BEYOND VISUALS: UNDERSTANDING CULTURE THROUGH LANGUAGE

Pa Vang

“Overcoming Challenges: Learning Abroad in a Time of Global Change”

6th Annual Learning Abroad Conference
RESEARCH
ROLE
CHALLENGES

• Shibboleth: a custom or tradition, particularly a speech pattern, that distinguishes one group of people (an ingroup) from others (outgroups).

DIALECTS: Thai
White Hmong vs Green Hmong
OVERCOMING

Children

Host family

Mon Cham
• I don’t speak Thai: Chan mai dai pood phasa Thai
• Do you speak Thai: Pood phasa Thai mai dai
• Language is not the barrier. It is our willingness to step out of our comfort zone to try new things even when we feel uncomfortable.
“A language is a part of a culture and a culture is a part of a language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one can not separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture.” (Brown (2000, p.177)
FURTHER MORE
TAKE-AWAY

1. Challenges are what brings the best out of experiences.

2. Take the initiative to learn and invest in the people and culture.
THANK YOU!

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