



NATIONAL FORUM TO
ADVANCE RURAL EDUCATION

Bridging Home & School Literacies: Considering Assets

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Background of Presenters

Dr. Stacy Gray

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- Early literacy consultant (WI Department of Instruction); adjunct professor (University Wisconsin-Stevens Point)
- Former elementary teacher, reading teacher, & literacy coordinator



Dr. Amber Garbe

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- Assistant Professor of Literacy and Social Studies Methods at University Wisconsin-Stevens Point
- Former Elementary & ELL Teacher, Literacy Coordinator



Outcomes

Participants will:

- ❑ Reflect on the role that partnerships between homes and schools play in informing and enriching culturally-sustaining literacy instruction.
- ❑ Reflect on strategies for bridging home and school literacies, while also tapping into the diverse funds of knowledge students bring from their homes and communities.

Essential Questions

- ❑ How can we leverage the partnerships between homes and schools to enhance and inform culturally-sustaining literacy instruction, ensuring that every student's unique background and experiences are valued and integrated into the learning process?




Imagine you and your colleagues each operate your own restaurant with the same cookbooks...

- Would you all be sticking to the exact same recipes?
- What factors would you take into consideration when crafting these meals?

Funds of Knowledge

(Wolf, 1966; Vélez-Ibáñez & Greenberg, 1992; Moll & Diaz, 1985)



Tapping into the Funds of Knowledge of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students and Families

Carla Amaro-Jiménez, *The University of Texas at Arlington*
Peggy Semington, *The University of Texas at Arlington*

"It's called 'La Tamalada... Yolanda knows how to make tamales. My dad will make the meat and my mom will make the corn stuff that goes on the husk and we set the kids on the stools around there and we give them a pile of the masa and Yolanda knows how to put the corn husk down and rub the masa and meat and wrap it. We make our own tamales...."

(Alejandra, interview)

In the context of doing home visits and interviews as part of a research study on parents' participation in their children's literacy learning conducted by the second author (Semington, 2008), Alejandra, a single parent of four school-aged children, was given a book, *Family Pictures/Cuadros de mi Familia*, by Mexican-American author Carmen Lomas Garza. Alejandra explicitly connected the Lomas Garza literary text

with a Mexican cultural tradition in the household: making tamales. She connected this cultural experience with the types of school literacies and texts her second-grade child, Yolanda, was engaging with in the classroom, drawing resourcefully on cultural and linguistic Funds of Knowledge present in her bilingual/bicultural household (Moll & González, 2004) to support her daughter's literacy learning.

Introduction

Creating meaningful connections between home and school is not always an easy task, especially when parents and families speak a language other than the one spoken by the classroom teacher. The challenges become even greater when these families belong to a different culture than one's own. Additionally, researchers have argued that a focus on assimilation and devaluing of students' language and culture can result in notions of subtractive schooling (Valenzuela, 1999, 2005; Worthy, Rodriguez, Assaf, Martínez, & Cuero, 2003). In contrast to such deficit models, an additive model seeks to build on students' and family's strengths and abilities and transform teachers' and schools' ways of perceiving the families with an overall goal of increasing student achievement (Amaro-Jiménez & Semington, 2010;



Building Literacy Through Shared Experiences

- **Letter Names:** I spy with my little eye, the letter k ...
- **Letter Sounds:** What sound does the letter B make?
- **Vocabulary:** Practice verbs through cooking (ex. stir, chop, mix, bake)
- **Phonemic Awareness:**
 - What sound do you hear first in the word banana?
 - What word would you have if you put these sounds together: /d/-/i-/sh/ (dish)
 - Say the sounds you hear in the word mix. (/m/i/x/).

Building on Assets



Go to the people

Live among them

Learn from them

Love them

Start with what they know

Build on what they have...

Project 1:

Pan Dau Art to Published Art

Creating Diverse Books through
Book Authorship



Hmong Refugee Immigrants-2004 Wave

- Spent several years/decade in Thailand Refugee Camps
- Many students knew Hmong and Thai
- Oral-based culture



Inviting & Empowering Diverse Voices

1. Culturally-Relevant
2. Parent Capital
3. Funds of Knowledge
 - a. Strong Oral Storytelling
 - b. Cultural Folktales and Fables
 - c. Rich history

Steps to Publishing Books

1. Recruiting families
2. Recording and translating stories
3. Illustrating sessions
4. Publishing
5. Release party
6. Sharing the literature with the whole student body at an elementary school

Illustrating Workshop







Sharing the Published Books





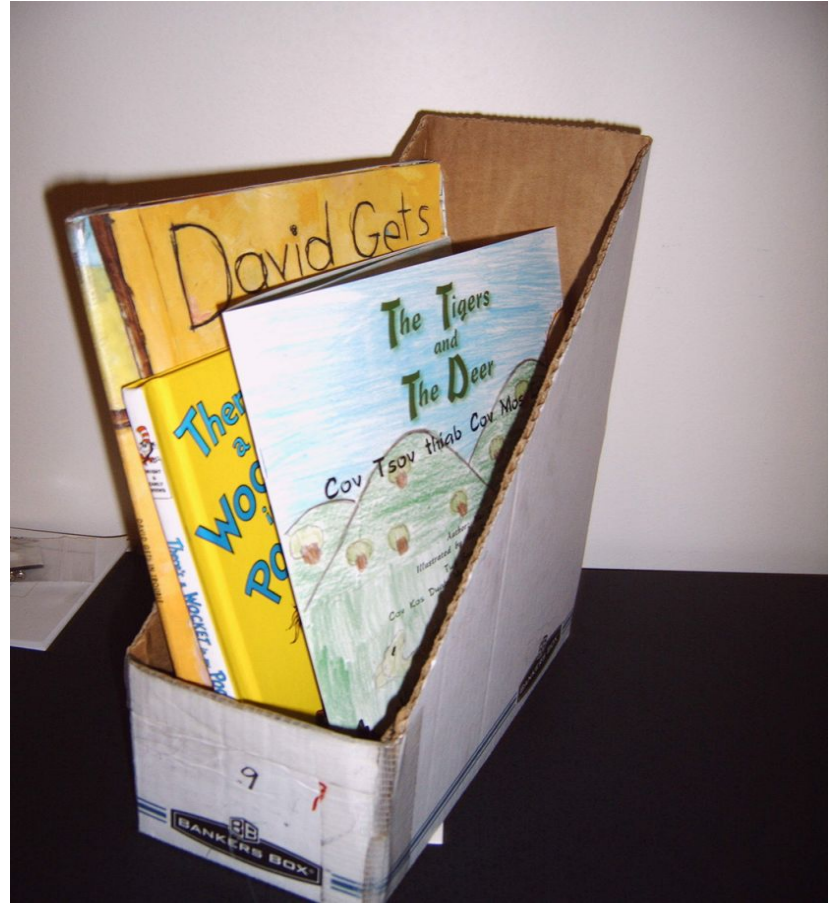
Certificate of Achievement
Miss Hong and Family

Certificate of Achievement
Miss Sue Yang and Family

Certificate of Achievement
Miss Lee and Family

Grandpa, Why Did the Hmong
Come to America?

A Box of Diverse Texts



A Father's Love

Leej Txiv Txoj Kev Hlub

Author: Ger Moua

Illustrated by Ger Moua and Family

Tus Sau: Ntxawg Muas

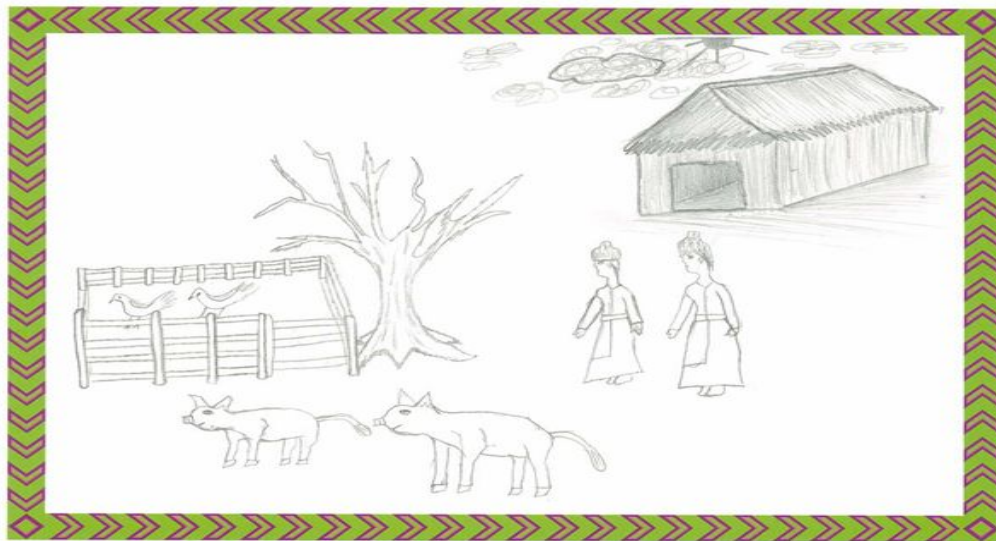
Cov Kos Duab: Ntxawg Muas thiab nws tsev neeg



Based on a True Story

Little Sister and the Snake Prince

Ntxawm Yau Thiab Txiv Nraug Sis Nab



Author & Illustrator: Mai Neng Thao

Tus Sau thiab Kos Duab: Maiv Neeb Thoj

The Tigers and The Deer

Cov Tsov thiab Cov Mos Lwj

Author: Mai Thao

Illustrated by Mai Thao and Family

Tus Sau: Maiv Thoj

Cov Kos Duab: Maiv Thoj thiab nws tsey neeg



The Two Brothers and the Monk

Npawg Hlob Npawg Yau thiab Phab Lws Xim



Author: *Vue Xiong*

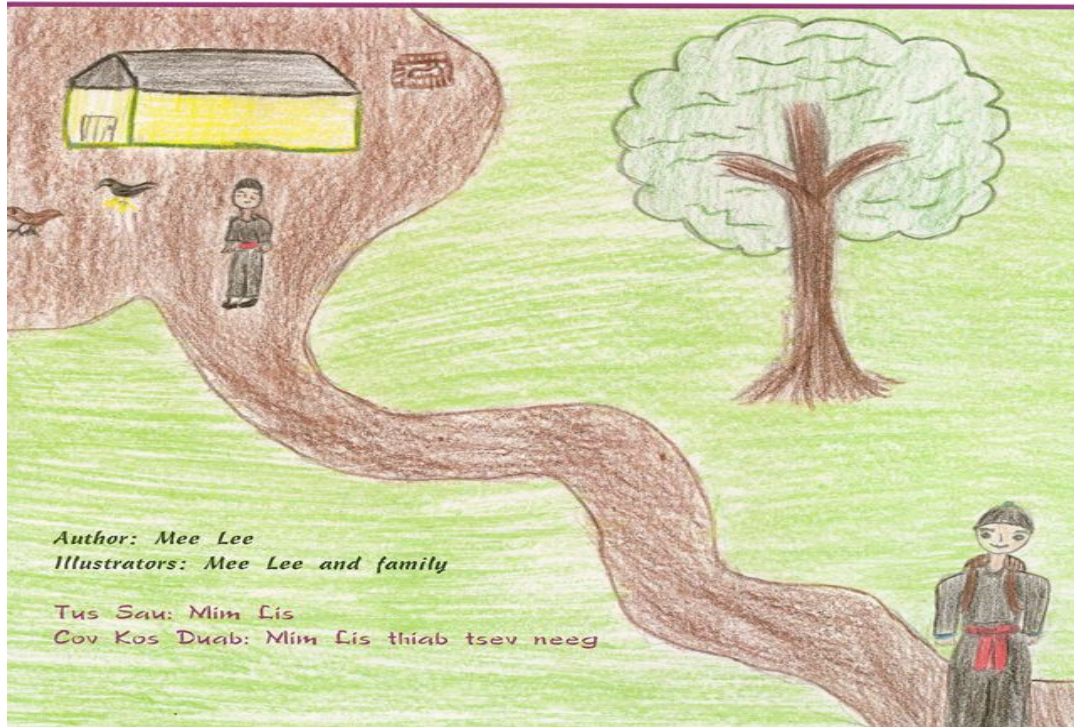
Illustrators: *Vue Xiong and family*

Tus Sau: *Vwj Xyooj*

Cov Kos Duab: *Vwj Xyooj thiab tsev neeg*

Yia's Lesson

Yia Txoj Kev Kawm Ntawv



PDFs of the Texts

[A Father's Love](#)

[From Thailand to America: A Dream Come True](#)

[Grandpa, Why Did the Hmong Come to America?](#)

[Little Sister and the Snake Prince](#)

[The Tigers and the Deer](#)

[Two Brothers and the Monk](#)

[Yia's Lesson](#)

Gray, S.(2021). *A virtual photovoice early literacy study with Karenni mothers*
(Publication No. 28541309)
[Doctoral Dissertation,
Cardinal Stritch University].
Proquest Dissertations and
Theses Global.



Project 2: Parent/Caregiver Empowerment Using Photovoice Techniques

Purpose of this Photovoice Study

The purpose of this qualitative photovoice study was to explore the unique funds of knowledge within sociocultural-based literacy experiences of Karenni preschoolers as defined by their mothers to bridge home to school and school to home cultures for their empowerment within the educational process.

Photovoice is a way to



REFLECT



TALK



LEARN



SHARE



**IMPRO
VE LIVES**

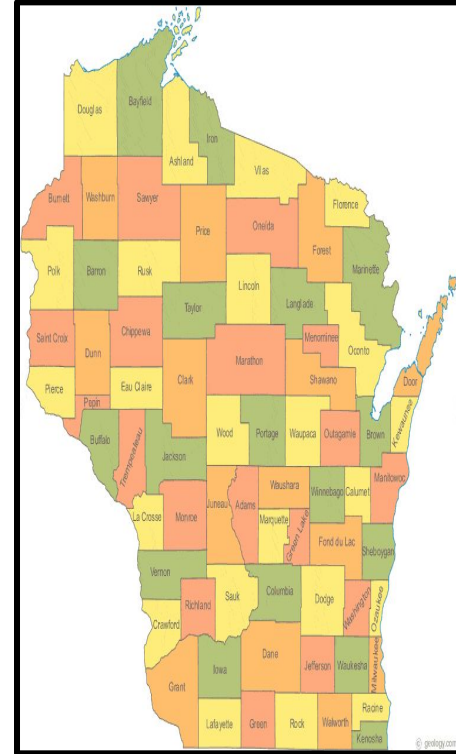
Multilingualism of the Karenni People

Kayah Li

Burmese

Thai

English



Written Language-1962

- Karenni (Kayah)
- Burmese
- Romanized

Participants for the Photovoice Study

Sample

- Selected through homogeneous sampling:
 - 6 Karenni mothers
 - 7 preschoolers
 - resided in a midwestern metropolitan area

Recruitment

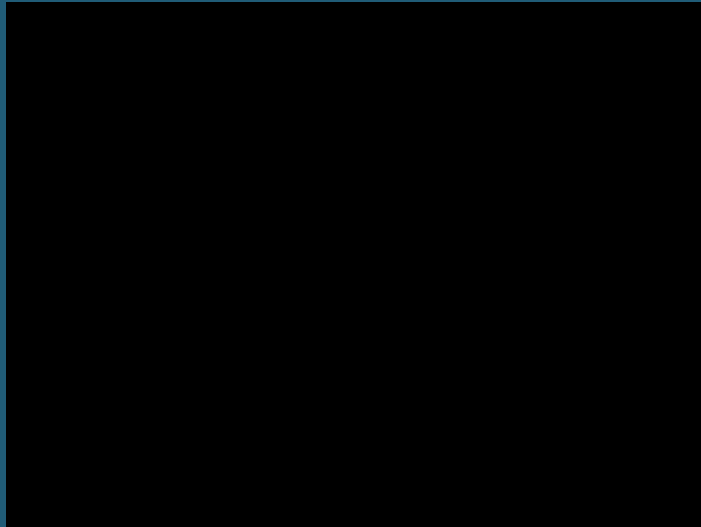
- Occurred through collaboration with a Karenni interpreter/translator contacting Karenni mothers of preschoolers.

Setting

- Utilized virtual Facebook Room and Zoom for mothers to share their photos and related stories.

The Study Prompts for Photo Collection

- **The mothers wanted to show**
 - their preschoolers' experiences learning to read, write, speak, and listen.
 - their Karenni children in their homes, schools, and community activities that related to early literacy learning.



The Study Prompts for Individual Narratives



- Place: Where was the picture taken?



- People: Who is in the picture?



- Objects: What things are in the picture?



- Action: What are they doing in the picture?

The Study Prompts for Group Storytelling

- **P:** Describe the PICTURE.
- **H:** What is HAPPENING in the picture?
- **O:** In your OPINION, why was this picture taken?
- **T:** What does this picture TELL about a Karenni child's experience with learning to read, write, speak, and/or listen?
- **O:** How does this picture reflect life experiences that you think should OCCUR in the classroom?
- **S:** How does the picture represent what you want to SHARE about your child's literacy experiences when he/she attends school?

Coding of Data for RQ1

Phase 1: Categories

- In-person Preschool
- Virtual Preschool
- Doing Music Activities (Singing, Playing Music, Dancing To Music)
- Doing Visual-spatial Art Activities (Drawing & Scribbling On Paper, Coloring On The Computer, Doing Creative Art Projects, Cutting Paper, Building With Blocks)
- Writing Activities
- Reading, Viewing Print, And Listening To Books
- Using Technology
- Walking
- Biking
- Meditating
- Food-related Habits
- Following Bedtime Routines
- Celebrating Events
- Visiting The Doctor

Phase 2: Subcategories

- In-person Preschool
- Virtual Preschool
- Literacy Through Engaging in Creative Expressive Activities
- Reading, Writing, and/or Technology Activities
- Wellness Activities
- Daily Interactions

Phase 3: Themes

- Meaningful Literacy Experiences
 - In Preschool
 - In The Home & Community

Meaningful Early Literacy Experiences as Identified by Karenni Mothers



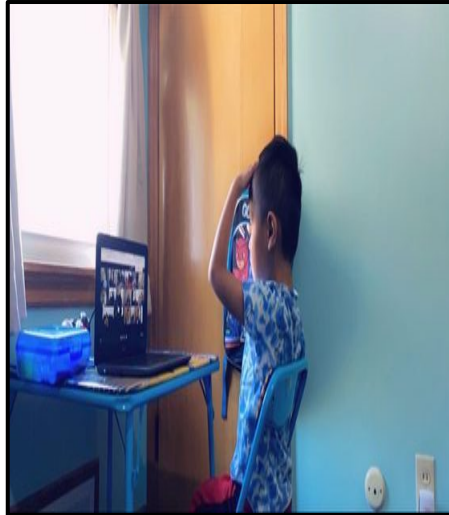
“When someone is able to gain insight or gain something from an activity that is what makes it meaningful. So, if they are not able to take something away from the activity or gain something from that activity it is not considered meaningful.”

The Coding of the Data

Communication



Curriculum & Instruction



Relationships



Resources



How can we apply the photovoice process?

1. Invite parents/caregivers to share photos
2. Discuss photos
3. Identify instructional meaning of photos



We can use funds of knowledge represented in photos to support learning related to many early literacy skills!

Letter Names

Letter Sounds

Vocabulary

Phonological Awareness



Supporting Literacy Through Sharing Experiences

Letter Names & Sounds:

- **Identify** the name and sound of the letter (d)

Vocabulary:

- **Practice** verbs (swimming, flapping, quacking)
- **Identify** the habitat of ducks
- **List** the anatomy of a duck (beak, wings)
- **Write** and talk about ducks

Phonological Awareness:

- **Sing** duck songs with rhyming words (Five Little Ducks)
- **Ask:** What sound do you hear at the beginning of *duck*? (/d/)
- **Ask:** What word would you have if you put these sounds together: /p/-/o/-/n/-/d/?
- **Ask:** What word would you have if you changed the /b/ in best to /n/? (*nest*)



Find a photo on your phone of a shared experience:



- Place: Where was the picture taken?



- People: Who is in the picture?



- Objects: What things are in the picture?



- Action: What are you doing in the picture?

In conclusion...

To identify the authentic literacy experiences for your students:

- Funds of Knowledge
- Partnerships with families and community organizations
- Elevate the stories of your students

Reflection

As you think about the students and families you support...

- How could you design literacy experiences that elevate the unique lived, cultural, and linguistic experience of the students and their families?
- How will you establish the commitment, trust, and collaboration with students and their families in order to understand their funds of knowledge?



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