

Preserving Immigrants Native Language and Cultural Identity in Multilingual and Multicultural Societies

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Introduction

Preserving Immigrants native Language and Cultural Identity is very important to organization today. Preserving is necessary not only to preserve function of the building, but to endure a safe environment. The problem occurs because of low quality of preserving work, lack of ethics in preserving effectiveness, ignorance to understand maintenance work, inexperienced and unskilled workers and manpower, and lack of commitment to preserve plan (Emma and Syharul 2009). This paper discussed how to preserve our native language and cultural identity in multilingual and multicultural society.

Preserving student's native language and cultural identity in multilingual and multicultural societies is constantly debated. Native language and cultural identity refer to all languages and cultures brought to the host societies by immigrants. International migration is one of the most global issues of today. More people than ever before are moving across international borders. As families and individuals settle in other countries to make a life for themselves, the question of maintaining or preserving ties and connection with the source country arises, to enable children of immigrants to establish position culture identities (Duff.2008).

Preserving Student's Native Language in Multilingual Societies

We use native languages to refer to languages spoken by immigrant refugees and indigenous groups, which mean all languages in principle, but all languages other than community language in practice. Cummins (2005) refers to "native language practices are often embedded within family life, the home environment; parental influences are seen to be greater than the role of the peers in heritage language proficiency" (p.585). Given the right encouragement, immigrant families can pass on the best of both worlds to their children: a home language in addition to the host community language.

One of the most important factors causing immigrant students' native language loss in immigrant family is parents' choice of the home languages. According to (Hinton 1998), parents' language choice at home may increase the possibility of their children's native language loss. In addition, Hinton revealed that younger children in the family were more likely to lose their native language because of the earlier exposure to other language from the older siblings, who learned this language in school.

"Studies show that simply speaking language at home is not enough to maintain of the heritage languages. Rather, more efforts from parents as well as proper resources are required" (Kondo 1998:394).

Negative consequences reported by many researches (e.g. Cummins 2001, Hinton 1998, Thomas & Cao 1999) which can be one of the biggest negative consequences of immigrant students' native language loss, is the destruction of family relationships. Students' native language lost because the use of the host language society dominates in the home; also the children in this family make their parents who do not know the host language less authoritative by "putting them in to a secondary position of decision making" in their school life (Thomas and Cao 1999 p.112). As a result of this, the children and parents could not communicate well due to an increasing language gap caused by children's native language loss, the weakening of communication between generations.

According to (Cummins 2004), early studies of home environments tended to focus on shared book reading whether it is reading story books or recipes, engaging in writing activities, board games or TV reviewing, trips, image, jester, gaze, and so more holistic perspective.

As a conclusion, communicating effectively with parents of native language children, we realize that all parental needs cannot be met by the classroom teacher. When the school was often a community centre, so in my point of view I suggest to hold an early event, such as a picnic for students and their families at a local park, not associated with the school to interact and communicate with their own language.

(Wrong Fillmore, 1991) contended that the consequences of losing a primary language affect “the social, emotional, cognitive, and educational development of language minority children, as well as the integrity of their families and society they live in” p.342.

Preserving native language is not only about the first generations keeping skills in their native language but about generations knowing the native language. Previous studies revealed that the success of maintaining a native language depended on many factors, such as family, relationships, parental attitudes and peer influence.

For many decades there has been a common misconception that immigrant families will help their children most by completely switching to the community language in the home. The belief is that the more a family uses the community language together, the stronger their community language skills will become. While it is true that family members can help one another by practicing the community language together, the community language should not supplant the native language in the home. In fact, dropping the home language in favor of the community language can end up having many negative consequences; because of a strong desire to prepare children for a competitive education system is one very common reason. Parents are unaware of the fact that they are actually hindering rather than helping their children by going this route. Other parents, desperate to prove that they are adapting to their new country, eagerly drop their native tongue in favor of an English-only approach. The desire to fit in can be overpowering.

While immigrant parents should certainly do everything they can to learn the host language, they should also be encouraged to continue speaking their native language at home with their children. Teachers and school administrators can play a key role in helping to make this happen by providing information, support and language resources. At the very least, parents can be reassured that their children will have a better chance at academic success when a home language is maintained.

Suggestions to Share with Parents to Preserve Their Children Native Language

- **Parental Education:** When children discuss their class work and homework with their parents, it is important that these discussions take place in a language that feels comfortable and natural. To help children achieve academic success, parents must be able to discuss a variety of topics with increasing difficulty and complexity as academic levels increase. Regardless of language, being able to understand and work with ideas and concepts is what education and academic success is all about. In fact, studies suggest that if children build a strong foundation in their home language, they will learn to speak, read and write the community language even better (Kourtzin, 1999). Parent's educational attainment and multicultural experience, influence their conception of bilingual education. Family plays crucial role. Family members, especially parents, pass their attitudes and beliefs about native language to their children at a very young age, the mother plays more important role in children's development than does the father. (Li, 2006) drew the same conclusion that the context plays a crucial role for success or failure in native language development. Speak your mother language make people from your country will respect you. Also, you have a chance of getting a high-paying job because of your language skills, and your parents will be very proud of you. Another benefit of being able to speak your mother language is that when you go outside, nobody will be able to eavesdrop on your private conversation
- **Warmness and Feelings:** Our native language resides deep within us. How often have we heard stories of a family member who spoke another language only in childhood yet reverted back to it in old age? Language is about more than just words. It is the repository of personal experience. To connect with our children fully, we need to be able to use words that have a depth of meaning for us. To soothe a skinned knee, to talk about new teenage love, or to share something personal about our own childhood, we need to use a language that taps into our own emotions (Lee, 1999).

Extended family members also such as grandparents are helpful in providing more exposure to the native language and cultivating a position attitudes towards language learning among grandchildren. Peer also influences play a vital role in language preserving. Sometimes it is more important than parental influence.

- **Language Switching:** By choosing to switch to the community language, we are sending a message to our children that our native language, culture, history and extended family are somehow inferior to the other culture, language and way of life. It is important to show our children that our native is important. We should do all we can to help our children stay connected to it. Our children may even travel to our native homeland when they are older to learn more about their roots (Wrong Fillmore ,1991) . Parents want to do what is best for their families. When they switch to host language at home, they do so from a misconception that it will benefit their family as a whole. They believe this will give their children a better chance at a successful future.

When people in positions of authority (teachers, administrators, doctors, etc.) let families know that speaking a home language provides the best academic and emotional support possible for their children, families will be motivated to pass on their native language. At the very least, parents will be able to provide their children with the gift of bilingualism – a gift of which many in the community language are envious.

Preserving Students' Cultural Identity in Multicultural Societies

Preserving of culture has been recognized as an important aspect to increase the quality of preserving of the original identity. Maintenance of culture is important to elevate maintenance which would directly lead to enhanced facilities performance.

We are all culturally identified by the language we speak in our homeland is making us different instead of being classified just as the community home language. People are proud of where they come from, they don't want to be seen as the same, they want to be different, which in turn can contribute things such as different ideas, traditions and practices together into a melting pot giving us these new traditions but keeping the old ones at the same time. Ehlers (2009) contended culture is shaped by the interaction between individual and groups shared the same value, perception and goal they have learned previous generation continues to generation, through social relationship way of thinking, behavior and beliefs among members.

In general, culture is defined as the overall activity of human behavior, the arts, belief, values, attitudes, practices, and all human works and ideas that influences each member.

Preserving of culture identity is a way of thinking and behaving, preserving and protecting a system's equipment and structures. Cultural beliefs, values, norms, practices and attitudes related to preserve work should be embedded in every individual organization (Marker. Dl, 2006).

Cultural is not something that existence naturally, it should be educated and develop stage by stage. Thus, the internal environment between the members through sharing of ideas, beliefs, and values for each other.

As an immigrant out of our homeland, it is difficult to preserve one's culture and identity, since it's only natural to be influenced by the new lifestyle and the predominant culture. This certainly knowing where we come from and helps us navigates the diversity in the host country with ease. Then, we become parents and it's a whole new ball game again. We want our children to experience our culture, to have a sense of behaving to that home we left years ago (Park, &Sarkar, 2007).

Suggestions to share with parents to preserve their children Cultural Identity

- Learn about your Religion. Religion is the most vital key factor in any culture. It brings you inner peace. Going to a mosque, synagogue, church, or temple is a great way to keep your cultural spirit alive. Read your holy book. Try to understand it by buying books with footnotes in them. See how your culture relates to your religion. You will find that they both have a few things in common (Park, 2011).
- Reminds our kids about home country's holidays, it's very fun for them to have more holidays and celebrations. Attending your country's national festivals helps you see more of tradition. It also helps you make new friends. If you live in a foreign country, having a gathering with your ethnic community is a fabulous idea. It is easier to instill cultural awareness when others are celebrating with you; and Plan having your family visit around holiday time or invite same nationality families over to celebrate with you.

- Eating traditional foods while all sitting at the same table, this is meaningful. It's never too late to whip up some recipes from your mother's cookbook. Bringing your native food home reminds you about where you come from and helps you appreciate those old memories. If you can't find any ethnic recipes in your family's cookbook or the internet, going to a local ethnic restaurant occasionally is the next best option. It doesn't have your mother's love in it, but it's still a culture.
- Teach them about our own culture through tools, pictures, jesters, and plan activities to show them more about our culture. Wear traditional costumes, in holidays also include wearing a traditional costume; and pick some up while you are home or order them on the internet.
- Hear our home tradition music and how to dance and sing. Many celebrations have traditional songs related to them, find CDs or sheet music. You may need to buy the music over the internet or the next time you are home. Teach her at least one folk tale, song, or fairy tale that is common or traditional to her country. Consider sharing these with her as part of your bedtime routine. Make sure he knows a traditional dance from his country. Help him to understand when such a dance was performed.
- Keep in touch with family members abroad, such as grandparents, uncles, aunts, ex..., creating a strong relationship. Regardless of whether these relatives are sharing stories of the past or not, the mere fact that older relatives are spending time with your children will help with preserving heritage. There's no denying that the older generation acts, talks, and in general, carry themselves in a different manner. Your children will likely learn a lot without even knowing they're learning anything simply by spending a bit of time with their older relatives. Preserve and look at photographs: It's not enough to save photographs and then put them away. You need to actually bring out those photo albums every once in a while and go through them with your children so they can see those embarrassing photos of you and photos of their grandparents when young. I like to go through the photo albums my mother has at her house and any photos up at my mother-in-law's house when we visit, sit down with the kids, show them the pictures and ask questions of who the people are that I don't recognize. Not only do I learn more about extended family, but the kids learn along with me of great-great grandparents, uncles, etc (Thomas,&Cao,1999).
- Teach them our history, at least basic history, the flag, the population, geography. Make sure that the child can locate his home country on a world map. Have the map hanging on his bedroom wall as a part of his room decor. Make sure the child knows the name of her home town, or the town where the orphanage was located. Help her pinpoint that on a map as well.
- Share stories: Storytelling is sometimes the best way to help children learn about their families, their rich heritage, and their cultural background. Telling stories and listening to stories of the past can be very powerful and children love to hear stories of when you were little, when their grandparents were little, and so forth. It's amazing to see their little faces light up with joy and be transported to the time and place you're telling them about. Tell them all about when and where you grew up and if possible, let much older relatives do the same.
- Speak with them our home language to get involved to our culture, being able to communicate with their relatives and to create a positive environment where being bicultural it's sometimes good and positive. Have your children interact in playgroups with children from the same nationality.
- Making return trips to the home land in the one of the best means of both heritage language retention (Hinton, 1998) and cultural identity. Talk about and try to regularly visit your 'home' country.

As a result, immigrants' native language proficiency plays a positive role in their ethnic identity, since their heritage language is closely linked to their parents; heritage culture immigrants' socialization practices with ethnic friends have strong impact on their ethnic identity. Thus, parents, encouragement of the use of native language at home and culture heritage enhance immigrant ethnic identity development. Preserving cultural heritage alive is a daily celebration in our house, but it doesn't feel like a chore or something that we have to actively work at doing. It is truthfully second nature in our household because we live and breathe it every day through food, music, storytelling, and the way we talk (I speak home language with my family and as much as I can to our kids, plus my husband uses Trinidadian dialect and slang with his family that the kids also hear). Our children are lucky to have older relatives in their lives still from both my husband and my side of the family to talk to and spend time with periodically. Preserving our cultural and family heritage is important to us and so far, it seems to be important to our children as well because they are often asking us questions about the past and our family relatives. And that's a beautiful thing.

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