

Abstract

This thesis examines literacy practices embedded in the home domain of three transnational families from a new sending region in Mexico with the aim of understanding the relationship between literacy and transnational migration. Data was collected in the homes through interviews, observations and analysis of texts, events and literacy practices involving children and adults.

Few direct effects of transnationalism were found, with letter-writing serving a restricted sentimental purpose. Indirect effects of transnationalism were economically connected, with many literacy practices embedded in the running of a family business, financed with remittances. Results also show that families use remittances for securing children's full participation in school and school-supportive activities. The co-construction and movement of texts were found to be affected by the Mesoamerican family structure described by Robichaux (2002). Results suggest incipient transnational families negotiate social and family roles and relationships which shape new literacy practices.

Implications for school practices include incorporating Vygotskyan-based literacy activities into curriculum and relating school subject matter to students' *funds of knowledge* (González and Moll, 2002), with several examples, based on materials and instruments developed *in situ*. Implications for school policies and future research are also discussed.