



LSLP Micro-Paper 104: *Funds of Knowledge*

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Defining the Term

Funds of Knowledge (FoK) is a concept that emphasizes the importance of each student's background in the classroom. FoK encourages us to recognize students' cultural identities and empower them to connect their learning to their communities, integrating curricular topics with their culture and existing knowledge. In this context, FoK is crucial for acknowledging the significance of the diverse, historically accumulated, and culturally developed knowledge that is vital for each individual in the school. This perspective highlights that, beyond the surface, the richness of all human knowledge is preserved within our diverse communities worldwide.

FoK is dedicated to linking the knowledge we develop in the classroom with the understanding that children and their families already have. FoK challenges traditional school instruction that relies on transmission models where the teacher has all the knowledge and the students have none. Instead, FoK promotes dialogue among individuals with extensive knowledge, recognizing their humanity. It emphasizes that minoritized and marginalized communities have much to offer, yet as teachers, we often overlook our students as individuals with rich histories and diverse experiences. None of us is made of air; we have families who teach us many things every day, and schools could use this vital knowledge to create meaningful learning experiences.

FoK also provides teachers and communities with tools to understand where learners come from and how, enabling children to incorporate their experiences into the classroom. Therefore, FoK helps us build and share household and individual knowledge to explore new ways of understanding culture as a dynamic concept that can transform how we teach and learn, blending familiar knowledge with curricular knowledge.

Connecting it to LSLP

At LSLP, we promote listening to all voices involved in teaching and research, as these voices are essential for building strong communities and incorporating culturally relevant practices. This fosters a space where children and their identities can be heard, valued, and understood in relation to what we teach.

Although we had not previously used FoK in our research, we can recognize its influence in some of our work. We see how FoK principles have shaped our studies on gaming

communities and the [city as a form of literacy](#). Examining digital practices and urban spaces requires careful consideration of people's experiences and histories.

We can review the studies we've conducted, especially within #TeamLiLE, that align with FoK. We find overlaps between FoK and our earlier research on [affinity spaces](#), [digital storytelling](#), [culturally sustaining literacies](#), [read-alouds](#), [queer critical literacies](#), and [Multimodal Critical Consciousness](#). These studies highlight the importance of recognizing our students' culture, empowering their voices in a second language, and adopting humanizing approaches to [literacy](#) and language learning.

Expanding Second Language Research

As second language teachers, using Funds of Knowledge (FoK) helps connect home and school perspectives. It values each child's home knowledge as important for understanding their interests and affirms their classroom experiences. This approach encourages seeing familiar knowledge as essential for linking the school curriculum with community knowledge. We can build a classroom that respects culture and links home and school.

FoK gives second language learners more chances to share their opinions about knowledge, highlighting their identities and valuing their viewpoints. Students enjoy talking about their realities; their families and experiences shape who they are. Therefore, introducing Funds of Knowledge is key to understanding our students' worlds and creating classrooms where everyone can grow while respecting their backgrounds.

References

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Declaration of Generative AI and AI-assisted Technologies in the Writing Process

The author wrote the different drafts of this text without AI assistance. Before uploading the micro-paper, final edits were made using Grammarly. The author takes full responsibility for the publication's content.

