

HERITAGE LANGUAGE TEACHING AND THE GLOBAL STORYBOOKS PROJECT: LESSONS FROM THE VANCOUVER BANGLA SCHOOL

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Language Sciences.



Heritage Language Learning and COVID-19

- As a result of lockdowns, children are spending more time with their parents, and for children in multilingual families, there has been greater opportunity to hear their parents speak the heritage language.
- Increased enthusiasm for heritage languages has been noted in Germany, Britain, the United States, Norway, and Uganda

(Hardach, *The New York Times*, 2020).



Teaching and Learning Bangla Online



The Bangla School

- Many ethnolinguistic communities have shown enthusiastic support for heritage language maintenance and have established heritage language programs in many provinces of Canada (Duff, 2008; Duff & Becker-Zayas, 2017).
- The Vancouver Bangla community school was established by the Greater Vancouver Bangladesh Cultural Association in 2018, with free Bangla language classes offered on a weekly basis to Canadian Bengali children.
- In the fall 2020, we began a case study to investigate how teachers from the community-based Vancouver Bangla School are transitioning from in-person to online teaching during COVID-19.

Research Questions

- As a result of COVID-19, what challenges have teachers experienced in the transition to online heritage language teaching?
- To what extent do teachers use translingual and multimodal practices and resources to promote student investment in heritage language learning and to develop students' bi/multilingual identities?
- To what extent might the digital platforms, Storybooks Canada and Storybooks Bangladesh, help to promote students' investment in heritage language learning?



Methodology

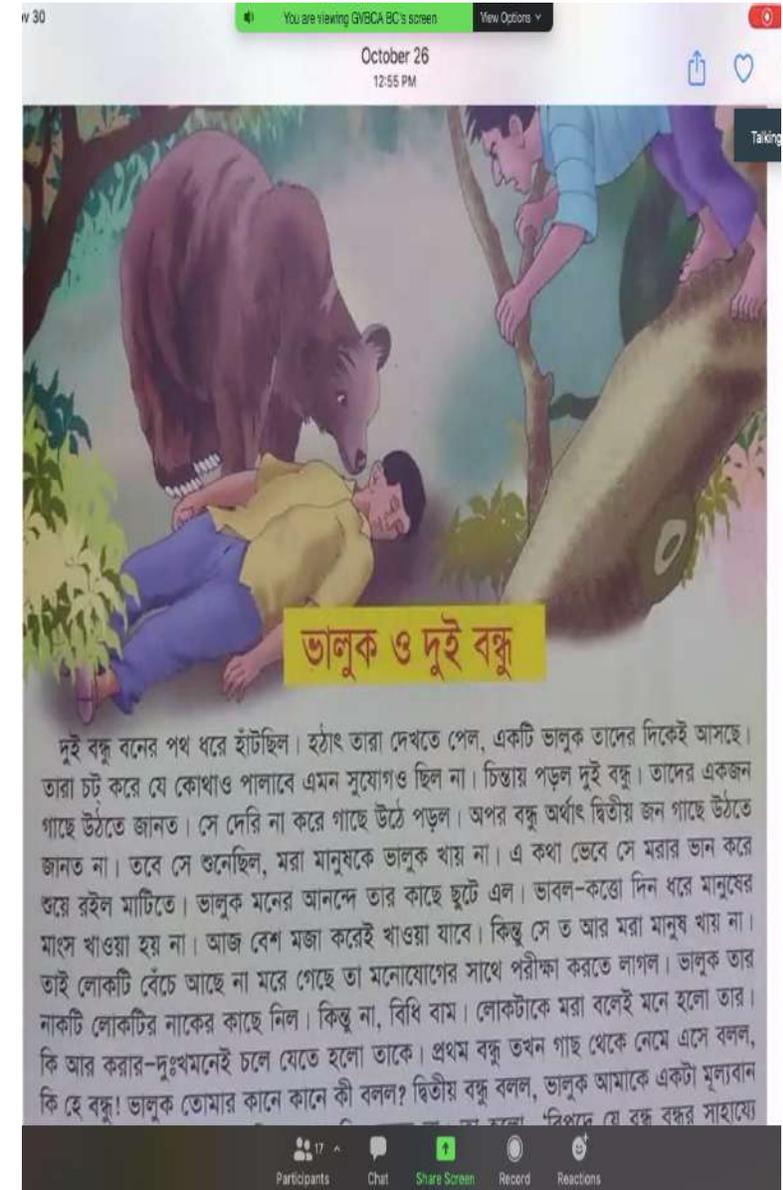
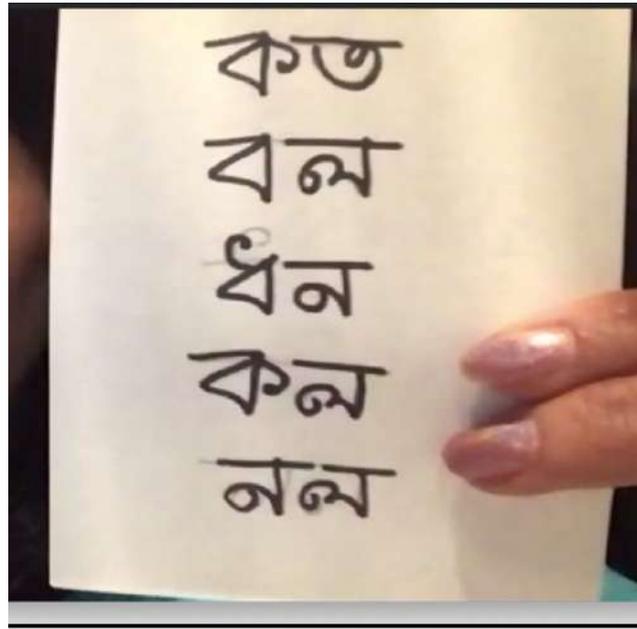
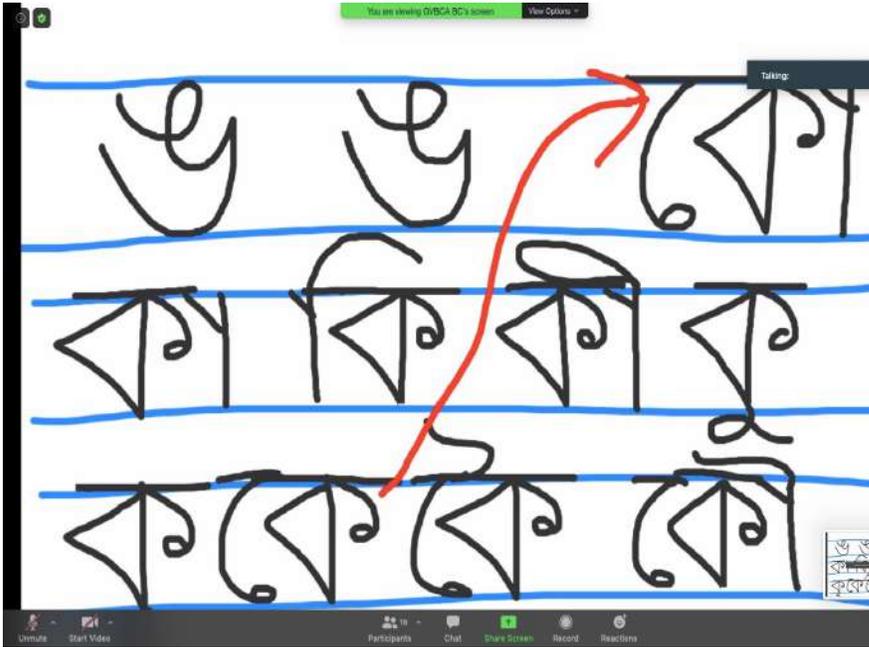
- A qualitative case study (Duff, 2012; Yin, 2018).
- Data collection period (September 2020- May 2022)
- The school currently has seven volunteer teachers. Six teachers have agreed to be part of the study.
- Currently, the school has twenty-four children (aged 6-14).
- Parents of the children who attend the Vancouver Bangla School are mostly Bangladeshi Canadian immigrants.
- While parents and teachers are native speakers of Bangla, English is the dominant language of the children.
- Data sources include participant class observations, field notes, questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions with teachers.



Challenges

- Lack of teacher training (Most teachers have no prior online teaching experience)
- Lack of appropriate educational resources
- Lack of volunteer teachers
- Lack of funding
- Different levels of learners

Translingual and Multimodal Resources



Translingual and Multimodal Resources



ঋতু / Seasons	মাস / Month
গ্রীষ্ম (Grishsho) / Summer	বৈশাখ (Boishakh)
	জ্যৈষ্ঠ (Joishtho)
বর্ষা (Borsha) / Rainy Season (Monsoon)	আষাঢ় (Asharh)
	শ্রাবণ (Srabon)
শরৎ (Shorot) / Autumn, Fall	ভাদ্র (Bhadro)
	আশ্বিন (Ashshin)
হেমন্ত (Hemonto) / Dry Season	কার্তিক (Kartik)
	অগ্রহায়ণ (Ogrohayon)
শীত (Sheet) / Winter	পৌষ (Poush)
	মাঘ (Magh)
বসন্ত (Boshonto) / Spring	ফাল্গুন (Falgoon)
	চৈত্র (Choitro)

Translingual and Multimodal Resources

আমার সোনার বাংলা, আমি তোমায়
ভালোবাসি।

চিরদিন তোমার আকাশ, তোমার
বাতাস, আমার প্রাণে বাজায় বাঁশি॥
ও মা, ফাগুনে তোর আমের বনে স্বাণে
পাগল করে,
মরি হয়, হয় রে—
ও মা, অস্বাণে তোর ভরা ক্ষেতে আমি
কী দেখেছি মধুর হাসি॥

কী শোভা, কী ছায়া গো, কী স্নেহ, কী
মায়া গো—
কী আঁচল বিছায়েছ বটের মূলে, নদীর
কূলে কূলে।
মা, তোর মুখের বাণী আমার কানে
লাগে সুধার মতো,
মরি হয়, হয় রে—
মা, তোর বদনখানি মলিন হলে, ও
মা, আমি নয়নজলে ভাসি॥

Amar shonar Bangla, ami tomay
bhalobashi/

Chirodin tomar akash, tomar
batash, amar prane bajay bāshi.
O ma, phagune tor amer bone
ghrane pagol kôre,
Mori hay, hay re—
O ma, Ôghrane tor bhôra khete
ami ki dekhechhi modhur hashi.

Ki shobha, ki chhaya go, ki sneho,
ki maya go—

Ki āchol bichhayechho bôter
mule, nodir kule kule/
Ma, tor mukher bani amar kane
lage shudhar môto,
Mori hay, hay re—
Ma, tor bôdonkhani molin hole, o
ma, ami nôyonjôle bhashi.



Extracts from Teachers' Interviews

- 'They [children] are familiar with **Canadian maple leaves**. They will not recognize jackfruit leaves ... they are familiar with **maple leaves**, they are familiar with **cherry blossoms**...they are familiar with **fall colors**—so [the lesson] becomes more effective...When I give **instruction** using **the Canadian style**...if I **mix** them it becomes more **effective**.'

(Mili, Interview, April 13, 2021)

Afreen & Norton, 2022

কাজের আনন্দ

নবকুম্ভ উট্টাচার্য

মৌমাছি, মৌমাছি
কোথা যাও নাচি নাচি
দাঁড়াও না একবার ভাই।

ওই ফুল ফোটে বনে
যাই মধু আহরণে
দাঁড়াবার সময় তো নাই।

ছোট পাখি, ছোট পাখি
কিচিমিচি ডাকি ডাকি
কোথা যাও, বলে যাও শুনি।

এখন না কব কথা
আনিয়াছি তৃণলতা
আপনার বাসা আগে বুনি।



২০১

৬৬

Extracts from Teachers' Interviews

- They [children] need to learn [Bangla]—because first of all, they need to know their root, right? Like where their parents are coming from.

(Mili, Interview, April 13, 2021)

Afreen & Norton, 2022

Extracts from Teachers' Interviews

- 'They can use **objects** from their homes, they can show their **T-shirts**—what they are wearing—or, I made this, someone bought this for me, I made this art—they can talk about anything.'
- 'Certainly, because they [children] are showing their own things. They wait for this [activity] —I will show this today...This is a big thing for them—I mean a really big thing.'

(Interview, April 13, 2021)

Afreen & Norton, 2022



Storybooks Bangladesh

Change language

Change level

Storybooks Bangladesh is a free open educational resource that promotes literacy and language learning in homes, schools, and communities. Part of the [Global Storybooks](#) project, it makes 40 stories from the [African Storybook](#) available with text and audio in Bengali, English, and the most widely spoken languages of Bangladesh. Share and enjoy!



Global Storybooks Portal

search

Global Storybooks is a [free multilingual literacy resource](#) for children and youth worldwide. Read, download, or listen to a wide variety of illustrated stories from the [African Storybook](#) and other open sites. Development by the University of British Columbia, Canada.



Afghanistan

داستان پرای افغانستان



Bangladesh

Storybooks Bangladesh



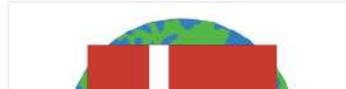
Brazil

Storybooks Brasil



Canada

Storybooks Ca



Translingual and Multimodal Resources

- The Global Storybooks project (globalstorybooks.net/), is developed by Bonny Norton and her team at UBC
- Storybooks Bangladesh (global-asp.github.io/storybooks-bangladesh/)
- Storybooks Canada (storybookscanada.ca)
- Indigenous Storybooks (indigenoustorybooks.ca)



Storybooks Canada

Storybooks Canada is a free open educational resource that promotes literacy and language learning in homes, schools, and communities. It makes 40 stories from the [African Storybook](#) available with text and audio in English, French, and the most widely spoken [immigrant and refugee languages](#) of Canada. We are also developing [Indigenous Storybooks](#) and the [Global Storybooks](#) literacy portal. Share and enjoy!



I like to read!

Level 1



Counting animals

Level 1



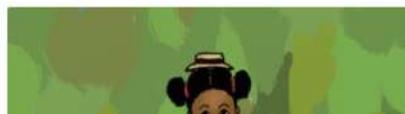
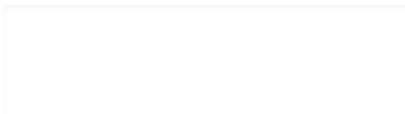
Feelings

Level 1



Fire

Level 1





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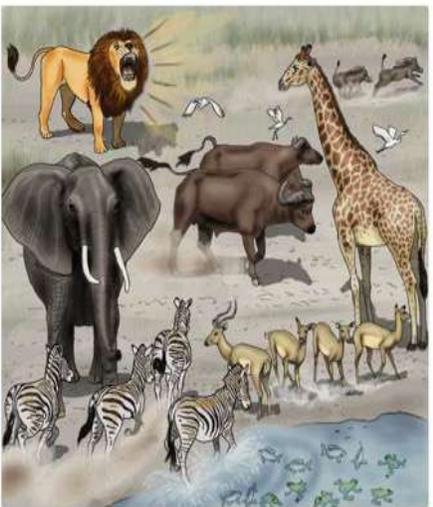
Change level

Change language

- English
- French
- Arabic
- Bengali**
- Cantonese
- German
- Italian
- Korean
- Mandarin
- Persian
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Punjabi
- Somali
- Spanish
- Tagalog
- Turkish
- Urdu



I like to read!
Level 1



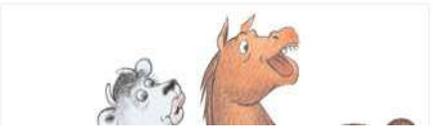
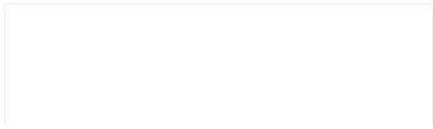
Counting animals
Level 1



Feelings
Level 1



Fire
Level 1





Storybooks Canada

Storybooks Canada is a free open educational resource that promotes literacy and language learning in homes, schools, and communities. It makes 40 stories from the [African Storybook](#) available with text and audio in English, French, and the most widely spoken [immigrant and refugee languages](#) of Canada. We are also developing [Indigenous Storybooks](#) and the [Global Storybooks](#) literacy portal. Share and enjoy!



I like to read!

Level 1



Counting animals

Level 1



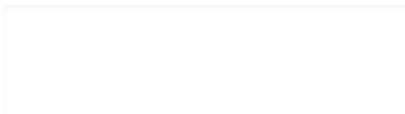
Feelings

Level 1



Fire

Level 1





Bangladesh
Storybooks Bangladesh



Brazil
Storybooks Brasil



Canada
Storybooks Canada



Central African Republic
Histoires pour la Centrafrique



Denmark
Barnebøger for Danmark



Gabon
Histoires pour Gabon



Germany
Storybooks Deutschland



Ghana
Storybooks Ghana



Greece
Ιστορίες για την Ελλάδα



Haiti
Storybooks Haiti



Hong Kong
香港故事書



Hungary
Storybooks Magyarország



Indigenous
Indigenous Storybooks



Jamaica
Storybooks Jamaica



Japan
Storybooks Japan



Kenya
Storybooks Kenya



Storybooks Bangladesh

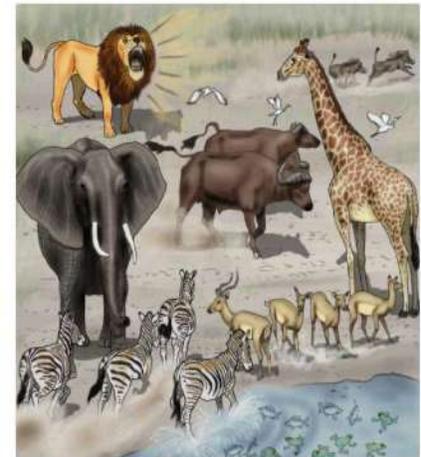
Change language Change level

Storybooks Bangladesh is a free open educational resource that promotes literacy and language learning in homes, schools, and communities. It makes 40 stories from the [African Storybook](#) available with text and audio in Bengali, English, and the most widely spoken [languages](#) of Bangladesh. Share and enjoy!



আমি পড়তে পছন্দ করি!

Level 1



পশু গণনা

Level 1



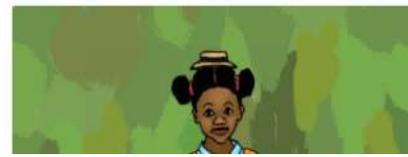
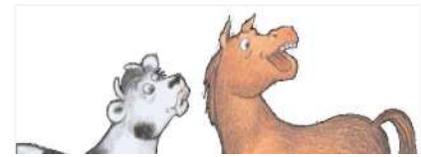
অনুভূতি

Level 1



আগুন

Level 1



Bengali



আমি পড়তে পছন্দ
করি।
Level



পশু গণনা
Level



অনুভূতি
Level



আশুভ
Level



শান্তি
Level 2



খলাই গাছের সাথে
কথা বলে
Level 2



ফুটবল তারকা
আন্দিসওয়া
Level 2



অনেক লম্বা একজন
মানুষ
Level 2



স্বধার্ত কুমির
Level



পশুগুলোর দিকে
তাকাও
Level



স্কুলের কাগড়
Level



চুল
Level



যামা মহান!
Level 2



ছাগল, কুবুর এবং
গরু
Level 2



গাধারূপী বাচ্চা
Level 3



আনান্দি এবং জ্ঞান
Level 3



দুই
Level



আবহাওয়ার বই
Level



অলস ছোট ভাই
Level



রান্না
Level



একটি ক্ষুদ্র শীতঃ
ওয়াঙ্গারি মাথাই-এর
গল্প
Level 3



মুরগী এবং ঈগল
Level 3



যেই দিন আমি শহরের
জন্য ঘর ছেড়ে গেলাম
Level 3



মুরগী এবং কেবো
Level 3



তুমি কি করছ?
Level



আমার বিড়াল
কোথায়?
Level



আমার শরীর
Level



জলহস্তীর কেন লোম
নেই
Level 2



নোষিবেলে এবং
তিনটি চুল
Level 3



স্যাঁকিমার গান
Level 3



ভূসির বোন যা বলল
Level 4



হানিগাইড পাখির
প্রতিশোধ
Level 4



মোমের শিশুরা
Level 2



টিঙ্গি এবং গরু
Level 2



কলা বিক্রোতা টম
Level 2



সিদ্ধান্ত
Level 2



দাদীমার কলা
Level 4



ছুটির দিনে দাদীমার
সাথে
Level 4



সিন্ধেশ্বইরে
Level 5



মাগোজওয়ে
Level 5

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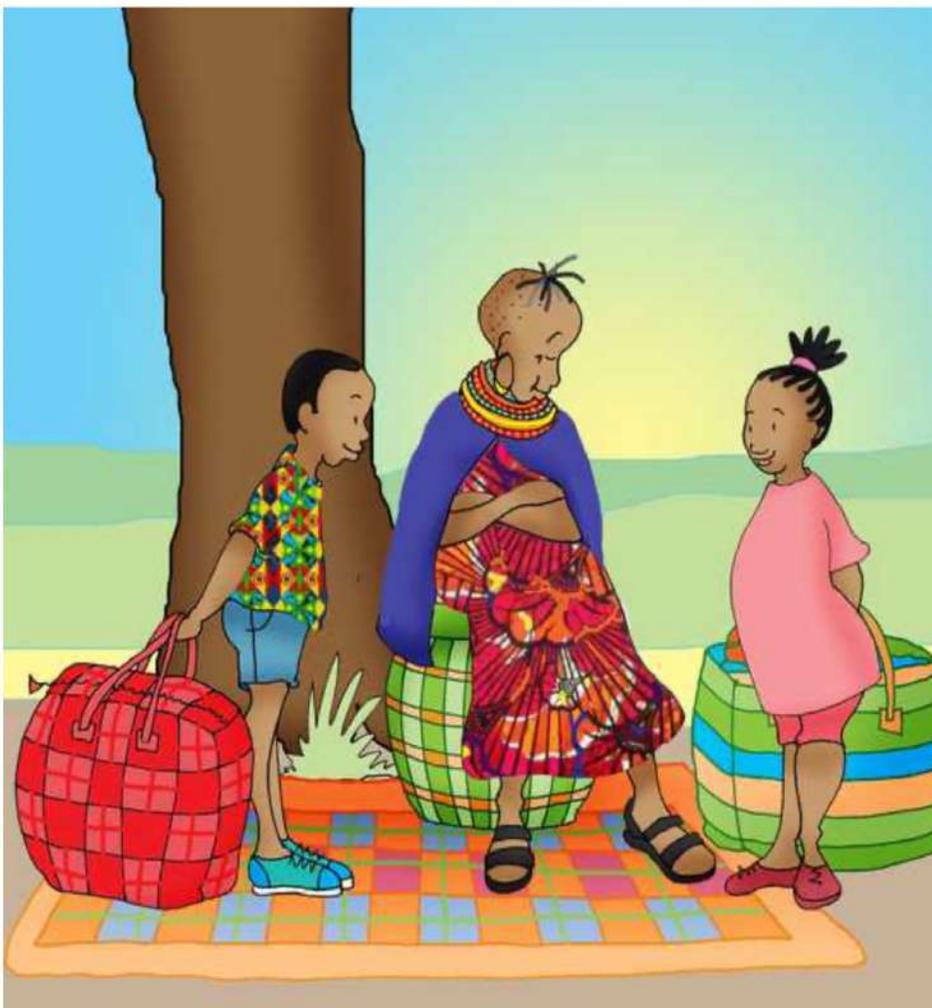
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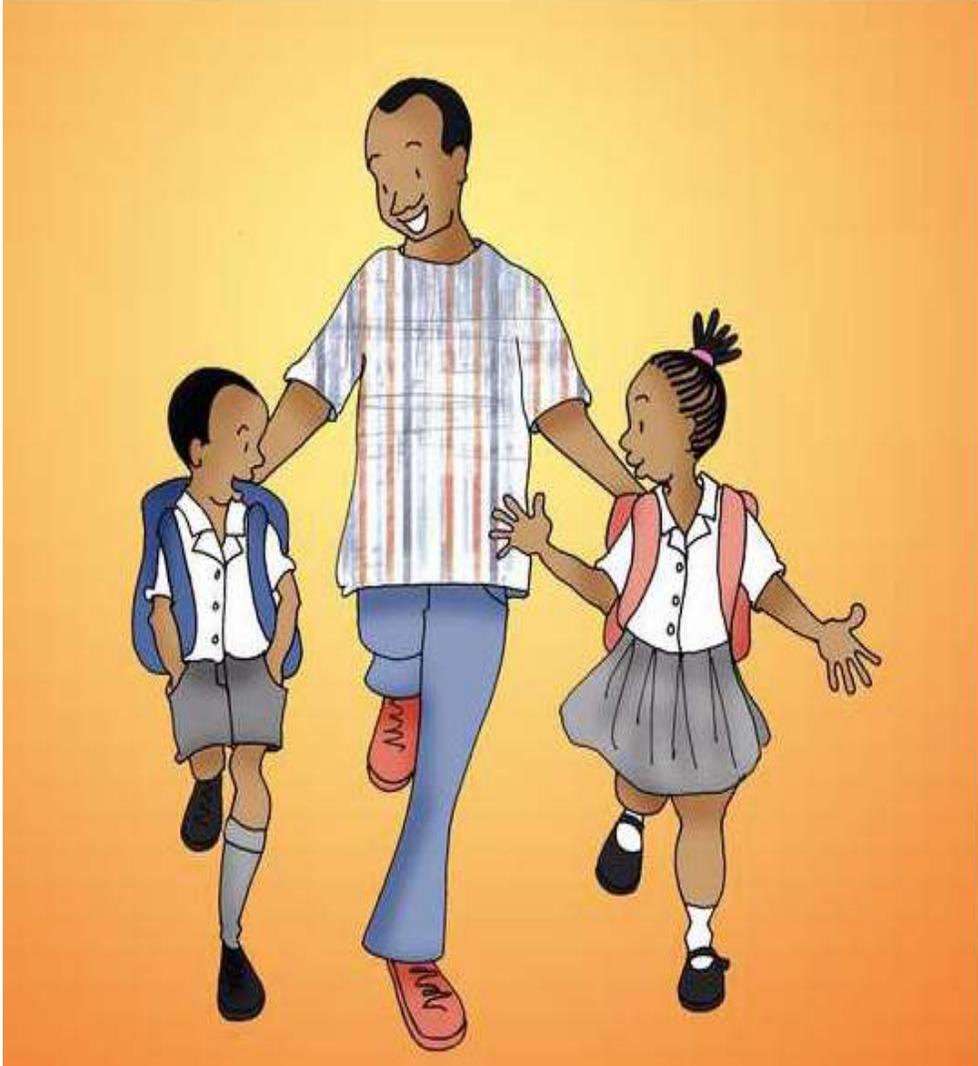
Holidays with grandmother



-  Violet Otieno
-  Catherine Groenewald
-  Darshan Soni
-  English
-  Level 4



Storybooks Canada/ Storybooks Bangladesh



ওডোঙ্গ এবং এপিও তাদের বাবার সাথে শহরে বাস করত। তারা ছুটির জন্য অধীর আগ্রহে অপেক্ষা করত। শুধুমাত্র স্কুল বন্ধ ছিল এজন্য নয়, বরং তাদের দাদীমার সাথে দেখা করার জন্য। তাদের দাদীমা বিরাট বিলের পাশে এক জেলেপাড়ায় বাস করতেন।

Odongo and Apiyo lived in the city with their father. They looked forward to the holidays. Not just because school was closed, but because they went to visit their grandmother. She lived in a fishing village near a large lake.



en

Switch between Bengali and English



bn

fr

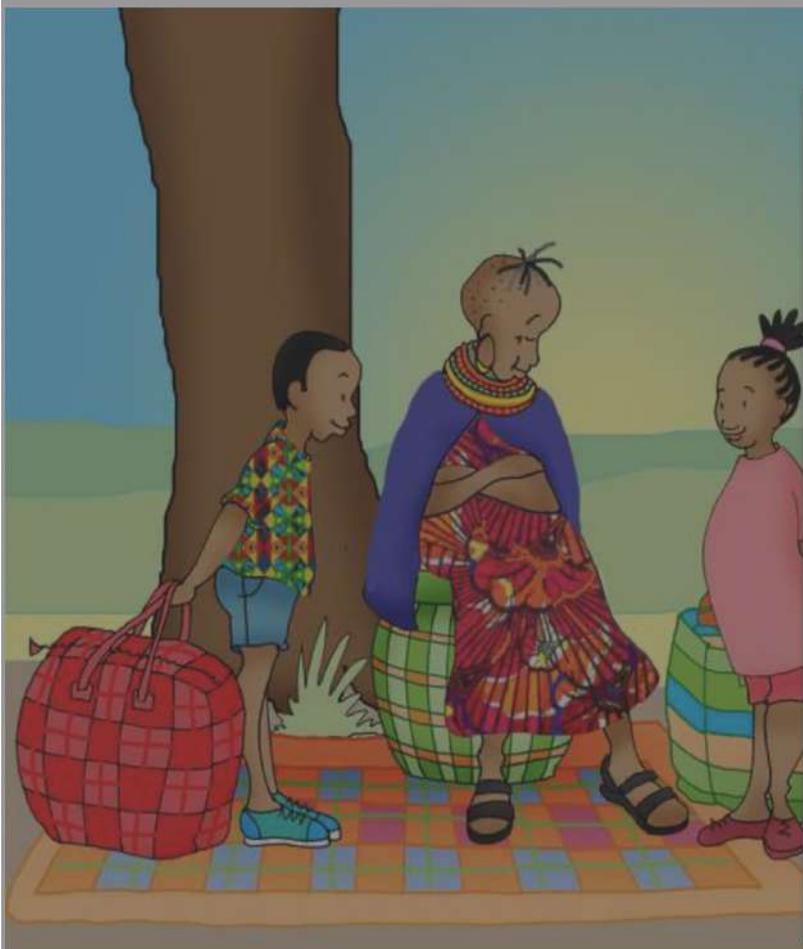
Switch between Bengali and French

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Holidays with grandmother



Download Options



Booklet PDFs (for printing)

- [Booklet PDF \(monolingual\)](#)



- [Bilingual booklet PDF \(English-French\)](#)



- [Wordless booklet](#)



Close

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Indigenous Storybooks

[Change language](#)[Change level](#)

Indigenous Storybooks is a resource designed specifically for children, families, community members, and educators. Inspired by the open-licensed stories from [Little Cree Books](#), this project aims to make the text, images, and audio of stories available in [Indigenous languages](#) as well as English, French, and the most widely spoken immigrant and refugee languages of Canada. Share and enjoy! (Note: Indigenous Storybooks is still under development and we will continue to add languages, stories, and resources as they become available.)



Little Bear's Day



The Seasons



Little Fox



Grandmother Fox

DISCUSSION

- Validating and acknowledging HL students' identities through translingual and multimodal practices help teachers promote children's investment in HL learning and develop children's multilingual identities
- Although the teachers want children to know about their "roots" and heritage, they understand that these children are also invested in Canadian cultural practices. They value children's identities and the capital they bring to the classroom and use them as affordances rather than constraints.
- Teachers "mix" Bangladeshi and Canadian cultures and help children negotiate their transcultural identities. They help children navigate their past, present and future, and support them in negotiating their transcultural identities as Bangladeshi Canadians, not only as Bangladeshis.



DISCUSSION

- Collaboration among HL teachers may help resolve the common challenges of HL community programs, such as dearth of funding, trained teachers, and suitable educational resources.
- Online teaching has enabled the school to reach the wider Bengali community, both locally and nationally, transforming itself from an urban centre to a virtual provincial and national site.
- Although parents and teachers acknowledge the benefits of face-to-face teaching, both teachers and parents highlight commuting time as a significant challenge in face-to-face teaching.



The Globe and Mail/ Royal Society of Canada February 2021

COVID-19 and heritage learning: How community-based language schools are adapting to the pandemic, *The Globe and Mail*:
<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-covid-19-and-heritage-learning-how-community-based-language-schools/>

The article (Article 2.3) is included in the RSC report:

https://rsc-src.ca/sites/default/files/Literacy%20PB_EN_3.pdf



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COVID-19 and heritage learning: How community-based language schools are adapting to the pandemic

ASMA AFREEN AND BONNY NORTON
CONTRIBUTED TO THE GLOBE AND MAIL
PUBLISHED FEBRUARY 5, 2021

TRENDING

1 Rob Carrick: Three mistakes investors



RSC SRC

Impact of COVID-19 on Language and Literacy in Canada

August 2021

Afreen, A., & Norton, B. (2022). Bangla and the identity of the heritage language teacher. *Educational Linguistics* [Inaugural issue]. <https://doi.org/10.1515/eduling-2021-0008>

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Thank You

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