

DYNAMIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN BELIEFS AND PRACTICES: HOW CHINESE FAMILIES SUPPORT THEIR CHILDREN'S BILITERACY ACQUISITION (312 pp.)

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The purpose of this study was to understand and to describe how Chinese families' home literacy practices support their children's bilingualism as well as maintain their heritage language in U.S. mainstream society. This qualitative research took the form of a multiple case study in which five purposefully selected Chinese families' home literacy practices were investigated in one Midwest community in the US. The study sheds light on the Chinese families' sociocultural literacy practices and strategies they adopted to interact socially with their children to promote the achievement of biliteracy (Chinese–English listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Data collection and data analysis were based on Vygotsky's sociocultural theory.

The results of the study show that Chinese parents who live in the US play important roles in the maintenance of their children's heritage language (Mandarin Chinese) and in their learning of the English language. Several major findings revealed that first, parenting styles among Chinese immigrant parents explain their strategies. Second, parents have unique perspectives on the value of Mandarin Chinese or English or both. Third, Chinese families living in the US practice home-based involvement to promote children's learning in school. Fourth, parents' languages experiences impact efforts to enhance children's acquisition of biliteracy. Fifth, social environment has more impact on the development of children's biliteracy than physical environment. Sixth,

diverse strategies implemented in informal and formal literacy practices are useful in predicting children's oral ability in Mandarin. Seventh, dynamic relationship between beliefs and practices shapes the different roles parents play in Mandarin Chinese and English informal and formal literacy practices.

The findings of this study provide suggestions and strategies for other families who face the challenge of biliteracy acquisition. The results of this study have direct implications for school personnel critically reflecting upon their practices to cooperate with parents in assisting bilingual children at home and at school. This study calls for generous support for educators, teachers, parents, and children who are working hard to face the challenges of biliteracy, heritage-language preservation, and bilingualism.