

Review of Research

Transnationalism and Literacy: Investigating the Mobility of People, Languages, Texts, and Practices in Contexts of Migration

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ABSTRACT

This review of research offers a synthesis and analysis of research studies that address issues of language and literacy practices and learning in transnational contexts of migration. We consider how theoretical concepts from transnational migration studies, including particular Bourdieusian-inspired concepts such as transnational social field, capital, and habitus, as well as sociolinguistic studies of language and transnational space, might inform and extend the field of literacy research. We mobilize these concepts in relation to each other as interpretive frames for discussing an emerging body of empirical studies that address various aspects of language and literacy practices as they are intertwined with issues of cross-border relations and mobility. Studies reviewed examine practices in families and communities, practices among youth and within educational settings, and practices with transnational media (broadcast and digital communications). We argue that as a whole these studies show the important role of language and literacy practices in constructing and maintaining social relations across borders, and in how migrants navigate and position themselves in various social fields within and across national boundaries. We consider the intergenerational process in the family in mediating participation in these social practices, how language ideologies at multiple scale levels influence family and youth practices, and the variable ways in which institutional structures of schooling position the transnational affiliations and linguistic resources of migrant students.

In an article commenting on new directions of literacy research with Latino and immigrant students written for *Reading Research Quarterly* nine years ago, Jiménez (2003) suggested that future research should consider and explore closely the transnational character of literacy for Latino students. He noted that migratory movements occur not only in one direction, and research should examine “those literacies that are necessary for students to negotiate their lives” and the

effects that a “dual-national perspective” may have on how migrants view language and literacy (p. 125). Indeed, the last two decades have seen a significant development of transnational perspectives in migration research (Vertovec, 2009).

Most migration scholars now recognize that many people maintain ties to their countries of origin while they become incorporated into the countries where they settle. Whereas some migrants may participate regularly

in cultural, economic, or political activities within social networks that span national borders, others (including children of migrants) may not participate directly but are integrally involved with the flow of economic resources, ideas, images, and contact with people from far away. Yet, it is mostly within the last decade that studies of language and literacy have begun to explore the relation between communicative practices and the multilayered relationships that migrants develop across geographical borders.

In the present review, we offer a synthesis and analysis of research studies that address issues of language and literacy practices and learning in transnational contexts of migration. Because the study of transnationalism and literacy is a relatively new area of research, we discuss both theoretical perspectives and concepts that hold promise for examining issues in this area and an emerging body of empirical studies related to language and literacy practices in transnational contexts. Before we lay out the organization of this review, we briefly discuss how this review builds on particular theoretical orientations to literacy as they relate to the study of literacy in changing social and spatial contexts of migration.

Given our concern with locating language and literacy within social phenomena of transnational migration, we draw from theoretical perspectives that consider the situated, contextual, and ideological nature of reading and writing. We build on a tradition of research in the New Literacy Studies that has argued for the need to examine literacy as ideological constructions produced within social and institutional settings rather than as a universal or neutral set of skills related primarily to individual cognition (e.g., Barton, Hamilton, & Ivanič, 2000; Bloome, Carter, Christian, Otto, & Shuart-Faris, 2005; Gee, 2007; Hull & Schultz, 2001; Street, 2005). The rhetorical styles, interpretive strategies, and semiotic systems that are involved in any act of reading or writing are predicated on, and in turn give meaning to, the beliefs, practices, and social relationships of particular social groups.

Whereas earlier work in the New Literacy Studies tended to focus on literacy practices within local communities and as located in immediate social, cultural, and political contexts, a new generation of research in this tradition has moved toward investigating literacy practices within intersecting local and global contexts and in relation to changing technologies of communication (e.g., Baynham & Prinsloo, 2009; Brandt & Clinton, 2002; Cope & Kalantzis, 2009; Mills, 2010; Pahl & Rowsell, 2006; Warriner, 2009). Indeed, the spatial location of any particular social group, from a corporate work team to a diaspora social network to the many online interest-based communities, may stretch across geographical territories, and the ideological influences of the group may come from distant sources.

This attention to broader contexts and dispersed locations across geographical sites necessitates new ways of understanding the spatial dimension of literacy (Blommaert, 2008; Leander, Phillips, & Taylor, 2010). An approach to examining literacy across social and geographical spaces is especially relevant to the practices of people of migrant backgrounds as they develop and maintain relationships that often spread across territorial boundaries.

Complementary to the New Literacy Studies is the uptake by educational researchers of Bourdieu's sociological theory as a conceptual template for considering how literacy, as a form of cultural capital, takes on different values across differing social fields (Albright & Luke, 2008; Carrington & Luke, 1997; Collins, 2000; Compton-Lilly, 2007; Grenfell, 2011; Grenfell et al., 2011; Hanks, 2005). One of the central ideas of Bourdieu's work is that human activities are recognized and given meaning within structured social spaces that he termed *fields* (Bourdieu, 1987, 1993, 2005; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). By field or social field, he refers to a relational, multidimensional space of activity in which people take up positions in relation to one another according to how much resources or capital they have. Forms of capital include economic capital (i.e., money, assets), cultural capital (e.g., knowledge, skills, dispositions, educational and professional credentials, cultural goods and portfolio), and social capital (e.g., affiliations, networks). All forms of capital attain their particular value only with respect to the ideological dynamics or logic of practice of a social field (Bourdieu, 1991, 1992). Indeed, the logic of practice that operates in a local site, such as a school or church, often is not local in nature but comes from belief and value systems that are in various states of dominance or struggle in the larger contexts of the educational or religious fields.

Working from a Bourdieusian perspective in the study of literacy, we examine reading and writing as forms of capital production and exchange through which people are variously able to attain particular positions within and across diverse social fields. For example, the bilingual skills that children of immigrant families develop through serving as interpreters for their families in dealing with official or commercial texts in the dominant societal language are skills that are highly valued within the immigrant family and community but seldom get recognized in American classrooms that are constrained by monolingual norms and educational policies (Orellana, 2009; Valdés, 2003). Yet, these bilingual skills or the ability to move across languages and cultures constitute a highly valuable asset when combined with other professional qualifications in a globalizing and transnational economy. Hence, the family, the school, and the workplace constitute some of the multiple intersecting or competing social fields that an individual may move through and where

their literate cultural capital takes on different values depending on the rules of recognition and conversion in these fields.

In educational research on the experiences of children of immigrants (for a useful review of this literature, see Arzubaga, Noguerón, & Sullivan, 2009), the social fields in focus have historically been confined to the national context of the receiving country (Lam, 2006; Levitt, 2009; Sánchez, 2007b). Yet, as we discuss in more detail in the next section, a significant body of scholarship on transnationalism has provided impetus and analytical tools for studying various kinds of cross-border connections and practices that are created in the process of migration. We consider a range of concepts from the anthropological and sociological literature, including how particular Boudieusian-inspired concepts such as transnational social field and transnational habitus, as well as the sociological concept of embeddedness, are used in this literature in ways that could inform and extend the field of literacy studies. We also consider how recent work in sociolinguistics offers a spatial perspective on language and communicative behaviors that examines the complex sources of normative values and power relations at different scale levels that influence multilingual practices. Our goal is to both delineate the relevance of these conceptual tools for studying language and literacy practices and mobilize them in conjunction with each other as interpretive frames for discussing the empirical literature in the subsequent sections.

This article is divided into five sections. Following the theoretical discussion in the second section, we review empirical studies that address various aspects of language and literacy practices as they are intertwined with issues of cross-border relations and mobility. The studies are thematically organized across three sections by their focus on practices in families and communities, practices among youth and within educational settings, and practices with transnational media (broadcast and digital communications). Although these studies reveal a variety of social practices in which migrant families and youth engage in different ethnic communities and national contexts, we argue that as a whole, they show the important role of language and literacy practices in constructing and maintaining social relations across borders and in how migrants navigate and position themselves in various social fields within and across national boundaries. These social relations and fields of activity contribute diverse normative values and language and semiotic resources that shape the literacy development of individuals in these communities. We consider the intergenerational process in the family in mediating participation in these social practices, how language ideologies at multiple scale levels influence family and youth practices, and the variable ways in which institutional structures of schooling position the

transnational affiliations and linguistic resources of migrant students.

Our search of the literature for these sections was broad, encompassing both research studies that set out to address questions of language and literacy in transnational contexts as well as studies that provided evidence of the relations among language, literacy, and cross-border relationships, even if such relations were not the central focus of the studies. However, given the scope of the review, we excluded research that dealt with language and literacy issues among immigrant populations but did not show empirical evidence that these issues are related to transnational relationships and practices. The peer-reviewed articles, chapters, and books discussed in these sections were gathered through a comprehensive search via a range of academic databases. Although there is a distinct focus in this review on contexts of migration involving the United States, we have included a range of studies that examine migration contexts in other countries. Of the 48 empirical studies that were selected for our discussion, 14 were conducted outside the United States. Even so, we recognize that our primary reliance on academic databases in the English language has precluded our inclusion of work that is written in other languages, and we acknowledge this as a limitation of the present review. Our aim in examining these research studies is to synthesize and evaluate the empirical evidence of the relations between language, literacy, and transnationalism and to bring the empirical evidence in dialogue with the theoretical concepts proposed in our discussion. We end with final considerations of cross-cutting themes and suggestions for future research.

Theorizing Migration and Literacy in Transnational Contexts

Anthropological and Sociological Studies of Transnational Migration

For two decades now, a substantial body of research in the fields of anthropology and sociology has revealed various social, cultural, economic, and political relationships and practices in which migrants participate across national borders (cf. Conradson & Latham, 2005; Guarnizo & Smith, 1998; Khagram & Levitt, 2007; Levitt & Jaworsky, 2007; Vertovec, 2004, 2009). These relationships and practices are multilayered and multisited, including not just the countries of origin and settlement but also other sites around the world that connect migrants to their conationals. Although throughout history migrants have maintained forms of contact with families, organizations, and communities in their homelands, advances in technologies of communication and travel (e.g., cheap telephone calls,

satellite television, online media, ubiquitous print media, affordable modes of travel) and the increasing integration of economies in capital and labor flow have provided new conditions for migrants to stay connected to the places they left (Morawska, 1999; Schiller, 1999; Vertovec, 2009). Indeed, the recent “transnational turn” in migration research has provided a “new analytic optic” (Caglar, 2001, p. 607) for making visible how people constitute daily routines, activities, and institutional affiliations that simultaneously connect them to more than one society, whereas such phenomena were often obscured in earlier research and even contemporary thinking that assume that the nation-state is the natural and logical category for organizing social life (Wimmer & Schiller, 2002).

A transnational optic does not imply that all migrants engage in sustained interactions across borders. Forms of contact and exchange may be selective, ebb and flow, and develop differently through the life cycle. They also may vary according to social class, homeland politics, and the contexts of migration and settlement (Levitt, 2009; Portes, Escobar, & Arana, 2009; R.C. Smith, 2006). Hence, it is important to analyze transnational practices—and for our purpose, their associated literacy practices—in their diverse forms, in terms of their significance and meaning to the participants, and with attention to the conditions in which they are facilitated or constrained. In what follows, we discuss some key theoretical concepts from the anthropological and sociological literature that could be useful for conceptualizing the relation of transnationalism and literacy.

Transnational Social Fields

Building on earlier use of the concept by Basch, Schiller, and Blanc (1994), Levitt and Schiller (2004) defined social field in the context of transnational migration as “a set of multiple interlocking networks of social relationships through which ideas, practices, and resources are unequally exchanged, organized, and transformed” (p. 1009). These scholars proposed the concept of transnational social fields for analyzing the diverse domains of activity and social relationships that link individuals and institutions across borders. The concept draws from Bourdieusian theory of social field as a structured space of positions in which people’s positions in relation to one another are determined by the relative distribution of different kinds of resources or capital. In other words, there are specific forms of capital that are generated and distributed unequally in a transnational social field, and the acquisition of such forms of capital influences one’s position and movement in the field.

Researchers have examined how the connections of migrants with people and institutions across state boundaries create various transnational social fields

in the domains of family, economic activities, religion, and politics (e.g., Landolt, 2001; Landolt & Goldring, 2010; Levitt, 2007; Orellana, Thorne, Chee, & Lam, 2001; R.C. Smith, 2006). For example, in studying the economic practices linking two Salvadoran settlements in the United States and El Salvador, Landolt used the concepts of transnational social field and capital to analyze the types of resources that are mobilized through different kinds of interpersonal networks across the United States and El Salvador. The research showed that midscale entrepreneurs tap strategically into kin and *paisano* (i.e., individuals from the same place of origin) networks to mobilize a wide array of resources, such as business knowledge and links to potential suppliers and customers, whereas household-oriented economic ventures mobilize meager resources through a reduced social network that includes only family members. This study not only revealed the kinds of resources that migrants mobilize across borders but also how the specific nature of the resources may influence and position individuals’ economic success and opportunity.

Robert Smith’s research (2006) with Mexican American families in New York provided a multifaceted portrait of the impact of growing up in a transnational social field of family and kin network. His research showed how the young people in these families actively negotiate ideas and practices of gender, including competing notions of masculinity and femininity, as they interact with and relate to family and community members in New York City and Ticuani, their hometown in Mexico. Smith argued that Mexican and American cultures support various hegemonic and nonhegemonic images of masculinity, femininity, and family life, and these meanings have simultaneous referents in New York and Ticuani and capture the imagination of the members of this kin and community network residing in both places. This research illustrated how gender disposition, as a form of cultural capital that serves to position the self in family life and other domains of social relationships, is developed and negotiated in an interconnected social field that crosses national borders.

Although studies in this research literature tend not to focus on language and literacy practices, reading and writing and ways of using language are an integral part of different transnational fields of activity. Forms of documentation and communication are a necessary part of economic transactions, and gender ideologies are often manifested in language and literacy practices (Davies, 2003; Farr, 2006). In the subsequent sections of this article, we discuss how the concepts of social field and capital may serve as an interpretive frame for understanding the literacy practices and learning that people with transnational relationships engage in and the resources, values, and dispositions that these people

acquire and have to negotiate through their engagement in these domains of activities.

Dualistic Orientation and Transnational Habitus

A variety of researchers in transnational migration studies have documented what has been termed bifocality (Rouse, 1992; Vertovec, 2004) or a dual frame of reference (Guarnizo, 1997; Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001)—that is, the tendency of migrants to compare life experiences and situations from different points of view of their native and adopted societies. Such dualistic orientation signals the impact of transnational connections and activities on the cognitive, social, and cultural orientations of migrants, as they are exposed to social and material practices that are not confined to one societal system. For example, researchers have noted how migrants represent their sense of double belonging through sharing narratives of events and displaying material goods that come from both the home and host countries (Golbert 2001; Salih, 2003) or how migrants assess and critique the social practices in one country by referencing what they have experienced in another country (Guarnizo, 1997).

Whereas such dualistic orientations may be an inherent part of moving across nations and cultures, the specific manifestations of these orientations are also shaped by the particular social positions (e.g., race, class, gender, religion) of the migrant within and across different societies. For example, Orellana et al. (2001) noted in their comparative study of transnational families in the United States how poor Mexican and Central American families struggled with crossing territorial borders and maintaining an economic foothold in both their host and home countries amid economic uncertainties, whereas the more affluent Korean families that they studied had the latitude to create long-term strategies by spreading their social connections and economic interests across countries (see also Levitt, 2009). Drawing from Bourdieu's concept of habitus, Guarnizo (1997) suggested the term *transnational habitus* to describe people's dispositions or propensities for certain kinds of social action that develop from their social positioning and experiences across countries, which "accounts for the similarity in the transnational habitus of migrants from the same social grouping (class, gender, generation) and the generation of transnational practices adjusted to specific situations" (p. 311). In other words, a transnational habitus is shaped or developed through people's experiences and social positioning in various institutional structures and fields of activity within and across nations, which may lead to different types of dualistic dispositions or comparative perspectives.

To understand the literacy practices and learning processes that are generated from a transnational habitus, we need a complex understanding of the multiple influences that shape the language repertoire of a migrant learner and his or her ability to bring different comparative perspectives to bear in approaching reading and writing activities. For example, Guerra (2004, 2007) suggested the notion of transcultural positioning to describe the communicative experiences of learners from migrant backgrounds as they negotiate different norms of language use across diverse communities and how these communicative experiences could be leveraged as a resource in critically reflecting on and mediating or bridging the rhetorical conventions of different communities of practice. Also, working productively with the transnational habitus of students would require us to consider how the textual materials that students are exposed to may be derived from diverse communities and mediate their access to different kinds of knowledge across local and translocal spaces (Lam 2009b; Sánchez, 2007b).

Embeddedness

The concept of embeddedness refers to how broad structural forces and the conditions provided by different locations affect forms of transnational practices and institutions (Guarnizo & Smith, 1998; Landolt, 2001; Levitt & Jaworsky, 2007; Vertovec, 2009). Attending to the political-historical context of the locality of migration allows us to examine the specific sets of constraints and opportunities that come to shape migrants' experiences and perceptions of transnational pathways. For example, in Landolt's study of the transnational economic practices of two Salvadoran American communities in Los Angeles and Washington, DC, described earlier, she found that the community in Los Angeles represented a broader regional and class spectrum of Salvadoran society than the one in Washington, DC, and, together with a strong Latino presence and its sizable population, was able to consolidate a range of political and commercial institutions to support the business interests of Salvadoran entrepreneurs, whereas such institutional support was negligible in the Washington, DC, community.

Moreover, it is important to recognize that nation-states still monopolize the means of coercive power within their borders and adjudicate discourses of national loyalty, citizenship, language ideology, and policies of language in education. The restrictive language policies that have become pervasive in the United States and Europe have widely limited the use of immigrant children's native language in the educational process (Blommaert, Creve, & Willaert, 2006; Gal, 2006; Gutiérrez, Morales, & Martinez, 2009; Ovando,

2003). García and Torres-Guevara (2010) characterizes the education of Latino children in the United States as framed by a monoglossic ideology that relegates the status of Spanish to a subsidiary or foreign language separated from the native status of English, values monolingualism over bilingualism, and ignores the complex interactions of both languages in the communicative practices of many Latino children (see also Gutiérrez, 2008).

In the context of post–September 11 politics and the global economic downturn, a rise in nationalist sentiment in Western nations has led to increasing demands to fortify state borders against migrants who are seen to threaten national security and the jobs of native-born workers. In particular, Arab and Muslim communities are often burdened with the threat that contact with the homeland and dissent from national foreign policy would cast them as dangerous outsiders and enemies (Abu El-Haj, 2007; Blackledge, 2003; Ibish, 2008). For example, Abu El-Haj's (2007, 2009) research with Arab American youths showed the struggle that they face in American schools as they deal with issues of pledging allegiance to the U.S. flag, peer and teacher harassment, and disciplinary sanctions related to being framed as terrorists, which contribute to a fracturing of their sense of belonging to a nation in which they hold citizenship. Through their experience of the racialized discourse and practices in their schools and the public sphere, the youths have come to see themselves as outside the imagined community of the United States. Hence, the study of transnational belonging and practices requires that we attend to the enduring significance of state power and nationalist discourse in shaping and inflecting migrants' experiences and actions.

Next, we turn to some recent work in the field of sociolinguistics that has attended specifically to the relation between communicative practices and the multilayered relationships that people develop across geographical spaces.

Sociolinguistic Studies of Language and Transnational Space

An emerging body of work in sociolinguistic research has suggested new ways of theorizing the nature of language and communicative practices in globalized and transnationalized spaces, especially in regard to understanding multilingual practices in migrant communities (Blommaert, 2007, 2008, 2010; Blommaert, Collins, & Slembrouck, 2005a, 2005b; Collins & Slembrouck, 2007; Collins, Slembrouck, & Baynham, 2009; Jacquemet, 2005). We consider some conceptual tools that are proposed in this work for analyzing language and literacy in complex local and translocal multilingual environments where communicative practices take place at a variety of spatial scales and in reference to different norms of language use.

Polycentricity

In a series of publications drawing from their fieldwork in immigrant neighborhoods in Ghent, a midsize city in Belgium, Blommaert et al. (2005a, 2005b; see also Blommaert, 2010) suggested that language practices in such multilingual neighborhoods are characterized by polycentricity, a concept that refers to the multiple sets of language norms or norm-generating practices that guide people's behaviors across diverse spaces in these urban neighborhoods. Residents in these environments orient to multiple centers of communicative behavior, which impose different codes and norms as to what are acceptable, normal, or expected behaviors. Some examples that the researchers noted from their fieldwork include the use of Arabic in the local mosque and Quran school that is related to a set of valued practices in a transnational Islamic community; the use of standard Dutch in the local schools that is oriented to the national ideal of Dutch linguistic homogeneity; the local negotiation of language norms at cafés, playgrounds, and bus stops as people of diverse national origins interact with one another; and the active incorporation of immigrant languages in neighborhood centers and advocacy groups with the goals of promoting outreach or multiculturalism.

In proposing the concept of polycentricity, these researchers called for a more complex analysis of communicative behaviors as we seek to understand how people's use of language and literacy is indexed to a variety of normative centers, which may range from state policy to various forms of political and community organizing, from religious institutions to youth peer groups, and practices coming from immigrants' countries of origin that are represented in transnational print and electronic media. Such analysis requires that we attend to the indexical relationship (Silverstein, 2003; see also Collins & Slembrouck, 2007) between local uses of language/literacy and the ideologies or normative values that are mobilized as interpretive frames for understanding and enacting situated behaviors. Polycentricity provides an image of a world in which the interpretive frames used for comprehending and generating communicative behaviors increasingly come from a variety of origins locally and translocally. In relation to this, Jacquemet (2005) noted that the use of new electronic media, such as mobile phones and the Internet, accelerates the diversification of language practices as people interact with both local and distant others, often simultaneously, across multiple channels of communication. Thus, understanding communicative practices in polycentric environments requires that we attend to how different centers operate at different scale levels, a concept we turn to next.

Sociolinguistic Scale

Polycentric environments involve different scales—a term borrowed from social geography and world

systems analysis (Blommaert, 2007, 2010; Blommaert et al., 2005b; Collins et al., 2009). The concept of scale coming from these fields of study serves to capture the power differentials that shape the relationships between events and processes as they are located in and move across different geographical spaces. These spaces could be both physical (e.g., cities, states, regional conglomerates) and symbolic (e.g., religious, academic, or commercial centers), and they exist in relative prestige and influence to one another. Such power differentials produce processes of dependence and inequality, as often seen in labor migration from rural to urban centers and from postcolonial countries to the formal colonial powers.

Hence, scale includes both a horizontal dimension (how meaningful social behaviors are shared among groups across spaces of various geographical distances—local, translocal, national, transnational) and a vertical dimension (space as stratified and power-invested whereby different kinds of normative values exist in hierarchical relationships to one another). To understand how people orient to and navigate across different sets of norms and expectations in polycentric environments, we need to analyze the scalar nature of the different centers in terms of both their geographic spread (horizontal scale) and the power differential between them (vertical scale). For instance, although Spanish is a major community language in many parts of the United States, it is seldom recognized as a legitimate language for communication in most institutional settings; however, Spanish is ascribed higher prestige in comparison with the indigenous languages (e.g., Maya) spoken by migrants from the same countries (Güemez Pineda, 2006; Kramsch & Whiteside, 2008). In this case, multiple kinds of vertical scalar relations, both national and transnational, are drawn from to create the hierarchy among the different languages. As Blommaert (2010) noted, “Different scales can interact, collaborate and overlap or be in conflict with one another, because each time there are issues of normativity at play” (p. 37).

This attention to how communicative behaviors are indexed to and, hence, evaluated by different sets of norms and expectations in polycentric environments seems to echo Bourdieusian theory of field and capital, whereby linguistic and other forms of cultural capital attain their value only with respect to the ideological dynamics of a social field. Indeed, in the Bourdieusian model, the different social fields in society, although partly autonomous with their own normative values, are also structured in relation to one another (e.g., how easily the forms of capital in one field can be translated into valued capital in another field) according to the larger field of power held by institutions that reproduce the values of those who hold the most economic and cultural capital in a given society. In this sense, the sociolinguistic concept of scale provides an extension

of Bourdieu’s framework by suggesting that social fields or linguistic markets are stratified across different scales. Although social fields in Bourdieu’s framework are immersed in a larger field of power, they tend to be restricted to power hierarchies within a national context. The concept of scale points to the need to examine the multiple fields of power across societies that may structure relations between different sets of social and communicative behaviors.

Examining the scalar relations of different language and literacy practices is important as we seek to understand the challenges and opportunities for literacy development among learners of migrant backgrounds as they move across different fields of social activity. At the least, this examination prompts us to expand our vision regarding the diverse sets of language and literacy practices that migrant learners engage in locally and translocally as they navigate multiple spheres of their lives that have functional purpose for them. This points to the need for a broader understanding of the complex influences that shape the transnational habitus and language repertoires of migrant learners. Further, it compels us to analyze the power stratification across fields of activity that affects the extent to which the learner’s linguistic and literate capital is recognized and can be translated to value across fields.

In our view, the concepts of field, capital, transnational habitus, polycentricity, and sociolinguistic scale together provide some broad theoretical lenses for studying how spatial organization of social relations within and across countries affects the structure and development of language and literacy among learners of migrant backgrounds. In the following, we review a range of empirical studies that provide diverse portraits of language and literacy practices in the context of transnational relations. We draw from the theoretical concepts discussed in this section to reflect on the different sets of empirical work as they are applicable.

Literacy Practices in Transnational Migrant Families and Communities

This section reviews empirical work that has provided descriptive evidence of the relations between transnationalism and situated literacy practices—including the role of literacy in fostering transnational connections—with particular attention to studies about migrant families and communities. Studies discussed here examined how literacy practices are influenced by and used to facilitate transnational movement, transborder family networks, and the different resources required and facilitated by those networks. The work described here illuminated how language ideologies span geographical space, how they are mobilized in local (language/literacy) practices,

and the dynamic quality of those relationships. When children are described or discussed in these studies, they are examined in relation to an environment shaped by adults, families, and communities.

Language and Literacy in Transnational Social Fields and Networks

A number of studies have reported on the role of multilingualism, multilingual repertoires, and multilingual literacies in maintaining ethnic identities and fostering connections to one's roots in the homeland. In these studies, language and literacy practices were often influenced by—and then used to maintain—connections to people and practices from the homeland. Also, just as transnational connections are maintained in and through literacy as a situated social practice, emergent literacy practices continue to be shaped and supported by connections to the homeland.

Some studies documented how transnational literacy practices within the domain of the family are used to create, maintain, or transform family connections and social networks that span the nation-state border. For instance, Farr (1994) described how men in one transnational social network learned to read and write in Spanish after migrating to Chicago to maintain social connections with family members and friends in Mexico. Guerra (1998) also analyzed the personal letter writing of members of this transnational Mexicano community and found that many letters included mentions of exchanging goods and gifts, the need for money to purchase particular items, and expressions of appreciation for money that had already been sent. Personal letters were used to maintain long-distance relationships and to share feelings of sadness and isolation experienced as a result of being distant from people living so far away. In addition, after examining the biographical writing of three young migrant women, Guerra found that their writing contained descriptions of their back-and-forth movement between the language of their social network and that of the larger society and between Mexico and the United States. Their autobiographical writing also echoed the rhetorical conventions used by orators from their transnational social networks.

Sarroub (2009) also discussed how literacy practices serve to facilitate movements in transnational social fields, relationships, and connections. With a focus on practices in the domain of marriage, Sarroub examined how young Yemeni and Iraqi immigrant and refugee women and men strive to become literate and find a new spouse from their home country. Drawing on data from ethnographic interviews with Yemeni, Iraqi, and Kurdish women living in two cities in the U.S. Midwest, the study showed the literacies that are

involved in navigating travel, state citizenship, and settlement of the new spouses. For the young Muslim women in this study, the process of becoming literate can be both liberating and constraining. Being literate in English increased the decision-making power of the women over their newly settled spouses, but it also meant the women were expected to follow family expectations of transnational marriage. A woman in the study resisted this role expectation by failing her citizenship test to avoid such marital arrangements. The analysis demonstrated that literacy plays a key role in transnational marriage negotiations, and such negotiations are fluid, creative, and contested for individual Muslim men and women.

Ek's (2009) work documented the influences of transnational family and religious connections on emergent literacy practices. Reporting on a longitudinal case study of Amalia, a Guatemalan American woman, Ek examined the transnational ties that were supported by Amalia's return trips to Guatemala since her childhood and how these social ties provided access to practices and resources that helped her strengthen and maintain her Guatemalan Spanish, even in the face of pressures to accommodate the Mexican Spanish in her new surroundings in southern California. In addition to family ties that motivated these return trips, Ek noted that the globalization of the Pentecostal Church enabled Amalia to develop strong ties to the Church both in the United States and in Guatemala. Her engagement in church language and literacy practices in both countries contributed to her use and valuing of Spanish as a medium of religious expression. Similar relations between return trips and language maintenance are also noted in Dicker's (2006) interview study with five Dominican Americans living in Washington Heights, New York. The study described how the participants' commitment to developing Spanish literacy is related to their regular travel to the Dominican Republic within a migrant community that has close ties across the borders.

In another study on the relationship between multilingualism and border mobility, Machado-Casas (2009) analyzed how three focal families from a multilingual Latino indigenous community in North Carolina used multiple languages as "border-crossing tools" (p. 89). Based on interview narratives of the parents in these families, Machado-Casas found that even as undocumented immigrants who could not move freely across territorial borders, these parents emphasized the importance of knowing multiple languages (i.e., indigenous languages, Spanish, English) in carrying out diverse activities that transcend national borders. Such activities included sending money home, managing business transactions, assisting people in their hometown, and keeping up with current events in both places. The researcher argued that transnationalism,

multilingualism, and cultural mobility provide survival tools that enabled the families to connect multiple spheres of their lives and pass on these valued resources and survival tools to their children.

In the European context, Fürstenau (2005) studied the strategies used by young people of immigrant backgrounds to position themselves in the transnational fields of education and the labor market. Based on an interview study with 27 young people from Portuguese immigrant families in Hamburg, Germany, who had completed secondary schooling and were planning a school-to-work transition or further education, Fürstenau found that the young people were informed about educational and career options in Portugal through their family and social networks and were able to describe the relative advantages of vocational paths in Germany and Portugal in planning their careers. The young adults perceived their literacy in Portuguese that was fostered in their families and immigrant community as an asset as they pursued work that requires mobility across the two countries. Fürstenau noted that the transnational orientations of the young adults need to be understood in the context of the conditions of the German labor market and limitations in social mobility of ethnic minorities, as well as the young people's status as legal citizens in the European Union that facilitated their transnational mobility.

Whereas these studies documented how language and literacy is used to negotiate relationships and positioning in different social fields across countries, other studies concentrated on how such transnational connections are reflected in the narrative and discourse practices in migrant families. Pahl (2004), for instance, described an ethnographic research project that examined the communicative practices of children and their immigrant parents in a multilingual area of London, with a focus on the participants' use of narrative to create and maintain cultural identities. As family members described the shared meanings attached to particular artifacts and objects, their narratives captured family histories and cultural identities that span generations and countries. Children's drawings in these families carried meanings of the children's experiences and relationships with people in the family's hometown as well as their experiences in their present locality. Pahl drew on Bourdieu's concept of habitus to consider "how sedimented 'dispositions' are built up within families" (p. 341) and how these dispositions that are developed through experiences across countries contribute to the meaning-making practices in the families' oral accounts and relations to artifacts.

In de la Piedra's (2011) interview study with 11 Mexican immigrant mothers who self-identified as transnational migrants and frequently crossed the El Paso, Texas/Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, border region, the researcher identified *leer juntas* (reading together)

as a literacy practice within the family that facilitates connections between mothers and daughters, maintains Spanish language and literacy, and promotes values of family unity across the border. In describing how they engaged in reading of school materials, community magazines, and online messages in Spanish with their children, the women in the study emphasized the importance of bilingualism for people living in the border region and their role as mothers to promote their children's literacy development.

González (2001) also noted the distinctive discourse practices in child socialization among Mexican immigrant families who have dense cross-border ties with kin across the United States and Mexico. Analyzing data collected through long-term participant observation of 10 families living in Tucson, Arizona, she found that immigrant children began to learn from an early age the expectation of *confianza* (the mutual exchange of social, affective, and economic support among kin and nonkin family networks) that is intrinsic to the social organization of Mexican families who are linked across territorial borders. Children engaged in play situations in which they pretend to be friends and *comadres* (co-mothers), and relational ties are at the center of the play activity. González observed that children in these immigrant households, because of their exposure to sustained transborder relationships, experienced a form of socialization that is distinct from children in second- and third-generation families.

The studies reviewed here provide evidence of the diverse ways in which language and literacy is used to construct and maintain connections across transnational social fields, including in the domains of family, marriage, religion, work, and education. Within these social fields, particular languages and literacy practices are given value and serve as cultural capital to facilitate or negotiate social exchanges. Whether in the form of letters, religious expression, citizenship tests, remittances, or career credentials, literacy practices and artifacts are used by people to take up or resist particular social positions (e.g., family members, potential spouses, religious participants, future workers) and move within the respective social fields. These studies also illuminated how migrants use existing and growing repertoires of language and literacy practices derived from their transnational experiences to create symbolic connections to people and practices across countries and strengthen transgenerational relationships. Narratives and other discourse practices in the family allow parents to maintain cultural ties while providing their children access to and participation in cross-cultural and linguistic borderland spaces.

It is important to note that transnational mobility in the diverse social fields documented in these studies has to be understood with regard to larger structural forces that affect possibilities of movement in these

fields. The relative freedom of mobility among the young adults documented in Fürstenau's (2005) study and the potential for the youths' multilingual literacies to translate into value in their careers are dependent on structural policies at both the panregional level of the European Union and its member states as well as the youths' status as legal citizens of the European Union. These political conditions stand in contrast to those faced by undocumented immigrants and are experienced differently by racially and religiously stigmatized immigrants, especially in the context of growing antiimmigrant sentiments and enacted policies in many countries. In these cases, how literacy as survival tools (Machado-Casas, 2009) is used to struggle against structural limits to mobility merits our research attention.

Language Ideologies, Transnationalism, and Literacy

A number of studies with migrant families and communities focused on how language ideologies that span geographical space infuse and inform local language/literacy practices. Here we approach language ideologies as sets of social norms and beliefs that guide language behaviors as well as how beliefs about language are adopted by users to justify perceptions about language choice and use (Schieffelin, Woolard, & Kroskrity, 1998). Studies examined here investigated the role of language ideologies in how language and literacy practices get taken up, modified, or reconstituted by migrant families and communities in transnational contexts.

Farr (2005, 2006) examined the influence of language ideologies on the oral rhetorical practices among a community of Mexican migrants who moved between Chicago and their rancho (rural village) in Mexico and identified themselves as *rancheros*. Examining how the *ranchero* identity of these migrants, and the transnational community that supports it, is constructed in and through speech, Farr analyzed the talk of *ranchero* men, women, and children in both Chicago and Mexico. For example, describing the verbal style *franqueza* (a direct, straightforward, candid way of speaking), she explained that this *franqueza* style, which reflects an ideology of independence, self-assertiveness, and pride among *rancheros*, has become a shared linguistic and cultural practice for men, women, and children from this community. The study showed that the ideology and the verbal practices that support the ideology both regularly travel between Mexico and Chicago.

Focusing on a similar transnational Mexican social network as described in Farr (2005, 2006), Barajas (2005) examined how oral traditions in general and proverbs in particular help members of the social network

re-create experiences and understandings from the home community in the new context. Drawing on data from ethnographic observations and interviews, the researcher analyzed how the members' extensive use of proverbs increased solidarity and improved relationships among them by referencing shared values and priorities in an abbreviated way. By alluding to the community's place of origin or social values, proverbs maintain psychological and cultural connections across great distances while socializing newer members into the network over time.

In related work, Hurtig (2005) examined how ideological influences that promote assimilation might be resisted in the stories told by Mexican women living in Chicago's southwest side. With a close look at how these women engaged in writing, publishing, and discussing stories in an adult writing workshop, in which they were encouraged to narrate their experiences across the two countries, Hurtig noted that the women's stories began to contest the "unidirectional model of immigration and settlement as ethnic incorporation" (p. 196). Their stories moved from a separation of their life in Mexico as the past and that in Chicago as the present to an active interweaving of their experiences and social relationships across the countries and critical reflection on these experiences in their narratives. Through their participation in the writing community, the women began to construct a new critical and transnational perspective that informed their literacy practices.

Other studies have considered transnational sources of ideological influences on language learning and maintenance in migrant families. Saxena (2000) examined the ideological dimensions of the language and literacy practices of Punjabi speakers living in West London in the late 1980s to mid-1990s. By focusing on issues of language choice and maintenance in relation to speakers' migratory histories and transnational ties, Saxena explored how Punjabi migrants described and used different languages. He found that how Punjabi speakers positioned themselves in relation to different language choices (Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu) and script choices (Gurmukhi, Devangari, the Perso-Arabic script) for usage and teaching the next generation were influenced by their cultural and religious roots in their places of origin, the connections they had to their homeland (India), and the religio-political conflicts that had taken place in India during their lifetimes.

Song (2010) examined the heterogeneity of ideological influences on the views of English and Korean language learning among two groups of Koreans living in the United States—Korean immigrants who settled in the United States and early study abroad families who stay temporarily in the United States for their children's education. Analyzing data from interviews with 22 mothers from the two groups, Song discussed how the women enacted different

language ideologies and how those ideologies resulted in divergent attitudes to and different strategies for their children's language education. The interviews with early study abroad families revealed that their attitudes toward English learning were closely related to the language ideologies of global English that exist in Korea. Transnational migration allowed the early study abroad families to circulate glocalized ideologies of English, namely the ideas of English as a marketable commodity and cosmopolitan membership, that are related to the national globalization project of Korea. In contrast, the longer term Korean immigrants expressed more dichotomous views of English as a necessity for survival versus Korean as a symbol of ethnic identity; as a group, they showed ambivalent attitudes toward Korean language maintenance. Yet, Song noted that the ascendance of Korea in the global economy has affected some immigrant mothers' views of the economic value of Korean language for their children's future.

The work described here demonstrates some of the ways that ideologies of language operating at different sociolinguistic scales influence local language and literacy practices. The literacy practices of the immigrant families discussed in these studies index values and norms that exist at various scales, including those of different nation-states, regional culture and politics within these nations, transnational political economy (e.g., global English vs. Korean), and local community movements (e.g., adult writing workshop). Understanding how these families' beliefs and practices are influenced by normative values at different scales is important in making sense of their attitudes and strategies toward language and literacy learning. As Saxena's (2000) and Song's (2010) studies suggested, families within any particular ethnic or immigrant group may be affected by a heterogeneous range of normative values operating within and across nations. Such variation in ideological influences has to do with the particular social, economic, and political location or embedding of the families, as they are positioned in relation to the social class systems, and the racial and religious politics in different nation-states. The different ways in which the Korean families in Song's study were embedded both in regard to their socioeconomic status and history of migration account for the kinds of ideological beliefs that they mobilized for ascribing value to English learning.

Some of the studies reviewed here also suggested how normative values at different scales may come together or interact with one another in affecting the literacy practices of migrant families and communities. The women in Hurtig's (2005) study were able to bring to bear the assimilationist ideology of the United States and their cultural experiences in Mexico in their critical writing practices within the local politics of a grassroots activist community. The Korean immigrant

families in Song's (2010) study were positioned by the majority/minority language politics in the United States but were also beginning to embrace a new view of the Korean language within a globalizing economy and the increasingly heterogeneous Korean community in the United States. Further research of literacy practices and learning in migrant families could explore both the diverse ideological influences affecting the practices of particular migrant communities and how these sources of influence, at different scale levels, may interact to reconstitute the nature of the practices.

Literacy and the Cross-Border Experiences of Migrant Youths

In this section, we turn to studies that explored how the transnational experiences of youths of migrant backgrounds shape and are shaped by their language and literacy practices. These studies examined the influence of history and cross-border movement on the diverse language and literacy practices of youths, how these practices interact with literacy learning in educational settings, and how institutional structures of schooling position youths' transnational experiences and affect their literacy learning and educational opportunities.

Textual and Language Practices of Migrant Youths

A number of studies particularly examined how young people's use of language and engagement with texts are related to their social and cultural connections to people and practices across countries. When literacy repertoires and transnational affiliations are shaped by participation in two or more cultural communities, multiple frames of reference and diverse linguistic repertoires are drawn on to produce, take up, and reconstitute the meanings attached to linguistic forms.

In studying the linguistic practices of Muslim French adolescents whose parents had migrated from Algeria, Tetrault (2009) examined a verbal interactional genre that she called "parental name calling" (p. 65), in which the youths simultaneously index their knowledge of Algerian social norms and their peer culture of sexuality and gender within the French context. The youths in the study used an irreverent practice in Algerian culture of invoking the first name of a peer's parent as a shaming device to monitor and control information regarding each other's sexual practices. Tetrault argued that parental name calling became a tool for these Algerian adolescents to negotiate their own beliefs and practices while also articulating their ambivalent relationship to the North African-derived cultural value they call *le respect* (respect). Their

innovative linguistic practices positioned them as young, Arab, and French simultaneously and helped circulate and re-create cultural norms from Algeria.

Illustrating a similar interest in how young people use linguistic and textual resources to establish or perform a locally recognized identity, Bruna (2007) studied how Mexican immigrant youths living in the U.S. Midwest used tagging and other devalued linguistic practices in school contexts to index ongoing ties to people, ideas, and practices from Mexico. Tagging refers to “the way in which newcomer Mexican youth write the name of their country, region of origin, or themselves (often, though not always, in highly stylized form), in public spaces” (p. 240). The practice of tagging school structures, such as interactive whiteboards and walls, allowed the youths to inscribe their affiliations to particular places and practices in Mexico and, in doing so, invoke another space in the textual landscape of the school and resignify the meanings of artifacts available to them.

Rubinstein-Avila (2007) explored how the transnational space is both physically and symbolically realized through a case study of the reading experiences and literacy practices of a Dominican high school student, Yanira, in the United States. Although her repertoire of literacy practices was not represented in the U.S. high school context, the analysis showed that Yanira, who had moved between the United States and the Dominican Republic in her childhood, learned over time to incorporate both new and old forms of knowledge into her life experiences and drew on dual frames of reference to develop her literacy repertoire. Examining Yanira’s practices with texts that occurred outside the classroom context (e.g., oral reading in church and community, reading popular teen magazines in English, predicting and discussing Spanish-language soap operas, reading books about the Dominican Republic from the local library), Rubinstein-Avila argued that Yanira’s literacy practices need to be understood as an expanding repertoire developed from her affiliations across countries.

Sánchez (2007a) examined the use of writing to give meaning to and foster transnational connections in her ethnographic account of a participatory research project with three second-generation youths from Mexico who lived in northern California. Based on their participatory research with the author in understanding the girls’ transnational experiences, the girls collaborated with each other to produce a bilingual children’s picture book to tell the story of transnational migrants. Sánchez described the girls’ depiction of local cultural artifacts, the use of collaborative storytelling characteristic of their families’ practices, the knowledge they gained as a result of their regular return trips to their hometowns in Mexico, and the privileging of Spanish as a primary language in producing the bilingual narrative of the

storybook. Through this writing project, the girls used the linguistic, rhetorical, and material resources derived from their transnational experiences to create new meanings in the official genre of a children’s book.

Whereas the above studies focused on literacy practices in peer-oriented and community contexts, other studies explored how young people’s transnational experiences are expressed in classroom reading and writing activities. In analyzing Latino immigrant children’s reading responses in a literature discussion group that focused on stories about border crossing (*literatura fronteriza*) in the Latino literary tradition, Medina (2010) found that their responses indicated their histories of participation in multiple communities, real and imaginary, across time and places. The children in this elementary school classroom reacted with stories about their own experiences in crossing the U.S. border with their families, images and narratives from oral traditions in Latin America, and their engagement with transnational Spanish television. The analysis illuminated how students construct diverse cultural and imaginative worlds in and through texts that provide spaces for sharing knowledge gained from lived experiences across time and places. Medina suggested a “reading across communities” (p. 40) approach to literature discussion that supports the transborder flows of knowledge from students’ diverse cultural experiences in their engagements with texts.

Also interested in how literacy practices might be derived from transnational migration experiences, Campano (2007) and Cuero (2010) encouraged teachers to incorporate students’ stories of cross-cultural and cross-border relationships into the classroom. Examining the written narratives of Maria, an elementary school student whose parents had migrated from the Philippines, Campano noted that Maria’s stories were structured as a series of movements, both physically and emotionally, between her homes in the Philippines and the United States. Such movements involved reflecting on her life experiences and cultural identity as tied to both people and events across countries and situating her family’s history of migration in larger political contexts, such as the Philippine-American War. As a teacher-researcher, Campano described how the display of the children’s stories, and letters and photos from families abroad in his classroom provided a lens into the world and encouraged empathy among all the students in the classroom. In a case study of a fifth-grade Latina student enrolled in a bilingual program, Cuero pointed out that the student’s skills as the author of a dialogue journal that she maintained with Cuero contrasted with her self-doubt about her abilities in classroom reading and writing. In her journal entries, the student was able to merge academic expectations of planning, checking facts, audience consideration, and proofreading with the voices she assumed as

family historian and cultural teacher chronicling her experiences visiting family across the border in rural northern Mexico.

The studies reviewed in this section show how linguistic and textual practices provide ways for young people to navigate and integrate multiple spheres of their lives across cultural and geographical borders. The youths draw on multilingual repertoires and dual frames of reference, in creative and subversive ways, to participate in and make meaning out of their experiences of migration, transnationalism, and literacy practices. Oral, written, and visual practices with texts are used to reach across time and space, to create and sustain social connections, and to facilitate participation in communities of learning. Even though many of the youths in these studies are migrants who grew up partly in their natal countries and may feel identified to its people and practices, others who are second-generation children of immigrants were also found to engage in transnational relationships that impact their literacy practices and learning. Hence, although these studies are limited in number and do not allow for comparison between native- and foreign-born children, they suggest an important link between literacy development and the diverse symbolic and material affiliations that youths develop from their relationships and movements across borders.

Some of these studies also suggested how these symbolic and material affiliations and resources may move across institutional borders as the young people engaged in designing and writing children's books, developing autobiographical accounts, or discussions about literature. These cases showed how the transnational habitus and literacy repertoires of the youths may be mobilized to create new kinds of knowledge in which academic norms and students' experiences of the world come together to redefine what is acceptable knowledge in the classroom. Learning in these contexts involves recognition and translation of students' migratory experiences as legitimate resources or capital in the educational process. In the following section, we turn to some studies that explored how the institutional structures of schooling affect the language and literacy learning of youths in transnational contexts.

Transnational Affiliations and Institutional Responses

As part of a larger interest in the language and literacy learning of migrant youths, a number of studies examined how youths from a variety of national backgrounds and their migratory experiences are positioned within and by institutions of schooling and education. A few studies on this topic highlighted the negative experiences that youths with transnational backgrounds tend to have with institutions of schooling

and how those experiences affect their learning. Rodríguez (2009) examined the school experiences and testimonies of Dominican American girls between the ages of 14 and 18 who maintained strong ties and regular travel between New York and their homes in the Dominican Republic. Through life history interviews with five focal youths, the researcher found that their ongoing transnational connections mitigated the negative experiences associated with attending a large urban school in the United States where their Spanish language and Dominican culture were devalued. Because of their firsthand experiences of the functional purpose of bilingualism across national contexts, the girls provided a critique of the lack of representation of Dominican history, literature, and their existing proficiency with the Spanish language in the school that enrolled large numbers of Dominican American students. This study showed how the transnational affiliations of the girls affected their dispositions toward schooling and prompted them to critically evaluate their negative experiences in an American school.

Other studies that focused on the challenging experiences of transnational sojourner students from Mexico (Hamann & Zúñiga, 2011; Hamann, Zúñiga, & Sanchez Garcia, 2006) and Japan (Haneda & Monobe, 2009) who have schooling experiences across countries showed the variable availability of institutional responses to their literacy learning and education. Focusing on return migrants in Mexico who have lived and attended school in the United States, Hamann and colleagues observed that transnational movement is often not recognized in school settings and that this disadvantages sojourner students, especially those who are not clearly settled in any community (sending or receiving). The authors argued that schools with noninclusive curricula are not able to help students overcome such challenges and that schools must "figure out not just a curriculum that builds on what such students already know, but one that is also conscious of the circumstances transnational students negotiate and likely will need to negotiate in the future" (p. 268). For example, in such transnational contexts, strong literacy education in both Spanish and English is necessary for students who have to move with families to seek work across borders under changing economic circumstances.

In contrast, Haneda and Monobe's (2009) study of Japanese sojourner youths who were enrolled in U.S. schools found that these students had access to different institutional resources to support their transnational mobility. Through interviewing and observing four preteen males and females and their parents who had been relocated from Japan to the United States by their companies and expected eventual return to Japan, Haneda and Monobe noted that the youths received instruction in Japanese language and other core subjects

through *hoshuko* (Japanese Saturday schools) sponsored by the Japanese government and sometimes additional private tutoring sessions in both English and Japanese that are often paid for by the Japanese companies that are relocating their workers. For these middle-class families, institutional responses from the government and corporations provided different resources to support the children's learning and development of literate capital that is translatable across educational systems. These studies suggested class-based differences in experiences of transnational mobility and literacy learning and the role of institutional responses in supporting the learning trajectories of youths in these circumstances.

Other studies also pointed to how institutional structures of schooling may support the literacy learning of youths with transnational backgrounds. Bartlett (2007) examined the schooling experiences of a Dominican American student (Maria) who was enrolled in an unusual bilingual high school in New York City. Based on observations and interviews with Maria within the institutional context of the school, Bartlett highlighted how the local model of success at this school created a space in which Maria was able to use her bilingual literacy practices to position herself as a successful student. Key features of the success model at the school included the high status of Spanish and the use of Spanish in content classes, the recognition that many students have families across countries and may move between countries in their future careers, accessibility of teachers and administrators, and an opportunity narrative that considers education as a key to success for immigrant students. It was within this context that Maria used the opportunity narrative to reposition herself from a struggling student to a successful one by studiously completing written tasks, using her strength in Spanish and requesting transfers to classes with teachers who had high opinions of her. In this case, the institutional structure reframed what counts as literate capital in the local context, which was then drawn from by the student to reposition her educational trajectory.

With a similar focus on the positioning of migrant students in educational settings, Enright (2011) documented the case of Leesa, a Mexican American student who had moved twice between Mexico and the United States and attended schools in both countries. Because her transnational background and prior education in English was not known to the school, Leesa's rapid transition to mainstream classes was seen by the school staff as a case of an exceptional learner in comparison with other newcomer students. In examining her 12th-grade research project, Enright noted that Leesa was able to focus on the inquiry process and more sophisticated organizational skills rather than the basics of composition that was the focus

for other English learners. Enright suggested that the case showed "the potential for learning and growth that is available to young people when traditional categories and dichotomies no longer constrain their opportunities or conceal their strengths and skills" (p. 99).

Other studies also considered the role of transnational institutions and social networks in affecting the literacy learning and attitudes of young migrants. García-Sánchez (2010) explored the production of pan-Arabic and Islamic identities in the Arabic-language socialization of Moroccan immigrant children living in Spain. The study examined divergent teacher beliefs and instructional practices of Arabic-language education in two types of institutional settings: Arabic language classes in a Spanish public school that were jointly funded by the Spanish and Moroccan ministries of education, and after-school religious classes at a mosque run by a local Islamic cultural organization. The choice of texts and interactional practices in the school setting were used to enact an ideology of Classical/Standard Arabic as a symbol of Moroccan nationality, modernity, and cultural authenticity, whereas practices at the mosque were used to associate Classical/Standard Arabic with pan-Islamic religious identity and ethnic distinction from secular Spanish society. The study suggested the need to further explore transnational institutional spaces in the language and literacy socialization of children from migrant communities.

A different informal space of transnational exchanges was described in Brittain's (2002, 2009) interview study that documented the kinds of information or messages about American schools that Chinese and Mexican adolescent immigrants in the United States shared with their conationals who were residing in their native country or had newly arrived in the United States. The youths were asked in the interviews what kinds of information they shared or received from their conationals before immigrating to the United States, on arrival in the United States, and after a few years of living in the United States. The study identified several themes in these transnational messages, including concerns with academic quality, the value of the English language and difficulty with learning it, and struggles with discrimination and racial relations. Brittain suggested that by sharing information across borders, these immigrant youths and their conationals socialized in a transnational space that contributed to their perceptions of U.S. schooling.

Investigating the relationship among language and literacy learning, transnational ties, and experiences of schooling, the studies reviewed here showed the variable ways in which the institutional structures and practices of schooling position migrant students and their resources and affiliations. They also showed how students may actively use their diverse linguistic and social resources (even those that are devalued) to take up or contest

this positioning. As a social field that is fraught with ideological values, schools can make invisible students' language abilities and binational affiliations, which may contribute to their sense of alienation from learning experiences in the classroom, or schools can seek to recognize and leverage the existing linguistic resources and migratory experiences of students to promote their biliteracy development and learning. As Bartlett's (2007) study suggested, such a process of recognition may involve not only seeing the translatability of students' linguistic and literate capital into sanctioned practices of learning in schools but also a larger view of how schools may play an important role in cultivating students' literate capital to help them navigate their present and future lives that involve intricate ties across countries.

Indeed, transnational mobility happens for the working class and working poor who have to risk their lives in search of economic chances across borders, as it happens for middle-class or more affluent families who relocate for career opportunities in a restructuring global economy. However, as seen in Haneda and Monobe's (2009) study, the institutional responses and personal resources that these families have for coping with transnational mobility are not the same. This raises the questions of what responsibilities schools have in educating a mobile workforce that its society needs and how schools may relate their practices of literacy education to the migratory experiences of students.

Media and Literacy in Transnational Environments

In this section, we discuss an emerging body of research studies that documented and examined the kinds of language and literacy practices and learning that are associated with the use of transnational media among migrant families and youths. We consider both the new and changing communication media (e.g., the Internet, social media) that are used for engaging in social interactions and with texts that circulate across national borders, and broadcast media (e.g., transnational television) that are found to constitute a significant part of the media experiences of migrant families and youths. Although we focus on studies that addressed issues of language and literacy, we also connect these issues to some related themes in the research literature of diaspora media studies where applicable to provide a larger context.

Transnational Media Use in Migrant Families

A range of studies that employed ethnographic observations, surveys, and interviews have begun to provide a portrait of the diverse media practices in migrant families. These media practices include viewing both

local and satellite television (with programs produced in the country of origin), accessing news and information media on the Internet, and the use of digital communication technologies (mobile phones and Internet social media) to maintain family ties and social relationships across borders. Cruickshank's (2004, 2006) longitudinal research with Arabic-speaking families in a working-class immigrant community in suburban Sydney, Australia, documented changes in the families' literacy practices in relation to global developments in media and technology from 1999 to 2000. The Arabic-speaking youths in this community were mostly Australian-born children of parents who came from Lebanon. It was during that time that the four focal families in the ethnographic study began receiving Al-Jazeera television through cable television and accessing the press from the Middle East on the Internet. The watching of cable television and Arabic-language videos obtained from local businesses was often a family event, and in many cases, the parents took on mediation roles in explaining formal spoken Arabic to their children.

In a follow-up survey of the media literacy practices of 220 year 9 (equivalent to ninth grade in the United States) students of Arabic background in the local schools carried out in 2005, Cruickshank (2006) found that 75% of the students had cable or satellite television, and 72% reported watching television programs in Arabic, mainly documentaries and movies. Additionally, Cruickshank (2004, 2006) noted that among the four focal families in his study, the mobile phone was increasingly used to complement other modes of communication (e.g., letters, cassettes, landline telephone) to maintain regular contact with relatives overseas. The teenage children in the families also started using e-mail and participating in chat rooms on a regular basis, which put them in touch with Arabic-speaking teenagers in other parts of the world.

Similar trends in the viewing of transnational television in migrant families were found in a qualitative action research project called CHICAM (Children in Communication About Migration), which was funded by the European Commission (de Block & Buckingham, 2007). The CHICAM project involved researchers working with media educators in running video-making clubs for refugee and migrant children (ages 10–14, originating from Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and Eastern Europe) in six European countries, as well as observing media use in the children's homes and local communities from 2001 to 2004. In documenting media use in the children's families, the CHICAM study revealed that the viewing of satellite television was prevalent and, in some households, was ranked as a necessity. Many families watched several sources of news, and the children were often well informed about world events.

A predominant view among many families was that national news often gave a limited view of international events, and they wanted access to different viewpoints. In addition, the researchers found that transnational television was used by some families for the purpose of maintaining children's fluency in the home language, while several families also actively encouraged their children to watch national television to assist them in learning the new language. In a recent interview study of multilingual practices with digital media conducted with 36 high school students who immigrated to the United States in their middle childhood to adolescence, Lam and Rosario-Ramos (2009) found that a majority of the students obtained news from both U.S. websites and websites based in their native countries or other parts of the world. The researchers noted that the students' exposure to a plurality of sources of news and information across countries seemed to have broadened and diversified their perspectives on current events and issues. For example, some students described how reading news from other countries expanded their scope and choice of information beyond the news they received in the United States. Some students also described the contrasting perspectives that were reflected in the different sources of news that they accessed online.

The diverse information resources and news media consumption of migrant populations are also noted in diaspora media studies (Christiansen, 2004; Christiansen & Sell, 2000; Gillespie, 2006). In reviewing research studies on the news consumption habits of immigrants in Denmark, Germany, Sweden, and the United Kingdom, Christiansen suggested that the immigrants' experience of multiple belonging and their skepticism of single versions of news influence their media practices, so they differ significantly from those practiced by the majority population. These researchers and others in the field of information studies (Pyati, 2010; Srinivasan & Pyati, 2007) have called attention to the need to understand the transnational nature of the information resources of migrant groups and have suggested that these resources should be considered information assets that are often hidden from view in the dominant culture of society (Pyati, 2010).

Another aspect of the media environment of migrant families is the use of communication technologies for maintaining family ties and social relationships across borders. Research in diaspora media studies has shown the adoption of various technologies, such as mobile phones, e-mail, text messaging, and video chat, among migrants to engage in the relationship of care with their parents, children, or other family members as well as social relationships with those whom they are separated from over long distances (Benítez, 2006; Panagakos & Horst, 2006; Wilding, 2006).

In the field of education, Sánchez and Salazar (2012) examined how Latino immigrants acquired and adopted

computer technology in their daily lives and used it in a binational context to communicate with people across borders. Drawing from an ethnographic study of three second-generation Latina adolescents, their families, and members of their respective immigrant networks carried out in 2000–2003 and follow-up interviews with the three focal youths in 2008, Sánchez and Salazar found that these youths served as cultural brokers of technology for their families by deciding which kind of computer to purchase, overseeing its setup and home use, and facilitating their parents' use of online chat media to communicate with family members and friends in Mexico. In playing these brokering roles, the youths relied on what they learned about computers at school and their relationships with more knowledgeable young adults in the community. Although Sánchez and Salazar focused on documenting the mediating and facilitative role that youths play in their families' adoption and use of computer technology, the researchers also pointed out the access barrier that many immigrant Latino families face in the absence of cultural brokers in the family or community. We return to issues of disparity in the access and use of new media later in this section.

Cruickshank (2004, 2006) and de la Piedra (2010, 2011) also noted the mediating role that youths play in introducing technology into the family in immigrant communities. In de la Piedra's observational and interview studies of the vernacular literacy practices of 14 adolescents and 11 women from Latino migrant families who moved frequently across the El Paso, Texas/Ciudad Juarez, Mexico border region, the researcher observed that Internet media was integrated into the lives of the young people for the purpose of renewing and maintaining social relationships across the border, and youths often assisted their parents in using the computer and Internet. The women who were interviewed described how they read with their daughters the e-mail messages sent from their hometown and chatted online with family and friends on both sides of the border (de la Piedra, 2010). The researcher suggested that this literacy practice of reading together, or *leer juntas*, serves to promote the connection between mothers and daughters as well as family members on both sides of the border and to maintain the use of Spanish in the family.

What has begun to emerge from these studies is a portrait of a translocal media environment in migrant families, with both adults and children contributing to the shaping of such an environment. In the families described in these studies, children broker or help facilitate adults' use of digital technologies, whereas adults tend to influence children's exposure to multiple sources of news and broadcast media. In other words, we see an intergenerational process contributing to the construction of transnational social fields in which

the migrant families participate, and the adults and children both take on mediation roles in the process.

We may consider the mediation roles that are taken up in the family as forms of capital exchange, as the children mobilize their knowledge of technology accessed from school and peer or other social networks to assist their families in positioning themselves in communicative networks across countries, and as the parents' connections to the home country and knowledge of the native language influence the youths' participation in transnational media and familial relationships. Such capital exchange in the construction of communicative networks serves to sustain or renew the transnational social field of the family. Communication is vital for family members across borders to feel sufficiently connected to call on one another for support and the exchange of resources. How the adults and children actually interact with one another and media artifacts when they take up mediation roles and how the family conducts communication across borders, particularly the ways in which their language and literacy practices with new communication media serve to constitute their transnational relations, are important questions for further research.

In addition, the diverse information resources and news media consumption of migrant populations deserve further attention in literacy research. The studies discussed previously reveal an information environment in migrant families that is polycentric, whereby different interpretive frames for representing news and events may be accessed from media sources that come from a variety of origins locally and translocally. How migrants interact with these diverse media representations and mobilize different interpretive frames for understanding societal events and personal experiences could be the subject of further investigation. In the following section, we turn to some recent case studies that provided a more in-depth portrait and analysis of the online literacy practices of young people as they navigate communicative networks across their countries of origin and settlement.

Literacy in Youths' Digital Practices and Affiliations Across Borders

Accompanying the growing interest in literacy research on adolescents' practices and learning with digital media, a number of studies examined how youth of migrant backgrounds use online media to develop and negotiate their affiliations with diverse communities across national borders. These studies provided analysis of how the youths represent their multilayered identifications online, how the youths acquire linguistic and semiotic resources from different cultural communities in their online networks, and how they organize collective practices and forms of belonging.

In a study of three youths—a Bengali American, a Colombian American, and a Jewish American with a strong affiliation with Israel—McGinnis, Goodstein-Stolzenberg, and Saliani (2007) found that these high school students used their personal profiles and narratives in online journals and social networking sites to express their identifications with multiple communities across borders. For example, the researchers described how Julia (pseudonym), who migrated to the United States in her fifth-grade year and came from a lower socioeconomic background, used a variety of modalities, such as Latin music, graphics of Colombian flags, and English and Spanish, to express her Colombian ethnic identification on Myspace. Her online gallery of friends reflected her affiliation with other Colombian youths from her high school and allowed her to maintain relationships with friends in Colombia. Additionally, Julia expressed her community involvement with immigrant rights by using the site to advertise and mobilize protests against an immigration bill that was being proposed in the U.S. Congress. In their analysis of the youths' multimodal and multilingual texts, the researchers argued that the online spaces served as dynamic representational spaces for the youths to express multiple identities and multiple loyalties and to reflect on the different social and cultural contexts of their lives.

Similarly focusing on the use of narrative texts and other modalities for representing identities and social affiliations, McLean (2010) described the digital literacy practices of a 15-year-old Trinidad and Tobago native who had been in the United States for four years. Through written texts, images, and music that reference the national symbols, people, and places of Trinidad and Tobago; the youth's social relationships and schooling experiences in both her host and home countries; and her use of both Standard English and Creole, the youth was constructing a virtual "home" that bridges "the contexts of her identities as student, adolescent, Trinidadian, Caribbean, and American" (p. 16).

Whereas the above studies focused on young people's use of narrative and multimodal texts to express their affiliations across borders, other studies examined the communicative practices in transnational online networks and how linguistic and semiotic resources are accessed within these networks. In a study of the instant messaging practices of a 17-year-old girl who came from a working-class family who had migrated to the United States from China two years prior, Lam (2009b) examined how the youth acquired and made choices among different written conventions in English and varieties of Chinese and how her language and orthographic choices allowed her to develop simultaneous networks across countries. The study showed that the linguistic and literate repertoire that the youth developed includes a hybrid variety of

standard American English and hip-hop English that she used with an online network of Asian American youths, bidialectal alternation between Cantonese and Mandarin with her peers in the local immigrant community, and a blended form of Mandarin and Shanghaiese that she used to interact with her peers and learn about events in her hometown of Shanghai. The researcher argued that such synchronic movement across social networks represented the desire of the youth to develop the literate repertoire that would enable her to thrive in multiple cultural communities and mobilize social and semiotic resources within those communities.

In another study, Lam (2009a) discussed how two Chinese American youths who migrated in their middle childhood navigated online media across countries to participate in a domain of interest, which included an online forum in China dedicated to the discussion of philosophy in one case and websites in both the United States and China related to the global culture of Japanese anime in another case. The study found that the youths' participation in their domains of interest was mediated through the use of specialist varieties of language (Gee, 2007), which involve complex linguistic structures and rhetorical moves in the discussion of philosophy and various textual and interactional genres in the online anime fandom. For these youths, their language use and access of media texts across countries were related to knowledge development in a particular social practice.

Jin Sook Lee's (2006) study of two second-generation Korean American siblings also examined the role of online social networks for developing linguistic resources. The researcher showed that these college-age youths' social networking on Korea's widely used Cyworld website provided them with a community of Korean speakers—speakers who were minimally present in their local environments—and a source of motivation for them to use their heritage language and engage in reading and writing for authentic purposes. The siblings' social and literate practices on Cyworld in turn helped to promote their sociopsychological attachment to the Korean language and culture.

Additionally, a few studies explored the language and literacy practices associated with particular online communities in which youths who share a common ethnic heritage participate. Such collective spaces serve as venues where youths reference and sometimes contest the linguistic and cultural practices coming from their home and host societies, and where they develop new communicative codes and mobilize collective identities. In Yi's (2009) research of a website maintained by 25 Korean American teenagers who were living in a Midwestern U.S. city and had grown up partly in Korea and partly in the United States,

the researcher found that the youths' web postings contained frequent references to practices in both Korea and the United States, including references to school culture, current events, music, and other forms of popular culture in these two countries. These youths also developed storytelling genres that were adapted from the online genres popular among young people in Korea, such as relay novels, online comics, and survey questionnaires. Yi suggested that the online community provided the youths with a "safe space" to "embrace and explore their transnational and transcultural identities" (p. 117), which remain invisible in the U.S. societal context.

Lam (2004) examined the social and discursive practices of a bilingual Chinese/English chat room frequented by adolescents of Chinese origin around the world and how this online environment provided an additional context of language socialization for two female Chinese teenagers in the United States. Whereas the girls experienced social segregation between English-speaking Chinese American and Cantonese-speaking Chinese in an American school and to some extent also on the website, the two girls contested and crossed these socially constructed boundaries with some of their online peers through the adoption of multiple languages and creative use of linguistic codes. The researcher posited that this hybrid language produced on the Internet opens up a new sociolinguistic space for the girls to take up positions as multilingual speakers and learners of English in a global diasporic community.

Similar contestations of language norms were observed in Helen Lee's (2006) analysis of websites created by Pacifican Tongan young people, a study that is situated in the field of diaspora and migration studies. The use of the Tongan language was promoted in some digital forums as a means to revitalize the language among young Tongans who were growing up in Western countries; however, such practice was also contested as a form of exclusion of non-Tongan-speaking participants. For many of these youths, the use of "Tonglish," the intermixing of English and Tongan, was adopted to signify their hybrid and pan-Polynesian identity. Lee noted that such debates on language and other aspects of Tongan cultural values occurring on the websites would not have been sanctioned in a similar manner within the youths' local communities. Also situated in the migration literature is Brouwer's (2006) analysis of Dutch Moroccan websites as "a new social space" for second-generation youths (Dutch-born children of Moroccan-born parents) to "share their imagination of Morocco" (p. 1159) and exchange views on sensitive issues, such as marriage, religion, and politics, that the youths were facing in their environments. Reading and debating these topics provided a way for the youths to express

their connection to their parents' homeland while constructing their collective identity within a national network of Dutch Moroccans.

This emerging body of research on the digital literacy practices of youths of migrant backgrounds shows the multiple and complex influences that contribute to the literate repertoires of these young people. These diverse influences are demonstrated in the use of multiple languages, genres, and hybrid linguistic codes; images, music, and other forms of semiotic signs; as well as the content and cultural references that are represented through these diverse semiotic forms in the youths' digital texts. Indeed, the youths' digital texts indicate that they are orienting to different sets of cultural norms and practices coming from both local and translocal contexts, across their countries of origin and settlement, as these norms and practices are dynamically brought together and brought to view in new media platforms. The coming together of semiotic forms in the youths' digital texts seems to confirm Jacquemet's (2005) observation that new media are promoting a diversification of communicative codes as people interact simultaneously with both local and distant others. Through their literacy practices with new media, the youths were variously expressing and constructing their multiple identifications, developing resources through local and translocal networks, and reflecting on the different social and cultural contexts of their lives.

While many of the reviewed studies emphasized the purposeful and creative use of languages and other modalities in youths' digital texts, some of these studies also indicated youths' orientation to different fields of power and contestation of language ideologies. The instant messaging practices of the focal youth in Lam's (2009b) study were shaped by the youth's location within different fields of power at the sociolinguistic scales of her local environment in the U.S. context (the cache of an urban vernacular and local hierarchy of Chinese dialects in relation to the institutional status of English) and her hometown in China (the differential political statuses of Mandarin and the Shanghai dialect). Other studies of the collective online practices developed by youths of migrant backgrounds seem to indicate an assertion of a new kind of space for the youths to express their common concerns and experiences, reference and challenge the language and cultural ideologies in their environments, and resist their invisibility in the dominant culture of society. These collective practices suggest that the youths were engaging with power relations between different normative values across national contexts and are carving out what Yi (2009) called "safe space[s]" (p. 117) online to engage in these practices.

Even though in this section we focused on research studies that furthered our understanding of the diverse

media practices among migrant families and youths, it is important not to lose sight of continuing social stratification in access and use of media technologies both within and across societies. In the United States, there has been a steady narrowing of gaps in Internet access over the last decade, but disparities based on income and race remain substantial (A. Smith, 2010; Warschauer & Matuchniak, 2010). Whereas English-speaking Latinos are almost identical to whites in the percentage of reported access to the Internet and home broadband, foreign-born and Spanish-dominant Latinos dramatically trail not only whites but also native-born and English-speaking Latinos in both respects of Internet use (Livingston, 2010). Moreover, the likelihood and degree of transnational communication among migrants are also dependent on the extent to which their friends and family living elsewhere can gain access to the attendant mode of communication technology (Benítez, 2006; Wilding, 2006).

For example, in their study with Latino migrant families, Sánchez and Salazar (2012) observed that communicating across borders is more easily maintained with family and social relations in the homeland who reside in urban areas. Access to satellite broadcasting is also far from universal and depends on both the domestic economic situation of migrants and the degree to which the broadcast media from their home country are represented on global satellite networks (de Block & Buckingham, 2007). Hence, we need to carefully consider the structural conditions that contribute to or constrain youths' development or engagement in literacy practices with media in particular contexts. Whereas most of the existing research on youths' digital literacy practices has been based on small samples of cases, more comparative studies that investigate a wider range of practices within and across migrant communities would further our understanding of how different social and structural conditions affect levels and types of engagement in transnational digital practices.

Summary and Final Comments

In reviewing research studies on the relations between transnationalism and language and literacy practices in the contexts of migration, we discussed some broad theoretical perspectives and concepts that hold promise for examining issues in this area, and an emerging body of empirical studies in the diverse domains of families and communities, youth practices, education, and media. Here we summarize some common themes across the major concepts and empirical findings discussed in the preceding sections. We also offer some further suggestions for future research.

Among studies that focused on migrant families and communities, we see evidence of people's engagement in diverse social fields that span national boundaries, and the role of language and literacy practices in constructing and maintaining connections in these social fields. These studies showed how reading and writing and ways of using language serve to facilitate social exchanges and position people in the transnational fields of family and marriage, religion, career, and even news and politics as they are represented in broadcast and news media. As people interact in these fields of activity, their language and literacy repertoires are shaped by the discourse practices that are valued and serve as cultural capital to achieve particular social positions within the field. In addition, we see an intergenerational process in the family that contributes to constructing relationships across borders—for example, through the use of narratives and other discourse practices in the family, and the mediation roles that parents and children take up in the use of transnational media. We suggest that these types of mediation, through verbal interactions and use of artifacts and technology, may be seen as forms of capital exchange between parents and children that contribute to constructing the transnational fields of relations and shaping their individual language and literacy repertoires.

Hence, it is important to understand the multiple and complex influences that affect the language and literacy development of learners of migrant backgrounds as they respond to normative values and language ideologies that operate at different sociolinguistic scales. Some studies reviewed herein showed how the beliefs and uses of language and literacy in migrant families are influenced by normative values coming from different nation-states, regional culture and local politics within these nations, and ideologies circulating in globalizing economies. Some of these studies also suggested how normative values at different scales may interact with each other through the literacy practices of families and youths as the adults and children draw from multiple frames of reference to take up, critique, and reconstitute the linguistic and semiotic behaviors associated with these normative values. Such interaction of diverse influences is seen in the oral, written, visual, and multimodal practices with texts in which young people engage as they navigate multiple spheres of their lives across cultural and geographical borders. Studies of youth practices with digital media indicated that some young people of migrant backgrounds are using online media to express and construct their multilayered identifications, develop linguistic and social resources through local and translocal networks, and reference and contest the language and cultural ideologies coming from their home and host societies.

Finally, studies that examined youths' experiences in educational settings showed the variable ways in

which the institutional structures and practices of schooling position the transnational affiliations and linguistic resources of migrant students. Even in the context of restrictive policies of language in education that have devalued the use of immigrant children's native language in the classroom, some of these studies showed how schools can recognize and leverage the existing language abilities and migratory experiences of these students to promote their biliteracy development and learning. We see examples in these studies of how students draw from the textual resources and knowledge derived from their transnational fields of activity in approaching reading and writing in educational settings. Such movements of literate capital is seen, for instance, in how students develop parallel motifs and imageries among literary texts, their own border-crossing experiences, and stories from diverse oral traditions (Medina, 2010) and how students situate their personal migration narratives within larger political-economic relations between countries (Campano, 2007).

In a similar manner, Jiménez, Smith, and Teague (2009) offered pedagogical suggestions for integrating transnational and community literacies in the classroom by promoting students' inquiry of the forms and function of texts in their communities. For example, the authors noted that students can learn about how advertisements and other texts are used in banking services in immigrant communities to promote and regulate the international transfer of funds or remittances and how these regulations reflect economic, political, and diplomatic relations between countries. Such movements of texts from students' communities to the classroom setting allows school learning not only to connect to the prior knowledge and lived experiences of students but also to integrate the analytic practices privileged in schools with the concrete and complex realities in students' communities.

By encouraging students' textual resources and knowledge to travel across institutional borders, we may also enable students to bring to bear different interpretive frames in approaching reading and writing activities as they engage with texts at both the personal and experiential levels and at the level of politics and policies across countries. Similar processes are already happening as migrants access different news media sources and interpretive frames for understanding societal events and as young people reference and reflect on the different social and cultural contexts of their lives in their informal literacy practices.

In addition, we noted that educational responses to migrant students may involve not only the movement or conversion of capital from home to school, through using students' migratory experiences as legitimate resources in the educational process, but also a larger recognition of the role that schools may play in producing the kinds of literate capital that can help students navigate their

lives and careers as they are situated within increasingly complex transnational ties across countries. This kind of recognition would necessitate consideration of the future pathways of students and how their multilingual literacies could be leveraged as assets as they engage in civic and economic activities that cross national boundaries (Fürstenau, 2005).

Throughout this article, we raised a number of questions within the various topics that call for further research and deliberation. Here we offer a few more suggestions for research directions in this area. Although there is an accumulating number of studies that consider the use of literacy, language ideologies, and language learning and maintenance within migrant families and their kinship and communal networks across countries, there is relatively little research of literacy practices in other kinds of transnational social fields, such as work, education, religion, social movements, and politics. For example, research could explore the relation of literacy and workplace transnationalism, or how people engage with texts and multiple languages and negotiate across values and norms as they participate in labor activities, collaborative work practices, and businesses that span national boundaries. Such research would be informative for literacy education as we consider how to connect learning to the present and future pathways of students. In particular, studies could examine how young people of migrant backgrounds deploy the linguistic and social resources that they developed from their transnational experiences in their career aspirations and practices, as well as the structural opportunities and constraints that affect the deployment or use of these resources.

Research may also explore literacy practices in the transnational fields of civic participation, politics, and social movement. Our discussion in the previous section showed the diverse news media consumption of migrant populations; other research studies also showed the engagement of adults and young people in civic and political activities in their natal countries as well as their countries of settlement (e.g., Abu El-Haj, 2007; Portes et al., 2009). Online social media are increasingly adopted by social and political movements in different countries to reach out to its diasporic population. Studies of the uses of literacy in these various practices would enhance our understanding of migrants' civic lives and political efficacy, as well as the role of literacy in translocal alliances and social change. Moreover, in line with García-Sánchez's (2010) study of Arabic-language education of Moroccan immigrant children discussed earlier, we believe that further research is necessary to increase our understanding of the role of transnational educational partnerships and religious institutions in the language and literacy socialization of children in migrant communities.

Finally, as we noted in regard to studies of youths' digital literacy practices, existing research that addressed issues of literacy and transnationalism tended to focus on single cases and single ethnic communities. Although such research approaches have expanded and challenged our understanding of the literacy practices of migrant populations, they also run the risk of "sampling on the dependent variable" (Vertovec, 2009, p. 17)—a critique that has been leveled at scholarship on transnationalism that focuses on positive cases rather than variation and discrepancy within and across groups. We suggest that more comparative studies of literacy practices within and across migrant communities would allow us to consider the social and structural conditions that give rise to particular forms of transnational literacy practices. These conditions may include geographical distance and economic relations between the host and home countries, structural policies governing cross-border movement at the panregional level, the legal status and context of exit of migrants, homeland politics and media infrastructure, and ecology.

Studies could also systematically compare foreign- and native-born youths of migrant backgrounds in the kinds of affiliations they develop across their different homelands and the language and literacy repertoires that are cultivated from these affiliations. Even though we expect that native-born children of immigrants may identify more strongly with the norms and institutions of the place where they are raised, the studies reviewed in this article indicated that some of these children may also be deeply and intensely embedded in their families' cultural and kinship ties across countries. Hence, studies that contextualize the literacy practices of native- and foreign-born youths within particular social and political conditions of migration would contribute to more nuanced understandings of the literacy learning and development of youths in transnational contexts.

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