How School Leaders Address the Needs of Refugee Students

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HOW SCHOOL LEADERS ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF REFUGEE STUDENTS

by

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On a day in the fall of 2001, which was my first semester in the United States, I was walking around the hall of 11th floor of the Educational Science Building at UW-Madison to drop by the department office. At that time my eye caught a student in a suit, just coming out of a room and waiting for something with a nervous look on her face. After a while, a professor came out of the room and said to her "Congratulations" and she shouted with joy.

I realized that she had just finished her final defense and had got the title of Ph.D. I stood there and sighed, wondering, 'Can I be like her someday? Can I really finish this study? How long will it take?' In the first semester in a foreign land with a language barrier, living by myself, leaving family and friends behind in my home country, was not easier than I thought. A great deal of anxiety and little confidence possessed me at that time.

Since then several years have passed, and I find myself preparing for my final defense in a short couple of weeks. Now I can see the light at the end of the tunnel of this long journey. Looking back on those years, there have been many hands and hearts that have helped me through this study. I wish to express my gratitude to them and would like to state their names.

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HOW SCHOOL LEADERS ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF REFUGEE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This cross-case study sought to establish a better understanding of leadership practice of schools that hosted newly-arrived refugee students through investigation of the artifacts that the leaders designed and implemented to help the children adjust to a new school life. This was conducted under the background of the second wave of Hmong refugees from 2004 to 2005 in the U.S., and three schools in different districts with large numbers of newly-arrived refugee students were selected. The research questions were (1) what artifacts were used to address the needs of newly-arrived refugee students across the three different schools? (2) how did these artifacts show how school leaders framed and solved problems in meeting the needs of the refugee students?

Throughout the study, Design Cycle Analysis Model served as a coding scheme and framework for analyzing and interpreting qualitative data in terms of problem-setting and problem-solving. I reconstructed the coded data into narrative cases of each school; next, in an attempt to synthesize the three narratives focusing on the problem-setting and problem-solving, I conducted a cross-case analysis.

The major findings of the study are as follows. Local contexts, especially the degree of linguistic diversity and the size of district, influenced the decision of the school districts

regarding placement of the newcomers in schools: spreading vs. concentrating. The small size rural school district concentrated recently-arrived refugee students into a transitional program while larger and more linguistically diverse districts spread out the students. Local school leaders seemed to develop artifacts to compensate for the constraints or to enhance the advantages of student placement practices.

Through the analysis of the artifacts that school leaders developed to address the needs of refugee students, a balance between social integration and efficient teaching resource operation was revealed as an important issue. School leaders in this study were negotiating between these two demands; if a school or school district spread Hmong refugee children across schools and classes, it would help increase interactions with mainstream peers; however, this might entail a need for more ESL and bilingual teaching resources.

Finally Hmong-American bilingual staff members, who have lived in the two cultures, Hmong and American, served as the core personnel resources for the refugee children. They were bridging between Hmong students and school and providing a comfort zone and guidance for refugee parents. In order to develop and secure bilingual teaching resources a leadership case of creating opportunities for Hmong teaching aides to get certified in elementary education was discussed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Background

American schools have long faced the responsibility for introducing immigrant families to life in the U.S. In recent years, schools have responded to the unique educational needs of a certain kind of immigrants, refugee families. School and district leaders have taken the lead in developing programs to meet the needs of refugee students and their families. Hmong refugees have been the largest group of refugees in the American Midwest. This study investigates how leaders in local public schools have constructed local programs and practices to reach out to Hmong refugee students and help them integrate into American life. The study will begin by describing the nature of the refugee issue in the U.S. It will consider the role schools have played in helping refugee children, and will describe a research study of how three Midwestern schools have worked to meet the needs of refugee children and their families.

The refugee issue has become a global issue. At the end of 2003, throughout the world, there were approximately 17.1 million refugees who departed to a new land. Most of the refugee population is comprised of Asian, African, European, and Latin American people (UNHCR, 2004b). As the number of refugees has doubled over the past decade, the migration of refugees has posed a growing challenge for international agencies, governments, and local institutions, such as public schools of the host countries, which are responsible for them. In the United Sates, around 53,000 refugees were admitted in 2004, and 54% of them were school-age children under the age of 18 (UNHCR, 2004a).

The unique circumstances of refugees demand a heavy toll on the children. Forced by war and persecution to leave their homeland, refugee children often arrive in their host country traumatized and disoriented (Rutter, 1994). The children may suffer psychologically, face financial challenges, lack parental involvement in education, and of course, suffer limited proficiency in the host country's language and difficulty in adapting to the new culture. Although some studies show that younger refugees tend to be more resilient in the host country and adapt more easily than adults, it is often not easy for the children to recover without assistance.

There has been much research that has looked at refugees in general, in particular focusing on social or individual factors that have an impact on the refugees' ability to manage their adjustment into a new life in the host country. However, there is a paucity of literature related to refugee children and school-based programs and services for them. Schools are regarded as one of the prime points of contact between refugees and the host culture and also play significant roles in the children's socialization process and cultural adjustment in their resettlement (Frater-Mathieson, 2004). Education, undoubtedly, is crucial for refugees.

Researchers have noted that school administrators and teachers can provide refugees with the route to self-sufficiency and a new life (Rutter, 1994). There has not been much research on how school leadership practices have dealt with the influx of refugee children and how school leaders in different local contexts negotiate their existing constraints and affordances to provide better circumstances for their refugee children. Hence, I wanted to explore leadership practices in the situation of hosting refugee children by investigating school-based programs and services related to the children. It is crucial to know how to address refugee children's needs and how to create and maintain conditions in schools which are better prepared to meet their needs and integrate them into school communities.

Due to the second wave of Hmong refugees to the United States, which occurred through over the period of 2004 to 2005, I was able to conduct my research on the school sites that recently received refugee children. This gave me an opportunity to access on-going processes school leaders were implementing to welcome and manage refugee children's transitions into the new school life. Wisconsin, a Midwest state in the United States received 1,941 Hmong refugees as of December 6, 2004 and among them at least 1,280 were school-age children under 18. I chose three different sites in the state with large numbers of Hmong refugee children—a small town, medium size urban setting, and large size metropolitan city—in order to understand how the scales of the schools and districts could influence the types of programs offered to refugee children. Investigating three distinctly different areas allowed me not only to look at various programs and services but also helped me perceive local situations that acted as constraints or affordances in the leadership practices.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to understand leadership practices of schools that hosted newly-arrived refugee students through investigating the artifacts (Halverson, 2003; 2004) that leaders designed and implemented to help them adjust to a new school life. Artifacts refer to the programs, procedures and policies designed to shape or reform existing practices in the institutional context (Halverson, 2003). Artifacts, in a broader meaning, are mediational tools that enable actors to engage in their purposeful activity (Wertsch, 1996, cited in Spillane, J. P., A. Coldren, et al., 2001). School practitioners use artifacts to engage in the activities in order to achieve the goals they set for school organization and individual members. Halverson (2004)

suggested that investigation of artifact implementation can help researchers access how practitioners frame and solve specific problems, set goals, and make value commitments in practice. Adopting Halverson's perspective for my study, I take the artifacts identified by local practitioners as important for educating refugee students as a lens for examining and understanding the complicated process of how school leaders think and act about refugee students.

Artifact analysis also reveals how leadership practice is not necessarily restricted to formal leaders such as school principals or administrators. I view leadership as being stretched over the work of teachers or other staff in the school (Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2003). People who are not in formal leadership positions can be leaders if they actively engaged in developing or implementing the artifacts that shape the conditions for the instructional practices of others in the school. This distributed leadership perspective (Spillane, J. P., A. Coldren, et al., 2001) encourages researchers to see leadership activity as distributed throughout the interactive web of actors, artifacts, and situations, which form that appropriate unit of analysis for studying leadership practice.

Research Questions

This study explores the artifacts that school practitioners developed or used to help newly-arrived Hmong refugee students adjust to a new school life. More specifically, it attempts to address the following two questions**:** (1) What artifacts were used to address the needs of newly-arrived refugee students across the three different schools? (2) How did these artifacts show how school leaders framed and solved problems in meeting the needs of the refugee students? These questions were generated based on Halverson (2002)'s Design Cycle Analysis Model (DCAM), an analytic model developed to track the genesis, development, iteration and

subsequent institutionalization of artifacts. I chose this model to analyze how leaders thought about their practices through considering their problem-setting and-solving processes. I also used DCAM as a base for coding data; more detailed explanation of the model is presented at Chapter 3, Methodology.

Limitations

This study examines under the following limitations. First, the participants of this study are school administrators, teachers, or other staff members who were involved in educating refugee children. Since the focus of the study is on leadership practices through the artifacts rather than the effectiveness of the programs or satisfactions of the beneficiaries, this study does not include data from any interviews or surveys directly with the refugee children or their parents. To make a more complete study of the issue, I would include voices of the students and parents to correct the possible bias toward the views of school practitioners.

Second, there is a sample size limitation. Studying three schools cannot possibly provide a large enough sample to warrant generalization. Including more schools in the study would help us see whether the practices uncovered here were typical or extraordinary. Further, each of the three were elementary schools. This leaves open the questions of whether the practices of these schools would fit in secondary schools. Finally, readers should not overgeneralize each school case to its entire school district. However, since this study is qualitative research, which is supposed to document and render a specific situation, limiting the number of school sites allows for an in-depth examination of how school leaders worked to meet the needs of their refugee population.

Third, refugee children in this study are Hmong. This unique group cannot represent

diverse groups of refugee children in the United States. Hmong ethnicity, language, and traditional cultures are unique. The children, who were born and lived in a refugee camp in the post-war period, were in different situations from other refugee children who directly experienced violent war or societal upheavals. The linguistic challenges of Hmong refugees are also unique. Until very recently, Hmong culture had not developed a written form of their language, making the transition to a heavily text-based school system particularly difficult. Therefore, the findings of the study may not be simply generalized to other refugee populations.

Finally, the schools in this study contain many artifacts related to refugee children. I focus on the artifacts that local school leaders identified as directly involved in helping refugee children's initial transitions or adjustment into a new school life; in other words, this study focuses on interventions or programs particularly for the "recently-arrived". Hmong refugee children in this study can be called "recently-arrived" newcomers since they have come to the United States less than one or two years before the point in time that my research was conducted.

Significance of the Study

Above all, this study presents an illustration of the systematic efforts of a school by showing how an artifact that leaders use for refugee children is linked to other artifacts and how they are interconnected in the existing instructional delivery system. Rather than listing individual commendable or exemplary programs or abstract characteristics of effective services for refugees, often found in the literature concerning refugees, and which may mislead readers to "miss the trees for the forest," this study attempts to help readers rise above and look at the interventions for the newcomers from a more inclusive and systematic viewpoint.

Secondly, this study compares school schools of three different district sizes to address issues of scale. Through this cross-case analysis that contains differentiated approaches of each site facing the influx of the refugee children from the identical ethnic group and period of time, this study allows readers to obtain more reliable information and to consider the alternatives in comparison with their own situations.

Finally, the artifact-based perspective allows for the investigation of how the local system of practice constrains what school leaders see as possible solutions to the needs of refugee children and still maintain their existing system. By illustrating how the school practitioners' intentions, local resources, and situational factors worked together, I hope that this study may guide the decision-making process of educators who consider applying those artifacts to their local schools.

Organization of the Dissertation

As described below, the dissertation includes six chapters. The following two review the literature and methodology. The next two chapters provide within-case analyses and cross-case analysis. The dissertation concludes with a discussion of implications and suggestions for further study. The literature review in chapter two focuses on two parts. The first part reviews characteristics of refugee children to emphasize their unique educational and social needs, in contrast with immigrant children, and the second part reviews school leadership tasks in educating and serving refugee children.

Chapter three contains a detailed account of the qualitative methods used for the study. As mentioned above, the framework of this study is based on DCAM (Halverson, 2002), an analytic model developed to understand problem-setting and -solving processes by investigating

the design and use of artifacts. This framework is introduced, followed by a review of site and participant selection, data collection and analysis, and issues of validity. Chapters four and five provide the findings. Chapter four includes three case narratives: Abraham School in a small town, Bridge School in a medium size urban setting, and Columbia School in a large size metropolitan area (all school and individual names are pseudonyms). Chapter five presents a cross-case analysis that synthesizes the three cases to answer the research questions of this study. Chapter six concludes with a discussion of the findings related to previous studies on refugee children and suggestions for further study.

CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

One of the important tasks that refugee children would face when arriving in a host country is to adapt to a new school environment. School leaders engage in a variety of activities in order to prepare school facilities, curriculum, teaching staff, and on-going students to help the newcomers adjust to a new school life. Because the educational programs and services that school leadership are engaged in are developed to meet the needs of particular groups of students, before discussing leadership practice for refugee children, developing an understanding of the nature of refugee children and their unique needs is necessary. Hence, the first section of this chapter deals with refugee students, and the second section focuses on leadership practice in refugee education contexts.

Understanding Refugee Students

In this section, first I attempt to identify differences between refugees and typical immigrants. Understanding this aspect is important to serving refugee children with approaches differentiated from those for conventional minority students in the U.S. Second, I review common experiences of refugee children, which are often described as a complex process involving loss, trauma, and regeneration, and then I examine characteristics of refugee family interactions. These aspects are important knowledge for school leaders and teachers to gain access to the students and help them more effectively. Last, I briefly review the historical background of how the Hmong became refugees, and who comprises the population of this study.

Refugees vs. Immigrants

The term "refugee" generally means individuals fleeing persecution in their home country. A formal definition, however, has a specific meaning. The most commonly used definition is that of the UNHCR (The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), established in 1950 by the United Nations General Assembly. The definition is as follows:

> a person with refugee status is defined as someone who has left from his or her home country or is unable to return to it owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion (UNHCR,1950).

This definition is broadly used. For example, the definition in the Refugee Act of 1980, P.L. No.96-212, of the U.S. Congress is virtually identical to the definition above. The Act defined a refugee as,

> Any person who is outside any country of such person's nationality or, in the case of a person having no nationality, is outside any country in which such person last habitually resided, and who is unable or unwilling to return to, and is unable or unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of, that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.

Refugees who resettle in a host country are sometimes categorized as a group of immigrants. However, due to their unique situation, refugees should be distinguished from typical immigrants who left their home country for better jobs and economic security. In a comparative study between Asian students and Latino students, Schmidt (2001) referred to refugees as 'political immigrants'. Cortes (2001) called them 'refugee immigrants' and draws a contrast with 'economic immigrants'. Ogbu and Simon (1998) proposed three different types of minority status such as autonomous (e.g. the Amish, Jews, and Mormons), voluntary (immigrant, e.g. Chinese- or South Korean-American), and involuntary minorities (non-immigrants, e.g. African Americans). They do not apparently assign refugees to any of these groups; however,

Ogbu and Simon see refugees as being closer to voluntary immigrants than involuntary immigrants because they find common pragmatic attitudes between voluntary immigrants and refugees to be a "tourist" attitude.

> Refugees did not freely choose or plan to come to settle in the United States to improve their status. However, they share some attitudes and behaviors of immigrant minorities which lead to school success…Like tourists, they know before coming to the United States that to accomplish the goal of their emigration they would have to learn new, that is, white American, ways of behaving and talking (Ogbu and Simon, 1998).

Cortes' (2001) work is consistent with the notion of the 'tourist attitude'. In the study he compared the trends of the economic status of refugees and typical immigrants over time, and found that in early settlement years refugees tend to earn 6 percent less and work 14 percent fewer hours than immigrants; but after 10 years both groups had about the same level of English skills and even the labor market outcomes of refugees surpassed those of typical immigrants. Hutchinson's (1997) work also supports this notion; in the conclusion he states, 'It is likely that Hmong youth will be more successful in their educational careers than any other immigrants'.

Interestingly, however, there are conflicting views over which groups refugees belong to, voluntary minority (immigrants) or involuntary minority. Anderson (2004) employed Ogbu's terminology in her refugee study, but she maintained that refugees have a greater tendency to develop an oppositional cultural frame of reference and negative acculturation attitudes, which are the phenomena often found in involuntary minorities. The conflicting views about whether refugees better fit the categories of voluntary or involuntary minorities may be resolved by Kunz's (1973) terminology. He distinguishes between anticipatory refugee movements and acute refugee movements. The former refugees have more time to plan their resettlement and tend to be educated and financially solvent (Rumbaunt and Portes, 2001 cited in McBrien, 2005). Meanwhile the refugees in the latter group were not able to have enough time to prepare their

departure, arrived in the new country in mass numbers, and were lacking in education and job skills. Vietnamese refugees provide examples of each group. The first wave of Vietnamese who came to the U.S. in the mid-1970s was an anticipatory refugee movement and the second wave was an acute refugee movement. Zhou (2001) explained the two different waves in detail; the initial wave of the elite, and a later wave of boat people. This initial wave of refugees was mostly comprised of members of the elite and the middle class who either had access to the evacuation arranged by the American military or could afford their own means of flight. After the airlift at the fall of Saigon, thousands of refugees fled Vietnam by boat from the end of 1975 to 1978. But the phrase "Boat people" came into common usage as a result of the flood of refugees casting off from Vietnam in overcrowded, leaky boats at the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s. By 1979, an estimated 400,000 refugees, known as the "second wave" of flight, escaped Vietnam in boats for Thailand. McBrien (2005) pointed out that some of the early studies on Vietnamese refugee children's adjustment were not generalizable to most groups of Southeast Asian refugee children because they did not distinguish between anticipatory refugees and acute refugees.

Here the term 'refugees', to be contrasted with immigrants, refers to acute rather than anticipatory refugees. Working from this sense of the term 'refugee', I describe several ways that refugees are different from typical immigrants.

First, as noted earlier, refugees do not have the ability to return to their native country. They must make a life in the country that accepts them. On the other hand, typical immigrants are able to make trips to visit their home countries if they so desire (Cortes, 2001).

Second, refugees are often sponsored by the government or voluntary agencies of the host country, whereas immigrants are sponsored either by their families or by their employers. This

means that refugees may or may not have small preexisting ethnic communities. A social network is invisible but powerful resource for anybody who lives in a society. Refugees, in many cases, lack an established ethnic community to look to for assistance. This limits their possible social network and their ability to obtain assistance of varying sorts.

Third, in many cases refugees do not have control over their destinations. In the United States the government attempts to scatter their refugees around the Midwestern and mountain states least populated by recent immigrants. The policy makers see geographic dispersion as important because the concentration of a large number of refugee families in any single state or city can place a heavy burden on social services and local school districts, and the dispersion can help to integrate refugees into the American economy and society as quickly as possible. Meanwhile, Hutchinson (1997) pointed out that in the 1970s initial resettlement plans did not give full recognition to the importance of refugees' kinship and political structures.

In addition, many refugees are not ready to participate in business because they may not have marketable skills or be proficient in English, which would ease their lives in the host society (Zhou, 2001). In many cases, refugees may not have a formal education due to war and life in refugee camps. Because of such conditions, many refugees remain illiterate even in their native language. Having a formal education in the home language was revealed as an important factor that has an effect on future academic success. In a longitudinal study for developmental bilingual education programs, Thomas and Collier (1997) found that students from ages 8 to 11 who were educated in their home language for 2-5 years took 5 to 7 years to develop academic English language whereas students who began school before the age of 8 and did not receive instruction in their home language, skills took 7 to 10 years to develop their academic language skills.

In schools, teachers' stereotypes or biases about refugee students can be caused by applying a typical image of a certain ethnic group to refugee students. In the U.S. American teachers often employ a "model minority myth" toward Asian students. The myth is that Asian students are quiet, obedient, and high-achieving with little need for teacher support (Pang et al., 2004). Despite their diversity, Asian students are often referred to as a homogeneous group in educational data (Mukhopadhyay & Henze, 2003; Pang *et al.*, 2004; Suzuki, 2002). An ethnographic study by Lee (2002) provided evidence that overgeneralization of Asian students carries a possibility of hiding realities and particular educational needs of Hmong students. She found that the social and academic success of some East Asian American students was used by some educators as evidence that equal opportunity existed at the school across all the Asian students, including Hmong students. The findings of Lee's study imply that teachers need to understand some educational discrepancy between the children of typical immigrants from relatively stable countries and refugee children even though their appearances may be similar. This finding implies that the cases of academic success of immigrants who come from a stable country and had a formal education cannot be equally applied to the case of refugees.

In sum, refugees' involuntary movement, lack of adequate preparation, less formative community, and lack of control over final destinations make the settlement process qualitatively different from the experiences of regular immigrants (Zhou, 2001).

Refugee Children's Experiences

In most cases refugee children come from war-torn countries and many have spent time in refugee camps where they have witnessed violence and deprivation on a daily basis. In the midst of wars, they lost their livelihoods, ancestral lands, and family members, and lived under a

collective fear that they could be persecuted within their home countries. The children often experience continual unplanned departure and rapid upheaval during the war, exodus, escapes, temporary resettlement, and secondary resettlement. In addition, witnessing horrors in high-intensity war, and poor nutrition- shortages of food, water or other necessities are often reported as the past events of refugee before coming to the host country (*Refugee students;* Rutter, 1994).

Upon arrival in the host country, they face challenges such as grasping a strange language, fitting into new social circles, and learning different customs. Particularly in coming to grips with the adjustment to school, refugee children may experience being with people who do not understand or know about the violent events they have experienced, seeing their parents as vulnerable people, not being cared for by their parents, suffering a drop in their standard of living and other major changes in their lives, and bullying or isolation in school (Ascher, 1989; ECRE, 2001; Olsen, 1997; Rutter, 1994).

Terrible violence in the past and new challenges in current periods are likely to cause psychological problems for refugees: i.e., sleep disorders, depression and emotional numbing. In Sutner's (2002) study a refugee boy told how his past experience influences him currently: "Sometimes when I sit and think, it bothers me… I dream about how they killed. I dream how they cut people's hands off." Such symptoms are diagnosed as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which is defined as,

> PTSD is a psychiatric disorder that can occur following the experience or witnessing of life-threatening events such as military combat, natural disasters, terrorist incidents, serious accidents, or violent personal assaults like rape. People who suffer from PTSD often relive the experience through nightmares and flashbacks, have difficulty sleeping, and feel detached or estranged, and these symptoms can be severe enough and last long enough to significantly impair the person's daily life (National Center for PTSD)

PTSD experts advise that educators should know that displaced trauma can be long-

lasting. Garbarino, a researcher who studies the impact of violence on refugee children, found that half his sample group showed signs of post-traumatic stress after ten years in the United States (Sutner, 2002). As the rate of refugee populations increases, educational policy makers in this country attempt to help children with PTSD. For instance, in 2001 the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services launched the National Child Traumatic Stress Initiative and distributed 30 million dollars over three years of research and clinical treatment centers across the country (Sutner, 2002).

Refugee Family Interactions

Knowing a refugee child's family interactions is an important part of understanding the child. Refugee children are a diverse group with a wide range of family characteristics; however, the following aspects are considered commonalities among refugee families. First, refugee children are deeply affected by family trauma, history, and feelings about their origins. In a study of Vietnamese refugees, Zhou (2001) found that children who were born in the United States can still be deeply affected by their family's experiences prior to their flight, and other traumas can be immediate realities for young people.

Young child trauma studies have suggested that parents play a key role in helping the children to recover from their traumas (Corr & Corr, 1996; Montgomery, 1998; Van der Veer, 2000). In a study of middle-eastern refugee students, Montgomery (1998) found that if traumatized children have a secure and stable parent-child relationship, they will not be as significantly affected by the past experiences. Frater-Mathieson (2004, p.22) emphasized the importance of parental support, stating that if parents or caregivers of refugee children have means for coping with loss and trauma, communicating, and ways for acknowledging differences

in grieving processes, the children would be more likely to be able to overcome the stressors. Unfortunately these means are not often used in refugee families. In a case study by Fu (2001) a Laotian girl described that her family had little time for sharing their feelings, fears or perplexities while they were struggling to understand their new country. Her parents, aunts and uncles, and older siblings were at work in local factories; other school-age siblings seldom saw other members of the family except on weekends. Montgomery (1998) found that refugee children often do not want to express feelings in front of their parents because the children may not want them to be upset or the children do not want to acknowledge that their parents were unable to protect them. Moreover because of the refugee parents' desire to quickly re-establish bonds and build a sense of security, their children become more withdrawn.

Role reversal is another aspect which is often found in refugee families. Role reversal is usually caused by the social and economic isolation of refugee parents. Zhou (2001) found refugee children often act as family spokespersons, substitute parents for their younger siblings at school, and drivers for their families. He pointed out that the role reversal often causes parental authority to decline, and deepens generational conflicts, especially since generally the refugee's culture of origin holds obedience to parents as an important value. Once school leaders and teachers have made themselves aware of past and current experiences of individual refugee children and their family interaction, they can develop intervention programs for them accordingly.

McBrein (2005) found parental factors to be a main obstacle to refugee children's success because the parents are frequently victims of trauma and so are not always able to be stable emotional supporters for their children; in many cases adults are not as rapid as children in the acquisition of a new language and culture, so the parents are less able to assist the children with

homework or guide their social interactions (p.345). Considering these characteristics of refugee family interactions, it is an important area for school leaders to address; it is also important that they provide opportunities to communicate with the parents to help them be better home educators and to cooperate with them in supporting their children's successful adaptation to the new school environments.

Hmong Refugees

As I stated above, this study was conducted in the context of the second wave of Hmong refugees during 2004 to 2005. In order to help readers understand the particular characteristics of this refugee group, I briefly describe the historical background of Hmong people and their current socio-economic status in the United States.

The Vietnam War (1954~ 1975) generated thousands of refugees over the last three decades. The war was primarily a civil war between the South Vietnamese government, which was aided by the United States, and guerrilla forces aided by North Vietnam. This war became an international conflict since the U.S was deeply involved by 1961. In 1975 South Vietnam's requests for aid were denied by the U.S. Congress and the war was finally over.

With the withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam, the initial flight of refugees in this area started. The Hmong, an ethnic group that lived in a part of Vietnam, fought against the Communist forces of North Vietnam in the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)-backed war for ten years. In 1975 when the United States withdrew its army, more than 100,000 Hmong soldiers and dependents were abandoned, and during the war at least 30,000 Hmong were killed (Hutchinson, 1997). Due to the fear of being executed like South Vietnam people, Hmong fled for their lives to Thailand across the Mekong River and they were resettled in refugee camps. Since the late 1970 the U.S. has continued to receive them as refugees. According to U.S. Census

Bureau 1990 and 2000 data, the Hmong population grew by approximately 90%, from 94,439 in 1990 to 169,428 in 2000. The three states with the highest Hmong population are California (65,095), Minnesota (41,800) and Wisconsin (33,791). The Midwest states have witnessed a dramatic increase in the Hmong-American population. Neighboring states such as Illinois, Michigan, and Iowa, also face the growth trends.

According to the U.S. Census (*Current population survey: Annual social and economic supplement*, 2004), the percentage of Hmong families below the poverty level was 62% in 1990 and 34.8% in 2000, whereas the average U.S. poverty rate in 2003 was 12.5% and that of the Asian population in 2003 was 11.8%. Although refugee families' economic dependence decreases over time, they are still heavily concentrated in the lowest-wage occupations. Hutchins (1997) wrote that a majority of Hmong adults, who arrived in the United States even 20 years earlier, were not actively participating in the labor force, most households have incomes below the poverty line, and many households have one or both parents absent. Residence in low-income communities would be subject to adversarial influences of social isolation and poverty.

In sum, as Figure II-1 describes, I found four factors that may adversely affect refugee children in their resettlement process. School practitioners should perceive refugee students as being different from typical immigrant students. In particular, the academic success of some East Asian students cannot be used as evidence that equal opportunities exist at schools across all Asian students. Second, since refugee children, in general, are traumatized from their past experiences schools need to provide psychological or mental supports besides the supports for the acquisition of the second language and academic contents. Third, refugee students and their families suffer low socio-economic status. In addition, since refugee parents themselves are in the state of learning and adjusting to a new society, their parenting support can be weaker than

those of mainstream families. School educators who desire to provide leadership for refugee children may consider these characteristics in order to provide more beneficial programs and interventions for the students.

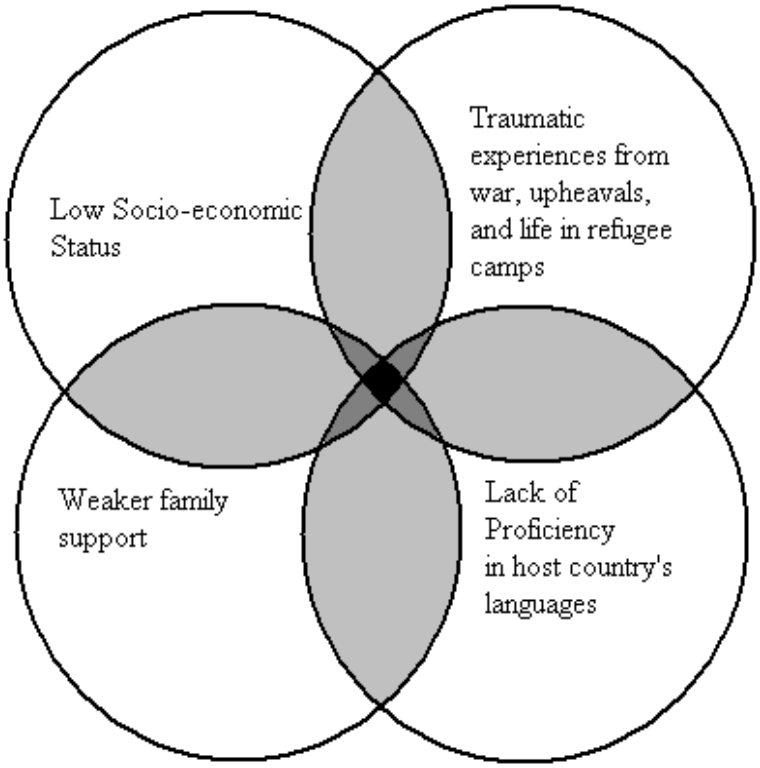

Figure II-1. Four main factors that may effect refugee students' resettlement

School Leadership for Refugee Students

In this section, I first mention how important schooling is for refugee children in the host country and what Berry (2001) suggested are desirable approaches in terms of acculturation. Then I have searched leadership roles and tasks in hosting refugee students and attempt to draw implications for the education of refugee children.

School as Acculturating Agency

Schools are a prime point of contact between refugee children and the host country. For refugee children schooling is more than learning the host country's main language and obtaining an academic degree. Refugee children learn ways to communicate with their host culture and develop their cultural identity through interactions with the mainstream society, whereas for the host country schooling is the main way to integrate the refugee children into their larger society. Given this, schools are a significant acculturating agent for refugee children and accordingly the task of school leaders is critical.

When school leaders regard their schools as a primary agency of acculturating refugee children in their host country, they need to look at how their refugee students acculturate and what should be desirable directions that benefit the children in the process. Acculturation, in general, refers to the cultural changes that occur when two or more cultures come into contact. In more technical terms, it is defined as "the process of selectively adopting traits from the host culture to blend with values from one's own culture" (Chud & Fahlman, 1995). For refugees, their new contacting culture --the host country-- is usually the dominant society, and refugees become the group undergoing acculturation. The dominant group is called the 'donor' culture and refugees are often referred to as the 'receptor'(Anderson, 2004). As refugees acculturate, their need is to acquire values, norms, and tools of the host culture necessary to function successfully within it.

Berry (2001) proposed four different acculturation strategies of a receptor group in their donor culture (See Figure II-2). This framework can give useful insights to school leaders concerning which strategy their refugee students are taking in their school community. A refugee child can be placed into strategies of *integration, separation, assimilation,* or *marginalization*.

Explanation of each strategy follows:

Integration: Refugee students are able to maintain their native culture and acquire the norms, language, and values of the host country.

Separation: Refugee students develop oppositional identities to their host country, are reluctant to cross cultural boundaries, and wish to retain their cultural identity.

Assimilation: Refugee students seek frequent interaction with the mainstream culture and accept the values and norms of the culture and mainly use those in developing their identities; however, they perceive their culture of origin as inferior and may end up rejecting their own cultural identity.

Marginalization: Refugee students neither acquire the tools and values of the mainstream society nor hold on to their own cultural norms. This is characterized by striking out against the larger society and by feelings of alienation and loss of identity.

Among these four strategies, Berry regards "integration" as the most desirable outcome and he goes on to argue that integration of a receptor group can be possible when the larger society supports "multiculturalism." Anderson (2004, p.77) characterized a positive multicultural ideology as "respect for diversity, tolerance and institutional structures that consider cultural diversity and create culturally safe environments." If schools did not develop a positive multicultural ideology, there is a high possibility that refugee children may adopt assimilation, marginalization, or separation as a strategy of acculturation.

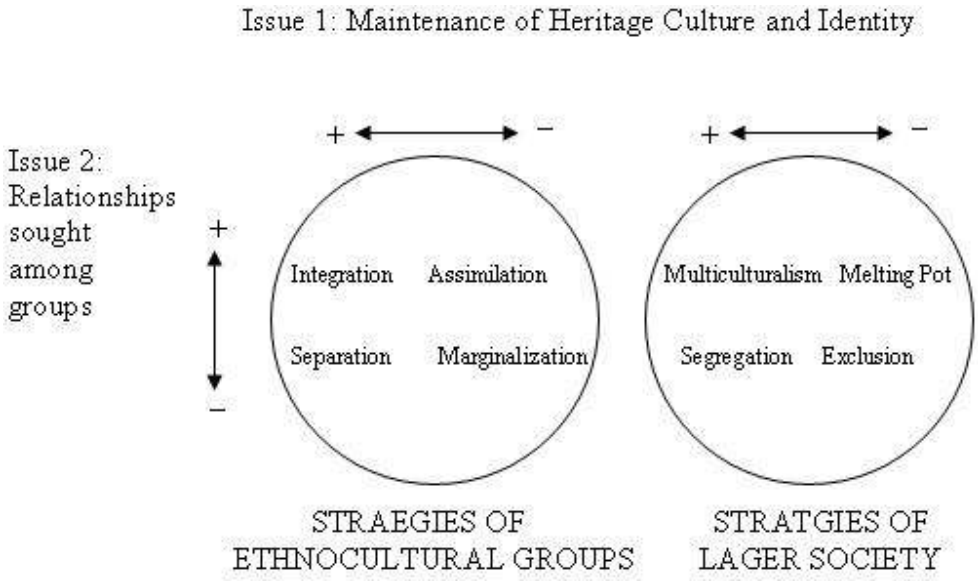

Figure II-2. Varieties of Intercultural Strategies (Berry, 2001)

Leadership Practice for Refugee Students

In order to help refugee children ease their way into their new cultural environment, the literature suggests a variety of activities that school leaders can engage in, including providing effective academic supports, securing and allocating teaching resources, creating a mechanism that helps integrate newcomers into the school community and that enhances mutual understanding and tolerance between the newcomers and on-going peers. Among the various activities, there are four that are particularly salient and will be discussed further.

Instructional Delivery

Research on classroom environment and instruction for refugee students includes themes of safety, inclusion, and multicultural education. In refugee education, creating a safe environment includes dealing with the prevention of bullying, discrimination, and misunderstanding as well as ways to increase tolerance among all students. Inclusion does not just refer to an instructional method, but a school structure that enhances integration of minority

students into the mainstream as well as a school culture in which principal, teachers, and class peers are willing to make changes for the benefit of the refugees (Moore, 2004; McBrien, 2005). Multicultural education emphasizes cultural diversity and sensitivity, and encourages educators to focus on differences rather than attributing to a deficit in the individual student.

Safety. McBrien (2005) found that one of the major obstacles that refugee students face is social and individual rejection, which can be expressed in various ways; stereotypes, prejudices, and even hostile discrimination. Accordingly, school educators need to consider strategies to prevent bullies and other unwelcoming practices, as well as to help mainstream students develop tolerance and understanding toward refugee students (Cushners, 1998). For example, Garrison (2002) suggested a program, 'Pier to Peer', that helps mainstream students to understand refugee experiences through volunteer activities for refugee students and their families with the assistance of a local community center. In this project students were encouraged to be mentors for refugee families and to offer assistance ranging from social relationships, to friendship to financial help. The teacher appreciated the project highly stating 'it has been one of the most rewarding and effective means I have found for teaching tolerance.'

Another example is a class lesson (Nocciolino, 2003) designed to have students engage in 'forced change' situations. In this plan students are initially provided with examples of 'forced change' that most people at one time or another can experience in their lives: illness, death of a family member, relocation, divorce, natural disaster, aging, and poverty. These examples draw an analogy between refugees' experiences and people, and can help students recognize similarities between their experiences and the refugee children's. In the next stage of the plan, students are involved in relatively brief 'forced change' activities in the classroom, which may lead students to catch a glimpse of what it is like to live as refugees. According to the lesson plan, at the end of

the lesson, students would share their initial reactions, what physical and psychological adjustments they had to make, and how they sought 'refuge'. Then a teacher would lead a discussion on how the students could make a difference for anyone experiencing forced change, and what kinds of forced change a refugee might experience. This lesson can be helpful in preparing mainstream students to learn and play more effectively with refugee children.

Inclusion. Udvari-Solner defined inclusive education as a value-based practice that attempts to bring all students, including those with disabilities, into full membership within their local school community (Keyes *et al.*, 1998). According to Kennedy and Fisher (2001), the underlying value behind inclusive education is that all children should be welcome members of the school, classroom and larger community. Traditionally, in public schools of the Unites States, education for the Limited English Proficient (LEP) has often taken place under pull-out conditions, which was originally designed to benefit the students; however, many studies have identified how pull-out or separate approaches caused these side effects. Brantlinger (1995) argued that in traditional pull-out programs students tend to hold stereotypes and unrealistic views of each other that prevent subsequent interactions. Oakes (1985) pointed out how tracking negatively affects student achievement, integration, teacher expectation, and lifelong attitudes about schools. Also Kennedy and Fisher (2001) argued that pull-out models reinforced discrimination and created limited expectations for students from low-income families and all minority students.

Capper et al. (2000) summarized typical problems of pull-out programs. For example, individual students who received the services may lose consistency in class, their sense of belongingness to their class, and feelings of labeling such as "you are a person who needs assistance." Teachers may have a feeling of "your kids, and my kids" and it is hard to motivate

them to collaborate with ESL teachers for the students' benefit. In addition, the LEP students are not often assessed with district-standardized assessments; test-exception. This means that no baseline data exist for the neediest students and may also influence teachers to hold low expectations of those students.

In sum, an inclusive education model is considered to be a condition that can provide a school climate that helps refugee students use integration approaches in their acculturating process. Just eliminating pull-out programs will not eliminate all inequity in schools. Inclusive education is an infrastructure through which school members raise a culture of desegregation and a sense of community, and which can offer the school community a critical step toward integration.

Multicultural education. As stated in the previous section, multiculturalism is an ideology: "respect for diversity, tolerance and institutional structures that consider cultural diversity and create culturally safe environments (Anderson, 2004, p.7)" Reflecting this notion, researchers in refugee student education stress respecting and recognizing cultural differences as important means for refugee students' academic success. Researchers suggest that students' ethnicity and culture exert major influences on what they learn at school, and maintaining one's native language helps to develop second language acquisition (Moore, 2004). To this end, they suggested that school educators provide curricula or activities that reflect elements of refugee children's culture and their experiences. McBrien (2005) pointed out that some educators presume assimilation and rapid language acquisition are necessary; however, many researchers have warned against rapid acculturation. Multicultural education, particularly in the context of refugee education, emphasizes respecting the refugees' experiences, native culture and languages, and making use of those for learning in school. In addition, teachers and school staff in general

should be instructed in cultural sensitivity and should model respect for all children.

Social Supports for Adjustment to a New Life

Peer interaction. School leaders can help newly-arrived refugee children feel comfortable at school and learn proper ways to communicate with other members in school through providing more opportunities for social contact between refugee children and on-going students. As frequently suggested strategy is cooperative learning and peer tutoring. Peer tutoring provides newly arrived refugee children with both first language and second language peers, and these peers can help the refugee children become familiar with the expectations of their new school. Lowen (2004) suggested that pairing a new refugee student with an English-speaking peer can enable the refugee child to learn how the system works. It will also offer opportunities to build friendships and to practice the host country's language.

Besides the classroom, the playground is an important place for social interaction. The next method I consider is concerned with matters outside the classroom. Refugee children's familiarity with the rules of play or game skills may seriously deficient. Parents or educators often take for granted the possession of the rules of play or game skills of a certain age and fail to recognize the existence and importance of such deficiencies. Such a lack may cause refugee children to feel insecure in social life in the school and hate break or play time. To help this situation, a school may employ a play teacher or older mentor students who help refugee children become comfortable through learning the rules and skills of sports, games, arts, and crafts.

A befriending system is often recommended as an induction strategy and usually lasts a few days for basic introduction with the help of a student from peer groups. School staff assigns a newly arrived refugee child a befriender, who is another child in the school and who takes the

refugee child around the school building and tells them where the toilets are, what to do about lunch, and where to go for different lessons.

Psychological support. Since, in many cases, refugee students have experienced a multiplicity of different stressful events, helping the children who are not able to cope with these stresses and remain vulnerable is important. As mentioned earlier, PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) or related symptoms are often found in refugee students (Sutner, 2002). To support their healing process school leaders can introduce some therapeutic interventions. For example, narrative therapeutic intervention is known as a helpful tool when working with traumatized children. In this intervention children externalize their problems through writing (story telling and poetry), music, dance, drama, or any art form of the child' cultural heritage. Through these they search for meaning in the events of their past and integrate them into their present in order to restore a sense of identity and belongingness (Frater-Mathieson, 2004). Autobiographical writing is frequently used with refugee children as a way of helping them to develop an understanding of complex events and explore psychological issues such as fear, trust, and rest (Rutter, 1994). Children can write about themselves, their origin, and present environments or younger children can draw pictures and work with a teacher to write captions for their drawings. However, teachers should not assume that refugee students will quickly share personal stories in front of the class; before doing this, teachers need to check if their class acted as a safety net for the students and (Naomi, 2003).

Another useful intervention is group counseling. This intervention may need human resources outside the school. According to Sutner (2002), Boston Medical Center, which was funded by the federal government for dealing with children with PTSD in 2001, organized a team of psychiatrists, psychologist, and social workers who offer therapy to the families of

refugee children, and instruct school staff to find out how certain classroom factors can trigger traumatic memories. Besides helping the refugee children recover from traumatic experiences, developing their cultural identity is another necessary area in meeting their needs. For refugee children, forming their ethnic identity tends to be more complex or uncertain due to experiences in continually unstable circumstances (Geiger, 1993). In many cases refugee children were found to be insecure in their ethnic identity. Ethnic identity does not undergo a simple transformation from their origin to host country nationality. The children continue to face the situations they negotiate, create and manipulate their identities (Krulfeld and Camino, 1994). School leaders need to provide their refugee students with opportunities to help the students learn to negotiate their identities and be secure in their own cultural identity and tolerant of others who are different.

Refugee Parent School Involvement

Various studies indicate that parental involvement is salient in determining how well minority students do in school (Chavkin, 1989a; Chavkin & Williams, 1987; Epstein, 1987; Schleicher, 1992; Yao, 1988). A meta-analysis study of parent involvement of minority students by Jeynes (2003) indicated that parental involvement does generally affect the academic achievement of the minority group. Bryk and Schneider (2001) described a school reform in a neighborhood of Mexican immigrants, and place an emphasis on how important it is to forge a meaningful partnership between school and home to achieve a school reform. In 1997 AAPIP (Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy) issued a report titled “An Invisible Crisis: The Educational Needs of Asian Pacific American Youth”, which covers cases of Hmong, Vietnamese and other students of the immigrants from Southeast Asia. In this report, the authors

emphasized community, school, and family partnerships as fundamental to the success of their other recommendations. They maintained that "such partnerships reduce barriers to educational equity and create an enriched learning environment by brining together the full complement of a community's resources for each child's benefit". Cummins (1986 & 1991) investigated the nature of successful school practices for minority students, emphasizing community participation in students' education. He maintained that educators should take the initiative to enhance mutual collaboration among the minority community, families, and schools, and to work closely with teachers or aides proficient in the mother tongue in order to communicate with parents from minority groups effectively and in a non-condescending way.

In general, parental involvement in school takes three approaches: 1) parent education programs, 2) functional communities around the school, and 3) community control (Lee et al., 1993 cited in Hamilton, 2004). Parent education programs focus on training parents to understand the curricula in their school and strategies to help their children in school life. Establishing functional communities around the school involves generating a system that encourages parents or members from the community into the activities of the school. With this approach schools do not remain inside and outreach for local society as a center of community action. Finally, community control advocates that parents gain some control of schools, for example, parent council.

Of the three approaches, Hamilton suggested that parent education programs need to be primarily considered. He maintained that schools need to help parents develop skills (for example, second language skills) that will allow them to participate more fully in their child's educational experience, and to support the efforts of schools (p.86). Particularly for newly-arrived refugee parents, as Rutter (1994) suggested, the following information should be

accessible: school requirements, free or reduced-price meals, transportation, clothing grants, maps of the local area and the school building, names of their children's classes and teachers, and a timetable.

School leaders need to seek a way to use resources and services from the local community to support the education of refugee children. It is also important to integrate human resources in the refugee ethnic groups. AAPIA (1997, p.33) pointed out that schools do not often tap into the existing leadership in minority communities, and suggested that school staff must identify and involve the range of leadership within an ethnic group's communities and have a community map of the important formal and informal leadership of the minority communities. Finally, the community control approach toward refugee parents may require more effort and time. However it is important for school leaders to provide activities in which the refugee parents can be involved in school activities and develop leadership in their school communities. In a case study, Bryk and Schneider (2001, p.56) describe how a principal established a way for parents of minority students to be involved in leadership roles in the school community. This effort started from the principal's personal understanding of the vulnerability experienced by immigrant parents. Even though the parents had neither the academic background nor the political skills to be expert members of a local school council, the principal kept encouraging parent participation in the elections of its local school council.

Professional Development

Teachers' attitudes and expectations influence their interactions with students within the classroom. In a refugee education study, Hamilton (2004) emphasized teachers' expectations and attitudes by stating,

> given that refugees often come from very different cultures and possess different values and goals…, the potential for conflicting stereotypes or biases to enter into teacher-student interactions is heightened. Consequently, initiatives that are aimed at influencing teacher views, knowledge and expectations related to…refugee students' need to be part of any attempt to have a significant impact on refugee education (p.87).

In particular, when teachers deal with seriously traumatized refugee students, teachers may 'internalize the pain and trauma of their refugee pupils and become traumatized themselves, losing confidence in their teaching skills and doubting their own abilities, or may protect themselves by becoming rigid or distancing themselves (Fox cited in Flater-Mathieson, 2004, p.30). Through professional development, school leaders can help teachers reduce the potential for conflict and negative effects in teacher-refugee student interactions. School leaders can provide in-service programs which aim at increasing teachers' knowledge about refugee children's backgrounds, developing their listening and communication skills, and sharing other cases of teachers' experiences and practical wisdom (Hamilton and Moore, 2002). The following list includes suggestions for professional development of teachers by Hamilton and Moore.

Professional development should focus on assisting teachers to:

- increase their skills for teaching traumatized children, their knowledge of symptoms and triggers of emotional relapses and their confidence in referring students to appropriate services
- increase their knowledge of the nature of forced migration and its influence on refugee children--for example, helping teachers become familiar with the different pre- trans- and post-migration factors which influence the development of refugee children should be a focus on professional development
- increase their knowledge of issues related to diversity
- increase their knowledge of the different refugee cultures and communities

- acquire skills to employ curriculum-based and performance- or portfolio-based assessment processes focused on identifying obstacles to more effective learning
- acquire culturally responsive approaches to teaching all children; i.e., skills and expertise in inclusive assessment and teaching strategies
- acquire skills for helping refugee children with the task of second language learning and acculturation
- learn to think, explain, and act according to predominant metaphors and theories of relevant refugee cultures

According to Hamilton (2004), a good induction process is a two-way exchange between the school and the parents and children that includes gathering information about the parents and children. In addition, the induction process should include mechanisms that should ease the child's transition as well as the parents' transition too.

Conclusion

In sum, through the literature that is reviewed here I attempted to identify the nature of refugee children and the areas that school leaders need to be involved with to provide a better learning environment for the children. First, refugee children, in comparison with immigrant children, tend to be situated in more difficult circumstances, and school leaders that host refugee children need to differentiate teaching and services to provide best practices for these groups. Next, regarding leadership practice in refugee education contexts, there are several areas that administrators, teachers and other staff in school need to consider: what is the best class environment and mode of instructional delivery for the refugees? how can the school help the children adjust to a new life in school as well as in the society? what are the ways to encourage

refugee parents who are highly likely to be unfamiliar with formal education in the U.S? and finally, what should be the focus of professional development that helps teachers and staff who deal with the newcomers on a daily basis?

However, the literature review above is insufficient as a guide to how school leaders might introduce new interventions into their existing curricula, programs, and services, negotiating the school priority and agendas for on-going students in their complex school systems. In addition, the review does not adequately address how local contexts and resources afford or constrain school leaders in their efforts to provide better circumstances for the children. In order for my research to fill this gap, I found Halverson (2001)'s notion useful; he suggested that readers can reflect on their own practice and plan the actions in a more practical way through an examination of the artifacts that school leaders use to achieve a certain goal, dealing with situational elements in their school contexts. Eventually I hope my research will contribute to refugee children's resilience and to schools' efforts to integrate the children by providing reliable and valid findings that guide school practitioners in developing and facilitating the programs, policies and other educational services for refugee students.

CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

This study is designed to understand how school leaders developed artifacts to address the needs of refugee students. The study identified the programs, services or artifacts, which leaders used to serve these needs, traced what leaders were thinking when they designed and used the artifacts, and discussed the lessons school leaders learned from their efforts. Here, the term 'artifacts' follows the definition of "the programs, procedures and policies designed to shape or reform existing practices in the institutional context (Halverson, 2003)".

A cross-case analysis (Yin, 1994) was utilized to investigate the development, implementation, and impact of the artifacts among three different school sites. This approach is a form of analysis for a case study conducting more than one case in order to draw similarities or patterns with the findings in individual case analysis. Differently from within-case analysis, which is to see how the findings in one case fit with previous studies, the cross-case analysis has several advantages to make the data richer and improve understanding of action in complex contexts. Cross-case analysis, since they use multiple cases, can strengthen or broaden the analytic logics (Yin, 1998). Miles and Huberman (1994) maintained that multiple cases not only pin down the specific conditions under which a finding will occur but also help researchers form the more general categories of conditions by which they may be related. This approach is often used to examine interventions or public programs with an emphasis on comparisons of recurring patterns and themes that emerge across the multiple institutions. Finding patterns and themes across cases is an important task in this method (Munger & Psencik, 2002).

Site Selection

To conduct this study, the first step was to identify school sites which housed many newly-arrived refugee students. The population I proposed to study is Southeast Asian, primarily Hmong, refugee students. This group was accessible to my research because they were recently the largest of the refugee groups to have settled in the United States since the mid-1970s (UNHCR, 2004b). Additionally, in Wisconsin, where I reside, a great number of the Southeast Asian refugees have been accepted. As of December 6, 2004, a total of 1,941 had arrived in Wisconsin, and among them at least 1,280 are school-age children under 18 (Seere Weroha, 2005-4-6). Among the counties that relatively accepted a high number of Hmong refugee children, who came to the U.S. after the fall of 2004, I chose three counties, then for each selected the school district that hosted the highest number of the students. In addition, I wanted to vary schools in terms of the size of district to contrast and compare their local contexts.

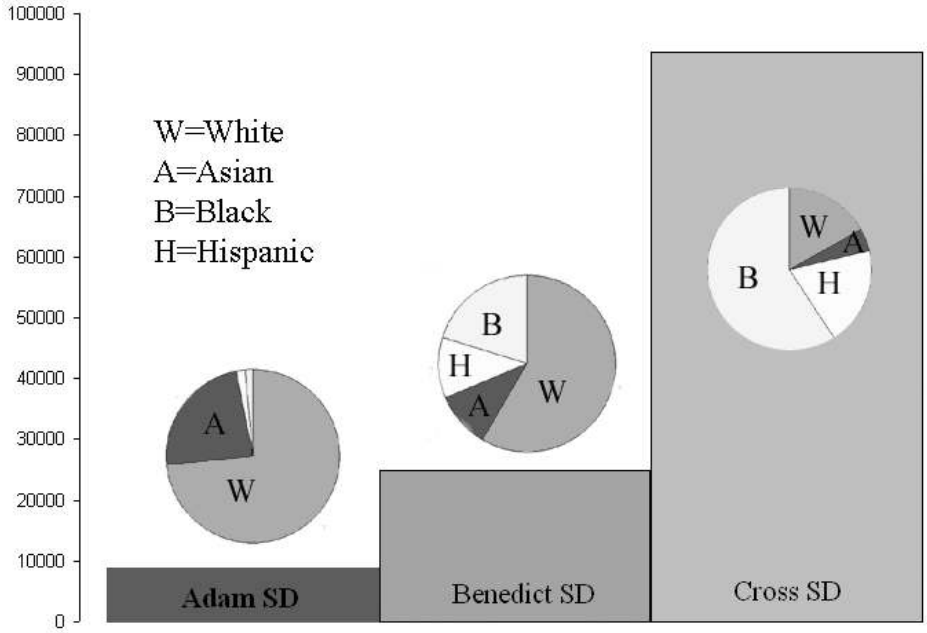

Figure III-1. The Size of the three School Districts and Ethnic Diversity

As Figure III-1 shows, I chose three school districts: Adam School District in a small town, Benedict School District in a medium size urban setting, and Cross School District in a large size metropolitan area (all district names are pseudonyms). Adam District served 8,746 students in the school year 2004 and 5, Benedict District 24,913, and Cross District 97,354 in the same year. The pie graphs in the figure show ethnicity diversity of each school district. Most of the Asian students in Adam were Hmong while Benedict School Districts had much diverse Asian and other minority student population.

Schools were selected through a multiple source site nomination process: with the help of 1) school leaders and administrators, 2) Hmong community leaders, 3) the web sites of the schools and their districts or local newspaper archives to identify schools with a high proportion of newly-arrived refugee students and possible research sites. Then I spoke with identified candidate schools to determine their willingness and suitability to participate.

Finally three schools, each representing a different setting, small town, medium size urban setting, and large metropolitan area, allowed me to investigate their artifacts for Hmong refugee students. I use pseudonyms for district, school, and participants in order to protect the privacy of the interviewees in this study.

- Abraham Newcomer Center at Adam School District, in a small town
- Bridge Elementary School at Benedict School District, in a medium size urban setting
- Columbia K-8 School At Cross School District, in a large size metropolitan area

According to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, each school district and school housed the following numbers of Hmong refugee children in Table III-1.

Table III-1. Enrollment of Hmong Refugee Students School Year 2004-5

The school year 2004-5	Hmong Newcomer Enrollment
Adam School District	130
Abraham Newcomer Center	33
Benedict School District	153
Bridge Elementary School	20
Cross School District	180
Columbia K-8 School	18

Data Collection

This phase of data collection was started in June 2005 and completed in May 2006 involving between 5 and 10 days of fieldwork in each of the three sites. The primary source of data for each school was interviews with various school practitioners, with observations of classes, refugee parents' workshops, teachers' professional development, and other activities related to refugee children in the school, and document that district or school provided with me.

Yin (1998) suggested that a case study must use evidence in a converging manner to define the facts of the case. If evidence from multiple sources all coincides, a robust fact is considered to have been established. He continued to argue that "to get such convergence, you must ask the same questions of the different sources of evidence (p. 233)." As Yin suggests, I collected data from the three different sources to increase the validity of the study.

Interviews

At the outset I contacted the principals or directors of the institutions to identify the artifacts that the school was using for recently-arrived Hmong refugee students. For this I asked 1) what kinds of programs or services your school is providing for newly-arrived students and 2) what needs did you find in the process of hosting the newcomers. When the artifacts were tentatively identified, I then attempted to access teachers or other staff members who were involved in the design and implementation of the artifact. The interview protocol can vary according to the nature of the artifacts. However, the themes of the main questions will be consistent: 1) what is the artifact? 2) why was it made? 3) how was it made? and 4) what happened as a result of it?

The participants of this study are school administrators, teachers, or other staff members who were involved in educating refugee children. Since the focus of the study is on leadership practices through the artifacts rather than the effectiveness of the programs or satisfactions of the beneficiaries, this study does not include data from any interviews or surveys directly with the refugee children or their parents.

Interviews were conducted in the following manner. Interviewees received a letter or email, ahead of the scheduled meetings which contained questions that I intended to ask during the interview, with notices that if the interviewee had no objections, I would audio-tape the interviews to assure accuracy, to conserve time, and to lessen the distraction of handwritten notes (Leedy, 1993). All records of interviews were maintained in a secure place with the anonymity of the participants protected. Interviews were later transcribed and recorded in electronic files soon after each interview session. When I found unclear responses in the interview or new issues emerged over time, then follow-up interviews in person, or e-mail correspondence were utilized.

At Abraham Newcomer Center, I had interviews with five participants and each interview lasted from 20 to 180 minutes. Participants included the director of Newcomer Center, three teachers, and one principal. At Bridge School sites, I had interviews with five participants: a school principal, three teachers, and one Hmong bilingual teaching assistant in the school, two in its school district, and two from a community organization working with the school. Each interview lasted from 20 to 120 minutes. Finally, at Columbia School, I met with four people: a school principal, ESL teacher, and two Hmong bilingual teaching assistant in school. Each interview lasted 30 to 60 minutes. In addition, I had three rounds of email correspondence with the ESL director of the school district to find out district-wide newcomer student placement and teaching resources.

Table III-2. Interviewee by Research Site

Research Site	Interviewees Pseudonyms (position)	Interview Recording Minutes (min)	Email Correspondences
Abraham Newcomer Center	ESL & Center Director	180	√
	Principal at Abraham Elementary School	60	
	Hmong American Teacher 1 at Newcomer Center	30	
	Hmong American Teacher 2 at Newcomer Center	30	
	European American Teacher at Newcomer Center	30	
Bridge Elementary School	School Principal	30	
	ESL staff member of District	120	
	Hmong American Kindergarten Teacher	120	
	Hmong Bilingual Resource Specialist	80	
	Hmong American Art teacher	60	√
	European American ESL teacher	120	
	Afterschool program supervisor from District	30	
	FAST director from a Social Work Organization	60	
Columbia K-8 School	School Principal	60	
	ESL teacher	60	√
	Hmong teaching assistant & Hmong family liaison	60	
	Hmong teaching assistant	30	
	ESL director of District		√

Documents

I collected a wide array of documents to trace how the artifacts were developed and used in the school. One kind of data I relied on was student demographics and district and school performance data available to the public through the Wisconsin educational agencies. I also used documents such as archives of the local newspapers or district press releases. In addition, many of the documents, such as school brochures, curriculum materials, school reports, were volunteered by the interview subjects.

Observations

The primary purpose of observation was to see how the artifacts operated in the local context. This included observation of classes, after-school programs, in which refugee students interacted with teachers and other students, teacher workshops and refugee parent-teacher meetings. Yin (1998) suggests two different kinds of observations: 1) direct observation and 2) participant observation. In my study the data were collected through direct observations in which I acted as a passive observer attempting to document verbal and nonverbal communication and context information. All observations were systematically recorded in a field journal. To distinguish analytic notes from descriptive notes, "low inference" language was used as much as possible. In addition, reflections and questions stemming from observations were distinguished from the field notes. For Abraham Newcomer Center, I made a total of three trips over four months, between June and September 2005, and observed Newcomer classes for two full days. For Bridge school I visited the site during school hours every Tuesday for class observation and every Wednesday afternoon and evening for after-school programs between March and May 2006. For Columbia School, I made site visitations five times over May to September 2005 for a teacher conference, a parent-teacher meeting, classes for newcomers, and Hmong parent workshops.

Data Analysis

The data analysis in this study proceeded in three stages. The first stage dealt with data coding. In the next stage, I reconstructed narrative cases of each research site. Here I focused on providing a holistic view of each case with detailed description of the artifacts in the sequence of events. Finally in an attempt to synthesize the three within-case narratives focusing on problem-setting and problem-solving of the school practitioners, I have conducted a cross-case analysis. As the three stages of analysis were proceeding, there was overlap among the data collection and the analyses and they informed one another, which is often found in qualitative studies (Maxy, 2004).

Through this study I explored leadership practice in the refugee education context. In understanding how the practices are actually enacted in schools, distributed perspective on leadership (Halverson, 2001 & Spillane, 2006) and expertise research on school administration (Leithwood, 1993) were adopted. These two notions provided a benefit allowing me to frame the nature of leadership practice and how to access and represent the practice. In a distributed perspective leadership practice is viewed socially and situationally distributed in the daily instructional activities of the school. Spillane (2005) argued that the distributed perspective shifts the focus from leaders' roles, structures, and functions to leadership practice that gets defined in the interactions of leaders, followers, and their situation including routines and tools. In Leithwood's theory, which introduced executives' problem solving processes into school organizational settings, leadership practice is understood as expertise. He explained that "expertise is associated with both effective and efficient problem solving within a particular domain of activity (Leithwood, K., R. Steinbach, et al.,1993)" In the combinations of the two

perspectives, in this study leadership practice is understood as a problem framing and solving process, which are socially and situationally distributed in the complex organizational system of the school.

In order to explore such complexity in a daily leadership practice, Halverson (2001, 2002) suggested that *artifact* can be a window for inquirers into the practice. Artifacts, in a broader meaning, can be sign systems, instruments, procedures, methods, laws, and processes which shape the work of human beings (Norman, 1991). In the school leadership context, however, artifacts refer to the programs, procedures and policies designed to shape or reform existing practices in the institutional context (Halverson, 2003). In this definition, artifacts are the tools that help define leadership practice and at them same time leaders use design, use and modify artifacts to improve their practice. When a researcher looks backward at the process of how an artifact was designed and implemented, this can help understand the assumptions that the designers or users made about the nature of the problem and its solution since " the designed artifacts themselves stand as representations of aspects of the addressed problem the community wanted to notice and name (Halverson, 2001, p.8)" Therefore, pressing on artifacts can offer opportunities to make practitioners' practical knowledge, which is usually tacit, more accessible and reveal the relationship between contexts and practitioners because 'in dialectical terms, people and settings together create problems and solution shapes' (Lave *et al.*, 1984).

In order to capture the practice which is mediated by the artifact comprehensible, I chose Design Cycle Analysis Model (DCAM, Halverson, 2001), designed to identify several key components of problem-setting and solving process. This model served as the data analysis framework that gave a guideline to reconstruct a narrative of leadership practice for this study. The components of the model include *goals*--the problem setting was intended to achieve,

resources-- social and material capital available to the designers, *strategies*—how to secure resources necessary to design and maintain the artifact and how to overcome constraints. Halverson further defines *constraints* as "aspects of the situation that limit or define the problem-solution" and *affordances* as "the situation that can be capitalized upon by designers in artifact construction (Halverson, 2001 p.12)." The model helped me categorize data into themes and patterns, and to recognize conceptual linkages between the phenomena described in the three different sources.

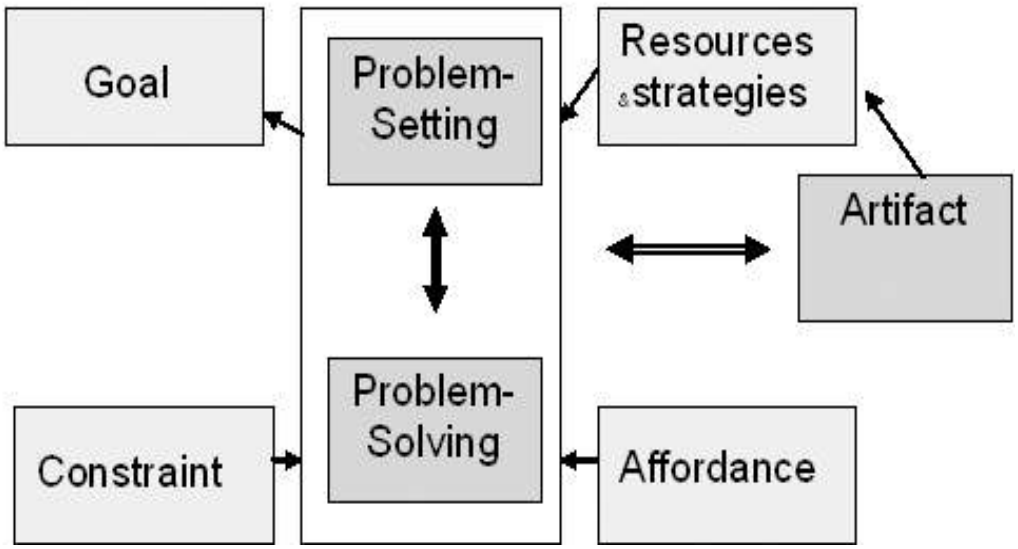

Figure III-2. Design-Cycle Analysis Model (Halverson, 2001)

The key components of the model were used in coding scheme and also guide my interpretation on leadership practice of each case in terms of problem-setting and solving. As mentioned above, this model assumes that leadership practices in schools involve problem-setting and problem-solving, and the artifacts are the product of the problem solving as well as means for intended goals.

Through initial interviews with school leaders each site, I was able to tentatively figure out significant artifacts-programs, procedures and policies- designed to meet the needs of recently-arrived refugee students. Through my literature review I found four important areas in which school practitioners have been engaged in refugee student education: 1) Classroom environment and instruction, 2) Social supports for adjustment, 3) Refugee parent school involvement, and 4) Professional development. I tried to identify artifacts that related to these four areas. For example, for refugee parent school involvement, Hmong Parent Meeting at Adam School District is a relevant artifact, and Hmong Club at Bridge School is a related artifact to social supports for adjustment. After identifying significant artifacts, my interview questions have set up around why each artifact was made and how it used in order to reveal the concerns and assumptions the school leaders had in facing the influx of refugee students.

For the data coding, the first step was to compile all the data from interviews, school documents, newspaper articles, and hand written field notes into a computer database. Interviews in audio files were transcribed using software called INQSCRIBE ® into text files, and saved by interviewee's name and interview dates. Next, I broke the text into meaningful segments. Gall, Borg, & Gall (1996) defined segment as "a section of the text that contains one item of information and that is comprehensible even if read outside the context in which it is embedded (p.563)" The length of the segment varied: a phrase within a sentence, a paragraph, and several pages of text.

As mentioned above, in this study I utilized the categories from DCAM (Halverson, 2002) in order to encompass and summarize the data. Before categorizing the segments according to DCAM, however, I have developed titles or summary of each segment to understand the content or to clarify which artifact the segment is related to. For example, below

is a transcribed text from an interview with a school principal of Adam school district. I have set apart the underlined text as a segment and titled "self-contained class for refugee newcomers" and then*, italicized text* as a segment titled "parent education"

> We've got 25 new students who all were pretty much at the same spot. None of them knew any English. None of them knew how American schools work. So all of sudden, piecemeal those kids out to different areas, I think that is really tough on the kids. In this way we bring them into a self-contained room and started very basics, and walking straight through, giving them background knowledge, giving them a tool to be successful when they are out there. If I stated integrating students who did not know English through out the whole building, I don't think there would be really successful. There would been a high frustration for the kids and for the teachers. *The parents did not know how American school work and what to expect. They put their sons and daughters on a bus that, 7:30 in the morning and magically they come home at 4:00clock. (they do not know what is going on during the school day) So we set up a night end of the October last year, we invited parents in and had interpreters and had people from Hmong Association, we sat them down, and walked through a whole school day; what their sons and daughters experience in a course of day. We toured them through the buildings so that they knew every place their kids are going.* (School Principal, 2005-9-20, 16:19~17:57)

< self-contained class >
In this way we bring them into a self-contained room and started very basics, and walking straight through, giving them background knowledge, giving them a tool to be successful when they are out there. If I stated integrating students who did not know English through out the whole building, I don't think there would be really successful.

<Parent education>
The parents did not know how American school work and what to expect. They put their sons and daughters on a bus that, 7:30 in the morning and magically they come home at 4:00clock. (they do not know what is going on during the school day) So we set up a night end of the October last year, we invited parents in and had interpreters and had people from Hmong Association, we sat them down, and walked through a whole school day; what their sons and daughters experience in a course of day. We toured them through the buildings so that they knew every place their kids are going.

In the next step, each segment was sorted into the DCAM categories: *goals, resources, strategies*, *affordances* and *constraints*:, and I have sometimes developed more detailed categories or

subtypes. “Resources” were coded as financial resources or social resources, and “affordances” could be divided into affordances on the benefit of refugee students or affordances for efficient use of teaching resources or maintaining existing school system. For example, the segment below is about “class placement” at Columbia K-8 School from the interview of an ESL teacher. She explained that Hmong newcomers were clustered into the same class so that the newcomers have the same tasks as well as this helped a more convenient operation of Hmong bilingual support and teaching schedule. This part was coded into “affordances-for newcomers” and “affordances-for teaching schedule” as well.

> For Hmong newcomers we tried to put them into the same classroom where they could have the same homework and also they are going to make (Hmong) aide’s time and the teacher's time. They’re able to get that. If we scatter them around to the different classrooms, we did not change their grades just to make more convenient for us, but we made sure putting them into a certain classroom to make more convenient for us and for them (Maxwell, 29:10~29:34).

In the second stage, *narrative analysis* of the coded data was conducted. Eisenhardt (1989, cited in Audet and Amboise) advises cross-case researchers to start data analysis with an in-depth study of each individual site. With the major pieces of data associated with the DCAM categories I reconstructed a narrative case for each site. As Halverson (2004) suggested, this process required an iterative cycle with the first stage to find sequential linkages between events, clarify assumptions behind the use of artifacts and provide detailed contexts. Halverson (2004) maintained that “in the first stage … omit many “taken for-granted” assumptions that make the practice itself possible. Accessing these assumptions is critical for reconstructing the situation of practitioners’ problem-setting and –solving”. Since a leadership practice is an experience which happens narratively, the best way of representing and sharing the experience is narrative (Clandinin and Connelly 2000). Through narrative forms, the story of each site is presented as a

connected and contextualized form. Within-case narratives are presented in Chapter Four.

In the third stage, the cross-case analysis directs attention to problem-setting and problem -solving of school leadership in refugee education contexts. This process helped me refine a clear response to my research question. In order to deal with the leadership practice analysis, in terms of problem-setting and problem–solving, I contrasted the context of each school district to focus on how district situational factors affected the particular artifacts leaders used for their refugee students. I also discussed why an artifact used at one site could not be used in a similar way at another site to highlight the assumptions school leaders made about the services they provided to refugee children. Overall, the within-case analysis in the previous stage is more descriptive whereas the current analysis is more interpretative. The findings of cross-case analysis are presented in Chapter Five.

Validity

Yin (1998) suggested four tests have been used to establish the quality of social research: 1) construct validity, 2) internal validity, 3) external validity, and 4) reliability. For each tactic, Tellis (1997) explained,

> Construct validity is especially problematic in case study research. It has been a source of criticism because of potential investigator subjectivity. Yin (1994) proposed three remedies to counteract this: using multiple sources of evidence, establishing a chain of evidence, and having a draft case study report reviewed by key informants. Internal validity is a concern only in causal (explanatory) cases. This is usually a problem of "inferences" in case studies, and can be dealt with using pattern-matching, which has been described above. External validity deals with knowing whether the results are generalizable beyond the immediate case. Some of the criticism against case studies in this area relate to single-case studies. However, that criticism is directed at the statistical and not the analytical generalization that is the basis of case studies. Reliability is achieved in many ways in a case study. One of the most important methods is the development of the case study protocol

In this study "triangulation" in data source was the primary means to increase

the construct validity. The multiple sources of data are interviews with school leaders and other staff who are involved in the design and implementation of the artifacts, observations of the artifacts in use, and document review. In order to avoid biased interpretation of interviews, I included at least three different voices from various positions in each school: school principal, teacher, and teaching assistant. For example, during the investigation of an after-school program for Hmong refugee students, I interviewed a teacher who facilitated the program, the school principal, and a district administrator who supervised all the after-school programs in the school to collect richer information and at the same time to verify their statements.

To bolster internal validity, Yin, (1998) suggested pattern matching, explanation building, or using logic models as tactics. The coding schemes based on the components of DCAM, which are linked to each other in order to explain problem-setting and solving process, helped explanation building in this study since internal validity is about demonstrating that certain conditions lead to other conditions. For external validity, which reflects whether or not findings are generalizable, I compared and contrasted multiple sites; I considered small, medium and large school districts to find similarities and differences using the same analysis framework in each. This process strengthens analytical generalizations. Finally, to enhance reliability, I had developed interview protocol for school administrators and teachers before entering the field, and used the same data-collection procedure and a consistent set of initial questions in the interview protocol.

CHAPTER IV
WITHIN-CASE NARRATIVES

This chapter presents three within-case narratives of the school sites in the state of Wisconsin that housed Hmong refugee students over the period of school years 2003 to 2005. Through the initial interviews with school administrators in each site, I identified central artifacts that were closely related to educating the newcomers (See Table IV-1), and then collected information through interviews with school practitioners, site observation, and school documentation. The information was then coded into elements of Design Cycle Analysis Model (Halverson, 2004).

Table IV-1. Central artifacts for Hmong Refugee Students

School Site	Central Artifacts	Operated by
Abraham Newcomer Center	Self-contained Class Community Learning, Parents Meeting &Teacher Training	By District's ESL Department
Bridge Elementary School	Inclusive instruction FAST Hmong Club	By local school
Columbia K-8 School	Pull-out Group Tutoring Peer Buddy Parent Workshop	By local school

With the major pieces of data associated with the DCAM categories, I have reconstructed narratives: describing the central artifacts, which were implemented in the midst of dealing with an influx of Hmong newcomers in each school, in a connected and contextualized form in order to express how the artifacts mediated the goals that the school practitioners had intended to achieve and their local contexts. Through the narratives presented here I hope my readers might gain insights into the experience of the school leaders who adapted to their situational constraints, affordances, and limited fiscal or personnel resources to provide better learning conditions for refugee students.

Case Narrative One:
Abraham Newcomer Center

This narrative depicts a school district in a small town which provided educational services in the response to a large influx of the Hmong refugee children though a transitional program called Abraham Newcomer Center. The story started with brief history of the local community related to the Hmong wave, and then is continued to describe how the Newcomer Center is made, what resources and strategies were used, and what kind of leadership was shown in designing and implementing the program.

Small Town: Adam Community

Serving 8,700 students, the Adam School District is located in a tranquil town in the state of Wisconsin. The town has changed in the last twenty years from one of the whitest districts in the United States to an area with a diverse student population: Hmong children now comprise nearly a quarter of the student population. Changes began in 1976 with an influx of Hmong refugees. *Atlantic magazine* described the situation as follows:

> It all began simply enough, when a few churches and individuals in *Adam*, decided to resettle some Southeast Asian refugees during the late 1970s. To most residents, it seemed like a nice thing to do. Nobody meant to plant the seeds for a social transformation (Beck, 1994, Italics added to show that the name is a pseudonym).

In the *Atlantic Magazine* article, Hmong refugees were described as causing all the troubles in Adam, including overcrowding classrooms, increasing public welfare reliance, gang violence, and eventually overburdening taxpayers. In addition, in the early ‘90s, a conflict arose between parent groups surrounding the ‘partnering school’ program, a district policy to spread Hmong students evenly through the district in order to prevent concentrating them in a particular

area. The conflict was featured by several national press agencies and magazines, such as *60 Minutes* and the *Chicago Tribune.* The community was depicted as segregating and discriminating against the refugee population. These reports made the people of Adam aware of how they were being perceived from outside and how they painted their community to outsiders (Addison, 2005-09-20, 57:11~57:32). After these experiences in the '90s, the Adam community made significant efforts to know about the Hmong people and to establish a supportive tone toward them. Helen Addison (pseudonym), an administrator of the district explained,

> I think that it took us a while to understand who they are. April was Hmong Awareness month in the city. So we did a lot of activities and exercises and a lot of things are going on in the city. That helps the community understand who Hmong people are and what they are about. We'll continue to do that. Our newspapers sent someone over to the Watt [a refugee camp in Thailand]. When the Hmong had been here about 20 years they sent somebody over to Thailand to look at that. I think that there's a lot of people that have. We spent a lot on the education process. The education process is not just for the children but for all the families. I think now for the most part people know that you can't bring that up as an issue, that the Hmong is here is better than it is negative. I mean that is no longer an issue. (Addison, 2005-5-26, #1, 38:34~40:00)

Also Addison mentioned how successfully Hmong people resettled and succeeded in integrating into life in Adam.

> And a lot of it proved that Hmong are successful here. So many of the Hmong people are off welfare, they are working, they have jobs, home-owners and they become citizens. In the state of Wisconsin they are a group that got off the welfare faster than all other minorities. We train Hmong people; women mostly to be Hmong day-care providers: they can feel comfortable leaving their children there. (40:00~ 41:00)

Since the first wave began, the Hmong population has continuously grown, and now the number of Hmong students comprises over 24% of the total population, while that of Latino and other ethnicities is around 3%. Addison found that through over thirty years of experiences, her community has come to a more realistic view about accepting the refugees, to understand their children's educational needs and native-born residents have become more open to their refugee neighbors and more positive about spending resources for refugee students.

The First Hmong Wave

Back in the late 1970s, when the first influx of Hmong refugees took place, many in the community did not fully understand the process of how students learn a second language and assumed that the refugees could be easily assimilated to the community and be Americanized quickly. Addison, the director of the ESL department of Adam School District, recalled that time.

> At the beginning we probably did not do a very good job. Because we kind of thought, "Ok, they could learn English right away, everything will be fine. They will become American"… I think for the most part our administration thought 'hmm, these people are from a tropical rainforest. Give them one winter in Wisconsin, they're going to be gone" but they did not. They stayed around. At that time they (the school district) said 'there is no job for ESL, because these Hmong People coming, they've got older brothers and sisters. They just learn English by watching television" (Addison, 2005-05-26-#1 02:15-27, 15:57:~19:24)

By the middle of the 1980s, the school district had only one ESL teacher and a few aides for 160 ESL students, most of whom were Hmong. During the 1980s, Hmong refugee students enrolled in a regular school right away. ESL teachers were the main adults the students interacted with and the students used to be pulled out for their English instructions from their regular classes for much of the day. With the Hmong student population growing and their expectations of immediate language acquisition not having occurred, the district realized that schools would need more ESL teachers. In 1988 there were six ESL teachers in the school district for about 480 ESL students. Compared to the past, introducing more ESL classes, that pulled students out of their regular classes, showed a significant commitment on the part of the school. However, in this instructional model, the Hmong students did not make much progress in acquiring their second language. In the early 1990s, despite all her efforts, Addison found that her Hmong students were not making progress as she expected.

> What was made clear to me in 1990, when I got the job, (ESL) coordinator, I run over to a middle school. At the middle school, a teacher was very mad. 'They (ESL students) did not know the difference between "this" and "that" and "these" and "those"--this is close to you, that is far away, singular.' ESL kids mixed all those things up. When I looked at, I realized I had half of those kids. Two years before, back at the Elementary school, I taught the lesson because the principal came and observed me. Of course, I did a wonderful teaching job, He came in Monday thru Thursday because he was supposed to do a full observation. Worksheet: this and that, these and those: I had candy, pencils, stickers toys and all this stuff so they can play around with "this is mine and that is yours; these are mine; those are yours" (24:26) they have all that down, filled out worksheet things, two years later, they did not remember any of that. They remember the time I taught them for a short time. (Addison, 2005-9-20, 24:00~24:39)

Why did the students not show any progress? Concerning this matter, Addison concluded that the Hmong students did not have opportunities to practice what they learned from the ESL classes in their rest of the school day. Addison explained,

> I realized they do not take it back to their classroom. Their teacher was not doing anything with it. At that time I said, "you know what, the way we are doing language, our kids are learning English in spite of us. We were pulling them out; we were making them feel good; we give them a good comfort level. But they were learning language because of what's happened to them all the rest of the day" (Addison, 2005-05-26, #1, 21:25~25:20)

Besides language skills, Addison found that many of the refugee students had difficulties catching up with the basic knowledge in academic subjects that their American counterparts are generally supposed to have. This is because most refugee students had little or no formal education at their refugee camps, so that they were not able to have opportunities to develop basic knowledge in math, science and social studies. Addison and her school district came to agree to make a transitional program for Hmong students, which would integrate English language skills into other academics and provide with the students and their parents a safe, welcoming, and supportive atmosphere. With these ideas as a foundation, the school district first opened Newcomer Center in 1992, and assigned Helen Addison to direct the Center; it lasted for three years and then closed when Hmong newcomers in town were relatively settled. Ten years

later, when Helen Addison learned that the second influx of Hmong refugees into Wisconsin would begin in the summer of 2003 and her school district was expected to receive 139 students, she thought it was the right time to reopen Newcomer Center again.

Newcomer Center for the Second Hmong Wave

Newcomer Center in 2003 opened five sites: three are elementary school-level, one middle school-level, and the other one high school-level. Among five centers, four centers are dedicated to Hmong newcomers, and one K-5-level center is for Latino students (school year 2005-6, 12 Latino students enrolled). Numbers of Hmong newcomers enrolled for the years 2003-2006 are displayed in Table IV-2.

Table IV-2. Enrollment of Newcomer Centers

Level / Year	K-5		6-8	9-12
	Site A	Site B	Site D	Site E
2003-2004	45	35	20	19
2004-2005	35	27	23	39
2005-2006	31	33	23	46

For some newcomers, Newcomer Centers are located beyond their neighborhood area. Since there are ten neighborhood school areas, and only two areas have Newcomer Centers, the district provided refugee students who live outside of the two areas with transportation. Since the town is not very large geographically, transporting individual or small groups of students to a school beyond the most geographically accessible school is not a difficult issue.

In this case I chose one elementary-level Newcomer Center from among the five sites, and since the Newcomer Center was located in Abraham Elementary School (pseudonym) I decided to call the site “Abraham Newcomer Center”.

Self-Contained Class

Abraham Newcomer Center have two multi-aged self-contained classes, and15-16 Hmong newcomer children enrolled each class. One class is for Kindergarten to 2nd grades and the other class for 3rd to 5th grades. Out of two classes, one class teacher is Hmong-American, and the other teacher is European American with ESL certification. One Hmong bilingual aide helps the two classes. One of the features of the center is bilingual support for all academic subjects. Helen Addison, the Director of Newcomer Centers and ESL Department of the school district, expressed the importance of bilingual education for refugee students;

> Studies have shown that it is better for students who know their first language, easier to learn the second language. If you could provide learning in the first language it is easier for them to transition that to second language. We do not provide a full bilingual program and we don't do all of our instruction in Hmong, for example, but we offer strong bilingual components in our Newcomer Centers (Addison, 2005-12-14 #4, 03-59~04:50).

In self-contained classes the newly-arrived Hmong students study both English language and the standard academic content of the curriculum, such as Literature, Math, Science, and Social Studies. The students have the time they need to prepare themselves before going out to mainstream classes; and they do not need to "grab a few words of English and try to understand what is going on (Addison, 2005-12-14, #4, 04:50-58)." Principal Baker (pseudonym) of Abraham Elementary School, in which the Center is located, found that the self-contained class cushioned some of the impact from the resettlement on their students' lives.

> We've got 25 new students who all were pretty much at the same spot. None of them knew any English. None of them knew how American schools work. So all of a sudden, to place those kids out to different areas, I think that is really tough on the kids. In this way we bring them into a self-contained room and started very basic, and walking straight through, giving them background knowledge, giving them a tool to be successful when they are out there…If I stated integrating students who did not know English throughout the whole building, I don't think there would be really successful. There would been a high frustration for the kids and for the teachers. (Baker, 2005-09-19, 16:19~17:11)

The components of the Newcomer Center-elementary-school level are English literacy acquisition, academic subjects and orientation classes. Each month has a thematic unit. Examples are below.

September
A. Survival Skills (Geographical Awareness, Name& Address, School, Safety)
B. Readiness Skills (Alphabet, Colors, Shapes, Calendars)
C. Social Skills (Manners, Cooperation, Responsibility, Listening)

October
A. Me
B. Family (Immediate family, Extended Family)
C. Health Care (Body parts, personal Hygiene, Sleep, Appropriate clothing)
D. Home (Types of homes, Floor Plan, Furniture)

Abraham Newcomer Center is able to provide curriculum that are customized for Hmong children due to it self-contained classes. Hence, the classes already included orientation pieces for school-life and their community. In a class called "Community", for example, Hmong newcomers went to a field trip to learn about their community. They visited hospitals, police stations, fire stations, a water purification plant and grocery stores. Or in class the newcomers are learning school's regulations or basic etiquettes for school life. For example, playground or hallway is not a place that people would throw trash **(**Anderson 2005-09-20**).** This activity looks like very basic social knowledge which is often taken for granted. However, since the refugee students come from a very different world than their new home in the U.S., these activities are necessary. Some components of cultural orientation were added to literacy classes. For example, to help the newcomers understand stories that were read in literacy classes, Principal Baker provided Hmong newcomers with hot chocolate and baseball equipment. He shared his experience.

> We did things like she was reading a story about snowmen. It talked about when everyone else goes to sleep, the snowmen kind of come to life. They go to a park and drink hot

> chocolate and play all the games. And then I got to talking with Jill (a newcomer center teacher) after that and I said "do you think your students ever had hot chocolate yet, probably not, so I bought the hot chocolate stuff for all the kids and introduced some to it. It was so funny to watch their reactions. Some of the kids loved it, some of them didn't, but it was neat to give them the experience. One of the times we read about baseball. Many of the students had no idea of baseball. I went home and brought a bunch of baseball equipment and set up a little game on the gym floor. So it is just a neat experience for me as a principal that the school is involved in their academic growth (Baker, 2006-09-19, 03:59~05:01)

School in a School

When Addison initially proposed the idea of self-contained classes, some people in the school district were concerned about the possibility of segregating the newcomer students from mainstream students. Addison recalled that "when we talked to them about Newcomer Centers, [they said] we were segregating the students, we were moving them off to the side and making them separate (2005-09-20, 52:41~52:44)." Addison encouraged the district staff to consider how to produce a transitional program that could provide the refugee students with both self-contained classes and at the same time integrate students into the mainstream classes. One of the ways to prevent the newcomers from being isolated is to make the center a part of the community of the local school.

Fortunately, around 2004 and '05 several local school buildings in the district were able to provide two or three classrooms for Newcomer Centers due to school building renovation, which was funded by a $65 million school-building referendum approved in 1999 to replace a high school, renovate another, and remodel four elementary schools. In addition, the student enrollment in general was declined. Principal Baker explained,

> Overall Adam School District, student population has been declining just because people aren't having babies. As we prepared the school year in 2004 -5, I had two empty classrooms in my building. We've also seen that Southeast Asian population has been declining in our area just because people aren't moving into it. Again I did not have

> students to draw from, which to me was a detriment to my school. (Baker, 2005-09-19, 00:36-1:20)

Integrating Newcomers into the Mainstream

Being located in a local school building enables the Center to have their newcomers partially mainstreamed. For example, Pre-K newcomer students spend the morning in mainstream classes, and in the afternoon are separated for their bilingual education. For other grades, newcomers and mainstream students go to the same art or music classes and spend lunch and recess together. Another way to give the newcomers the opportunity to interact with American peers is an Activity Buddy hour. Addison explained,

> They can do things like reading buddies or activity buddies. They [refugee students] have an English-speaking fourth grade class come in and help work on a project, or they have a project down on the playground all together. Also what's convenient is here two kids can go to math class, they can't be in a regular class all day long, but they can be at math class for an hour or an hour and a half, then they come back to the newcomer center. (Addison, 2005-09-20, 01:06:40)

Principal Baker encourages mainstream students to welcome the refugee students in a friendly way. For instance, the school held a big drive to collect clothes and other items for living to help Hmong families' resettlement.

> As I introduced my first group of students I did that. I pushed the whole idea to make them feel a part of the school, get them involved in playground, and have lunch with them. I had more with my parent organization as we started talking about that, I would let them know what is going on. We had a big drive last year. we filled up 33 boxes last year; families donated things for our refugee families. And we gave them directly to the families of our school. (Baker, 2005-09-19, 25:23~25:47)

Through school visitations I found that newcomers seemed to share a sense of belongingness with the school that hosted the Center, and did not just share the physical spaces with the mainstream students. For example, when I asked a question who the head of the school the student attend, the newcomer students were not hesitant to say the name of the principal of

the school that they are housed rather than the director of Newcomer Centers, even though the ESL department of the district's central office operates the program. Helen Addison and the local school principal, playing different roles, were working closely with student needs. Addison made decisions relating to guidelines for curricula, transportation, refugee parent conferences, financial supports, and other administrative issues while the local school principal is involved in day-to-day activities such as student discipline, and supporting teachers. Principal Baker described how the tasks are allotted and how the he and Helen Addison have collaborated:

> However, we do a lot of stuff collaboratively, a lot of discussions together. Helen (Helen Addison, Central office administrator) is our expert. She knows a lot more about ESL than I'll ever know. So I look to her for my resource person. If I have a question or concerns about something I'd pick up the phone and call Helen and say "I don't understand please talk to me, and she'll fill me in. So she provides us pretty much with the framework to get going. (Baker , 2005-09-19, 07:00~07:55)

Principal Baker also described the ways decisions were made regarding the coordination between the schools and the centers.

> Principals have the day-to-day type of decision making that needs to be done. For example, when students have discipline problems. If there are pieces that, 'we want to purchase new computers or something', then they come to me, for monetary things, also it is programmatic. Maybe they're saying 'we did not think we needed to have a physical education teacher time, but now I think we want to be able to provide that. If there is a bigger concern for example, busing kids aren't getting to school in time ..some of the bigger picture things where I kind of step in. The principal in the building has day-to-day contact with them [students]. Let's take a look at the evaluation. Teachers need to be evaluated, particularly new teachers. The principals do some observation but I also do come in, because, again, maybe I have expertise in ELL and what they should be doing; teachers have expertise in curriculum and educational strategies (Addison, 2005-12-14, 06:35~08:21)

Eventually, the end goal of the Newcomer Center is, of course, to transition the students into the mainstream classroom. Some people in the school district worried about the possibility of the prolongation of primary or secondary studies, which might cause fewer academic challenges for

the students, but retain students permanently. To resolve this concern, the school district set a two year limit. Addison explained,

> I think the concern, also when we started Newcomer Centers, was that "we don't want to get them into that program and have them stay there, year after year, make sure they transition out." So we kind of say 'two year limit'. We have found that for some children that works out very well (Addison 2005-09-20, 53:48~54:16)

In the high-school-level Newcomer Center, some refugee students who attended a public school in Thailand go to regular math classes and bilingual aides help them in the classroom. The teachers in the Newcomer Center were making efforts to give their students opportunities to be exposed to a regular class when they were considered ready. Giving them part-time opportunities to participate in regular classes is one of the main approaches to getting the students ready to move on. Principal explained how newcomer students made progress in their academic development.

> A lot of our kids are in the Newcomer Centers right now, they started with us last year (2004) October. They are getting some of those skills and they are ready to go out. So we've got kids right now in the Kindergarten classroom and we've got kids in the first grade classroom. They are not there full time yet, because still there are additional supports for them so we are getting them out there in those classes and they have been successful. (Baker, 2005-09-20 7:59~08:20)

In addition, the principal explained how he and Newcomer Center teachers collaborate on matters of transition.

> Newcomer teachers come to me, and say "this is what I have been working on. And this is the child who is showing progress. We think she is ready to go out." And I say "Great, let's look at the classrooms" because at every grade level I have ELL-certified teachers. So we check out where they are at and what their class size looks like at that point. Newcomer teacher, myself, and the teacher talk about what is going on and where this child started at, why we think they are ready for coming to the classroom. At this point, all of our regular ed teachers have been very accommodating (Baker 2005-09-20 , 12:13~12:54)

Regarding the criteria for transition, Newcomer Center teachers commonly rely on 'Access for all'-- an English assessment system that the Department of Public Instruction of Wisconsin developed for limited English proficient students. In addition, teachers consider

students' ability to comprehend and complete daily work because some students may have good results on tests, but may have difficulty keeping up with the class' regular activities. From the Newcomer Center Teacher Survey of 2006, most Newcomer teachers described successful transition to mainstream classes such as "two 2nd grade students have successfully transferred into mainstream classrooms full-time this year. Both students were extremely driven and hard-working. They were encouraged to strive for more by both me and the mainstream teacher."

Outreach for Hmong Refugee Parents

For the parents of refugee students who are not familiar with the American school system, Newcomer center is a secure and comfortable zone. In the 1990s, when the district did not have any Hmong teachers, Hmong parents did not make progress in understanding education as quickly as the current newcomer Hmong parents. Addison recalled that, "the difference, I know, we did the newcomer center the way back in the '90s, we did not have resources, having Hmong teachers, seemed to take families longer to understand what the education is about (Addison, 2005-09-20, 01:05~11:07)." The Newcomer Center held many meetings for refugee families that focus on how to be effective care-givers for school age children. When I visited the school in mid-September 2005, the school had already had family meetings twice already. The first meeting dealt with what schools are about in U.S. society, and what the parents should do to help their children succeed in the American school system. Addison said,

> We have a lot of family meetings. We had two so far this year, one was specifically just for the new families, helping those families understand what school is about, what they should be doing with their kids, we had another one--kind of general about more things they can do –getting them to sleep on time, give them food before they go to school, getting them a place they can study- place can be quiet, where the TV is off, how they dress for school, (2005-9-20, 14:46-16:10)

Principal Baker described Hmong parent meetings that gave the refugee parents the opportunities to understand American schools.

> The parents did not know how American schools work and what to expect. They put their sons and daughters on a bus that, in the morning and magically they come home at 4:00 o' clock. So we set up a night at the end of October last year, we invited parents in and had interpreters and had people from the Hmong Association, we sat them down, and walked through a whole school day; what their sons and daughters experience in the course of a day. We toured them through the buildings so that they knew every place their kids are going. (2005-09-19, 17:19~17:57)

At the meeting the district provided not only school-specific information (i.e. curriculum, teachers' names, class placement, school policy), but also general guides about how to help their children create a learning environment in their homes (i.e. making sure that children have enough sleep and eat breakfast before going to school, find a quiet place for to do their homework, have time to study, get to sleep on time, learn their address and telephone number). A Newcomer Center teacher said,

> We had teachers volunteer to educate them survival skills for the whole families. This summer we had that. It was very helpful for the first group of refugees that came so they [recent refugees] can get that kids of supports. (Vang, 2005-09-19, 07:11~42)

In addition, the district distributed a small guide book, titled " A Guide to Adam Area Schools for Parents of Southeast Asian Students--English and Hmong Versions" . The purpose of the book is to explain the educational system to Hmong parents in the community and provide answers to frequent questions from parents who are new to the U.S. This book contains contact numbers of the school district buildings, the parent's role in the educational process, instructional programs, people who work in the schools. Included is an appendix that provides seven samples of notes which parents can copy when they need to send notes to the school.

Example 1.

Dear Mr./Mrs___
Please excuse my son/daughter _____ from school early on ____ (date) at ____ (time).
He/she had an appointment to see the doctor/dentist/counselor.
Thank you.
Sincerely,
(sign your name here and date)

In order to reach Hmong families, Addison, the director of the Newcomer Center, is closely collaborating with a local Hmong organization in the town. For example, Adam Area Hmong Mutual Association, Inc. (pseudonym), a private non-profit organization, founded for the integration and economic advancement of Hmong refugees, made a bridge between schools and Hmong refugee families. One of their important services is the home-school liaison project. AAHMA describes;

> Our Home-School Liaison Project promotes cultural awareness and appreciation in schools, while advocating for Lao-Hmong parents and students alike. Equally important is the bridging language and cultural barriers while educating parents and students on the nature of American education and their responsibilities and rights. Our program works with at-risk students and their families to redirect their time in a positive manner. This project also assists schools in coordinating and promoting family involvement (AAHMA Website, access date 2006-02-10).

Addison found this organization helpful in reaching out to the refugee families and she described how supportive the organization has been in detail as follows;

> AAHMA was very supportive and help us [Adam School District] set up the program and they carry on (The AAHMA leaders) have been there very long time and very supportive of assisting parents helping them realize some of their needs are. We were working with students but WAHWA works with parents. When parents would have issues and concerns they brought there, they would be willing to do we can do workshop and retreat, all sorts of things are there. (Addison, 2005-12-14, 00:50~02:07)

So far I have illustrated the local background of the Newcomer Center and its features as a transitional program. In the next section I narrate how Helen Addison secured financial resources

and what professional development she provided for Hmong bilingual teachers and general teachers as well.

Securing Financial Resources

When Helen Addison mentioned launching a program for minority students, including the Newcomer Center, other district decision-makers grew concerned about fiscal resources. One strategy that she used to convince people was to show how the district could shift money around in their budget to support the implementation of Newcomer Centers and other bilingual supports, especially hiring doubly certified teachers from pre-K to fifth grade. Addison explained,

> I think some of the ways you can get funding at that time under Title Seven for things like Newcomer Centers so we worked with the people of the district, and say 'how do you want this to look', they put in their input, we wrote the grant and we got the funding. The idea that how do you get a HR director and accountants, say 'yes' we should get all the teachers who are pre-Kindergarten to fifth grade ESL certified **,** you appeal to that economic part of it, like I said, as much as money we will spend, we get 12% back, so those teachers we have out there we hired in the classroom, they would have to be there anyway, we still 12% back on them.' (Addison, 2005-09-20, 55:34~56:29)

To secure more financial resources, the Adam school district pursued the following aids, which cover about 12% of the total expenses of the Newcomer Center. In 2004-5, Title I[1] provided $ 70 per student. Even though Title I was not specific to ELL (English Language Learners), most of the ELL students in the district are eligible for the qualifying criteria. From Title III[2], the district received $112 per student. Since the total number of newcomers is 135, the district received $15,120. Bilingual State Aids, a Wisconsin state program, reimbursed the district for the 12% of expenses for ESL personnel salaries. Since the district hired new teachers with ESL certification (currently 172 dually certified teachers), the district received more reimbursement from the state than they expected. Besides, Title I, III, and Bilingual State Aids,

[1] A U.S. federal program that provides financial support for academic achievement of disadvantaged students who are at risk of not meeting the state's challenging content and performance standards.
[2] A US federal program that provides financial support through a grant given to school districts which implement supplemental instructional programs for limited-English proficient (LEP) students.

there was $70,000 more from the Office of Refugee Resettlement specifically targeting Hmong educational support.

Professional Development

The fact that, currently, the district has six Hmong bilingual teachers is due to Helen Addison's efforts. Ten years ago, Addison realized the school district would eventually need more Hmong bilingual teachers, not just teaching aides, in order to provide a quality educational service for Hmong children. Four of the newcomer teachers are Hmong-American, who began their careers as teacher aides in the school district. A local magazine explained,

> One of the best parts of the Newcomer Centers for these brand new students are their teachers. Four of the newcomer teachers are Hmong American. These teachers serve as role models for the children; showing them that they too can reach their dreams here in America. All of them began their careers in Adam School District as teacher aides and, through a special District program, have gone on to complete their degrees and received their elementary education certification (WSD dialogue, winter 2005 p.3-4)

In the early 1990s, fifteen Hmong teaching aides with high school diplomas signed up for teacher certification courses and thirteen have completed their degrees and received their elementary education certification. In the school year 2004-5 eight of those thirteen are working in the district and five have moved to other cities. In addition, the school district has a pay scale for bilingual aides: the aides who read and write proficiently in both English and Hmong get paid a higher rate. Addison explained that this is a strategy to recruit more proficient aides and school district places an emphasis on the value of bilingual staff for educating refugee students (Addison 2005-09-20 33:00~36:00 & 2005-12-14 09:35~10:00).

Another professional development initiative was to educate general-education-certified teachers to use ESL strategies such as hand-on experiences, visual materials, and pre-teaching vocabularies. Extending ESL strategies to other content areas, such as math, social studies, and

science, was intended to support the continuing development of language skills for Hmong students and other ESL minority students who were transitioned to regular classrooms. In addition, Helen Addison introduced the policy of hiring teachers who were double-certified in general education and ESL. They could teach general education with an understanding of the principles of language acquisition and adapt the ideas of ESL teaching methods.

> We also had students that, we realized we need to do more about content-knowledge-based instruction rather than grammar instruction. So the content-based instruction, that is what literacy is eventually getting, required all of our pre-school through fifth grade teachers to get ESL certification. So those teachers in the classroom who see the kids all day long have the certification and can help students with strategies and ideas of ESL. (Addison, 2005-09-20, 05:43~06:12)

Addison also realized that teachers should be oriented in issues of equity and tolerance. Addison initiated the Co-Star program, in which every new teacher spent thirteen hours over the course of the school year to learn about diversity and equity. This professional development is facilitated with [A World of Difference] which is developed by the Anti-Defamation League. Through this program, brand-new teachers have opportunities to learn about the value of diversity and explore ways that help to improve inter-group relations and to combat forms of prejudice and racism.

Conclusion

Adam school district wanted to make a program as a buffer for transitional impacts on the Hmong refugee students and also aimed to help local schools more efficiently incorporate the students, as well as improved academic and social growth of the newcomers. When Helen Addison, the director of ESL department of the District, proposed Newcomer Center that would operate self-contained classes for newcomers, the fear of segregation made the idea controversial.

Segregation was a sensitive issue for the school district's decision-makers, since the community had suffered from a media portrayal that they were segregating the Hmong population in the1990s. Regarding this matter, Addison used the school-within-the-school model to enhance integration opportunities for mainstream students and Hmong newcomers. The Hmong students shared a sense of belongingness to the local school community and transitioned effectively due to bilingual supports and gradual participation in mainstream classes. Briefly Newcomer Centers can be described as independent, but connected to a school community; and as transitional, having bilingual supports, and strong school-home ties

In a discussion of the Newcomer Centers, the leadership of Helen Addison deserves attention, especially in the area of professional development. As mentioned above, Hmong bilingual teachers are the primary resource for the Newcomer Centers. Addison made this possible by writing a grant ten years ago to invite college classes to the town in order to help Hmong educational aides to get certified as general education teachers. In addition, she initiated professional development for all teachers, including non-ESL teachers, to help equip them with ESL strategies for the students who are transitioning or partly participating in mainstream classes.

Case Narrative Two:
Bridge Elementary School

This narrative is about how, in an elementary school located in a medium-size urban setting in the State of Wisconsin, Hmong teaching staff members made efforts to provide programs customized to meet the unique needs of their Hmong refugee students. The story begins with the context of the school and its school district, and then continues by describing two after-school programs dedicated to Hmong newcomers, Hmong club and Hmong FAST (Families and Schools Together).

Unexpected Influx

"We did not really know that we were going to get so many children until after the school year started", said the school principal of Bridge Elementary School (Principal at Bridge, 2006-3-31). It was not until the first week of the school year that the principal learned that the school would receive twenty five Hmong students from Thailand. 153 Hmong refugee students came to the city in 2004, and of these the number of elementary school age children was 53 (School district data of school year 2005-2006). Almost half of these students were enrolled in Bridge Elementary School whereas the remainder was spread out to ten other schools, which enrolled a range of one to three Hmong newcomers. The school district did not intend to concentrate the Hmong student population at one school; however, because the Catholic charity organization that sponsored the Hmong refugees owned an apartment complex in the neighborhood, the Hmong refugee families were accommodated in this area.

It was difficult for the school district to spread the Hmong newcomers across the district or run a separate program that would focus only on them. One of the reasons was this school

district has diverse linguistic minority populations. In this medium size city the number of home languages in LEP students was recorded 53, comparing 34 languages in Cross School District, which serves the largest city. One of the reasons of its greater linguistic diversity is due to a local state university that attracts many international students and professionals from various Asian countries. Given this situation, the school district did not want to focus its resources on a particular ethnic group, but rather to spread bilingual and ESL resources equitably across the diverse student population. Therefore, to respond to the specific needs of Hmong refugee students, the school district made use of their existing educational services and assistance from outside refugee support organizations. Maria Smith, a staff member of the ESL department of the school district, explained,

> I think we have a long tradition that students go to the neighborhood schools to build community and create friends. I think because of the size of the city to transport someone on the far west-side all the way to the east side, those students could be on a bus for an hour in the morning. I think that size of our district, mixed it very hard to have bus route, that would go to all the different neighborhood and pick up all these students and bring them to one (site). (Among ESL children) main language, as for us it is Spanish. We have to spread our resources. We have 54 languages in our district so we have to spread our resources to meet the needs of all students that are coming for a variety of reasons (Smith, 2005-11-09, 01:11:06~1:12:32).

With the limited resources, the Bridge School started to receive the Hmong newcomers. Fortunately, the school had two Hmong bilingual teachers; Zoua Thao, a Kindergarten teacher, and an art teacher Victor Ku and an experienced Bilingual Resources Specialist (hereafter, BRS) Chao Xiong to this school. These three Hmong staff members made extra efforts to provide a better educational opportunity for the newcomers by implementing programs such as Families And Schools Together (hereafter, FAST), and Hmong Club and providing bilingual supports. In the following sections, each program is described, highlighting how the Hmong staff customized the structure and contents of the program to meet the unique needs of the Hmong newcomers and

their families.

Inclusive Class

Class Placement

In the 2005-06 school year, among the twenty five newcomers, eight were Kindergarteners. All of them were placed with the Hmong bilingual teacher, Zoua Thao's class. For other grades, if there was an on-going Hmong student who could speak both languages in the grade (there were eight on-going Hmong children), less than nine Hmong newcomers were placed in the same classroom with the Hmong-English bilingual students. One of the reasons the school clustered the Hmong newcomers was to prevent them from being isolated and to help them feel comfortable. The other reason was to have to operate Hmong bilingual and ESL programs with limited teachers and BRS (Zoua Thao, 2006-5-16 #1). The Principal said,

> Last year we had 25 new arrivals and we had 8 on-going students. When the children came in if there was a Hmong speaker in a classroom we would try to put two or three Hmong children in that room. It got a little bit crowded then we would start another classroom with new two or three students. We try to keep them cluster, two or three together. So they would have friends and could talk in the classroom and feel comfortable in that way (Principal, 2006-3-31, 14:01~15:54).

There is a district policy that says that the percent of ESL students who are in level 1 and 2 (the two lowest levels out of seven) in a class should not exceed 60 %. Since the average class size was 15, one class should not have more than ten newcomer students whose ESL level are the lowest.

In-class Support

In Thao's class, half of the students were Hmong newcomers and the other half were English speakers (One African American, two Latinos and four Whites). When Zoua Thao taught

the children, she spoke in English first and then briefly explained in Hmong for the newcomers. Thao is not ESL certified; however, she used many ESL strategies with her non-English native students. For example, while explaining, she used many visual materials along with her hands, figures and other motions together. Having a teacher who used two languages was a new experience for English speaking children too. In the beginning of the school year, Non-Hmong students needed some time to be adjusted to it. The principal recalled that a parent called her to ask what was going on in the class.

> The first couple of weeks, children who are English Speakers were totally confused because she was speaking both English and Hmong. They were kind of like "what did she say? I don't know what she said" so we had clarify and explain to them 'there are two languages going on here' I did have a mother called up and said her child was so confused and could not understand the teacher and that's what gave us "ah!, wait a minute. These children don't get it" We explained to them and things are fine. (Principal, 2006-3-31, 25:32~26:35)

Along with having a bilingual classroom teacher, there were two other adults who would come to the class to help Hmong students with English literacy and in other subject areas. Tuesday through Friday, each day for 45 minutes, an ESL teacher, Lena Griffin (pseudonym), came to the class for activities called "Centers." BRS Chao Xiong came for Math three times a week. Centers is a literacy activity in which students do a certain task at a station and when they are done with that task they are to move on to the next one. Thao explained,

> Centers is a literacy based activity. There are three stations; one is ABC table. Kids are printing letters, word search, things like activities. The other table is science. But they relate to the same them. For example last week the theme was dinosaurs. And Ms. Griffin plans her own station. She helps us on writing called 'interactive writing'. (Zoua Thao, 2006-5-16, #2, 00:20~01:18)

In Centers the students were grouped into three, divided by their level of literacy. In the lowest group, there were six children; five of them were Hmong newcomers; in the middle group were three newcomers, out of a total of six. Zoua Thao explained that although the

students came to the U.S. at almost same points in time, the rate of development in English literacy was different for individual students. When children had older siblings, it appeared that they were quicker to develop English literacy than the children who did not. The ESL teacher and Thao worked collaboratively on planning lessons and selecting topics for each group. The groups were rotated so that each group could have time to work with the ESL teacher at the literacy station. For example, one day the lowest group would work with the ESL teacher and the next day, the middle group would work with her, while Thao would take care of the other two groups. During one week in March 2006, the top group worked on developing stories; brainstorming ideas and working on word choices while the middle group, who knew how to sound out most of the English alphabet, practiced capital letters and lower-case letters, and the lowest group worked on basic vocabulary, making spaces between words, and sounding out words. Lena Griffin explained,

> In that case I am teaching the whole class. I am teaching the part of newcomer class. Some of them are in the middle group and some of them are in the beginner group so I am trying to develop vocabularies. Their (newcomers') literacy is different. In Ms. Thao's class three Hmong newcomers are in the middle group, and other five are in the beginner group. One day I have no ESL students. (top group) So in other word, Ms. Thao and I split the class. We are not just 'this is a time that we are just working with ESL students'. When I go into the other classroom, I work with every student who needs help. Usually there are ESL students but not always. The idea is that we teach all of the students. Classroom teacher teach all of them and I teach all of them (Lena Griffin, 2006-3-21, 01:59~02:51)

During Math, BRS Xiong helped the Hmong students with math and math related games. For example, counting numbers in both languages and discussing the concept of measuring. Zoua Thao informed the BRS ahead of time what Math would be covered during the week, and then Xiong worked with the small groups of students or individuals under the direction of the classroom teacher. Xiong explained his role at the school saying,

> I just help with the kids to make sure they understand basic rules and regulations of the school and help them feel comfortable in school. The other part is a social work; I am helping Hmong parents. For example make sure that kids get coats that are appropriate to the weather. (Chao Xiong, 2005-4-5, 02:25~03:19)

At the school his primary task was to act as an educational aide for Hmong students. As he mentioned, however, his role was not limited to the role of teaching aide in classrooms. He translated between student and school personnel to facilitate understanding. He also worked as a Hmong parent-liaison. He translated weekly school letters and other messages into Hmong text. Also using the Hmong-hot-line, Hmong parents were able to call him to ask about school activities and make appointments with teachers.

Partial Pull-out Instruction

All Hmong newcomers, of course, were ESL students and in this school traditionally ESL support was provided in class and was not a pull-out style program. However, the ESL department and Thao found that their newcomers were different from other immigrant students because their literacy level was very low, Entering (level 1) or Beginning (level 2) status, according to the seven scale of Department of Public Instruction of Wisconsin (http://dpi.wi.gov/oea/pdf/aa_guidebk05-06.pdf). According to these guidelines, Level 1-5 students are supposed to be supported by ESL supporters. More than that, the Hmong newcomers would need extra help with school and cultural orientation. For this reason, Bridge School decided to provide pull-out instruction for a certain period of time. Lena Griffin compared why the Hmong newcomer students needed extra pull-out instruction, saying

> As well as just the testing shows immigrant child coming who has a higher level of English. So I would work more with immigrant's child in their classroom. I only would work with special vocabulary development if I would think they can get more English in a separate environment….Most of my ESL students get more English in classroom. It makes sense that when I am in classroom if I think they are learning a lot of English in their room I would not take them out and teach them. But this group of students (Hmong

> refugee students) I pull them out and teach them because I think they can get more English when I sit down and explain things to them. For a period of time, after this year or next year I won't be pulling them out. (Lena Griffin, 2006-3-21, 08:33~09:29)

The newcomers were pulled out for 45 minutes a day and worked on English vocabulary with Lena Griffin In the ESL classroom. The pull-out class covered,

- Initial vocabulary
- Social skills and manners
- Safety
- School routines

In the beginning of the year, Hmong newcomers did not understand or speak English except for a few words. Some students avoided conversation when addressed by teachers, or just responded "yes" to every question. At that point, developing basic vocabulary; for example, body parts, objects around their classroom, numbers, and days of the week, was the top priority for the students because these basic words would help them to expand and develop their literary competence. Sometimes, practicing school life etiquette was added, for example saying "excuse me" or not tossing trash on the playground.

In sum, Hmong newcomers of the Bridge School received,

- In-class ESL support: every day 45 min
- In-class Bilingual aide's support three times per week, each 45 min
- Pull-put ESL class: four days a week for 45 min

In the Bridge School, all ESL education was held in classes with other English speaking peers. In this way, students spend the majority of the day in general education classrooms and are not separated from the primary curriculum. However, to meet the unique needs of newcomer students, pull-out instruction was added. Regarding bilingual support, Kindergarten Hmong

students could have a bilingual teacher with them all day long while older children received Hmong Bilingual Support three hours per week.

Besides the support in school-hours, Hmong teachers wanted to provide more supports for the newcomers through extra-curricular activities. According to Marilyn Mason (pseudonym), the supervisor for after-school programs from the District, Bridge school has been well-known for being supportive in providing various after-school clubs and a school district staff is permanently stationed to supervise over twenty five programs. Several years ago its school parent organization campaigned to bring after-school programs into the school building. The supervisor of after-school programs at the Bridge explained,

> We chose this school to run the programs because, number one, parents wanted us to be here. They really pushed to bring us here. Before we were here, the parent organization of this school, run lunch time clubs with parent volunteers. There were a lot work and not enough time. And they really liked the idea we are coming in. (Marilyn Mason, 2006-4-25, 08:44~09:15)

For the three Hmong staff members, Kindergarten Teacher Thao, Art teacher Victor Ku, and BRS Choua Xiong, this situation facilitated the initiation of after-school programs for Hmong newcomers. One of the programs was Hmong Club.

Hmong Club

A Wednesday afternoon in the spring of 2006, Hmong children's chattering echoed down the hallway, where an art room was located at the last corner. Hmong children began to enter into the art room by twos and threes where Victor Ku (pseudonym) was welcoming the children and giving out snacks. Having a relaxed time with snacks and chatting in their native language with other Hmong friends seemed to enliven the children. Talking, laughing and giggling, of fourteen girls and five boys, here and there were getting louder and louder and filled the room. Ten

minutes later, Mr. Ku shouted “attention here!” and said “Now we are going to continue to make the bridge. Come up here this table. I want to show you how to connect bridge piles to its board” Mr. Ku continued to explain in English and repeated soon in Hmong, sentence by sentence. Students went back to their tables with parts for the bridges that they made with toothpicks and paper the previous week, and started to connect the bridge piles and the board. Victor Ku was walking around table to table to help the kids and used Hmong when he talked with the students individually. When the time was almost up, the activity wound down and the children started packing their bags. Mr. Ku closed with an announcement for the next week’s activity. The children lined up at the hallway and Victor Ku sent them off to the school bus (Field note 2006-4-12).

Above is a description of the typical day of Hmong Club at the Bridge school. Hmong Club is a weekly after-school club like other clubs at Bridge Elementary that the school district operates. The club started in the fall of 2004 to help Hmong refugee students with school life. Victor Ku, a Hmong bilingual art teacher at this school, explained the purpose of the Club; “This club is designed solely for our new refugee students to give them a chance to get together and have some Q and A about school and life (email correspondence, 2006-3-28).” The idea of the Hmong club started from a conversation between the school principal and Victor Ku. He recalled, “My principal approached me and said ‘why don’t you run a Hmong Club?’” Victor Ku agreed with the suggestion and talked with the after school program supervisor, Marilyn Mason. She also agreed with the idea that Hmong newcomer students needed extra help in adjusting to the new environment. Mason explained,

> Mr. Ku offered to do it. We realized that ‘at this point, (Hmong) students have a large language barrier, and new to this country, still little shy. How can we give them

> opportunities to be a part of this (after school) program?' That's why we decided to do Hmong Club. (Marilyn Mason, 2006-4-25, 02:20~02:31)

The Hmong club members get together once a week; every Wednesday afternoon for 75 minutes. There are three sessions per year and each session runs for seven or eight weeks. Except for the time allotment, the curriculum and activities were left to the discretion of Victor Ku. It was not a mandatory course for the Hmong newcomer students but almost all the students joined the club for the last two years. In the spring of 2006 in which the 6th session was held, twenty one students out of total twenty five newcomer students joined the club. Victor Ku explained that a couple of Hmong students who did not join the Hmong club became members of other after-school clubs this semester since their English improved enough to communicate with English speaking peers.

Activities

At the outset, activities were mainly related to school orientation, American culture, and basic English words useful in the classroom; but as the newcomers became accustomed to school life, in the second year, the curriculum shifted to subjects of art, crafts, and sciences. Regarding the change, Marilyn Mason explained,

> At the start, it is much more about answering questions about American culture, and they are getting used to it. Then now it is much more he's been thinking more certain subject (2006-4-25, 14:24~15:00).

Here are some examples of what the Hmong Club covered in the past two years.

First year:

- Basic English, Etiquette, and school rules
- Identities, Students' families and backgrounds
- How to use school facilities
- Field trip to a local public library
- How to play children's sports and games

- How to stand up to bullies

Second year:

- Mini architecture
- Making Tangrams
- Writing activity
- Play Dough Sculpture
- Constructing a string instrument
- Outdoor Games

In the very first session of the initial year, the Hmong club spent time asking questions about how to express students' needs in English in their classroom situations; for example, "May I go to bathroom?" "I'd like to drink some water" "How do I say this in English?" Victor Ku also taught basic etiquette and attitudes, for example, not running in the hall way and raising their hand. He explained,

> I taught them proper behaviors; raise your hand, do not talk or run in a hall way, and being polite stuff; respectful to yourself, teachers, and other students. We do have a big handbook too. We all tell them; just do your best to do what is right. (Victor Ku, 2006-4-12. 21:05~22:35)

School orientation kept going on. Victor Ku took the students around the school building to show them how to use school facilities such as the library and computers. Also outside school, he took the children to a local public library and helped them register and apply for library cards so that the children could read books after school hours or on weekends. Ku was sensitive to the needs of the newcomer students. He found that many Hmong students felt out of place in gym class because they did not quite understand the rules of the games that children born in the U.S. might take for granted. After Ku consulted the physical education teacher, the Hmong club spent several weeks practicing sports games with the help of the P.E. teacher. Ku explained the serious of activities for the first year.

> I also took them around the school building. A few things we did were, first library review.

> I asked the librarian to give us introduction. She said through the librarian information. Next week I showed them how to use computers. Next, I showed them how to play games in gym class. That is what I did in the first beginning session. (Victor Ku, 2006-4-12, 10:03~10:33)

Hmong Club was a safe place for the Hmong students to share their feelings and struggle in their school life. Several students asked advice of Victor Ku concerning how they handle situations in which they are picked on by mischievous classmates. Ku helped the children by teaching them how to stand up for themselves in class and talking directly with these bullies or explaining the situation to their classroom teachers. As the art teacher, Ku teaches every student in the school, this was an advantage for him in helping Hmong students from every grade. Ku described,

> A couple of kids are pretty naughty, messing around and sometime bully others. After a while, some of their American classmates knew the Hmong kids did not speak English well enough, so they teased some of the Hmong kids. And so the Hmong kids came to the Hmong club and said "Mr. Ku, today a kid kept bothering me and I did not know how to tell the teacher" So I follow up with the kids. I know all the kids because I am an art teacher. So I went to talk to them too. I also told their classroom teacher, saying 'Hey, this is happening and this is what the Hmong kid told me.' Eventually it stopped since the Hmong kids picked up a lot of English. And now I think they can handle themselves (Victor Ku, 2006-4-12, 23:05~ 24:51)

As mentioned above, the second year activities were more focused on crafts which were also combined with scientific principles. For example, the students learned about balancing of objects by making bridges using toothpicks and papers during the first couple of weeks of 6th session, spring 2006. The following week, they made Tangram pieces to form given polygons which helped to develop their understanding of geometry and spatial skills.

Phasing out Hmong Club

Although the Hmong students enjoyed the Hmong Club for the past two years, some staff members of the school started to worry about the possibility of potential segregation because

almost all Hmong students did not participate in other after-school clubs even though their English improved enough. Zoua Thao, Kindergarten Teacher, explained that,

> They (school staff) do not want all the Hmong students to go there. His (Victor Ku 's) class is huge…. All the (Hmong) kids just go to the club. They feel they cannot go to the other clubs, which they could (Zoua Thao, 2006-4-18, #2, 03:57~04:30).

Victor Ku and Marilyn Mason, the supervisor of after-school program at the Bridge, agreed that for the last two years the current Hmong club accomplished its goal for the newcomers' transition in terms of school orientation, but the current club should be faded out in order to lead students to try other clubs so that Hmong children could interact with mainstream students. Mason explained,

> I think eventually we are going to fade the program out because the Hmong students are becoming more fluent and we want them to be a part of the school community too. They do not have to be segregated and have their own group. I have a couple of Hmong students who started to join other clubs (Marilyn Mason, 03:36~04:05).

The school principal also said that Hmong children should not be concentrated in one club that might result in segregation.

> I've talked to my principal. She said that it is time to make them go and take the other clubs too. Have them explore and join the other clubs. They are going to make American friends. (Victor Ku, 2006-4-19, 00:59~01:12)

Regarding an after-school club for Hmong students the Bridge staff is considering a homework club for the Hmong students, while continuing to encourage the students to join other clubs. Most refugee students, especially older children, had difficulty doing homework because their parents are largely unable to help their kids because of their lack of time, illiteracy in English, and unfamiliarity with school work. Victor Ku explained,

> They'd come back and see (each other) and some of them asked me, 'My teacher gave me this homework. I do not know what to do with this paper and my parents do not

know".(Victor Ku , 20:16~21:00)

Zoua Thao also mentioned the need of help for their homework, saying

> We thought about splitting it. Many Hmong students do not know how to do homework. When they take it home, their parents can't help them. So we think maybe having homework club next year for the Hmong kids would be more beneficial (Zoua Thao, 2006-4-18 #2, 06:00~07:13)

Hmong club was an extra-curriculum activity that supported Hmong newcomers in their adjustment to school life, focusing on specific needs in students' transition. Victor Ku, a refugee himself, was not only an art teacher, but also played the role of counselor and mentor for the newcomers. The students, who were just starting a new life in the U.S., had a lot of questions regarding every aspect of the school and often struggled in their new environment. Within the club context, Hmong students could freely express their concerns, sometimes fears, as well as their expectations for their new life.

Hmong FAST

This program is held in a school building; however, it is a local social work service organization which has the responsibility for running the program and employing and training the staff. In this city, the organization is Children's Service Society of Wisconsin (CSSW). Five years ago, the district contracted with CSSW, which included a provision that the school district pay $10,000 to CSSW every year to operate FAST at the Bridge School for five consecutive years. The funding was provided through a federal grant called '21st Century Community Learning Centers, which aims to support youth programs after normal school hours (Marilyn Mason, 2006-4-25, 05:46~09:50).

The Bridge School is one of the schools that the district chose to run FAST for the last several years. Since the district targeted schools with low income populations, the Bridge school was eligible for selection. The first FAST program at this school was initiated in 2001 and for three years it has targeted English or Spanish speaking families. The school principal explained,

> We had FAST program in our school before. Some years it had been focused on just Kindergarteners and general. We had FAST for six years. So the program is not new to us. What is new to us is we are making focus on the new Hmong families (Principal, 2006-3-31, 04:00~04:43).

Since the Hmong newcomers enrolled, Zoua Thao, the Hmong bilingual Kindergarten teacher, thought about FAST for the Hmong families. She also had experience working as a staff member for FAST before she came to Bridge School. During her time with FAST she witnessed the positive effects of the program on her students' academics and family relationships, saying

> It has been really positive. Many students were in the program. I noticed anyway my students' academics really improved and the child and parents' relationship improved; they are spending more time together and talking about schools and being more involved in schools, and getting to know the school, the programs, and the other resources outside schools that they could be in touch with. (Zoua Thao, 2006-4-18, 04:30~05:35)

This experience gave her confidence that FAST could benefit her Hmong newcomers in Bridge Elementary School. She and her school social worker started to talk about having a FAST tailored to Hmong newcomer families.

Recruiting Staff

Once the Bridge school decided to run Hmong FAST in 2005 and 2006, Zoua Thao was referred as the School Partner, which was the school social worker in previous years. Thao then referred to CSSW her Hmong colleagues and friends, Chao Xiong as Parent Partner, Lu Chang as Facilitator, and Mor Vang as Recreation Partner. A Parent Partner worked as a representative

for other parents. Xiong, the BRS, took the role since he knew the parents better than anyone and had built relationships with the newcomer parents. The School Partner was to act as a representative from the school staff, who is charged with recruiting families, preparing school facilities for each session, and collecting teachers' evaluation forms. Chang, a local social worker, took the position of Facilitator, who leads and oversees the FAST as a whole, and mainly coordinates parent meetings. Mor Vang, whose day-job is an engineer in town is not from an educational field, however, he wanted to be involved in helping Hmong newcomers. As Recreation Partner, he was responsible for coordinating "Kid's Time" activities and supervising volunteers while the parents had parent group. Thao explained how each staff member was fulfilling their role and, at the same time, closely collaborating (Zoua Thao, 2006-3-21, 00:04~ 02:50). And at the same time the staff worked together harmoniously and the leadership was relatively equally distributed among the staff members. Betty Regan mentioned their collaboration and teamwork, saying,

> The team has very good communication among each other and trust, rely on each other a lot. It seems the power of groups is very well distributed. No one asked other to do more; very equitable group. They seem to get along very well. I think they are unique because they have known each other in other capacity outside of FAST (Regan, 19:30~20:41)

Recruiting Families

For Zoua Thao, when she worked at her prior school FAST, recruiting families was not an easy task. She attributed the difficulty to being a young female which clashed with traditional Hmong views of authority figures, as well as a lack of relationships with the families.

> When I was there I had to go out and recruit families. We had a couple of Hmong families to recruit. I think that it was more difficult as a woman to go out and say 'you know, this is what the program is about' and also to not have a relationship with them as well. It was not attractive. I think it was harder because I was young and woman. I think all these factors made it (recruiting families) difficult. (Zoua Thao, 2006-4-18,

03:28~04:00)

Not only for Thao, but in many other schools, recruiting families is often mentioned as a challenge in running a FAST (Andrews, Klawitter & Zulick, 2003). Fortunately, soliciting Hmong families at the Bridge was not a big challenge thanks to Chao Xiong. Since he had built trust with Hmong newcomer families, and is an authority figure in the Hmong community outside the school, the newcomer parents did not show any hesitance when Xiong invited them to participate in the FAST.

In the spring of 2005 the first Hmong FAST, with fourteen families of the 3rd to 5th grade children was held. In the next year, the second Hmong FAST opened for the families of Kindergarteners to 3rd graders, and this time fifteen families were brought together. The children who were targeted by the school are called "focused child" in FAST to distinguish them from their siblings. The families met Wednesday evenings for eight weeks at the school gym.

Components of FAST

The following sections will lead the reader through a serious of activities in which Hmong parents and children participated through those eight weeks.

a. Family Flag

As sign-up started, volunteers distributed different colored name tags with each family member sharing the same color. In this way FAST staff identified family groups. After the sign-up, parents and children sat down and began to make a 'family flag' as a family project. The facilitator told the families to create a flag that would reflect the families' interests, abilities, and events and make sure every family member participate in the project. The flags were set out on

the tables each week to indicate which tables were designated for which family.

b. Family Meals

Around 6:00, meals were served. The focused children from each family lined up to serve the dinner meal to their parents first. Then their siblings, with excited faces, joined the line for the meals. The family members sat together at a table and started to enjoy Hmong traditional style food. In Hmong culture, having enough food for guests and sharing meals has important values. Through sharing the same meals together with other families and the staff, the bond among the participants was strengthened. For the Hmong families, sharing meals culturally associates with friendship and a sense of belonging. Zoua Thao recalled an episode when her former Anglo American FAST supervisor did not understand the significance of sharing a meal in Hmong culture,

> Food is a big thing for us. It is not polite for us to not eat. Last year our old boss, said (to the staff) 'if there is not enough food, you should not eat' and Chao was like "If there is not enough food, we wont' eat. But ideally it is better if we eat. We have to eat because we see each other as family and we should eat" It would be rude, if you do not eat. They would say 'how come they are not eating, but we are eating. What is wrong with the food?' so all these questions would come out (Zoua Thao, 2006-4-18, 40:03~41:42).

The founder of FAST suggested that eating together at a table was a positive activity which many families fail to organize on a regular basis, and this activity could help develop a family's habit to share a meal without alcohol.

c. Games

After supper, the Parent Partner introduced each family to the others and had a welcome ceremony called "Hellos". Soon after that, the Facilitator led in singing a song which translated in Hmong. For ten or fifteen minutes all staff, volunteers, and Hmong families sang together

several times. On other evenings, this time was used for games such as “scribbles” and “feeling charades” which were designed to help parents and children strengthen communication their skills. In order to do “scribbles”, everyone has the same start and all are not supposed to peek at each other’s drawing and to cover their pictures until everyone is finished. Then, parents and children share their drawings and take turns asking questions about the drawings. In “Feeling charades”, everyone chose a card that represented one’s own feeling of the day, and then each would take turns acting out the feeling.

While leading these activities, the staff found some challenges because of the passive attitudes of some of the Hmong parents in participation. The parents were not responding to the rules of the games and sometimes showed indifference. About the feeling charade, a Hmong staff member, Zoua Thao explained,

> It was kind of disappointing. Everyone is supposed to go up and grab cards and not show it. A lot of times, parents won’t even come up. A child would grab one or two and the parents would tell the children to grab one for them. We have to tell parents to get their own card and then they’d go up and grab a card and they’d guess. That’s it. They do not talk about the feeling further. For example, they should ask ‘when was the last time you thought this way or when have you been feeling this way lately?’ (Zoua Thao, 2006-4-18, 28:08~28:45)

Regarding the reason why the games did not work as stated, the Facilitator (2005-4-21, 17:00~21:40) mentioned the big size of families. It seemed hard for one mother and many children to concentrate on the games. Thao pointed out a communication pattern of Hmong families in their homes, saying that Hmong parents were not accustomed to talking ‘with’ their children.

d. Kids’ Time

Around 6:45 parents went downstairs with Xiong and Chang to gather in the library for

the parent group. Meanwhile Thao and Vang kept the children in the gym for recreational time. When the weather was nice out, the children went outside and played on the playground. Some children stayed inside and colored. On the surface, recreation time did not seem structured, or as educational or therapeutic as the parent group. However, even just free 'play' has some intentions. Regan explained that this component focuses on building interpersonal communication skills and non-competitive activities. She explained,

> very informal time frame, I think you see kids much more likely to start talking to another child. Also children get to see a wide variety of adult role models, specially this school, all is the first generation Hmong (Betty Regan, 2006-4-27, 40:19~41:32)

e. Parent Group

In the parents' meeting, Lu Chang led the group discussions on some nights or on other nights guest speakers were invited to share with the parents. The goal of the parents' meeting was "to mobilize parent group advocacy for common concerns in the families' school and in the community (A document provided by the FAST supervisor)" During the first week of the FAST, Chang explained what they were going to do and asked them what topics they were interested in and wanted to know more about. On one night, the parents and Xiong also discussed about teacher-parent conferences and other schooling issues. On other night, a Hmong social worker came to talk about raising children in the United States. Lu Chang described the parent meeting when a Hmong social worker was invited:

> the day that you were here two weeks ago, we had a CPS (Children Protective Service) worker, he came and talked about raising kids, I guess this person was very beneficial…. He talked about parenting and being able to be there for their kids, positive supports for their kids. Some of them shared their experiences and hardship of being parents. Some of them talked about disciplining kids. You don't want CPS to call. (Lu Chang, 2005-4-21, 03:54~04:18, 32:09~33:35)

Alcohol and drug issues are a not-to-miss topic. During the 6th week, Lu Chang ran an

'AODA' (Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse) night. In addition to parent group, the staff worked on different activities surrounding alcohol and drug issues. After dinner, there was a game in which Chao Xing pulled an item, for example, (cereal boxes, beer bottle, cigarettes, and etc.) from a big basket, and then children and their parents were to respond by showing thumbs up or down for item that are good or bad for their bodies.

Here, parent group was customized for the Hmong newcomer families. In a regular FAST program, parents are supposed to have 'Buddy Time' in which parents pick another adult or their spouses, if she/he is also present, to talk about how their week went for 15 minutes. Buddy Time, however, was skipped; instead, more educational components were added. The reason is because the Hmong parents wanted to know more about their children's educational settings, and at the same time, the parents felt uncomfortable talking one-to-one situations (Lu Chang, 2004-4-21, 30:40~31:45).

f. Special Play

Around 7:30, the focused children from each family were gathered and met their parents in the library, while their siblings played in the gym. When the children arrived in the library, Lu Chang and Chao Xiong started gave out bags that contained little toys, blocks and strings to the children. Then each parent and their child played together one-on-one with no distractions for 15 minutes. FAST calls this activity "Special Play" in which "parents are coached in an one-on-one, nonjudgmental, nondirective play therapy with their child (http://www.ncjrs.gov/txtfiles/95441-8.txt)." Initially, the concept of 'Special Play' was not easy for the parents. The staff found that many parents were not accustomed to playing with their children. During the first sessions of 2005 and '06, the parents seemed unsure of how to interact with their child. Xiong and Chang

suddenly had to improvise so the parents would feel less stressed. To accomplish this, they proceed with special play in a large group while the staff guided the parents and children in the kind of questions or answers they could give each other. When a couple of weeks had passed, the Hmong parents became more comfortable with the activity. Chang explained,

> You get to think a new way in doing things with them. Those families would not do typically talk about. First, we had hard time to incorporate 'one-on-one', the time that parents get to talk with the kids. We figured out that is going to be hard. At the first night we did it as the whole group we had all questions and everybody kind of listened, we pulled a question that a kid would ask to a parent and then all the parents take a turn answering. We wanted it to work one-on-one basis so that parents and kids talk together. (Lu Chang, 2005-4-21, 12:00-13:14).

Thao talked about reasons why running Special Play was not easy for the Hmong families. One reason was the size of the room. Special play took place in the library. Since the parents shared tables with other parents, they had to sit closely together. Culturally, for Hmong people showing intimacy with their own children in the presence of other people is perceived as negative etiquette. Another reason was that some mothers wanted their toddlers to stay with them. In this case, the special play for the focused child was made more difficult. Mothers were not able to concentrate on the play. To prevent this, during the 4th week, the staff decided to take the little siblings from their mothers so that the focused child could receive their mother's full attention during the play (Zoua Thao, 35:00~35:24).

g. Lottery

After Special Play, parents and children gathered back in the gym, and formed a big circle to start the lottery. Two families were selected to win the lottery of a gift basket for the entire family. The two families who won the prize, were supposed to cook supper for the next week. They were given twenty five dollars each to purchase food to cook.

The staff linked winning of the prize to the duty of cooking to encourage the idea of

reciprocity. The lottery was fixed. The staff decided beforehand which two families would win the baskets and prepared gift items that were appropriate for the family members. Mor Vang, the Recreation Partner, kept the winning tickets for the two focused children, and distributed other ones. This activity was slightly modified for the Hmong families. For example, in regular FAST, the gift basket should include family board games; however, those games were not included because the games written in English were not familiar to Hmong families (Lu Chang, 2005-4-21, 23:09~24:00).

f. Closing

After the lottery, all staff, volunteers, and the Hmong families stood in a circle to perform the closing ceremony which included announcements, acknowledgement to families who cooked, and Rain. "Rain" is an activity in which everyone easily participated. In the circle Thao started rubbing her palms together, and the child to the right made the same movement and passed it on. This went around until everyone in the circle was making the same sound. Then, Thao made the rain sound louder by snapping her fingers. Everyone followed in the same pattern. Then she clapped both hands together, again the sound was passed around the circle. This was an ending ritual that FAST used.

Effect of the Hmong FAST

Across the country, FAST has been reported as a successful intervention and has already risen to national prominence. There is a considerable amount of research that supports FAST's effect over 12 years. Evidence of the positive effects is the program retention rate. On average, if a family attends one session, 80% complete the 8 weekly sessions. Also studies show that children's academic performance improves; behavioral problems decrease; parents become more

involved in school and family conflict is reduced (http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/fast).

In the case of Bridge Elementary School, the graduation rate of 2005 and 2006 was over 90%. In 2005, thirteen out of fourteen families graduated. In 2006, all the fifteen families graduated. The FAST supervisor highlighted the high rate of retention as evidence of the success. Regan explained,

> Bridge School's success is really evident through the retention of the families in the program. Having 15 families start and they agree to show up, and show up, it is great. And then we have fourteen out of fifteen are still participating. This is really impressive. Really indicates that families are enjoying. FAST is completely voluntary. We provide the opportunities and transportation but there is no reprobation if family chooses not to participate (Betty Regan, 2006-4-25, 53:00~54:31).

In the 2005 evaluation report, all eleven parents who participated in the survey responded "yes" to the question "As a result of what you may have learned or experienced in FAST, has your relationship with your child improved?" Also, 75% of the parents reported some positive change in their relationship with school personnel. These items give evidence that the FAST positively impacted Hmong families. In addition, the Facilitator mentioned that parents found their children more comfortable attend school and also obeying their parents more (Lu Chang, 2005-4-21, 05:00~05:21).

Conclusion

Hmong newcomers at Bridge School could rely on the Hmong staff academically and emotionally. Especially for the youngest Hmong children in the school, Zoua Thao, the bilingual classroom teacher was a huge resource for them in understanding contents of the curriculum and exploring their new school life as well as providing a comfort zone in the school. Chao Xiong, the BRS, also created a comfort zone and access point for Hmong parents through FAST and

Hmong family-liaison work. Since almost all Hmong parents are illiterate in English, though some are literate in Hmog, parents needed to rely on verbal messages that are translated from Xiong. The Art teacher, Victor Ku also played the role of counselor and mentor through the Hmong club. Hmong children, through the club, were able to learn the American culture, share their identities, and learn appropriate reactions to negative situations.

Between the two after-school program, , FAST was held in shorter amount of time than Hmong Club, which was weekly for two years while FAST was held for only 8 weeks in a school calendar year. Ironically, this narrative allowed the FAST program lager space. This may be because the program included a variety of activities and dynamics in which many people were involved. Moreover, for the observer, these interactions of the people provided substantial knowledge about how Hmong staff considered the characteristics of Hmong refugee families and how they reflected those in the activities in order to customize the program for the Hmong families.

In contrast to the previous story of the Abraham Newcomer Center, the Bridge school's educational services were less centralized and leadership was more distributed. For example, the leadership of the Newcomer Center is executed through an advocate with formal authority; but in the Bridge School, the principal did not proactively lead the direction of the services for the Hmong students; rather she left the task in the Hmong staff's hands. From the standpoint of CSSW, or the school district department that operates after-school clubs, the Hmong staff was the employees to run the program; however, from the standpoint of the Hmong educators, their instructional leadership Zoua Thao, Victor Ku, Chao Xiong, was being executed through the programs to assist Hmong newcomers and their families.

Case Narrative Three:
Columbia K-8 School

This narrative illustrates how an urban school, which is located in a large diverse metropolitan area, dealt with a group of Hmong refugee students by shifting around existing programs and resources rather than by establishing new initiatives. The story begins with the context of the school district, which distributed the newcomers into local schools with relatively high populations of on-going Hmong students, and then continues by depicting how the urban school provided the learning condition for their newcomers by diversifying the roles of Hmong educational assistants.

Mega Size School District

The Cross School District (pseudonym) is located in a large metropolitan area of the state of Wisconsin. The city's population of almost 600,000 includes 50% Caucasians, 35% African Americans, 12% Latinos and 3% Asians. Hmong people are estimated to compose about half the Asian population of the city. Cross School District serves 95,000 students in 223 schools. This size is twelve times bigger than Adam School District, and four times bigger than Benedict School District, and it has the most diverse student population: African American (59%), Latino (19%), Caucasian (17%), and Asian (4%). The poverty rate of the school district is not only the highest among the three school districts in this study (See Table IV-3) but also in the state (76.4%).

Table IV-3. Enrollment by Economic Status

School District	Revenue Per Member from Local Property Tax (%of the total revenue)	Enrollment by Economic Status (% Eligible for Subsidized Lunch)
Adam SD	$4,026 (33.9%)	34.2%
		Abraham School 41.4%
Benedict SD	$8,085 (63.5%)	42.0%
		Bridge School 61.5%
Cross SD	$2,141 (18.2%)	75.8%
		Columbia School 65.5%

(Source; Winss School Year, 2004-2005)

Since the U.S government decided to receive Hmong refugees who remained in Thailand in 2003, this large school district became one of the host regions for the refugees. Finally, in the next two school years approximately 180 Hmong refugee students enrolled in the school district. This number is not small, compared to other school districts, but for this large school district, it did not represent a significant challenge to the district. Director of ESL department of the district described their capacity as saying,

> I can tell you that we did not receive the influx that we expected. In fact, we didn't even reach 200. Even 200 for a district this size would have been no problem for the district to absorb. We received a total of 180 students that enrolled in 2004-2005 who were newly arrived from Thailand (an email correspondence from the ESL director of Cross School District on Sept. 26, 2005, Italics added).

As the director commented, this school district did not find a need to develop additional educational program for hosting their 180 Hmong newcomers since their local schools is regarded to have enough capacity to integrate the students. The School District has a long tradition of ESL services since the city has been the recipient of diverse immigrants over several

decades and, moreover, the Hmong are not a new ethnic group within the school district. The Hmong community has grown in the city over the past 20 years, and among elementary-level schools nine schools already have Hmong educational assistants in their "Stand-Alone" English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. The newly-arrived Hmong refugee students were placed through those schools across the district. Stand-Alone English as a Second Language is a term to distinguish from the district's Spanish bilingual programs, which is for the largest ESL population in the school district. All other language speakers, including Hmong students, go to Stand-Alone ESL programs, which class is "made up of pupils speaking several different languages" (District School Catalog, p.13)"

Columbia is one of the nine schools that have the ESL program with Hmong language support. The school expressed an interest in receiving new Hmong refugee students because it already had an established ESL program, Hmong assistants, and a bilingual Hmong-American student community. The district's ESL director explained,

> At the elementary school level, we have targeted various elementary schools that have Hmong native language support in addition to English As A Second Language Programs…There are also other schools with lager Hmong student populations that have also expressed an interest in receiving these Hmong students such as:[Columbia], which is now a K-8…(A fax from the director of ESL of the Cross School District, 2005-9-26)

Columbia School

Brand New Charter School

Columbia School is located in a southeast neighborhood in Cross city and is close to the city's downtown--just five minutes' drive away. Over several years, the student demographic figure has changed since younger Caucasian families of the middle class have moved into the neighborhood due to the development of a new town in this area; in addition, the schools' recent

conversion into a brand-new charter school has changed its atmosphere into focusing more on academic achievements. Changing to a charter school gave Columbia more autonomy from the centralized bureaucracy, and allowed the school to use Direct Instruction (DI). DI was the means the school staff chose in 2001 in order to escape the State School Identified For Improvement list (SIFI). For the last several years, the most significant issue for this school has been improving academic performance. Principal Kendra Colman (pseudonym), recalled when the school was identified as underperforming before 2001, saying,

> Our test scores were pretty sad. We were actually put on the SIFI list. When I came here I was told that 'this school building is possibly closed and your school needs improvement'. At that time there was an annoying list that school need improvement. We did not make improvement. I brought that to the staff. We need to do something here. (Colman, 2005/4/7, 08:02~08:56)

A couple of years after introducing DI the school has shown a noteworthy progress in academics. Many local newspapers depicted the school as succeeding in spite of traditional impediments such as poverty. For example, a local report describes the success;

> "Certainly, one of the things that lit a bit of a fire for us was No Child Left Behind," said [Colman], The school was placed on a state list of those "needing improvement" because of low test scores during the first year of the law, but has watched its scores shoot up since starting direct instruction three years ago (http://www.susanohanian.org, 2004/2/6)

Another local newspaper says;

> By eighth grade, the achievement of students at [Colombia] far surpasses that of students in the rest of the district. They outperform their peers by 40 percentage points in math, 23 in language arts, 28 science and social studies, and 14 in reading…. Notwithstanding its ethnically diverse and economically disadvantaged student population, the academic achievement of [Colombia] pupils is noteworthy (http://fredericksburg.com/News, bracket added)

Columbia Charter School is one of the "schools that will be given a freer hand because of high performance" by the superintendent of its school district (Borsuk, 2006). Moreover, the academic

achievement, the enrollment is constantly increasing, as well as the stability since this school gains a reputation for high expectations for academic performance. For example, in the 2002-03 school year the total population was 555 and the latest data (2004-05) show 583, and stability and retention grew from 61% in 2000-01 to 83% in 2003-04. In addition, the poverty rate (free and reduced price lunch) has been gradually reduced; 74% (2001-02 school year) to 62% (school year 04-05).

Existing Hmong Population

Columbia has an active parent community. For example, it was a group of parents who initiated the conversion to a charter school and proactively influence the decision-making process through the Parent Community Teacher Committee (PCTC). A local newspaper states,

> [This school] became a charter school in 2005, a move initiated by parents concerned that district mandates might cause the school to discontinue Direct Instruction and Saxon Math, curriculum choices that parents overwhelmingly favored. The school leadership team is responsive to parents and sees them as partners in meeting the challenges of accountability (http://fredericksburg.com/, 2005-9-20)

However, the parents who actively participate in influencing the school's agenda are mostly Caucasian parents, and hardly any parents from other ethnic groups are found. There are around 570 children at Columbia, currently around 40 % of the students are Caucasians, followed by 30% Hmong. For the past several years, the Hmong actually had comprised the majority in the student population (35.6% school year 200-1), and this school is still known as a high ratio of Hmong population. Even though the Hmong population was for several years the majority in terms of quantity of total students, they have remained a minority in terms of parent involvement. The school principal wondered why the Hmong parents were hardly involved in school,

> I found that we never had Hmong parents' involvement. We accept that we should have had it. What we had was Hmong parents come to a conference and open house, a few of our families come but since we have a big population of Hmong students, we did not see a lot, never had a Hmong parent in a Governance Council. I can understand them. It would be hard but we did not have a program they come to (Colman, 2005/4/7, 01:00:08~01:00:43)

When I visited a PCTC meeting, there were only Caucasians present. During the two-hour meeting, most of the time was dedicated to discussions of Direct Instruction and charter school grants; however, the issue of Hmong new arrivals was mentioned only briefly, around three minutes in the latter half of the meeting, and then discussion moved to the school budget agenda (school visitation, Nov. 1, 2004). This may be because the members in the meeting felt prepared to receive the Hmong refugee students into their existing structures or because they may lack an interest in actively accommodating the newcomers. This snap shot is not able to be evidence for how much the parent committee was interested in Hmong newcomers; however for an outside observer, the school's priority seemed to be the implementation of the Direct Instruction curriculum to maintain test scores and survive as a brand-new charter school, rather than the new group of students.

New Hmong Arrivals

Even though Columbia School expressed an interest in hosting new Hmong refugee students, the exact number of the students was fixed only after the semester started. A veteran ESL teacher, Ms. Christine Maxwell (pseudonym), said, "it was all very unofficial as far as when we were going to get the kids and how many. It was very much up in the air and we never really knew (Maxwell, 2005-5-5)." Finally they received eighteen Hmong refugee students during the 2003-04 school year.

Columbia school has two full-time ESL teachers, one half-time teacher, and four

educational assistants. All ESL teachers are European American and one of them speaks Spanish fluently. Two and a half ESL teachers do not seem sufficient to cover all 172 ESL students (22 Spanish speaking students, 118 Hmong speaking students, and 28 other language students, in 2003-4 data). Ms. Maxwell expressed how difficult ESL class schedules for the large group of linguistically diverse students were to manage.

> The staff has been dealing with kids who don't speak in English for a long time and we had other refugees who were not Hmong, South-east Asia. They are Bosnian, and some are from Kosovo. Five years ago we have been dealing kids who came from a country from which had not opportunity to go to school because of war…Only two teachers here, we have already a lot of kids already. It is always rather sacrificing. We are taking some other groups' time to give times these kids in the neediest at that point. (Maxwell, 2005/5/5, 22:52~23:20, 26:17~26:34)

The lack of ESL teachers, particularly the absence of certified Hmong teachers, seemed to force the school to rely heavily on on-going Hmong educational assistants to take care of newly-arrived Hmong students in many aspects. This school has four educational assistants; three of whom are Hmong and one is Spanish. The school district requires a high school diploma and 60 college credits to be an assistant and pays only $13.71 an hour. The school district defines their role as to "work with smaller groups of students assisting with native language support in the students' academic subjects (an email correspondence, the District ESL director, 2006/7/11)" However, the duties of the Hmong educational assistants at Columbia seemed much more involved in student life. Most all the assistants were involved in orienting the students and assisting the parents in both their school life and in cultural expectations Examples range from instructing the students how to behave in the classroom to how to use the bathroom.

A Hmong assistant, Mrs. Mia Xing (pseudonym), explained:

> My role is supposed to be tutoring children. But I do all kinds of things like in the morning I help in the office: mostly call parents, setting up IEP, meeting for the parents, and also I help set up workshops for Hmong parents. I teach dance for Hmong children (Xing, 2005-6-9, 13:47~14:40)

Colombia did not develop a new intervention or hire more Hmong-related educational teaching staff, and seemed to view that their existing educational resources would be able to manage the new refugee students. For the new Hmong arrivals the Hmong assistants were more than assistants; rather, they acted as the main teaching staff for Hmong students. This school's Stand-alone ESL program is, of course, an important educational service; however, since this is a generic program common to every ESL student, not specifically focused on Hmong refugee students, I could not establish the specific, concrete impact of the program on the Hmong students in particular. However, there were several key activities and services which Hmong educational assistants provided to Hmong students: Group tutoring, Hmong Buddies, Hmong Parent Liaison, and the Hmong Parent Workshop.

Group tutoring

A first day for a Hmong refugee student would typically entail having the school principal and one of the Hmong educational assistants greet them. Then the assistant will take the students to show them around the school building, telling them where their classrooms are, how to use water fountains and locate the boys' and girls' bathrooms. In the afternoon they are pulled out again to have group tutoring with a Hmong educational assistant, where they usually start with the alphabet. Principal Colman described how Hmong assistants work would progress for the first day of Hmong students.

> She [Xing] pretty much walks kids during the morning, walk a group of kids around the building, introducing important areas, including bathroom and office. And then we attach the kids to another Hmong student who could speak with them, and try to translate for them a little bit initially and they go to the classroom. And in the afternoon we would usually do we have Hmong paraprofessionals, pull them out and started working out letters and alphabets and all that. So we actually had for the first couple of weeks (Colman, 2005/4/7, 57:48~58:30)

During a typical day of primary school a Hmong newcomer meets a Hmong educational assistant over four times a day. The assistants teach 1) social studies, 2) mathematics, and 3) survival skills. In survival language the students learn basic vocabularies necessary for their school life. Maxwell explained,

> During the reading block younger kids are with Mrs. Xing for survival language and content language. Survival language "where is the bathroom?" "Please pass the pencil" "can I go to the whatever", and being able to tell the time (Maxwell, 2005/5/5 -, 50:15~ 52:00)

On one occasion, five Hmong newcomer students from 3rd to 5th grade were sitting around a table together with a male Hmong assistant, David Pang in the hallway outside classrooms. At first sight, the hallway looked spacious but not able to take in enough light from the windows and either end. Sometimes voices from classrooms were overheard doing Direct Instruction, characterized by 'frequent repetition, a sing-song cadence and steady encouragement' (Carr, 2004). Despite being to some degree a distracting place, the group of Hmong children seemed enthusiastic to learn, not hesitant to give answers, were following the directions well, asking questions often, and sometimes giggling. For 45 minutes Pang taught social studies with a big textbook mainly speaking their first language and some English. Despite their age differences, they used the same textbook. The English words they were using were mostly simple: Alright, OK, yes, no, you, book (Field note 2005-9-26).

Xing witnessed that some newcomers were not accustomed to basic school etiquette and routines since they have not experienced school life or any other organizational social life before coming to America. Knowledge that is taken for granted concerning standard students was something to learn and practice for the newcomers, i.e. sitting in a chair for an hour, raising hands before talking, and not throwing trash on the playground. Xing explained that she needed

to teach very basic attitudes at school for example, “do not talk until you raise your hand and your teacher calls you” “speak softly inside” “do not run in the hallway” and such teaching and correcting should be repeated until the children get used to procedures. She explained,

> It is a quite experience though. Some of them, there was a girl, who came in, did not want to start things away. They did not get used to routine. They were used to whatever they want and talk whatever they want. (so I teach) "you don't talk until you raise your hand and (teacher) calls you" Those things they need to follow. And speak softly inside and can be loud outside. That is helpful them. So you have to tell them. I also tell them too girl and boy's bedroom is so that they would know Yes, you have to tell them the basic things they need to know. It will take a while for them to get used to. (Xing, 2005-, 15:52~ 17:16)

Table IV-4 below shows that newcomer students were spending the most time with the assistants, then ESL teachers in two 45 minutes sessions, and only 15 minutes in the morning and at lunch time in their classroom.

Table IV-4. Class Schedule of Typical Third Grade Hmong Newcomer

7:45~8:00	Classroom	Attendance, lunch count, etc.
8:00~8:45	Social studies	Hmong Educational Assistants
9:00~9:45	ESL	ESL specialists
9:45~10:30	Mathematics	Hmong Educational Assistants
10:30~11:15	Survival skills/language	Hmong Educational Assistants
11:15~12:05	Lunch/recess/dance	Class/ Hmong Educational Assistants
12:00~12:30	Classroom specials	
12:30~1:15	ESL	ESL specialists
1:15~2:30	Mathematics	Hmong Educational Assistants

Source: described by Maxwell, an ESL teacher

According to the principal, this pull-out tutoring by Hmong educational assistants would decrease with the students’ improvement in English. The principal stated that Hmong newcomers spent the majority of the school day with Hmong assistants, particularly in the first several weeks upon their arrival.

> I would say was about three weeks they are pulled out for majority of the time, quite honestly small group with the Hmong paraprofessionals. Then we are doing it less. We still pull them out so that they could have one of Hmong speaking paraprofessionals, one

> hour and half a day. At this point school year (April, 2005) this is the third month, they are in the classroom most of them. They are still in the small group but majority of time they are in the classroom. they are assigned a buddy because they need translation. But they started to get better after three month. Some of them still don't speak very much still shy about that, but others are very good. (Colman, 2005/4/7, 00:55 ~00:59:45)

However, Hmong refugee students who enrolled in this school between September and October of 2004 were still spending most of their time with assistants or in ESL classes by the end of school year. An ESL teacher in May 2005 stated that the refugee students spend "three or four hours per day with special supports until they don't need it." More individual instruction through pulling-out Hmong students is a necessary step to transition the newcomer students to mainstream classes; however, without the presence of a certified teacher, the efficacy of tutoring by an educational assistant for most of the day seemed disputable.

Besides group tutoring for survival skills and academic subjects, Hmong educational assistants were also teaching Hmong culture and languages during extra-curricular hours. For example, Xing facilitated a Hmong dance club during part of the lunch period. This activity was for Hmong students in general, not just newcomers. The Hmong dancers trained by Xing performed at the school's talent show and for the local community. Another male Hmong assistant ran a Hmong language class after school to teach the Hmong writing system for English speaking Hmong children.

Peer Buddy

Columbia School placed Hmong newcomers to a class appropriate to their age and at the same time the newcomers were grouped in classrooms so that ESL and other support programs could be run more effectively. Clustering same age newcomers in the same classroom was interpreted by a teacher as a way to provide an emotionally comfortable and academically

beneficial climate in which the newcomer students would not feel isolated and have the same homework and tasks to work on together. By May, 2005 the school had two Hmong refugee students for Kindergarten, two for 1st grade, two for 2nd, two for 3rd, one for 4th, three for 5th, and the school lost six students who moved to other cities during the school year.

The classes where the newcomers were placed have some other Hmong students who were born in the U.S. or speak both English and Hmong fluently. A class teacher asked a couple of the Hmong- English bilingual students who are responsible and glad to help others to partner with newcomers. Those students are called “peer buddies. In class peer buddies translate teachers’ directions and class routines for the newcomers and most of all become friends to talk and play with. Moreover, when a Hmong assistant is not available for English speaking teachers in classes, the peer buddies sometimes filled the roles of the adults. About peer buddies, a teacher explained,

> In the first day they spent most of time with the people. We set up them for peer-buddies, who speak their language and English as well. The teachers talked to a child who is responsible, nurturing, and sensitive and ask "Would you mind helping out...?" and explaining what else something they are going to need and how they(teachers and students) can accommodate. Since one-buddy can be tired too, so...a couple of buddies. It is ongoing they still have peer buddies because each teacher does not have a bilingual aide. But we got lots of kids in the class who speak in Hmong and speak English (Maxwell, 2005/5/5, 23:30~24:20, 45:19~45:40)

In addition to peer help in class, on-going Hmong students’ help extends outside class. For example, the Hmong parent liaison asked older students to guide younger newcomers in riding a school bus: where to get on and off for the first few weeks. Some students walked the younger ones home. Xing said,

> Yes they do that at upper grade, they have old students help new students get along and follow them. make sure they get off at the right spot (when they are getting off a school bus) When a new student comes, we call the students who used to come here to meet new students. And we ask them 'when you’re going home, make sure to get off at the bus stop and take them out with you "And kids like to do that (Xing, 2005-17:40~18:52.12)

The Peer buddy system was a more formal assignment for some students over a limited time. However, since almost every class has at least a couple of Hmong-English bilingual students, informal peer help is always available and most of the students are willing to help the newcomers. The Hmong peers seemed to become important resources for the Hmong refugee students who spent more time in class and less pulled out from the group for tutoring with a Hmong education assistant.

Hmong Parent School Involvement

Parent liaison. Principal Colman created the Hmong parent liaison position as a bridge between the school and the Hmong families. The liaison lets Hmong parents know what is going on in school and lets the school know what Hmong students and parents need. The principal explained how the school has responded to those needs, saying

> If you call this school, you will get a voice mail message, in Hmong after English. Mrs. Xing translates message in Hmong. And I've made a parent-liaison position which is Mrs. Xing. During the morning and afternoon, she is available to answer phone calls and make phone calls. So she makes lots of phone calls to parents for teachers. She called them and she helped out. She has been really instrumental for us. Having that person I could depend on. That would a good parent contact. (Colman, 2005/4/27, 00:43:06.14-00:44:40.13)

Xing, a Hmong educational assistant at Columbia, serves as the parent liaison. Xing spends most of the morning hours making phone calls to Hmong parents. Most of the newcomer Hmong parents are, unfortunately, illiterate, partly because they did not have educational opportunities and partly because their writing system is relatively new. In many cases written reports from the schools do not work for Hmong parents. For this reason phone calls became required work for the parent liaison. Maxwell explained about why phone call is important means to communicate with Hmong parents.

> Many parents are not literate in their own language. We have our liaison, calling to tell them about things that are important, it is hard to know who does and does not know Hmong or English. We do a lot of phone calling. It is an oral history they have. (Maxwell, 2005/5/5-, 59:58~1:00:47)

Besides communicating school messages to the Hmong parents, Xing also acts as an interpreter between English speaking teachers and Hmong students and translates various forms, including the Individualized Education Plans (IEP) upon teacher's requests.

The second main aspect of Xing's responsibilities is to act as a channel for the school to know what the Hmong families need. According to Principal Colman, when the Hmong refugee families arrived, she found that the financial aid from the government for them was a mere two hundred and fifty dollars per person, which was too small to survive on. Xing was actively making efforts to inform the needs of the newcomer families and the school staff and parents were willing to participate in a couple of drives for furniture, clothing, and food (Colman, 2005/4/7, 50:58~51:27). Xing described the drives of the first year after the newcomers' arrival:

> Our school actually did a lot. The school staff put out a list, we make a list of what the kids need and then we put that in the language and teacher signed what they can donate to the family. Upper level grade had a clothing and food drive for giving to the family. Also there was a food drive [00:08:28.22] to the family. Not just from staff, parents too. They have helped a lot with clothing and food and any other way they can help. (Xing, 2005-6-9, 07:26~09:00)

For Hmong parents, Liaison Mia Xing is a door to get into the school community, and for the school she is a channel to communicate with the parents. The position is not just a matter of linguistic translation but one of cultural translation. Xing is someone who understands the Hmong parents' backgrounds as a refugee and needs as a mom who is raising children in a bi-cultural world. The next section describes more extended her role.

Hmong Parent Workshop. The Hmong Parent Workshop' was designed as an after-school

program for educating Hmong parents new to the United States. Columbia school began providing this workshop in the fall of 2004 and continues to hold it every other month. One of the motivations to start this program was in to increase Hmong parents' involvement in the school. The topics that the workshop covers vary: i.e. Internet safety, discipline issues, teacher conferences, summer school, open-houses, and learning resources. Xing, a Hmong assistant & Hmong-parent liaison, described what kinds of topics the workshop has dealt with so far.

> I go ask the refugee parents at the beginning of the year what the parents need to know. For example, kids need get a flu shoot; call for attendance and absence. They need to know winter is coming and they need appropriate clothing for children. Fourth grade and eighth graders have to meet a certain level of proficiency, otherwise they cannot go on. I set up the topics and talk with the principal about the topics. We cover Internet safety, discipline issues, learning resources. They learn how to adapt to modern society, for example, where they can find for tutoring for their kids, libraries, other resources. Behavior issues is a big one. When children do not listen to parents what steps to take (Xing, 2005-6-9 00:23:16-00:24:04).

To give a full example of how one of the workshops runs, the description of a meeting concerning Internet Safety Issues follows. At about 5:30 pm six Hmong mothers gathered at a conference room. Parent Liaison Xing, the Assistant Principal, and a computer technician welcomed a police officer, the guest speaker of the night, who opened his speech with some questions to find out how much the Hmong parents access the Internet. Every word by the police officer was translated into Hmong by Xing. The speaker talked about how to protect the children from harmful information while they use the Internet.

Principal Colman described how Xing arranged and organized the workshop to benefit Hmong parents

> We provide a translator, we do not provide transportation. Most of them drive or get a ride or car-pool. If there is a parent who wants to come, Mrs. Xing calls, she would typically target families that she really feels need it more or so. For example, she saw disciplining a kid was appropriate or there are some issues, they looked like they need more extra assistances she would try hard to get those parents and if they need a ride, Mrs. Xing try to help arrange a ride for to get here. (Colman, 2005/4/7, 01:02:31~01:03:11.03)

Xing selected topics from the conversations with the parents and her own experience as a refugee and parent. Behavioral issues were always important because parents did not have much knowledge of and experience with the American society,

> We try to do refugee parent conference every other month, and find topics that parents need to know like Internet safety issue. I set up the topics. I just decided by myself and talk with the principal about the topics. Myself as a parent right now and even working in the school I have the problem with that and all the parents are worse. So we need to teach to them. Yes, from my own experience. (Xing, 2005/4/7, 24:04~25:15).

Although the principal initiated the idea of the Hmong Parent meetings, the Hmong parent liaison set the agenda and conducted many of the meetings. Xing worked for the Hmong parents with the principal's trust in her knowledge and enthusiasm for helping the Hmong families.

Conclusion

In facing newly-arrived Hmong refugee students in Columbia school, with its limited ESL personnel and resources, existing Hmong educational assistants seemed playing important roles in providing educational services for the newcomers. Besides ESL classes, there were several important artifacts for the Hmong students such as group tutoring for academic subjects and survival skills, peer buddies and Hmong parent workshops. In these services the school's three Hmong educational assistants acted as instructors, facilitators, counselors, and coaches for the children and their parents. This may be because they have the most information about the needs of the students and their families, and above all, had similar experiences as refugees themselves in the past. In a sense, the school leadership can be characterized as delegation since the principal gives autonomy and supports to Hmong assistants and puts the majority of work related to Hmong newcomers in their charge.

In the area of academic support, however, the school appeared to heavily rely on their Hmong educational assistants. The Hmong newcomers in the first year spent most of their time with the assistants, being pulled out of their classrooms for the additional tutoring. Even though the group tutoring with the Hmong assistants without the presence of certified teachers was a temporary and transitional support, and the school principal stated the pulling out would be gradually reduced, it seemed to take a longer time than the principal expected.

Even though Hmong students are quantitatively a majority group at this school, comprising almost one third of the total student population, in parent involvement the Hmong seemed still a minority group. Although the school's efforts at increasing Hmong parent involvement through programs such as the Parent Workshop deserve credit, in the long term the school may need to find a way to enfranchise Hmong parents so that the parents feel that they can be active participants in the decision-making processes of the school, rather than simply recipients.

CHAPTER V
CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS

The preceding chapter presented each case study in detail in order to give a holistic portrayal of how school practitioners, negotiating their complex organizational systems, developed and/or implemented artifacts for newly-arrived Hmong refugee students. This chapter presents a cross-case analysis, corresponding to my research questions, that contrasts and compares each case in an attempt to synthesize the research findings. My research questions are (1) what artifacts were used to address the needs of newly-arrived refugee students across the three different schools? and (2) how did these artifact show that leaders framed and solved problems in meeting the needs of refugee students? The answer to the first question entails a descriptive comparison from the three school cases while the response to the second question gives a more explanatory account of how different situational constraints, affordances, and local resources in each school shaped leadership practice and reflected the implementation of current artifacts.

In order to address the second question, DCAM (Design Cycle Analysis Model, Halverson 2002) serves as an analysis framework that helps me interpret and reflect on practice in terms of problem-setting and problem-solving. Since this model was designed to help researchers understand how practitioners design and redesign artifacts to achieve their goals within their situations, the analysis based on the model is presented to explore how the school leaders intentionally attempted to bring about systemic effects on the academic and social life of newly-arrived refugee students. A more detailed description of the model is provided in the section on Methodology.

This chapter consists of two parts: The first section describes what artifacts were used for

Hmong newcomers in each research site, corresponding to Question (1); the second section provides analysis of leadership practices focusing on why the artifacts were chosen and used by the leaders and how the artifacts were knitted into the existing system, answering Question (2).

Question I :
What Artifacts Were Used to Address The Needs of Newly-Arrived Refugee Students?

Through my Literature Review I found four areas that previous research suggests school leaders often engage in when refugee students arrive in their schools: (1) instructional delivery, (2) social supports for adjustment, (3) parent school involvement, (4) professional development Below I present the central artifacts that are related to the four areas.

Instructional Delivery

Abraham Newcomer Center, located in Adam, provided artifacts such as self-contained classes with multiple ages of Hmong newcomers. In the class all students were Hmong newcomers and the age difference between students was up to three years. At the elementary level there were two sites; each site had two classes (K-2, 3-5) and at least one certified Hmong and English bilingual class teacher. If a class was taught by a teacher that was not bilingual, the Hmong assistant was available to provide support all day long.

Bridge School, located in Benedict, used an inclusive-class structure for all ESL students. Hmong children were placed in a class based on age with American peers. Primarily, ESL teachers and a Hmong teaching assistant came into class to work together with the classroom teacher, and partly pulled Hmong students out.

Columbia school, located in Cross, assigned newcomers to a classroom appropriate to

their chronological age; however, most of time the newcomers were pulled out for ESL and multi-grade group tutoring by Hmong assistants. Table V-1 summarizes the characteristics of different types of instructional delivery in the schools.

Table V-1. Class Placement

School Class types	Abraham Newcomer Center At Adam	Bridge School At Benedict	Columbia School At Cross
Multi-aged vs. Single-grade	Multi-aged Class with an age range of 3 years	Single-grade Class	Single-grade Class & Multi-age group tutoring
Inclusion	Self-contained class With partial inclusion	Inclusive class with partial pull-out	Mostly pull-out with partial inclusion
Pull-out Hours	N/A	Average 36 min per day for ESL (4 times per week for 45 min per day)	Average 270 min per day for ESL & academic content (5 times per day for 45 min per day)

Social Supports for Adjustment

Abraham Newcomer Center is itself an artifact provided to meet the unique needs of newcomer children. Most of the curriculum and its instruction style during school hours were customized for Hmong children. Hence, the classes already included instruction for orientation to school life and their community. For example, in a class called “Community” at the Center, Hmong newcomers went on a field trip to learn about their community. They visited hospitals, police stations, fire stations, a water purification plant and grocery stores. In those hours the children also learned school regulations and basic etiquette for school life. For example, people do not throw trash in places like the playground or the hallway (Anderson 2005-09-20).

Bridge School added extra-curricular, after-school artifacts for cultural orientation to help Hmong children adjust; these were called Hmong Club and Hmong Families and School Together (FAST). For the first year the Club was focused on school orientation, American culture, and basic English vocabulary; however, as those needs gradually faded the Club began to deal with arts and crafts. In the third year the Club was disbanded to encourage the newcomers to try other after-school programs that would give newcomers more chances to interact with their American peers.

Columbia School made use of tutoring by Hmong assistants. The Hmong newcomers were pulled out for an hour a day to work with a Hmong assistant on basic English vocabulary, basic rules for school life (e.g., raise your hands before responding to a teacher's question) and other practical matters of orientation. Peer Buddy is another artifact that was established for the newcomers. Teachers or Hmong assistants asked those students to voluntarily help the newcomer peers with in-class activities or outside of school hours.

Refugee Parent School Involvement

The school leaders in this research seemed to understand the importance of parental factors to the newcomer children's success. There are common challenges that school leaders and staff members experienced in helping the parents be involved in school. One of them was illiteracy. This is not just because the parents do not speak English, but because many parents are illiterate in their native language. The Hmong writing system was made fifty years ago, which is relatively new for many Hmong people. In many cases, written reports from the schools and the district do not work for Hmong parents. This situation necessitates a relatively heavy work load for translators who contact parents personally and costs much more than written notice.

Mrs. Xing, the parent liaison of Columbia school said “a phone call is the main route to communicate because a lot of them do not read and write in their own language because they did not go to school (2005-4-27).” In addition, Mr. Xiong, a Bridge School BRS, stated that illiteracy in their native language not only causes difficulties in communicating between schools and the refugee students’ homes, but is also related to a lack of Hmong literacy resources for their bilingual education. Since this matter of the collective illiteracy in their own language is very particular to Hmong refugees, school leaders who are receiving Hmong students should notice and prepare for this challenge.

Another challenge was related to the family’s economic status. For the families that are not financially stable, parents’ participation in school events is sometimes difficult. A school principal said that in many cases both fathers and mothers in Hmong families have to work to earn money to meet living expenses, and some parents have two jobs, day and night, and this is, realistically, a main reason why Hmong parents’ involvement is limited in the school. Besides the busy work schedule, there is a tendency for Hmong families to have many children. A Hmong staff member at Bridge School told me in a casual conversation, they have six or seven, even nine children, which many be affected by early marriage, a Hmong tradition.

Some school staff members reported that Hmong parents acted as though their role was to listen and follow educators’ professional judgment, which can lead to trust; however, the attitude can also work as a barrier. Parents were often reluctant to challenge the school’s authority and did not tend to initiate conferences with teachers. Mr. Xiong, BRS of Bridge school said “This is the (Hmong) parents' attitude: 'I prepare my child. I bring them into school. I totally trust the school. Education is your (school's) job (2005-11-8, 00:35:43.19-00:36:55)”

The artifacts for the Hmong parents aimed at equipping them with a basic knowledge

about schooling: information about schools, how to make their home a better learning environment, and how to discipline children who live in the two different cultures. Commonly all three schools invited parents to the school and shared information with them about how to take care of and educate their children at home.

The Newcomer Centers at Adam School District provided Hmong Family Meetings. In a description by Principal Baker, their program for Hmong parents focused on the very basics about school routines.

Table V-2. Hmong Parent Education

Hmong Parent Education	Adam SD Newcomer Centers	Bridge School	Columbia School
Artifact	Family meetings	FAST: parent meeting	Hmong Parent Workshop
Some of the Subjects covered	What schools are about in U.S. Society Basic parenting for school-age children Survival skills for the whole family with volunteer teachers Appropriate dress for school and weather	Teacher-parent conference Raising and disciplining children in U.S. society with a Hmong social worker Alcohol and drug issues Appropriate dress for school and weather	Teacher-parent conference Summer school & Open-house Local learning resources Discipline issues (internet safety)

Bridge School tapped into the FAST program (Families and School Together), a received artifact in the form of an after-school program run by a local social work service organization. The parent meeting section of FAST was originally intended to share and discuss parents' experiences in raising their children, but this section was redesigned to focus more on learning about the U.S school system and raising children in a culture that the Hmong parents were not

accustomed to.

Columbia School held a Hmong Parent Workshop every other week for a semester. This is a locally designed artifact to educate Hmong parents who are new to the U.S. education system and to encourage them to be more involved in school and their children's learning. With the support of the school principal and Hmong liaison Ms. Xing, the Hmong assistant selected the topics and contents of the workshop and organized the programs depending on the needs of newcomer parents.

Professional Development

Most of the teacher conferences or training courses for welcoming the second-wave refugee children that were held in the school buildings were artifacts sponsored or operated by the school district or the state department of education. In 2004, seventeen educators from across the state participated in a program that allowed them to visit Wat Tham Krabok, the Hmong refugee camp in Thailand, to see how their prospective Hmong children had lived. The participants shared with their colleagues in the United States what they witnessed and learned from this visit to Thailand to equip the teachers with knowledge about their newcomers. The state agency held workshops several times by touring some main cities in the state shortly after the trip; then, on a local school's request, the state department of education dispatched presenters who had participated in the trip to speak on the experience. I observed a workshop at Columbia School (April, 6, 2005), in which two speakers who were from the same school district, presented pictures and explanations about topics such as a child's life in the refugee camp, differences between the earlier wave of Hmong refugees and the new wave, refugee culture, Thailand's public school and educational system, and other, similar subjects for a couple of hours.

Besides the field trip of educators to the refugee camp and workshops by the participants, the state department of education provides an information packet about Hmong refugee students, and various resources for curricula, diversity, and the prevention of bullying.

Adam School District was particularly distinguished in providing professional development programs related to Hmong and other minority students. Helen Addison, the director of the ESL Department of the school district, was one of the participants in the field trip to the refugee camp described above. She initiated and maintained various teacher training courses that were extended to all teachers, not just for ESL teachers or Hmong aides. For example, Addison operated the "Co-Star program", a district-wide program for all newly-employed teachers designed to develop sensitivity in cultural differences and to teach the value of diversity in order to combat various forms of prejudice and racism. Additionally, teachers of academic subjects such as math, social studies, and science had opportunities to learn strategies and ESL approaches to help Hmong children transition to regular classrooms.

Question II :
How did these artifacts show how leaders framed and solved problems in meeting the needs of refugee students?

As mentioned above, artifacts are the results of problem-setting and -solving by leaders who make efforts to shape the practice of others. Tracing how artifacts are designed and used serves as an occasion to document the expression of practical wisdom of school practitioners (Halverson, 2004). If this study stopped at the previous section, dealing only with 'what artifacts are used' my analysis would just demonstrate the range of programs previous studies have already identified. Scratching deeper, however, this study attempts to reveal why the school practitioners chose a certain artifact among other alternatives, and how the artifacts utilized local

affordances or were limited by local constraints. In a sense, this analysis may help readers understand the existing situations in complex school systems that school leaders had to negotiate while they were trying to initiate or implement innovative artifacts for their refugee children.

This section consists of two parts: problem-setting and problem-solving. Problem-setting is about identifying problems in meeting the needs of refugee children or goals that guide practice. This task requires understanding the nature of a problem in the context of a complex school system, recognizing which obstacles can be removed, and establishing and negotiating priorities within the broader system, taking into account other existing or newly occurring problems or needs. Problem-solving describes the leaders' processes leaders to actually address the perceived problem. In the real world problem-setting and problem-solving may not be reduced to separate processes since problem-setting directs problem-solving (Simon, 1983) and problem-solving builds a rich understanding of the problem (Leithwood, 1993).

Problem-Setting

Identified Goals

Across the research sites the forms and manner of the educational services provided through these artifacts varied; however, the artifacts of each school were commonly used in order to help the refugee students by:

- Improving in English literacy and academics
- Providing a comfort zone for Hmong students as well as parents
- Helping to integrate students into the school community
- Educating Hmong parents to be primary educators at home

These goals guided how leaders in each school dealt with ESL education, bilingual

supports, survival skills or basic knowledge for school and community life, parent education, and opportunities to learn and express Hmong history and cultural traditions; in the long term these efforts aimed at positive acculturation and integration into the host society.

Besides the general goals above, looking deeper at specific artifacts reveals what practical intentions the leaders had in mind and how leaders made links between the artifacts in systemic efforts for the intentions

Helen Addison, Director of Abraham Newcomer Center, emphasized that the reason the district provided self-contained classes was to integrate English language skills into academic content and give the children ample time and comfortable environments to adjust to a new school life. Although this explanation is certainly true, from a practical perspective, the Adam District needed to find a way to concentrate their Hmong teaching resources and at the same time prevent burdening particular local schools in which newcomers might have concentrated if the center did not exist. Concentrating Hmong newcomers in several sites across the town was a way to decrease possible difficulties for the local schools and provide customized programs for the newcomers at the same time. However, the administrator understood that concentrating Hmong bilingual resources and the newcomers would cause a certain degree of separation between mainstream and refugee children. In order to decrease the peril of segregation the Center had to find a way to increase chances for newcomers to interact with mainstream peers.

Bridge School leaders, on the other hand, perceived different goals. The possibility of segregation was not a significant issue because the school had already mainstreamed the newcomers. The school was already offering mainly inclusive ESL instruction with ESL teachers cooperating with the classroom teacher; the Hmong newcomers, like other LEP students, were placed with on-going American peers. This system, however, was not very effective for

providing a customized program for the children. The school principal wanted to offer some supplemental programs to fill the need, and asked the schools' Hmong Art Teacher to run an after-school program to mentor newcomers (Ku, 2006-4-12). Another Hmong Teacher and a school social worker found a need to help refugee parents, as well as the students, in understanding American school and society. However, since the school did not have additional money in the budget to provide for a program dedicated to Hmong parents, the two teachers had to find a way to draw support from outside the school.

Like Bridge School, Columbia also placed the Hmong newcomers in classes with on-going students. One of the differences is that the school from Bridge was providing pull-out instruction. The school did not change their current instruction system, but added supplemental services to meet the unique needs of the refugee children. School principal staff focused on the problem for their current system, how to catch newcomers up on academic content, which was very hard for their newcomers, especially those in higher grades. Their knowledge of academic content, not just English, but math, social studies, and science, was far behind their mainstream peers' since most of the children had not been in any school before the refugee camp. There seemed two situational reasons that the school would not provide in-class supports such as Hmong assistants in Bridge School. First, the school had more limited Hmong bilingual resources in terms of the ratio of ESL staff to pupils compared to Bridge School. Bridge School had a total of 68 LEP pupils and seven ESL teaching staff (4 licensed, 3 assistants), whereas Columbia school had a total of 180 LEP pupils and 6.5 staff (2.5 licensed, 4 assistants) (School profile 2004-5). An ESL teacher of the school described the lack of ESL staff "She and I, only two teachers here, we have already a lot of kids already. It is always rather sacrificing. we are taking some other groups' time to give times these kids in the most needy at that point(Maxwell,

26:17~26:34) Moreover, since Columbia school was implementing Direct Instruction across all the classes, often characterized by 'frequent repetition, a sing-song cadence and steady encouragement', class teachers seemed to have less autonomy in selecting instruction methods. On my observation, it looked more difficult for the general education teachers to cooperate with the Hmong aides to teach the newcomers together with on-going students in the class.

Situational Constraints and Affordances

This section attempts to provide background knowledge about how school districts distributed Hmong refugee children newcomers, and through comparing and contrasting three sites, what situational elements educators considered when they developed the artifacts illustrated in this study.

Adam School District, in a small town, concentrated all the K-12 Hmong newcomers in five Newcomer Centers, which were situated in local school sites. Benedict and Cross districts, which are located in urban areas, had local schools absorb the newcomers. Hmong refugee children at Benedict were not distributed as evenly across the district as those of Cross District. More than half of the K-12 newcomers were enrolled in Bridge Elementary School and its neighboring middle and high schools. The rest of the group was evenly spread throughout the school district. In Cross School District newcomer students were more evenly distributed than in the two other school districts; the district encouraged newcomer students to enroll in one of nine schools, including Columbia, with a high pre-existing Hmong student population because those schools were equipped with Hmong language support in addition to stand-alone ESL. There were two significant factors that determined differences between the districts: linguistic diversity and the size of the district.

Linguistic diversity. As statistical data in Table V-3 show, compared to urban settings, Adam School District has much less diversity among Limited English Proficient (LEP) students. For this reason, the district could concentrate its ESL resources on the Hmong student population, while the urban schools had to spread their resources across diverse LEP populations. An ESL staff member of Benedict School District said, "We have a long tradition that students go to the neighborhood schools to build community and create friends… we have 54 languages and have to spread out our resources to meet the needs of all students …(Smith, 2005-11-09)" The primary LEP students in the urban school districts are Latino students, for whom the school districts already provide a bilingual curriculum; for other LEP students the districts provide a regular ESL program. For the urban school districts Hmong newcomers, with LEP students of other ethnic groups, received the regular ESL program. In sum, because the primary LEP population at Adam District is Hmong, the district was able to set up a program like the current Newcomer Center, in which Hmong bilingual resources were concentrated, while other urban school districts had to spread out their ESL resources to serve a more diverse LEP population.

Table V-3. Linguistic Diversity in LEP

School District	Size of SD (total enrollment)	Linguistic Diversity Number of LEP Students Hmong languages	Primary LEP Population (%of total population)	Influx of Hmong Refugee children
Adam SD	Small Town (8,746)	16	Hmong (16.2%)	130 (K-12)
Benedict SD	Medium Size Urban (24,913)	53	Latino (6.9%)	153 (K-12)
Cross SD	Large Size Metropolitan (97,354)	34	Latino (7.1%)	180 (K-12)

(source: WINSS 2004-5 school data, & March 2004 Census of LEP pupils in WI by District. *Linguistic diversity is expressed in the number of LEP students' primary languages)

District Size. School district was another situational factor that brought out the differences among the research sties. The size of the city significantly shaped the issue of transportation. A staff member of Benedict School explained, "I think that the size of our district, it is very hard to have a bus route that would go to all the different neighborhoods and pick up all these students and bring them to one (Smith, 2005-11-9)." A geographically small district allowed Newcomer Centers to provide transportation across the whole town. In terms of distance and commuting time, it would be difficult for the large, urban school districts to run a program that concentrated students in certain sites.

Here "size" refers to geographical size as well as to the student population. For example, for a small town 130 students was not a small number to assume, but for a large city district such as Cross School District, 180 students were not perceived to be a challenging number. For Cross, 180 students is only 0.18% of the total student population while for the small town 130 was 1.4%. An administrator of Cross School District commented that "Even 200 for a district this size would have been no problem for the district to absorb. We received a total of 180 students (2005-9-26)." If a small town like Adam School District had local schools house 130 newcomers as the urban schools did, the several neighborhood schools might have experienced a lack of facilities and Hmong bilingual resources because most of the refugee families had settled in a particular apartment complex.

School-Level Context. In addition to the district-level factors discussed above, there are other school-level factors. For example, one situational affordance that allowed the Newcomer Center to be located at a local school was that the school recently finished remodeling the buildings and had spaces available; at the same time, the student population of the neighborhood

had decreased. Although the concentration of Hmong newcomers at Bridge School could be seen as a constraint on utilizing Hmong teaching resources, it also allowed the school to make available more financial resources to provide after-school programs such as Hmong Club and Hmong FAST than would have been possible for a smaller or more diverse population. One of the affordances for Columbia School was the high population of bilingual Hmong-American peers. Bridge school had only eight on-going Hmong children in the first year of newcomers, and Abraham school had less than 10% among the total population. The number of Hmong children in Columbia had reached one third of the total school population. With this situation, artifacts such as the Peer Buddy program were able to rely on bi-lingual student partners. Since almost one of three children enrolled were Hmong, and most of them were English-Hmong bilingual, interaction with these on-going Hmong students became a stepping stone for the newcomers to get into school life and American culture.

Problem-Solving

Before discussing how school leaders attempted to solve the problems that their instructional delivery system might entail, I briefly summarize the characteristics of each case and the primary issues they had to address in Table V-4., to remind readers of the problem-setting issues of each school.

Abraham Newcomer Center: How to increase interaction with mainstream students

The Abraham Newcomer Center's self-contained class had advantages in terms of its efficiency in using teaching resources and in providing tailored academic content and comfort for the newcomers, but paid for it with the price of segregation. When Helen Addison proposed the idea of self-contained classes, some people in her school district were deeply concerned about

the possibility of the separation of the Hmong children from the mainstream students (Interview, 2005-9-20). Addison and other teachers also perceived the decisiveness of the issue, and made various efforts to overcome the shortcomings of their self-contained program.

Table V-4. Primary Problem-Setting

	Student Placement	Class Types	ESL & Bilingual Resources	Primary Affordance	Primary Constraint	Primary Issue (Problem Setting)
Abraham Newcomer Center	Concentrated	Self-contained (Segregated) multi-aged	Relatively affluent	Customized instruction for the newcomers	Possibility of segregation	How to increase interaction with mainstream?
Bridge School	Dispersed	Mainstream Single-grade Inclusive ESL	Relatively sufficient Staff:LEP =1:10	Easier to integrate into mainstream	Difficult to provide customized services	How to provide customized programs?
Columbia School	Dispersed	Mainstream Single-grade Pull-out ESL	Relatively insufficient Staff:LEP =1:27	Easier to integrate into mainstream	Difficult to provide in-class support	How to allocate limited teaching resources?

The first solution employed was placing the program in a local school building in an attempt to develop a sense of belongingness in the local school, rather than identification with the Center. For example, in the school the pre-K Hmong newcomers spent the morning with mainstream children and only in the afternoon did they gather on their own. K-5 students shared Music, Art, and PE classes with mainstream peers. Another strategy was to pair them with an English-speaking class. For example, a fourth grade class came down to a Newcomer Center class regularly to work together on a class project or the English native students would read a book to the Hmong children. Additionally, the Newcomer Center teachers sent some of those students who showed faster progress or were educated in Thailand public schools to the mainstream classes for periods of time. The teachers attempted to give Hmong students

opportunities to participate in regular classes

Bridge School: How to provide customized programs for Hmong refugees

Since Bridge School provided inclusive education, the newcomer children participated in mainstream classes with the help of a BRS or ESL teacher in the classroom. Sometimes instructions were made in small groups or the BRS was interpreting what the teacher was speaking or the directions in the materials. However, given the structure of inclusive education, it was not always easy to provide customized instruction for the group of newcomer children. To fulfill the need for customized instruction, one strategy was partial pull-out instruction. The ESL teacher would pull out the Hmong newcomers for one hour per day to teach basic vocabulary and to provide guidance in community life (e.g., how to use a crosswalk).

Besides the partial pull-out instruction during school hours, Hmong Club and Hmong FAST were extra-curricular programs to meet the unique needs of Hmong newcomers and their parents. As described in the Central Artifacts section, Hmong Club focused on mentoring newcomers with their school life. Victor Ku, a Hmong Art teacher, himself experienced life in the refugee camp and departed in the early 1980s. He stated that the Club is designed "solely for our new refugee children to give a chance to get together and have some Q and A about school and life" (Victor Ku, 2006-3-28). Hmong Club had played an important role in familiarizing Hmong children with American culture and school life, and finding help with their homework; however, at the end of the second year, Victor Ku and the supervisor of after-school programs considered it possible that the Hmong children would not try other after-school programs even though the children could manage their communications and were accustomed to school life. For this reason, Ku decided to close the club at the end of its second year and started to encourage

students to join other programs.

Regarding the needs for educating Hmong parents, FAST (Families and School Together) is a means. The funds for the program came from a federal funding source called '21st Century Community Learning Centers', which aims to support youth programs after normal school hours. The District paid $10,000 to a local social service organization to operate FAST at Bridge school for five consecutive years. This program was run by a social work organization in the community with well-developed, detailed manuals and clear training for the staff. However, the Hmong staff of the program made modifications to fit the needs of Hmong families; for example, they added more topics about the U.S. school system and policies for parents, improvised ways that participants would feel less stressed during the activities, and collected items for gift baskets that would be appropriate for the Hmong families

Columbia School: How to allocate limited teaching resources

Columbia School placed the Hmong newcomers in mainstream classes age-appropriately; hence, to providing customized curricula and instruction for the Hmong newcomers became an issue to address. However, the initial concern appeared how to allocate limited ESL and Hmong bilingual teaching staff for all the newcomer students that were spread across mainstream classes. One way to address this concern was clustering the newcomers in each grade with on-going Hmong bilingual peers. This was a way to operate ESL programs more efficiently so that the newcomer students would not feel emotionally isolated and could help each other with their homework and class tasks.

The second solution was pull-out group tutoring by Hmong assistants for academic content and orientation for school life. With this strategy the school helped the newcomers catch

up in mainstream classes and was also able to concentrate its Hmong teaching resources on the target children. Survival skills were emphasized in the group tutoring, especially focusing on English vocabulary and basic attitudes and etiquette in interacting with teachers and peers. Xing, a Hmong assistant, explained that since most Hmong newcomers were not accustomed to an institutional group life in a school—concentrating on a school task, sitting in a chair over the course of an hour, or attending a series of classes—which most of mainstream children are accustomed to, but which can be challenging to the newcomers. Additionally, to some extent the Peer Buddy system was a strategy to offset the school's lack of bilingual resources. In class peer buddies translated the teachers' directions and class routines for the newcomers and, most of all, became friends to talk and play with. Outside school, some older bilingual students helped the newcomers in riding the school bus when they were not yet accustomed to the neighborhood during their first several weeks. However, this system seemed to entail a problem of segregation despite their participation in mainstream classes because if the percentage of pull-out instruction increase too much, and might cause a lower quality of instruction since their academic content was taught by teaching aides rather than certified teachers

Conclusion

This cross-case analysis investigated the characteristics of the central artifacts that three schools implemented to address the needs of newly-arrived Hmong children. Through the analysis of the practice of school practitioners in three different sites in terms of problem-setting and -solving we can gain clearer insight into how the school leaders negotiated the various issues of maintaining existing programs in their schools and pursuing desirable goals for newcomers

within their complex organizational systems.

Newcomer Centers, which operated self-contained classes, were able to provide customized curriculum and bilingual support as well as efficient use of Hmong teaching resources; however, a peril of segregation of newcomers from mainstream students remained. To solve this problem, the Center used various partial mainstreaming strategies such as Activity Buddy, which paired a newcomer class with a mainstream class on a weekly basis, or the newcomer students shared Music, Art, and PE classes with American peers.

Two other urban school districts did not concentrate their newcomers but rather let the local schools immerse the group of students. Bridge School, in a medium-size urban setting mainstreamed their twenty Hmong newcomers. This setting had the advantage of lessening the possibility of segregation; however, it may not be very efficient for providing a customized program for the newcomers. To compensate this weakness Hmong teaching staff at the school initiated after-school programs dedicated to the Hmong newcomers such as Hmong Club and Hmong FAST.

Columbia Charter School, in a large metropolitan area, also mainstreamed its newcomers. The school had very limited ESL teaching personnel; compared to Bridge, the ratio of LEP pupils to ESL staff was three times. In this situation, the primary problem for the school seemed making efficient use of Hmong teaching resources. To that end Hmong newcomers were pulled out most of the day to receive multi-aged group tutoring for academic subjects and school orientation with Hmong teaching assistants. Additionally, since the school already had a high population of Hmong students, having existing Hmong-English bilingual students help the newcomers through a Peer Buddy program was a strategy to offset the school's lack of bilingual resources.

By exploring the problem-setting and -solving that school leaders at each site have been through, I found that local contexts, especially the degree of linguistic diversity and the size of district, could be important factors that may influence the decision of school district regarding placement of the newcomers in school: spreading vs. concentrating, and then local school leaders seemed to develop artifacts that compensate for the constraints or supplement the advantages of student placement practices. In developing and using the artifacts, an important issue was to balance between social integration and efficient teaching-resource operation. If a school or school district spread Hmong refugee children across schools and classes, it would help increase interactions with mainstream peers; however, this might entail a need for more ESL and bilingual teaching resources. School leaders in this study appeared to have negotiated between these two demands.

CHAPTER VI
DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Review of Findings

This study sought to better understand leadership practices of the school practitioners that hosted newly-arrived refugee children through investigating the artifacts that the practitioners used to address the educational and social needs of the newcomers.

This case study was conducted under the background of the second wave of Hmong refugees to the United States over the period from 2004 to 2005. Schools in Wisconsin received 1,280 children during this time. I chose three different sites in the state with large numbers of Hmong refugee children: a small town, medium-size urban setting, and large-size metropolitan city. The selection of multiple sites allowed me not only to look at various programs and services but also to perceive how local situations influenced the leadership practice for the refugee children.

The research questions were (1) what artifacts were used to address the needs of newly-arrived refugee students across the three different schools? (2) how did these artifacts show how leaders framed and solved problems in meeting the needs of the refugee students? If this study stopped at the first question, my analysis would just demonstrate the range of programs previous studies have already identified; however, through the second question, I wanted to reveal why the school practitioners chose a certain artifact from among other alternatives, and how the artifacts utilized local affordances or were limited by local constraints, so that readers may understand how school leaders negotiated their complex school systems while they were trying to initiate or implement innovative artifacts for their refugee children.

Throughout the study DCAM (Design Cycle Analysis Model, Halverson 2002) served as a coding scheme and analysis framework that helped me analyze my qualitative data from interviews, documents, and observations, and interpret the data in terms of problem-setting and problem-solving. I reconstructed the coded data into narrative cases of each school and presented the three individual within-case studies in Chapter Four. Next, in an attempt to synthesize the three within-case narratives focusing on the problem-setting and problem-solving of school practitioners, I conducted a cross-case analysis, and the findings are presented in Chapter Five.

The summary of research findings are as follow. Adam School District, in a small town, concentrated 130 Hmong newcomers in a transitional program called Newcomer Centers, which operated self-contained classes to provide customized curriculum and bilingual support as well as effective use of Hmong teaching resources. Despite the advantages of self-contained classes, there was a possibility of segregation of the newcomers from the mainstream students. To prevent this possibility, the director and teachers in the Center utilized various partial mainstreaming strategies such as Activity Buddy, which paired a newcomer class with a mainstream class on a weekly basis, or placing newcomer students with American students in Music, Art, and PE classes.

Two other urban school districts did not concentrate their newcomers, but rather let the local schools absorb the group of students. Bridge Elementary School, in a medium-size urban setting, which already operated inclusive education for ESL children, mainstreamed their twenty Hmong newcomers. This system had the advantage of lessening the possibility of segregation; however, it might not be very effective for providing a customized program for the children. To compensate for this, the two Hmong teachers and a Hmong Bilingual Resource Specialist at the school actively initiated programs dedicated to the newcomers through after-school programs

such as Hmong Club and Hmong FAST.

Columbia Charter School, in a large metropolitan area, also mainstreamed their 18 Hmong newcomers; however, different from Bridge School, the school's ESL teaching personnel were very limited. They were covering almost three times the number of LEP students as those in Bridge School. In this situation, the Hmong newcomers were pulled out most of the day with Hmong teaching assistants to receive multi-age group tutoring for academic subjects and school orientation. Additionally, since the school already had a high population of Hmong students, existing Hmong-English bilingual students were asked to help the newcomers through the Peer Buddy system.

Discussion

In this section I related my literature review and findings of this study regarding refugee children and leadership practice to implications for practice and suggestions for further research.

The Second Wave of Hmong Refugees

In the literature review I discussed general characteristics of refugee children; here I want to add specify the uniqueness of the Hmong refugees in the second wave, who were the target refugee group that the school leaders in my study were involved with.

Among Ogbu's well-known terminology to classify minorities—autonomous, voluntary, and involuntary—implies that refugees in the U.S. have a greater tendency to be closer to voluntary immigrants since they have a pragmatic attitude that is often found in voluntary minorities (Ogbu and Simon, 1998). Some studies (Corts, 2001; Hutchins, 1997) supported his

implication, whereas other studies (Anderson, 2004) found that refugees have a tendency to develop an oppositional cultural frame of reference, which is an attitude often developed by involuntary minorities. I found that Kunz (1973)'s contrast between anticipatory vs. acute refugees helpful for addressing this apparent conflict. Anticipatory refugees planned their resettlement and tend to be educated and economically stable, whereas acute refugees did not have time for departure, arrived in the new country in greater numbers, and were lacking in education and job skills. The former group has a tendency to be voluntary minority, while the latter group tends to develop characteristics closer to involuntary minorities.

The Hmong refugees in this study seem to have belonged to the acute refugee category because the evacuation of their Thailand camps happened in a short period of time, most of the people were not educated, and were financially insecure. However, compared to the first wave of Hmong people in the late 1970s, the conditions of this second wave appeared to be relatively better since the children were the post-war generation; even though they were born in and had grown up in a refugee camp, at least they did not experience the wars, civil conflict, and severe bereavement of their parents' generation. Because of the financial support of their families by relatives in the U.S., a few of the children were able to attend a public school near the camp in Thailand, where they were able to become literate in Thai and learn the English alphabet and basic grammar. Also after they arrived in the U.S., the newly-arrived had greater assistance for resettlement, including the Hmong community that their relatives who came to the U.S. in 1970s already established, and above all, Hmong and English bilinguals.

Before I started the investigation, I assumed that the Hmong refugee children would need a great deal of emotional and psychological care of because of the psychological problems reported by prior researchers. Refugee children were reported to have post-traumatic stress

disorder, sleep disorders, depression and emotional numbing resulting from the terrible violence they had suffered in the past through losing their homes, parents, and witnessing horrors in high intensity war. However, the school administrators and teachers who participated in this study did not describe the children as demonstrating those kinds of symptoms. Even though the children were in resettlement, they appeared to be full of energy and enthusiastic about exploring school life. When asked about emotional or psychological needs of the Hmong refugees, for example, a teacher in Columbia School mentioned only the physical fatigues that the children experienced in a tight class schedule to which they had not been accustomed in the refugee camp. A Hmong assistant said the new refugee children were talkative and brighter than her generation. Most of the educators I met viewed the new Hmong refugee children as healthier when compared to their parents' generation in the '70s wave or refugees who have personally experienced wars or upheavals. This perspective is not based, of course, on a thorough diagnosis with the refugee children, but on the interviews with the school staff and my observation of student's appearance. It should not be used as evidence to limit any emotional or mental support for the children.

In addition, in the literature review I also contrasted refugees and immigrants in order to distinguish unique educational and social needs of refugee children from other immigrants who voluntarily came to the U.S. Particularly I stressed that cases of some successful academic achievement of students from East Asian immigrant families should not be used to hide the educational needs of South East refugee students. In this study, however, the Asian students in the three research schools were mostly Hmong children and no comparable group of other Asian students from immigrant families was represented. Therefore, in this study it was not appropriate to look particularly for evidence regarding the problems that come from the school staff's

generalization toward Asian students.

Leadership Practice for Refugee Students

Integration

In the literature review I stated that Berry (2001)'s framework, which contained four different acculturation approaches, integration, segregation, assimilation, marginalization, can give useful insights to school leaders who are making efforts to develop and maintain effective learning conditions for refugee children. Berry suggested that 'integration' is the most desirable approach when immigrants or refugees are acculturated to their dominant society.

Scholars found that 'assimilation', however, was a pervasive approach by 1970's. As Rutter (1994) stated, there was a tendency within the dominant society to discourage refugee children from speaking their own languages, and they were taught, instead, a basic English literacy because people from the mainstream believed that assimilation was the best way to rapidly integrate refugees into the host country. I found that this statement rings true in the case of Helen Addison in the Adam School District when, in the 1970s, when they hosted the first wave of Hmong refugee students. Addison said, "At the beginning we probably did not do a very good job because we kind of thought, 'OK they could learn English right away and they will become American…there is no job for ESL. They just learn English by-watching television'" (Addison, 2005-05-26). However, with experience the school district found that just assigning Hmong children to mainstream classes with a couple of hours of pull-out supports did not improve English, particularly in terms of academic language.

Compared to the first wave of Hmong in the 1970s, it is clear that current schools tend, in Barry's terms, to seek an approach of 'integration'. None of the school leaders believed in a

quick assimilation for being Americanized, which might have pervaded three decades ago. Considering the goals and characteristics of educational services that the three schools in this study manifested, the educators in this study appeared to regard integration as the proper approach to follow.

"Once they get to know each other, the cultural differences fade away often times so they know how it (racism) is intolerant. (Colman 2005-4-28)" As Principal Colman of Columbia School said, increasing peer interaction between mainstream and refugee children is an elementary foundation for social integration. In this study the school leaders attempted to prevent refugee students from becoming isolated and encouraged both mainstream and refugee children to understand each other through various programs or interventions. Regarding specific ways to increase positive interaction, Lowen(2004) suggested cooperative learning, peer tutoring in class and teaching games or play skills. Some elements of these strategies were being practiced in the schools of this study.

In Bridge School refugee students spent most of their school hours in classrooms in which an ESL teacher and a Hmong BRS worked together with the class teacher. In this setting, Bridge School's mainstream and refugee children were exposed to each other for most of the school hours, and significantly more compared to settings where students were pulled out for the majority of the school day or where the students were in self-contained classes. In Columbia School, Peer Buddy is an intervention to link on-going Hmong children to newly-arrived Hmong in and outside class. The interaction with the on-going Hmong children who are bilingual in English and Hmong presented opportunities for the newcomers to learn how to adapt to school life and American culture. In the case of the Newcomer Center at Abraham School, self-contained classes had a peril of segregation despite its advantages. To prevent the possibility of

segregation, the students were partly mainstreamed; students were paired with an English speaking class to work on the same project regularly in Music, Art, PE or Math according to the students' ability.

Besides tutoring or cooperative work, schools also taught games and play skills to help refugee students. Victor Ku at Bridge School, who ran the Hmong Club, found that many Hmong students felt out of place in gym class since they did not quite understand the rules of games that mainstream students might take for granted. With the school PE teacher, Ku and the children spent several weeks practicing various games. Another example is from a literacy class when Principal Baker at Abraham School found his Hmong newcomer students had no idea about baseball; in response, he brought baseball equipment and showed them the setting and basic rules and let the children practice the game at the gym. As Harrison (2000) stated "involvement in sports and other extracurricular activities can also help children feel successful"; those practices helped the refugee children to play together with mainstream peers at break or play time and feel secure in social life.

Developing Tolerance

In many previous studies, refugee children reported encountering discrimination, prejudice, and bullying at school while they tried to endure the challenges in school life. Since refugee children are not familiar with the culture and language of the host country and of their new school life, the children tend to be situated in a vulnerable position. Many researchers (Ascher, 1990; ECRE 2001; Olsen, 1997; Rutter, 1994; McBrien, 2005) report that refugee children experience social and individual rejection in school as well as in their new community.

In this study, several school personnel related how they reacted to the bullies faced by

refugee children. For example, in the first year when Hmong children came to school, Mr. Ku, who ran the Hmong Club, found some Hmong children got picked on by a child who noticed them because the Hmong children were not able to speak in English to the teachers. Mr. Ku acted as a mediator for the Hmong children to decrease the negative attitudes and behaviors of the bully. His status as an art teacher who knows every child in the school helped him to play the role.

In another example, Principal Colman of Columbia School called to mind a happening on the school bus. When the principal spotted a bully, she made it a chance for the children to learn why the school is intolerant of racism. Colman described the event,

> I have some African American children on a bus, giving some Hmong students a hard time on the bus in it. I said the whole bus was going down; I told the kids how racism is not allowed at school, how it is not acceptable, and how they would feel. I did give them consequences as well. Why do you think that? I've tried to open it up, talk with the kids and get them to talk to each other too. (Colman 2005-4-28, 37:00~39:10)

To minimize negative attitudes, some researchers have suggested that school leaders should target the entire student population, not just refugee children, to be instructed in cultural sensitivity and multicultural education (Cushner, 1998). For a specific example, "Pier to Peer"(Garrison, 2002) was mentioned, in which mainstream students were able to pick up understanding and develop tolerance toward refugee people through a volunteer activity in helping refugee children and families' resettlement, and a class plan by Nocciolino (2003) designed to let students share 'forced change' experiences, for example, moving, illness, parents' divorce. In this lesson plan students discussed some commonalities between their 'forced change' experiences and their refugee peers' experiences.

In the research sites, there were some opportunities for refugee children to learn about how to act in their relationships with mainstream peers and school personnel, in their broader

social life in school. Additionally, there were some chances for all students to become familiar with Hmong culture through dance or art pieces that present traditional Hmong customs; however, any specific projects or class lessons were not reported by the interviewees, which targeted mainstream students to encourage them to understand refugee children's departure and resettlement experiences. Educating both mainstream and refugee students to develop cultural sensitivity and tolerance is an aspect to which the schools need to pay greater attention.

Bilingual Support

All the school sites attempted to find strategies for the students to effectively acquire American culture and language while, at the same time, they could accept their ethnic identities and feel proud of their own cultural assets. Overall, they recognized the importance of the Hmong refugee children's first language in gaining a command of English. All the schools attempted to use the refugee children's background knowledge to obtain English vocabularies and other linguistic skills through regular and extra curricula or story telling in literacy hours. This practice of the educators seemed to reflect the changing trends concerning ESL education, in particular, that research on ESL found more evidence that maintaining students' first language while acquiring the second language has a positive relation with higher self-esteem and educational goals and careers (Thomas and Collier 1997; Ports and Rumbaut 2001).

Helen Addison, the director of Adam School District' Newcomer Centers emphasized maintaining the native language in learning in English, and her school district has made efforts to secure Hmong bilingual teaching staff and resources for the children and expanded bilingual support in other academic subjects, not just for ESL classes through their self-contained class system. Two other schools, Bridge Elementary School and Columbia School, also provided

bilingual supports for academic subjects even though the approaches of managing classes are different. Bridge school provided the supports in an in-class and integrative way whereas Columbia school used a pull-out tutoring approach. Although there were differences among the three sites, all three school leaders emphasized preserving Hmong language and culture while they are fully integrated into American society.

However, the schools did not seem to put the same value or priority on the development of a bilingual education. Educators in this study tended to regard students' native language as a stepping stone for acquiring English language skills. Staff seemed to take for granted that the bilingual supports would fade when the students had acquired English proficiency to the degree that they would no longer be categorized as ESL students. Ports and Rumbaut (2001, cited in McBrien) criticized an educational policy that often uses the first language only until students have achieved an English level at which they can survive in monolingual classrooms because the policy causes immigrant or refugee children to lose their native languages and to and to lead them away from being fully fluent in both languages. It should be admitted that the services and program for the refugee children in this study have come closer to the integration approach than past school policy; however, school leaders may need to see the use of student's first language and culture as more than a tool to acquire the second language.

Professional Development

In a refugee education study, Hamilton (2004) pointed out that school leaders should help prevent "the [heightened] potential for conflicting stereotypes or biases to enter into teacher-student interactions." A 2-year qualitative study by Trueba and colleagues (1990, in McBrien) reported, "many teachers and administrators perceived refugee students as having low

intelligence and learning disabilities, although the researchers noted that the school personnel could not diagnose the presumed disabilities (p.350)" Through professional development, school leaders help teachers reduce the potential prejudices and stereotypes which may cause negative effects in the interaction of teacher-refugee students. Since the influx of the Hmong refugee students took place across the state, the state department of education sent seventeen school practitioners to the Hmong refugee camp in Thailand in the summer of 2004, and then operated a large-scale teacher workshop to prepare the schools for the newcomers. The schools in this study sent their teachers to the conference during the summer or invited the conference to the school building during the school year.

Besides professional development sponsored by state level, Adam School District operated the "Co-Star program", a district-wide program for all newly-employed teachers designed to develop sensitivity in cultural differences and to teach the value of diversity in order to combat various forms of prejudice and racism, and a training course for teachers of academic subjects to be trained ESL strategies to help Hmong and other linguistic minority children transition to regular classrooms. These two examples agree with Hamilton and Moore (2002) who maintained that in-service programs should aim at increasing teachers' knowledge about refugee children's backgrounds, developing their communication skills, and sharing other cases of teachers' experiences.

Refugee Parent School Involvement

In the previous section I described that the Hmong children in the second wave seemed grown up in a better situation compared to their parents' generation or the first-wave generation in the 1970s since the children have not experienced the war and battles in person. However, as

Zhou (2001) maintained, Vietnamese children born in the United States could still be deeply affected by family experience, and that to understand and assist Hmong children in their social adjustment, the school needs reach out to parents. McBrein (2005) found parental factors as a main obstacle to refugee children's success since the parents are frequently victims of trauma and so are not always able to be stable emotional supporters for their children; in many cases adults are not as rapid as children in the acquisition of a new language and culture, so the parents are less able to assist the children with homework or guide their social interactions (p.345).

All the school leaders in the three research sites seemed to understand the importance of contact with the parents for refugee children's adjustment. Every school conducted parent meetings or education in various forms, and made efforts to draw the Hmong parents into the school community. Despite many factors that may limit refugee parents' school involvement: i.e., illiteracy, cultural differences, poverty, and lack of educational background, all the school leaders created opportunities to increase Hmong parents' school involvement.

Hmong parent education was a structured as an acculturation process for Hmong students and families. Across the three schools, the main subject covered was how different raising children in the U.S. is from their native land, and how the parents could help their children, who were situated in the two cultures. Particularly, Hmong parent liaisons in Bridge and Columbia School mentioned their interest in how to discipline their children in their new environment. From the parents' standpoint, it is a huge challenge to educate the children who are spending most of their day in schools the parents have never experienced. Ascher (1989, cited in McBrein) found that intergenerational stress created family conflicts as children grow up and get accustomed to their new culture in school. Zhou (2001) pointed out 'role reversal', which often causes parental authority in refugee families to decline because children, who tend to be faster in

acquiring the host country's language, become spokespersons, substitute parents for their younger siblings, and drivers for their families. Fortunately, the facilitators of Hmong parent programs perceived such typical issues in refugee families and reflect those intergenerational and cultural issues in raising and disciplining children, since they were all Hmong educators who arrived in the 1970s in the first wave or were of the second generation and had experienced the two cultures in person.

As described so far, the major approach to schools took to structure Hmong parents' school involvement was through parent education programs. This corresponds to a notion of Hamilton (2002) who suggests that parent education needs to be primarily considered for the refugee parent group. According to Lee (1993) there are two more options for parent involvement: participating in school activities (ei. volunteering, food drive, and cultural events) & community control (ei. parent council). The former one was also found occasionally: some of the elements that comprise the FAST program of Bridge School, exhibitions about Hmong culture in Adam school district, talent shows in Columbia School. However, the community control was hardly found in this parent group in any of the school districts. For example, In Columbia School there was no Hmong parent who participated in Parent Council despite the large number of Hmong children, which occupied one of the third of the total population. In reality, it should not be easy to work to open opportunities for parent involvement as a form of community control for Hmong parents. Eventually, however, schools need to expand their efforts to help the refugee parents, who can be easily marginalized, develop skills that allow them to participate more in the decision-making processes which influence their children's learning environments.

Conclusions

This cross-case analysis on leadership practice of school practitioners in three different sites by investigating artifacts allowed me to better understand what important issues or dilemmas the schools had to address in their particular situations, why the practitioners employed certain artifacts, and how the artifacts were interconnected. Through the analysis, I concluded this study with the following points.

First, the degree of linguistic diversity and the size of school district are significant situational factors that influence the decision of student placement for a group of refugee children. Since two urban school districts in this study had relatively high degrees of linguistic diversity in LEP populations, leaders in these schools did not appear to see setting up separate transitional programs that would concentrate the newcomers and district's bilingual and ESL resources as a realistic goal. In addition, leaders perceived that the size of the city significantly shaped the issue of transportation. In terms of distance and commuting time it would be difficult for the large, urban school districts to run programs that concentrated students in certain sites. A geographically small district, Adam, allowed Newcomer Centers to provide transportation across the whole town. Since linguistic diversity among LEP students of a district is relatively homogenous and the size of school district is appropriate for efficient transportation, Adam School District was able to choose a transitional program such as Newcomer Center; however, since other two urban school districts serve large areas, with more diverse student populations, they regarded spreading newcomer populations among local schools a more appropriate option. This finding implies that when educators or school administrators want to introduce or evaluate a

certain program or intervention for their schools, like those described in this case study, they need to consider the linguistic diversity and the size of school district first to see if the artifact is appropriate to the local schools.

Second, I argue that the manner of school placement for refugee children may provide a basis for developing other educational interventions and services for refugee students. The manner of school placement set at the district level will determine to some degree the level of interaction between newcomers and mainstream students and the level of customizing instruction for the newcomers. Accordingly, school practitioners at local schools made decisions in developing artifacts that might offset the inherent constraints or enhance the perceived affordances of the placement. For example, Adam School District concentrated the newcomers in self-contained classes. The school district considered this setting could provide tailored curricula for the newcomers; however, it would carry the peril of segregating newcomers from mainstream classes and students. In response to possible segregation, Newcomer Center needed to find ways to increase the interaction between mainstream students and the newcomers. Benedict District spread them across local schools according to their neighborhood school policy, which setting increased the chances to interact with American peers; however Bridge School wanted to add supplemental programs that were customized for the newcomers.

Third, efficient use of bilingual and ESL teaching staff and resources is an important issue for local schools that face a large number of refugee children. A common strategy for this is clustering the newcomers to some degree. For example, Newcomer Center clustered all the newcomers in their self-contained classes, whereas the two urban school districts spread the newcomers across local schools, which, in turn, clustered student together through class placement. Leaders explained that newcomers in the same grade were clustered in the same class

so that their limited Hmong teaching resources could be efficiently utilized and more tailored curricula were available for the newcomers.

Fourth, Hmong-American bilingual staff served as the core personnel resources for the refugee children across all three school sites. Since the Hmong staff, who came to the U.S. during the 70s and 80s, experienced the two cultures, Hmong and American, they were able to actively engage in the adjustment of newly-arrived refugee children and were able to practically provide instructional leadership for the school and a comfort zone and guidance for the parents. The Hmong bilingual teachers were a source of pride for the Newcomer Center and the district actively helped the assistants into the teaching profession. This remains a good example for other larger school districts that are lacking in Hmong-certified teaching staff.

Last, leaders in each school perceived the important role of outreach to refugee parents. The leaders in the study found issues such as the limited knowledge refugee parents had of their native language, their lack of formal educational background, their economic status, and the cultural differences between home and school all constrained Hmong refugee parents' abilities to support their children as primary educators. All the school leaders in this study recognized the importance of Hmong parent school involvement in helping the children adjust to their new school life, and through various artifacts refugee parent education was conducted. In the long term, school leaders may need to expand their efforts beyond a form of education in order to facilitate refugee parents' participation in a process that influences the making of school policy for the purpose of improving their children's rights and learning environments.

Recommendations

This study explored how school leaders created and maintained the learning and instructional setting to integrate refugee children into the school community. The information found in this study can serve as a valuable resource not only for schools that host Hmong children, but those that host refugee students in general. There are several key implications for practitioners and researchers concerning educational programs and services for refugee children follow from this research.

First, artifacts regarded as successful in one school district cannot be strictly applied to other settings. When school policy makers evaluate existing educational services or develop a new one for refugee children, they need to consider the constraints and affordances of the school district and local schools and fundamentally examine i) the existing degree of linguistic and ethnic diversity, and ii) the size of the school district, along with human and financial resources. This study examined three different sizes of school district; a small town, medium sized urban setting, and large sized metropolitan city. All showed different approaches to refugee student school enrollments and class placement.

Second, in a sense, each case in previous chapters is a story about how school leaders sought effective ways to run their limited Hmong bilingual resources while trying to eliminate the peril of segregation in their local situations. When school administrators attempted to use restricted resources and teaching personnel for all Hmong newcomers and to provide customized instruction for them, some degree of segregation was unavoidable. Therefore school leaders and educators who will host refugee children in the future may need to pay attention so as not to lose the balance between operating effective bilingual resources for refugee children and social integration.

Third, bilingual personnel who can speak refugee children's first language are an essential component in serving and educating the children. In every school district in this research Hmong personnel played active roles in leading and helping Hmong newcomers' settlement in their new school life, both academically and socially. Administrator Addison at Adam School District is a particularly distinguished example for leadership. Despite the limitations of her small town, the school district was able to hold the highest number of Hmong bilingual teachers and aides through a special program that trained Hmong aides to get certified.

Fourth, school leaders and educators need to recognize the value of the native language of refugee students in order to lead the children to be fully fluent in both languages and to help them develop higher self-esteem and satisfaction in school life over the long term. Most of the school personnel in this study had an understanding the importance of maintaining the children's native language as a stepping stone to acquiring the host country's language. However, as Rumbaut (2001) pointed out, there is a tendency for bilingual supports to be maintained only until the student achieves a level of English proficiency to keep up in English-only classrooms.

Fifth, getting refugee parents involved in the school community is a useful strategy for schools to lower barriers that refugee children could face. Ways of educating refugee parents include informing them about schools and how to be home-educators through meetings and media, preferably in their native languages. In the case of Hmong parents, due to their collective illiteracy in their native language, school leaders may need to introduce devices for verbal communications and schools should be equipped with Hmong bilingual personnel as Hmong family-school liaisons.

Sixth, school leaders and teachers may need to facilitate a class lesson or project that helps mainstream children expand their understanding to refugee peers' experiences of departure

and resettlement. This can act as an effective intervention for increasing tolerance and minimizing bullying. The schools of this study provided opportunities for refugee children to learn about the host country's culture and values or for mainstream children to learn about Hmong cultural elements; however, those practices were not specifically designed for developing understanding of the hardships that their refugee peers had been through. Leading both mainstream and refugee children to develop tolerance and increase social interactions should be an important task for the school leadership.

Seventh, as many previous studies pointed to the importance of teachers' attitudes to refugee children, providing professional development for school personnel to understand the children's experiences should be considered by school administrators. The school districts in this study were benefited by their state department of education, which sent seventeen educators from across the state to Thailand to see the lives of Hmong children in the refugee camp and utilized conferences or workshops in which the educators were the speakers. Another example is the Co-Star program of Adam School District. This artifact was utilized for new teachers of the school district to develop sensitivity to cultural differences and learn the value of diversity.

Through this research I sought to present evocative and elaborate representations of how school practitioners set and solve problems in the context of local practice in order to address the unique needs of refugee students. I could have focused on describing exemplary programs or evaluating which school provided more effective services for refugees; however, in this study I focused on how the local contexts constrain what school practitioners see as possible solutions to the needs of refugee children and still maintain their existing system. My intent behind this approach was to make this research an opportunity for readers to open reflective conversation on their local practices, which are situated in a social and often conflict context, and produce

knowledge that is ‘amenable to flexible use in practice’ (Prestine, 1993). I hope the findings of this study can provide educators, researchers, and policy-makers with clearer access to the tools for improving the learning of refugee students, who are looking for school practitioners’ leadership to guide them toward self-sufficiency and integration into the society of their new homeland.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Consent Form

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Research Participant Information and Consent Form

Title of the Study: THE ARTIFCTS SCHOOL LEADERS USE TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF REFUGEE STUDENTS

Investigator: Yeonjai Rah

phone: 512-363-6595

email: yeonjairah@gmail.com

You are invited to participate in a research study about school leadership practices which integrate newly-arrived refugee students into school community. The purpose of the research is to search, document and analyze effective school leadership practices which help integrate newly-arrived refugee students into school communities. This study will include interviews with school principals and several teachers.

Interview questions will be about any programs, procedures or policies designed and/or implemented for newly-arrived refugee students in your school. I am going to ask you what the purpose, goals, the features and the effect of the programs. Your participation will last approximately 1 hour per session and will require 3 sessions which will require 3hour in total. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you do decide to participate, if at any time during interview sessions you do not wish to answer a question, you may skip any question or stop the interview. You may also revoke your consent to audio taping at any time. Refusal to participate in any part of this study will have no penalties.

The information provided by you, including your audio and/or video taped data, will be kept confidential unless you consent to be identified for the purposes of the publication. Every data collected will otherwise be used by the research project team for scientific purposes only.

All tapes and transcribed interviews will be stored separately, to which only the primary investigator has access. All tapes will be destroyed after ten years. I don't expect any direct fiscal benefits to you from participation in this study. However, your professional experiences with refugee students will be shared with more educational practitioners and researchers who are concerned with the education and human rights of the children who can be easily marginalized. You may ask any questions about the research at any time. If you have questions about the research after you leave today you should contact the Principal Investigator Yeonjai Rah at 512-363-6595 or yeonjairah@gmail.com. If you have questions about your rights as a research subject you should contact the Education Research IRB at (608) 262-9710, edirb@education.wisc.edu.

Your signature indicates that you have read this consent form, had an opportunity to ask any questions about your participation in this research and voluntarily consent to participate. You will receive a copy of this form for your records.

Name of Participant (please print):_____

_____ _____

Signature Date

Appendix B: Notice of Action from IRB

Notice of Action
University of Wisconsin–Madison
Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Principal Investigator: Richard Halverson
Department: Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis
Co-Investigator: Yeonjai Rah
Protocol Title: Refugee Students into Schools
Protocol Number: SE-2005-0286
IRB: Education Research IRB (Contact: Charlene Luchterhan
Committee Action: Qualifies as Exempt from IRB Review (46.101(b)(2);
2005

Special Notes or Instructions:
This protocol was determined to be exempt from CFR 46 per categories 43 and 2, as the research involves benign interviews with principles, directors and teachers as well as observation of meetings. Subject confidentiality is protected.

INVESTIGATOR RESPONSIBILITIES:

Annual review is not required for this protocol since it was determined to be exempt. However any changes to the protocol, including but not limited to changes in procedures, subject population or recruitment of subjects, must be reviewed by the IRB before the changes are incorporated to insure they do not change the exempt status of the protocol.

Any new information that would affect potential risks to subjects or any adverse reactions must be reported immediately to the IRB contact listed above.

Appendix C: Approval Letter from Adam School District

[redacted] SCHOOL DISTRICT

Longfellow Administration Center

[redacted]

[redacted]
Superintendent of Schools

[redacted]
Deputy Superintendent

[redacted]
Assistant Superintendent
Business

[redacted]
Director of Human Resources
and Employee Relations

June 1, 2005

Yeonjai Rah
3501 Shoreline Drive, #924
Austin TX 78728

Dear Yeonjai:

Thank you for considering the [redacted] School District as you study refugee student education. This communication serves as approval to proceed with your doctoral project by interviewing various administrators and educators involved in the District's elementary newcomer centers.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,

[redacted]
Director of Human Resources
& Employee Relations

Enclosure

Our vision is to create an exemplary school district which is acknowledged for the caliber of its graduates, the quality of its staff, and the excellence of its programs

Appendix D: Approval Letter from Benedict School District

09/26/2005 14:39 5123187542 SHAWN CHOI PAGE

[redacted] School District [redacted]
543 West Dayton

September 15, 2005

Yeonjai Rah
3501 Shoreline Drive #924
Austin, TX 78729

Dear Ms Rah,

The External Research Committee has reviewed and accepted your proposal entitled "Integrating refugee students into school" (Proposal #1166) pending the following:

1. Provide a copy for review and approval of the teacher interview protocol.
2. Clarify how the collective knowledge gained from the research is to be shared with [redacted] administrators, and parents for their direct benefit.
3. The committee suggests that to avoid any conflict in which students may be considered subjects that the researcher clarify with staff subjects that data collection will cease when names of individual students are mentioned in staff settings that are part of the observation tasks.
4. Note that the correct spelling is [redacted] Elementary School.

Please provide a reply to this letter in which you address the points above. Be sure to include a copy of this letter with your resubmission. The reply will be reviewed and, if satisfactory, you will be informed that the project may proceed.

Your liaison, pending final approval, will be A[redacted], [redacted] Coordinator for ESL and Bilingual Education Programs. The liaison may be able to assist with general issues related to your research topic and should be provided copies of all reports or products resulting from the research. A copy is also being sent to [redacted], [redacted] Elementary Principal. Principals always have the right to grant or deny access to subjects within the school. Please confirm with Principal Sweeney your research activities before you proceed.

If you have any questions, feel free to call me at 663-4946.

Sincerely,

[redacted], Director
Planning/Research and Evaluation

cc: External Research Committee
[redacted]

from [redacted] hide details 9/26/05 Reply
to yeonjairah@gmail.com
cc [redacted]
date Sep 26, 2005 4:02 PM
subject Re: Proposal#1166 revision (Yeonjai Rah, UW-Madison)
mailed-by [redacted]

Your project is approved with these edits. Please contact Ms. [redacted] to negotiate entree to [redacted] School.

[redacted]
[redacted] School District
Planning/Research & Evaluation
[redacted]

Appendix E: Approval Letter from Cross School District

[redacted] PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DIVISION OF ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY
5225 W.Vliet Street
M[redacted]e, WI 53208
41[redacted]5-8258 Fax: 41[redacted]5-8261

July 5, 2005

Mr. Yeonjai Rah
3501 Shoreline Dr. #924
Austin, TX 78728

Re: Research Proposal

Dear Mr. Rah:

Thank you for submitting the requested changes to your research proposal entitled "Integrating Refugee Students into Schools" to our office for review. The changes meet with our approval and I am happy to inform you that you have been granted district level permission to conduct research in [redacted]. You are free to begin your study.

We would like to wish you success with your project and thank you for your interest in conducting research in the Milwaukee Public Schools.

Sincerely,

Cindy Raven, Ph.D.

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Research Specialist
Division of Assessment & Accountability
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Appendix F: Interview Protocol (Administrators)

Interview

Date & time: _____
Place: _____

Respondent Information

Name: _____
Years of experience in education: _____
Years of experience as a teacher:_____
Years as an administrator:_____

1. What concerns or expectations did you have for your recently arrived Hmong refugee students and their families?

2. When you first met your students, what were your impressions of them?

3. How did you identify the educational, social needs of the newly-arrived refugee students?

4. Which programs or initiatives did you establish to help your refugee students and families?

5. How did you communicate the need for (the artifact(s)) to the teachers and other school community members?

6. What are the expected outcomes of the (artifact(s))?

7. Could you describe how (artifact(s)) was implemented? Can you help me draw a timeline for the program design and implementation?

8. Which resources (human, social and financial) were necessary to establish the (artifact(s))? How were you able to acquire and allocate these resources?

9. Did you have any previous models or experiences for designing/ implementing programs like the (artifact(s))?

10. What types and level of support have you received from your district for the implementation of (artifact(s))?

11. Which of your faculty and staff have been involved in the (artifact(s))? What are (have been) their roles?

12. What obstacles did you encounter in designing and implementing (artifact(s))? How did you overcome the obstacles?

13. By any chance, if there was someone who resisted or did not properly support your desire/ plan to implement (artifact(s)), what were the reasons that they expressed?

14. What effects do you hope (artifact(s)) will have on the refugee students' school and family lives?

15. What have you learned from the process of the (artifact(s))? What would you do differently if faced with this issue again?

Appendix G: Interview Protocol (Teachers)

Interview

Date & time: _____
Place: _____

Respondent Information

Name: _____
Years of experience in education: _____
Years of experience as a teacher:_____
Years as an administrator:_____

1. What is your role in educating the recent arrivals in your school?
2. Besides ESL (language education), what curriculum or programs does your school have, which is geared to helping refugee students? . (ei. Support services: counseling, health service, parent outreach, liaison with community services, extracurricular activities, career education)
3. What are the present conditions of the program?
4. Could you tell me about the history of the program in your school?
5. Could you tell me about who are the (formally and informally) leader of the program? Or who is the most influencing person who initiated or is implementing the program?
6. What kinds of professional development did the school district or school provide for teachers who are involved in the program?
7. How do you assess students' achievements? What would you say about the effects of the program in terms of students' achievements?
8. What would you say about the effects of the program in terms of students' social adjustment?
9. How do you communicate Hmong parents who do not speak English? Or who are not able to read or write in Hmong?

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