



HMông Students' Sources of Funds of Knowledge: A Case Study of Kinh Primary School Teachers' Practices

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ABSTRACT

Teachers working with ethnic minority students who have different language and cultural background from their own may have little knowledge of their students in out-of-school context. This lack of students' knowledge and resources outside of the school may lead to deficit thinking regarding this non-dominated group as intellectually and academically deficient. Underachievement and low study engagement by HMông ethnic minority students in disadvantaged primary schools in Vietnam evidence a need for more effective teaching practices to support these minority students' learning and reduce inequality within their educational environment. The funds of knowledge (FoK) approach attempts to overcome teachers' perceptions of ethnic minority students and their knowledge through learning about these students' FoK and incorporating these insights into the teaching practices. The purpose of this study is to explore how Kinh teachers identify HMông students' sources of FoK in order to support their teaching/learning practices. This research employs qualitative educational research method together with case study method to examine the way Kinh primary teachers identify HMông students' sources of FoK. The findings indicate that Kinh primary teachers identified HMông students' different sources of FoK that the teachers could beneficially be drawing on to empowering HMông children' participation, achievement and Kinh teachers' teaching practices.

1. INTRODUCTION

Ethnic minority students teaching in Vietnam, particularly for HMông children, has been raising significant concerns regarding curriculum and content, pedagogical practices, and deficit thinking toward ethnic minority students (Tran, 2013; Lavoie, 2011). Underachievement and low study engagement by HMông ethnic minority students in disadvantaged primary schools in Vietnam evidence a need for more effective teaching practices to support these minority students' learning and reduce inequality within their educational environment (World Bank, 2011). Vietnamese government has set up some educational programs for ethnic minority schools that focus on acknowledging and valuing their cultural aspects, intellectual knowledge and resources as a desirable teaching strategy for improving their educational outcomes, especially HMông minority students (Rheinländer et al., 2015; UNICEF, 2015).

Resolution 29-NQ/TW dated 2013 on fundamental and comprehensive innovation in education and training emphasized renovating educational objectives, contents, and teaching methods toward learners' competencies and qualities. The new general education program was introduced in 2018 focusing on different topics in culture, geography, history, economics, political and environment. In addition, developing teachers' competencies and

pedagogical methods based on ethnic minority students' language, cultural knowledge, identity and daily knowledge, as well as other resources, is a key policy requirement. However, the appropriate exploration and implementation of ethnic minority students' knowledge and other resources in school settings are still highly questionable as their relevance and application is examined.

To date, little attention has been paid to using knowledge of ethnic minority children in out-of-school context for educational purposes. In particular for H'Mông children, educational programs and policies have not been explicit about the deploying of ethnic minority-related knowledge, experiences and daily practices as educational resources to support academic knowledge in formal education. Moreover, most teachers working with ethnic minority students in Vietnam are Kinh people who have different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Therefore, the need to recognize and draw on ethnic minority students' intellectual resources to support their learning is increasingly important.

The funds of knowledge concept (Moll et al., 1990; González et al., 2005) was introduced as a strategy in school settings to target understanding disadvantaged students' resources from ethnic minority families with lower socio-economic status. By examining ethnic minority students' sources of FoK, teachers - dominated by middle class white females can learn, draw upon and then incorporate their FoK as scaffolding between familiar knowledge away from the school and academic knowledge in the classroom.

Learning about students' sources of FoK and incorporation into their learning enables teachers to increase relevant learning experiences, empowering a socio-constructivist approach to teaching and learning (Moll et al., 1990; González et al., 2005) and obviating cultural deficits facing minority disadvantaged students in school (Rodríguez, 2013). In this case, schools should 'identify and draw on' communities', parents' and children's sources of FoK to recognize them and improve teaching and learning practices in school.

Using a *funds of knowledge* approach as a framework, this study investigates the potential for using FoK in the education of H'Mông ethnic minority primary students in Vietnam. The study's primary purpose is to identify sources of FoK of H'Mông students in out-of-school contexts that were explored and employed by Kinh teachers for their teaching and learning practices. Specifically, the purpose for doing so is to answer the research question: *What sources of H'Mông students' FoK, if any, do Kinh teachers identify in their practices across primary school curricula?*

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Background to 'funds of knowledge' and sources of funds of knowledge

The concept of funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992; Gonzalez et al., 2005) is to help educators change their views on working-poor families and recognize resources and strengths these households possess, and design curricular and teaching practices basing on these strengths. Funds of knowledge concept was derived from research within Mexican-American and Latino households in Tucson, Arizona, USA. It aimed to redress deficit views of children as learners whose educational problems lay with diminished home experiences. Instead, it emphasised the critical need for teachers to familiarize themselves with the rich knowledge and daily experiences of students and their families as a new approach for teaching practices.

Learning about students' sources of FoK and incorporation into their learning enables teachers to increase relevant learning experiences, empowering a socio-constructivist approach to teaching and learning (Moll et al., 1990; González et al., 2005) and obviating cultural deficits facing minority disadvantaged students in school (Rodríguez, 2013). In this case, schools should 'identify and draw on' communities', parents' and children's sources of FoK to recognize them and improve teaching and learning practices in school. The foregoing literature indicates that sources of FoK is a contested and contestable concept (e.g. Zipin, 2009; Hedges, 2011; Saubich & Esteban-Guitart, 2011; Hogg, 2011). Andrews and Yee (2006) made explicit reference in the field of "funds of knowledge" focusing on recognizing and valuing knowledge and expertise in daily lives of two primary school-aged minority ethnic children to improving achievement' outcomes of ethnic minority pupil.

Moll and Greenberg (1990) carried out research on Hispanic (predominantly Mexican) working-class families in Tucson, Arizona, based on a "household analysis" (p. 320) of how these families functioned and exchanged knowledge, where a diversity of household skills and practices was noted. However, Andrews and Yee (2006) pointed out that in the Moll and Greenberg study (1990), on the broad levels of language and class there was homogeneity amongst these families. Tenery (2005) went on to state that learning and valuing cultural resources through Hispanic minority students' family members, in combination with the students' strong cultural identity build a mutual trust between her and the students.

Moll et al. (1992, p. 139) were conscious that sources of FoK should be considered to include daily life skills, expertise and knowledge that need to be recognized and valued in school and avoid perceiving FoK as cultural capital that represents “folkloric displays such as storytelling, arts, craft and art performances”. Therefore, it should reside or sustain within the family unit, drawing on “what people do and what they say about what they do” (González et al., 2005, p. 40). However, Saubich and Esteban-Guitart (2011) stood against the notion that sources of FoK should be extended, and support the funds of identity concept. These researchers pointed out students’ “identity is embedded in tangible, historical cultural factors such as social institutions, artefacts and cultural beliefs” (Saubich & Esteban-Guitart, 2011, p. 98). These authors argued that those cultural features still embody and energize the FoK notion. Examination of sources of FoK of Hông students and their community in Vietnam, in which the current research was carried out, is expected to reflect a higher degree of diversity of ethnicity, language and cultural knowledge, and class amongst the minority ethnic children and families.

Zipin (2009) argued for extending the sources of FoK to include dark FoK, claiming that this form of knowledge emanates from the disadvantaged conditions experienced by students, families, and communities from vulnerable socio-economic backgrounds. Subjects included could be, for example, poverty, violence, mental health issues and racism, being often absent from school curricula. Their resilience and resistance to hardship could become valuable knowledge to help engage students and revitalize the teaching and learning process (Zipin et al., 2015).

In Vietnam, the only research found was Hedges et al.’s (2016) study of primary teacher-ethnic minority parent partnership practices that foregrounded local FoK in a Bah’nar primary education class. These authors went on to assert that, the relational concept of everyday knowledge of Bah’nar minority students and academic knowledge in the context of valuing ethnic minority families’ FoK ledge lead to improving teacher - parent partnerships that would advantage minority children’s study and life achievements in Vietnam.

This research considers the importance of thorough understanding the FoK definition and different sources of FoK. It is supposed that a restricted FoK definition cannot provide comprehensive information within this context because diverse sources of FoK might manifest in different children, locations, communities and networks (Thomson & Hall, 2008), and any and all sources of FoK gained from life experience could contribute to students’ prior knowledge as they engage in the classroom context (Hogg, 2013). Hence, the current research explores an array of multiple FoK of Hông students and their families that could serve as educational resources for the co-construction of knowledge in teaching Hông students and contribute to the FoK theoretical framework.

2.2. Context of the study

Regarding teaching ethnic minority education in Vietnam, especially for Hông students, the significant issues are the absence of recognition and valuation of the language and intellectual knowledge and cultural values of minority students, and their community in school settings, namely: (1) limited school curricula and textbooks that are not associated with the languages, cultures and knowledge in everyday life of ethnic minority students (Hông children) and their community (Tran, 2013; Bui, 2014); (2) lack of minority students’ fund of language knowledge in school environment (Phan et al., 2014; Bui et al., 2019); (3) lack of culturally-responsive pedagogy (Rheinländer et al., 2015, Dang & Boyd, 2014); (4) lack of adequate teacher education and Hông teachers (Le et al., 2016); and (5) deficit thinking relating to ethnic minority students (Baulch et al., 2011, World Bank, 2014). These five major issues hinder teachers, especially Kinh primary education teachers, whose different language and cultural knowledge guide their approaches to and uses of teaching practices that fail to appropriately draw on the language, cultural knowledge and experiences of ethnic minority students.

Discussion of the strategy and planning to reduce inequality of quality education between minority students and Kinh children in Vietnam has made clear that developing teachers’ competencies and pedagogical methods based on ethnic minority students’ languages, cultural knowledge, identities, daily knowledge, as well as other resources, is a key policy requirement. These educational policies regarding ethnic minority students in Vietnam using the FoK approach was initially introduced using various methods whereby teachers explored and implemented ethnic minority students’ sources of FoK in school settings, such as Bilingual Curriculum Program (UNICEF, 2015); the Mother Tongue-based Bilingual Education (MTBBE) program (UNICEF, 2015); local language training for teachers (World Bank, 2017); Improving coordination between school/teachers and pupil/parents/community (World Bank & MOET, 2009); Using local teaching assistants (World Bank, 2013). However, there are inconsistencies in these policies implementation in teacher education and in schools. In reality, these Vietnamese education policies tend to ignore and underestimate cultures and languages of minority students in teaching practices (Nguyen & Hamid, 2017).

FoK approach and sources of FoK of ethnic students that can be explored and integrated into classroom settings must be considered as an educational resource to foster ethnic minority students' study in the Vietnamese context. The review of the literature also shows that in order to discover and justify HMông students' sources of FoK, there is a need to explore what Kinh teachers say, intend and do/practice, in relation to their HMông students' knowledge, practices and other resources. Therefore, it is necessary for teacher education to address minority students' sources of FoK, as it is central to overcoming disparities in school experiences and study outcomes among ethnic minority groups.

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research to explore how Kinh teachers identified HMông students' sources of FoK to support their teaching and learning practices. In an attempt to achieve the objective of this study, a case study was designed to determine what sources of FoK of HMông students that Kinh primary teachers explored and used in their teaching curriculum. The decision was made to purposively sample two schools with high populations of HMông students in Van Chan district, including: (1) Trâu Piôr semi-boarded primary school and (2) Khiz Zangx semi-boarded primary school (pseudonym). The criteria used for purposive sampling of the primary school teachers (N=26, with N=13 from each school). Kinh primary teachers were the main group interviewed because they represent the core focus of the research. It is these teachers who decided what HMông students' sources of FoK Kinh teacher explored and used in teaching the school curriculum.

The researcher developed a qualitative case study research design that documented HMông students' sources of FoK Kinh teacher explored and used in teaching the school curriculum. In-depth interviews and document analysis were the main tools used to address the above research question.

In-depth interviews

The researcher conducted 26 face-to-face Kinh teacher interviews. The goal of this study is to explore HMông students' sources of FoK Kinh teacher explored and used in teaching the school curriculum. As a part of the work, 26 Kinh teachers participated in in-depth interviews with qualitative methods. These interviews aim to reveal Kinh teachers' experience conducting home visits and their knowledge of HMông's daily knowledge, daily practices and other resources.

Educational documents

The purpose of this method is to locate valued data sources from ethnic educational programs and minority education policy, and from the teachers themselves in their teaching that could explore sources of FoK used in the school settings.

To be more specific, the documents examined are (1) all project documents and reports related to ethnic minority education; (2) national primary curriculum materials that possibly allows the investigation of the quality of lessons and topics associated with ethnic minority students' FoK, particularly HMông students, in this case; (3) other educational policies and guidelines on primary curriculum and instructions involving applying sources of FoK in education, especially for ethnic minority education, and (4) teacher-supplied information on teaching, documenting classroom interaction based on the teachers' everyday teaching and/or their handbooks.

In the current study, data collected from the field trip were processed and analysed following the main steps as shown in Figure 1. First, the collected data were organized and prepared for analysis. This involved transcribing interviews, typing field notes and sorting the data into different groups depending on the sources of information (Creswell, 2012). After the researcher had read through all the data to obtain a general idea of the information, the next step, detailed analysis, was commenced with a coding process. This study used both main approaches to code the data: by hand (paper) and by using qualitative data analysis software - NVivo.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study encompasses three themes of HMông students' sources of FoK that Kinh teachers identified when working with these students. The first theme involves HMông family-based FoK, emphasizing accumulated FoK from HMông households, the parents in particular. The second theme FoK emphasizes the local cultural dimensions of HMông communities within their regional contexts. Finally, HMông students' own FoK in embroidery and bilingualism constitute the last theme of HMông students' sources of FoK.

4.1. Family-based funds of knowledge

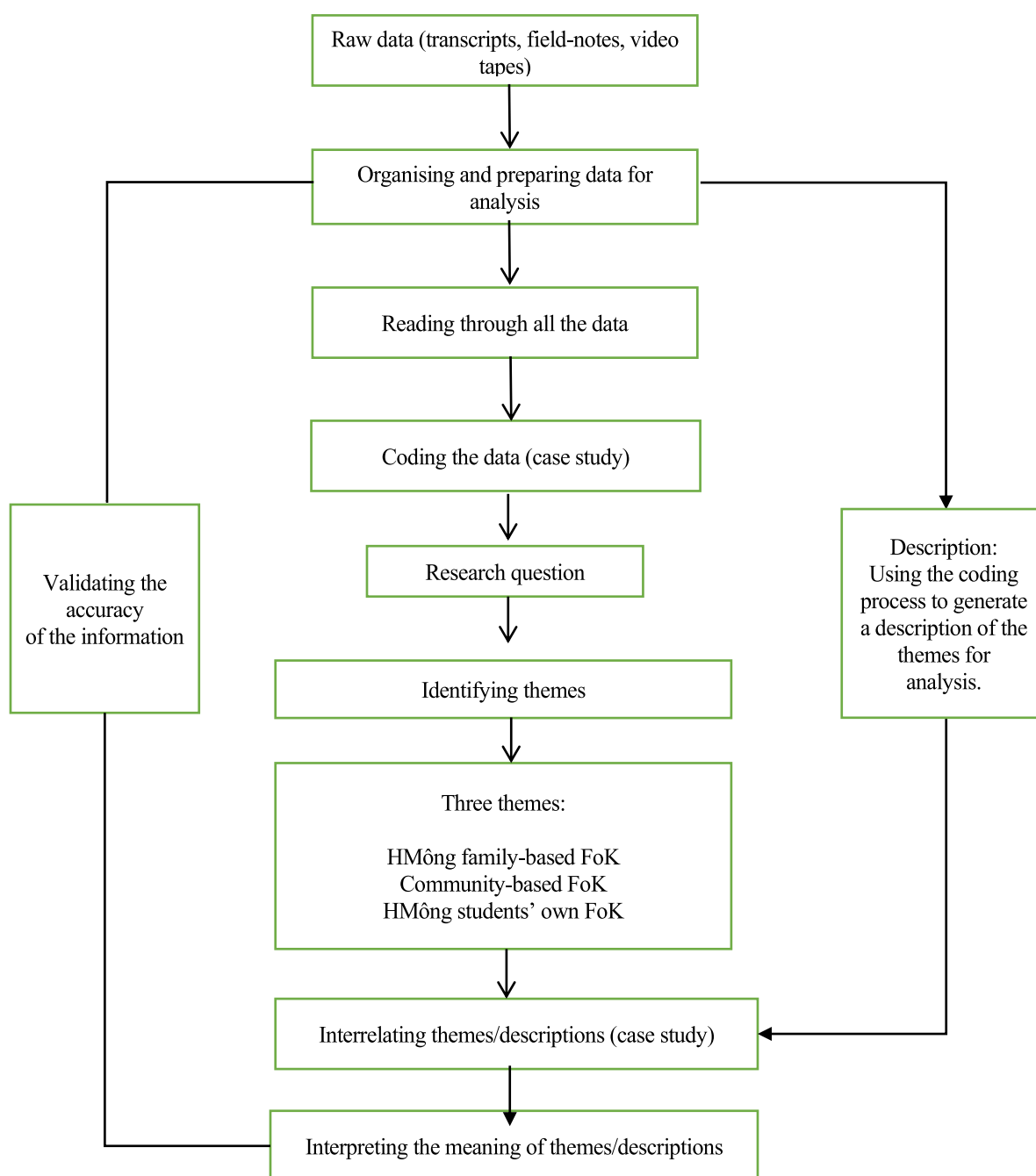


Figure 1. Data analysis in this research

Findings from the interviews of Kinh teachers make clear that HMông families are the powerful primary resources that influence HMông children's sources FoK. These sources of knowledge fall into three categories: (1) the occupational FoK of HMông parents both in and out of the home; (2) parents' HMông language, and (3) HMông families' cultural artefacts. This knowledge is molded and embedded in labour practices, everyday life activities and everyday contexts.

4.1.1. Parents' occupations

Through home visiting, Kinh teachers found that HMông children have demonstrated knowledge of farming and agricultural equipment that they are learnt from their parents. These students learn their parents' skills in farming, taking care of animals (pigs) and growing rice in terrace fields.

In one interview, Teacher Luong teaching Grade 1 HMông students at Khiz Zangx semi-boarding primary school described how her HMông students acquire their parents' knowledge of farming and agriculture in disadvantaged and vulnerable areas. Teacher Luong said:

Through home visiting, I found out that many of my HMông students went to the fields with their parents. They have typical knowledge of how to work in the unfertile fields or terrace fields and feeding buffalos in the field from their parents (Teacher Luong).

Teacher Luong supposed that in HMông's family, growing rice and husbandry are "bodies of knowledge that underlie household activities" (Moll, 2000, p. 258) and might be important resources for literacy, geography or nature science subjects that can support her learning at school. Teacher Luong claimed the funds of farming, feeding animals and other types of employment of HMông students' parents to be directly relevant to lessons and concepts related to farming or animal husbandry in the school curriculum.

Moreover, many Kinh teachers interviewed noted that outside schools, their students have knowledge of taking care of their younger brother/ sister and doing a lot of work at home. At this point, Kinh teachers did not talk about sibling care knowledge as *dark FoK* (Zipin, 2009) that could become an educational resource for their teaching practices -- though it did help teacher Dao to better understand her HMông students' behavior in the classroom (such as falling asleep during lessons or being distracted) -- and develop the empirical thinking and judgment to minimize their deficit thinking toward ethnic minority students and their community.

4.1.2. Parents' HMông language

A large number of Kinh primary teachers said that the role of the HMông language is a crucial and a popular resource in teaching HMông students. They spoke of incidents in which they had to employ explicit knowledge of the students' the first language. To many Kinh primary teachers, the HMông language is considered a language of instructions alongside Vietnamese for teaching HMông students, particularly in teaching them Vietnamese language.

Teacher Anh was a bilingual teacher (Kinh and HMông) who taught Grade 2 and Grade 3 at Khiz Zangx semi-boarding primary school. She said, "*I know many HMông children are really afraid of it [Vietnamese].*" Teacher Anh also said, "*without using HMông language in the classroom we [HMông students and teachers] would be quite confused.*"

In short, viewing bilingualism as an educational resource, not a hindrance, the Kinh primary teachers shared a strong view toward HMông language FoK in teaching curricula or at least in term of language issues.

4.1.3. HMông families' cultural artefacts

Funds of knowledge of HMông households are shown through their musical knowledge, folksongs, poems and other artefacts. Many Kinh primary teachers recognize and value the cultural artefacts of HMông families such as the stories and poems that they compose in the process of their labour -- in an original context. Through home visits, Kinh teachers can explore a vast reservoir of HMông parents' and grandparents' folk stories that explains their histories, phenomena in their lives and working activities. Many Kinh teachers reported that they were not only aware of the funds of cultural artefacts in their student's family, but they also anticipated that the cultural knowledge in their students' home might potentially support student study in the classroom.

Other artefacts of HMông households such as *Luz cov* (cái cở hoặc cái bẻ) and *Leiv trak* (dao quăng) are agricultural tools used by HMông parents and children in the fields. In her assessment of artefacts valued by HMông families, Teacher Nha noted that, if she saw anything during home visits relating to their culture and occupation, she asked HMông parents or their children if they could borrow it for the classroom to incorporate it as part of their academic knowledge.

4.2. Community-based funds of knowledge

Outside HMông household settings, Kinh primary teachers recognized and appreciated HMông community-based FoK such as cultural events. Beyond the family, the Kinh teachers knew that HMông children participated in various social and cultural events in community settings. Therefore, to bring cultural knowledge of the HMông New Year to school, Kinh teachers coordinated with the HMông parents and students to organise events such as making Chung cake (*bánh Chung* - traditional New Year's cake of the Kinh) as well as Day cake (*bánh Dầy* - traditional New Year's cake of the HMông) at school. Another example is that, HMông parents and children are encouraged to embroider various colorful patterns to decorate classrooms and other learning spaces.

4.3. HMông students' own funds of knowledge

The last source of FoK explored by Kinh primary teachers comes from HMông students' own knowledge, which includes their interests and talents. The concentration is on the individual knowledge of HMông students, not that of their family or community.

4.3.1. Embroidery skills

All Kinh teachers interviewed agreed that the children are very skilful in embroidery. The crucial knowledge has been passed on from peers, parents, and grandparents. Everyday, during school break time or in the hostel after school, HMông children, especially HMông girls, often embroider patterns on their traditional skirts or clothing (Teacher Chinh).

Teacher Nha - a Grade 5 Kinh teacher of a subject named Basic Techniques at Khiz Zangx semi-boarding primary school recognized that HMông students' embroidery abilities and contented faces suggested powerful resources for teaching her subject, with many applications for their learning. Teacher Nha said, *"I soon realized that their knowledge and skills in embroidery were far greater than I had gleaned."* Teacher Nha described the engagement of HMông students during her teaching time. The example from Teacher Nha showed that in exploring HMông students' FoK, Kinh teachers can enrich their own knowledge as well and then extend this to different curriculum activities that build up conceptual understandings for themselves and their students.

4.3.2. Bilingualism of HMông students

Outside the classroom, Kinh teachers often ask older students with Vietnamese proficiency about their culture, knowledge and selected HMông vocabulary they can explore or translate into Tiếng Việt for teaching purposes. One telling example is of a Kinh teacher who asked an older HMông boy about some HMông vocabulary she did not understand, which helped highlight another critical FoK element: his bilingualism (Teacher Loan). The analysis suggested that students' peers play an important role in helping younger HMông students - especially in Grade 1 and 2 - learn how to read and write Vietnamese at school.

4.4. Discussion

This paper has addressed the research question regarding sources of FoK of HMông students in relation to academic knowledge that is explored and employed by Kinh teachers. The teacher participants described, analysed and reflected upon their knowledge during conversations with the researcher. Through the use of extended interview transcripts, Kinh teachers' stories, and their commitment, different sources of HMông students' FoK that can support the teaching practices were revealed. The following sets out the key points that emerged from the analysis of evidence presented in this chapter.

There are wide-ranging sources of FoK of HMông students and their families. Kinh teachers pointed out that they did explore multiple sources of HMông students' FoK that can be categorized into different themes, as shown in Table 1. Many of these teachers viewed these sources of FoK of their students as a potential resource for pedagogical practices, rather than perceiving this ethnic minority group as low-awareness learners or of low economic status. Moreover, HMông students' own knowledge can be perceived as a potentially significant contribution of this study to the existing literature when compared with previous FoK research that has perhaps too narrowly focused on students' parents and community (Hogg, 2011; Hedges et al., 2011).

This finding seems to contradict previous results from Moll et al. (1992) who used the term funds of knowledge to refer to "historically accumulated and culturally-developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being" (p. 134). More specifically, Moll and his colleagues (1992; also see Moll et al., 1990) argued that household FoK connected to information about matters such as trade, business, and finance or knowledge about exchanging resources through social networks to enhance households' ability to survive. Moll et al. (1992, p. 139) argued that: Our concept of funds of knowledge is innovative, we believe, in its special relevance to teaching, and contrasts with the more general term "culture," or with the concept of a "culture-sensitive curriculum," and with the latter's reliance on folkloric displays, such as storytelling, arts, crafts, and dance performance.

While teaching HMông students, it is likely that Kinh teachers concentrate less on the economic knowledge of HMông parents and favour anthropological concepts such as culture, and folkloric displays such as storytelling, arts, embroidery and language. In other words, this study found that the Kinh teachers tended to emphasise HMông students' and their parents' funds of identity concept (Saubich & Esteban-Guitart, 2011; Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014), a feature that seems to fall outside Moll's (1990) FoK framework. The teachers in this study considered the sources of HMông funds of identity as educational resources, as they explained their work with HMông students to improve their study outcomes and at-school behavior.

In the current study, there were only two Kinh teachers who used economic aspects of HMông parents (selling tea leaves) to replace unfamiliar words in problem-solving mathematics lessons. However, they did not go further to ask their students to think about these economic implications in learning mathematics. Thus, the HMông parents' economic FoK were likely to be absent from the Kinh primary teachers teaching/learning practices. Turner (2012, p.

549) explained that HMông economic production “is based on human need rather than profit, with the concepts of well-being [seen as central].” This researcher further stated that the economic production of HMông farmers is reflected in “semi-subsistence terms rather than a shift to capitalist, market-oriented or ‘modernist’ consumer requisites” (Turner, 2012, p. 549). It is likely that HMông economic self-sufficiency actually points to them not being integrated into a capitalist economy. In contrast, Moll et al. (1992) approach has an economic capitalist focus wherein the HMông is seen as “deficient”.

Table 1. Comparison of household funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992) and the HMông students’ funds of knowledge

A Sample of Household Funds of Knowledge		HMÔNG CHILDREN’S FUNDS OF KNOWLEDGE	
<i>Agriculture and Mining</i>	<i>Material & Scientific Knowledge</i>	Family-based funds of knowledge	Parents’ job <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farming • Picking tea leaves • Crop planting (tea) • Animal management • Feeding animals (cattle, buffalo) • Using labour tools (ploughs, picks) • Shucking corn • Taking care of children Parents’ language <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HMông language Parents’ cultural artefacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Musical instruments, • Folk stories • HMông poems
Ranching and farming Horse riding skills Animal management Soil and irrigation systems Crop planting Hunting, tracking, dressing	Construction Carpentry Roofing Masonry Painting Design and architecture		
Mining Timbering Minerals Blasting Equipment operation and maintenance	Repair Airplane Automobile Tractor House maintenance		
<i>Economics</i>	<i>Medicine</i>	Community-based on Funds of Knowledge	Cultural events
Business Market values Appraising Renting and selling Loans Labor laws Building codes Consumer knowledge Accounting Sales	Contemporary medicine Drugs First aid procedures Anatomy Midwifery Folk medicine Herbal knowledge Folk cures Folk veterinary cures		
<i>Household Management</i>	<i>Religion</i>	Students’ own Funds of Knowledge	Bilingualism Embroidery
Budgets Childcare Cooking Appliance repairs	Catechism Baptisms Bible studies Moral knowledge and ethics		

In short, the funds of knowledge notion, which is geared toward knowledge about household functioning, development and well-being, provides a critical path to assess the diverse FoK sources of HMông children that are embedded in their families, communities and cultures. A major finding from this study is that Kinh primary teachers explore and value different sources of HMông funds of identity. They engage HMông students’ language, customs, artefacts and other cultural resources that are stimulated and constructed through their everyday life experiences. Furthermore, these sources of HMông students’ funds of identity were recognized and highlighted by Kinh primary teachers through a variety of pedagogies, that they deployed in order to engage the children in their classrooms. Kinh primary teachers created opportunities to explore and value HMông children’s funds of identity in family homes during home visits, and during cultural celebrations in the community and primary schools.

5. CONCLUSION

Recognizing and valuing intellectual knowledge, culture, and other sources of FoK of ethnic minority students may be particularly vital in improving HMông students’ study and the teaching and learning process. This paper has reported on one aspect of a research project in Yen Bai, a mountainous province in Việt Nam, to identify multiple sources of FoK of HMông students through Kinh teachers’ exploring.

Through exploring and gaining an insights into their HMông students’ FoK, the Kinh teachers developed their attitudes toward re-conceptualising HMông students’ and their families’ FoK sources not as barriers to children learning but as potential resources that can be tapped and integrated into teaching curricula and reduce deficit thinking concerning ethnic minority students. In this context, it can be seen that HMông students’ sources FoK are educationally important for the teachers working with the HMông school children. In reflecting upon the above FoK

resources, it seems that the more meaningful inquiry would be to ask how pedagogical practices are employed by Kinh teachers to build on these types of FoK that Hông students bring into the classroom. Hence, further research could investigate the pedagogical practices of a FoK approach for ethnic minority Hông students in Vietnam.

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