Perspectives on parents' contribution to their children's early literacy development in multicultural western societies

Eddie Denessen
Radboud University,
Nijmegen, The Netherlands

In this paper a review is provided of literature on early literacy programs with an emphasis on the role of parents in supporting their child's early literacy development. Many early literacy programs emphasize the role of parents in supporting their child's early literacy development. Suggested parent involvement activities in these programs mainly focus on reading activities (e.g. reading to children, shared reading), which are said to be very effective in promoting children's literacy skills. Perspectives on parents' role in supporting early literacy development, however, may vary across programs. Early literacy programs focus on parents' supporting roles with varying levels of culture responsiveness. As current academic debates on early literacy development shift towards increased responsiveness towards minority cultures and try to link early literacy practices to strengths of existing cultural defined family practices, the current socio-political climate in western multicultural societies seems to call for less responsive practices, because culture responsiveness might endanger integration of minorities and negatively affect social cohesion. It is argued that a future challenge is to broaden intervention studies with socio-political perspectives.

Introduction

The past decade, early childhood education has become centre in the public policy debate. Early literacy development is said to play a key role in enabling children to succeed in school (Strickland and Riley-Ayers, 2006). The value of early literacy for children's school success has been acknowledged widely and, as a result, a broad variety of early literacy programs has been developed and a lot of research on early literacy development has been initiated (Dickinson and Neuman, 2006).

Many early literacy programs emphasize the role of parents in supporting their child's early literacy development. Suggested parent involvement activities in these programs mainly focus on reading activities (e.g. reading to children, shared reading), which are said to be

very effective in promoting children's literacy skills. The increase of knowledge of effects of family interventions on promoting early literacy and of relevant conditions for intervention success has lead to an emphasis on specific parent behaviours. Nevertheless, some groups of children do not seem to benefit from early interventions, which is said to be mainly due to cultural family characteristics. Therefore, programs have been developed that stress the necessity to take children's family culture into account. Evaluations of these types of so-called culture-responsive programs show these programs to contribute to children's early literacy development.

Currently there seems to be a tension in early intervention policies between an approach based on existing knowledge about effective early interventions from a psychological-cognitive perspective and a sociocultural approach aimed at bridging the culture gap between families and schools. The current shifts in the socio-political climate in western-European societies are likely to affect the discussion about the perspective that

Correspondence concerning this articles should be adressed to Eddie Denessen, e-mail: e.denessen@pwo.ru.nl

should be held in early literacy programs, especially towards immigrant parents.

In this paper I will address this discussion. I will review the content of early literacy programs; focus on several types of interventions and the legitimation of the content and form of these programs. Also I will discuss the role of parents in these programs. The implications of socio-political contexts on perspectives underlying early literacy programs on parents' contribution to their children's early literacy development are discussed at the end of this paper.

The value of early literacy

Since the start of the early literacy movement (Taylor, 1983) an overwhelming number of early literacy programs has been developed. Research supports the need for interventions because the more limited a child's experiences with language and literacy the more likely he or she will have difficulty learning to read (Strickland and Riley-Ayers, 2006).

Early literacy interventions especially aim at children from less advantaged socioeconomic backgrounds. These children lag behind their peers from more advantaged backgrounds when entering formal education. To overcome these gaps, literacy development in these children should be promoted (Dickinson, McCabe, and Essex, 2006).

Research on children's literacy development has collected a lot of evidence on the following three predictors of reading and school success: 1) oral language (listening comprehension, oral language vocabulary), 2) alphabetic code (alphabet knowledge, phonological and phonemic awareness, invented spelling, and 3) print knowledge (environmental print, concepts about print). The evidence obtained from research on children's literacy development has lead to a focus of early intervention programs on these three predictors. They have been named by Strickland and Riley-Ayers (2006) as key components of the early literacy curriculum.

A large body of research on early intervention programs reports positive effects of these programs (Britto, Fuligni, and Brooks-Gunn, 2006; Strickland and Riley-Ayers, 2006). Pupil level effects mainly involve increased early reading-related knowledge and skills, such as vocabulary knowledge, alphabet knowledge, phonological awareness, decoding skills, and reading comprehension (Britto et al., 2006).

Parents' role in early literacy promotion

There seems to be a broad consensus that the basis for educational success lies in the home. Parents are said to play a key role in enhancing literacy development in young children through the interactions they share with their child. Insight

in key features of early literacy has lead to quite well-defined parent behaviours for promoting their child's literacy development. Serpell, Sonnenschein, and Baker (2005) have summarized parents' promotive activities in the following eight themes: 1) engage in shared book reading, 2) provide frequent and varied oral language experiences, 3) encourage self-initiated interactions with print, 4) visit the library regularly, 5) demonstrate the value of literacy in everyday life, 6) promote children's motivation for reading, 7) foster a sense of pride and perceptions of competence in literacy, and 8) communicate with teachers and be involved with school.

Children from lower socioeconomic status and ethnic minority families seem to have less text-based literacy experiences at home than their peers from higher socioeconomic status families. As a result, school entry gaps between children from more and less advantaged groups can be observed (Brooks-Gunn and Markman, 2005; Goldenberg, 2001). Parental activities at home partially account for disparities in performance between children at school entry (National Literacy Trust, 2001).

The effectiveness of early literacy interventions that do not contain a family component seems to be relatively low, because of the lack of home support for children's emergent literacy activities. Evidence suggests that children from homes, where parents model the use of literacy and engage children in literacy promoting activities are better prepared for school (McNaughton, 2006; National Literacy Trust, 2001; Strickland and Riley-Ayers, 2006). The insight that parents play an important role in children's early literacy development has lead to a stream of so-called family-literacy interventions (Rodriguez-Brown, 2003).

One of the leading debates on early literacy intervention practice involves the perspective that is being held towards the role that parents should play in the promotion of their child's early literacy (Auerbach, 1995; McNaughton, 2006). Programs that try to connect home and school literacy practices vary in the extent to which they are responsive to already occurring home literacy practices. Two types of programs are discussed in the literature: Programs that aim at modifying family practices and programs that aim to modify classroom practices (McNaughton, 2006).

The first type of programs focuses on parent practices that result from insight in psychological-cognitive predictors of children's literacy development. These programs rest on a deficit perspective and follow, in terms of Auerbach (1995) a so-called 'intervention-prevention' approach, which defines the

rootedness of literacy problems in the inability of undereducated parents to promote literacy attitudes and interactions in the home. Family practices that are promoted in these types of programs range from parent training to increase the frequency of reading and change the style of reading with children (e.g. Whitehurst et al., 1994), to parent training to increase authoritative parenting practices (e.g. Scott, O'Connor, and Futh, 2006). Programs that hold a deficit perspective on children's literacy development focus on the accommodation of parents' supporting behaviours to the behaviours that empirically have shown to be effective for literacy development. Program developers incorporate evidence-based effective parenting behaviours in their program in order to increase its effectiveness. Whitehurst et al. (1994), for example, have provided evidence that shows that, when parents use dialogic reading techniques, children's oral vocabulary as well as their letter and sound knowledge increase (see also Whitehurst et al., 1994; Whitehurst and Lonigan, 1998). This evidence has resulted in an increased focus on dialogic reading techniques in intervention programs (see, for example, Farver, 2005)[1].

Despite the proved effectiveness of programs that follow an intervention-prevention approach, these programs are subject to substantial criticism. Main point of criticism is aimed at the lack of recognition and value of cultural diversity (Auerbach; 1995; Cairney, 2002; Goldenberg, 2001). 'Because literacy and book reading practices found in schools are based on the practices of the mainstream culture, children from non-mainstream homes may be at risk, not because their home practices are deficient, but because of the mismatch between home and school practices' (Hammer, Nimmo, Cohen, Draheim, and Johnson, 2005, p. 196). Children from so-called 'mainstream' homes (that is, from advantaged, higher income families) are at an advantage, because their home and school environment share the same cultural background (Hammer et al., 2005). Critics suggest that the locus of a mismatch between family and school should not be placed solely in the home, but schools should also be challenged to develop practices that are responsive to parents' practices that are embedded in diverse family cultures. A vast literature suggests that programs should be responsive to children's family background and that they should build on existing family practices (for example Auerbach, 1995; Anderson, Fagan, and Cronin, 1998; Goldenberg, 2001; McNaughton, 2006; Whitmore, Martens, Goodman, and Owocki, 2004). Programs can be responsive in multiple ways. They can incorporate content (i.e. stories), that is meaningful to

members of diverse cultures (see Crockatt and Smythe, 2003, for an example of the use of native Inuit stories in a family intervention program). Also, programs could focus on the use of language in diverse home cultures (see Anderson, Fagan, and Cronin, 1998, for an example of emphasizing oral language, and Hammer, Nimmo, Cohen, Draheim, and Johnson, 2005, for the use of Spanish in book reading interventions).

Problems with programs that can be characterized with a low level of culture responsiveness are criticized because those programs are said to insufficiently recruit minority families and to be less effective than programs with higher levels of culture responsiveness[2].

Besides these overtly visible mismatches between program characteristics and family culture, some low-level responsive programs that focus on modifying parents' practices tend to have some stigmatizing effects. Parents feel they are 'bad' parents, lacking the competence of preparing their children for school entry. Also, some programs do not correspond with parents' ideas about literacy development and their responsibility to promote literacy in their children (Serpell, Baker, and Sonnenschein, 2005). According to Farver (2005), low-income and ethnic minority family contexts are poorly understood, and whereas they may be different from the 'school' model, they are not necessarily incongruent with contexts children encounter at school and vice versa. In addition, to having different socialization goals for their children, parents often do not view literacy activities as something they should do at home. Many believe that it is up to the public school teachers to educate their children.

Programs that are aimed to build upon existing practices in families from diverse backgrounds, thus following, in terms of Auerbach (1995) a 'multiple literacies' perspective, are more focused on modifying classroom practices (McNaughton, 2006) than on modifying family practices. Theoretical bases for these types of programs lie in socio-cultural and eco-cultural theory (Gallimore, Goldenberg, and Weisner, 1993; Moje and Lewis, 2007). Both socio-cultural and ecocultural theory recognize that children gain knowledge from literacy practices in the home. Literacy is seen as tied to daily realities in its context and as meaningful to its users (Whitmore et al., 2004). Their primal focus lies on culture specific family practices that contribute to culture-defined multiple forms of literacy. As such literacy is assumed to exist in children's homes: families are viewed from a strength, rather than deficit, orientation (Whitmore et al., 2004). As Cairney (2002, p.153) states: 'children live in a world of diverse opportunities for learning, in which literacy is an important vehicle for this to occur. They experience language and literacy in many forms,

and are enculturated into literacy practices, which may or may not match those of their teachers or care givers. Teachers need to understand their role in this cultural process as well as that of families and community members'. For early literacy interventions that follow a multiple literacies perspective, it is needed that program developers acquire extensive knowledge about cultural contexts of families at which the program is aimed (Serpell, Baker, and Sonnenschein, 2005)[3].

The dilemmatic nature of family interventions

When parents are involved in early intervention programs, interventionists seem to face one basic dilemma. This dilemma pertains to the level of culture responsiveness of the program. To illustrate the dilemmatic nature of interventions, two extremes can be pictured, a program that is not responsive at all, and a program that is totally responsive. A non-responsive program can be developed based on the obtained knowledge of predictors of early literacy and parenting practices that have been proved to contribute to early literacy development. In such a program, parents can be instructed and coached on how to interact with their children, based on the eight parent practices described by Serpell, Baker, and Sonnenschein (2005). Parents are invited to accommodate to mainstream cultural behaviours in order to prepare their children best for entry to primary school. With respect to home language use, parents can be convinced to use the school language in their communication with their child.

A fully responsive early literacy program would sound like a contradictio in terminis. By full recognition and highly valuing home culture and existing parent practices, there is no need for family intervention. Interventions, then, should be fully aimed at modifying schools, to become responsive to home cultures and provide a multiple literacies approach in which all children's preschool literacy experiences are embedded, whatever form they may have had. It can be claimed that any initiative that tries to reinforce parents' behaviour aimed at the promotion of their child's early literacy limits – even when based on their current parenting practices – defies the culture responsiveness of a program, because it presumes insufficient preparation (i.e. *deficits*) for school entry in the homes of disadvantaged children.

Most family literacy programs are located at some place between the two extremes that are illustrated here. Program developers, who claim to follow a multiple literacies perspective based on sociocultural or ecocultural theory, should not be hesitative to admit that they aim to assist parents to overcome deficits in their current literacy promoting practices. Some programs have been documented - more or less implicitly - following a combined (this could be called a 'multiple literacy interventionist') approach (see, for example Serpell, Baker, and Sonnenschein, 2005, Anderson, Fagan, and Cronin, 1998; Crockatt and Smythe, 2003). These programs aim at a shared or negotiated practice (see, for example, Serpell, Baker, and Sonnenschein, 2005). Serpell, Baker, and Sonnenschein suggest that family interventions should be based on a so-called ecological inventory, consisting of negotiating a shared understanding between the teacher and the parent and identifying recurrent activities outside of school in which children engage. Results from such an ecocultural interview can be very helpful in constructing meaningful parent literacy practices in which school expectations, as well as parents' beliefs can be taken into account. In this context, Kostogriz (2002) introduced the concept of 'pedagogy of thirdspace'. 'Thirdspace pedagogy of literacy brings a culturally responsive perspective on the participation of minority students in literacy events. It invites teachers to (re)imagine classrooms as multivoiced collectives whose literacy learning is related to the practices, discourses and 'funds of knowledge' of other communities.' These practices, aiming at linking school and family cultures seem to be very promising in future to strengthen children's literacy development and to prepare them for school entry.

Broadening the scope: socio-political contexts of early literacy interventions

The world of children's early literacy development is strongly linked to the broader socio-political context in which it is embedded (Carrington and Luke; Luke and Luke, 2001). Increased cultural heterogenization of western societies is said to raise the complexity and challenges for early childhood education. According to Carrington and Luke (2005) ethnographic and sociocultural perspectives on family cultures and their contextual consequences for early literacy development are said to create a shift from the mono-cultural hegemony of 'white'-cultures to blended and resituated ethnic, migrant, indigenous and other-language speaking cultures. A multicultural society is said to present opportunities to educate children in their varied cultural identities but tolerant of those from different backgrounds. 'In an ever-shrinking interdependent world, the ability to interact positively with others from different cultures will become an increasingly important goal of education' (Scott-Jones, 1993, p. 251). Increased international mobility and transnational movements that are part of globalization leads to increased personal contacts, complexities of

familial and residential arrangements and forms of belonging to diverse sociocultural and political communities (Yuval-Davis, Anthias, and Kofman, 2005). Cultural differentiation and fragmentation, as important features of current western societies, are in conflict with political practices that focus on increased levels of social cohesion. Conservative forces today operate with the notion of an all-encompassing cultural identity of a nation imagined in the public spheres of cultural politics and education, with the aim to differentiate, control, marginalize, and normalize the cultural 'other' (Kostogriz, 2002)[4].

Kostogriz's interpretation of current political reality seems to fit the actual Dutch political situation. Kostogriz (2002) stresses that a project of nation-building and transmission of cultural literacy are inseparable from the processes of cultural homogenization and exclusion of the other. Today, we are witnessing the resurgence of democratic nationalism as a reaction to the processes of globalization and migration. Western societies struggle with the concept of their national collective identity (Brochmann, 2003). According to Yuval-Davis et al. (2005) preserving a national collectivity requires intervention in various forms of social and cultural practices of established migrants as well as policing of those who are allowed to enter and eventually become citizens[5].

Western governments aim to create a sense of belongingness and loyalty to western societies in immigrants, in order to protect our social order. Brochmann (2003) questions whether such a national framework is needed to create conditions under which persons from different cultural groups can have confidence in one another.

The socio-political contexts of multicultural western countries have strong implications for early literacy development practices. Early literacy intervention can, following above interpretation of socio-political contexts, be conceived of as a means to decrease the level of 'otherness' of members from non-mainstream cultures. Van Kampen, Kloprogge, Rutten, and Schonewille (2005), for example, explicitly state that presumed effects of early literacy development encompass integration of ethnic minorities and an increase of social cohesion. Early literacy policy aimed at these effects seems very explicitly to hold an intervention-prevention approach, by rejecting cultural diversity within the contemporary society. Within such a socio-political context, there seems no place for interventions that hold a multiple literacies (of even multiple literacy interventionist) approach. An illustrative example of the link between national politics and early literacy practice is the decision of Dutch government to withdraw the funding of early literacy programs with a home language component (i.e. Turkish or Arab), because the use of other than Dutch language would hinder the integration of minorities.

To conclude

In this paper, I have reviewed literature on early literacy programs, with an emphasis on the role of parents in supporting their child's early literacy development. Early literacy programs focus on parents' supporting roles with varying levels of culture responsiveness. As current academic debates on early literacy development shift towards increased responsiveness towards minority cultures - and try to link early literacy practices to strengths of existing cultural defined family practices - , the current socio-political climate in western multicultural societies seems to call for less responsive practices, because a multiple literacies perspective might endanger integration of minorities and negatively affect social cohesion. The tension between concepts of multiculturalism and social cohesion has affected western integration policies as well as early literacy intervention policies. The impact of national integration policies on early literacy programs is clearly visible when it comes to the funding of early literacy programs. According to Whitmore et al. (2004) current governmental agendas severely narrow the ways in which literacy development is defined and described. Rodriguez-Brown (2003) observed that cultural models that mediate learning at home are frequently undermined to create programs where mainstream, school-based literacy practices are the centre of program activities. She ascribes these types of internal conflicts of family literacy programs to the criteria that have to be met when applying for funding.

Those who are involved in the development of early literacy programs should be aware of the socio-political contexts in which their work is embedded and the extent to which these contexts put constraints to their initiatives to establish programs that aim at incorporating strengths of diverse home cultures in early literacy promoting interventions.

In the end, it all comes to power (see, for example, Brochman, 2003). Just like early literacy can be described as a process of negotiated power relations between institutions and families, early literacy policy seems a process of negotiated power relations between early literacy practitioners and national integration politics. To strengthen the power position of early literacy practitioners, they will need to put a lot of effort in the provision of empirical evidence of societal effects of culture responsive intervention programs. The challenge for the future is to

broaden intervention effect studies with socio-political perspectives.

Notes

[1] 'In dialogic reading the child learns to become the storyteller, and the adult-child interaction develops into a 'conversation', about picture books which focuses on teaching new vocabulary, grammar and narrative, as well as improving overall verbal fluency. The adult encourages the child to use and improve expressive language skills through a series of prompts and questions that are increasingly challenging with each repetition of the book. The child's verbalizations are corrected as needed and the adult repeats and expands what the child says. If the child is hesitant to answer a question, the adult models the correct answer and the child repeats it.'(Farver, 2005., p. 6).

[2] Anderson, Fagan, and Cronin provide two illustrative examples of implementation problems of low-level responsive programs. They report that some parents lamented that the materials, provided by a program caused their homes to be untidy. These parents tried to keep their house clean and stashed away all the materials from the program, which resulted in less exposure of children to these materials. They also reported that some practices, such as singing and rhyming, were seen by some parents as 'girlish' activities. These parents were less inclined to perform these activities with their sons.

[3] Hammer et al. (2005) studied book reading activities in African American and Puerto Rican families. They found book reading practices to be strongly culturally defined. The mothers who participated in this study, for example, asked a relatively small percentage of questions as compared to what has been reported about white, middle-class mothers. Hammer et al.'s study has been conducted to contribute to the understanding of parents' beliefs and styles with the aim to formulate some recommendations for intervention programs that can build on the parents' beliefs and behaviours. Hammer et al. suggested to focus on different book reading styles in intervention programs by encouraging parents to supplement and not to replace their literacy practices, with behaviours that occur within the school setting. 'Through this approach, parents learn that their styles are valued, cultural styles of looking at books may be maintained, and parents and children become familiar with the styles and expectations that they will encounter when the children go to elementary school (Hammer et al., 2005, p. 223).

[4] The Dutch Social and Cultural Planning Office (SCP, 2005, p. 5) reports that 'overall, views on the multicultural society have appeared to have become more negative, especially with regard to Muslims'. For measures to improve integration, the Dutch government has changed their perspective from a 'mutual acceptance'-policy to an assimilation-policy, partly because of the lack of public support for multiculturalism policies (Joppke, 2004). As a result, in the Netherlands, the policy of providing immigrant (that is Turkish and Arab) language education has been abandoned; minority parents are forced to learn the Dutch language, and mastery of the Dutch language has recently become a prerequisite for getting migration documents. Migrants who plan to move to the Netherlands have to succeed for a Dutch language test in their home country.

[5] One of the areas of interventionism has been that of family related migration: 'Although the government maintains it is not intervening in the right of the individual to select their marriage partners, it does seek to dissuade them from choosing partners from abroad, and has furthermore argued that it does have the right to have a say in where couples should eventually live' (Yuval-Davis et al., 2005, p. 519).

References

Anderson, J., Fagan, B., & Cronin, M. (1998). Insights in implementing family literacy programs. In E.G. Sturtevant, J. Duggan, P. Linder & W. Linek (Eds.), *Literacy and community* (pp.269-281). Commerce, TX: The College Reading Association.

Auerbach, E. (1995). Deconstructing the discourse of strengths in family literacy. *Journal of Reading Behavior, 27*(4), 643-661.

Britto, P.R., Fuligni, A,.S., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (2006). Reading ahead: Effective interventions for young children's early literacy development. In D.K. Dickinson & S.B. Neuman (Eds.), *Handbook of early literacy research. Volume 2* (pp. 311-332). New York: The Guilford Press.

Brochmann, G. (ed., 2003). *The multicultural challenge. Comparative social research Vol. 22.* Oxford: Elsevier Science.

Brooks-Gunn J., Markman, L.B. (2005). The contribution of parenting to ethnic and racial gaps in school readiness. *Future of Children, 15*(1), 139-168.

Cairney, T.H. (2002). Bridging home and school literacy: In search of transformative approaches to curriculum. *Early Child Development and Care, 172*(2), 153-172.

Carrington V., & Luke, A. (2005). Reading, homes and families: From postmodern to modern? In A. van Kleeck, S.A. Stahl, & E.B. Bauer (Eds.), *On reading to children: Parents and Teachers* (pp 231-253). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Crockatt, K., & Smythe, S. (2003). *Building culture and community: Family and literacy partnerships in Canada's north*. retrieved from www.nunavutliteracy.ca/english/resource/reports/building/building.pdf.

Dickinson, D.K., McCabe, A., & Essex, M.J. (2006). A window of opportunity we must open to all: The case for preschool with high-quality support for language and literacy. In D.K. Dickinson & S.B. Neuman (Eds.), *Handbook of early literacy research. Volume 2* (pp. 11-28). New York: The Guilford Press.

Dickinson, D.K., & Neuman, S.B. (2006). Introduction. In D.K. Dickinson & S.B. Neuman (Eds.), *Handbook of early literacy research. Volume 2* (pp. 1-10). New York: The Guilford Press.

Farver, J. M. (2005). *Best practices in promoting literacy in young ethnic minority children: Lessons from the United States*. Beijing, China: Soong Ching Ling Foundation and UNICEF.

Gallimore, R., Goldenberg, C.N., & Weisner, T.S. (1993). The social construction and subjective reality of activity settings: Implications for community psychology. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 21*(4), 537-559.

Goldenberg, C. (2001). Making schools work for low-income families in the 21st century. In S.B. Neuman & D.k. Dickinson (Eds.), *Handbook of early literacy research* (pp. 211-231). New York: The Guilford Press.

Hammer, C.S., Nimmo, D., Cohen, R., Draheim, H.C., & Johnson, A.A. (2005). Book reading interactions between African American and Puerto Rican Head Start children and their mothers. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy, 5*(3), 195-227.

Joppke, C. (2004). The retreat of multiculturalism in the liberal state: Theory and policy. *The Britisch Journal of Sociology, 55*(2), 237-257.

Kostogriz, A. (2002). *Teaching literacy in multicultural classrooms: Towards a pedagogy of 'Thirdspace'*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the Australian association for research in education, Birsbane, 1-5 December 2002.

Luke, A., & Luke, C. (2001). Adolescence lost/childhood regained: On early intervention and the emergence of the Techno-subject. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy, 1*(1), 91-120.

McNaughton, S. (2006). Considering culture in research-based interventions to supportearly literacy. In D.K. Dickinson & S.B. Neuman (Eds.), *Handbook of early literacy research. Volume 2* (pp. 229-242). New York: The Guilford Press.

Moje, E. B. & Lewis, C. (2007) Examing opportunities to learn literacy: The role of critical sociocultural literacy research. In C.J. Lewis, P. Enciso, & E.B. Moje (Eds.), *Reframing sociocultural research on literacy: Identity, agency, and power*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

National Literacy Trust (2001). *Parental involvement and literacy achievement. The research evidence and the way forward. A review of the literature prepared by the National Literacy Trust.* London: National Literacy trust.

Rodriguez-Brown, F.V. (2003). Reflections on family literacy from a sociocultural perspective. *Reading Research Quarterly, 38*(1), 146-153.

Scott, S., O'Connor, T., & Futh, A. (2006). *What makes parenting programmes work in disadvantaged areas?* York: York Publishing Services.

Scott-Jones, D. (1993). Families as educators in a pluralistic society. In N.F. Chavkin (Ed.), *Families and schools in a pluralistic society* (pp. 245-254). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

SCP (2005). *Jaarrapport Integratie 2005 [Annual report on integration 2005].* The Hague: SCP.

Serpell, R., Baker, L., & Sonnenschein, S. (2005). *Becoming literate in the city: The Baltimore early childhood project.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Strickland, D., & Riley-Ayers, S. (2006). *Early literacy: Policy and practice in the preschool years (preschool policy brief).* New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research.

Taylor, D. (1983). *Family literacy: Young children learning to read and write.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Van Kampen, A., Kloprogge, J., Rutten, S., & Schonewille, B. (2005). *Voor- en vroegschoolse zorg en educatie: De toekomst verkend [Early childhood education and care: An exploration of the future].* Utrecht: Sardes.

Whitehurst, G.J., Epstein, J.N., Angell, A.L., Payne, A.C., Crone, D.A., & Fischel, J.E. (1994). Outcomes of an emergent literacy intervention in Head Start. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 86*(4), 542-555.

Whitehurst, G. J., Falco, F. L., Lonigan, C. J., Fischel, J. E., DeBaryshe, B. D., Valdez-Menchaca, M. C., & Caulfield, M. (1988). Accelerating language development through picture book reading. *Developmental Psychology, 24*(4), 552–559.

Whitehurst, G.J. & Lonigan, C.J. (1998). Child development and emergent literacy. *Child Development, 69*, 848-872.

Whitmore, K.F., Martens, P., Goodman, Y.M., & Owocki, G. (2004). Critical lessons from the transactional perspective on early literacy research. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy, 4*(3), 291-325

Yuval-Davis N., Anthias, F., & Kofman, E. (2005). Secure borders and safe haven and the gendered politics of belonging: Beyond social cohesion. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 28*(3), 513-535.