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Becoming Literate in Taiwan: Kindergarten Experiences as the First Part of a Long Literacy Journey

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Abstract

The lifeworlds of children incorporate home, school and community locations. They are different environments and each has different contexts and goals. In Taiwan, while school is more focused on an overt exchange of teaching and learning, home is more informal and generally characterized by unstructured contexts and parents' attention that encourages and enhances their children's learning with practical knowledge. Consequently, while literacy is taught in school via a well-planned curriculum, at home it is expected to happen via everyday communications and family activities that promote a close parent-child relationship. This ethnographic study was designed to consider emerging literacy practices in two main venues of kindergarten children's life (school and home) to get a greater understanding of how early literacy is evident in Taiwan. In addition, patterns and practices of children's literacy learning in both urban and suburban areas of Taiwan are scrutinized and analyzed to provide a rationale for early

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literacy learning and teaching in a time of governmental mandates and global literacy efforts.

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