

Overview of CDLC's Community Voices Project

CDLC Partners Meeting at CNNC

February 20, 2014

CDLC's Mission is...

- To be a catalyst for innovative, relevant, collaborative and policy-related research, leveraging the synergy and knowledge of faculty, staff, students, and communities locally, nationally and globally.

Three related goals...

- **Developing a ... research agenda** to address the educational and socio-cultural wellbeing of DLC individuals and groups;
- **Establishing and strengthening partnerships** among diverse language community stakeholders ...
- **Advocating and engaging in outreach activities...**

Community Voices Project Goals

- **Engage** immigrants, refugees, and educators in exploring their perspectives on education in the United States.
- Better **understand** how to improve education services for children and families from diverse language communities.
- **Inform** others about how members of refugee and immigrant communities in our region have experienced the educational systems in their homeland and in our local schools.

Two CV Research Projects

Study #1 - Community Voices and the Problem of English

Examine the perceptions of immigrant and refugee community members' school experiences, especially as they relate to language and literacy practices, in order to offer educators new insights to the language and literacy instruction for immigrant and refugee students.

Study #2 - Imagined Community of Education

Using the perspective of community cultural wealth, learn about the educational experiences of immigrant and refugee community members in their home countries and in the United States, and understand the supports and challenges identified by immigrant and refugee families based on their perceived reality of education.

Focus Group Participants

Focus Groups were conducted with people from

- **China** (N=4), **Liberia** (N=10), **Mexico** (N=3), and **Sudan** (N=5) living and working in our region for between five and 27 years.
- Participants ranged in age from 16 to 53 years; the average age was 33.
- Participants who were parents reported having children between the ages of two and 26 attending local schools, or who had already completed their K-12 education.

Study #1

Community Voices and the Problem of English

Research Question: What are the perceptions of immigrant and refugee community members' school experiences, especially as they relate to language and literacy practices?

Data source: Transcripts of focus groups

Study #1 Findings

Language and Literacy Practices

- Experiences related to learning and speaking English and/or enhancing their first language shape success in U.S.
- Language learning experiences of the participants' children are shaped by English as a second language.

Social and Cultural Practices

- Unofficial norms for parent/teacher interaction, parent/child interaction, teacher/child interaction, and maintenance of cultural values that are manifest through dress, discipline, and communication styles.
- Yielded insights into the ways in which cultural and social practices shape understanding of and participation in the school experience.

Theoretical Framework

- **Community Cultural Wealth**

- “an array of knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts possessed and utilized by Communities of Color to survive and resist macro and micro of oppression” (Yosso, 2005, p.77)
- Aspirational capital, linguistic capital, familial capital, social capital, navigational capital, and resistant capital

- **Imagined Community of Education**

- “a community of the imagination – a desired community that offers possibilities for an enhanced range of identity options in the future” (Norton, 2010, p. 355).

Study #2

Imagined Community of Education

Research Questions: (1) What are the cultural wealth assets immigrant and refugee families bring into education? (2) What supports and challenges are identified by immigrant and refugee families based on their perceived reality of education?

Data sources: Transcripts of focus groups

Study #2 Findings

- Parents in this study describe experiences and fears that their children are not being challenged enough, are not recognized for their talents, are discriminated against, and are being bullied.
- Parents use several forms of capital (aspirational, social, navigational, linguistic, and resistant) to overcome barriers and challenges related to cultural transitions, language discrimination, and expectations as parents of students in U.S. schools

Future Goals

- Desire to conduct more focus groups with diverse language communities.
- Plans to make video about college access available in many languages
- Hope to get funding for additional videos and for teacher professional development about working effectively with children and families from diverse language communities