

Strengthening home-school links through family literacy programmes: a comparative European case study

Anthea Rose

University of Nottingham
Nottingham , UK

Chris Atkin

University of Nottingham
Nottingham , UK

Family literacy programmes have become increasingly popular, particularly in England since the implementation of the Skills for Life (SfL) agenda (DfEE, 2001). Programmes are perceived by policy makers as a means of addressing low levels of literacy and numeracy in families who are viewed as underachieving, economically and socially, (Atkin, Rose and Shier, 2005). They can also be used to develop links between the home and school fields, (Bourdieu, 1977) and to re-engage adults who have a habitus (Bourdieu, 1993) of none-involvement with formal learning. Drawing on Bourdieu's theoretical concepts of habitus and field this paper looks at family literacy programmes in England, Ireland and Malta and the role, if any, of such programmes in strengthening links between the home and school. Based on the findings of a European comparative doctoral study, research found that the fundamental difference between the three case study areas was the absence of children participating in family literacy programmes in Ireland compared to England and Malta largely due to the fact that in Ireland programmes did not involve schools. This paper explores reasons why programmes in Ireland are not delivered in conjunction with schools and the impact collaboration has on home and school relationships.

Introduction

The Every Child Matters green paper published by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) in 2003 highlighted family learning as offering, '...opportunities to increase involvement in learning, to break down barriers between school and parents, and act as a link to targeted help and support' (DfES, 2003, p41). According to Crozier (2000) parental involvement can assist a child's educational development in one of three ways. First, it can help to improve children's literacy and numeracy skills, mainly relating to primary school children, second, parents can help to improve discipline and attendance at school, mainly in the secondary school sector and third, greater parental involvement allows a better understanding of how schools operate. The implementation of family literacy programmes is one viable strategy which could be employed to encourage a greater level of parental involvement in schools and in so doing address at least two of Crozier's points.

Family literacy programmes are frequently viewed as a method of re-engaging potential adult learners or parents into education particularly parents from disadvantaged communities where there a high proportion of adults with low levels of literacy and numeracy skills compared to the general population (Barton, 1994; OECD, 1997).

Low parental literacy levels have long been linked to the underperformance of children at school (ALBSU, 1982).

Schools are often aware that generation after generation fail to reach their academic potential. This generational cycle of underachievement is well documented and specifically highlighted in the SfL report of 2001 The national strategy for improving adult literacy and numeracy skills which stated, '...parents with poor literacy and numeracy skills are more likely to have children with similar difficulties' (DfEE, 2001, p29). Improving the literacy skills of parents is frequently cited as a key strategy for breaking this generational cycle of underachievement (Alexander and Clyne, 1995; Brynner and Parsons, 2006; Cox, 2000 and OECD 1997).

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Anthea Rose, e-mail txar2@nottingham.ac.uk

One way to accomplish this is to offer family literacy programmes in areas of identified need and to involve local schools in the process. In England family literacy programmes are predominantly offered in primary schools, during school hours (Atkin, et al., 2005). However, the findings of this comparative study into family literacy programmes in England, Malta and Ireland suggest that this is not always the case in other cultural contexts. Whilst in England and Malta schools were seen as playing an important role in family literacy programmes, in terms of identifying children who would benefit from participating in programmes, providing the premises as a venue for programme delivery and, particularly in England, the children's teacher working with the adult tutor, in Ireland schools were found to have virtually no involvement in the process.

This paper draws on the findings of a comparative study into family literacy programmes carried out in England Ireland and Malta as part of a doctoral study at the UNESCO Centre for Comparative Education Research School of Education, University of Nottingham. In it we explore the difference in the approaches to family literacy programmes between the three case study areas within the three countries in terms of the involvement and attitudes of schools, the benefits of schools strengthening links between the home and school fields and the value placed on parents as an important educator of their children. The discussion is framed by Bourdieu's theoretical concepts of habitus (1977) and social fields (1993).

Theoretical framework

Bourdieu's concepts of habitus (1977) and field (1993) form the basis of the theoretical framework for this article. Bourdieu defines a social field as, '...structured spaces of positions (or posts) whose properties depend on their position within these spaces and which can be analysed independently of the characteristics of their occupants,' (Bourdieu, 1993, p73). Jenkins interprets Bourdieu's term field as an identified social space '...within which struggles or manoeuvres take place over specific resources or stakes and access to them' (Jenkins, 2002, p85).

Each field possesses its own logic, its own ways of thinking and its own predetermined hierarchy of power and status. Bourdieu likens a social field to playing a game using different forms of capital where the inhabitants of each field instinctively know the rules and possess the tools of the game. For Bourdieu habitus relates to the way in which individuals within a field cope or rationalise the social world in which they find themselves. Habitus, as a result of different experiences and connections, usually from outside the field, is not static, it can and does change over time. However, it is stubborn and changes do not occur quickly, often taking

generations. Fields are both shaped by and shapers of habitus.

According to Atkin (2000) family and schools are the main fields through which habitus is acquired. These are also the main fields involved in family literacy programmes. By taking the field of education and the family field, we can begin to deconstruct the habitus found within each field and allow us to explore the relationship between the home and school fields in relation to family literacy programmes.

An overview of family literacy programmes in the international context

There has been increasing interest over recent years in the low levels of adult literacy and numeracy skills and their impact on the economy, poverty reduction and social inclusion (Brynnner and Parsons, 1997; DfEE, 2001; UNESCO, 2005). Parents, particularly mothers, have increasingly been acknowledged, in English, European and international policy strategies as key to children's success in schools (Crozier, 2000; DfES, 2003; Lisbon European Council, 2000 and UNESCO, 2005). Internationally concerns over low adult literacy levels, particularly in women, are highlighted by the United Nations Literacy Decade which runs from 2003-2012 (United Nations, 2005). According to the UNESCO Institute of Education Hamburg (UIE) Nexus newsletter which reported proceedings of the European regional meeting on literacy in Lyon in April 2005 '...there will be no achievement of the Lisbon agenda without adult literacy,' (UNESCO UIE, 2005, p2).

The meeting considered families to be one of the most important spaces, or social fields, where literacy takes place and a key resource for raising competences, spurred on by the Lisbon agenda for a knowledge based economic area within Europe. Accordingly family literacy programmes have become one strategy employed by policy makers to encourage the engagement of potential learners who have low literacy and numeracy competencies.

Since the concept of family literacy was first introduced by Taylor (1983), the term has been continually debated (Thomas 1998). Programmes are difficult to define; frequently they are illusive, wide-ranging, fluid in nature and in some countries may not be recognised as family literacy at all. For example they may be termed lifelong or intergenerational learning, adult or family education, family literacy or family learning. Several European countries such as Norway, Denmark, Spain, Hungary and the United Kingdom have a strong tradition of adult education but few mention 'family learning' or 'family literacy' specifically (Federighi, 1998). In many of these countries, learning through the family is implicit within their wider social and educational ethos. Learning within the family is often viewed as a natural, positive activity rather than a separate, often negative or problematic.

Cyprus also has a long tradition of parental educational programmes largely as a result of specific historical challenges faced by the island. During times of occupation, by both the Turkish and the British, Cyprus has used education as a means of ‘...protecting their religious, national and cultural identity,’ (Phtiaka, 1999, p98). Parental education took on a particular significance following the Turkish invitation of 1974 which led to the division of the island and the destruction of many extended family networks. Schools were utilised as one way of filling the gap, offering social support and practical advice concerning parenting that had traditionally been provided by family members (Phtiaka, 1999). According to Phtiaka school teachers in Cyprus have been viewed as holding all knowledge whilst parental experiences and skills have been regarded as having little or no value. The parent takes on learning in much the same manner as the children, being taught to, a one-way process of learning. Parental programmes in Cyprus focus mainly on parenting abilities rather than the academic or economic advancement of skills such as literacy and numeracy.

For the purpose of this paper the term family literacy, rather than learning, will be employed. Family literacy programmes here are defined as a formal programme of delivery which occurs within a set time frame with a beginning and end date, although these may vary between different types of programmes, delivered at a designated location. Programmes are delivered by at least one experienced facilitator, usually a paid adult tutor. All programmes have a literacy and numeracy component which underpins the ethos of delivery with a view to ultimately improving the competencies of the adults and the children who attend. The learners attending generally have dependant children at pre-school or primary school. Most programmes teach literacy and numeracy by embedding them into craft activities such as making books, puppets, gluing, cutting, pasting and so on. What seems to be common amongst all family literacy programmes is an emphasis on fun, activity based learning.

The study: models of family literacy programmes in England, Ireland and Malta

The three countries involved in the study were selected because they all ran family literacy programmes that were sufficiently similar to those identified in England to be comparable whilst exhibiting differences. The three countries have many factors in common. Whilst they all belong to the European Union they are not part of Continental Europe. They all speak English – the Maltese being bilingual. All three areas run formal, established publicly funded family literacy programmes of one type or another with broadly similar aims. An explanation of the policy rationale and funding of

family literacy programmes can be found in Rose and Atkin, (2006). The overriding purpose of family literacy programmes in all three countries is to improve the literacy and numeracy levels of parents under social inclusion agendas.

The study used a qualitative methodological case study approach in which a series of semi-structured interviews with policymakers, practitioners, adult learners, ex-learners, non-participating fathers and children’s teachers were conducted at each site as well as a number of classroom observations. A total of 94 interviews were carried out including 48 with learners. The majority of those interviewed were women. Overwhelmingly, and in line with previous research, (Brookes, Gorman, Harman, Hutchinson, and Wilkin, 1996; Goldman, 2005; Ofsted, 2000) family literacy participants were found to be mainly mothers. This female dominance of the field was especially noticeable in Ireland where, at the time of the study, no men were found to be involved in the delivery, policymaking process or participation of family literacy programmes.

Therefore the relationship that exists between mothers and schools is important for a child’s progression and achievement. In Ireland, locally programmes were referred to as family learning, but nationally as family literacy (NALA, 2004). Despite the differences in terminology the content of sessions at each area were broadly similar. Learning was predominantly through planned sessions and included many hands-on activities such as compiling story sacks – a bag filled with a range of toys and activities relating to a chosen children’s storybook - to encourage reading through play, the singing of nursery rhymes to learn letter sounds and rhythms of words and the making of games to promote numeracy as well as literacy skills.

In England family programmes are generally funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) under the SfL agenda. Programmes are divided into two strands. The first, family literacy and numeracy (FLLN) aims to address the deficit in literacy, numeracy and language of parents in some areas usually by linking adult learning to the National Curriculum (Atkin, et al., 2005). Programmes are predominantly delivered to deprived areas or inner city communities (Horne and Haggart, 2004). The second strand is a wider family learning which covers many aspects of how a family learns and grows together, similar to programmes found in Cyprus. It is with the first type, FLLN, that this article is most concerned. In Malta family literacy programmes are the responsibility of the Foundation for Educational Services (FES), which was established in 2001 to work with the Ministry of Education. Malta has several initiatives including the Club Hilti which is a family literacy programme targeted at families with children in primary school. In Ireland, programmes are delivered by more than 27 Vocational Education Committees (VEC’s)

Adult Literacy Schemes through partnerships with adult education, schools, libraries and community projects, (NALA, 2004). According to NALA programmes involve two or more family generations and aim to improve and develop literacy and numeracy in the family context.

In England and Malta the main family literacy programmes – FLLN and Club Hilti - consist of children and adults working first separately then coming together for a time during the session. Commonly referred to as the 'H' model it was developed out of the Parent and Child Education (PACE) programmes piloted in Kentucky, United States of America. In 1986 this evolved into the Kenan model implemented by the National Centre for Family Literacy (NCFL) in 1989. According to the Working Together – Approaches to Family Literacy (NALA, 2004) report family literacy in Ireland is also modelled on PACE. The model recommends that all family literacy programmes should contain four core elements; first there should be a basic education element intended for adult participants; second a focus on children's education; third, time for the child and the parent to work together and fourth parental time which allows space to explore parenting skills and issues. (NALA 2004, p31)

Of the three areas in the study Ireland was the only one not to have children take an active part in sessions on a regular basis. Coordinators in Ireland were finding elements two and three of the model - children's education and time for parent and child to work together – illusive. In the model time for the child and parent to work together implies this should occur formally under the guidance of a professional tutor at a designated time set aside within the programme. In Ireland this interaction is assumed to be taking place informally at home. There is a focus in Ireland on children's education in as much as parents are encouraged to share the knowledge gained at family literacy sessions with their children at home however, it does not extend to incorporating the work the children actually do in school. The VEC tutors do assure mothers that learning strategies they are using at home with their children are beneficial and that they the mothers are the most important educators of their children. The results of the study show that one of the factors which may be contributing to the absence of children from current modes of family literacy delivery in Ireland is the lack of collaboration and communication between the children's schools and the adult education provider, the VEC.

Home-school collaboration

Programmes in England predominantly involve mothers and children in the early years of schooling between the ages of five and seven. Delivery mainly takes place in primary schools during the school day. In Malta sessions are delivered either in Maltese or English, in the

early afternoon directly after school with children aged six to nine. In both cases the schools have an input into the programmes in terms of either staff, programme content or both. In Ireland the main strand of family literacy programmes are also aimed at mothers with young children, aged seven or below. However, unlike the programmes in England and Malta the children do not attend and the schools involvement was reported mainly to be the use of school premises in the evenings as a venue to deliver programmes in the local community. Whilst family literacy programmes aim to help mothers understand the development stage of children in school and how the child develops language and literacy in the formative years, programmes do not combine the sub-field of children's education with that of adult education. The children do not attend sessions with a school teacher, sessions are not planned to include the children and separate sessions for the children with a teacher of their own to complement the adult delivery does not take place because, in general, there is little communication, collaboration or interaction between the two fields. There was a built-in, long standing habitus, a feeling that the schools '...just...want to be left to do their own thing...they can't see the benefits to parents,' (Tutor, Ireland). Despite numerous efforts afforded by the VEC family literacy programmes in Ireland remains a separate adult field of learning from the children's learning at school. The two social fields remain distinct entities.

The VEC, through family literacy programmes seek to ensure parents realise that they are the most important teachers of their children, help the adult develop a learning environment, encourage parents to look at their own literacy and numeracy skills and to develop better links between the home and school fields. However, despite reports by interviewees that schools have received directives from the Ministry of Education to work more closely with parents in schools no remit or such directive has been issued that schools should work closely with the VEC for this to be achieved. The VEC and schools could be seen as a site of natural linkage where the delivery of family literacy programmes, especially in areas of deprivation, should be taking place. This would encourage parental participation and involvement in schools to build bridges between two sets of currently and traditionally, opposing social fields - the schools and adult education and the schools and the family - by using the site of the family as a bridging agent in the context of social capital networks (Putnam, 2000) and a potential ally in raising the achievement of children in schools.

This has been a successful strategy in England where family literacy programmes are delivered in schools. Parents were said to feel more involved in the school. One adult tutor felt that, '...absolute key is if the school has very good relations with the parents...' to obtain the best results from programmes. Children were

said to respond well knowing that the school and the parents were working together. Tangible benefits were therefore reported as a result of combining the home school fields.

The ultimate aim of the VEC in the study was for schools to recognise the importance of family literacy, but they were finding it very difficult for this to be realised. The VEC were clearly found to be keen to make links with schools but schools were reported to be reluctant to allow the VEC access. The VEC felt that the schools were not so much resistant to the idea of family literacy programmes per se but rather they wanted to be left alone to get on with the task in hand, that of teaching the children not the parents. In England and Malta parental involvement is encouraged on a daily basis and schools are open to parental visits however in Ireland parents appeared to be considered something of an annoyance. Parents were said to only become visible in Irish schools when a problem occurred with the children or at designated parents evenings. Further, VEC tutors who had attempted to liaise with schools reported schools frequently insisted they did not have literacy or numeracy difficulties in the area.

Nevertheless, some participation by schools was found in Ireland but it did not take the same format as it did in the other two case study areas. Not all Irish schools were completely closed to outside interventions or the involvement of parents. There was evidence of a shift in Habitus with the introduction of home-school link workers. A recent policy intervention in Ireland under the Home School Community Liaison Scheme (Department of Education and Science) home-school link workers are helping to improve parental involvement in some deprived areas; mainly in larger areas of urban disadvantage. There was one such worker attached to a school within the area of the study that seemed to be working successfully not only with the VEC but also with other local agencies to help address issues of social disadvantage.

The school, located in a particularly deprived part of the study area, provided a designated parents room for the delivery of programmes. Sessions ran two or three times a year. Content was activity-based crafts with an underpinning of literacy or numeracy discreetly incorporated into sessions. However, the children did not actually receive any separate instruction to consolidate their learning. Further, the mothers worked with a number of children other than their own. Typically sessions were reported to include five or six mothers and around ten children, The Home-school link worker, a nun and a primary school teacher for 25 years, worked closely with the VEC tutor.

The link worker reported that traditionally parents did not interact with the school but ‘...having opened the gates the school is finding that many of the parents are returning’. Sometimes this involved participation with further family programmes or simply

helping with shared reading, an activity in England that for many years has been taken for granted that parents will undertake. Indeed in England, it has become an essential part of literacy in Primary Schools. In this context family literacy was being used as a tool to help address some of the specific issues faced by those described by one tutor as leading ‘fractured lives’; often they were socially excluded, unemployed and dealing with drug and alcohol abuse. Many came from the Traveller community and were said to exhibit a specific set of values and beliefs, particularly one of not valuing educational attainment with a strong culture of non-education, a habitus often contradictory to, and outside of, the wider habitus of other local residents.

One possible explanation suggested for the lack of school involvement in family literacy programmes in Ireland could be that the VEC is a secular organisation unlike the majority of Irish schools according to the interview data are run by the Catholic community. Unlike England, Malta and Ireland have a high proportion of Catholic schools which, traditionally, have been largely closed fields to all but those involved in the teaching of children, especially parents. Parents have been viewed as a distraction with little or no expertise in the area of child education, having no business in schools. Likewise parents did not necessarily view themselves as having anything of value to offer the schools. An ex-learner who had participated in the family literacy programmes had found it a valuable experience stating, ‘...it has given me a different outlook as well with Nuns and that...’ However, in general, the habitus was one of distinct boundaries around the social fields, each allowing the other to play a predefined function within the community. Such attitudes were culturally engrained in Malta until a few years ago but, according to Borg and Mayo (2001) the situation has changed recently.

Schools in Malta are now more open and receptive to outside influences, including parents who have moved from a supportive or representative role to one that is much fuller and equal. Only through a series of initiatives, including the publication of the draft National Minimum Curriculum (NMC) in 1998 which recognised ‘...parents as important partners in the educational process, and encourages the education community to enhance the presence, participation and education of parents within schools’, (Borg and Mayo 2001: 249), has parental involvement in Maltese schools become increasingly valued and accepted. Parents in Malta are now encouraged to engage with schools for the benefit of their children’s and their own learning. Those interviewed felt that where schools are not behind initiatives such as family literacy programmes then they will not succeed.

Schools felt that it was becoming increasingly essential for parents and schools to

work together reporting that benefits of attending family literacy programmes included increased parental involvement and interest in the school and their children's education. Parents were also said to grow in confidence becoming better able to help their children with school work. Similar benefits were reported by adult tutors in England. One Head teacher (Gozo, 2006) stated, 'the programme is helping a lot to empower and up-skill parents to enable them to improve the work of their children and improve their own skills...' Parents were reported to be more aware of what the teacher did and felt comfortable approaching the teacher when they had concerns. Parental involvement in schools in Malta is now valued. It appears that a similar change in habitus amongst schools and teachers in Ireland is needed if the two fields are to make progress, particularly in terms of delivering successful family literacy programmes. Schools need to view parents as helpful, as an additional resource which they can draw upon, not as a hindrance. One tutor recited the hostile reception she received when relocating to Ireland from England with her young son. When offering to help at her sons' school with reading, a common activity for parents in English schools her offer was declined, despite being a fully qualified teacher leaving her no doubt that her place as a parent was firmly outside the school gates. The VEC has an opportunity to address literacy difficulties for both adults and children, the Irish government is trying to encourage this engagement but to realise this two important shifts in habitus are required: first by the parents as to the value of education, and second by the teachers within the schools to value the role of the VEC as bridging the gap between teachers and parents.

Conclusion: Combining fields of learning

Family literacy seems to be increasingly popular in all three case study areas, policy makers, funders and adult learners alike. It has the potential to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of adults and children and hence be an important element in breaking the cycle of underachievement and poverty in which many families find themselves trapped. Excluding schools from the family literacy process in Ireland did not appear to be detrimental to the enjoyment and experience of the adult learners – predominantly mothers – attending programmes.

In Ireland the school field seems, at this time, to be a separate entity of learning from that of the rest of the community particularly the family and adult education fields. There appears to be an insistence, conscious or unconscious, that schools should remain disconnected, remote fields of delivery with a single aim of teaching the children. Yet delivering family literacy programmes in schools could help to demystify the inner workings beyond the school gates by helping parents better understand how the school system and the curriculum operates thus bridging the divide between the home and school fields; a strategy that England and Malta are finding beneficial.

However, for this to occur there needs to be a change in the habitus of those within Irish schools to allow parental participation and to see the value that parents have to offer. This process has begun with the implementation of home-school link workers but it needs to be rolled out to incorporate a greater number of schools if more families in disadvantaged areas and particularly the children, are to benefit from family literacy programmes as they already do in England and Malta.

References

- Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit (ALBSU) (1982) Report to the Secretary of State for Education and Science and the Secretary of State for Wales by the Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Units management committee on the first year of operation 1980/81 (London, HMSO)
- Alexander, C. and Clyne, P. (1995) *Riches Beyond Price: Making the most of family learning*, Leicester, A NIACE discussion paper
- Atkin, C. (2000) Lifelong learning – attitudes to practice in the rural context: a study using Bourdieu's perspective of habitus, *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (May-June) PP 253-265
- Atkin, C., Rose, A. and Shier, R. (2005) *Provision of, and learner engagement with, adult literacy, numeracy and ESOL support in rural England: a comparative case study*, London, National Research and Development Centre for adult literacy and numeracy (NDRC)
- Barton, D. (1994) *Literacy: An Introduction to the Ecology of Written Language*, Oxford UK and Cambridge USA, Blackwell
- Bourdieu, P. (1977) *Outline of a theory of practice*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press
- Bourdieu, P. (1993) *Sociology in Question*, London, Sage
- Borg, C. and Mayo, P. (2001) From 'Adjuncts' to 'Subjects': parental involvement in a working-class community, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, Vol 22, No2

- Brooks, G., Gorman, T., Harman, J., Hutchinson, D. & Wilkin, A. (1996) Family Literacy Works, The NFER Evaluation of the Basic Skills Agency's Demonstration Programmes, London, The Basic Skills Agency
- Brynner, J. and Parsons, S. (2006) New light on literacy and numeracy: summary report, London, National Research and Development Centre for adult literacy, numeracy, (NDRC)
- Brynner, J. and Parsons, S. (1997) Does numeracy matter? Evidence from the National child development study on the impact of poor numeracy on adult life, Social Statistics Research Unit, City University, Adult Basic Skills Agency
- Cox, T. (2000) Combating Educational Disadvantage: Meeting the needs of vulnerable children, London, New York, Falmer Press
- Crozier, G. (2000) Parents and schools: Partners or protagonists? Stoke on Trent, Trentham Books
- DfEE (2001) The Skills for Life Survey: A national strategy for improving adult literacy and numeracy skills. London: DfEE
- DfES (2003) Every Child Matters Summary, (of the Green paper), Norwich, The Stationery Office, Cm 5680 (Web accessed 10 November 2005 www.dfes.gov.uk/everychildmatters)
- Department of Education and Science Home School Community Liaison Scheme (Web accessed 14th August 2006 at: <http://www.education.ie/robots/view...>)
- Federighi, P. (Ed) (1998) Glossary of Adult learning in Europe, Barcelona, European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA)(Web accessed 20th July 2006 at www.vsy.fi/evk/pub/eureda.pdf)
- Jenkins, R. (2002) Pierre Bourdieu Revised Edition, London, Routledge
- Goldman, R. (2005) Fathers' Involvement in their Children's Education, London, National Family and Parenting Institute
- Horne, J. and Haggart, J. (June 2004) The Impact of Adults' Participation in Family Learning – A Study Based in Lancashire, Leicestershire, NIACE
- Lisbon European Council (March 2000) Presidency Conclusions, (Web accessed 19 December 2006 http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/lis1_en.htm and http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/00100-r1.en0.htm)
- National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) (2004) Working together – Approaches to Family Literacy, Dublin, NALA
- Ofsted (2000) Family Learning: A Survey of Current Practice, London, Office of Standards in Education, <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk>
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (1997) Literacy Skills for the Knowledge Society, Canada, Human Resources Development Canada and Minister responsible for Statistics
- Phtiaka, H. (1999) Parental Education in Cyprus: past, present and future, International Studies in Sociology of Education, Vol. 9, No. 1, PP 95-107
- Rose, A. and Atkin, C. (2006) Family literacy programmes: a comparative European perspective of local and global, In Human Development and Adult Learning 'Between Global and Local: Adult Learning and Development', Faro, Portugal, University of the Algarve, PP 129-140
- Taylor, D. (1983) Family literacy: Young children learning to read and write, New Hampshire, Heinemann Educational Books
- Thomas, A. (Ed) (1998) Family learning in Canada: Profiles of effective practices, Welland, Ontario, Soleil
- UNESCO UIE (June 2005) European Regional Meeting on Literacy held in Lyon (April 2005) In UIE Nexus electronic newsletter Hamburg Vol. 5, No 2
- UNESCO (2005) Education For All: Literacy for life - Global Monitoring Report – (France, UNESCO)
- United Nations (2005) United Nations Literacy Decade 2003-2012, (Web accessed 4th July 2005 http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-RL_ID=26957&URL_DO=DO_TOPI)