

Moje, E. B., & Ciechanowski, K. M., Kramer, K., Ellis, L., Carrillo, R., & Collazo, T. (2004). Working toward third space in content area literacy: An examination of everyday funds of knowledge and discourse. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 39, 38-70.

Keywords: content area literacy, explicit comprehension instruction, culturally responsive instruction

Summary: This research focuses on the creation of a “space” where the various funds of knowledge students bring to the texts they read and write can be integrated and valued as an essential component to literacy events. Specifically, the authors assert that strategic integration of the various knowledges both students and teachers bring to the classroom is a necessary component in the literacy development of secondary students. Various funds of knowledge and discourse can connect to, inform, and even be integrated with those privileged in schools today. Therefore, the creation of “third spaces,” which integrate home, school, and community literacies is needed. A close examination of students’ home/ community funds of knowledge and discourses and how that knowledge was used in the classroom was the main objective of this project.

Assumptions:

- Academic texts can limit some students’ learning as they struggle to integrate different ways of knowing, reading, writing, and speaking.
- Being literate in a content area requires understanding how content knowledge is constructed and organized.

Results:

- The knowledge studied in this project became secondary to the ways of knowing about the knowledge.
- Community funds of knowledge centered on youth, ethnic identity, and activism.
- Peer funds of knowledge often included ways of knowing how to “do school.”
- Students report rarely being encouraged to use and connect home/ community knowledge in school.
- Many students construct literacy practices that reflect the needs and interests of the perceived audience of that literacy event.
- Some students construct learning spaces individually in order to interact in ways they know and understand with text.

Conclusions:

- Creating a space for students to make connections among their various funds of knowledge is critical in fostering sound literacy practices in the secondary classroom. Further, teachers who allow for these spaces empower students to move from what they know to what they need to know in any given content area classroom.

- The construction of curriculum guides and reading materials that make use of every day experiences and funds on knowledge is a critical part to fostering literacy practices in the classroom.

Suggestions for Teachers:

- Develop awareness of and legitimize students' home and community literacies.
- Provide space (e.g., opportunities, activities) for students to connect home and community literacies to content literacies.

Suggestions for Literacy Leaders:

- Support development of curriculum and materials that tap students' everyday experiences within content study.
- Support teachers' development of ability to create these "third spaces."