of parental sensitive responsiveness in children's learning. This result is similar to the finding reported by Sawyer and colleagues (2018) in their qualitative study of literacy beliefs and practices of low-income families in the US. Mothers in their study reported that their engagement in literacy activities varied with their child's reading interest. The emphasis on responding to your child's characteristics is also in line with work by Mesman and colleagues (2016), who showed that parents across cultures view parental responsiveness as a characteristic of the ideal parent.

More than two thirds of the sample mentioned enhancing the parent-child relationship as a goal of facilitative home literacy activities. Apparently, aspects of parental beliefs in

which the child's literacy development is not a key element are also related to parental literacy beliefs. The above-mentioned study by Mesman and colleagues (2016) showed that parental positive affect towards children was viewed universally as a characteristic of the ideal parent. Similarly, Aram et al. (2016) found in their study on parental literacy beliefs in an Israeli sample of home- and regular-schooled kindergartners that all parents in their sample highly valued parent-child closeness. Friesen and Butera (2015) found in their study on parental literacy beliefs of parents participating in a Head Start program that a considerable number of parents mentioned spending time with their children and being encouraging as a way to promote children's literacy development. This relates to our finding that stimulating the parent-child relationship is perceived by parents as an important goal of facilitative teaching activities.

Associations Between Preferences and Home Language

In the current study, parents who did not speak Dutch at home with their children showed stronger preferences for instructional activities compared to monolingual Dutch parents and parents who spoke both Dutch and another language with their children. They also showed weaker preferences for facilitative activities compared to monolingual Dutch parents. The differences found in didactic preferences between the language groups may be an indication of cultural and contextual differences in didactic beliefs. However, we did not find a relationship with parental birth country and didactic preferences. Of the twenty-four parents who were born outside the Netherlands, sixteen spoke Dutch as an additional language with their children at home. Possibly, the degree of acculturation to the Dutch educational system may explain the relationship between home language and didactic preferences (Berry, Kim, Power, Young, & Bujaki, 1989; Durand, 2011). Several studies have suggested that parents' own schooling experiences influence parental literacy beliefs (Gillanders & Jiménez, 2004; Li, 2006; Reese, Arauz, & Bazán, 2012; Reese & Gallimore, 2000). In addition, contact with school teachers and exposure to children's school system have been related to changes in literacy beliefs of parents with a migrant background (Li, 2006; Reese et al., 2012; Reese & Gallimore, 2000). The Dutch educational system can be characterized by a constructivist approach to learning, pupil centered, and an emphasis on pupil cooperation and interaction (Oostdam, Peetsma, & Blok, 2007; Pieters & Verschaffel, 2003). Possibly, parents who spoke no Dutch with their children at home may have been less acculturated to the Dutch school system than parents who spoke Dutch as an additional language with their children, explaining their preference for instruction instead of facilitation.

As Manz and colleagues (2010) suggested, limited effects of FLPs for linguistic minority families may be explained by a misalignment between program principles and the literacy beliefs of these families. Our results indicate that the alignment between program principles of the meaning-oriented, facilitative program Early Education at Home and the non-Dutch speaking parents is less optimal, compared to alignment with Dutch-speaking parents. The non-Dutch speaking parents thus participate in a program that advocates an approach to literacy learning that may not fully match parents' own beliefs on how children should be guided in their literacy development. Many questions remain unanswered on this topic. One question is whether parents perceive such a misalignment between their own beliefs and the program they participate in as problematic. If this the case, the next question is how programs such as EEH should respond to such misalignments. Possibly, explicitly introducing the program philosophy and the intended benefits of this approach for children's literacy development to parents can be a way to address differences in the beliefs of the participants. Another possible route to make the program more inclusive would be to include relevant code-oriented and instructional activities to the program in addition to the meaning-oriented and facilitative activities, to guarantee the program is perceived as meaningful by all parents.

Limitations

This study has several limitations. First, the findings are situated in a specific context, a family literacy program conducted in schools located in urban areas of the Netherlands. Program participation in EEH can be regarded as a limitation of the study. This program mostly takes a facilitative, meaning-oriented approach. The program may thus have influenced parental literacy beliefs. However, in the larger study on program effects, we measured parents' preferences quantitively at the start of the study. We found that parents also scored highest on preferences for meaning-oriented facilitative activities, before they took part in EEH. This suggests that the possible effect of participating in EEH on beliefs is minimal. Second, we cannot exclude a selection effect, as many parents rejected participation in the research. Although parents in our sample represented all kinds of backgrounds and the sample was comparable with the main sample of the larger study concerning the demographic background of the participants, it is possible that the parents that we could not reach hold different literacy beliefs than the parents included in the sample. Third, our instrument only included eight home literacy practices for parents to reflect on. Possibly, the inclusion of additional activities, such as craftwork, puzzles, and outdoor games, would have revealed additional aspects of parental literacy beliefs.

Directions for Future Research

Based on the outcomes of this study some directions for future research can be formulated. First, this is a first small-scale study exploring the use of newly developed instrument. Although results seem promising, future studies should further validate this instrument. Second, the role of cultural and linguistic background and acculturation in shaping parental literacy beliefs should be further examined, as these may be factors of importance in determining parental literacy beliefs. For instance, in this study home language was related to differences in parental didactic preferences. Furthermore, during the ranking task, in some instances multilingual parents reflected on the role of multilingualism in supporting their children's literacy development. When referring to parental insecurity for example, some parents mentioned that they could not perform certain instructional activities in Dutch, such as correcting your child, and other parents mentioned that they did not know how to perform certain activities with their children in their mother tongue, such as rhyming. Future exploratory research could explicitly examine the role of cultural and linguistic background in parental beliefs about what is important in supporting children's literacy development.

Third, research indicates that parental beliefs are not static, but subject to change. External factors, such as the family and school community may influence parental literacy beliefs (Reese et al., 2012; Reese & Gallimore, 2000). Another crucial factor may be the child (Sawyer et al., 2016). Nearly all parents in this study indicated that the importance of teaching certain skills depended on the children's characteristics, such as their level of development and literacy interest. Research into parental literacy beliefs, preferably in longitudinal designs, should consider the dynamic nature of literacy beliefs and investigate which factors may generate changes in parental literacy beliefs.

Implications for Practice

This study highlights the importance for professionals working with FLPs and families to be aware of the program principles underlying FLPs and the alignment with the literacy beliefs of parents participating in programs. The current study provided an indication of a possible mismatch between program principles and non-Dutch speaking parents, as the FLP applied a facilitative approach to teaching and this group of parents held more instructional preferences. A first step to increasing involvement in FLPs by all groups of parents, is to acquire knowledge on the alignment between the program and its users. Our instrument could be used by professionals as a tool for conversations with

parents on their beliefs concerning what is important in supporting their children's literacy development at home.

Conclusion

The current study showed that a new, brief instrument that is relatively easy to use in interviews with a diverse group of parents was able to expose the variety and nuance in the literacy beliefs of diverse parents participating in a Dutch family literacy program. The instrument revealed that in this particular sample parents viewed meaning-oriented and facilitative home literacy activities as most important for stimulating children's literacy development. Parental explanations for the importance of different activity types reflected two dimensions of literacy beliefs, namely parental views on the nature of children's literacy development and on didactic approaches. However, also aspects of parental beliefs beyond these two dimensions, such as the importance of a good parent-child relationship, seemed to inform parental literacy beliefs. Additionally, the study showed that parents who did not speak the majority language to their child at home differed in didactic preferences from parents who did. This shows the need for further research into what shapes parental literacy beliefs.

3

4

Do Parental Beliefs Moderate the Effects of a Family Literacy Program on Kindergartners' Emergent Literacy Development?

Abstract

In a sample of 159 kindergartners and their parents, highly diverse regarding parental education, migration and linguistic backgrounds, the current study examined whether the effects of a family literacy program on kindergartners' emergent literacy development were determined by parental self-efficacy, role construction and literacy beliefs. The study provides further validation for a conceptualization of parental literacy beliefs based on two dimensions: beliefs on the nature of children's literacy development and beliefs on how parents should support this development. Multilevel regression analyses revealed no effects of the family literacy program on children's literacy development and none of the parental beliefs moderated program effects. Correlations between parental beliefs, parental demographic variables and treatment fidelity variables indicated that the program may not optimally accommodate parents of diverse backgrounds. The results demonstrate the importance of increasing our knowledge on the factors associated with program compatibility with children's homes and schools.

Introduction

Family literacy programs (FLPs) aim to stimulate children's emergent literacy development, by supporting parents in creating rich home literacy environments for their children (Hannon, 2003). FLPs may differ in which skills they target (Van Steensel, McElvany, Kurvers & Herppich, 2011; Sénéchal & Young, 2008). Some programs focus on children's meaning-oriented skills, that is, all skills necessary to process the meaning of spoken and written language, such as vocabulary knowledge, narrative skills and listening and text comprehension. Other programs focus on children's code skills, that is, all skills needed to understand the code of print, such as letter knowledge, phonological skills, word decoding and early writing skills. Furthermore, FLPs may differ in didactic approach favored in program activities. FLPs may encourage parents to stimulate children's emergent literacy development through facilitation, that is, adopting a playful, child-centered approach. They may also encourage parents to teach their children about language and print in more formal learning activities. The different types of FLPs may thus offer different activities to parents and children, such as shared reading and storytelling (meaning-oriented, facilitative activities), teaching of new words (meaning-oriented, instructional activities), teaching the alphabet (code-oriented, instructional activities) and playing letter games (code-oriented, facilitative activities).

It appears that some types of FLPs may better suit some families than others. Meta-analyses (Manz, Hughes, Barnabas, Bracaliello, & Ginsburg-Block, 2010; Mol, Bus, De Jong, & Smeets, 2008) have shown that FLPs consisting mainly of shared reading activities, are less or not effective for children of low socio-economic (SES), ethnic and linguistic minority backgrounds. FLPs focusing on code skills, training parents to directly instruct their children about print and reading (Sénéchal & Young, 2008) did show positive effects for low SES children, although still smaller than for high SES children. Researchers have suggested that parental beliefs on supporting their children's literacy development may be important in explaining these differences in program effects (De la Rie, 2018; Manz et al., 2010). If misalignments exist between program principles and parental beliefs, program engagement may be hampered. To date, scholars did not investigate the possible moderating role of parental beliefs in program effects. The aim of the current study is to investigate whether parental beliefs moderated the effects of a Dutch FLP on kindergartners' emergent literacy development.

Parental Literacy Beliefs

Parental literacy beliefs can be defined as the views parents have on how children develop emergent literacy skills and how children should be supported in their development (Cottone, 2012; Hannon, 2003). Research into parental literacy beliefs generally distinguishes two types of perspectives, known by different names in the literature (cf. DeBaryshe, Binder & Buell, 2000; Evans, Fox, Cremaso, & McKinnon, 2004; Lynch, Anderson, Anderson, & Shapiro, 2006; Sonnenschein et al., 1997). In the code-oriented perspective (see Chapter 3 of this dissertation), understanding the *code* of print is the starting point of literacy development: children need to acquire specific skills and knowledge on how words are built up, such as letter knowledge, word decoding and phonological awareness. In the meaning-oriented perspective (see Chapter 3 of this dissertation), understanding the *meaning* of print is the basis of literacy development: children develop their literacy skills steadily, embedded in their daily interaction with their environment. In this perspective, the acquisition of meaning-oriented skills precedes the acquisition of code-oriented skills. Parents were also found to combine code- and meaning-oriented perspectives in their views on emergent literacy development (Chapter 3 of this dissertation; DeBaryshe et al., 2000; Evans et al., 2004; Lynch et al., 2006).

Another way of categorizing parental literacy beliefs is by considering parents' didactic beliefs. Parents may prefer to directly teach their children about language and print or they may prefer to expose their children to language and print in a more playful, embedded approach (Chapters 2 and 3 of this dissertation; Hannon, 2003; Stipek, Milburn, Clements, & Daniels, 1992). We reason that parents with meaning-oriented beliefs and those with code-oriented beliefs may both vary in their didactic preferences (see Chapters 2 and 3). For instance, parents who focus on code skills, may explicitly teach their children about letters and sounds (instruction; Hannon, 2003), but they may also engage them in more facilitative, playful code activities, such as alphabet puzzles (facilitation; Hannon, 2003). Notwithstanding, most studies on parental literacy beliefs do not explicitly distinguish didactic preferences in parental literacy beliefs (cf. Anderson, 1995; DeBaryshe et al., 2000; Evans et al., 2004). The results of a previous study into parental literacy beliefs suggest that parental didactic beliefs should be included in conceptualizations of parental literacy beliefs (see Chapter 3). Integrating parental didactic beliefs in models of parental literacy beliefs may provide a more fine-grained description of types literacy beliefs.

Parental literacy beliefs have been related to parental behavior in supporting their children's literacy skills: parents with code-oriented perspectives reported undertaking more code-oriented activities with their children in the home, such as teaching the letters of the alphabet, and parents with meaning-oriented beliefs reported to undertake more meaning-oriented activities with their children, such as shared reading (Lynch et al., 2006, Sonnenschein et al., 1997). This implies that parental literacy beliefs may moderate effects of FLPs, because they steer parents' behaviors. If program principles and parental beliefs are not aligned—that is, if parents with a preference for code-oriented activities participate in a meaning-focused FLP, or parents with instructional beliefs participate in a facilitative FLP—program implementation may be hampered: parents' beliefs may prevent them from engaging in program activities and, consequently, program effects on children's development are likely to be negatively affected.

Motivational Beliefs: Parental Self-Efficacy and Role Construction

In addition to specific beliefs about literacy, parents' more general beliefs about the impact they have on their child's development may also affect program implementation. In Hoover-Dempsey and colleagues' (2005) influential model, parental self-efficacy and role construction together form parental motivational beliefs that determine parental involvement. Parental self-efficacy for school involvement can be defined as parents' sense of their own abilities to help their children succeed in school (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). Parents are more likely to support their children's school work if they expect their efforts will result in the desired outcomes, that is, in promoting their children's learning (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara & Pastorelli, 1996; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). Parental self-efficacy has been related to parental engagement in home literacy practices (Machida, Taylor, & Kim, 2002; Newland et al., 2011).

In the context of research into the effects of FLPs, self-efficacy is generally considered as an outcome variable (cf. Nievar, Jacobson, Chen, Johnson & Dier, 2011) or a variable mediating the relationship between program participation and children's literacy development (cf. De la Rie, 2018). Based on the model by Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2005), it may, however, be useful to view parental self-efficacy as a moderator of program effects. Parental self-efficacy can be expected to affect parents' engagement in program activities: if parents think they are not sufficiently equipped to support their children's school development, they may be less inclined to engage in educational parent-child activities. Therefore, we expect that program effects on children's literacy development

are stronger for children of parents with high self-efficacy beliefs compared to children of parents with low self-efficacy beliefs.

Hoover-Dempsey and colleagues (2005) define parental role construction as parents' beliefs about their responsibilities in supporting their children's schooling and education. In this study, role construction is understood as a continuum with active parental role beliefs on the one end and passive parental role beliefs on the other end (Walker, Wilkins, Dallaire, Sandler, & Hoovers-Dempsey, 2005). Parents with active role beliefs regard themselves as primarily responsible for their children's learning, while parents with passive role beliefs place the responsibility for their children's learning mainly within the school. Active role beliefs have been related to higher parental engagement in home learning activities (Chrispeels & Gonzalez, 2006; Walker, Ice, Hoover-Dempsey, & Sandler, 2011). To our knowledge, parental role construction has not been considered in research into the effects of FLPs, despite the possible influence it might have on parents' program participation. Parents with more active role beliefs may be more involved in an FLP and this may positively influence program effects on children's emergent literacy.

Current Study

The aim of the current study is to investigate whether parental beliefs (self-efficacy, role construction and literacy beliefs) moderated the effects of a Dutch FLP, Early Education at Home (EEH; Dutch name: VVE Thuis), on kindergartners' emergent literacy development in a highly diverse sample. EEH is developed by the Dutch Youth Institute (2020). The program is directed at stimulating children's home literacy environments by helping parents to undertake home literacy activities and by guiding parents in how to interact with their children during these activities. The program emphasizes an informal, facilitative approach in stimulating children's literacy development. In line with the Dutch kindergarten curriculum, EEH emphasizes the stimulation of children's meaning-oriented skills, in particular their vocabulary knowledge. Although EEH is directed at parents with lower educational levels, in reality, schools working with EEH serve families who are highly diverse, not only in educational levels, but also in migration and linguistic backgrounds. We hypothesized that EEH may gain larger effects for children of parents with higher role construction and self-efficacy beliefs and for children of parents with higher meaning-oriented and facilitative beliefs, compared to parents with lower role construction and self-efficacy beliefs and with higher code-oriented and instructional beliefs. In order to determine the moderating role of parental beliefs

in program effects, we firstly explored a more elaborate conceptualization of parental literacy beliefs, by using a newly developed instrument. We examined whether four categories of parental literacy beliefs can be distinguished: meaning-oriented facilitative beliefs, meaning-oriented instructional beliefs, code-oriented facilitative beliefs and code-oriented instructional beliefs or perhaps other relevant categories. Next, prior to testing the moderator effects of parental literacy beliefs, we tested the main effect of EEH on children's growth in literacy skills. Thus, we aimed to answer the following research questions (RQs):

1. What categories of parental literacy beliefs can be found in a highly diverse sample of parents of kindergartners?
2. What are the effects of EEH on kindergartners' emergent literacy development?
3. Are those effects moderated by parental self-efficacy, role construction, and literacy beliefs?

4

Method

Design

This study was conducted using a quasi-experimental approach, using a longitudinal design, with a pretest, intermediate and posttest. We compared children in eight schools participating in EEH (experimental condition) with children in four schools not participating in EEH (control condition). The current study is part of a larger project in which we also investigated the role of additional school support in creating school vision and policy on stimulating parental involvement. The experimental condition consisted of four schools that received additional support in developing a school policy on parent involvement and four schools that did not receive such support. Thus initially, we worked with three conditions (EEH + additional support, EEH without additional support, control). The twelve participating schools were divided into four groups that were comparable on important school characteristics: the share of children with lower educated parents, the share of children learning Dutch as a second language and school size. Schools within each group were then randomly assigned to one of the conditions. However, since the comparison between the two experimental conditions (additional support vs no additional support) is not the focus of the current paper, we combined the eight schools into one experimental condition. Analyses revealed no differences between these two (sub)conditions in either program implementation and children's literacy development. The condition that received additional support in creating a school vision and policy on parental involvement is the topic of the study described in Chapter 5.

Sample

The sample at pretest consisted of 212 children. In the EEH condition, 144 children in thirteen classes participated. In the control condition, 68 children in seven classes participated. Using t-tests, MANOVA and chi-square tests, we checked for differences between conditions at pretest in children's performances, age, gender, parental level of education, language background, and migration background. In the sample used for the effect analyses (n = 159, see Attrition) conditions were equal on all variables. Parents filled out a questionnaire to provide demographic background information (see Measures). Table 4.1 presents an overview of parent and child characteristics based on responses to the parent questionnaire. Questionnaires were returned by 191 parents (90% of total sample), of which 151 questionnaires were answered by mothers, 38 by fathers and one by the eldest son in the family. The sample was highly diverse regarding migration and linguistic background and parental level of education. Sixty-two percent of the children had a migration background, with one of the parents being born outside of the Netherlands (Statistics Netherlands, 2016). Forty-seven different parental countries of birth were present in the sample, the Netherlands being most frequently mentioned, followed by Morocco, Turkey, Surinam, and the Netherlands Antilles. Forty-three different languages were spoken with the children at home, Dutch being most frequently mentioned, followed by Turkish, Moroccan-Arabic, and Berber languages. Educational levels of the parents were classified into three categories: parents in the 'low' category had taken either no formal education or primary and/or prevocational secondary education; parents in the 'middle' category had followed senior general secondary education or pre-university education, and/or secondary vocational education; and parents in the 'high' category had taken higher professional education or had a university degree. Nearly one third of the parents were lower educated, nearly one third were middle educated and one fifth was higher educated. The remaining parents did not report their educational level.

Measures

Children's meaning-oriented literacy skills

Children were tested at pretest, intermediate, and posttest on five different aspects of their emergent literacy development (see Procedure). The measures are also described in a previous study (see Chapter 2 of this dissertation).

Table 4.1

Participant Characteristics

Characteristics	Frequency and percentage of total sample	
	At pre-test (N (%))	Used in final effect analyses (N (%))
Sample		
Children	212 (100%)	159 (100%)
Parents	191 (90%)	159 (100%)
Gender child	212 (100%)	159 (100%)
Female	97 (46%)	71 (45%)
Male	115 (54%)	88 (55%)
Gender parent (respondent)	190 (90%)	159 (100%)
Female (mother)	151 (71%)	130 (82%)
Male (father)	39 (18%)	29 (18%)
Age children (in months)	212 (100%)	159 (100%)
	range = 45 to 66, M = 52.8, *SD* = 3.8	*range* = 45 to 66, M = 52.8, *SD* = 3.6
Age parent (respondent) (in years)	170 (80%)	156 (98%)
	range = 22 to 51, *M* = 34.8, *SD* = 6.1	*range* = 22 to 51, *M* = 34.8, *SD* = 6.2
Migration background child	188 (89%)	159 (100%)
Yes[a]	132 (62%)	111 (70%)
No[b]	56 (26%)	48 (30%)
Parent's country of birth	186 (88%)	159 (100%)
Netherlands	81 (38%)	69 (43%)
Other	105 (50%)	90 (57%)
Home language	185 (87%)	59 (100%)
Only other language(s) than Dutch spoken at home with child	23 (11%)	20 (12%)
Dutch and other language(s) spoken at home with child	96 (45%)	82 (52%)
Only Dutch spoken at home with child	66 (31%)	57 (36%)
Educational level parent (respondent)	169 (80%)	158 (99%)
Low[c]	62 (29%)	56 (35%)
Middle[d]	63 (29%)	58 (37%)
High[e]	44 (22%)	44 (28%)
Educational level respondent's partner	139 (66%)	132 (83%)
Low[c]	58 (27%)	53 (33%)
Middle[d]	41 (19%)	39 (25%)
High[e]	40 (19%)	40 (25%)

Note. Information is provided for the sample at pretest and the final sample included in the effect analyses.
[a] Birth country of one of or both parents is outside the Netherlands [b] Birth country of both parents is the Netherlands [c] No education, primary and /or prevocational secondary education [d] Senior general secondary education or pre-university education, and/or secondary vocational education [e] Higher professional education or university degree

Receptive vocabulary. Receptive vocabulary was measured using the Receptive Vocabulary Task from the validated Dutch test battery Taaltoets Alle Kinderen (TAK) [Language Test for All Children] (Verhoeven & Vermeer, 2001, 2006). The assignment is composed of 96 items. For every item, four images are presented to the child, while a word referring to one the images is read by the test administrator. The child is asked to identify the image depicting the word. Level of difficulty rises with each item. If a child does not provide the correct answer five times in a row, the administrator ends the test. The number of corrects responses form the child's score (Cronbach's α = .99 at pre-test, α = .97 at intermediate test and α = .96 at post-test).

EEH curriculum-based receptive vocabulary. Curriculum-based vocabulary was tested using a receptive vocabulary test designed for this study by the first author. Forty-three words from six EEH themes shared by all experimental schools (see Procedure) were selected for this test. Similar to the Receptive Vocabulary Task described above, children are shown four pictures while the test administrator reads a word corresponding with one of the pictures. The child is asked to point at the picture representing the word. A child's score is formed by the number of correct answers (Cronbach's α = .88 at pretest, α = .86 at intermediate test and α = .84, at post-test.).

Narrative production. Narrative production was measured by the Storytelling Task from the TAK (Verhoeven & Vermeer, 2001, 2006). The child is shown two sets of eight images, printed on different sheets, each set depicting a small narrative. The administrator asks the child to tell her the narrative in such a way that the administrator can comprehend the narrative, without seeing the pictures. The children's' narratives were audio-recorded, transcribed and coded with the aid of a coding scheme containing 32 items, on which children could score up to one point per item. Points were allocated based on adequate descriptions of the scenes depicted in the images and adequate descriptions of the relationships between story events. The maximum number of points is 32. The narratives of the pretest, intermediate test and post-test were coded by three research assistants each, who were the main coders. Nineteen percent of the data (92 cases) were double coded by the three research assistants and the first author of the paper. Percentages of agreement ranged from 82 to 91 (Cronbach's α = .82 for the main coder at pre-test sample, α = .81 for the main coder at intermediate test sample and α = .82 for the main coder at post-test sample). Disagreements were discussed between the coders until agreement was reached and additional coding rules were formulated. Based on these rules some of the scores were adjusted.

Children's code-oriented literacy skills

Letter-sound knowledge. Letter-sound knowledge was assessed with the Letter Knowledge task from the validated Dutch test battery Toetspakket Beginnende Geletterdheid (TBG) [Test Battery Emergent Literacy] (Aarnoutse & Verhagen, 2012). The assignment is composed of 27 items. In the first 20 items, five lower case letters are presented to the child while letter sound referring to one of the five letters is pronounced by the administrator. The administrator asked the child to identify the letter referring to the letter sound. For the last seven items, the child is asked to identify letter combinations, signifying diphthongs common in the Dutch language. The number of corrects responses form the child's score (Cronbach's α = .92 at pre-test, Cronbach's α = .85 at intermediate test, and Cronbach's α = .92 at post-test).

Auditory perception. Auditory perception was measured with the Sound Discrimination Task from the TAK (Verhoeven & Vermeer, 2001, 2006). This assignment is composed of 50 items. For every item, two words are read by the administrator that are either similar (e.g., *cat-cat*) or dissimilar by one phoneme (e.g., *bell-ball*). The administrator asks the child whether the two words are identical or not. The number of corrects responses form the child's score (Cronbach's α = .91 at pre-test, Cronbach's α = .93 at intermediate test, and Cronbach's α = .91 at post-test).

4

Parental beliefs

Parental self-efficacy. Parental self-efficacy for helping the child in school was measured using a scale adapted from Walker et al. (2005). This scale consisted of seven items expressing parental self-efficacy, such as "I know how to help my child do well in school" and "I feel successful about my efforts to help my child learn". Parents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statements on a six-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 6 = *strongly agree*). Cronbach's α for this scale was = .69. Mean scores were used in the analyses.

Parental role construction. Parental role construction for involvement in the child's education was measured using a scale adapted from Walker et al. (2005). This scale consisted of ten statements expressing an active role in educational involvement, such as "I believe it is my responsibility to communicate with my child's teacher regularly" and "I believe it is my responsibility to help my child with homework". Parents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statements on a six-point Likert scale (ranging

from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 6 = *strongly agree*). Cronbach's α for this scale was = .76. Mean scores were used in the analyses.

Parental literacy beliefs. Parental literacy beliefs were measured using a new scale, developed for this study on the basis of a questionnaire used in a previous study (see Chapter 2 of this dissertation). Parents were asked to rate how important they perceived 15 home literacy practices on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (*not important at all*) to 5 (*very important*). These 15 home literacy practices reflected different activity categories, namely meaning-oriented facilitative activities (e.g., shared reading and storytelling), meaning-oriented instructive activities (e.g., teaching your child new word/concepts, correcting your child when s/he uses a wrong word), code-oriented facilitative activities (e.g., playing letter games and rhyming games/citing nursery rhymes) and code-oriented instructional activities (e.g., teaching your child the alphabet, practicing letter writing).

Demographic background information.
Child's gender. Schools provided the information on the child's gender (0 = *boy,* 1 = *girl*).

Child's age. Schools provided the birth date of the children. Based on this date, we computed the child's age in months at the start of the study.

Migration background. A child received the label migration background if one of the child's parents was born outside the Netherlands (Statistics Netherlands, 2016) (0 = *no migration background*, 1 = *migration background*).

Home language. Parents were asked what language(s) they spoke with their child. If the parent indicated speaking only Dutch with the child, the child was labelled monolingual. If the parent (additionally) spoke another language than Dutch with the child, the child was labelled multilingual (0 = *monolingual Dutch*, 1 = *multilingual*).

Parental education. Parental education was operationalized as the mean of the highest educational level obtained by both parents (1 = *low, i.e., no education, primary and/or prevocational secondary education*, 2 = *middle, i.e., senior general secondary education or pre-university education, and/or secondary vocational education*, 3 = *high, i.e., higher professional education or university degree*).

Procedure

Recruitment of schools and families

Schools were recruited by advertising on social media and contacting the municipalities of the four major cities of the Netherlands. If a school was willing to participate, its eligibility was assessed on the basis of the following criteria: 1) the school had a group of first year kindergarten pupils when the project started; 2) the population of the school was in accordance with the target group of EEH (i.e., the school had a relatively large share of children with lower educated parents and/or second language learners of Dutch); 3) the schools did not currently work with an FLP; 4) the school was compatible with our design, that is, it was comparable to two other schools in the sample, so that a threesome could be formed of which each member could then be assigned to a condition; and 5) the school was willing to take part in this randomization procedure. The participating schools selected one or two kindergarten classes to take part in the study. At the beginning of the school year, parents of the children received a letter from the school with information regarding the project and an invitation to take part. Parents communicated their decision whether or not to take part in the study to the child's teacher.

4

Assessment

Children were tested in September/October 2015, May-June 2016 and May-June 2017. All children were tested individually by the first author and trained research assistants. One test a time (duration 2-15 minutes) was administered. Parents received the parent questionnaire from their children's teachers. Parent questionnaires were provided in four different languages to meet the needs of different language groups: Dutch, English, Turkish, and Polish.

Intervention.

Early Education at Home (EEH). For two school years (2015-2016 and 2016-2017), families participating in the program were invited by the schools for parent meetings of one and a half hours every four to six weeks. Schools were urged to organize seven parent meetings in the first year and eight in the second year in correspondence with the program guidelines (Kalthoff & Berns, 2014). During parent meetings, parents received a booklet with descriptions of and instructions for eight informal home literacy activities around themes connected to the school curriculum (e.g., Winter, Traffic, At home). Examples of activities included in the booklets are shared reading activities, prompting board activities (De la Rie, Van Steensel, Van Gelderen, & Severiens, 2020),

outdoor activities, craftwork activities, and household activities such as cooking or tidying. Parent meetings were led by kindergarten teachers or sometimes social workers connected to the school. The parent meetings were characterized by their interactive nature. Ideally, the teacher modeled the activities and engaged the parents in guided practice, through discussions and role plays. Language of instruction was Dutch.

Teacher training for EEH. Teachers (or social workers) in the experimental condition were trained by the first author. In a first informative session, they received general information about EEH. The next session consisted of a hands-on training session, in which teachers were familiarized with the theoretical background of the program, the content, and the program's didactic methods. Learning activities such as modeling, group discussions, and role play were practiced. Additionally, teachers received guidance in working with parents less proficient in Dutch, and parents with lower literacy levels. Finally, each teacher participated in two 'coaching on the job' sessions: in each experimental school, two parent meetings (either the second, the third, and/or the fourth) were observed by the first author. After each meeting, the researcher and the teacher(s) had an evaluative coaching session, in which the quality of the parent meeting was discussed, guided by an observation protocol.

Treatment fidelity of EEH. Delivery, the way the program is delivered to parents, and receipt, the way parents engaged in the program meetings, were assessed (cf. Powell & Carey, 2012). Regarding delivery, schools on average organized the number of parent meetings intended by the program. Duration of the parent meetings varied across school, with a minimum of 20 minutes and a maximum of the prescribed 90 minutes. Furthermore, duration of the meetings decreased over time. Four parent meetings in each experimental school were observed by the first author (two observations in each school were part of the 'coaching on the job' sessions, as described above). These observations showed that, whereas some schools adhered relatively well to program guidelines, others did less so. Especially the use of modeling, role play, possibilities for parents to share their experiences in conducting program activities at home, attention to transfer of program activities to daily practice, and adequate support for parents who were less proficient in Dutch or (Dutch) reading were elements not always visible in the parent meetings. Regarding receipt, parental attendance of the parent meetings varied strongly. On average, parents attended less than half of the organized parent meetings, but there was considerable variability: while some parents attended all organized meeting, others attended none. Parental evaluations of EEH were higher at the end of the first year of

the intervention (with a mean score of 4.04 on a 5-point Likert scale) compared to the second year (mean score 3.84). Table 4. 2 displays the descriptive statistics for quantitative aspects of treatment fidelity and correlations with study variables.

Table 4.2

Treatment Fidelity: Descriptive Statistics for Quantitative Measures for Delivery and Receipt of EEH and Correlations with Demographic Background and Parental Beliefs

Quantitative fidelity measures	M	SD	Min	Max
Delivery				
Number of parent meetings organized by the schools[a]	15	.53	14	16
Duration (in minutes) of observed parent meeting 1[a]	73.75	20.66	35	90
Duration (in minutes) of observed parent meeting 2[a]	66.25	23.87	25	90
Duration (in minutes) of observed parent meeting 3[a]	65.25	12.61	50	90
Duration (in minutes) of observed parent meeting 4[a]	52.13	20.43	20	75
Receipt				
Percentage of attended parent meetings[b]	42.83	28.52	0	100
EEH Parent Evaluation Year 1[c]	4.04	.61	2.14	5
EEH Parent Evaluation Year 2[d]	3.87	.61	2.14	5

Correlations between receipt variables and demographic background variables, parental beliefs and child outcomes	Percentage of attended parent meetings[b]	EEH Parent Evaluation[e] Year 1[c]	EEH Parent Evaluation[e] Year 2[d]
Child's age	.07	-.05	-.04
Child's gender	.02	-.10	.14
Parental education	.10	-.15	-.34**
Home language	-.11	.18	.23
Migration background	-.21*	.08	.28*
Self-efficacy	.18*	.15	-.05
Role construction	.13	.38**	.14
Meaning-oriented facilitative beliefs	.17	.11	.02
Meaning-oriented instructional beliefs	.06	.29**	.12
Code-oriented facilitative beliefs	.16	.18	.17
Code-oriented instructional beliefs	.09	.27**	.21

[a] n = 8 (schools). [b] n = 118 (parents). [c] n = 94 (parents). [d] n = 71. [e] Parents were asked to indicate on a 5-point Likert scale to indicate how much they enjoyed the EEH –activities, how much their child enjoyed the EEH activities, how much they enjoyed the parent meetings, how important the EEH activities and the parent meetings are to them and how clear they think the explanation was during meetings and in the EEH material. Based on the mean scores for these questions, composite scores for Evaluation EEH Year 1 and Evaluation EEH Year 2 were computed. * p < .05. ** p < .01

Analysis

Attrition analysis showed that, as some parents did not return or complete the parent questionnaires, for 53 pupils (25%) missing data existed on predictor variables. These pupils were excluded. Attrition was related to children's migration background and parental educational level, indicating that parents with lower levels of education and parents of children with a migrant background were less likely to fill out the questionnaires (completely). Attrition was not related to any of the other demographic background variables included in this study. The sample used for the effect analysis consisted of 159 children and their parents, 118 in the EEH condition and 41 in the control group.

To answer the first research question (What categories of parental literacy beliefs can be found in a highly diverse sample of parents of kindergartners), we performed an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with oblique rotation to explore the factor structure of the parental beliefs scale on the sample at pretest. The EFA was conducted using the statistical software Mplus (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2010). Subsequent analyses were performed with the final sample (see above).

The data in this study were hierarchically ordered, measurements were nested within pupils, pupils were nested within classes, and classes were nested within schools. Therefore, we first of all tested for all outcome variables (i.e., receptive vocabulary, EEH curriculum-based vocabulary, narrative production, letter sound knowledge and auditory perception) whether there was significant variance at the two upper levels (classes and schools) to determine if analyses should be performed two-level, three-level, or four-level. This test was carried out with the statistical software package HLM (Raudenbush, Bryk, Cheong, Congdon, & Du Toit, 2016). These initial analyses showed that for each dependent variable significant variance existed at three of the four levels: either at the measurement, individual, and class level, or at the measurement, individual, and school level. For reasons of consistency, we decided to use the same models for all dependent variables. Therefore, we tested for all variables whether differences in model fit existed between a three-level model with measurement at Level 1, pupil at Level 2 and school at Level 3 and a three-level model with class at Level 3 instead of school. Model fit did not differ significantly. Because randomization took place at school-level, we decided to work with a three-level model with school instead of class at Level 3.

For answering the second and third research questions (what are the effects of EEH on children's emergent literacy development and are these effects moderated by parental

beliefs?), multilevel regression analyses were performed using the software package MLwiN 3.02 (Rasbash, Steele, Browne & Goldstein, 2019). For each of the outcome variables, we built the regression models in the same sequence, based on the procedure described by Hox (2010) for multilevel growth models. We started with the null model, including the intercept with random effects on all three levels and a fixed linear effect for time (Level 1). Subsequently, we checked whether a quadratic effect of time existed. In the next step, predictors at pupil-level (Level 2) were entered. First, we included the covariates child's gender, child's age, parental education, home language, and migration background as predictors. Second, we added parental self-efficacy and role construction. Third, we included the parental literacy belief variables resulting from the EFA. Subsequently, we entered the predictor at the school-level, namely the intervention (EEH). In the next step, we checked whether growth differed across pupils and across schools, that is, we tested if time had a random slope on the pupil or school level. If time was found to have a random slope on both the pupil and school levels, indicating difference in growth existed across pupils and schools, possible predictors for these differences between pupils and school were added in the form of cross-level interactions. If the slopes of time were not random, growth did not differ across pupils and schools and so no differences need to be explained. In the case of random slopes, we first entered the two-way interaction intervention x time, testing whether the intervention influenced children's growth in emergent literacy skills. Then, we checked for each of the parental belief variables separately whether (two-way) interaction effects with time and with the intervention existed. Finally, only if one or both of the afore-mentioned two-way interactions was significant, we checked the three-way interactions for each of the belief variables with time and intervention, to test whether parental literacy beliefs moderated program effects on children's skill development. The chi-square difference test was used to evaluate whether each step in the analysis resulted in improved model fit.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Table 4.3 shows the descriptive results and correlations for all study variables. Parents' average scores on the belief variables are relatively high (for role construction and self-efficacy mean scores are > 4.5 on a 6-point scale, and for the literacy beliefs (see further, the results of the EFA on the parental beliefs scales), mean scores are > 3.8 on a 5-point scale). Large variability exists among children in their literacy skills, as shown by the range and standard deviations of children's score on all the five emergent literacy tests (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3

Minimum, Maximum, Mean Scores, Standard Deviations and Correlations for all Study Variables in Control and Experimental Group

	Min	Max	Control			EEH			1	2	3	4	5	6	7
			M	SD	n	M	SD	n							
1 Age child (in months)	45.00	66.00	52.88	4.14	41	52.83	3.37	118	1.00	.07	-.08	.07	.08	-.07	-.05
2 Gender child	.00	1.00	.49	.51	41	.43	.50	118	.07	1.00	.11	-.04	-.07	-.03	-.09
3 Parental education	1.00	3.00	1.80	.67	41	1.93	.70	118	-.08	.11	1.00	-.19*	-.16*	.08	-.02
4 Home language	.00	1.00	.59	.50	41	.66	.48	118	.07	-.04	-.19*	1.00	.51**	-.17*	.01
5 Migration background	.00	1.00	.59	.50	41	.74	.44	118	.08	-.07	-.16*	.51**	1.00	.20*	-.05
6 Self-efficacy	2.25	6.00	4.79	.66	41	4.52	.68	118	-.07	-.03	.08	-.17*	-.20*	1.00	.40**
7 Role construction	3.50	6.00	5.10	.46	41	4.97	.45	118	-.05	-.09	-.02	.01	-.05	.40**	1.00
8 Meaning-oriented facilitative beliefs	3.33	5.00	4.67	.31	41	4.54	.42	118	-.04	.02	.22**	-.24**	-.28**	.34**	.36**
9 Meaning-oriented instructional beliefs	2.50	5.00	4.43	.51	41	4.32	.52	118	-.06	.03	.05	.01	.04	.24**	.41**
10 Code-oriented facilitative beliefs	2.33	5.00	3.84	.54	41	3.92	.52	118	-.07	-.05	.05	.02	.05	.04	.30**
11 Code oriented instructional beliefs	2.33	5.00	4.14	.54	41	4.07	.59	118	.01	.06	-.13	.22**	.19*	-.06	.34**
12 T1: Auditory discrimination	12.00	46.00	30.68	10.19	38	27.09	10.68	112	.22**	.15	.14	-.20*	-.20*	.22**	.07
13 T1: Letter sound knowledge	.00	25.00	7.58	5.11	40	7.27	3.87	117	.02	.12	.15	.00	-.09	.08	-.04
14 T1: Receptive vocabulary	.00	69.00	33.10	16.05	41	29.76	16.49	118	.29**	.14	.22**	-.38**	-.35**	.23**	.04
15 T1: Narrative production	.00	14.74	5.30	3.21	41	4.57	2.87	116	.19*	.10	.11	-.13	-.15	.25**	.09
16 T1: Curriculum-based receptive vocabulary	6.00	42.00	27.07	8.64	41	25.89	8.41	118	.30**	.12	.20**	-.29**	-.30**	.19*	.03
17 T2: Auditory discrimination	13.00	50.00	33.95	11.26	41	34.92	10.33	111	.28**	.17*	.25**	-.11	-.06	.01	-.01
18 T2: Letter sound knowledge	2.00	27.00	10.07	6.16	41	9.37	5.50	111	.23**	.09	.10	.02	.10	.02	-.05
19 T2: Receptive vocabulary	2.00	82.00	41.88	17.86	41	39.58	17.25	113	.20*	.13	.23**	-.36**	-.30**	.29**	.16*
20 T2: Narrative production	.99	19.30	7.17	2.41	41	7.71	3.01	113	.19*	.17*	.15	-.11	-.13	.14	.04
21 T2: Curriculum-based receptive vocabulary	12.00	42.00	30.44	7.50	41	30.15	6.54	112	.26**	.16	.17*	-.20*	-.25**	.19*	.04
22 T3: Auditory discrimination	13.00	50.00	42.89	6.09	38	41.95	8.03	97	.13	.14	.16	.04	-.01	.09	.13
23 T3: Letter sound knowledge	2.00	27.00	21.21	5.37	38	17.79	6.68	94	.05	.08	.27**	-.06	.01	.05	.10
24 T3: Receptive vocabulary	12.00	87.00	60.16	15.94	38	55.85	15.74	96	.25**	.21*	.27**	-.33**	-.31**	.20*	.01
25 T3: Narrative production	3.64	20.99	10.63	4.04	38	9.34	2.68	94	.21*	.20*	.15	-.09	-.03	.15	.06
26 T3: Curriculum-based receptive vocabulary	17.00	43.00	37.03	4.09	38	36.85	4.51	97	.18*	.14	.19*	-.17*	-.16	.16	-.01

Table 4.3 *continued*

	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
1 Age child (in months)	-.04	-.06	-.07	.01	.22**	.02	.29**	.19*	.30**	.28**	.23**	.20*	.19*	.26**	.13	.05	.25**	.21*	.18*
2 Gender child	.02	.03	-.05	.06	.15	.12	.14	.10	.12	.17*	.09	.13	.17*	.16	.14	.08	.21*	.20*	.14
3 Parental education	.22**	.05	.05	-.13	.14	.15	.22**	.11	.20**	.25**	.10	.23**	.15	.17*	.16	.27**	.27**	.15	.19*
4 Home language	-.24**	.01	.02	.22**	-.20*	.00	-.38**	-.13	-.29**	-.11	.02	-.36**	-.11	-.20*	.04	-.06	-.33**	-.09	-.17*
5 Migration background	-.28**	.04	.05	.19*	-.20*	-.09	-.35**	-.15	-.30**	-.06	.10	-.30**	-.13	-.25**	-.01	.01	-.31**	-.03	-.16
6 Self-efficacy	.34**	.24**	.04	-.06	.22**	.08	.23**	.25**	.19*	.01	.02	.29**	.14	.19*	.09	.05	.20*	.15	.16
7 Role construction	.36**	.41**	.30**	.34**	.07	-.04	.04	.09	.03	-.01	-.05	.16*	.04	.04	.13	.10	.01	.06	-.01
8 Meaning-oriented facilitative beliefs	1.00	.38**	.15	.23**	.24**	.06	.18*	.09	.14	.12	-.02	.16*	.16	.10	.01	.14	.17*	.20*	.12
9 Meaning-oriented instructional beliefs	.38**	1.00	.30**	.48**	.15	.02	.02	-.06	.05	-.01	-.01	.06	.00	.00	-.01	.02	-.04	.07	-.05
10 Code-oriented facilitative beliefs	.15	.30**	1.00	.55**	.08	.04	.09	.03	.06	.06	.02	.10	-.02	.05	.05	.07	.03	.02	.03
11 Code oriented instructional beliefs	.23**	.48**	.55**	1.00	.11	.15	-.02	.04	.03	.06	.15	-.01	-.01	.03	-.03	.14	-.10	.07	.00
12 T1: Auditory discrimination	.24**	.15	.08	.11	1.00	.17*	.44**	.26**	.47**	.45**	.19*	.41**	.25**	.37**	.24**	.26**	.40**	.31**	.44**
13 T1: Letter sound knowledge	.06	.02	.04	.15	.17*	1.00	.21**	.23**	.30**	.20*	.56**	.26**	.12	.25**	.19*	.31**	.21*	.12	.26**
14 T1: Receptive vocabulary	.18*	.02	.09	-.02	.44**	.21**	1.00	.57**	.81**	.43**	.18*	.77**	.37**	.69**	.30**	.23**	.73**	.40**	.58**
15 T1: Narrative production	.09	-.06	.03	.04	.26**	.23**	.57**	1.00	.58**	.37**	.26**	.53**	.44**	.55**	.21*	.28**	.49**	.32**	.45**
16 T1: Curriculum-based receptive vocabulary	.14	.05	.06	.03	.47**	.30**	.81**	.58**	1.00	.47**	.31**	.74**	.45**	.78**	.35**	.30**	.76**	.44**	.64**
17 T2: Auditory discrimination	.12	-.01	.06	.06	.45**	.20*	.43**	.37**	.47**	1.00	.32**	.39**	.36**	.46**	.39**	.33**	.43**	.27**	.52**
18 T2: Letter sound knowledge	-.02	-.01	.02	.15	.19*	.56**	.18*	.26**	.31**	.32**	1.00	.29**	.25**	.39**	.25**	.60**	.28**	.25**	.35**
19 T2: Receptive vocabulary	.16*	.06	.10	-.01	.41**	.26**	.77**	.53**	.74**	.39**	.29**	1.00	.39**	.74**	.34**	.32**	.81**	.42**	.62**
20 T2: Narrative production	.16	.00	-.02	-.01	.25**	.12	.37**	.44**	.45**	.36**	.25**	.39**	1.00	.49**	.08	.25**	.38**	.27**	.34**
21 T2: Curriculum-based receptive vocabulary	.10	.00	.05	.03	.37**	.25**	.69**	.55**	.78**	.46**	.39**	.74**	.49**	1.00	.40**	.37**	.74**	.43**	.70**
22 T3: Auditory discrimination	.01	-.01	.05	-.03	.24**	.19*	.30**	.21*	.35**	.39**	.25**	.34**	.08	.40**	1.00	.36**	.31**	.21*	.39**
23 T3: Letter sound knowledge	.14	.02	.07	.14	.26**	.31**	.23**	.28**	.30**	.33**	.60**	.25**	.25**	.37**	.36**	1.00	.36**	.39**	.38**
24 T3: Receptive vocabulary	.17*	-.04	.03	-.10	.40**	.21*	.73**	.49**	.76**	.43**	.28**	.81**	.38**	.74**	.31**	.36**	1.00	.49**	.74**
25 T3: Narrative production	.20*	.07	.02	.07	.31**	.12	.40**	.32**	.44**	.27**	.25**	.42**	.27**	.43**	.21*	.39**	.49**	1.00	.33**
26 T3: Curriculum-based receptive vocabulary	.12	-.05	.03	.00	.44**	.26**	.58**	.45**	.64**	.52**	.35**	.62**	.34**	.70**	.39**	.38**	.74**	.33**	1.00

Note. The demographic variables were coded as follows: gender (0 = boy, 1 = girl), parental education (1 = low, 2 = middle, 3 = high), home language (0 = Dutch, 1 = -additional-other language/s), migration background (0 = no, 1 = yes). The variables role construction and self-efficacy were coded ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 6 = strongly agree. The literacy beliefs variables were coded ranging from 1 = not important at all to 5 = very important. The range of possible scores for auditory discrimination was 0-50, for letter sound knowledge 0-27, for receptive vocabulary 0-96, for narrative production 0-32 and for curriculum-based vocabulary 0-43. *p* < .05. **p* < .01

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The correlations indicate that multilingual parents and parents of children with a migration background had lower self-efficacy beliefs compared to monolingual Dutch parents and parents of children without a migration background. In addition, multilingual parents and

parents of children with a migration background thought that meaning-oriented facilitative activities were less important but code-oriented instructional activities were more important for their children's literacy development. Self-efficacy and meaning-oriented facilitative beliefs were positively associated with several of the child outcomes, such as auditory perception and receptive vocabulary. Furthermore, the correlations indicate that higher educated parents had higher self-efficacy beliefs and that they found meaning-oriented facilitative activities more important for their children's emergent literacy development, compared to lower educated parents. The children of higher educated parents had higher literacy skills than the children of lower educated parents. Multilingual children and children with a migration background showed lower vocabulary knowledge at most measurements, compared to monolingual children and children without a migration background.

Research Question 1: Factor Analysis of Parental Beliefs

The EFA of the parental beliefs scale showed that a four-factor solution had a good fit ((χ2[51, n = 171] = 96.427, p < .01; χ2/df = 1.89; CFI = .96; RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .03). Factors were labeled Meaning-oriented Facilitative Beliefs, Meaning-oriented Instructional Beliefs, Code-oriented Instructional Beliefs, and Code-oriented Facilitative Beliefs. The item story telling loaded significantly on Meaning-oriented Facilitative Beliefs (.24) as expected, but also on Code-oriented Facilitative Beliefs (.49). The latter loading was higher. Because this item was not theoretically compatible with the other items belonging to Code-oriented Facilitative Beliefs, we decided to remove this item from the analysis. The reliability of the factors was good (Cronbach's α > .80), except for Meaning-oriented Facilitative Beliefs (Cronbach's α=.56.). However, because the fit of the four-factor model was good and the items in the Meaning-Oriented Facilitative Beliefs factor were theoretically interpretable, we decided to include this factor. Table 4.4 shows the results of the EFA and reliability coefficients.

Table 4.4

Factor Loadings Derived from the Exploratory Factor Analysis of the Parental Literacy Beliefs Scale (scores below 0.3 not shown) and Reliability Coefficients per Factor (Cronbach's Alpha)

Items parental belief scale	1 Meaning-oriented Facilitation	2 Meaning-oriented Instruction	3 Code-oriented Instruction	4 Code-oriented, Facilitation
1. Talking with child about child's experiences	.63*			
2. Singing with child				.47*
3. Shared reading	.30*			
4. Listening to stories of child	.48*			
5. Teaching child new words		.54*		
6. Having child repeat new words		.74*		
7. Correcting child if (s)he uses wrong word)		.93*		
8. Correcting child's pronunciation		.74*		
9. Teaching child letter names			.60*	
10. Having child point out words or letters				.59*
11. Practicing name writing			.86*	
12. Practicing letter writing			.98*	
13. Playing rhyming games/citing nursery rhymes				.79*
14. Playing letter games				.74*
Cronbach's Alpha	α = .56	α = .85	α = .88	α = .82

Note. n = 171.

Research Questions 2 and 3: Multilevel Regression Analyses

To answer the second and third research questions, we ran the following models for all outcome variables. In the first step, we included the intercept with random effects on all three levels and a fixed linear effect for time (Model 0). Subsequently, we checked whether a quadratic effect of time existed (Model 1). After controlling for child's age, gender, parental education, home language and migration background (Model 2), parental self-efficacy and role-construction were entered in the model (Model 3). This step resulted in improved model fit for receptive vocabulary (Δ *deviance* = 8.862, *df* = 2, *p* < .05) and narrative production (Δ *deviance* = 9.791, *df* = 2, *p* < .01), with parental self-efficacy being significantly positively associated with receptive vocabulary (*B* = 4.225, *SE* = 1.593, *p* < .01) and narrative production (*B* = .755, *SE* = .268, *p* <.01). The addition of the four parental literacy beliefs variables to the model (meaning-oriented facilitation, meaning-oriented instruction, code-oriented instruction and code-oriented facilitation; Model 4) resulted in improved model fit for letter-sound knowledge (Δ *deviance* = 12.246, *df* = 4, *p* < .05), with code-oriented instructional beliefs being significantly positively

associated with letter sound knowledge (B = 2.839, SE = .825, p < .001). No other significant associations between parental beliefs and children's emergent literacy outcomes at pretest were found. Finally, we tested the main effect of EEH (Model 5), which was insignificant, indicating that the experimental condition and control condition were equal at pretest. See Appendix B for all models and parameter estimates.

In the next step of our analysis, we tested whether random slopes existed for linear growth at the pupil (Model 6) and school level (Model 7). For children's growth in receptive vocabulary and narrative production, no random slopes for the predictor time were found at the pupil-level, indicating that children in the sample did not significantly differ in growth on these measures between pre- and posttest. The absence of random slopes at pupil level implicates an absence of random slopes at school level (Hox, 2010). For auditory perception and letter sound knowledge, random slopes for the predictor time were found at the pupil level, but not at the school level, demonstrating that no differences between schools existed in growth for auditory perception and letter sound knowledge. For these four variables the intervention effect on growth was not further tested, as the lack of random slopes for growth at the pupil and/or the school level signifies that EEH, being a school-level variable, did not influence growth (see Appendix B, Table B.1, B.3-B.5 for all parameter estimates). For EEH curriculum-based vocabulary random slopes for linear growth were found at both the pupil- and school-level. However, no significant effects of EEH on growth were found (Model 8), hence EEH did not influence children's growth in any of the measured emergent literacy skills. Consequently, the answer to Research Question 2 is negative.

Due to the lack of random slopes described above, moderation effects of parental beliefs on program effects on growth in children's emergent literacy skills were only tested for EEH curriculum-based vocabulary. The analyses showed that program effects were not moderated by any of the parental beliefs (Models 9-20; see Appendix B, Table B.2 for all parameter estimates). Therefore, the answer to Research Question 3 is also negative.

Discussion

In the current study, we examined whether the effects of Early Education at Home (EEH), a Dutch family literacy program (FLP), on children's literacy development were moderated by parental self-efficacy, role construction, and literacy beliefs. In order to examine the moderating role of parental beliefs, we firstly explored the concept of

parental literacy beliefs and secondly investigated the main effects of EEH on children's literacy development. Our analyses revealed that none of the parental beliefs measured in this study moderated program effects. Also, no effects of EEH on children's literacy development were reported. Our exploration of the parental beliefs scale revealed that four types of parental literacy beliefs can be distinguished: meaning-oriented facilitative beliefs, meaning-oriented instructional beliefs, code-oriented facilitative beliefs, and code-oriented instructional beliefs.

The study contributes to the research base on family literacy in two important ways. First, although several scholars suggested that parental beliefs on what a parent can and should do in supporting children's literacy development might play an important role in explaining the (lack of) effects of FLPs (cf. De la Rie, 2018; Manz et al., 2010), the current study is the first that investigated this possible moderating role of parental beliefs in program effects. Although both general aspects of parental beliefs relevant for parental involvement in children's schooling (self-efficacy and role construction) as well as four specific parental literacy beliefs were included, the study provided no evidence for the suggested moderating effect of parental beliefs. Second, our exploration of parental literacy beliefs showed that parental didactic beliefs should be included in a conceptualization of literacy beliefs, thus providing further validation for a more fine-grained picture of literacy beliefs as suggested in a previous study (see Chapter 3).

Absence of Program and Moderator Effects on Children's Literacy Development
Participation in EEH influenced neither children's meaning-oriented nor their code-oriented literacy development. Furthermore, our expectation that EEH might be more effective for children of parents with higher self-efficacy, stronger role beliefs, and an orientation towards meaning-oriented facilitative activities—due to better alignment between parental beliefs and program principles (Manz et al., 2010)—was also not confirmed. Despite the absence of moderator effects of parental beliefs on program effects, still some indications exist that the alignment between EEH and parental beliefs may be more optimal for some groups of parents than others. In our sample, higher educated parents, monolingual Dutch parents, and parents from children without a migration background tended to have higher meaning-oriented facilitative beliefs. Multilingual parents and parents from children with a migration background, conversely, showed higher code-oriented instructional beliefs. Additionally, monolingual Dutch parents and parents from children without a migration background showed higher self-efficacy beliefs. As EEH focuses on meaning-oriented skills, encourages a facilitative method in stimulating children's learning, and presumes

an active contribution of parents to their children's learning, EEH might be better suited to higher educated parents, monolingual Dutch parents, and parents from children without a migration background.

However, further inspection of the correlations between background variables, parental beliefs and receipt variables (see Table 4.2) indicate a pattern contradictory to the above-mentioned presumption that EEH may be better suited to higher educated parents, monolingual Dutch parents, and parents from children without a migration background. The correlations revealed that lower educated parents, parents from children with a migration background, and parents with stronger instructional (both code- and meaning-oriented) beliefs evaluated EEH more positively, compared to higher educated parents, parents from children without a migration background, and parents with weaker instructional beliefs. The negative correlation between level of education and program evaluation was stronger in the second year, indicating that higher educated parents may have tired of the program in the course of the intervention period. A positive evaluation may indicate a higher need for EEH, especially since higher evaluations of EEH were associated with lower scores on most of children's vocabulary measures.

The above leads us to revisit the assumed benefits of alignment between program principles and parental beliefs. Two questions can be asked: 'What needs to be aligned?' and 'What degree of alignment is optimal to increase program effects?' According to Durlak and Du Pre (2008), to successfully implement a program, users need to feel they *need* what the program might bring them. Possibly, EEH does not accommodate any of the groups included in the study. Parents with more meaning-oriented facilitative beliefs may not feel the need for a facilitative literacy program such as EEH, because it will bring them something they already know. Similarly, higher-educated parents and parents from children without a migration background might feel that they do not need EEH for their children's literacy development. Additionally, program activities offered in EEH may not provide a significant addition to the activities these parents already engage their children in at home. Lower-educated parents and parents from children with a migration background may feel a need for family literacy programs such as EEH, but as their beliefs are less compatible with EEH, they might not feel comfortable in performing program activities. This may have resulted in a less than optimal treatment fidelity regarding parents' uptake of the program (see Table 4.2, receipt variables). For instance, parents from children with a migration background attended fewer parent meetings than parents from children without a migration background. Another reason

for limited treatment fidelity in terms of receipt may be that attendance of parent meetings and performing program activities in the home may not be compatible with parents' work and family schedules (McElvany & Van Steensel, 2009).

Treatment fidelity in terms of delivery was also suboptimal and showed variations across and within schools: the quality of parent meetings regularly did not meet program guidelines. In teacher interviews concerning program delivery in the current study, teachers expressed that in their daily reality, it was not always possible to plan enough time for the preparation and execution of high-quality parent meetings of 90 minutes every six weeks, given their highly diverse groups of parents regarding educational levels, literacy skills, languages spoken and cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, our observations of the parent meetings revealed that teachers in some schools were more willing to respond to the wishes of the higher educated parents, by for example offering additional learning materials and activities, instead of tailoring the content of the parent meetings to lower educated parents or parents with limited proficiency in Dutch. Two previous studies on the effects of EEH found similar dissatisfying results on treatment fidelity (De la Rie, 2018; Teepe, Molenaar, Oostdam, Fukkink & Verhoeven, 2019). Together, these observations may indicate general problems implementing EEH, both for families and teachers, which may explain the lack of program effects on children's emergent literacy development found in this study.

In their meta-analysis on factors affecting successful program implementation, Durlak and DuPre (2008) identified two program variables that may hamper its implementation. The first variable is a program's compatibility or fit with the implementation context, namely the organization (in the case of EEH: the school), its users and target group (see also De la Rie, 2018). The second variable is a program's flexibility or adaptability: the extent to which the program can be modified to improve the aforementioned fit. The compatibility between EEH and the implementation context in this study seems to be suboptimal. Such incompatibility with reality may have resulted in an adapted program implementation in most of the participating schools, in which less time was spent on the program and in which more challenging working methods, such as role play and modeling, were sacrificed. It is questionable whether this form of program adaptation was beneficial, as research shows that, although it is difficult to influence parental behavior through family programs, relatively intensive programs using active learning methods are most promising (Grindal et al., 2016; Teepe et al., 2019)

In an ideal form of program flexibility, adaptation leads to a better fit with the implementation context, without sacrificing program quality (Castro, Barrera & Martinez, 2004; Meyers, Durlak & Wandersman, 2012). Program adaptation to meet the needs of its target audience can be especially beneficial in dealing with diverse families regarding educational backgrounds, literacy skills and languages spoken. In this respect, EEH may be not flexible enough. For parents with lower educational and literacy levels and limited proficiency in Dutch, the materials used in EEH may be not adequately helping them undertaking literacy activities at home: the materials rely heavily on written text, and translations of the instructions are not available. This might have hampered the program's uptake, especially by these groups of families, which represented a considerable part of our sample.

Limitations

This study has several limitations. First, the power of the study is limited. Because of the hierarchical structure of our data (measurement nested within pupils, who are nested within schools) and the significant variance at the different levels, we needed to analyze the data using multilevel methods. Although we had a sample of 159 pupils, spread across 20 classes, the possibility of identifying intervention effects may have been hampered by the fact that, essentially, condition was a school-level variable and we were not able to include more than 12 schools. Second, although the exploratory factor analysis of the parental literacy beliefs scale showed four interpretable factors with a good model fit, the reliability of one of the factors, meaning-oriented facilitative beliefs, was low. Additional studies with this experimental measure should be conducted to improve the scale. Third, because self-reports were used to measure parental literacy beliefs, we cannot exclude the possible effect of social desirability in parental answers on the belief scales. Fourth, 25 per cent of the pupils could not be included in the effect analyses due to missing data on predictor variables. These data were not missing completely at random but related to migration background and parental level of education. This may have caused bias in the results.

Suggestions for Future Research

Several directions for future research can be formulated based on the outcomes of this study. Future confirmative studies could further examine the validity of the new conceptual framework of parental literacy beliefs framework explored in this study. Second, although we examined a range of parental beliefs that may be theoretically expected to moderate program effects, the influence of other aspects of parental

beliefs, for instance, parents' perception of need for a literacy program for their children (Durlak & DuPre, 2008) or parental sense of inclusion at the child's school (Abram & Gibbs, 2002; Turney & Kao, 2009), could be further explored, as they might be more predictive of parents' engagement in FLPs. Third, to further investigate the moderating role of parental beliefs in the effects of diverse types of FLPs (meaning- or code-oriented programs and facilitative or instructional programs) on children's development, experimental research designs in which different types of FLPs can be compared, could be informative. Fourth, researchers of FLPs could extend their focus from intrinsic parent factors to the wider implementation context (Durlak & DuPre, 2008). Future studies could focus on questions such as what school factors are related to the fit between the program and the parents working with the program, and how program adaptations could enhance compatibility with the target audience.

Implications for practice

Based on the outcomes of this study, practitioners who intend to work with an FLP can be advised to carefully reflect on the context in which they would work with the FLP, before deciding which program to use. Especially the compatibility of the FLP with the daily reality of both professionals and families, and the program's adaptability to better fit the needs of both teachers and parents must be considered.

Conclusion

The current study was the first to investigate the moderating role of parental beliefs in the effects of a family literacy program on children's emergent literacy development. The results provided evidence for a fine-grained picture of parental literacy beliefs that includes didactic approach (instructional versus facilitative beliefs) in addition to parental understanding of the nature of emergent literacy development (code-oriented versus meaning-oriented perspectives). However, parental literacy beliefs, self-efficacy and role construction did not influence the effects of Early Education at Home on children's literacy development. Regardless of parental beliefs, the program did not impact children's literacy development. These outcomes underscore the importance of increasing our knowledge on the factors associated with program compatibility with children's homes and schools.

5

Aiming for Educational Partnership: Shared Vision Development with Parents and Professionals in a Professional Learning Community

Abstract

In the current qualitative case study, a professional learning community (PLC) that focused on building educational partnership between parents and school, in which team members and parents participated, was established in a primary school for a two-year period. In this study, we explored whether and how the PLC contributed to the development of a shared vision on parental involvement characterized by educational partnership. Thematic analysis of transcripts of PLC-meetings (n = 13) and interviews with PLC-members at the end of the first (n = 5) and second year (n = 6) disclosed an ambiguity in PLC-members' visions. The visions reflected an ambition to build educational partnership but also barriers to this ambition, such as the presence of deficit perspectives on parents, which seemed to result in an ambivalence concerning the responsibilities and possibilities of professionals and parents in building educational partnership. The results suggest that shared vision development is a multiple staged process, consisting of an initial stage in which existing views and knowledge were exchanged, a second stage focused on the process of shared vision development and practical aspects of executing such a process and a hypothetical third stage in which the planned process of vision development would be realized. To actually form a shared vision characterized by educational partnership three elements seem necessary: a substantial amount of time, continuous parent participation in the PLC and a targeted approach addressing deficit perspectives on parents and creating awareness for the power dynamics present in the parent-school relationship.

Introduction

A vast body of research indicates that the involvement of parents in children's schooling positively affects children's academic outcomes (e.g. Boonk, Gijselares, Ritzen, & Brand-Gruwel, 2018). Therefore, many schools promote parental involvement. However, the discourse on parental involvement has been criticized for the endorsement of deficit perspectives on parents and for favoring schools' agendas while neglecting parental voices (Auerbach, 2007a; 2009; 2010; Bakker & Denessen, 2007; Cooper, Riehl, & Hasan, 2010). An approach to parental involvement characterized by educational partnership, in which parents and schools are equal partners with a shared responsibility for children's development, may overcome such critique (Denessen, 2019; Epstein, 2011; Epstein & Sanders, 2002).

Building educational partnership often implies an attitudinal and behavioral change in schools and can be viewed as an educational innovation. A shared school vision is regarded a prerequisite for implementing and sustaining educational innovations (Fullan, 2007; 2011; Hammerness, 2010; Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Lucas, Smith, Dutton, & Kleiner, 2012). It is thus assumed that successful implementation of a partnership approach is supported by a shared school vision on parental involvement. Research suggests that a shared vision should be developed in a collaborative process involving members from all layers of the school community and that changes in practice and behavior may foster shared vision development (Barnett & McCormick, 2003; Fullan, 2011; Huffman, 2003; O'Connell, Hickerson, & Pillutla, 2011). A way to develop a shared vision may be by working in a professional learning community (PLC; cf. Lomos, Hofman, & Bosker, 2011). In PLCs, professionals collectively exchange knowledge, investigate and reflect on school practices in order to improve students' learning.

In the current qualitative case study, a PLC in which both team members and parents participated was established in a primary school for a two-year period. The PLC's aim was to build educational partnership between parents and school. In this study we explored whether and how the PLC contributed to the development of a shared vision characterized by educational partnership in the school.

Parental Involvement in Children's Schooling
Parents can be involved in their children's schooling in many ways. Parental involvement can take place at home, for example when parents assist children with their homework

or engage children in home literacy activities, such as shared book reading, storytelling and teaching about letters and print. Parental involvement can also take place at school, for example through taking part in parent councils or by helping with school events (Fantuzzo, McWayne, Perry & Childs, 2004). A vast body of research has shown that higher academic performances have been reported for children with more involved parents compared to children with less involved parents (Boonk et al., 2018; Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Jeynes, 2005).

However, several scholars have criticized the discourse on parental involvement (cf. Auerbach, 2007a; 2007b; 2010; Bakker & Denessen, 2007; Baquedano-Lopez, Alexander & Hernandez, 2013; Cooper et al., 2010). Central to the critique is that the term is frequently used without acknowledging the power dynamics at play between schools and parents, in which schools determine what the 'right' type of parental involvement is and overlook types that do not fit that mold (Bakker & Denessen, 2007; Posey-Maddox & Haley-Lock, 2016). Types of parental involvement prioritized by schools are practices such as assisting with homework, engaging in shared reading activities, attending parent-teacher conferences, being active in the schools' parent council and practical support, such as helping out during field trips. Research shows that such types of parental involvement are more frequently shown by parents from middle and high socio-economic (SES) backgrounds than by low-SES parents (Auerbach, 2007a; Lopez, 2001; Posey-Maddox & Haley-Lock, 2016; Weininger & Lareau 2002). However, parents from low-SES background may show alternative types of support, such as teaching children about the importance of hard work and the value of education and study, setting high standards for their children and promoting properties such as diligence and dedication (Lopez, 2001; Rezai, Crul, Severiens & Keshkiner, 2015). These alternative types of parental involvement are not always recognized, prioritized or noticed by schools (Auerbach, 2007a; Denessen, 2019; Rezai et al., 2015)

Conceptualizations of parental involvement based on school priorities may engender deficit perspectives on parents. Such deficit perspectives generally pertain to low-SES parents and parents of other ethnic and linguistic backgrounds than the majority group (Baquedano-Lopez, 2013; Chavez-Reyes, 2010; Denessen, 2019) and imply that, if parents do not show the type of parent involvement recognized by schools, they are regarded as problematic, lacking knowledge or skills, and needing to change their attitudes and behaviors in order to meet the schools' norms (Auerbach, 2007a; 2007b; Baquedano-Lopez et al., 2013; Chavez-Reyes, 2010). As a consequence, parents may be

blamed for the struggles in their children's schooling, while societal and educational structures that produce or maintain educational inequalities are ignored. Deficit perspectives thus remove the focus from schools' and authorities' responsibilities in diminishing differences in children's educational opportunities (Kim, 2009b).

Models of cooperation between parents and school based on the notion of *partnership* may overcome the critique described above. In a partnership-model of parental involvement, parents and schools are equal partners with a shared responsibility: optimally supporting children's learning and development (Epstein, 2011; Epstein & Sanders, 2002). Partnerships between parents and schools are ideally characterized by mutual trust and respect, an inclusive approach welcoming families from all backgrounds, a focus on improving students' results and success, and a process-oriented approach, in which the collaboration between schools and parents is regarded as an ongoing process, which takes time, attention and planning to sustain (Epstein, 2011; Epstein & Sanders, 2002; Valli, Stefanski, & Jacobson, 2016). In a partnership approach, creating and maintaining good relationships between parents and school are regarded a shared responsibility of schools and parents, instead of narrowly focusing on what parents should do or fail to do (Auerbach, 2007a; Bakker et al., 2013; Epstein, 2011; Kim, 2009b).

In the current study, we depart from Oostdam and Hooge's (2014) notion of 'educational partnership'. Educational partnership focuses on the cooperation of parents and school in stimulating children's learning. A typical example of educational partnership is when parents and teachers engage in home – school conferencing: a mutual exchange of knowledge on how the child learns in the home and in the school setting and how to align both contexts. Educational partnership contrasts with other forms of partnership, such as 'formal partnership' (e.g., participation in parent councils) or 'social partnership' (e.g., organizing community events).

Educational Change: The Role of Shared Vision

Building educational partnerships often implies implementing changes. In the educational innovation literature, shared vision is regarded as a driving force behind successful and sustainable changes in schools: if team members share a vision on the goals of education and how to achieve them, they will be more committed to reaching those goals and applying changes in practice (Fullan, 2007; Hammerness, 2010; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Senge et al., 2012; Thoonen, Sleegers, Oort, & Peetsma, 2012). In most definitions, a vision entails an understanding of the current situation

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of the school/organization (descriptive model; Strange & Mumford, 2002, 2005) and an understanding of what the situation should be in the future (prescriptive model; Strange & Mumford, 2002, 2005). According to Van der Helm (2009), a vision is "the more or less explicit claim or expression of a future that is idealised in order to mobilise present potential to move into the direction of this future" (p. 100). Senge and colleagues (2012) emphasized this aspect of creating an understanding of what the future should be in defining a shared school vision as the "images of 'the future we want to create together,'[Senge and colleagues' quotation marks] along with the values that will be important in getting there, the goals we hope to achieve along the way, and the principles and guiding practices we expect to employ" (p. 80). According to Senge and colleagues, a vision is not only an imagined future, but it also has consequences for practice, as it encompasses shared ideas on the methods for reaching the goals and values collectively formulated.

Despite the widely shared acknowledgement of its importance, little is known on how to develop shared vision in schools (Averso, 2004; Barnett & McCormick, 2003; Hammerness, 2010; Watson, 2014). Research suggests certain key elements in the process of shared vision development. First, shared vision development should be a collective process involving members from all layers of the school organization, to ensure ownership of and commitment to the vision. A vision that is solely developed by the school leadership and is implemented top-down, will likely not be shared by the school community (Barnett & McCormick, 2003; Huffman, 2003; O'Connell, Hickerson, & Pillutla, 2011; Pekarsky, 2007; Senge, 2012). Second, shared vision development should be a collaborative process, in which critical reflection and the exchange of knowledge, experiences, and opinions are crucial (Barnett & McCormick, 2003; Huffman, 2003; O'Connell, Hickerson, & Pillutla, 2011; Senge et al., 2012). Third, shared vision may not only develop through talking but also by *doing* (Barnett & McCormick, 2003; Fullan, 2007, 2011; Pekarsky, 2007). Research indicates that a mutual relationship exists between practice and vision: changed behavior may result in changed ideas and vice versa (Fives & Buehl, 2012; Fullan, 2007, 2011). According to Fullan (2007; 2011), professionals need to be exposed to meaningful new experiences in order to form or alter their personal and eventually shared vision. As a method to develop a shared vision, initiating innovative practices may get this process started.

Shared Vision and Professional Learning Communities

Working in a professional learning community (PLC) may be a means to stimulate the development of shared vision in a school. A PLC is a community of educational professionals who engage in a collective, ongoing reflective enquiry into their own and colleagues' teaching practices in order to improve those collective practices with the final aim of fostering students' learning (Lomos, Hofman, & Bosker, 2011; Sleegers, Den Brok, Verbiest, Molenaar, Daly, 2013; Stoll, Bolam, McMahon, Wallace & Thomas, 2006). PLCs are often defined in terms of their characteristics, such as shared vision, a focus on students' learning, supportive leadership, a culture of collaboration, collective critical reflection on practice, a focus on teacher learning and a positive work climate (Bolam, McMahon, Stoll, Thomas, & Wallace, 2005; Schaap & De Bruijn, 2018; Sleegers et al., 2013; Stoll et al., 2006; Vangrieken, Meredith, Packer & Kyndt, 2017; Voelkel & Chrispeels, 2017).

In the current study, we assume that, although shared vision is usually regarded as a defining element of PLCs, the relation between shared vision and PLCs may be reversed: working in a PLC may also stimulate the development of a shared vision. In well-functioning PLCs, the conditions for developing a shared vision may be present, as diverse members of the school community collaborate, exchange knowledge and experiences and engage in collective critical reflection. Furthermore, while the term PLC may also refer to the learning culture in the whole school community including all staff, we use the term PLC for a community of learners within a school (cf. Louis, 2006; Vangrieken, et al., 2017). Finally, although some uncertainty exists on the compatibility of the participation of parents with the notion of 'professional' in PLCs (Hairon, Goh, Chua, & Wang, 2017), we believe that parents could and should be part of a PLC that focuses on building educational partnership between parents and school (Cooper, Allen, & Bettez, 2009).

Research Questions

In the current qualitative case study, we examined the process of shared vision development on parent involvement in one primary school in the Netherlands. We started from two assumptions. First, we assumed that shared vision development would benefit from the collaborative reflective process in a PLC. Second, we assumed that shared vision development would profit from collective engagement in a meaningful new experience (Fullan, 2007, 2011). Starting from the first assumption, a PLC was established in which staff members and parents together worked toward the introduction of a partnership approach in the school. Starting from the second

assumption, a parent-child program was introduced that required PLC members to collectively reflect on their perceptions of parent involvement. This program, Early Education at Home (EEH; Dutch Youth Institute, 2020), aims to stimulate kindergarteners' home literacy environments by helping parents to undertake literacy activities at home and assumes that parents and teachers engage in a dialogue on how both can contribute to children's literacy development.

We aimed to answer the following research question: Does a PLC involving parents and professionals contribute to the development of a shared vision on parental involvement characterized by educational partnership and, if so, in what way? We expected that, at the beginning of the study, PLC-members would not (yet) have a shared vision characterized by educational partnership. To answer the main research question, we aimed to answer the following sub-questions:

1. To what extent were the visions on parental involvement expressed by PLC-members compatible with an educational partnership approach?
2. How did the expressed visions develop?

Method

Case Study Design
The current study is a single-case study (Yin, 2018). The unit of analysis is the PLC in one school, that was followed for two years (summer 2015 until summer 2017). This case study is a sub-study in a larger project, in which we investigated the effects of EEH on children's emergent literacy development. For the current study, we made in-depth analyses of the process of shared vision development in one of the participating schools.

Case Description

School
The school, which we gave the fictitious name 'The Compass', was located in one of the major Dutch cities, in an area belonging to the 25% of neighborhoods in The Netherlands with the lowest socio-economic status scores of the population (based on a measure of the population's mean income, mean educational level and employment status; Netherlands Institute for Social Research, 2017). At the start of the study, 20%

of the school's pupils came from families with low parental educational levels (i.e., no education or only primary education and/or prevocational secondary education; Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs, 2015) and, according to the school leader, 40% of the children had a migration background (one or more parents being born outside the Netherlands; Statistic Netherlands, 2020). With a population of 480 pupils (Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs, 2015), The Compass is considered a large school.

Unit of analysis: The PLC

The school self-selected participants for the PLCs, based on the guidelines provided by the research team. These guidelines were as follows: ideally, the PLC should consist of the school leader, teachers from age groups 4-6, 7-9 and 10-12, the parent consultant if present in the school and two or more parents. These guidelines were based on the notion that strong commitment of the school leader is a characteristic of successful PLCs (cf. Sleegers, Den Brok, Verbiest, Molenaar, Daly, 2013) and that it is important for shared vision development to involve members from all layers of the school community (cf. Fullan, 2011).

PLC-members

Table 5.1 provides an overview of the PLC-members. Below, we provide a short description of the PLC-members.

Coordinator PLC. The coordinator of the PLC was the special needs coordinator of the lower grades (kindergarten). In her role as PLC-coordinator, she prepared and chaired the meetings, determined the agenda for each meeting (in consultation with the first author of this paper) and took the lead in written communication before and after each meeting. The PLC-coordinator and the first author regularly evaluated the PLC process together and discussed possible future activities of the PLC. The PLC-coordinator was also responsible, together with the kindergarten teacher and the parent consultant (see below), for the implementation of EEH in the school (see Procedure).

Teachers. Three teachers took part in the PLC, a kindergarten teacher (for children aged four to six years), a teacher of the 'middle grades' (for children aged six to nine years), and a teacher of the upper grades (for children aged nine to twelve years).

Parent consultant. The school employed a parent consultant who also took part in the PLC. However, at the beginning of the second year of the PLC, the parent consultant

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found a new job and was, after a while, replaced by a new parent consultant. The new parent consultant also took part in the PLC.

Table 5.1

Overview of PLC-Members

Function	Gender	Country of birth	Number of PLC-meetings attended	Participation interview 2015-2016	Participation interview 2016-2017
School leader	Female	Netherlands	13	Yes	Yes
Coordinator PLC / Special coordinator lower grades / responsible for implementation EEH	Female	Netherlands	12	Yes	Yes
Teacher age groups 9 – 12	Male	Netherlands	12	Yes	Yes
Teacher age groups 6 – 9	Female	Netherlands	10	No	Yes
Teacher age groups 4 – 6 / responsible for implementation EEH	Female	Netherlands	11	No	Yes
Parent consultant in Year 1 / responsible for implementation EEH	Female	Netherlands	4	Yes	No
Parent consultant in Year 2	Female	Morocco	3	No	Yes
Parent	Female	Suriname	6	Yes	No
Parent / only took part once in 2015-2016	Female	Unknown	1	No	No
Researcher (first author)	Female	Netherlands	12	n.a.	n.a.
Researcher (second author)	Male	Netherlands	8	n.a.	n.a.

School leader. The school leader was present during every PLC-meeting, in which she actively participated.

Parents. Parents did not take part in the PLC before the third meeting, because team members were initially not sure which parents to ask to participate and seemed to feel some hesitancy in involving parents. One parent had children in the lower and upper grades. She attended nearly half of the PLC meetings and actively contributed to the discussions. In the course of the second year of the PLC, she found a job which she could not combine with further participation in the PLC. The second parent was a mother of a child in kindergarten, who also took part in EEH. She was present only once, during the third PLC-meeting. This mother also found a job that did not allow her to continue participation in the PLC.

Researchers. Two researchers (first and second author) served as facilitators. At least one of them was present during every meeting of the PLC. Additionally, the first author and the PLC-coordinator communicated by telephone or email in between meetings. The researchers' activities in the PLC involved providing access to certain resources, such as research literature, challenging assumptions and beliefs, asking reflective questions, providing feedback and stimulating critical reflection. As such, the researchers' role can be characterized by what Margalef and Roblin (2016) defined as '"supporting teacher [participant] learning" (p. 158).

Procedure

Before the start of the study, in April 2015, the first author organized an informative meeting with the whole school team. During this meeting, information was provided on the general aims of the research project, the concept of PLCs in general, the aims and working method of the PLC to be organized in the school, and the EEH program. The first PLC meeting was held in the summer of 2015, just before the summer holidays. Thereafter, the meetings were held every six to eight weeks. Meetings generally lasted for 1.5 hours. The first two meetings were chaired by the first author to provide a model of how the meeting could be structured. Subsequently, the PLC-coordinator took over this role. The first meeting consisted of exploratory collaborative group assignments and discussions to introduce the topic of 'educational partnership'. Thereafter, all meetings followed the same procedure (see Figures 5.1 and 5.2). In the first part of the meetings, members discussed the implementation of EEH. In the second part of the meetings, the focus was extended to educational partnership in the whole school. PLC-members were encouraged to work form a research-oriented perspective, following a cyclical approach (Ponte, 2012), with the aid of a format provided by the researchers, inspired by De Koning & Kroon (2009). See Figure 5.1 and 5.2 for the format and a description of the stages in the cycle.

Issue
= something you'd like to see differently or better
= topic from your practice you'd like to know more about

- What is the issue?
- When does this issue occur?
- For whom is this important?
- Why is it important?
- What do we want to find out?
➔ Research question

Exploration
- What do we want to find out? (Research question)
- What goal do we want to reach?
- How do we want to do this?
  → **see page Exploration**
- When are we going to explore?
- What are the results?
- How can we apply the results?

Action
- What action for improvement could we perform?
- What is the aim of this action?
- How will we perform this action?
  ○ Who?
  ○ When?
  ○ What do we need?

Reflection
- Did we reach the goal of our action?
- Why (not)?
- What went well in performing the action?
- What should have gone better?
  ○ Why is that?
  ○ How can we improve?

ISSUE **EXPLORATION** **ACTION** **REFLECTION**

Figure 5.1. PLC working method Part 1: cyclical approach. During the first stage ('Issue'), members focused in group discussions on issues they encountered in their daily practice. Members then formulated practice-oriented research questions to further explore these issues. During the second stage ('Exploration'), PLC members were encouraged to explore in order to find answers to their research questions. After conducting practice-oriented research, results were discussed in the PLC-meetings. In the next stage ('Action') PLC-members formulated actions to improve practice, based on research outcomes. In the last phase ('Reflection'), PLC-members evaluated those actions, which could lead to emergence of new issues in the cyclical approach. However, PLC-members could also take an alternative route the cyclical approach: results of the practice-oriented research in the second stage ('Exploration'), could lead to the formulation of new issues and research questions ('Issue'), after which PLC-member could decide to conduct another round of practice-oriented research, thus continuing in the second stage ('Exploration').
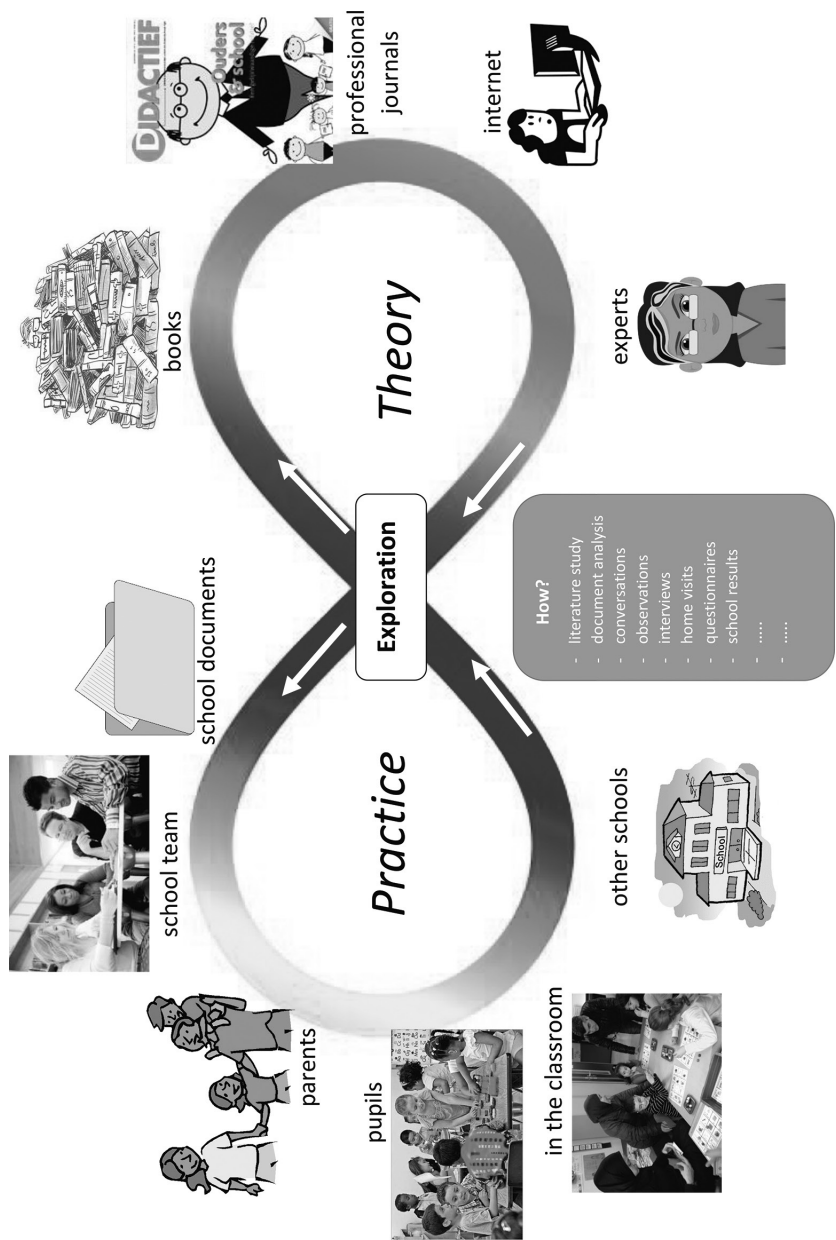
Figure 5.2. PLC working method Part 2: Exploration. In the second stage ('exploration'), this format was used to visualize for PLC-members which methods and resources could be used to explore practice-oriented research questions, for example by interviewing parents and team members, or examining professional literature. Figure inspired by De Koning & Kroon (2011).

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Shortly after the first PLC-meeting, the school implemented EEH. Every four to six weeks, the school invited parents of kindergartners for a parent meeting of 1.5 hours. In those meetings, parents were encouraged to share their experiences with children's literacy learning at home. Parents received materials to take home, in order to undertake playful literacy activities with their children, such as shared book-reading, discussing prompting boards (De la Rie, Van Steensel, Van Gelderen, & Severiens, 2020), playing language games and doing craft work together. These materials were explained to parents by the kindergarten teacher and the parent consultant. All activities were connected to the themes of the kindergarten curriculum. The parent meetings also provided opportunities for parents to bring their own topics to the table and for teachers to tell the parents about the kindergarten curriculum (Kalthoff & Berns, 2014).

Data Sources

Meeting transcripts
Audio recordings were made of each PLC-meeting (thirteen in total), which were later transcribed ad verbatim by a research assistant.

Interviews PLC members
At the end of each intervention year, all PLC members were approached by a research assistant to take part in a semi-structured telephone interview (see Table 5.1 for an overview of participants). In the first year, however, three members could not be interviewed: two teachers could not be reached, because of pregnancy leave and family circumstances, while one parent could not be reached because of an unknown reason. In the second year, parents had ceased participation in the PLC at the time of the interviews. The interviews consisted of general evaluative questions on the PLC-process (such as: According to you, what went really well in the PLC-meetings this year? What aspects need improvement?), questions on the cooperation between parent and school (such as: How do you evaluate the cooperation between parents and school in the PLC?), questions on the discussion of the implementation of EEH (such as: What do you think of the discussions of EEH in each PLC-meeting?), questions on the development of a (shared) vision on parental involvement in the PLC and in the school (such as: To what extent do you share the same ideas on parental involvement in the PLC? To what extent do you share the same ideas on parental involvement in the school team? Did any changes occur in the school's vision on parental involvement as a result of the introduction of the PLC?), questions on the role of the school leader in supporting

parental involvement and the PLC, and questions on the role of the research team in the PLC. Interviews generally lasted about 40 minutes. All eleven interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed ad verbatim by a research assistant.

Analysis

To answer the research questions, transcripts of the PLC meetings (n = 13) and interviews (n = 11) were analyzed (see Appendix C for coding scheme). We only selected fragments that expressed PLC-members' vision(s) on parental involvement. Based on the notion that vision entails a descriptive mental model of the current situation and a prescriptive, normative mental model of what the situation should be (Strange & Mumford, 2002; 2005), we applied the following rules in selecting fragments:

- Fragments contained PLC-members' expectations / norms concerning what parents should do, be or have in relation to parental involvement. For instance: parents should be involved in their child's schooling.
- Fragments contained PLC-members' expectations / norms concerning what the school / professional should do, be or have in relation to parental involvement. For example: the professional should be open and respectful towards parents.
- Fragments contained PLC-members' perceptions / descriptions of what parents currently do, are or have, in relation to parental involvement. For example: parents are approachable for the school.
- Fragments contained PLC-members' perceptions / descriptions concerning what the school / professional currently does, is or has in relation to parental involvement. For example: the professional facilitates parental involvement. See Appendix C for more examples of PLC-members' perceptions and expectations.

The first author coded the fragments following the procedures of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) aided by the research software Atlas.ti (ATLAS.ti Scientific Software Development GmbH, 2019). Although some themes and codes resonated theoretical insights on parental involvement and partnership, the data were leading in defining codes and themes; the data were coded according to an inductive approach (Thomas, 2006). After the first round of coding all transcripts, codes were organized into larger themes and more specific sub-codes were merged into more general codes. Next, all data were coded again using the adjusted coding scheme. To ensure validity and reliability, the coding procedures and coding scheme were discussed several times with the second and third author of the paper: we discussed the validity of the codes

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and the organization into larger themes and collectively coded a meeting transcript and an interview transcript. The few cases where disagreements on coding occurred were discussed until agreement was reached. These discussions led to small adjustments in definitions of codes and themes. See Appendix C for the final coding scheme.

To examine developments in vision in the PLC (RQ 2), we analyzed how the expressed visions changed in the second year compared to the first year. To this end, the absolute frequency (total number of times a code occurred) and relative frequency (percentage of total number of codes occurred) of each code in the meeting transcripts in Year 1 and in Year 2 and the number of interviews in which each code was applied in Year 1 and in Year 2 were computed. This allowed us to compare Year 1 and Year 2 in a) how much attention was payed to specific expectations and perceptions in PLC-meetings and b) how many PLC-members expressed specific expectations and perceptions in interviews.

After analysis, the first author discussed the results with the available members of the PLC, namely the school leader and the PLC-coordinator, as a member-check (Koelsch, 2013). Both PLC-members recognized the researchers' interpretations of the data and saw no discrepancies between the results and their own perceptions of the PLC process.

Results

The visions expressed by the PLC-members on parental involvement during the PLC meetings and in the interviews were categorized into seven themes, namely 'educational partnership', 'formal partnership', 'contact and communication', 'relational climate', 'diversity of the parent population', 'responsibility and control', and 'vision and team support'. See Table 5.2 for descriptions of the content of the seven themes. Figure 5.3 provides a schematic overview of the interrelations between the themes. Appendix C contains the complete coding scheme including definitions of main themes, sub-codes and examples from the data. Below, we present the results of our qualitative analysis across themes.

Table 5.2

Description of Main Themes in Coded Data Fragments. For all Codes and Data Examples, See Appendix C.

Main theme	Description
Educational partnership	Codes within this theme concerned the cooperation between parents and school aimed at stimulating children's development.
Formal partnership	Codes within this theme concerned the cooperation between parents and school aimed at improving the school organization.
Contact and communication	Codes within this theme concern the communication between parents and school
Relational climate	Codes within this theme concern the relational clime between parents, among parents, among professionals, and attitudinal aspects of parents and professionals towards each other and towards parental involvement.
Diversity of parent population	Codes within this theme concern the diversity of the population, how diversity may influence parental involvement, the skills parents and professional have, need or lack related to diversity..
Responsibility and control	Codes within this theme concern professionals' and parents' responsibilities in stimulating parental involvement and the extent to which the degree of parental involvement can be influenced.
Vision and team support	Codes with this theme concern the topic of shared vision and process of shared vision development within the school team and the school community.

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Compatibility of Visions on Parental Involvement with Educational Partnership (RQ1)

Regarding the compatibility of visions with educational partnership, we observed four tendencies in the data. Below, each of these tendencies are described in more detail.

Striving for educational partnership (first tendency)

PLC-members held norms for parents and professionals that were compatible with an educational partnership approach. First of all, they expected that parents were involved in their children's learning and cooperate with the school to stimulate children's learning. They also expected professionals to cooperate with and support parents in order to stimulate children's learning (theme 'educational partnership'). Additionally, PLC members expected parents and school to engage in a reciprocal communicative relationship and they expected both to adhere to similar norms (e.g., being approachable, sharing information, reaching out; theme 'contact and communication'). Next, PLC-members strived for a relationship between schools and parents characterized by trust, equality and mutual respect, as evidenced by the expectations that professionals should respect parents and treat them as equals, by taking them seriously, and being open and welcoming. Similarly, PLC members expected from parents that they were respectful and

understanding towards professionals (theme 'relational climate'). PLC-members valued an inclusive approach, by expecting from professionals that they knew and responded to diverse parental backgrounds (theme 'diversity of parent population') and by expecting from the school that it should involve team members, parents and children in developing a school vision on parental involvement (theme 'vision and theme support').
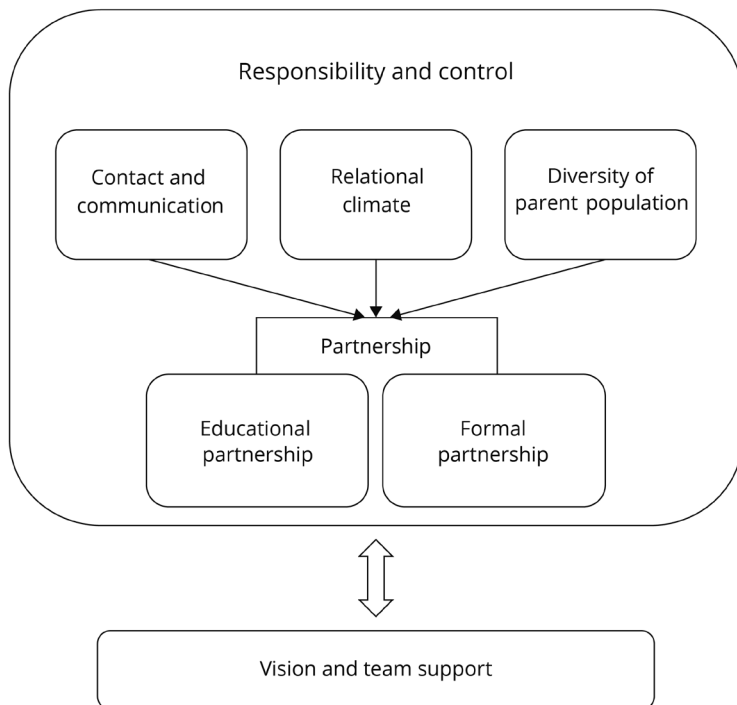
Figure 5.3 Schematic overview of main themes and relations among themes in coded data fragments. The themes 'educational partnership' and 'formal partnership' referred to the different goals of parental involvement. The themes 'contact and communication', 'relational climate', and 'diversity of the parent population' are related to the quality of educational and formal partnership. The theme 'responsibility and control' relates to all of the other previously mentioned themes: how far does the school's responsibility reach in creating educational and formal partnership, communicating with parents, creating a good relational climate with parents and responding to diverse parents' needs, and what are parents' responsibilities in those matters? The codes within the theme 'vision and team support' concern the topic of shared vision and vision development on the general topic of parental involvement, including all themes.

Obstacles for educational partnership (second tendency)

Several perceptions of parents expressed by PLC-members may frustrate the development of educational partnership. In various cases, positively formulated parent perceptions were accompanied by negative parent perceptions that reflected a deficit perspective. For example, although parents were sometimes perceived as supportive and involved in children's schooling, concerns were also raised about parents' knowledge, skills and facilities to support children's learning (theme 'educational partnership'). Similarly, some parents were perceived as approachable, but others as 'hard to reach' (theme 'contact and communication'). Likewise, parents were in some cases perceived as appreciative, respectful and understanding towards the school and professional, while in other cases they were perceived as too demanding and critical (theme 'relational climate'). Additionally, some parents were perceived as involved and enthusiastic, while others were perceived as uninvolved and not enthusiastic (theme 'relational climate'). Furthermore, although PLC-members generally observed good relations among parents and between parents and school, concerns were also expressed that parents may not feel welcome and/or appreciated in the school (theme 'relational climate'), as illustrated by the following quote, when the PLC-members (no parents were present at that moment) discuss the participation of parents in the PLC: "But that is really something to consider; if we're going to put a parent here who finds it difficult to tell things and doesn't feel safe here, then we're not going to get any information out of them" (Teacher upper grades, PLC-meeting 2, Year 1).

The ambivalence in perceptions among PLC-members seems to be related to the diversity of the parent population. PLC-members, for instance, indicated that personal circumstances of some parents, such as a hectic family life, work situation or financial problems hampered their involvement. Additionally, parents' language background, if different from Dutch, was perceived as problematic. Similarly, parents' cultural/ethnic background was seen as a factor determining involvement: some PLC-members, for instance, perceived parents with Turkish backgrounds to be less involved than other parents: "We're just missing a whole group of parents who we never see and those are precisely our Turkish mothers, who we don't see" (School leader, PLC-meeting 2, Year 1).

Sometimes, the deficit perspective was challenged. During one PLC-meeting, for instance, the parent consultant opposed the stance that cultural background determined the degree of involvement and, consequently, the deficit perspective underlying this

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stance. Instead, she argued that parents with different cultural backgrounds may have different beliefs on what parent involvement should be:

> There is also the group of parents who from their cultural perspective say, "this is the school and here it belongs. You do it." You know, then it is not about disinterest but, you know, it's a bit of culture. "You are the school and we are home, we are not school" […]. I think anyways the word "not interested" is a pity, that is just something that you cannot fill in for someone else. (Parent consultant, PLC-meeting 1, Year 1)

PLC-members' perceptions of professionals also reflected some obstacles for realizing educational partnership. PLC-members saw some professionals reach out to parents only in case of problems, instead of building an equal, reciprocal communicative relationship with parents (theme 'contact and communication'). Additionally, (some) professionals were perceived to be feeling tense and vulnerable in contacts with parents (theme 'relational climate'). Although PLC-members expected from professionals that they knew and responded to parental backgrounds, the perception prevailed that professionals lacked knowledge on parental backgrounds and perspectives (theme 'diversity of population'). Furthermore, perceptions of PLC-members reflected lack of skills and discomfort in professionals when engaging with linguistically diverse parents (theme 'diversity of population'). An example of discomfort with linguistic diversity was expressed by the school leader, when explaining why adherence to the school policy that parents should only speak Dutch in school was important to her:

> We want Dutch to be spoken in the school and Dutch in the school yard. Because otherwise, we cannot communicate with one another. It causes an eerie feeling if you don't understand. I can stand beside them but I don't get anything because I don't know what they're talking about, and so forth. She [a parent] was very outraged about that. She felt told off, but it is the only way to communicate with one another. (School leader, PLC-meeting 2, Year 1)

This quote is illustrative of the trend that, within the expressed visions, the voice of the school outweighed the parents' voice: in this quote only the discomfort of the professional seemed to matter. The discomfort the 'Dutch only' policy may cause in parents ("she was very outraged about that") is dismissed, as the school leader sees no alternative for communication ("it is the only way to communicate with one another").

Uncertainties and contradictions in responsibilities and control (third tendency)
This tendency was observed within the theme 'responsibility and control'. PLC-members questioned what professionals' and parents' responsibilities were in stimulating parental involvement: they expressed uncertainties in what belonged to the school domain and the family domain. PLC-members observed that team members differed in their understanding of what constituted teachers' tasks in involving parents:

> To what extent do you do you go after them, as a teacher, if a parent does not show up at a parent-teacher conference? Everyone here would call the parents or address them if they [staff members] see them [parents], but then there are teachers who say, well, we made this appointment, they did not show up, I called them, I emailed them, there is no reply, here it ends for me. Not my job to pursue it any further. But there will also be teachers who say, yes, eventually the child matters, so I will call a second, third, fourth time until I made an appointment. And yes, there are differences in expectations from school and teacher. (Interview teacher upper grades, Year 2).

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Additionally, PLC-members were sometimes ambiguous in their expectations and perceptions of the responsibilities of the school. On the one hand, they expected staff members to maximally facilitate parental involvement, by taking away obstacles for parents to become involved (for example by arranging childcare during parent meetings, arranging interpreters for parents who did not speak Dutch). On the other hand, the responsibilities of the school were often nuanced. For instance, many parent involvement activities were perceived as the (sole) responsibility of the parent consultant. Furthermore, PLC-members expressed boundaries in the extent to which the school could accommodate parents, for example concerning planning evening meetings: "There were parents who said 'yes, but we can do that in the evenings'. No, we are not going to do that" (Interview kindergarten teacher, Year 2). Also, PLC-members expected and perceived the staff to regulate or even restrict parental input and involvement. For instance, cooperation in the PLC with parents was not seen by all PLC-members as desirable: parent participation should be limited to formal parent councils, according to several PLC-members. The following quote from an interview with a teacher participating in the PLC illustrates how the school regulated parental input in selecting parents to take part in the PLC:

> [interviewer] What do you think of how the cooperation with parents in the PLC
> is working out?
> [teacher] Hm, fine. Yes, they are also, yes, yes, we select them a bit for it, of course.
> To put it a little bluntly, but, we have two very pleasant parents who, yes, are very
> well capable of, and that is difficult for some parents, but they are very capable of
> switching between, what do parents want? And what is feasible for, for a school?
> (Teacher middle grades, Year 2)

PLC-members also expressed contradictory perceptions about the level of control the
staff had over the degree of parental involvement, reflecting both a stronger as well
a more limited sense of collective efficacy (Tschannen-Moran, Saloum, & Goddard,
2014). PLC-members expressed positive perceptions about the staff's efforts to
stimulate parental involvement. They perceived professionals to indeed facilitate
parental involvement in the school in many different ways, for example by considering
parents' needs and wishes in organizing parent events. They perceived professionals
as able to influence parental involvement, for example through positive and welcoming
teacher attitudes when approaching parents. At the same time, PLC-members were
pessimistic about the impact of the schools' efforts: they expressed the perception
that professionals could not influence parental involvement, no matter how much work
professionals put into facilitating parental involvement. The following quote of the
school leader discussing the implementation of EEH illustrates this perception:

> You just cannot figure out how to do it exactly. What is important for me at this
> moment, is, gosh, I am not going to invest hundreds and thousands of euros in
> this. You know, this takes so much energy that I think, you know, you don't even
> have the strength to put so much energy into it and keep on going after it, and,
> but, I think, the material is nice, you know, that's not it. That's not what they are
> coming for then. So you keep on going after it, come on, hand it in, attend the
> meetings. We only have a group of fifteen of which half already pulled out actually
> and then do take the materials along. We just go with that then. It does not serve
> the goal, and then I think, yes, where did we take the wrong turn. (School leader,
> PLC-meeting 6, Year 1)

Remarkably, contradictory perceptions regarding professionals' influence on parental
involvement were observed within the same individuals in the PLC. It is unclear what
caused the ambivalence in perceived control. Perceived control may vary for the

involvement of different groups of parents, but the data did not provide clear evidence for this interpretation.

Need for and intention to develop a (formalized) shared vision (fourth tendency)
The fourth tendency was observed within the theme 'vision and team support'. When discussing the presence of shared vision in the school community, PLC-members perceived the school staff to agree upon the importance of parental involvement in the school:

> [teacher upper grades] I think all the teachers recognize the importance of it, of parents being involved. Because I think everyone has numerous examples of that you just reap the benefits if you have good contact with the parents. I guess so, but maybe I'm speaking for others too much.
> [PLC-coordinator] I think so too.
> [teacher upper grades] I think it is supported within the team.
> (PLC-meeting 4, Year 1)

At the same time, PLC-members expressed concerns that team members did not always agree on the interpretation of the concept and goals of stimulating parental involvement. Furthermore, PLC-members expressed that in some cases (large) differences existed in the views of parents and team members, as illustrated by the following quote: "Really just very basic stuff that we as teachers here find obvious, but which aren't obvious for all parents at this school" (teacher upper grades interview, Year 1).

The discussions in the PLC lead PLC-members to note the absence of a formalized school vision and policy on parental involvement. At the end of the first year, PLC-members had created an action plan to improve certain parental involvement activities in the school, which was implemented in the second year. While discussing this plan, the school leader made it very clear that this action plan did not contain a formal school vision. She expressed that, to reach a shared school vision, certain steps needed to be taken:

> Because that means, if you're heading towards educational partnership, you need to develop a clear vision. This is a first step but you need to develop a vision with each other, like, okay, this is what we envisage as an educational partnership but up till here and no further. And it's not about us not wanting to engage in conversations with parents or something, but here [in the PLC] the school's

authority still applies and we don't need to account for ourselves. [...] I think we should brainstorm with the team and create a vision based on that, but we also have the part of involving parents in it. Which is not part of this [school leader points to document on the table]. [...] There is no vision in this. There is no vision in this. This is not a vision document. We did not collectively formulate a vision that says this is how we do it at The Compass. (School leader, PLC meeting 7, Year 1)

Based on PLC-members' observation of the absence of a formalized shared school vision on parental involvement, the wish to obtain such a shared school vision was formulated. PLC-members expressed expectations that the school team should have shared ideas and approaches concerning parental involvement. PLC-members expected the whole team to be involved, and they also expected that the team/staff would involve parents and children in creating a more formalized shared vision. This formalized vision could then serve as the basis of further policy plans.

PLC-members perceived the PLC to play a facilitating role in the process of developing a shared vision. First, the process was facilitated by a shared drive and sense of urgency among PLC-members to improve parental involvement: "And that I really notice, that still, within the PLC, when we sit together, I sense that we all want to go for that parental involvement. I feel that very strongly" (Interview PLC-coordinator, Year 2).

Second, the discussions within the PLC facilitated a process of reaching consensus, when PLC-members initially differed in their ideas:

Yes, the school has always been concerned with 'how do we get the parents more involved with the children?' They have always done their best for that. But I think that, maybe they were not exactly of one mind yet, or they did not know how give shape to it. I notice during these meetings, that things are more structured and that there is more collaboration. [...] But how do you implement it? And now, now it just becomes clearer that... Yes, you realize, you're sitting down together, you're starting to think about certain things, you realize 'Okay, this is what we want to reach, that is where we are headed'. So, everybody, all eyes in the same direction. (Parent interview, Year 1).

Third, the reading of professional articles on the topic of parental involvement and the collective discussion of those articles aided the process of reaching consensus on the goal of parental involvement, namely educational partnership:

> I think because of reading literature, we are much more on the same page. That things are clearer. What I said before: I thought, yes, involvement, parental involvement, what else should we do? I mean, if seven parents are here to help and twelve aren't, yes, so that was my bit of parental involvement. I thought, we have to get them into the school to have them help decorate the school and join the field trip to the petting zoo. But now I think: oh, we're going to focus on more, on sitting down together, on that educational partnership. So yes, I think we all are much more on the same page now. (Kindergarten teacher interview, Year 2).

The PLC was expected to take a coordinating role in obtaining a more formalized vision by planning the process for involving all relevant stakeholders (parents, team members, children) and setting the agenda. Obstacles for this process were also expressed, such as the differences between views of professionals and parents and among staff members, limited knowledge on parental involvement, and time constraints. The plan to create a formalized shared school vision on parental involvement was still in development at the end of the intervention. PLC-members expressed that further systematic efforts were necessary: "Where we should go now is that we should have a certain vision and a multi-year plan based on that vision, or actually integrate it within the school's multi-year plan. And set this up systematically" (Teacher upper grades interview, Year 2).

Developments in Expressed Visions in the PLC (RQ2)

Table 5.3 provides a comparison of how codes were distributed across the different themes in Year 1 versus 2. This information provides an indication of the development in visions expressed in the course of the PLC-intervention. The data show three developments (marked in bold type in Table 5.3). The first development involves an increase in the attention to the theme 'vision and team support' (from 10 to 29%) accompanied by small decreases in attention to other main themes during PLC-meetings. This development aligns with the activities carried out during the PLC at The Compass. In Year 1, PLC-members mainly worked from an exploratory approach, aiming to answer general questions, such as: what are the school's successes concerning parental involvement, where are improvements needed, what are parents' and professionals' needs and expectations, how can those needs and expectations be

met? Based on these questions, PLC-members investigated the school's practice in several small research projects. In discussing the implications of the outcomes of those projects, PLC-members noted the school did not have a formalized shared vision and expressed the need to obtain such a vision. This resulted in a focus on the process of vision development in Year 2. The discussions concerning vision development in the PLC meetings focused on how to create a shared vision (who needs to be involved in what stage, who will organize the process, what obstacles need to be dealt with?) instead of on the vision itself. In the interviews, also more PLC-members in Year 2 (4 members) compared to Year 1 (2 members), expressed the expectation that professionals should base their actions related to parental involvement on a shared vision or plan.

The second development is an increase or stabilization in attention for the theme 'educational partnership'. This theme received more attention in interviews from Year 1 to Year 2 (mentioned by 2 PLC-members in Year 1 and 6 in Year 2). In meetings, the share of references to educational partnership remained stable across the two years (12 % in Year 1 and 14% in Year 2), while references to other themes, except for 'Vision and team support', decreased. One possible explanation for the relatively large share of attention to this theme during the second year is that through the activities undertaken in the PLC, such as the reading of literature, members obtained a clearer view of what they aimed for in stimulating parental involvement (see previous teacher quote on p. 193). Another explanation may be the increase in the expression of a particular perception within this theme, representing an obstacle for educational partnership: PLC-members expressed the perception of parents that they lack knowledge, skills or facilities to support their child's learning more frequently in Year 2 (13 times) than in Year 1 (one time only). This perception was expressed in several contexts: while discussing the outcomes of practice-oriented research into the needs of parents (parents expressed the need for more support from the school on how to guide their children in educational topics), when discussing the implementation of EEH (parents were perceived to have difficulties implementing the program) and in reflecting on professional literature in which a focus on parents' needs and expectations in building educational partnership is promoted.

The third development is an increase in attention in interviews to the diversity of the parent population. In Year 1, only one PLC-member referred to this theme, while in Year 2, all six interviewed PLC-members did. In Year 2, more PLC-members expressed that professionals lacked knowledge on parental background and perspectives. All PLC-

members expressed the perception that parents were hampered to become involved because of their family circumstances (such parents' work situations, finances, child care). The latter suggests that deficit perspectives were more prominent in Year 2 than in Year 1. This development indicates a heightened sensitivity in the PLC towards parents' needs, and to misalignments between what is expected from parents and parents' diverse contexts. However, this sensitivity seemed not to be accompanied by an increased awareness of the school's role and responsibilities in addressing such misalignments, as PLC-members mostly explained such misalignments in terms of individual parent factors.

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Table 5.3

Absolute and Relative Frequencies with which Codes from the Main Themes were Applied in Meeting Transcripts and Number of Interviews and Percentage of Total Interviews in which Codes from the Main Themes were Applied in Year 1 and in in Year 2

Main theme	Meetings Year 1		Meetings Year 2		Interviews Year 1		Interviews Year 2	
	Number of times code applied	Percentage of total number of codes applied in Year 1	Number of times code applied	Percentage of total number of codes applied in Year 2	Number of interviews in which code is applied	Percentage of all interviews Year 1	Number of interviews in which code is applied	Percentage of all interviews Year 2
Educational partnership	**69**	**12%**	**56**	**14%**	**2**	**40%**	**6**	**100%**
Formal partnership	23	4%	5	1%	0	0%	1	17%
Contact and communication	110	18%	52	14%	4	80%	4	67%
Relational climate	125	21%	61	16%	5	100%	6	100%
Diversity of parent population	87	14%	39	10%	**1**	**20%**	**6**	**100%**
Responsibility and control	125	21%	65	17%	3	60%	6	100%
Vision and team support	**59**	**10%**	**111**	**29%**	5	100%	6	100%
Total codes applied/ percentage of total codes applied/number of interviews/ percentage of total interviews	598	100%	389	100%	5	100%	6	100%

Note: Bold text represents developments discussed in the results section, in answer to research question 2.

Discussion

In this study, we explored whether and how the cooperation of parents and team members in a PLC focused on building educational partnership contributed to the development of a shared vision on parental involvement. In particular, we examined to what extent the visions expressed by PLC-members were compatible with an educational partnership approach (RQ1) and how visions developed during the project (RQ2).

The PLC proved to be a promising instrument to initiate a process of shared vision development and, especially, in exposing existing views among staff members. Parents, however, were only marginally represented in the PLC meetings, despite the intention of the PLC-design. The four tendencies in the data described in answer to RQ1 disclosed an ambiguity in PLC-members' visions. We observed that the visions of PLC-members reflected an ambition to build educational partnership, as the norms they held for both parents and professionals echoed the importance of mutual respect, reciprocal communication, inclusion and cooperation in stimulating children's development (first tendency) and the visions exposed a need within the PLC for a formalized shared school vision on educational partnership (fourth tendency). Simultaneously, possible barriers to the ambition to build educational partnership were expressed. Some of the visions displayed deficit perspectives on parents and discomfort and lack of skills in professionals in responding to a diverse parent population, which may undermine an equal, respectful relationship between parents and the school (second tendency). The paradox between striving for educational partnership and the obstacles for educational partnership seemed to result in an ambivalence concerning the responsibilities and possibilities of professionals and parents in building educational partnership (third tendency). On the one hand, PLC-members attributed the school a strong responsibility and agency in facilitating and also regulating parental involvement, on the other hand PLC-members placed the responsibility for (limited) parental involvement within parents and perceived the school to have no control over the level of parental involvement. Such uncertainties and inconsistencies concerning professionals' and parents' roles in the parent-school relationship may hamper educational partnership, as educational partnership needs clarity on the mutual expectations of parents and schools (Deslandes & Rousseau, 2007; Driessen, Smit, & Klaassen, 2010). The main development in visions (RQ 2) is an increased focus on the process of shared vision development rather than on content. During the process, PLC-members became aware of the lack of a shared school vision on educational partnership. In the second year, 'shared vision and team support'

became the main theme in the PLC-meetings. These results indicate that shared vision development is a lengthy and multi-staged process.

Obstacles for Educational Partnership: Persistency of Deficit Perspectives
Our data show that, although PLC-members strived for educational partnership, the role of parents was frequently discussed from a deficit perspective and this did not decrease during the intervention. Evidence of deficit perspectives were the many instances in which parents' involvement was regarded as somehow hampered because of characteristic of parents, as well as the instances in which professionals expressed discomfort in responding to (linguistic) diversity. Additionally, the school's voice seemed to be prioritized over the parents' voice, as evidenced by the instances in which PLC-members expected the school to regulate or limit parental input and involvement (for example in selecting parents for the PLC).

Possibly, the PLC provided too little space to critically challenge existing views and perspectives. To illustrate this concern, we highlight three of our observations of the collaborative process in the PLC. First, participation of parents was limited and did not continue throughout the intervention period, contrary to the PLC guidelines. Furthermore, the interview data show that the school only invited parents that were perceived to be able and willing to take the school's perspective on matters. A continuous participation of parents in the PLC and a more democratic parent selection procedure may have increased the opportunities to discuss parental perspectives and limit the expression of deficit perspectives. One of the teachers, for example, expressed in an interview that staff members were more careful in formulating their stances when a parent was present in the meetings ("You'll mind your words just a little bit more"). Second, despite the school leader's strong commitment to the ambition of building educational partnership, she also voiced deficit perspectives and advocated a school centric approach to parental involvement. Although support of the school leader is regarded an important characteristic of effective PLCs (e.g. Stoll et al., 2006; Thoonen et al., 2012), due to the power dynamics present in a leader-employee relationship, it may have been difficult for other PLC-members to question the school leaders' stances. Third, interview data show that the parent consultant in Year 1, who frequently took a more critical position during PLC-meetings and challenged deficit assumptions underlying parent perceptions, was the only PLC-member that did not perceive the working climate in the PLC as completely positive. Where the other PLC-members praised the constructive and open atmosphere, the parent consultant voiced

her concern that with other PLC-members expressing their convictions and ideas so resolutely, she did not always feel safe.

Our observations hint at negative aspects of shared vision (Hammerness 2010; Watson, 2014). Possibly, an implicit normative vision (Van der Helm, 2009) on what is appropriate in the collaboration between parents and school was operative in the PLC, limiting the opportunities to openly and critically challenge one another's viewpoints. Shared vision can be a constructive force, fueling positive changes in schools. However, as Watson (2014) describes, shared vision can also "mask difference" (p. 22) and "become a means to produce silence" (p. 22) instead of opening up the discussion. In the PLC in our study, such a silencing-mechanism may have been active.

We hypothesized that the implementation of EEH would provide meaningful new experiences to PLC-members that stimulate the development of a shared vision characterized by educational partnership (Fullan, 2007; 2011). However, despite the importance of reciprocal communication advocated by the program guidelines (Kaltfhoff & Berns, 2014), the discussions of EEH in the PLC-meetings focused mostly on issues related to transferring the EEH-curriculum to parents. Such a 'traditional', unidirectional method of school-to-parent communication (Cooper, Allen, & Bettez, 2009; Green, 2017), with few opportunities to explore whether the program met the needs and expectations of participating parents, may have given rise to barriers in the parent-school contact that reinforced rather than challenged deficit perspectives on parents. Possibly, the existing deficit perspectives in the PLC steered the way EEH was approached, while simultaneously, EEH was not innovative enough to provide an actual departure from deficit-based notions of parental involvement. More targeted interventions that explicitly address deficit perspectives may be needed.

Development of Shared Vision: A Lengthy and Staged Process
Based on the outcomes of this study, we hypothesize that shared vision development is a lengthy and possibly three-staged process. The initial stage could be characterized as 'taking stock': in the first year, PLC-members expressed their views on a variety of themes related to the topic of parental involvement, resulting in a broad inventory of, sometimes contradictory, perceptions and expectations. The next phase could be labelled as 'setting the stage': the second year was characterized by a narrower focus on the process of shared vision development and the practical aspects of executing such a process, such as planning of meetings with stakeholders (parents, team members,

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children) and planning the agenda of such meetings. A hypothetical third stage ('creating vision') would be the realization of the planned process, in which all stakeholders are involved in substantial exchanges and critical reflection leading to the development of a shared school vision. This hypothetical third stage was not reached within duration of the research project.

Previous research provides some evidence for our hypothesis of shared vision development being a staged and lengthy process (Barnett & McCormick, 2003; Boschman, McKenney, & Voogt, 2015; Robertson, 2007). In a study into the quality of design talk in teacher teams, Boschman and colleagues (2015) found that deeper levels of teacher talk, in which information was analyzed and synthesized rather than simply exchanged, hardly took place and only in later stages of the project. Robertson (2007) found in her study of shared vision development among a group of science teachers that the group first explored many diverse and broad ideas and assumptions, and only after a while was able to concentrate on more focused and pragmatic aims. Possibly, an initial broad exploration of existing, explicit as well as tacit knowledge and beliefs (Nonaka, Von Krogh, & Voelpel, 2006) is a necessary first step in shared vision development (Stage 1: 'Taking stock'). Based on this exchange, decisions can be made on which issues are prioritized. Consequently, steps can be taken to plan the process of developing a shared school vision (Stage 2: 'Setting the stage'). The actual development of a coherent shared school vision (hypothetical Stage 3: 'Creating vision') might require such a deep level of collaboration and group reflection that it may only take place after the collective efforts in the first two stages have paved the way.

Our results indicate that on the one hand the PLC was a tool to initiate a process of shared vision development, as it was able to expose existing views on parental involvement and concrete, practical steps were taken to facilitate a process of shared vision development in the near future. On the other hand, to realize substantial progress in creating a shared vision characterized by educational partnership, the current deficit approaches would need to be challenged in this hypothetical third stage. Perhaps, by ensuring the participation of parents in this phase, as PLC-members intended to do, would bring the discussions to a higher level and help challenging deficit perspectives in the school. However, as suggested above, more targeted interventions addressing such perspectives, may be necessary.

Implications for Practice and Research

The results of this study indicate that PLCs involving both parents and professionals may be a promising instrument to stimulate shared vision development on parental involvement. PLCs may be especially suitable to question stereotypes, raise awareness regarding inequity and power dynamics (Auerbach, 2007b; Cooper et al., 2009), as in effective PLCs, members collectively examine assumptions and co-construct new knowledge. However, our results also highlight that such a critical examination of assumptions does not happen automatically. To engender more profound changes in visions towards educational partnership, sufficient time, continuous parent participation and targeted support in addressing deficit perspectives may be necessary. Future studies should explore shared vision development on parent-school relations in PLC-interventions that explicitly incorporate elements from a "social justice framework" (Green, 2017), directly addressing issues of privilege and power related to racial, socio-economic, ethnic and linguistic background (Cooper et al., 2009; Denessen, 2019; Green, 2017). Furthermore, future research is necessary to validate our hypothesis that shared vision development occurs in a three-staged process, consisting of an initial orienting phase, a second phase focused on the planning of the third phase, which consists of the actual vision development. Next, the cooperation between parents and professionals in PLCs is understudied, as most studies on PLCs focus only on collaborative processes among professionals. To provide knowledge on what works and what hinders successful collaboration between parents and schools in PLCs, qualitative research that analyzes the different roles that various participants fulfill in such PLCs is needed.

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Limitations

The study has several limitations. First, the PLC was not completely implemented as intended, as the participation of parents in the PLC was limited. More extensive and continuous parent participation in the PLC may have given different results. However, the limited parent participation cannot simply be regarded as poor intervention fidelity: it is also one of the outcomes of the study, illustrating a school-centric approach to parental involvement present in the PLC. A second limitation is that we only audio-recorded and not video-recorded the PLC-meetings. The audio-recordings did not always allow us to match all utterances with specific PLC-members. Therefore, we could not analyze the unique role each PLC-member played in the development of shared vision. Third, we cannot preclude the possibility that, in our role as PLC-facilitators in supporting participant learning (Margalef & Roblin, 2016), we may have influenced the expressed visions in the PLC. By asking questions, we could steer the conversation in

the PLC and in providing professional literature we possibly induced the formulation of specific expectations and perceptions.

Conclusion

In this study, we explored whether and how a PLC with parents and professionals contributed to the development of a shared vision on parental involvement characterized by educational partnership. The PLC-intervention proved to be a promising instrument to initiate a process of shared vision development with parents and professionals, especially in exposing existing views and knowledge among members. However, to actually create a shared vision characterized by educational partnership, and supersede the stages of exchanging and planning, two elements seem necessary. More time may be needed, as well as a more targeted approach addressing deficit perspectives on parents and creating awareness of the power dynamics present in the parent-school relationship in schools with a diverse population.

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Summary and General Discussion

The current dissertation aimed to increase knowledge on factors associated with the compatibility between family literacy programs (FLPs) and their implementation contexts: children's homes and schools. To be able to improve the alignment between FLPs and the home context of diverse families, gaining insight into the HLEs of these families is essential. Therefore, we described the factors in children's home literacy environments (HLEs) that may be associated with program compatibility with children's homes and thus with successful implementation, namely parental child-directed literacy behavior (Chapter 2) and parental literacy beliefs (Chapter 3). As a next step, we tested the assumption that parental beliefs moderate the effects of an FLP on children's emergent literacy development (Chapter 4). To be able to improve the compatibility between FLPs and the school, alignment of a school's shared vision on the parent-school relationship with program philosophy is important. Therefore, in Chapter 5, we focused on how to improve the compatibility between an FLP and a school by exploring whether a professional learning community (PLC) with parents and staff members aimed contributed to the development of a shared vision on the parent-school relationship characterized by educational partnership. Below, I provide a summary of the main findings of the four studies in this dissertation.

Summary of Main Findings

In **Chapter 2**, we explored a typology of home literacy activities that was new in two ways: it explicitly addressed didactic approach and was not restricted to activities involving print. We additionally examined the associations between activity types and children's emergent literacy skills in Dutch. By applying exploratory factor analysis we found that three home literacy activity types could be distinguished: activities targeting children's meaning-oriented skills adopting a playful, facilitative approach, such as shared reading and parent-child conversations; activities targeting children's meaning-oriented skills through direct instruction, such as teaching the child new words, having the child repeat new words; and activities targeting children's code-oriented skills, such as teaching the child letter names and playing letter games. Multilevel structural equation modelling techniques revealed that meaning-oriented facilitative, meaning-oriented instructional and code-oriented activities were associated with children's meaning-oriented literacy skills. The association between meaning-oriented instructional activities and children's meaning-oriented skills was negative. The association between code-oriented activities and code skill was indirect, mediated

by oral language skills. Home activities did not have a direct association with children's phonological skill.

The mixed method study in **Chapter 3** further built on the conceptualization of home literacy activities offered in Chapter 2. In a linguistically, socio-economically and ethnically diverse sample of 35 parents, we explored the use of a new interview instrument to measure parental literacy beliefs. In particular, we examined what the new instrument revealed about the types of literacy activities parents prefer, and whether parental motivations for their preferences reflected a distinction in meaning- and code-oriented, and facilitative and instructional beliefs, or possibly other types of beliefs. Additionally, we explored whether the new instrument exposed relations between parental preferences and parental education, home language, and country of birth. The instrument proved to be capable of exposing a variety of literacy beliefs. The results showed that parents generally preferred meaning-oriented and facilitative practices to stimulate their children's literacy development. Qualitative thematic analysis of parental responses demonstrated that parental preferences were associated with a range of literacy beliefs, which indeed reflected code- and meaning-oriented perspectives and facilitative and instructional beliefs. However, other types of beliefs, that did not directly pertain to children's literacy development, were also associated with parental preferences, such as beliefs about the parent-child relationship, parental self-efficacy in performing literacy activities and perceived ease of fitting in activities in daily routines. Mann Whitney U-tests revealed that parents who did not speak Dutch with their children at home were more inclined towards directly instructing their children compared to parents who did speak Dutch.

In **Chapter 4** we explored whether parental literacy beliefs are associated with program fit, by testing the assumption that parental self-efficacy, role construction and literacy beliefs moderated the effects of the Dutch FLP Early Education at Home (EEH) on children's emergent literacy development. In a quasi-experimental longitudinal study, we followed 159 socio-economically, linguistically and ethnically diverse kindergartners who either participated in EEH or in a control condition for two years. Exploratory factor analysis of the items of a newly developed quantitative questionnaire measuring parental literacy beliefs supported the presence of four types of parental literacy beliefs: meaning-oriented facilitative beliefs, meaning-oriented instructional beliefs, code-oriented facilitative beliefs, and code-oriented instructional beliefs. Multilevel regression analyses revealed no program effects of EEH on children's emergent literacy

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development. Furthermore, none of the parental belief constructs measured in this study moderated program effects.

Finally, in **Chapter 5,** we focused on the fit between FLPs and the school. We explored whether and how a PLC of professionals and parents, that was aimed at building educational partnership, contributed to the development of a shared school vision on the parent-school relationship characterized by educational partnership. We expected that, at the beginning of the study, PLC-members would not (yet) have a shared vision characterized by educational partnership. Applying a case study design, we followed a PLC in one school for a period of two years. Thematic analysis of transcripts of PLC-meetings (n = 13) and interviews with PLC-members in the first (n = 5) and the second year (n = 6) revealed an ambiguity in PLC-members' visions on the parent-school relationship. On the one hand, PLC-members strived for educational partnership and a shared school vision characterized by educational partnership. On the other hand, PLC-members' visions disclosed barriers for reaching educational partnership, such as deficit perspectives on parents, school-centric approaches toward parental involvement, and discomfort and lack of skills in responding to a (linguistically) diverse parent population. These barriers seemed to result in an ambivalence concerning the responsibilities and possibilities of professionals and parents in building educational partnership. Regarding the process of shared vision development, we observed that PLC-members became aware of the lack of a shared school vision on educational partnership. In the second year, 'shared vision and team support' became the main theme in the PLC-meetings. The development of shared vision occurred in a staged process, consisting of an initial stage in which existing views and knowledge were exchanged and a second stage which focused on the process of shared vision development and practical aspects of executing such a process. A hypothetical third stage, in which the planned process of vision development would be realized, was not reached within the course of the study (two years).

Discussion of Main Findings

Below, I further discuss the main findings of this dissertation. First, I reflect on the findings concerning the HLEs of diverse children. Next, I discuss the intervention and school characteristics possibly associated with the lack of program effects of EEH reported in this dissertation. Finally, I position EEH, the PLC and the studies in this

dissertation in diverse epistemological perspectives on the family-school relationship, in order to further explain the main results of this thesis.

Describing diverse children's HLEs

Defining the HLE: beyond print-only activities
The results of the first three studies of this dissertation provided a more nuanced view of what constitutes diverse children's HLEs than hitherto available. The results of the study described in Chapter 2 showed that current conceptualizations of home literacy activities which are limited to activities involving print (Hood, Conlon, & Andrews, 2008; Manolitsis, Georgiou, & Tziraki, 2013; Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2002; Sénéchal, 2006; Sénéchal, Whissel, & Bildfell, 2017) can be extended by including oral language activities, such as singing songs, parent-child conversations, rhyming and teaching your child new words or concepts. Such a broader conceptualization better matches with what we know about diverse families' HLEs, as numerous studies have shown that parents with various socio-economic, linguistic and ethnic backgrounds engage their children in a multitude of home literacy activities that support children's literacy development, including oral language activities (Curenton, Craig, & Flanigan, 2008; Van Steensel, 2006; Purcell-Gates, 1996; Phillips & Lonigan, 2009; Weigel et al., 2006a; 2006b).

Defining the HLE: including didactic approach
The study in Chapter 2 showed that home literacy activities could be further classified according to didactic approach. In facilitative activities, children are exposed to language and print in an informal way while in instructional activities, children are directly taught about language and print (Hannon, 2000; 2003). The analyses in Chapter 2 showed that the distinction between code- and meaning-oriented activities and facilitative and instructional activities could be partly integrated. Meaning-oriented home literacy activities could be further categorized into activities adopting a facilitative approach and activities adopting an instructional approach, whereas for code-oriented activities, no further refinement based on didactic approach was found.

The relevance of didactic approach was further consolidated in the results concerning parental literacy beliefs described in Chapters 3 and 4. In Chapter 3, parental responses elicited with the aid of a newly developed qualitative interview guide revealed that parents' motivations for preferring certain types of home literacy activities reflected code-oriented, meaning-oriented as well as facilitative and instructional beliefs.

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In Chapter 4, parental beliefs on the importance of activities to support children's emergent literacy development measured with a newly developed quantitative instrument, again exposed the significance of didactic approach in conceptualizing parental literacy beliefs. In this study, parental beliefs could be categorized into four types based on targeted skills and didactic approach, that is, meaning-oriented facilitative beliefs, meaning-oriented instructional beliefs, code-oriented facilitative beliefs and code-oriented instructional beliefs.

Inclusion of the dimension of didactic approach allowed for a more fine-grained conceptualization of home literacy practices and preferences than a categorization only based on the distinction between code-and meaning-oriented activities. This more fine-grained conceptualization of home literacy activities enabled us to describe the ways in which aspects of children's HLEs contribute to children's literacy development more accurately. For instance, where many studies into different types of home literacy activities did not include meaning-oriented instructional activities, such as teaching your child new words and concepts, (e,g. Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2014; Sparks & Reese, 2013; Weigel, Martin, & Bennett, 2006a; 2006b), and others did not separate meaning-oriented facilitative activities, such as shared reading, from meaning-oriented instructional activities (e.g. Kalia & Reese, 2009; Skwarchuk, Sowinski, & LeFevre, 2014), the data presented in Chapter 2 were able to reveal that the relations with children's meaning-oriented skills were different for meaning-oriented facilitative activities (namely, positive) than for meaning-oriented instructional activities (namely, negative).

Furthermore, inclusion of the dimension of didactic approach allowed for a more elaborate interpretation of differences in parental beliefs between socio-cultural groups. The results of Chapter 3 demonstrated that parents in general were more inclined towards meaning-oriented facilitative beliefs, but that parents who did not speak Dutch at home with their children had a stronger preference for instructional activities, compared to parents who (also) spoke Dutch with their children. An association between home language and parental literacy beliefs was also observed in Chapters 2 and 4. In Chapter 2, correlational analysis between the home activity factors and home language variable showed that meaning-oriented facilitative activities were negatively correlated with home language, implying that parents speaking (additional) other languages than Dutch at home engaged less often in meaning-oriented facilitative practices. Correlational analysis in Chapter 4 revealed that parents from children with a migration background and multilingual parents reported stronger code-oriented

instructional beliefs and weaker meaning-oriented facilitative beliefs than monolingual Dutch parents and parents from children without a migration background.

Parents speaking another language than Dutch with their children may prefer instructional practices over facilitative practices, as they may have had children's language development in Dutch in mind when responding to our questions on preferences for home literacy activities. Possibly, parents perceive instructional activities as more beneficial for children's second language development (in Dutch) than for children's first language development. However, as we did not ask parents to indicate which language they had in mind when responding to our questions, we do not know whether parental preferences in stimulating children's first language development differ from parental preferences in stimulating children's second language development.

To further explain the relationships between home language and parental beliefs, we proposed that the home language variable served as a proxy of parental own experiences with literacy learning and, possibly, as an indicator of parents' familiarity with the Dutch educational system. Research suggests that parental literacy beliefs originate in parents' own experiences with schooling and literacy learning, which are rooted in the cultures they grew up in, and that parental literacy beliefs are not static, but may change when parents are exposed to their children's school teachers' perspectives on literacy learning (El Moussaoui & Brasters, 20111; Gillanders & Jiménez, 2004; Li, 2006; Reese et al., 2012; Reese & Gallimore, 2000). Parents speaking a different home language than Dutch with their children may have had literacy learning experiences that focused more on direct instruction instead of facilitation. The approach to emergent literacy development in Dutch kindergarten can be characterized as meaning-oriented and facilitative (El Moussaoui & Brasters, 2011; Stichting Leerplan Ontwikkeling, 2010): the curriculum exposes children to language and literacy mostly in an informal way, embedded in the context of playful learning activities. Although learning to recognize letters is one of the goals of the kindergarten curriculum, the emphasis lies on meaning-oriented skills and activities (Stichting Leerplan Ontwikkeling, 2010). Possibly, parents who did not speak Dutch at home with their children were less familiar with the kindergarten curriculum, while parents speaking Dutch at home with their children have been more exposed to this curriculum. As home language seems to mark differences in parental didactic beliefs, FLPs directed at linguistically diverse group families, may need to explicitly consider didactic beliefs in program activities (see practical implications).

The results described in Chapter 3 further suggest that parental literacy beliefs are a multi-faceted construct and that scholars should be careful in describing them only according to predefined categories. Parents expressed a variety of beliefs to motivate their preferences for particular activities. These beliefs often reached beyond the domain of literacy. For example, a main goal of facilitative practices, such as talking and reading with your child, was strengthening the parent-child relationship. Beliefs guiding parental preferences also refer to conditional factors, such as perceived ease of incorporating activities in daily routines and parental self-efficacy. The newly developed instrument, that allowed for parents to motivate their preferences, was able to expose the variety of literacy beliefs present in this highly diverse sample of parents.

Our examination of parental beliefs allowed for a better understanding of diverse children's HLEs. However, the role that parental beliefs play in the fit between FLPs and children's homes remains uncertain. In the study in Chapter 4, no main effects of a two-year participation in EEH on children's emergent literacy development could be reported. Parental self-efficacy, role construction and literacy beliefs did not moderate the effects of EEH on children's emergent literacy development. Possibly, the parental beliefs measured in this in this study played a less significant role in program fit than other types of parental beliefs, which were not included in this study, such as parents' perception of need for a literacy program for their children (Durlak & DuPre, 2008) or parental sense of inclusion at the child's school (Abram & Gibbs, 2002; Turney & Kao, 2009). It may also be true that, in this study, intervention and school characteristics outweighed the importance of parental beliefs in program fit. Below, we reflect on intervention and school characteristics that may be associated with a suboptimal program fit of EEH in this dissertation.

Intervention and school characteristics as possible causes for a lack of EEH effects
Although the study in Chapter 4 did not suggest that program outcomes were affected by a lack in compatibility with parental beliefs, lack of program compatibility with children's homes and schools may have influenced intervention effects in other ways. First, the compatibility of EEH-materials with its actual target group, lower educated parents and/or parents with limited proficiency in Dutch, seems to be suboptimal. The materials heavily relied on text and were mostly in Dutch. As such, they may have been less appropriate for parents with limited proficiency in Dutch and/or limited literacy skills. A review on the effects of FLPs in low-SES samples indicate that programs with a narrow scope, that is, programs that focus on one type of activities and one type of

skills, are more effective for children from low-SES families than programs with a wider scope (Van Steensel, Fikrat-Wevers, Bramer, & Arends, 2019). Talk and play activities are found to be more suitable for lower educated parents than print-only activities (Van der Pluijm, Van Gelderen, & Kessels, 2019). An increased program fit with the target group of EEH may be reached by a more demarcated focus on such talk and play activities and a stronger program flexibility, which allows parent-child activities and materials to be modified to better match participating parents' preferences, needs and routines (see practical implications).

Second, program delivery in the school did not seem to match the needs of parents with low educational levels and/or limited proficiency in Dutch. Our analysis of implementation quality of EEH disclosed difficulties for teachers in delivering the program to a diverse parent audience. We observed that teachers adapted the content of the parent meetings to the higher educated and Dutch speaking parents, by limiting working methods such as role play and modeling and adjusting the topics of the meetings. Nevertheless, additional moderator analyses showed that parental education and home language did not moderate program effects on children's emergent literacy development. This suggests that EEH did not accommodate any of the groups involved in the sample. Tailoring program delivery to a diverse parent audience, including low educated parents and parents with limited Dutch proficiency, would require additional efforts from teachers, for which they would need adequate resources, such as sufficient preparation time and additional training and support (Van der Pluijm et al., 2019).

School characteristics may have further hampered successful implementation of EEH. Educational partnership between parents and school may be necessary for a strong foundation for the implementation of EEH. The results of the study in Chapter 5, describing shared vision development in a PLC focused on educational partnership, hint at the existence of school factors that undermine educational partnership between parents and school (Kim, 2009b). Despite PLC-members' ambition to build educational partnership, in practice they met with barriers. These barriers included the existence of deficit perspectives on parents, discomfort and lack of skills in professionals responding to a (linguistically) diverse parent population, and uncertainties concerning the responsibilities and possibilities of professionals and parents in building educational partnership. To further explain the suboptimal implementation quality of EEH and the limited capability of the PLC to induce real changes towards educational partnership in the school studied in this dissertation, it may be useful to position EEH and the PLC

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within the different epistemologies from which family-school relationships in general, and family literacy programs in particular, can be approached (Capper, 2018; Compton-Lilly, Rogers, & Lewis, 2012; Compton-Lilly & Graue, 2012; Crotty, 1998; Green, 2017). Such a positioning is the purpose of the next section.

The family-school relationship approached from diverse epistemologies: situating EEH, the PLC and this research

An epistemology is a "theory of knowledge" (Crotty, p. 3) which determines "how a person comes to know" (Capper, 2018, p. 7) and as such, how a person approaches the world in which s/he moves (Green, 2017, p. 372). Epistemologies are frequently described on a continuum with modernist perspectives on the one end and postmodernist perspectives on the other end (Capper, 2018; Compton-Lilly et al., 2012; Compton-Lilly & Graue, 2012; Crotty, 1998). In a modernist epistemology, the world is regarded as a static objective reality, which can be known through thorough scientific work. Modernist stances are characterized by a strong belief in progression: societal change occurs in a linear process over time, driven by causal mechanisms. For example: lack of parental involvement causes school failure, which causes social inequality; consequently, stimulating parental involvement will diminish school failure which will diminish social inequality (Compton-Lilly et al., 2012). In postmodernist epistemologies, knowledge is subjective, situated in local contexts, always subject to change. Change is a cyclical process and progression is regarded a fiction, as the notion of what constitutes progress and what goals should be pursued, are subjective and everchanging, situated in unique contexts (Compton-Lilly et al., 2012; Capper, 2018; Crotty, 1998). Many stances exist on the continuum of modernism versus postmodernism, in which aspects of both epistemologies are combined. For a detailed and nuanced overview of the different types of epistemologies in educational sciences, see Capper (2018) and Crotty (1998).

Regarding the family-school relationship, Green (2017) distinguishes three types of epistemologies: positivist epistemology, interpretivist, and critical epistemology. Positivist epistemology is considered to be at the extreme modernist end of the continuum. In positivism, according to Green (2017), parental involvement is approached from a "traditional framework", which considers it a means to raise students' results. The idea of what constitutes 'good' parental involvement and what is the 'best' way for schools to cooperate with parents is fixed. This framework relates to what Auerbach (1995) describes as the "intervention-prevention approach" in family literacy scholarship and practice. In this approach, limited literacy skills are regarded as the core cause of societal inequality.

As poor literacy skills are understood to originate from limited literacy stimulation in children's homes, family literacy programs must be aimed at changing parental child-directed literacy practices and beliefs (Auerbach, 1995, p. 644).

The traditional framework is often characterized by deficit views: causes for social and educational inequality are attributed to characteristics of the groups that suffer most from inequality, in this case, to families themselves (Auerbach, 1995; Green, 2017). Deficit perspectives fall short in two ways. In explaining educational inequality only through such "person-centered" frameworks, as opposed to frameworks of "institutionalized inequity" (Valencia, 1997; Pearl, 1997), they pay no or limited attention to systemic and contextual factors that determine inequality. Simultaneously, such perspectives overlook the rich and various ways in which diverse families contribute to their children's literacy development (Auerbach, 1995; 2007a; 2010; Bakker & Denessen, 2007; Baquedano-López, Alexander, & Hernandez, 2013; Green, 2017; Kuchirko, 2017; Valencia, 1997). For instance, by applying a limited definition of the HLE as an operationalization of a fixed idea of 'good' parental involvement, in which only reading-related activities are measured, the contributions of other home literacy activities to children's emergent literacy development, such as singing songs and mealtime conversations, go unnoticed.

Interpretivist epistemology combines elements of modernist and postmodernist stances and relates to what Compton-Lilly and Graue (2013) describe as a constructionist perspective. Knowledge is regarded as constructed in social interaction, always situated in a social context (Green, 2017, p. 375.). In interpretivism, parental involvement is approached through the "collaborative framework". In this framework, the relationships between parents and professionals are more reciprocal than in the traditional framework. Equality and inclusion are key concepts. Within the collaborative framework, no fixed idea exists of what 'good' parenting and school-family relations look like: the framework acknowledges the importance of each school's and family's specific contexts. The collaborative framework relates to what Auerbach (1995) defines as the "multiple-literacies perspective". In this perspective, instead of pointing to deficiencies in parenting practices and beliefs, inequality in children's literacy development is understood as originating from "a mismatch between culturally variable home literacy practices and school literacies" (p. 651). FLPs designed according to this view are aimed at "investigating and validating students' multiple literacies and cultural resources in order to inform schooling" (p. 651). The multiple literacies approach advocates a

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"stance of inquiry" (p. 652) that does not prioritize school literacies over diverse families' literacies, in which professionals recognize, learn from and build on the literacy resources available in children's homes.

Despite their focus on equality, inclusion, and cultural sensitivity, the collaborative framework does not explicitly discuss systemic power dynamics between parents and school. Furthermore, according to Green (2017), in schools trying to implement practices according to a collaborative framework, generally only professionals, and no parents, are included in decision making processes, thus maintaining traditional power relations and only providing an "illusion of inclusion" (Green, 2017, p. 376). Critical epistemology, in contrast, is concerned with such power dynamics. Critical epistemology consists of postmodern elements as knowledge is regarded highly subjective, created in and existing through power dynamics. Critical theory seeks to expose, question and disrupt such existing structures. In explicitly aiming for social justice, it takes a modernist approach towards change and progression. Social justice (progress) is regarded possible, through mechanisms of causality, by changing systemic elements that produce inequality (Capper, 2018). According to Green (2017), parental involvement is approached in the critical epistemology through the "social justice" framework. This framework explicitly aims to expose and challenge power dynamics and privileges that determine school-family relationships and situate those within a larger societal context. This framework addresses issues as equity, social justice, race/ethnicity and discrimination, rather than narrowly focusing on raising students' results. The "social change perspective" towards family literacy scholarship and programs, distinguished by Auerbach (1995), is similarly concerned with power dynamics. The social change perspective regards children's literacy development to occur in a complex political, socio-economic and cultural context. Family literacy programs within this perspective "focus more on changing the institutions and addressing the conditions which cause marginalization than on changing families" (Auerbach, 1995, p. 655).

The PLC and, to lesser extent EEH as well, can be partly positioned within the collaborative framework. Both interventions allow for interaction between parents and school, and especially the PLC was flexible and adaptive in nature: PLC-members collectively examined the context of the school community and built their actions on what was perceived necessary within this specific context. Additionally, equality and inclusion were key concepts in the aims of the PLC: the design of the PLC aimed to provide parents a platform to voice their needs, rights and expectations. We

expected that reflecting on the implementation of EEH in the PLC would engender visions characterized by educational partnership, as EEH intended to provide regular encounters between parents and professionals based on equal footing (Edwards, 2004, as cited in Compton-Lilly et al., 2012; Fullan, 2007; 2011). However, the traditional framework seemed to dominate in EEH and the PLC. First, both interventions' aims were positivist: cooperation between parents and schools was stimulated in order to enhance students' learning. Second, as EEH guides parents in undertaking specific activities to stimulate children's literacy development at home, the idea of what constitutes 'good' parenting practices seemed fixed. Third, in the implementation of the PLC, the school was hesitant in involving parents and selected parents willing to take the school's perspective on matters. This relates to what Green (2017) referred to as the "illusion of inclusion". In general, if traditional parental involvement perspectives, characterized by school-centeredness and deficit approaches, prevail during collaborative efforts, success is unlikely (Auerbach, 2007a; 2007b; 2009, 2010; Baquedano-Lopez, Alexander & Hernandez, 2013). In our case, they may have hampered the quality of the collaboration between parents and school, a successful implementation of EEH and, indirectly, program effectiveness.

Neither EEH nor the PLC directly addressed issues of privilege and power at stake within the parent-school relationship. To induce a transformation in schools towards educational partnership, in which collaboration between parents and school through FLPs can thrive, elements of a social justice framework may need to be explicitly incorporated in interventions (Auerbach, 1995; Cooper, Allen, Bettez, 2009; Reyes & Torres, 2007). Where Green (2017) states that the ambition to raise students' results mostly serves the school agenda, as meeting the states' accountability standards is regarded the ultimate goal, I believe raising students' results to be a goal that fits within a social justice and equity agenda. Helping children succeed in school may provide children with better chances in society, thus contributing to greater equity. However, only focusing on raising students' results without consideration for the structural realities in which their learning takes place, may sustain person-centered frameworks in explaining inequality. Therefore, I propose that practitioners need to approach the parent-school relationship through a combination of positivist, interpretivist and critical epistemologies (Compton-Lilly & Graue, 2012). Collaboration between parents and school focused on stimulating children learning (positivism, traditional framework) needs to build on students' unique family and school contexts (interpretivism, collaborative framework) and explicitly consider power dynamics interwoven in those

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contexts (critical epistemology, social justice framework). See 'Practical Implications', for a reflection on the implications of this stance for practice.

Not only the interventions studied can be situated in an epistemological context, but also the research designs from which the fit between FLPs and children's home and school contexts was approached in this dissertation. This dissertation is in many aspects firmly rooted in a modernist tradition. The impetus for conducting this research was contributing to the solution of a societal problem: inequalities in children's educational trajectories in the Netherlands. The research started from the assumption that differences in children's literacy development, and related educational inequalities, should be largely attributed to individual child and family factors, namely differences in children's home literacy environments. It was hypothesized that changing aspects of children's HLEs by FLPs would impact children's literacy development. As research may not only describe, but also shape reality, our research may have -unintentionally- contributed to the persistence of deficit perspectives, putting the blame on parents for the educational struggles of their children (Rogers, 2018). Simultaneously, the research also contained elements of interpretivist/constructionist epistemologies. Literacy development was considered to occur in children's unique family contexts in interaction with children's school contexts and an open perspective on what constitutes children's HLEs was applied. However, the studies in this dissertation did not include elements of critical epistemology, that is, they did not examine systemic societal factors contributing to inequalities in children's emergent literacy development or analyze power dynamics at stake in the parent-school relationship.

Strengths and Limitations

The combination of the four studies in this dissertation contribute to the research base on family literacy programs in several ways. First, in applying a new, elaborate conceptualization of children's HLEs, we were able to paint a more refined picture of the HLE in a highly diverse sample of families. Most studies into children's HLEs have worked with homogenous samples regarding children's demographic characteristics. Schools in urban parts of the Netherlands can be characterized by a superdiverse population, in which no real majority can be distinguished (Crul, 2016). Working with samples that reflect this diversity increased the ecological validity of the research. Next, new instruments to capture the variety of parental literacy practices and beliefs were developed and investigated. These instruments can be applied (and further validated)

in future studies. Furthermore, this dissertation approached the notion of 'program fit' from a broad perspective and focused both on children's home settings as well as the school setting. A final strength of this dissertation is the diversity of research methods applied, using both quantitative and qualitative techniques, to provide an in-depth picture of factors associated with program fit.

Several limitations of the studies in this dissertation should also be mentioned. For reflections of study-specific limitations, I refer the reader to the discussion sections in Chapters 2-5. Below, I will discuss the general limitations of this dissertation. A first limitation is the restricted attention to multilingualism and children's home languages. The research sample was highly diverse in languages spoken at home. However, the instruments used did not allow us to determine in which languages parents conducted different types of home literacy activities with their children and whether they had their children's first or second langue development in mind when responding to our questions. As such, our results did not provide any information on how the language in which activities were conducted were associated with children's literacy skills and parental literacy preferences and beliefs. Next, although we tried to accommodate parents from diverse linguistic backgrounds by providing the written parent questionnaires in four different languages, we cannot exclude the possibility that some parents could not sufficiently comprehend the questionnaires due to limited Dutch proficiency. Furthermore, although EEH encouraged parents to undertake program activities with their children in their home language, only children's Dutch literacy skills were assessed.

A second limitation is the level of attrition in both quantitative and qualitative studies. In the study described in Chapter 2, which was based on the pre-test data of the effect study, nearly twenty percent of the parents did not return the parent questionnaire, resulting in missing values. Although the appropriate statistical methods of dealing with missing values were applied (MLR-estimation), attrition may have affected the results and conclusions. In the effect study in Chapter 4, 25 percent of the sample could not be included in the analyses due to missing values on parent questionnaires. Attrition was not random but related to parental level of education and migration background, with parents with lower levels of education and migration backgrounds less likely to complete the parent questionnaires. In the study in Chapter 3, many parents rejected participation, although participating parents did not significantly differ in demographic variables from parents who rejected participation. Finally, while the PLC described

in Chapter 5 was intended to provide parents a platform to voice their views and needs, parent participation was limited in practice. In all cases, attrition may have biased results, as the parents we could not reach may have engaged in different home practices and may have held different beliefs than the parents included in the studies. Furthermore, this limitation hints at the existence of 'research-based barriers' for parental involvement in research on parental involvement.

A third limitation is that the research in this dissertation, as previously mentioned, did not approach the fit between FLPs and children's home and school contexts from a critical perspective analyzing the power dynamics at stake in the parent-school relationship. For example, we did not explore issues related to discrimination, although our data may have called for an approach that included such notions. A more critical analysis may have shed a different light on factors associated with the compatibility between FLPs and the school organization. See 'Directions of Future Research' for examples of situations in which such a critical perspective would have been informative.

Implications for Practice

As a general implication, I propose that equity should be the primary objective of FLPs and that, within this greater goal, raising children's literacy skills is a legitimate sub-goal. However, practitioners need to be aware that other sub-goals of FLPs may be equally important when striving for equity (Auerbach, 2010). For example, FLPs may simultaneously aim at strengthening relationships between parents and professionals and creating inclusive school communities, in which schools are spaces "co-owned by the children […] which requires an inclusive, multicultural, child-centered climate, collaborative group activities, participation of parents and fluid, easy to cross boundaries between children's homes and the institutional settings" (Leseman, 2019, p. 6.). To create such spaces, children's home experiences need to be recognized, valued and built upon in education. FLPs may aid in opening up the boundaries between homes and schools and thus contribute to such safe shared multicultural spaces.

When focusing on a single sub-goal such as raising pupils' literacy skills, practitioners need to be aware of the plurality of methods to reach that goal, in building upon children's unique home contexts. Building upon children's unique contexts requires program flexibility and adaptivity (Castro, Barrera, & Martinez, 2004; Compton-Lilly et al., 2012; De La Rie, 2018; Harn, Parisii, & Stoolmiller, 2013). FLPs should be

characterized by what Auerbach (1995) describes as the "stance of inquiry". Whereas others have argued that an examination of children's home and school contexts should take place prior to implementing FLPs (De La Rie, 2020), I propose that a continuous exploration of children's home and school contexts needs to be a core element of FLPs. FLPs should provide ongoing opportunities for parents and professionals to exchange experiences and learn from each other (cf. Van der Pluijm, 2020). Based on such exchanges, the content of programs can be modified to match families' needs. This would result in programs that "[defy] prediction and [are] eternally subject to revision and reinvention within changing contexts" (Compton-Lilly et al., 2012, p. 52). Such an approach ensures continuous attention to facilitating an optimal fit between a program and its implementation contexts. Whereas the above may sound rather abstract, based on the results of this dissertation some concrete recommendations for improving the fit between FLPs and children's home and school contexts can be made.

Exploring parents' beliefs and practices

To facilitate an optimal fit between programs and families, the beliefs of the participating parents concerning their role in the literacy development of their children should be considered in FLPs. Instruments such as the one described in Chapter 3 can be incorporated in FLPs as conversational tools for professionals to start discussions with parents with diverse backgrounds on their literacy beliefs. Although we did not find evidence for a moderator effect of parental beliefs on program effects, such conversations may still explicate the congruences and incongruences between parents' perspectives and professionals' expectations from parents, and vice versa, upon which activities in FLPs can be built. Not only parents' beliefs concerning the literacy development of their children, but also parents' child-directed literacy behavior, should be explored within FLPs. FLPs should provide opportunities for parents to share with professionals and other parents what their family routines look like, when opportunities occur for parent-child interaction, what their children's home literacy environments look like, what their own good practices in supporting their children's literacy development are, and what the areas are in which they would like to receive more support, be it from professionals or from other parents. Such exchanges should inform which program activities should be focused on. EEH intended to provide such opportunities for exchange by commencing each parent meeting with a collective review of how the parents implemented the previous EEH-activities with their children at home. In reality, however, the collective review seemed to be regarded by teachers and parents as an obligatory but secondary part of the meetings, for which only limited time was

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reserved. Transferring the EEH-activities to parents was prioritized, as it took up most of the meetings. As a consequence, perhaps, parents were observed to be hesitant in sharing their experiences during the meetings.

Recognizing families' home languages as valuable for children's learning

Our results suggest that within FLPs implemented in a highly diverse context, families' home languages may need to receive more attention to increase program fit with multilingual families. Teachers expressed difficulties in adjusting their language of support to parents with limited Dutch literacy skills and many multilingual parents indicated to conduct the program in Dutch. Explicit attention should be paid to the beneficial effects of stimulating children's home language. Not only is home language stimulation beneficial for children's home language development, also positive effects of home language stimulation on majority language development have been reported (Cummins, 2018; 2019). Furthermore, by valuing children's home languages in FLPs (and generally, in their education) their social identities are positively affirmed, which may counterbalance some of the negative effects of discrimination and stereotyping ethnic and linguistic minority children may experience in society (Cummins, 2018; 2019). It has to be stressed, however, that offering space for multilingualism in FLPs does not necessarily imply providing translations of learning materials or the presence of interpreters in parent meetings, but it does imply that parents' and children's home language(s) should be recognized during program activities as valuable and important for children's learning.

Applying a critical perspective

The implications listed above can be situated within an interpretivist epistemology. Improving the fit between FLPs and the school context may require professionals to additionally approach the parent-school relationship from a social justice framework. Professionals working with a highly diverse pupil and parent population need not only explore their pupils' unique home learning contexts, but also their own beliefs concerning the role of parents in education. They need to examine their beliefs on parents from diverse backgrounds, and the ways in which their thought and practice may be determined by stereotypes and deficit perspectives. I agree with Rezai (2019) who believes that "'prejudice' and 'implicit bias' should be at the core of organizations' efforts for diversity and inclusion" (p. 141). However, addressing prejudice and implicit bias within professionals and (school) organizations is not easy, as lack of awareness

in combination with feelings of shame may prevent persons from discussing their prejudices (Rezai, 2017).

Working with parents and professionals in a PLC centered around the theme of educational partnership may be a promising tool to raise awareness and uncover existing views among staff members and parents concerning the parent-school relationship (Cooper et al., 2009). However, the results of Chapter 5 indicate that to critically question existing views and to challenge deficit perspectives, bringing parents and professionals together in a PLC is not enough. PLC-members may need more targeted support in examining and addressing such perspectives. First, the PLC's aims should be formulated in accordance with a social justice framework (Auerbach, 1995; Green, 2017). The aim should not only be defined as building educational partnership with parents, but as more explicitly critical, namely creating awareness regarding the power dynamics present in the parent-school relationship. Second, a PLC may need a facilitator who is experienced in critical theory and can help PLC-members in recognizing stereotypical and deficit thinking. Third, parent participation should be arranged through a more democratic process than in the study described in this dissertation, in which the school selected parents who were believed to be able to take the school's perspective on matters. Fourth, as the collective reading of professional articles in the PLC in the study described in Chapter 5 proved to aid the process of reaching a shared understanding of the goals of parental involvement, it may be expected that the reading of critical literature on the topic of parental involvement will also help PLC-members examine their own assumptions and beliefs.

Directions for Future Research

Based on the outcomes of this dissertation and the reflections in this discussion, I provide suggestions for future research below.

Increasing the focus on the role of home language
In future research on the fit between FLPs and linguistically diverse families, the role of home language should take up a prominent place. First, such research could map in which languages parents undertake different types of home literacy activities with their children and what motivates their language choices. Although EEH encourages the use of home languages, most multilingual parents indicated to conduct the program in Dutch, or both in Dutch and their home language. Those parents motivated the choice

for Dutch in several ways: some parents deemed it more important to stimulate Dutch than their home language in their children, others told us that their child only wanted to speak Dutch with them. Knowledge on what determines family language preferences is relevant for the development of FLPs and for how FLPs can build on families' home languages (Aghallaj, Van Der Wildt, Vandenbroeck, & Agirdag, 2020).

Second, our research indicates that home language is associated with parental didactic beliefs, with non-Dutch speaking parents showing stronger preferences for instructional activities. In this chapter, we proposed that this association may be a consequence of the home language variable being indicative of the extent of parental knowledge of the Dutch school system. Additionally, we proposed that parental preferences in stimulating their children's literacy development may differ for children's first and second language development. Future research should further explore these propositions and examine the role of linguistic background in parental literacy beliefs and preferences.

Third, future research investigating the effect of FLPs on multilingual children should not only measure children's literacy development in the majority language, but also in their home language, especially if programs encourage the use of the home language. Experimental designs assessing the language of implementation of FLP activities in children's homes and relating this to children's development in the language of implementation, in addition to the majority language, could be insightful. This would provide more valid assessments of program effects on children's emergent literacy development: if program activities are conducted in the home language, effects on literacy development in the home language are more likely than in the majority language. Of course, in a sample with forty-three different home languages reported, such as in ours, this poses serious practical problems. Studies might therefore focus on specific language groups (e.g. Scheele, Leseman & Mayo, 2010).

Approaching the fit between FLPs and children's home and school from a combination of epistemological perspectives
Similar to the proposition that practitioners need to approach the parent-school relationship through a combination of positivist, interpretivist and critical epistemologies, I also propose that scholars exploring the fit between FLPs and children's home and school contexts and program effects need to combine elements from diverse epistemologies. In examining the associations between children's HLEs and children's literacy development and how FLPs may impact children's literacy development, most

scholars usually start from modernist assumptions. Knowledge on the causal relations between home factors and children's literacy development and how to influence that development is highly valuable, as knowledge on how to diminish differences in children's literacy development may contribute to greater equity. However, scholars need to be aware that exclusively applying person-centered frameworks (Pearl, 1997; Valencia, 1997) to explain differences in children's development may sustain deficit perspectives on families and only provide a limited picture of how children become literate in society. By incorporating elements from other epistemologies, scholars may be able to provide a more nuanced view on the factors that determine the compatibility between FLPs, children's homes and schools.

First, scholars should take an open view on what constitutes children's HLEs, rather than applying limited notions of how parents may support children's literacy development at home. They should acknowledge the rich and various ways in which diverse families can contribute to children's emergent literacy development. In order to do so, research methods are needed that pay attention to children's unique family contexts and that allow for open interpretations of children's HLEs, as "that which goes *concealed* in the intellectual climates of low-SES [and linguistic and ethnic minority families'] homes can be *revealed* with sensitive instruments" (Valencia, 1997, p. 194, original emphasis). The research described in Chapter 2, and particularly in Chapter 3 of this dissertation complies with this appeal, as it explored new dimensions of children's HLEs. Rich descriptions of diverse children's HLEs will advance the knowledge on the ways in which FLPs could be tailored to the variety of families taking part. Furthermore, I recommend partnership-driven research methods (Manz et al., 2010) to develop the needed sensitive instruments. This may provide research that enhances program quality and is valuable for the families participating in the programs under study. In partnership-driven research, parents collaborate with researchers and professionals in determining the goals of programs to be implemented, and in designing, evaluating and finetuning program activities.

Second, in approaching the compatibility between FLPs and their implementation contexts, scholars need not only examine home and family factors, but also consider the school and societal context in which this literacy development occurs (Morell, 2017). When examining the effects of FLPs, scholars should map the school context in which these programs are implemented. The study in Chapter 5 attempted to describe an important feature of the school context, namely the visions team members and parents

have on parental involvement. Further examining questions such as 'how do teachers approach parents from diverse socio-economic, linguistic, and ethnic backgrounds in FLPs?', 'in what way do the school policy and practices facilitate and impede educational partnership between parents and school?', 'what assumptions about diverse groups of parents are present in the philosophy underlying the FLP under study?' may provide valuable information about the factors associated with program fit (cf. Anderson, Streelasky, & Anderson, 2007; Prins & Toso, 2008). Scholars could also reach beyond the school setting and explore the societal situation in which schools and FLPs operate, and, for instance, examine the existing ideas and policies concerning issues such as monolingualism versus multilingualism that determine the educational context for implementation of FLPs.

 Third, in answering questions as the ones described above, scholars should not shy away from issues of power and privilege in relation to the socio-economic, linguistic and ethnic backgrounds of children, parents and professionals (Morell, 2017). In most research examining FLPs in highly diverse settings, including this dissertation, power dynamics interwoven in such contexts are not systematically analyzed. However, several observations during the data collection for this dissertation suggest that constructs as 'race' or 'ethnicity'[4] are relevant aspects of the implementation context of FLPs, requiring further exploration. Illustrative is the discomfort expressed by a (white, monolingual Dutch) staff member with language minority parents and children speaking their home language in the school, and the importance attached by this staff member to adherence to the school's Dutch-only policy, as described in Chapter 5. According to Agirdag (2010), "it would be naive to assume that 'black' languages such as Turkish or Arabic are coincidently disrespected and it is far more plausible that they are linked to 'the colour, culture, or ethnic origin' of immigrant students" (p. 318). Another example was observed during an EEH parent meeting, in which a teacher consistently spoke of "foreign parents" and "Dutch parents", even after one of the (non-white) parents labeled as "foreign" told the teacher that she, being born in the Netherlands, considered herself Dutch. A final illustration was observed during several EEH-meetings in a particular school, in which the white parents all gathered together at one table and the non-white parents at another. To be able to interpret such observations and reflect on how constructs as 'race/ethnicity' may play a role in program fit with children's homes and

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4   For a reflection on the terms 'race' and 'ethnicity', as "two sides of the same coin" (Wekker, 2016, p. 24), I refer the reader to Wekker (2016), p. 21-24.

schools, we need research methodologies that are sensitive towards the existence of societal power dynamics in the parent-school relationship.

As Wekker (2016) argues, in Dutch academy, even in migration studies or relatively critical fields such as gender studies, (white) scholars tend to avoid analysis of race/ethnicity in their work, out of discomfort with confrontation with their own prejudices and fear of handling such a complex theme in their work. As a white scholar, I recognize this discomfort and hesitancy with race/ethnicity: being afraid not to treat this theme adequately, it seems easier to not speak about it at all. Assigning such an "optional nature to race/ethnicity" characterizes the approach of race in the Dutch academy, according to Wekker (2016, p. 78). Additionally, as Wekker (2016) contends, the focus on race and the explicit terminology of critical race theory does not match with the Dutch self-concept of being a 'color-blind' country where racism is not a problem. In recent years, this Dutch self-concept seems to change from 'color-blind' to being increasingly aware of racism (cf. Gargard, 2020; Wijnberg, 2020). In the wake of the Black Lives Matter protests in the Netherlands this year, several Dutch universities posted statements online in which they condemned racism and committed to building more inclusive communities by changing aspects of the education and personnel management (Ad Valvas, 2020). Commitment to anti-racism and anti-discrimination in general should also be present in how we conduct our research. In the field of early literacy development, family literacy and parental involvement, scholars have a responsibility to acknowledge the power dynamics at stake in the parent-school relationship in our research methodologies and interpretations of our results.

General Conclusion

This dissertation shed new light on factors associated with the compatibility between FLPs and children's home and school contexts. First, the results exposed parts of the "hidden landscape" (Hannon, 2016) of diverse children's HLEs and provided a more nuanced picture of the HLE than hitherto available. In particular, this dissertation revealed that didactic approach forms an important dimension of parental preferences for home literacy activities. By combining this dimension with the existing distinction between meaning- and code-related activities in newly developed quantitative and qualitative instruments, we were able to capture the variety of parental literacy practices and beliefs in a diverse sample. Such a nuanced picture of the HLE is necessary to improve the fit between programs and children's homes and develop

FLPs that better match diverse families' home contexts. Second, the outcomes of this dissertation showed that, in order to explain the (lack of) working mechanisms behind FLPs, intervention and school characteristics need to be considered. The results of this dissertation highlight how the dominance of a traditional framework towards the parents-school relationship, in which deficit perspectives and school centric approaches to parental involvement prevail, may be associated with a suboptimal program fit. The findings of this dissertation emphasize the responsibility that scholars of emergent literacy development and family literacy programs have in conducting research that considers the varied nature home literacy experiences of children from diverse backgrounds while simultaneously acknowledging the larger educational and societal circumstances, in which these programs are implemented (Compton-Lilly et al., 2012; Compton-Lilly, Rogers, Ellison, 2020).

I would like to conclude this dissertation by quoting the Nigerian novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, who warns against "the single story" of people and places, and in the context of this research, of children and families:

> The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story. [...] I've always felt that it is impossible to engage properly with a place or a person without engaging with all of the stories of that place and that person. The consequence of the single story is this: It robs people of dignity. It makes our recognition of our equal humanity difficult. It emphasizes how we are different rather than how we are similar. [...] Stories matter. Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign, but stories can also be used to empower and to humanize. Stories can break the dignity of a people, but stories can also repair that broken dignity. (Adichie, 2009).

As researchers of children's emergent literacy development, ultimately, our job is to tell stories of how children become literate in this world. We must allow for multiple stories to be told.

6

Appendices

Appendix A. Supplementary materials for Chapter 3

Ranking Task to Measure Parental Literacy Beliefs
Parents are presented eight cards, each displaying a picture of a home literacy practice with the words labeling the activity printed below the picture. The cards are included in this appendix.

The interviewer first describes the eight activities and explains them to the parents if necessary.

Next, the interviewer asks the parent: "Could you rank these activities in order of importance for children's literacy development? It does not matter what you actually do at home with your child, but what you think is most important for stimulating children's literacy development. There are no right or wrong answers, it is your opinion".

After the parents ranked the eight cards, the interviewer asks a set of qualitative interview question, such as "why do you think this activity is most important for children's literacy development?", "why did you place this activity in the second position?" etc.

Talking with your child

[picture of parent and child talking]

Shared reading

[picture of parent and child reading]

Teaching your child (the meaning of) new words

[picture of parent teaching child in conversation]

Correcting your child when s/he uses a wrong word

[picture of parent correcting child in conversation]

Playing letter games

[picture of parent and child playing letter games with blocks]

Citing nursery rhymes

[picture of parent and child citing nursery rhymes with hand clapping]

Practicing letter writing

[picture of parent and child writing together]

Teaching your child the alphabet

[picture of parent teaching child the alphet]

Pictures Retrieved from the Following Sources

Citing nursery rhymes. Retrieved from https://www.shutterstock.com/nl/image-photo/mother-daughter-playing-pattymid-adult-multiethnic-3951802 (Nov 7, 2019).

Correcting your child when s/he uses a wrong word. Retrieved from https://thestrip.ru/en/karandash/vedushchii-dmitrii-karpachev-biografiya-i-ego-biografiya-dmitriya-karpacheva/ (Nov 7, 2019).

Playing letter games: board game. Retrieved from https://www.superdairyboy.com/Educational/alphabet_games.html (Nov 7, 2019).

Playing letter games: mother and child playing with blocks. Retrieved from https://www.verywellfamily.com/fun-learning-activities-kids-at-home-3128960 (Nov 7, 2019).

Practicing letter writing. Retrieved from https://www.clubstaffing.com/how-school-based-occupational-therapists-can-help-students-with-handwriting-problems/?mobile=0 (Nov 7, 2019).

Shared reading. Retrieved from https://salamislam.com/family/kind-nurse (Nov 7, 2019).

Talking with your child. Retrieved from http://www.parentingtopic.us/general/high-7-subjects-folks-like-to-learn-about.html (Nov 7, 2019).

Teaching your child the alphabet: letters. Retrieved from https://www.noedidacticos.com/letras-magneticas-minusculas-155-pzs-4790 (Nov 7, 2019).

Teaching your child the alphabet: mother and child. Retrieved from https://autism.wikia.org/wiki/Floortime (Nov 7, 2019).

Teaching your child the meaning of new words. Retrieved from https://www.pinterest.ca/pin/3588812825830929294/visual-search/?cropSource=6&h=544&w=544&x=10&y=10 (Nov 7, 2019).

Appendix B. Supplementary materials for Chapter 4

Multi-level regression models for testing program effects and moderator effects on children's emergent literacy development.

Table B.1 Multilevel regression models for predicting general receptive vocabulary

Model	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Fixed part							
Intercept	28.629*** (2.626)	29.619*** (2.623)	37.561*** (2.554)	36.469*** (2.472)	37.253*** (2.556)	38.437*** (3.215)	38.636*** (3.164)
Time	12.484*** (.482)	6.214*** (1.621)	6.207*** (1.622)	6.161*** (1.622)	6.161*** (1.622)	6.168*** (1.621)	6.168*** (1.550)
Time^2		3.195*** (.791)	3.201*** (.791)	3.227*** (.791)	3.218*** (.791)	3.219*** (.791)	3.219*** (.751)
Child's gender (girl = 1)			2.907 (1.994)	3.280 (1.952)	3.290 (1.956)	3.263 (1.960)	3.134 (1.960)
Child's age (gm)			1.146*** (.285)	1.237*** (.278)	1.261*** (.276)	1.276** (.275)	1.301*** (.275)
Parental education (gm)			3.986*** (1.480)	3.768** (1.443)	4.026** (1.494)	4.084** (1.497)	4.062** (1.495)
Home language (multilingual = 1)			-7.770*** (2.439)	-7.206** (2.392)	-7.610** (2.420)	-7.665** (2.419)	-7.835** (2.414)
Migration background (yes = 1)			-5.042* (2.567)	-4.379 (2.512)	-4.836 (2.550)	-4.883 (2.555)	-5.045* (2.549)
Self-efficacy (gm)				4.225** (1.593)	4.957** (1.654)	4.895** (1.662)	4.950** (1.661)
Role construction (gm)				.590 (2.341)	.155 (2.602)	.142 (2.604)	.122 (2.604)
Meaning-oriented facilitation (gm)					-1.644 (3.036)	-1.748 (3.037)	-1.810 (3.030)
Meaning-oriented instruction (gm)					-2.325 (2.318)	-2.324 (2.320)	-2.273 (2.320)
Code-oriented instruction (gm)					1.724 (2.421)	1.687 (2.427)	1.776 (2.427)
Code-oriented facilitation (gm)					2.566 (2.242)	2.688 (2.255)	2.782 (2.255)
EEH (EEH = 1)						-1.518 (2.934)	-1.396 (2.869)
Random Part							
Level 3 (school)							
Random intercept variance	64.760 (32.671)	63.986 (32.345)	14.704 (10.829)	11.580 (9.291)	10.559 (8.768)	9.001 (8.121)	8.025 (7.721)

Appendices

Table B.1 *(continued)*

Model	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Level 2 (pupil)							
Random intercept variance	159.266 (21.461)	160.437 (21.442)	126.304 (17.462)	119.317 (16.648)	116.163 (16.280)	116.799 (16.351)	117.412 (19.796)
Random slope variance							6.653 (5.378)
Random intercept-by-slope covariance							-1.917 (7.612)
Level 1 (measurement)							
Random intercept variance	65.375 (5.446)	61.914 (5.158)	61.967 (5.162)	61.962 (5.161)	61.956 (5.161)	61.945 (5.160)	55.480 (6.554)
Deviance (IGLS)	3483.024	3467.159	3424.241	3415.379	3411.361	3411.114	3408.917
Difference		15.865*	42.918***	8.862*	4.018	.227	2.197
df		1	5	2	4	1	2

Note: gm = grand mean centered. N Level 3 (school) = 12; N Level 2 (pupil) = 159; N Level 1 (measurement) = 447

* $p <.05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p <.001$

Table B.2 Multilevel regression models for predicting EEH curriculum based vocabulary

Model	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Fixed part											
Intercept	25.436***	25.783***	27.897***	26.647***	28.210***	28.253***	26.458***	26.086***	26.498***	26.440***	26.388***
	(.995)	(1.000)	(1.119)	(1.102)	(1.131)	(1.469)	(1.423)	(1.630)	(2.180)	(2.152)	(2.139)
26Time	4.983***	2.758***	2.754***	2.741***	2.738***	2.737***	2.663***	2.847***	2.299	2.172	2.169
	(.233)	(.799)	(.799)	(.799)	(.799)	(.799)	(.676)	(.795)	(1.492)	(1.491)	(1.491)
Time^2		1.132**	1.137**	1.145***	1.145***	1.145***	1.232***	1.254***	1.441*	1.531*	1.535*
		(.390)	(.390)	(.390)	(.390)	(.390)	(.317)	(.316)	(.605)	(.693)	(.611)
Child's gender (girl = 1)			1.104	1.187	1.020	1.019	1.004	.959	.957	.937	.973
			(.849)	(.844)	(.842)	(.843)	(.688)	(.691)	(.691)	(.693)	(.694)
Child's age (gm)			.445***	.472***	.482***	.482***	.216*	.220*	.220*	.221*	.244*
			(.122)	(.121)	(.119)	(.119)	(.098)	(.098)	(.098)	(.098)	(.101)
Parental education (gm)			1.420*	1.350*	1.584*	1.586*	.947	.960	.959	.953	1.010
			(.631)	(.626)	(.646)	(.647)	(.532)	(.534)	(.534)	(.535)	(.537)
Home language (multilingual = 1)			-1.726	-1.530	-1.918	-1.919	-.781	-.807	-.805	-.815	-.836
			(1.041)	(1.038)	(1.046)	(1.046)	(.874)	(.876)	(.876)	(.878)	(.876)
Migration background (yes = 1)			-1.808	-1.637	-1.960	-1.957	-.654	-.767	-.768	-.762	-.856
			(1.097)	(1.090)	(1.102)	(1.105)	(.931)	(.932)	(.932)	(.934)	(.936)
Self-efficacy (gm)				1.274	1.736*	1.733*	1.358*	1.395*	1.394*	1.913*	2.595*
				(.690)	(.713)	(.716)	(.528)	(.585)	(.585)	(.905)	(1.280)
Role construction (gm)				-.202	-.578	-.578	-.362	-.383	-.383	-.377	-.350
				(1.014)	(1.121)	(1.121)	(.909)	(.914)	(.914)	(.915)	(.915)
Meaning-oriented facilitation (gm)					-.873	-.876	.105	-.057	-.056	-.063	-.192
					(1.313)	(1.314)	(1.103)	(1.105)	(1.105)	(1.107)	(1.113)
Meaning-oriented instruction (gm)					-1.105	-.106	-1.525	-1.528	-1.525	-1.532	-1.488
					(.999)	(1.000)	(.817)	(.821)	(.821)	(.822)	(.822)
Code-oriented instruction (gm)					1.928	1.926	1.389	1.498	1.497	1.506	1.520
					(1.043)	(1.044)	(.846)	(.850)	(.850)	(.852)	(.851)

Table B.2 (continued)

Model	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Code-oriented facilitation (gm)					.173	.177	-.010	-.104	-.101	-.103	-.156
					(.966)	(.970)	(.788)	(.793)	(.793)	(.794)	(.798)
EEH (EEH = 1)						-.063	.265	.372	-.214	-.088	.013
						(1.380)	(1.328)	(1.295)	(2.470)	(2.435)	(2.420)
EEH x time									.762	.904	.911
									(1.762)	(1.762)	(1.763)
EEH x time^2									-.256	-.373	-.379
									(.710)	(.717)	(.718)
Time x self-efficacy										.578	.580
										(.983)	(.984)
Time^2 x self-efficacy										-.468	-.473
										(.465)	(.465)
Self-efficacy x EEH											-.890
											(1.191)
Random Part											
Level 3 (school)											
Random intercept variance	8.711	8.695	3.244	2.753	2.482	2.478	2.983	11.934	11.225	10.703	10.505
	(4.597)	(4.587)	(2.208)	(1.987)	(1.847)	(1.846)	(1.788)	(6.289)	(6.220)	(6.002)	(5.903)
Random slope variance								2.230	2.193	2.074	2.069
								(1.204)	(1.189)	(1.137)	(1.136)
Random intercept-by-slope covariance								-4.396	-4.318	-4.074	-4.075
								(2.560)	(2.528)	(2.423)	(2.409)
Level 2 (pupil)											
Random intercept variance	25.167	25.233	21.496	21.031	20.231	20.232	48.752	40.286	40.320	40.286	39.732
	(3.169)	(3.607)	(3.173)	(3.119)	(3.027)	(3.027)	(6.572)	(5.747)	(5.751)	(5.741)	(5.679)

Table B.2 (continued)

Model	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Random slope variance							5.535	3.230	3.237	3.194	3.192
							(1.362)	(1.159)	(1.159)	(1.150)	(1.152)
Random intercept-by-slope							-15.880	-11.381	-11.397	-11.319	-11.181
covariance							(2.671)	(2.244)	(2.245)	(2.233)	(2.220)
Level 1 (measurement)											
Random intercept variance	15.374	14.959	14.975	14.979	14.986	14.968	9.903	9.847	9.843	9.791	9.807
	(1.281)	(1.246)	(1.247)	(1.247)	(1.248)	(1.428)	(1.162)	(1.154)	(1.154)	(1.148)	(1.150)
Deviance (IGLS)	2780.546	2747.425	2744.868	2741.174	2735.968	2735.966	2667.642	2647.869	2647.682	2645.711	2645.184
Difference		8.335**	27.343***	3.694	5.206	.002	68.324***	19.773***	.187	1.971	.527
df		1	5	2	4	1	2	2	2	2	1

Note: gm = grand mean centered. N Level 3 (school) = 12; N Level 2 (pupil) = 159; N Level 1 (measurement) = 447.
* p <.05; ** p < .01; *** p <.001
[a] Reference model is Model 8

Table B.2 (continued)

Model	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Fixed part										
Intercept	26.496***	26.453***	26.457***	26.518***	26.462***	26.526***	26.499***	26.459***	26.559***	26.445***
	(2.180)	(2.178)	(2.162)	(2.199)	(2.167)	(2.182)	(2.181)	(2.201)	(2.168)	(2.186)
26Time	2.249	2.251	2.367	2.354	2.344	2.358	2.291	2.289	2.259	2.257
	(1.498)	(1.498)	(1.494)	(1.492)	(1.492)	(1.491)	(1.493)	(1.492)	(1.491)	(1.490)
Time^2	1.470*	1.469*	1.417*	1.426***	1.426*	1.409*	1.445*	1.445*	1.446*	1.447*
	(.609)	(.609)	(.611)	(.610)	(.607)	(.606_)	(.606)	(.605)	(.606)	(.606)
Child's gender (girl = 1)	.956	.968	.955	.951	.959	1.010	.957	.958	.961	.943
	(.692)	(.692)	(.692)	(.684)	(.691)	(.685)	(.691)	(.686)	(.692)	(.689)
Child's age (gm)	.220*	.229*	.220*	.206*	.220*	.193*	.220*	.224*	.220*	.219*
	(.098)	(.099)	(.098)	(.098)	(.098)	(.098)	(.098)	(.099)	(.098)	(.098)
Parental education (gm)	.959	.977	-.957	.988	.955	.945	.959	.991	.956	.922
	(.534)	(.535)	(.534)	(.531)	(.534)	(.530)	(.534)	(.533)	(.534)	(.534)
Home language (multilingual = 1)	-.816	-.846	-.808	-.775	-.803	-.706	-.807	-.755	-.811	-.849
	(.877)	(.880)	(.876)	(.869)	(.876)	(.871)	(.877)	(.873)	(.877)	(.875)
Migration background (yes = 1)	-.757	-.740	-.769	-.654	-.777	-.785	-.766	-.708	-.765	-.682
	(.933)	(.935)	(.932)	(.927)	(.932)	(.927)	(.933)	(.928)	(.933)	(.932)
Self-efficacy (gm)	1.394*	1.390*	1.394*	1.536**	1.393*	1.375*	1.395*	1.432*	1.396*	1.1450*
	(.585)	(.586)	(.585)	(.592)	(.585)	(.579)	(.585)	(.583)	(.585)	(.587)
Role construction (gm)	-.332	.227	-.377	-.369	-.379	-.322	-.385	-.333	-.390	-.360
	(1.385)	(1.912)	(.914)	(.904)	(.914)	(.904)	(.914)	(.909)	(.914)	(.911)
Meaning-oriented facilitation (gm)	-.064	-.063	.659	-1.987	-.058	-.157	-.057	-.018	-.059	-.134
	(1.105)	(1.105)	(1.637)	(2.672)	(1.105)	(1.101)	(1.105)	(1.099)	(1.105)	(1.108)
Meaning-oriented instruction (gm)	-1.514	-1.504	-1.524	-1.680*	-.967	-2.600	-1.523	-1.647*	-1.516	-1.512
	(.822)	(.822)	(.821)	(.820)	(1.243)	(1.709)	(.821)	(.823)	(.822)	(.818)

Table B.2 (*continued*)

Model	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Code-oriented instruction (gm)	1.488	1.492	1.497	1.645	1.502	1.297	1.455	.272	1.493	1.505
	(.851)	(.851)	(.850)	(.851)	(.850)	(.853)	(1.186)	(1.1648)	(.851)	(.847)
Code-oriented facilitation (gm)	-.103	-.129	-.101	-.225	-.101	.051	-.102	-.015	.552	-.366
	(.793)	(.796)	(.793)	(.791)	(.793)	(.793)	(.793)	(.793)	(1.195)	(1.628)
EEH (EEH = 1)	-.212	-.170	-.143	-.280	-.159	-.302	-.216	-.252	-.296	-.218
	(2.469).	(2.464)	(2.448)	(2.496)	(2.452)	(2.474)	(2.470)	(2.498)	(2.455)	(2.477)
EEH x time	.829	.826	.666	.677	.700	.688	.772	.782	.811	.819
	(1.772)	(1.1772)	(1.766)	(1.764)	(1.764)	(1.763)	(1.764)	(1.762)	(1.761)	(1.760)
EEH x time^2	-.293	-.291	-.224	-.234	-.237	-.221	-.261	-.267	-.259	-.264
	(.715)	(.716)	(.717)	(.716)	(.713)	(.712)	(.710)	(.710)	(.711)	(.711)
Time x role construction	.485	.481								
	(1.468)	(1.469)								
Time^2 x role construction	-.282	-.280								
	(.693)	(.694)								
Role construction x EEH		-.737								
		(1.738)								
Time x meaning-oriented facilitation			-.861	-.878						
			(1.707)	(1.706)						
Time^2 x meaning-oriented facilitation			.267	.284						
			(.811)	(.810)						
Meaning-oriented facilitation x EEH				3.131						
				(2.461)						
Time x meaning-oriented instruction					-.550	-.562				
					(1.295)	(1.293)				
Time^2 x meaning-oriented instruction					.144	.149				
					(.608)	(.607)				

Table B.2 (continued)

Model	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Meaning-oriented instruction x EEH						2.204				
						(1.593)				
Time x code-oriented instruction							.158	.162		
							(1.154)	(1.154)		
Time² x code-oriented instruction							-.075	-.079		
							(.545)	(.544)		
Code-oriented instruction x EEH								1.491		
								(1.453)		
Time x code-oriented facilitation									-.515	-.528
									(1.255)	(1.255)
Time² x code-oriented facilitation									.096	.111
									(.595)	(.595)
Code-oriented facilitation x EEH										1.212
										(1.465)
Random Part										
Level 3 (school)										
Random intercept variance	11.191	11.094	10.894	11.475	10.976	11.194	11.233	11.567	11.011	11.268
	(6.206)	(6.162)	(6.076)	(6.313)	(6.117)	(6.209)	(6.223)	(6.371)	(6.130)	(6.228)
Random slope variance	2.188	2.190	2.112	2.095	2.149	2.156	2.195	2.183	2.163	2.155
	(1.186)	(1.187)	(1.155)	(1.149)	(1.170)	(1.174)	(1.190)	(1.185)	(1.175)	(1.172)
Random intercept-by-slope covariance	-4.307	-4.324	-4.154	-4.146	-4.211	-4.405	-4.322	-4.299	-4.238	-4.217
	(2.523)	(2.251)	(2.459)	(2.483)	(2.848)	(2.480)	(2.530)	(2.542)	(2.493)	(2.499)
Level 2 (pupil)										
Random intercept variance	40.330	40.268	40.332	40.448	40.314	40.657	40.321	40.561	40.269	40.339
	(5.751)	(5.744)	(5.751)	(5.763)	(5.750)	(5.784)	(5.750)	(5.774)	(5.744)	(5.751)

Table B.2 (*continued*)

Model	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Random slope variance	3.237	3.329	3.235	3.273	3.226	3.270	3.239	3.262	3.214	3.215
	(1.158)	(1.158)	(1.159)	(1.161)	(1.158)	(1.159)	(1.159)	(1.160)	(1.156)	(1.156)
Random intercept-by-slope covariance	-11.394	-11.366	-11.399	-11.562	-11.386	-11.614	-11.398	-11.543	-11.355	-11.418
	(2.244)	(2.242)	(2.245)	(2.255)	(2.244)	(2.258)	(2.245)	(2.256)	(2.240)	(2.243)
Level 1 (measurement)										
Random intercept variance	9.833	9.841	9.843	9.832	9.844	9.810	9.841	9.835	9.837	9.836
	(1.153)	(1.154)	(1.154)	(1.152)	(1.154)	(1.150)	(1.154)	(1.153)	(1.153)	(1.153)
Deviance (IGLS)	2647.498	2647.326	2647.296	2345.778	2647.313	2645.565	2647.662	2646.664	2647.149	2646.495
Difference	.184[a]	.172	.386[a]	1.518	.369[a]	1.748	.020[a]	.998	.533[a]	.654
df	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1

Note: gm = grand mean centered. N Level 3 (school) = 12; N Level 2 (pupil) = 159; N Level 1 (measurement) = 447.
* p <.05; ** p < .01; *** p <.001
[a] Reference model is Model 8

Table B.3 Multilevel regression models for predicting narrative production

Model	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Fixed part							
Intercept	4.821***(.290)	4.705***(.300)	5.044***(.415)	4.878***(.402)	4.929***(.411)	5.080***(.485)	5.063***(.488)
Time	2.438***(.144)	3.154***(.497)	2.436***(.144)	2.441***(.144)	2.437***(.144)	2.435***(.144)	2.439***(.150)
Time²		-.365(.242)	-	-	-	-	-
Child's gender (girl = 1)			.705*(.337)	.751*(.330)	.699(.331)	.684*(.332)	.692*(.331)
Child's age (gm)			.162***(.048)	.176***(.047)	.175***(.046)	.175***(.046)	.175***(.046)
Parental education (gm)			.516*(.038)	.469(.242)	.484(.249)	.495*(.250)	.498*(.250)
Home language (multilingual = 1)			-.392(.411)	-.305(.402)	-.368(.404)	-.374(.404)	-.382(.404)
Migration background (yes = 1)			-.342(.431)	-.216(.420)	-.194(.425)	-.179(.426)	-.163(.426)
Self-efficacy (gm)				.755**(.268)	.831**(.278)	.816**(.280)	.813**(.280)
Role construction (gm)				.079(.392)	.011(.437)	.010(.437)	.007(.437)
Meaning-oriented facilitation (gm)					.407(.509)	.399(.509)	.410(.510)
Meaning-oriented instruction (gm)					-.599(.392)	-.605(.392)	-.599(.392)
Code-oriented instruction (gm)					.564(.407)	.560(.408)	.552(.408)
Code-oriented facilitation (gm)					-.100(.377)	-.080(.380)	-.080(.380)
EEH (EEH = 1)						-.205(.393)	-.200(.395)
Random Part							
Level 3 (school)							
Random intercept variance	.403(.323)	.403(.323)	.174(.207)	.106(.171)	.055(.146)	.030(.136)	.033(.137)
Level 2 (pupil)							
Random intercept variance	2.768(.595)	2.768(.595)	2.143(.527)	1.949(.504)	1.887(.497)	1.908(.499)	2.586(.975)
Random slope variance							.476(.505)
Random intercept-by-slope covariance							-.506(.577)
Level 1 (measurement)							
Random intercept variance	5.806(.486)	5.806(.486)	5.871(.491)	5.857(.490)	5.859(.490)	5.856(.490)	5.395(.636)
Deviance (IGLS)	2180.704	2178.447	2157.239	2147.448	2143.601	2143.356	2142.392
Difference	-	2.257	23.465***	9.791**	3.847	.245	.964
Df	-	1	5	2	4	1	2

Note: gm = grand mean centred. N Level 3 (school) = 12; N Level 2 (pupil) = 159; N Level 1 (measurement) = 443.
* $p <.05$; ** $p <.01$; *** $p <.001$

Table B.4 Multilevel regression models for predicting auditory perception

Model	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Fixed part							
Intercept	27.498***(.906)	27.596***(.941)	28.158***(1.271)	27.816***(1.276)	27.947***(1.336)	28.420***(1.583)	27.727***(1.591)
Time	7.134***(.465)	6.548***(1.614)	7.153***(.464)	7.141***(.464)	7.128***(.464)	7.121(.464)	7.152***(.476)
Time^2	-	.297(.781)	-	-	-	-	-
Child's gender (girl = 1)			2.085(1.101)	2.245*(1.091)	2.094(1.095)	2.069(1.095)	2.069(1.068)
Child's age (gm)			.650***(.154)	.664***(.152)	.665***(.151)	.664***(.151)	.598**(.146)
Parental education (gm)			2.436**(.803)	2.395**(.795)	2.359**(.817)	2.411**(.821)	2.476**(.797)
Home language (multilingual = 1)			-1.112(1.344)	-.997(1.336)	-1.045(1.350)	-1.041(1.348)	-.605(1.316)
Migration background (yes = 1)			-1.034(1.391)	-.745(1.384)	-.789(1.403)	-.715(1.408)	-.334(1.380)
Self-efficacy (gm)				1.102(.879)	1.272(.916)	1.217(.920)	.897(.893)
Role construction (gm)				1.004(1.292)	-.069(1.443)	-.106(1.443)	.643(1.402)
Meaning-oriented facilitation (gm)					1.426(1.676)	1.376(1.676)	.908(1.644)
Meaning-oriented instruction (gm)					-.677(1.288)	-.682(1.286)	-.951(1.251)
Code-oriented instruction (gm)					1.447(1.348)	1.391(1.350)	.642(1.308
Code-oriented facilitation (gm)					.676(1.249)	.764(1.257)	.815(1.219)
EEH (EEH = 1)						-.695(1.253)	-.527(1.213)
Random Part							
Level 3 (school)							
Random intercept variance	3.106(3.021)	3.096(3.016)	0.000(0.000)	.000(.000)	.000(.000)	.000(.000)	.000(.000)
Level 2 (pupil)							
Random intercept variance	32.146(6.563)	32.120(6.560)	24.457(5.505)	23.342(5.387)	22.443(5.285)	22.318(5.273)	46.189(12.080)
Random slope variance							4.136(5.160)
Random intercept-by-slope covariance							-13.408(6.654)
Level 1 (measurement)							
Random intercept variance	59.715(5.041)	59.705(5.040)	59.868(5.053)	59.922(5.057)	59.775(5.043)	59.798(5.045)	55.638(6.594)
Deviance (IGLS)	3176.824	3176.680	3147.022	3143.513	3139.484	3139.177	
Difference	-	.144	29.802***	3.509	4.029	.307	
Df	-	1	5	2	4	1	

Note: gm = grand mean centered. N Level 3 (school) = 12; N Level 2 (pupil) = 159; N Level 1 (measurement) = 437. Model 7, in which we tested for the existence of random slopes for linear growth at the school level did not converge, hence it is not displayed in this table.

* p <.05; ** p < .01; *** p <.001

Table B.5 Multilevel regression models for predicting letter sound knowledge

Model	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Fixed part								
Intercept	6.358***(.527)	7.405***(.517)	6.815***(.846)	6.724***(.856)	7.349***(.873)	8.159***(1.031)	7.819***(.904)	7.448***(.906)
Time	5.514***(.263)	-1.048(.822)	-1.035(.822)	-1.047(.822)	-1.053(.822)	-1.061(.822)	-1.001(.705)	-.876(.761)
Time²		3.339***(.401)	3.335***(.401)	3.342***(.401)	3.340***(.401)	3.343***(.401)	3.293***(.336)	3.237***(.336)
Child's gender (girl = 1)			.642(.681)	.654(.682)	.339(.667)	.323(.667)	.375(.637)	.358(.632)
Child's age (gm)			.136(.097)	.167(.097)	.165(.094)	.169(.093)	.152(.088)	.139(.088)
Parental education (gm)			1.461**(.503)	1.438**(.503)	1.698***(.507)	1.757***(.506)	1.366**(.480)	1.397**(.477)
Home language (multilingual = 1)			-0.025(.833)	.044(.837)	-.423(.823)	-.397(.819)	-.076(.772)	-.123(.768)
Migration background (yes = 1)			.491(.875)	.560(.878)	.310(.870)	.351(.867)	-.207(.815)	-.118(.811)
Self-efficacy (gm)				.438(.559)	.915(.566)	.823(.567)	.945(.538)	.953(.534)
Role construction (gm)				-.248(.819)	-.806(.884)	-.742(.883)	-1.113(.841)	-1.182(.835)
Meaning-oriented facilitation (gm)					-.175(1.037)	-.311(1.032)	-.535(.971)	-.451(.975)
Meaning-oriented instruction (gm)					-1285(.789)	-1.298(.788)	-1.033(.751)	-1.064(.746)
Code-oriented instruction (gm)					2.839***(.825)	2.777***(.826)	2.713***(.794)	2.740***(.788)
Code-oriented facilitation (gm)					-.836(.765)	-.716(.769)	-.671(.742)	.745(.737)
EEH (EEH = 1)						-1.199(.884)	-.582(.752)	-.127(.764)
Random Part								
Level 3 (school)								
Random intercept variance	1.066(1.054)	.930(.988)	.935(.942)	.969(.954)	.942(.902)	.498(.713)	.068(.479)	.000(.000)
Random slope variance								.967(.688)
Random intercept-by-slope covariance								.000(.000)
Level 2 (pupil)								
Random intercept variance	12.249(2.327)	13.235(2.268)	11.733(2.093)	11.642(2.083)	10.361(1.936)	10.461(1.947)	8.738(2.335)	8.634(2.280)
Random slope variance							5.119(1.455)	4.238(1.399)
Random intercept-by-slope covariance							-.188(1.411)	-.091(1.382)
Level 1 (measurement)								
Random intercept variance	19.346(1.626)	15.684(1.311)	15.703(1.320)	15.704(1.320)	15.686(1.319)	15.696(1.319)	10.694(1.294)	10.700(1.293)
Deviance (IGLS)	2724.450	2661.663	2649.422	2648.811	2636.565	2635.042	2602.377	2597.241
Difference		62.787***	12.241**	.611	12.246*	1.523	32.665***	5.136
df		1	5	2	4	1	2	2

Note: gm = grand mean centered. N Level 3 (school) = 12; N Level 2 (pupil) = 159; N Level 1 (measurement) = 441.
* p <.05; ** p < .01; *** p <.001

Appendix C. Supplementary materials for Chapter 5

Coding scheme

Educational partnership
(Codes concerning the cooperation between parents and school aimed at stimulating children's development)

Main theme and subcodes		Example from data	Number of data fragments
Expectations parents	Be involved in and cooperate with school for development child	We talked about it, should you want every parent to visit the parent room? No, that is not what you want. You want that parents are involved in the learning process of their children.	14
Perceptions parents	Important for child's development	But what I took from it is mostly that in all these studies that have been examined, that the most positive effect on learning performances is, because that is what it is ultimately all about, that parents are involved.	3
	Interested/involved in topics concerning child's wellbeing, learning and education	I think parents attend when it is about learning matters of their children, they are very sensitive for that. In other areas, they are much less sensitive.	36
	Supporting/guiding/controlling children's learning	Parents like to be in control when children write down something in their school diaries, that te teacher can check whether it is really there, and additionally they want their children to write down their grades. For example, for 'world orientation' tests, that they can read it through.	4
	Lacking knowledge/skills/facilities to support children's learning	What we just talked about in that meeting, that parents find it difficult to practically carry it out. Does every child have a place, their own desk, a table where they can work quietly, a moment to do homework, because parents can…. that is more than just the pedagogical aspect, it is not unrelated but it is often a condition to be substantially working this way. It's the same in the classroom, if it's a mess you can't teach. So that is, I think we can provide a service here.	13

Coding scheme *(continued)*

Main theme and subcodes		Example from data	Number of data fragments
Expectations school/ professional	Support and cooperate with parents for development child	I think the ultimate goal is to help those children as much as possible in their development, both in behavior as well as in grades and I think the way do that is being on the same page with parents.	57
Perceptions school/ professional	Experienced/ knowledgeable about supporting parents	No, it was fine, it was very recognizable, it was. Look, it was not much new, but you know, that was nice. That you just saw it again and thought, oh, that is possible or you can do it that way. It was just really recognizable, which makes it a bit easier I think.	3
	Supporting parents in helping children learn at home	If we can show a prompting board, that we also use in the classroom… So last week we had them experience it themselves. Yes that was quite different. It is just really difficult to make a sentence at a prompting board. But parents liked it a lot, so we try this way to find out, yes, if we [EEH-teachers] do this, do they [parents] will get an idea… what they do in the classroom and how they can work with it, that way sort of.	12

Main theme: Formal partnership

(codes concerning the cooperation between parents and school aimed at improving the school organization)

Expectations parents	Help in school	What can parents offer us? The initiatives they have now, which are sometimes overshadowed a bit by the parent council, because that can be difficult sometimes. But for example, in group 8 [upper grade primary school], they got a kickboxing clinic yesterday by the father of [name child]. Really nice, that's just small things they can do for their classes. I think that more is possible than we're doing now.	11
Expectations school/ professional	Instruct and facilitate parents in helping	And then also sit down with the class parent representative, who has a list of tasks that I emailed around, like, so that you can work with it. So I think it is good that it is with the teachers, that you say this is the list of tasks, this is what I expect from you.	13

Coding scheme *(continued)*

Main theme and subcodes		Example from data	Number of data fragments
Perceptions school/ professional	Having difficulties delegating tasks to parents	Well, I think we should take a look at ourselves first. Do we give this responsibility to the class parent representative, or do we want to control everything ourselves? And yes, it won't work if one does it and another doesn't.	5
	Instructing/facilitating parents in helping	The class parents, well, we made the task list and distributed them during the start meeting... So that happened. Every teacher had a conversation with the class parent, that was done too.	1
Main theme: Contact and communication (codes concerning all communication between parents and school)			
Expectations parents	Be approachable	But also in this I think part of the accountability lies with the parents. Like, that you show up at a parent-teacher conference, that you are there at an information evening, that you read your newsletters.	10
	Keep appointments	I'm a bit old-fashioned. I think the part that, but that is my common sense, that it is a sort of respect, norms and values, how do you interact with each other, and that is also how you interact with each other at The Compass. We have rules, we have appointments, you come on time, you know, that is part of it.	15
	Reach out	I have certain expectations from parents. That it is not only one-way traffic, like. I have also mentioned that I think it's very difficult to keep on seeking contact if I enter a dead-end street every time. So I also expect from parents that in certain situations they reach out to us, to the school or teachers.	9
	Share knowledge/ information	What do our teachers need from the parents? We had [...], information from home.	3
	Speak Dutch only in school	Dutch should be spoken in the school and we actually do not accept it if parents speak Turkish, Moroccan, or whatever among each other, because we cannot understand that.	3

Coding scheme *(continued)*

Main theme and subcodes		Example from data	Number of data fragments
Expectations school / professional	Be open / transparent in communication	Make clear agreements, very simple, like, how do you want us to communicate?	15
	Be approachable	There are certain things we expect from a teacher, that you are available for the parents at certain times, [...] that you are there.	4
	Reach out	Yes, I think with everything, if something does not go well, really tell the day after what did go well, because that keeps [the threshold] low. That you're able to just normally talk to one another.	32
	Share knowledge / information	There are certain things we expect from a teacher from the school [...], that you inform parents.	23
Perceptions parents	Approachable	I see many parents entering the classroom in the mornings, and then I briefly see them or speak to them. Yes, so, in that sense, it is going well.	2
	Hard to reach	I have also mentioned that I think it's very difficult to keep on seeking contact if I enter a dead-end street every time	31
	Better to reach when approached personally / directly	Well, I think that in personal contact you reach parents very well, so directly, face-to-face.	19
Perceptions school / professional	Approachable	You now have this parent meeting, and I can imagine that that gives a boost, that you become very approachable for parents at this moment.	6
	Open and transparent in communication	I was just going to say, we make those agreements in advance, and we have them signed, that's what we did now too.	3
	Reaching out	If something is going on in the classroom, we now communicate much more directly to the parents, or if a teacher is ill or if there is a group change, or, anything. This is much appreciated by parents. If something is going on in the neighborhood, we just communicate that much faster.	8

Coding scheme *(continued)*

Main theme and subcodes	Example from data	Number of data fragments
Reaching out (only) when problems with child	- We may have raised them in a certain way, that you call - That something is wrong. - That something is wrong, which causes a certain ... 'Hello, you speak with so and so's teacher...', that is - I always say 'nothing's wrong' too	5
Sharing information	We provide the information to parents much faster. So if we have a different structure of the day due to an activity, this is something that is really announced two months earlier, so that parents are able to provide daycare.	4

Main theme: relational climate

All codes concerning the relational climate between parents and professionals, among parents, among professionals and attitudinal aspects of parents and professionals towards each other and towards parental involvement

Expectations parents	Understand / trust / respect / appreciate school / professional	What our teachers need from the parents? We had [...], trust, understanding.	3
Expectations school / professional	Take parents seriously, create and have trust, be open, welcoming, interested and respectful towards parents	That they are taken seriously and are given the feeling that they are really welcome. That's what we had there and what we expect from our teachers concerning parental involvement: openness, showing that we need to do it together.	19

Coding scheme *(continued)*

Main theme and subcodes		Example from data	Number of data fragments
Perceptions parents	Critical / demanding/ outspoken	We were characterizing our parents, and I got to, like, one word that really pops into my mind is outspoken, in positive and negative sense, because it is not at all meant really negatively.	13
	Enthusiastic / involved / positive	That is what parents very much appreciated, at least, you noticed that when you had such a meeting. That information meeting we had with the parents, that program, you know, to make them enthusiastic, well, nine parents attended and all parent want to joint because of that meeting.	56
	Good atmosphere among parents and between parents and profs	That is really nice and it also lasted longer than we had planned for, because it's just nice to chat with one another.	13
	Degree of involvement influenced socially by other parents	And it was said that the same group of parents are always there during the "coffee mornings" and that it wasn't inviting for them to, yes, join them, that was what it came down to.	19
	Not involved / enthusiastic / positive (enough)	- The mother of [name child], she is not enthusiastic, so we are really not going get her on board. - No that is why I doubt if all these parents are enthusiastic because, [name child], I doubt it	33
	Understanding / supportive towards professional	And with the item 'what did it bring you': appreciation for teachers, it said, amongst others. [...]. Here it says, a comment of parent to child, I don't remember, but I have to read out loud: "the teacher is working herself to pieces for you, so just behave". It has provided support. So what did it bring you? Many positive reactions from parents. Actually, knowledge and understanding of how we work. So actually, I think as teachers we can conclude that it is positive.	6
	Not be feeling safe in school / PLC	But that is really something to consider; if we're going to put a parent here who finds it difficult to tell things and doesn't feel safe here, then we're not going to get any information out of them.	8

Coding scheme *(continued)*

Main theme and subcodes	Example from data	Number of data fragments
Perceptions school / professional	Open, taking parents seriously, creating and having trust	- We started with pictures of our own children, both of [kindergarten teacher], and [parent consultant] and mine. Yes, you know, told a little about that, that you run up against the same things as they do, and then you already saw, from that moment I saw actually, like, now we've got them. - Yes, funny isn't it... I understand it though. - Yes, but especially with our own examples with those parents. I also never feel like reading aloud [inaudible] 'oh so she also doesn't always do that' [inaudible] 'oh that one also cries in the shop'. Our children do that too. - But that was for those parents just really nice to notice.	9
	Valuing parents' perspectives	But I think that tomorrow we should just ask in the feedback to the parents how they see that. Because I think that plays a big part in it, how they would like to see it.	50
	Wary / tense / vulnerable in contact with parents	What always happens in a team is that some find it easier to sit around the table with parents than others. And then it is more about finding it difficult to, parents who are critical, to sit around the table with them. But it's not, like, that it stops them from engaging in conversations with parents, but they find it stressful. So those staff members would rather have a little as possible contact. You know, let me just do what I do in the classroom. . .	10

Main theme: diversity of population
(codes concerning the diversity of the parent population, how diversity may influence parental involvement, the skills parents/professionals need or lack related to diversity)

Main theme and subcodes	Example from data	Number of data fragments
Expectations school / professional	Know and respond to parental backgrounds	But that requires from teachers that they have knowledge on parents' background information.	11

Coding scheme *(continued)*

Main theme and subcodes		Example from data	Number of data fragments
Perceptions parents	Hampered to be involved due to personal / family / financial context	That can be really small things indeed, why they cannot attend or no child care, you name it. You know, I cannot come tonight, I have no one to take care of my kiddies, because some are really on their own.	50
	Determined in their involvement by cultural background	There is also the group of parents who from their cultural perspective say, "this is the school and here it belongs. You do it." You know, then it is not about disinterest but, you know, it's a bit of culture. "You are the school and we are home, we are not school"	3
	Hampered to be involved due to linguistic background	- when I hear about which child this is, there is of course a language barrier behind this and that is what we also run into with EEH, and is now with the future children that we get. The language, that is really a big problem. - first generation, you know, so in fact. - but that really is a big problem, because I was doing my talk and that man said really honestly that the way I talk and pronounce the letters, that he could not follow me sometimes. Even though I just normally...	17
	Differing in support needed from school	I think what you're saying, you have many childrearing topics in the parent room, and that the parents that, like, the target group you want to reach with that, that is the target group that you want to have inside and have involved.	10
Perceptions school / professionals	Knowledgeable about parental backgrounds and perspectives	We know as teachers which parent has trouble with child rearing	3
	Lacking knowledge about parental backgrounds and perspectives	- Actually, throughout the years, actually, it's more that the question emerged what is the cause that those parents dropped out. Has it always been like that, from kindergarten? [inaudible] so what happened why [they] left really, was it something which was there before and now not anymore, did something happen? Is the trust in the school gone? Is it...? - It has not been asked, then you don't know what it is, you don't know, really.	38

Coding scheme *(continued)*

Main theme and subcodes		Example from data	Number of data fragments
	Uncomfortable / unskilled in dealing with linguistic diversity	It causes an eerie feeling if you don't understand. I can stand beside them but I don't get anything because I don't know what they're talking about, and so forth.	4
Main theme: responsibility and control (codes concerning professionals' and parents' responsibilities in stimulating parental involvement and the extent to which the degree parental involvement can be influenced)			
Expectations school / professionals	Facilitate parental involvement	[parent] yes I think obviously from my perspective, at a certain moment it slips away. If you have a parent-teacher conference you are very enthusiastic, but it slips away. You have to, just like you have to get children's attention, you need to be triggered and so there's the rub. [teacher] look you can't say then let's do another seven conversations with parents [inaudible]. So you have to reach parents one way or another. We have to find ways how to trigger you.	40
	Regulate / restrict parental input / involvement	In that we decide when and how. I do say, in a certain way it is we decide on that, so I'm not completely 3.0 [comment researcher: parental involvement 3.0 is a Dutch term for reciprocal parent – school communication]	11

Coding scheme *(continued)*

Main theme and subcodes		Example from data	Number of data fragments
	Cooperate as a team with parent consultant	But I seriously connect on the part of... between teacher and parent consultant. I think we should say now... come on, now we are going for it all together. We have such a great wheel of, I don't know whose it is, but, what we worked with on the study day with mathematics. It consists of various components, parents are one of those components and this is a miniscule thingie that may take one percent of energy to pay attention to and to think of [name parent consultant], if you read an email and you think, o hey, that parent could talk to [name parent consultant]. And if I struggle to address that parent myself, then I say, well, I'll go to [parent consultant], that parent, but I find it difficult. Yes that really does not take any energy, that's just doing your job, I think. And I seriously think we can do that.	15
Perceptions school / professionals	Parent consultant responsible for involving parents	- Next year, [parent consultant] will go after the parents who did not attend. - [parent consultant] will call parents who were absent. - and the drop-outs, she'll try to get them in the parent room again, structurally.	16
	Facilitating parental involvement	And yes, how the school can play a part in that. I don't know whether, I think we already do very much to try to reach parents.	40
	Limited in resources and responsibilities in involving parents	- But yes, it is simply not feasible to structurally, with all parents, real nice, but not feasible. - No you don't have time for that. - And that is a pity, but it can't. - We should be realistic about that.	51
	Regulating / restricting parental input / involvement	The fact that we also said, we want peace and quiet in the school. A big lot of parents in the school can also cause much unrest, because yes, you are talking out loud and laughing and, but lessons are being taught too, you know, also in, just visit the classroom one more time. But that is very disturbing also you know, and you have to guard that process and of course there are always moment when that is allowed. But there also moments that we say no, now we are really occupied with teaching and that the parents hand over the children to us to provide them with that bit.	11

Coding scheme *(continued)*

Main theme and subcodes		Example from data	Number of data fragments
	Able to influence / control the degree of parental involvement	- I think also, how actively do you, as a teacher, involve the class parent representative. - Oh, yes, it is an interaction, of course.	23
	Uncertain about boundaries of school's responsibility in involving parents	But we do have some differences in the ways we want to get the parents into the school, or, well, how far does the influence, should the influence of a teacher go? Or that of the school leadership? And I think there are some issues as to what extent can you oblige parents to come into the school? We regularly disagree on this.	23
	Not able to control or influence the degree of parental involvement	So much we did. [...]. So yes, I don't know what I could have done differently. If someone now says, I know the trick, please come forward.	19

Main theme: Shared vision and team support

(codes the topic of shared vision and the process of shared vision development within the school team and school community)

Expectations school / professionals	Guide/ coordinate vision and plan development	According to me, what we now do every time is, we do something, and then we have that information, but we don't really know what to do with it. So please let us think well about it, what do we want to know, what are we going to do with that and when are we going to do that... in order to be able to actually do it.	37

Coding scheme *(continued)*

Main theme and subcodes	Example from data	Number of data fragments
Involve children in vision and plan development	- should the children be on board, by the way? - yes I think so. - yes, shouldn't they. - at least, I think so, - Yes so do I - Yes I think so too, I think that they should be able to give their opinion.	5
Involve parents in vision and plan development	- Yes and then not just what the colleagues think but also parents. - Yes certainly	19
Involve team in vision and plan development	- It is important to know... that information, how teacher look at it, to determine a vision, a vision of course you always determine for a longer period, I think. - yes, a vision we should support, so we can create a vision, but if you, with information on what the people think, if that does not match with the vision you present, then it won't be implemented, right? - that's right, so then you'll have to intervene some way, yes, in order to in a small [inaudible] so that you can create a vision that is supported by all teachers, otherwise it is not the vision of The Compass.	45
Work guided by vision and plan	Where we should go now is that we should have a certain vision and a multi-year plan based on that vision, or actually integrate it within the school's multi-year plan. And set this up systematically.	26
Have shared ideas and approaches	I think that is the whole foundation of wanting to improve something is that you have to map what is the current situation and where do we want to go? And why.	22
Perceptions parents — Different in ideas / approaches from professionals	I think you have to search for a common interest. I notice for example with information, I think parents don't really have a plan for that. We find that very important, but parents are like, whatever.	21

Coding scheme *(continued)*

Main theme and subcodes		Example from data	Number of data fragments
Perception school / professionals	In need of (more) information / knowledge for vision and plan development	- I think we have to read about it more and remove background information, that that may be a task for us, to look at, guys, where can we take information away, what should be included?	16
	(more) Aware of parents / parental involvement / perspectives concerning parental involvement ...	The ideas and the methods we apply now in the PLC, that was always an interest. Only... so, the ideas haven't changed, because I just think that you're now more consciously aware of them. That you pay more attention to them. And different from: okay, this is what we do and it is going well. And yes, well, it's just the way it is. And we want it and we're doing it, but... Now you are more aware, but the ideas and the underlying thoughts, that is the same I think.	18
	Having no shared ideas / approaches	I think there are some differences in what... in how teachers see themselves in this. So, how they explain themselves in this. Some will be like: if a parent does not show up, I would call myself. Another would say, like: Well, I wait. It is the parent's responsibility to attend a parent-teacher conference, so I wait until the parent calls. So I think there are larger differences there.	32
	Having shared ideas / approaches	I think all the teachers recognize the importance of it, of parents being involved. Because I think everyone has numerous examples of that you just reap the benefits if you have good contact with the parents	31
	Hindered in involving team in vision and plan development	It's quite something. And I see that also in the lower grades. Now we have met twice for an hour and a half, and we are now halfway I think, so it takes a lot of time and I don't see right now, what [school leader] now said, we are occupied with a lot of things. That means if I only consider the team, that all meetings have a full agenda, all consultations have a full agenda, and lately, teachers are bombarded quite with questionnaires and such things, so yes, then I just think [...] It is really difficult now.	15

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Samenvatting

(Summary in Dutch)

Inleiding

Al bij aanvang van het onderwijs zijn er grote verschillen tussen kinderen in hun ontluikende geletterdheid, waartoe kennis en vaardigheden behoren als woordenschat, verhaalbegrip, letterkennis, en het kunnen navertellen van een verhaaltje. Sommige kinderen starten het basisonderwijs in groep één met sterk ontwikkelde ontluikende geletterde vaardigheden, terwijl dit bij andere kinderen minder het geval is. Een deel van deze verschillen kunnen verklaard worden door variatie in de mate waarin kinderen thuis gestimuleerd worden. Kinderen doen thuis allerlei ervaringen op met taal en geletterdheid, bijvoorbeeld wanneer ze in aanraking komen met schriftelijk materiaal, door (kinder)boeken te bekijken, maar ook doordat ze thuis folders, kranten en boodschappenbriefjes tegenkomen. Ook zien kinderen andere gezinsleden dit soort schriftelijk materiaal gebruiken, bijvoorbeeld wanneer een ouder de krant leest. Tenslotte kunnen oudere gezinsleden kinderen betrekken bij allerlei 'geletterde activiteiten', zoals voorlezen, liedjes zingen, letters aanwijzen op straat of verhalen vertellen. Al deze ervaringen samen vormen 'het geletterde gezinsklimaat' van een kind. Kinderen met een rijk geletterd gezinsklimaat waarin dit soort activiteiten en materialen volop aanwezig zijn ontwikkelen vaak een sterkere taal- en leesvaardigheid dan kinderen met een beperkter geletterd gezinsklimaat.

Het Nederlandse onderwijs lijkt niet goed in staat de vroege verschillen in de ontluikende geletterdheid tussen bepaalde groepen kinderen en de gevolgen daarvan voor de latere leesontwikkeling te verkleinen. Daarom zetten veel scholen in op het stimuleren van het geletterde gezinsklimaat met behulp van ouder-kindprogramma's. Onderzoek naar de effecten van dit soort programma's laat zien dat ze gemiddeld genomen de ontluikende geletterdheid van kinderen positief kunnen beïnvloeden. Wel zijn de meeste programma's minder of zelfs helemaal niet effectief voor kinderen van lager opgeleide ouders of voor kinderen met een migratieachtergrond. Om de verschillen in programma-effecten tussen groepen kinderen te verklaren, wijzen onderzoekers vaak op het belang van de aansluiting tussen het programma en de context waarin het uitgevoerd wordt. Als een programma niet goed aansluit bij de gezinnen en de scholen die werken met de programma's kun je ook geen effecten van een programma bij kinderen verwachten, zo is de redenering.

Het onderzoek in dit proefschrift is gericht op het vergroten van kennis over de aansluiting tussen ouder-kindprogramma's, de gezinnen en de scholen van kinderen

in de Nederlandse grootstedelijke context. Bij de aansluiting van een ouder-kindprogramma bij gezinnen en scholen speelt het begrip 'educatief partnerschap' een rol. De term educatief partnerschap beschrijft de gelijkwaardige samenwerking tussen ouders en school met als doel het leren van het kind te stimuleren. De veronderstelling in dit onderzoek is dat als de relatie tussen school en ouders gebaseerd is op de principes van educatief partnerschap, ouder-kindprogramma's beter ingebed zullen worden in de school.

Voor een beter zicht op de aansluiting tussen programma's, gezinnen en scholen is een goed begrip van de geletterde thuisomgeving van kinderen met diverse achtergronden noodzakelijk. Hoofdstuk 2, 3 en 4 richten zich vooral op de thuiscontext en dragen bij aan meer nuance in conceptualiseringen van het geletterd gezinsklimaat. In Hoofdstuk 2 onderzochten we de typen geletterde activiteiten die verschillende groepen ouders met hun kinderen ondernemen om de ontluikende geletterdheid te stimuleren. In Hoofdstuk 3 onderzochten we met behulp van een nieuw ontwikkeld interviewinstrument wat de opvattingen zijn van diverse ouders over hun rol in het stimuleren van de geletterde ontwikkeling van kinderen. In Hoofdstuk 4 doen we verslag van een studie naar de effecten van een Nederlands ouder-kindprogramma, VVE Thuis, op de ontluikende geletterdheid van kinderen, en in het bijzonder naar de vraag of opvattingen van ouders over hun rol in de geletterde ontwikkeling van hun kind programmaeffecten beïnvloeden. Hoofdstuk 5 richt zich op de schoolcontext. Voor een goede inbedding van een ouder-kindprogramma in de school is het belangrijk dat het programma aansluit bij de schoolvisie op de ouder-schoolrelatie. In Hoofdstuk 5 analyseerden we of de aansluiting tussen programma en school kan worden geoptimaliseerd door samen met ouders en teamleden een visie te ontwikkelen op ouderbetrokkenheid die zich kenmerkt door educatief partnerschap.

**Context van het onderzoek: implementatie van VVE Thuis
in grootstedelijk Nederland**

De studies in deze dissertatie zijn uitgevoerd op basisscholen in de Nederlandse grootstedelijke context, rondom de implementatie van de kleuterversie van het ouder-kindprogramma VVE Thuis. VVE Thuis is een ouder-kindprogramma dat ouders stimuleert een rijk geletterd gezinsklimaat voor hun kinderen te creëren door hen te ondersteunen in het ondernemen van allerlei geletterde activiteiten met hun kinderen, zoals voorlezen, praten over 'praatplaten', en (taal)spelletjes doen. De kleuterversie van VVE Thuis wordt uitgevoerd in samenwerking met basisscholen. De

school nodigt ouders in het kader van het programma ongeveer om de vijf weken uit op school voor een ouderbijeenkomst. Tijdens deze ouderbijeenkomst wisselen ouders en leerkrachten ervaringen uit en krijgen ouders VVE-Thuismaterialen mee naar huis, nadat ze een toelichting hebben gekregen over hoe ze die materialen kunnen toepassen tijdens activiteiten met hun kind. Volgens de handleiding is VVE Thuis gericht op laagopgeleide ouders, maar in de praktijk bedient het programma ouders met diverse opleidingsniveaus, thuistalen en etnische achtergronden. Het onderzoek in dit proefschrift reflecteert deze praktijk: de deelnemers aan de studies spreken allerlei talen, hebben verschillende opleidingsniveaus en etnische achtergronden.

Hoofdbevindingen

Geletterde ouder-kindactiviteiten: een nieuwe conceptualisering

In Hoofdstuk 2 werd een nieuwe typologie van geletterde ouder-kindactiviteiten geïntroduceerd en onderzocht. Deze typologie was gebaseerd op twee dimensies: de inhoud waar activiteiten zich op richten en de didactische benadering die al dan niet bewust toegepast wordt in de activiteiten. De inhoud van geletterde ouder-kindactiviteiten kan vooral gericht zijn op de schriftcode ('codegerelateerde activiteiten' zoals oefenen met letters schrijven) of juist meer op de betekenis van teksten en taal ('betekenisgerelateerde activiteiten' zoals voorlezen). Didactisch zijn sommige ouder-kindactiviteiten sterker gericht op de instructie van specifieke vaardigheden ('instructieve activiteiten' zoals de betekenis van nieuwe woorden aanleren), terwijl in andere activiteiten kinderen op een meer speelse manier in aanraking komen met taal en schrift ('faciliterende activiteiten' zoals letterspelletjes spelen of liedjes zingen). Waar eerdere conceptualiseringen van geletterde ouder-kindactiviteiten zich alleen richten op schriftgerelateerde activiteiten, bevat de nieuwe typologie bovendien activiteiten waarbij schrift geen rol speelt (zoals liedjes zingen, rijmen, of nieuwe woorden aanleren).

In een steekproef van 214 gezinnen met diverse achtergronden wat betreft ouderlijk opleidingsniveau, thuistaal en etnische achtergrond vroegen we ouders welke activiteiten zij vooral ondernamen met hun kinderen en maten we bij kinderen de woordenschatkennis, de vertelvaardigheid, letterkennis en het vermogen klanken van elkaar te onderscheiden (klankonderscheiding). De resultaten wezen uit dat ouder-kindactiviteiten onder te verdelen zijn in drie soorten: betekenisgerelateerde faciliterende activiteiten (zoals voorlezen), betekenisgerelateerde instructieve

activiteiten (zoals nieuwe woorden aanleren) en codegerelateerde aciviteiten (zoals letterspelletjes). De frequentie van betekenisgerelateerde faciliterende en codegerelateerde activiteiten hing positief samen met de woordenschat en vertelvaardigheid van kinderen: kinderen van ouders die aangaven veel van dat soort activiteiten met hun kinderen te doen, scoorden beter op die vaardigheden. De frequentie van betekenisgerelateerde instructieve activiteiten hing negatief samen met de woordenschat en vertelvaardigheid van kinderen: kinderen van ouders die aangaven veel van dat soort activiteiten met hun kinderen te doen, scoorden lager op die vaardigheden. De frequentie van codegerelateerde activiteiten hing positief samen met letterkennis van kinderen, maar die relatie liep via betekenisgerelateerde vaardigheden (woordenschat en vertelvaardigheid). Er was geen directe relatie tussen thuisactiviteiten en klankonderscheiding. Kortom, de resultaten laten zien dat ook mondelinge ouder-kindactiviteiten, zoals liedjes zingen en praten met je kind, een rol spelen in de ontluikende geletterdheid van jonge kinderen. Door onderscheid te maken in ouder-kindactiviteiten naar didactische benadering (meer instructief of meer faciliterend) kunnen verschillen worden blootgelegd in de manier waarop verschillende typen activiteiten samenhangen met de geletterde vaardigheden van kinderen.

Ouderlijke opvattingen over het stimuleren ontluikende geletterdheid

De studie in Hoofdstuk 3 bouwde voort op de typologie van ouder-kindactiviteiten beschreven in Hoofdstuk 2. In deze studie werd een nieuw interviewinstrument gebruikt om opvattingen van ouders over hun rol in de ontluikende geletterdheid van hun kinderen in kaart te brengen. Bij 35 ouders met uiteenlopende opleidingsniveaus, thuistalen en etnische achtergronden werd onderzocht voor welke ouder-kindactiviteiten ouders de voorkeur hadden, wat hun redenen voor die voorkeuren waren en of er een onderscheid te maken was tussen betekenisgerichte, codegerichte, faciliterende en instructieve opvattingen. Bovendien werd nagegaan of er relaties waren tussen gevonden opvattingen en het opleidingsniveau, de thuistaal en het geboorteland van ouders.

Met behulp van het interviewinstrument kon een verscheidenheid aan opvattingen over de ouderlijke rol in de ontluikende geletterdheid van kinderen in kaart gebracht worden. Uit een kwalitatieve thematische analyse bleek dat de voorkeuren van ouders deels te verklaren waren vanuit opvattingen over het belang van betekenisgerelateerde (zoals voorlezen) dan wel codegerelateerde activiteiten (bijv. alfabet aanleren) of vanuit opvattingen over didactische benadering (instructieve activiteiten, zoals het aanleren

van nieuwe woorden, versus faciliterende activiteiten, zoals gesprekken voeren met je kind). Voorkeuren hingen echter ook vaak samen met opvattingen die niet direct te koppelen waren aan die twee dimensies. Zo prefereerden ouders faciliterende activiteiten bijvoorbeeld vaak omdat ze de band tussen ouder en kind versterken, en waren voorkeuren ook gerelateerd aan de vraag of ouders activiteiten goed konden inpassen in hun dagelijkse routines. De resultaten wezen uit dat ouders vooral de voorkeur gaven aan betekenisgerichte en faciliterende activiteiten. Statistische toetsen lieten verder zien dat ouders die thuis geen Nederlands spraken met hun kinderen een sterkere voorkeur hadden voor instructieve activiteiten dan ouders die (ook) Nederlands met hun kinderen spraken. Ouders die geen Nederlands spraken met hun kinderen thuis hadden bovendien een minder sterke voorkeur voor faciliterende activiteiten dan ouders die alleen Nederlands met hun kinderen spraken.

Ouderlijke opvattingen en het effect van VVE Thuis op de ontluikende geletterdheid

In de studie beschreven in Hoofdstuk 4 werden de effecten van het ouder-kindprogramma VVE Thuis op de ontluikende geletterdheid van kinderen onderzocht en werd nagegaan of opvattingen van ouders over hun rol in de geletterde ontwikkeling van hun kinderen programmaeffecten beïnvloedden. In een quasi-experimentele studie volgden we twee jaar lang een groep van 159 kinderen en hun ouders waarvan een deel meedeed aan VVE Thuis (n = 118) en een deel aan de controlegroep die niet deelnam aan VVE Thuis (n = 41). In deze studie werden verschillende soorten opvattingen van ouders betrokken in de analyse: *'self-efficacy'*, de overtuiging van ouders dat ze in staat zijn om een wezenlijke bijdrage te leveren aan de schoolse ontwikkeling van hun kind; 'rolconstructie', de overtuiging dat ouders zelf (en niet alleen de school) een verantwoordelijkheid hebben om die ontwikkeling te ondersteunen, en opvattingen over de geletterde ontwikkeling, gemeten door ouders te vragen welke typen activiteiten ze het meest belangrijk achtten om de ontluikende geletterdheid van hun kind te stimuleren (betekenisgerelateerde, faciliterende activiteiten; betekenisgerelateerde, instructieve activiteiten; codegerelateerde, faciliterende activiteiten; en codegerelateerde, instructieve activiteiten). Bij kinderen maten we de woordenschat, vertelvaardigheid, letterkennis en klankonderscheiding.

De analyses lieten geen verschillen zien tussen de ontwikkeling in woordenschat, vertelvaardigheid, letterkennis en klankonderscheiding van kinderen die hadden deelgenomen aan VVE Thuis en kinderen die in de controlegroep zaten. Het programma lijkt dus geen effect te hebben op de geletterde ontwikkeling van kinderen. Ook de

opvattingen van ouders speelden geen rol in de effectiviteit van VVE Thuis: welke activiteiten ouders belangrijk vonden en hun self-efficacy en rolconstructie waren niet van invloed op de effecten van het programma op de ontwikkeling van kinderen.

Ontwikkeling van een gedeelde visie in een professionele leergemeenschap met ouders en teamleden

Hoofdstuk 5, tenslotte, richtte zich op de factoren die belangrijk zijn voor de aansluiting tussen een ouder-kindprogramma en de school. In dit hoofdstuk werd onderzocht of en hoe een 'professionele leergemeenschap' van teamleden en ouders gericht op het stimuleren van 'educatief partnerschap' (de gelijkwaardige samenwerking tussen ouders en school met als doel het leren van het kind te stimuleren) kon bijdragen aan de ontwikkeling van een gedeelde visie op de ouder-schoolrelatie die gekenmerkt wordt door educatief partnerschap. Een professionele leergemeenschap (PLG) is een groep van onderwijsmedewerkers, en in deze studie ook ouders, die hun (praktijk) ervaringen met elkaar delen en hier gezamenlijk op reflecteren, met als doel het leren van zowel leerlingen als leerkrachten te stimuleren. De veronderstelling hierbij was dat een ouder-kindprogramma beter geïmplementeerd wordt als het is ingebed in een school met een gedeelde visie op ouderbetrokkenheid die gekenmerkt wordt door educatief partnerschap.

In een kwalitatieve casestudie werd twee jaar lang een PLG binnen één school gevolgd. De verwachting was dat bij aanvang van de studie de PLG-leden nog geen gedeelde visie gekenmerkt door educatief partnerschap zouden hebben. Thematische analyses van transcripten van 13 bijeenkomsten van de PLG en interviews met de leden in het eerste jaar (n = 5) en het tweede jaar (n = 6) onthulden een zekere ambiguïteit in de visies van de PLG-leden. Enerzijds streefden de PLG-leden naar educatief partnerschap en naar een gedeelde schoolvisie die gekenmerkt werd door educatief partnerschap. Anderzijds lieten de geuite visies ook obstakels zien voor het bereiken van educatief partnerschap, zoals '*deficit*-perspectieven' op ouders. In deficit-perspectieven ligt de nadruk ligt op wat ouders allemaal niet kunnen of willen doen in het ondersteunen van de schoolse ontwikkeling van hun kind. Andere obstakels waren ongemak en onkunde bij teamleden in het omgaan met een diverse ouderpopulatie. Deze obstakels leken te resulteren in ambivalente visies op de verantwoordelijkheden en mogelijkheden van de school en ouders in het realiseren van educatief partnerschap. Enerzijds schreven de PLG-leden een grote verantwoordelijkheid toe aan de school in het faciliteren van educatief partnerschap. Anderzijds leken PLG-leden weinig vertrouwen te hebben in

de mogelijkheden van de school om educatief partnerschap te kunnen bewerkstelligen, vanwege belemmeringen die de PLG-leden vooral situeerden bij ouders.

Een vergelijking van de situatie in het eerste en tweede jaar liet zien dat PLG-leden zich er in de loop van het traject van bewust werden dat een gedeelde visie op educatief partnerschap in de school ontbrak. In het tweede jaar van het onderzoek werd 'gedeelde visie en ondersteuning van het team' het belangrijkste thema in de bijeenkomsten. Op basis van een analyse van de data stellen we voor dat de ontwikkeling van een gedeelde visie een proces is dat uiteenvalt in drie fasen. Een eerste fase bestaat uit het uitwisselen van uiteenlopende ideeën en kennis. In de tweede fase ligt de nadruk op de organisatie en planning van het proces van visieontwikkeling. In een hypothetische derde fase (die in het onderzochte traject echter nog niet werd bereikt) wordt het geplande proces uitgevoerd en wordt een gemeenschappelijke visie geformuleerd.

Kritische reflectie

Het uitblijven van effecten van VVE Thuis op de geletterde ontwikkeling van kinderen en de geobserveerde obstakels om in een PLG met ouders en teamleden tot een gedeelde visie te komen gestoeld op educatief partnerschap vragen om een kritische reflectie op VVE Thuis, de PLG en op de insteek van dit onderzoek. Deze reflectie wordt beschreven in Hoofdstuk 6. Als onderdeel van deze kritische reflectie worden het programma VVE Thuis en de PLG gesitueerd binnen diverse benaderingen van de ouder-schoolrelatie. Een eerste benadering is de 'traditionele' benadering, waarbij ouderbetrokkenheid vooral gezien wordt als middel om de schoolresultaten van kinderen te vergroten. Binnen deze benadering zijn er vaste ideeën over wat 'juiste' vormen van ouderbetrokkenheid zijn en wat niet. De communicatie tussen school en ouders kenmerkt zich in deze benadering door éénrichtingsverkeer: de school zendt informatie en instructies, ouders ontvangen. Oorzaken voor mindere schoolprestaties van kinderen worden in deze benadering vaak bij gezinnen gelegd en niet bij de school of maatschappij. De traditionele benadering kenmerkt zich dus door deficit-perspectieven op ouders. Een tweede benadering van de ouder-schoolrelatie is een 'collaboratieve' benadering. In deze benadering is er sprake van meer wederkerigheid in het ouder-schoolcontact. Er bestaat geen vast idee over de juiste vormen van ouderbetrokkenheid, maar er wordt rekening gehouden met de unieke situaties van elk kind en de school. In de collaboratieve benadering bouwen professionals voort op wat een kind vanuit huis meebrengt aan waardevolle kennis en vaardigheden. Ouders worden gezien als gelijkwaardige partners. De collaboratieve

benadering is dus inclusiever dan de traditionele benadering. Tegelijkertijd houdt de collaboratieve benadering geen rekening met machtsdynamieken bepalend voor de aard van de ouder-schoolrelatie-, waarbij sommige gezinnen (impliciet) bevoordeeld en andere gezinnen (impliciet) benadeeld worden. Een dergelijke dynamiek zit bijvoorbeeld verweven in het taalbeleid van een school. Sommige scholen voeren het beleid dat op het schoolterrein alleen Nederlands gesproken mag worden, ook tussen ouders onderling, ten behoeve van heldere communicatie. Ouders die het Nederlands niet of minder goed machtig zijn, worden hierdoor (onbedoeld) benadeeld in het ouder-schoolcontact: deze ouders voelen zich mogelijk minder welkom in de school dan ouders die vloeiend Nederlands spreken. Een derde benadering van de ouder-schoolrelatie, de 'sociale rechtvaardigheidsbenadering', richt zich wel expliciet op dergelijke machtsstructuren. De sociale rechtvaardigheidsbenadering richt zich op thema's als sociale gelijkheid, inclusie, discriminatie en racisme. In deze benadering wordt gepoogd om samen met ouders het onderwijs inclusiever te maken, in plaats van dat de school probeert het gedrag van ouders te veranderen om hen 'meer' of 'beter' betrokken te maken. Voortbordurend op bovengenoemd voorbeeld van taalbeleid zou in een sociale rechtvaardigheidsbenadering de impliciete bevoordeling van Nederlandstalige en de benadeling van anderstalige ouders worden (h)erkend en zou er in samenspraak met ouders bijvoorbeeld een ander taalbeleid ontwikkeld kunnen worden.

VVE Thuis en de PLG passen voor een deel binnen de collaboratieve benadering van de ouder-schoolrelatie. Gelijkwaardigheid, wederzijds respect en wederkerige communicatie tussen teamleden en ouders werden nagestreefd in zowel de ouderbijeenkomsten van VVE Thuis als de PLG-bijeenkomsten. Daarbij was met name de PLG flexibel in de benadering van ouderbetrokkenheid: activiteiten werden toegespitst op de unieke context van de school en ouders. Tegelijkertijd overheersten in de implementatie van VVE Thuis en de PLG elementen uit een traditionele benadering. VVE Thuis is zeer gestructureerd programmatisch en biedt ouders gerichte activiteiten om thuis te doen. Daarmee lijken ideeën over de 'juiste' vorm van ouderbetrokkenheid vaststaand. Tijdens PLG-bijeenkomsten werd een deel van de percepties van ouders door PLG-leden gekenmerkt door deficit-perspectieven. Ouders zelf speelden in de PLG maar een marginale rol, waardoor er eerder sprake was van een 'illusie van inclusie' dan van daadwerkelijke inclusie (Green, 2017). VVE Thuis en de PLG bevatten in elk geval geen elementen van een sociale rechtvaardigheidsbenadering. Het expliciet incorporeren van elementen uit een sociale rechtvaardigheidsbenadering in ouder-kindprogramma's en PLG's met teamleden en ouders zou wellicht kunnen bijdragen aan

het tegengaan van deficit-perspectieven op ouders. De dominantie van het traditionele perspectief op de ouder-schoolrelatie in VVE Thuis en de PLG heeft mogelijk een goede implementatie van beide interventies in de weg gestaan en biedt een verklaring voor het uitblijven van programma-effecten.

De drie hierboven besproken benaderingen van ouderbetrokkenheid zijn verbonden aan verschillende wetenschappelijke perspectieven over wat kennis is ('epistemologieën'). De traditionele benadering van ouderbetrokkenheid past binnen het positivisme, gekenmerkt door de overtuiging dat er een objectieve waarheid bestaat die gemeten kan worden, een sterk geloof in vooruitgang en een grote nadruk op causaliteit bij het verklaren van verschijnselen. Het onderzoek in dit proefschrift is sterk verankerd binnen het positivisme wat betreft aandacht voor causaliteit en vooruitgangsdenken: onderliggend aan het onderzoek ligt de aanname dat de verschillen in ontluikende geletterdheid tussen kinderen verkleind kunnen worden door aspecten van het geletterd gezinsklimaat bij groepen kinderen te veranderen. De collaboratieve benadering past binnen het interpretivisme, waarin kennis gezien wordt als iets dat geconstrueerd wordt binnen een bepaalde context en daarmee contextafhankelijk is. Dit proefschrift kan ook deels gesitueerd worden binnen dit wetenschappelijke perspectief: zo wordt een ruime definitie bepleit van het geletterd gezinsklimaat, waarin oog voor de unieke context van een gezin belangrijk is. De sociale rechtvaardigheidsbenadering, ten slotte, past binnen het kritische perspectief waarin kennis niet los gezien kan worden van machtsstructuren in de maatschappij. Wetenschappelijk onderzoek binnen het kritische perspectief is erop gericht deze machtsstructuren bloot te leggen en waar mogelijk te doorbreken. Dit proefschrift benadert de data niet vanuit dit kritische perspectief, maar in Hoofdstuk 6 wordt de vraag besproken waar de toepassing van het kritische perspectief in dit onderzoek betekenisvol had kunnen zijn.

Hoofdstuk 6 sluit af met een pleidooi voor het combineren van de verschillende benaderingen van ouderbetrokkenheid en wetenschappelijke perspectieven in praktijk en onderzoek. Als het grotere doel van ouderbetrokkenheid en ouder-kindprogramma's in de praktijk het stimuleren van onderwijsgelijkheid is, dan is het stimuleren van de schoolprestaties van kinderen (traditionele benadering) daarbinnen een legitiem doel. Samenwerking tussen ouder en school om dit doel te realiseren dient gebaseerd te zijn op gelijkwaardigheid en inclusie en moet uitgaan van de unieke situaties van leerlingen en scholen (collaboratieve benadering). In dit soort samenwerkingen verdient het aanbeveling het bestaan van de machtsdynamieken

verweven in de ouder-schoolrelatie te erkennen, te verkennen en waar nodig te doorbreken (sociale rechtvaardigheidsbenadering). In onderzoek kunnen de diverse perspectieven gecombineerd worden door te blijven zoeken naar hoe elementen uit de thuis- en schoolomgeving van invloed zijn op de geletterde ontwikkeling van kinderen (positivisme). Daarbij is het belangrijk om geen vaststaand beeld te hebben van de 'juiste' geletterde thuisomgeving van kinderen maar open te staan voor de diverse manieren waarop ouders bij kunnen dragen aan de ontwikkeling van kinderen, en hoe scholen en ouders samen deze ontwikkeling kunnen stimuleren (interpretivisme). Tegelijkertijd is het belangrijk dat onderzoekers oog hebben voor de maatschappelijke realiteit waarin de ontwikkeling van kinderen plaatsvindt. Onderzoekers dienen (ook) factoren in de school en de bredere maatschappelijke context in kaart te brengen die de ontwikkeling van kinderen bepalen. Daarbij dienen zij mechanismen van bevoorrechting en benadeling in de maatschappij en thema's als discriminatie en racisme niet te schuwen (kritisch perspectief).

Implicaties voor praktijk

Voor professionals die werken met ouder-kindprogramma's en voor leerkrachten die educatief partnerschap met ouders willen bewerkstelligen kunnen op basis van dit onderzoek vier aanbevelingen worden gedaan. Om de aansluiting tussen gezinnen en programma's te vergroten, is het, ten eerste, zinvol om gesprekken met ouders te voeren over de opvattingen die ze hebben over hun rol in het stimuleren van de ontluikende geletterdheid van hun kinderen. Het instrument dat beschreven is in Hoofdstuk 3 kan daarbij gebruikt worden als gesprekstool. Hoewel opvattingen van ouders in dit onderzoek de programma-effecten niet beïnvloedden, kunnen dit soort gesprekken wel bijdragen aan een beter begrip van de wederzijdse verwachtingen die ouders en leerkrachten hebben over het gezamenlijk stimuleren van de ontluikende geletterdheid van kinderen. Ten tweede is het voor het faciliteren van dergelijke uitwisselingen tussen ouders en leerkrachten en ouders onderling belangrijk dat ouder-kindprogramma's daarvoor voldoende ruimte bieden. Dat vermindert de kans op éénrichtingsverkeer, waarbij het vooral de school is die informatie overdraagt aan ouders. Ten derde, wanneer ouder-kindprogramma's gericht zijn op een meertalige doelgroep, zoals in Randstedelijk Nederland vaak het geval is, is het noodzakelijk dat programma's (meer) aandacht besteden aan het belang van de thuistalen voor de schoolse ontwikkeling van kinderen. Tenslotte verdient het aanbeveling dat professionals die met ouders willen samenwerken niet alleen de opvattingen van ouders over hun rol in de ontluikende

geletterdheid onderzoeken, maar ook hun eigen opvattingen ten aanzien van de rol van ouders in de schoolse ontwikkeling van kinderen. Een dergelijke introspectie kan helpen om denkpatronen bloot te leggen waarin vooroordelen en stereotypen een rol spelen. Het vormen van een professionele leergemeenschap met ouders en teamleden kan een eerste stap zijn om een dergelijk proces van reflectie en de ontwikkeling van een gedeelde visie op educatief partnerschap op gang te brengen.

Conclusies

De bevindingen uit dit proefschrift dragen bij aan kennis over de aansluiting tussen ouder-kindprogramma's, gezinnen en scholen. De resultaten duiden op de relevantie van een breder perspectief op het geletterde thuisklimaat. Dat bredere perspectief impliceert allereerst dat een conceptualisering van het geletterde thuisklimaat naast schriftelijke activiteiten, zoals voorlezen, ook mondelinge activiteiten, zoals liedjes zingen, bevat. Daarnaast blijkt een onderscheid naar didactische benadering met faciliterende en instructieve activiteiten informatief. De toevoeging van didactische benadering aan een conceptualisering van het geletterde gezinsklimaat zorgt ervoor dat de relaties tussen verschillende componenten van het geletterd gezinsklimaat en kinduitkomsten met meer nuance bepaald kunnen worden: zo is de samenhang tussen betekenisgerelateerde *faciliterende* activiteiten en de woordenschat en vertelvaardigheid van kinderen positief en de samenhang tussen betekenisgerelateerde *instructieve* activiteiten en de woordenschat en vertelvaardigheid van kinderen negatief. De toevoeging van didactische benadering zorgt er daarnaast voor dat verschillen in voorkeuren tussen bepaalde groepen ouders beter in kaart gebracht kunnen worden: thuistaal lijkt samen te hangen met de ouderlijke voorkeur voor een didactische benadering. Ouders die thuis geen Nederlands spreken met hun kinderen lijken meer waarde te hechten aan instructieve activiteiten dan ouders die thuis wel Nederlands spreken. Door deze fijnmazigere conceptualisering van het geletterd gezinsklimaat en de inzet van innovatieve kwalitatieve en kwantitatieve instrumenten kon de variëteit in geletterde praktijken en opvattingen in diverse gezinnen in de Nederlandse grootstedelijke context worden blootgelegd, resulterend in een genuanceerder beeld van het geletterde gezinsklimaat. Een dergelijk beeld is belangrijk om de aansluiting tussen programma's en de deelnemende gezinnen te kunnen verbeteren.

De resultaten van dit proefschrift leveren geen bewijs voor de veronderstelling dat opvattingen van ouders de programma-effecten op de geletterde ontwikkeling

van kinderen beïnvloeden. Mogelijk speelden in de context van dit onderzoek programmakenmerken (de mogelijk beperkte aansluiting bij niet-Nederlandstalige en laaggeletterde ouders) en schoolfactoren (de overheersing van een traditioneel perspectief op ouderbetrokkenheid) een grotere rol in de aansluiting tussen het programma en de gezins- en schoolcontext van kinderen dan de opvattingen van ouders. Tegelijkertijd laten de resultaten zien dat onderwijsmedewerkers zeer gedreven zijn in het opbouwen van educatief partnerschap met ouders. Professionele leergemeenschappen met ouders en teamleden kunnen een zinvolle eerste stap zijn in het creëren van een gelijkwaardige relatie tussen ouders en school, als de gevolgde werkwijze reflectie uitlokt op de heersende opvattingen in de school ten aanzien van ouderbetrokkenheid, er beschikking is over voldoende tijd, en de continue deelname van ouders verzekerd is. De resultaten onderstrepen het scala aan mogelijkheden waarop ouders kunnen bijdragen aan de ontluikende geletterdheid van hun kinderen. Tegelijkertijd kan de invloed van het gezin op de geletterde ontwikkeling van kinderen niet los gezien worden van de maatschappelijke en educatieve context waarin deze ontwikkeling plaatsvindt.

About the author

Eke Krijnen was born on January 24, 1985 in Balk, the Netherlands. After finishing secondary education, she participated in a student exchange program in Norway. During that year, she developed her interest in language acquisition, and in the mechanisms that allowed her to learn to speak Norwegian fluently within a year. Back in the Netherlands, she obtained a bachelor and master degree in Dutch language and culture at the University of Amsterdam. After graduation, Eke became a teacher of Dutch as a second language for adults, working for diverse language schools. Simultaneously, she obtained her second master degree in Dutch as a second language, also at the University of Amsterdam. Next to teaching, Eke worked as a junior researcher at Leiden University and the University of Amsterdam in research projects concerning emergent literacy development and early childhood education, parental involvement, second language teaching and reading development. At the Erasmus University of Rotterdam, Eke conducted her PhD research on the compatibility between a Dutch family literacy program and its implementation contexts: children's homes and schools in urban parts of the Netherlands. Currently, Eke is working as an educational researcher at the Kohnstamm Institute in Amsterdam. Her research interests include educational (in)equality and equity, first and second language development, reading development and the parent-school relationship.

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