

**CHILD-INITIATED LITERACY EPISODES:
SITES OF SIGNIFICANT LEARNING IN
EARLY EDUCATION**

A dissertation submitted by

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Abstract

This teacher-research explores child-initiated literacy episodes within the literacy-learning context of a particular Year One classroom. The aim of the case study was to identify and explore the elements, effects and outcomes of the literacy-learning context and the ensuing child-initiated literacy episodes that occurred. Data were collected daily using qualitative data techniques and classroom experiences were documented using observations, field notes, journalistic notes, written comments of interactive sessions, samples of student work and a reflective journal.

Child-initiated literacy episodes occurred within scheduled literacy practices of the classroom and arose from child interest in an environment of co-operation and collaboration where literacies and learning embodied children's lives. The interactive literacy episodes encompassed children's sharing and volunteering information as they demonstrated understandings and literacies. The teacher-researcher acknowledged literacies as social practice and considered construction of learning, co-construction of knowledge and interactive scaffolding as effective early childhood pedagogy. The open-ended scheduled literacy practices built on the children's literate identities as they called on lived experiences, immediate and global worlds in everyday classroom life.

The research conclusions illustrated children as dynamic and powerful learners as they initiated meaningful learning, made connections and demonstrated multiple ways of knowing in building their literate identities and using everyday literacies. In addition, the 'enabling' teacher established classroom conditions that were

underpinned by core assumptions and key understandings about how young children learned. Such classroom conditions enabled child-initiated literacy episodes to occur within the rich literacy context and become sites of significant learning.

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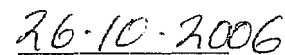
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