INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LANGUAGES AND EDUCATION
AL-AZKIYAA'
OKTOBER 2022 | VOL.1 | NO.2 , NO. E-ISSN: 2948-5312 WWW.AZKIYAA.USIM.EDU.MY

VOICES OF INDIGENOUS PARENTS ON LEARNING, CLASS, AND LITERACY PRACTICES: AGENCY, AUTHORITY, AND EMPOWERMENT

Mohd Muzhafar Idrus[1]*, Fariza Puteh-Behak[2], Ramiaida Darmi[3], Noor Saazai Mat Saad[4], Suraini Mohd Ali[5] , Norhana Abdullah[6], Habibah Ismail[7], Zarina Ashikin Zakaria[8], Noorhayati Hashim[9]

[1-5]Associate Profesor, Faculty of Major Language Studies, Islamic Science University of Malaysia, Bandar Baru Nilai 78100, Nilai Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia.

[6-9]Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Major Language Studies, Islamic Science University of Malaysia, Bandar Baru Nilai 78100, Nilai Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia

*Corresponding author: Email: muzhafaridrus@usim.edu.my

Article Info

Received:
4 September 2022
Accepted:
18 September 2022
Published:
10 October 2022

DOI:
https://doi.org/10.33102/alazkiyaa.v1i2.26

ABSTRACT

Drawing on interviews with parents of indigenous communities, this article presents insights into indigenous parenting aspects related to inside-and-outside classroom learning, cross-cultural complexities, and literacy practices by taking perspectives of Malaysia's indigenous parents as an example. Using Bronfenbrenner's ecological model on how individuals navigate complex interactions in a particular society, indigenous parents' authority and agency play important roles in navigating competing issues of indigenous learners' literacy, learning, and class. Implications on parenting practices, particularly on uplifting indigenous parents with sociocultural, learning, and literacy engagement within changing and challenging expectations of indigenous learners inside and outside their homes, are presented.

Keywords: Bronfenbrenner; class; indigenous; literacies; parenting

INTRODUCTION:

INDIGENOUS LEARNING AND LITERACIES

Many studies on situating, recognising, encouraging, and supporting indigenous literacies, for example, by Gellman (2019), Hu, Daley, and Warman (2019), Macqueen et al. (2018), Mills and Dooley (2019), Milne and Wotherspoon (2019), and Sherris and Peyton (2019) just to name a few have flourished. However, although a number of alternative approaches and/or initiatives have geared towards literacies, literacies among indigenous learners in Malaysia are frequently discussed in terms of indigenous community's continuing education, in particular to stereotypical depiction, dropout rates and truancy (see, for instance,

Idrus, 2013; Nicholas, 2006; Mohd Nor et al., 2011; Mustapha, 2013). To counter the discourse of the scarcity of attention, resources, and equity given to Malaysia's indigenous community, the government of Malaysia has introduced Malaysia's revised National Education Blueprint (2013-2025) (Ministry of Education, 2013), drawing attention to uplifting socio-economic advantanges among indigenous learners by articulating “equal access to an education that will enable that child to achieve his or her potential,” “opportunity to attain an excellent education that is uniquely Malaysian and comparable to the best international systems,” “the best possible education for every child, regardless of geography, gender, or socioeconomic backgrounds,” and “a system where students have opportunities to build these shared experiences and aspirations that form the foundation for unity” (E-9). Increasing expenditures on developing Malaysia's indigenous community in its annual financial planning can be seen, for example, in Malaysia's recent 2011 budget onwards, including Tenth Malaysian Plan 2010 (2011-2015), and 2015 Eleventh Malaysian Plan (2016-2020) (Government of Malaysia, 2010; Prime Minister’s Office, 2015). Among others, these assistance are designed to help indigenous communities in financial terms (allocating funds), mobilising indigenous learning spaces, researching the language of indigenous communities, and enhancing indigenous community centres, just to name a few, as elaborated in Malaysia’s parliament discourses (Parliament of Malaysia, 2019) and 2016-2020 Malaysia’s Department of Indigenous Community Development (Strategic Plans, 2019). However, after almost a decade, Malaysia's indigenous community continues to deal with complexities and constraints, in particular to challenges related to indigenous community’s literacies and sociocultural nuances (Hasmah, 2013; Renganathan, 2016; Rosnon, 2014). That is, as demonstrated by Rosnon and Abu Talib (2019), indigenous learners remain peripheralised and the reality of classroom learning is seen as protecting the expectation of ‘mainstream,’ non-indigenous students.

The question remains; have these objectives circumscribed by the powers that-be reached their objectives? Possibly; authority often report that funding have bridged learning barriers among indigenous learners and that these development programmes are informative (Asnarulkhadi, 2005; Krishnasamy, 2019; Rosnon et al., 2019); Yet, do challenges to engaging literacies and social class among indigenous communities remain dominant and fertile? Our study previously conducted, alongside Hasmah (2013), Renganathan (2016), and Mohd Nor et al. (2011)’s studies, suggests that reaching out to communities, particularly indigenous communities, can help further understand and boost literacies among learners. Because learners of indigenous communities inhabit Malaysia’s larger population which organises themselves around specific cultural practices and societal beliefs, a tangible line exists between perspectives of indigenous learning and literacies of the past and indigenous community learning of the present. This being one of the key factors that demands alternative perspectives and redefines the age-old question on indigenous education literacies and class in new terms makes the need to discuss these concerns on literacies and sociocultural notions through investigating parenting and parenting approaches all the more urgent. That is, amidst changing and challenging expectations inside and outside schools, literacies and sociocultural class can be investigated further through considering viewpoints from indigenous parents.

The paper will be outlined as follows. We will firstly begin by highlighting the roles ecologically-oriented perspectives play in shedding light on indigenous communities. After that, we will situate our study within the spaces of Malaysia’s policies on education and indigenous community development which will centralise the importance of providing necessarily brief links between parenting role and the demands created by institutions and non-learning institutions. Particular attention will be paid to the ways in which cultural practices (do not) play roles in learning and the extent to which indigenous traditions as employed by

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indigenous parents may (not) describe learners' cross-cultural values that support literacy. Methodological approaches will illustrate the ways in which our study is carried out. Finally, we will present our findings on inside-and-outside classroom learning through analysing responses from indigenous parents from the perspectives of ecology.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:

Parenting, Indigenous Learning And Literacies Through Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model

We would first like to dwell on the notion of Bronfenbrenner's ecological framework before discussion on indigenous parents' perspectives and parenting practices are highlighted. How can ecological framework define and shape the contour of the study? Parenting aspects are often central to ecological model of indigenous education.

Bronfenbrenner's ecological model (1977, 1979, 1992) suggests parenting as one of the approaches which elaborates class, ways of how sociocultural constructs and literacies are realised when he lists 1) microsystem- settings and contexts that realise activities, roles, and duties that involve individuals which may influence how individuals shape their relations with one another, 2) mesosystem- interactions across various microsystems (for instance, interactions that take place between a learner and the learner's (extended) family members, 3) exosystem- settings and contexts that may (in)directly influence the individual, but still "impinge upon or encompass the immediate influence" (Bronfenbrenner 1977, p. 515), 4) macrosystems- beliefs, morals, values, and tradition of specific culture, 5) chronosystem- settings and contexts that transpire life-changing events, transitions, opportunities that are significant from holistic and longitudinal perspectives of individual development. Bronfenbrenner and Evans (2000) explain ecological model a step further by claiming that ecological model involves proximal processes, transfer of energy, or transfer of interactions that occur within and across individuals and their changing and challenging environments. In other words, these proximal processes, transfer of energy, or transfer of interactions that occur among learners of indigenous backgrounds can explain the interdependence between class, literacies, and sociocultural norms as indigenous learners live and grow.

Bronfenbrenner, along with his colleague, Morris (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998) theorise about a Process-Person-Context-Time (PPCT) model that underlies the diverse and complex components found in ecological models throughout the world. That is, the process which can be defined as the recurring, overlapping axioms within which learning takes place can inform us of the ways in which environment can affect individuals' desires, hopes, and outlook. Human beings, with their unique, varying characteristics can "affect the direction and power of proximal processes through the life course" (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, p. 995). The third component, which is the diverse and complex contexts, is contained in Bronfenbrenner's earlier work. The final component, time, in Bronfenbrenner and Morris's (2000) ecological perspectives describe microtime (events in single interaction), mesotime (recurring events across a larger time frame, for instance, days, months, years), and macrotime, that is explained as chronosystem. In our study, Plucker et al.'s (2013) guideline is used to elaborate parenting aspects of indigenous education that particularly elaborate class, literacies, and sociocultural norms by taking into account Bronfenbrenner's ecological model. As Jaeger (2016) puts it, Bronfenbrenner's PPCT model provides a 'window' into one's depiction of literacy, class, and sociocultural norms as they make evident "regular, ongoing, complex, reciprocal interactions between the developing person and the people, objects, and symbols

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present within a given microsystem. These processes are influenced by the individual characteristics of the developing person, by the range of contexts that surround her/him, and by the historical time period in which s/he lives" (p. 168). That is, although parenting aspects keep indigenous learners within the boundaries of sociocultural norms of indigenous contexts, the manner in which they consciously make decisions to advance their socio-economic standing and literacies in keeping up with demands inside and outside learners' classrooms illustrate the centrality of parenting practices in educating indigenous children while maintaining cultural tradition they consider desirable. Although Bronfenbrenner does not explicitly link ecological theory with literacies, we are reminded that ecological theory "has the potential to serve as the foundation for literacy research because it promotes careful attention to the range of factors that influence literacy practices" (Jaeger, 2016, p. 169). And although literacy practices and the understanding of the notion of class and sociocultural norms are constructed mostly in schools, for the purposes of this article, we focus on indigenous parenting practices, specifically, their perspectives on sociocultural norms and class that support socio-economic mobility and "literacy growth" (Neber, 2018, p. 257).

Our analysis is concerned with the ways in which inside and outside classroom learning and literacies are framed within the views of Bronfenbrenner's ecological model. While these systems are separated on their emphases, they do not necessarily work in a linear manner; instead they can be in conflict as everyday facets and facts of life such as human beings' experiences of the media, technology, and education including literacies commonly go back and forth responding to one another. To summarise, the focus in Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory is on the quality and context of the child's environment. As a child develops, the interaction within these environments becomes more complex (Bronfenbrenner, 2009). This complexity can arise as the child's physical and cognitive structures grow and mature, thus creating a link between nature and the child's development (nurture). According to the ecological theory, if the relationships in the immediate microsystem break down, the child will not have the support within his or her environment. In our study, Bronfenbrenner's concept of ecology is recontextualised to argue that to boost socioeconomic advantage is to consider dynamic elaborations by parents and their practices on parenting. That is, every system, for instance, microsystem, actively responds to exosystem and macrosystem, and similarly our discussion on reproducing social advantage depends upon how parenting approach dynamically interacts with literacies, cross-cultural complexities, and learning. As Jaeger (2016) argues, "microsystems do not 'sit' neatly within mesosystems; rather, mesosystems exist at the overlap between two or more microsystems. Similarly, if the simple nesting view is adopted, the child would be contained by the exosystem; but exosystems are, by definition, systems of which the child is not a member (e.g., parental workplace)" (p. 164). Thus, to advance social capital by solely relying on other macrosystems, however, is in practice rare because, as it is argued in this article, socio-economic advantage is, in one way or another, characterised by complex 'webs' of parenting, parents' intention, and practices. In the following pages, we hope to extend the discussion on ecological model by presenting insights into parenting practices of selected indigenous communities in Malaysia. By focusing on interviews among indigenous parents, inquiries on mobilising education is sustained through ecological understanding that learners are "located within a particular microsystem," and that a learner "has differing experiences depending on the microsystem in which" he/she "is situated (Jaeger, 2016, p. 178).

'Strategising' Parenting Practices: Indigenous Community In Malaysia

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Studies concerning literacies among indigenous parents and their parenting practices are inadequate. In many societies across the world, indigenous learners are already underrepresented (Milner & Wotherspoon, 2019; Milner, 2016), and failure to place increasing emphasis on the role indigenous parents as worthy subjects of inquiry may marginalise them further, as if indigenous communities, individually or collectively, are not relevant. As described by Milne and Wotherspoon (2019) and Pushor (2015), investigations on indigenous communities may demonstrate important educational, social class, and cultural resources that are almost always ignored and how they are now to be understood. This task, therefore, calls for an elaboration of indigenous communities in Malaysia that contextualises our understanding of indigenous parents and what it means growing up surrounded by official and unofficial accounts of indigenous community. While not necessarily comprehensive, the following discussion will provide a more focused discussion.

Official depictions of learning among indigenous communities that illustrate indigenous family members suggest certain ‘landscape’ about learning across Malaysia’s indigenous communities. Firstly, formal education of the indigenous children can be traced in the early 1960s in which the education of the indigenous communities was managed by the Department of Indigenous People Development (JAKOA), that was also managing other areas of indigenous community’s development such as health and land ownership (Edo, 2019; Mohd Noor, 2012). As an official body, the Ministry of Education took over indigenous communities’ learning and welfare beginning 1990s, suggesting a more structured, tenuous, and focused public administration of indigenous people’s learning. At elementary and high school levels, the indigenous children could attend three types of schools, namely, 1) regular national schools, 2) indigenous-specific national schools, and 3) special model schools, known as K9 schools. In regular national schools, indigenous learners attend classes with learners of other backgrounds. Indigenous-specific national schools, however, admit all indigenous learners situated in close proximity to indigenous villages and areas. K9 schools house indigenous learners who sit for a Special Model School that offers a ten- year education that ranges from pre-school to lower secondary levels (Abdul Rahman, 2009). There are around five K9 schools in Peninsular Malaysia, and they are mostly built in rural areas, usually adjacent to indigenous community settlements (Edo, 2019; Puteh-Behak et al., 2019). Secondly, JAKOA provides financial assistance in the form of scholarships and school items. Since its inception in 1996, the Education Financial Assistance Scheme has privileged indigenous learners with financial assistance and supplementary programmes to elevate education for indigenous people, including organising Career Path and Indigenous Student Overseas Degree Programmes and Centre of Excellence for Bright Indigenous Minds. These transparent readings between authority and indigenous people conditioning the indigenous learning communities contextualise indigenous parenting approaches, as we will demonstrate in the following pages.

Unofficial delineations on indigenous learning communities, however, illustrate certain ‘stereotypes’ on indigenous literacy practices. Sani (2014), and Shaari, Yusoff, Ghazali, and Dali (2016), for instance, demonstrate recurring issues on literacy gaps with Puteh-Behak et al.’s (2019) assertions about Malaysia’s indigenous individuals’ literacy status. Using several interviews among teachers at an indigenous national school to prove their point, Puteh-Behak et al.’s research (2019) demonstrates literacy struggles associated with indigenous children of one of Malaysia’s indigenous community. Citing difficulties with basic literacy skills such as reading, writing and numeracy, Puteh-Behak et al. explain that a majority of these indigenous learners had to be reassigned to remedial classes, suggesting lack of common oral and written literacy skills. Similarly, Shaari, Yusoff, Ghazali, and Dali (2016) argue that the marginal literacy status of indigenous learners in Malaysia is associated with different ‘interests’ in

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literacy skills; many indigenous learners show keen interest in Makan (eating), Minum (drinking), and Main (playing). Abdul Rahman, Mansor, and Harun (2018), in addition, argue that literacy issues surrounding indigenous learners can be explained by the misalignment of the national syllabus to socio-cultural backgrounds of indigenous communities. NGOs such as Suruhanjaya Hak Asasi Manusia Malaysia (2010) (Human Rights Commision of Malaysia), in its annual report, highlighted that bolstering indigenous literacy gaps is not taught using indigenous communities' 'mother tongues.' While at home, Abdul Wahab et al. (2016), Aznie et al. (2018), and Mat Deli and Mohamad Yasin's (2016) description of indigenous parents' involvement with children literacy illustrates that some indigenous parents showed reluctance over teaching their children due to lack of literacy growth among the indigenous parents themselves.

In the following pages, we do not intend to examine the variations of minimum or below literacy skills among indigenous communities, and the reasons why their literacy status peripheralises them. Instead, we will present insights into indigenous parents' perspectives because issues of class, education, and literacies operate with their parenting practices. Thus, while we are fully aware that an indigenous parenting skill in a Malaysian indigenous community may not be the same as parenting practices in another indigenous community across the world, the following discussion will show that despite restrictions on literacy placed on indigenous 'representation,' their stratagems and boldness oppose social, familial, and material pressures that would otherwise defy their socioeconomic advantage.

METHODS

In this section, information on the sites, approach, design, participants and instruments of the research are presented. It will then be followed by an explanation on data collection and data analysis procedures, research objectives, research questions and instruments as well as data analysis. The study, designed based on an exploratory case study, uses qualitative instrument (interview protocols) and thematic analysis is used. The fieldwork involved parents of indigenous communities selected from an indigenous population in central east Peninsular Malaysia, chosen as a site based on authorisation gained from regional authorities. Ethical approval is on file.

Research Location and Participants

The research location, a K9 school in central east of Peninsular Malaysia, was chosen. The participants were selected based on purposive sampling, as it accentuated "a process whereby a group of subjects" was "chosen as participants because they have certain characteristics" (Piaw, 2012, p. 43). Recruitment was processed at the school after the teachers were briefed on the purpose of the study. This enabled the teachers to help select parents who were able to provide the much needed responses, as their availability to participate may affect the outcome of the study. Through purposive sampling technique, eight indigenous parents were selected based on these criteria:

1. Parents' whose names were recommended by teachers.
2. Only parents of Year 1 students who took part in Language Literacy Programme.
3. Only parents who gave their consent to participate.

Research Design and Tool

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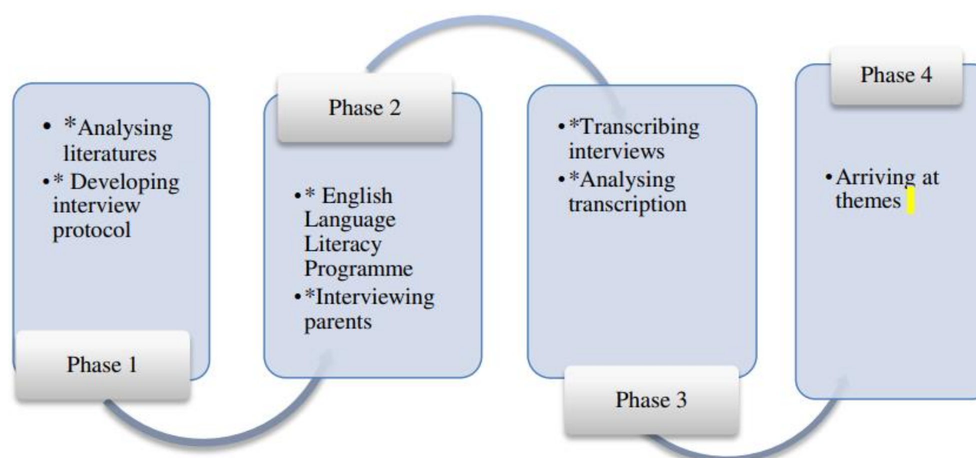
This is an exploratory case study in which interview protocol is employed as the primary qualitative data collection tool. Part of a large-scale research project on indigenous communities' literacy and curriculum, semi-structured interview questions were developed based on the broad aims of the study which is to investigate how indigenous parents support learning.

Data Collection & Analysis Procedure

Figure 1 shows the data collection and analysis procedure of this study which was conducted in four phases. In Phase 1, related literatures from various sources were selected and analysed. Interview protocols were developed based on related literature review as a preparation for interviews with indigenous parents. In phase 2, an English Language Literacy Programme was conducted with a group of Year 1 students with the aim of exposing them to English Language through games and activities. Subsequently, eight indigenous parents were interviewed. The audio-recorded interviews lasted between thirty to forty minutes. In Phase 3, these audio recorded data gathered from the interviews were transcribed and analysed according to themes (thematic analysis). The emerging themes were discussed in Phase 4, in order to meet the aim of the study.

FIGURE 1. Data Collection and Analysis Procedure



FINDINGS

In the previous sections, we have argued the uses of Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory, either in isolation or collectively, for exploring parenting practices to unveil how they oppose social, familial, and material restrictions to gain socioeconomic advantage. In the following pages, we will re-generate discussions of Bronfenbrenner's ecological model. Although the intersection of literacy, class, and sociocultural norms occur at homes, in schools, non-profit organisations, or other community-based institutions, for the purposes of this article, we will focus on views of parents of indigenous backgrounds. We begin with discussions on indigenous parents' responses that are somewhat shaped in line with the demands and 'pressures' placed by existing socio-economic landscapes that prioritise changing expectations of parents, constructing a more nuanced account of parenting approaches, learning, and socio-economic mobility. Through viewing the responses this way, we will be able to reconceptualise Bronfenbrenner's ecological model as a telling lens to see parents primarily as compliant

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operators within teaching dimensions; literacies, education, and socio- economic class are constructed in line with the socioeconomic demands. We then continue our discussion with indigenous parents that sheds light on the occasions in which sociocultural learning, class, and literacies are deemed culturally- attuned, appropriate and actually occurs, and the consequences of one's navigation across varying microsystems and mesosystems. Indigenous parents' viewpoints about parenting and their responses to learning itself calls for greater analysis: the indigenous parents and their children and the links between indigenous parents and their material (trees, plants, people, and organisations-for-indigenous population) and immaterial(norms, values, belief systems) objects all need to be made overt, empowering indigenous learners to thrive within varying microsystem, mesosystem, and exosystem.

On literacy and learning: Indigenous parents' agency and authority

Indigenous parents and their voices place them in a position of agency and authority as they speak for themselves against the socio-political atrocities and socio-politically oriented establishment where indigenous parents' role is normally defined by solely relying on mainstream and non-indigenous-oriented accounts of how, when, and where their behaviour will be socio-culturally 'attuned,' and socio-culturally 'appropriate.' That is, the perspectives of ecology work in our case to destabilise the 'imaginary' unity between stereotypical depictions of indigenous learning, literacies, and class, and what really occurs as indigenous communities interact with one another. A representation of indigenous learning, literacies, and class can be misconstrued and 'fictionalised;' indigenous parenting has long been associated with less engagement with their children's learning inside-and-outside classroom, resulting in dropouts and truancy (Milne, 2017; Rosnon, 2019). Despite some of these restrictions placed on indigenous parenting and their roles involving indigenous children learning, these indigenous parents, by means of their interactions at microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems, and macrosystems levels, can (re)conceptualise alternative discourses on how they negotiate between the educational demands placed on indigenous learners. By exposing parenting views on indigenous children's learning, we work instead with indigenous parent voices to build a 'catalogue' of agency and authority against confining, 'prescribed' indigenous parenting roles, contributing to indigenous learning engagement inside and outside classrooms (Rethinasamy, et al., 2013).

Indigenous parents such as Olivia and Silvia are considered agents of change for their involvement in their children's learning. Olivia, for instance, alerts her indigenous children to get up early to school because, according to Olivia, getting up early can warrant information and knowledge made available to her child. She worries that if her children do not wake up early, learning may not take place. According to Olivia, "my children have to go to school early so knowledge can be built, shared, and gained." Olivia is concerned that if she does not 'plot' a way by stepping in to get her children up from bed early, her children might not benefit from classroom learning. Olivia regards the idea that 'education is power' as relevant, as it can drive economic bases that give her, an indigenous parent, an important role to play as guardian to her children ("I do not want them to suffer like me. I want them to study and study to have more money"). When Olivia responds by saying that her roles are regarded as duties, she refers to ensuring her indigenous learning as honourable because only concerned parents like her can champion her children's learning even though, according to Olivia, she is uneducated herself. The fact that she abandons her plans to save money by not furthering her education but working to safeguard her children's future magnifies her nobility, sensibility, and responsibility as impacting her children's future by making sure her children could study "mathematics" as her maternal instinct wishes to fulfil the children's desire to earn a living by studying.

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Another parent, identified as Silvia, together with the support of her husband, must insist on English language learning, just as she lends her authority in voicing out her opinion about the selection of languages that need to be prioritised. Silvia, is prepared and she promotes the importance of English language learning for survival skills. Here is what she has to share:

> "Time and time again I remind my children to try English language because if you can speak and write in English, you can make it to the world…now it is not easy to get jobs if English language is not prioritised. I want them to study and use English language, by any means necessary. Whether they can or cannot make it, I want them to learn English language as this will help them use in their lives."

One can only imagine what indigenous parents like Silvia and her husband who promote English language is prepared to do and how far they will go for their children. Silvia not only looks for the opportunities for her children to develop skills in English language, but this finding also records her role in elevating her children's literacies and expanding the interaction of these young learners at Silvia's house. Silvia is an authoritative figure, positioning herself as a supporter, aware that her children's unfolding classroom interactions will make or break their future. Silvia uses her strengths and stratagems to bolster her children's education by emphasising English language development. Silvia further describes other instances in which she generates literacies through interactions with her kids. For instance, Silvia gives motivation, helps with homework, selects graded English language book series, and closely monitors her children's learning by ensuring that she has access to their schools and their facilities.

Silvia was proactive in recommending strategies and skills because she believes her children's future is dependent upon their learning and ability to understand, respond, and negotiate meanings in English language ("I try my best, regardless whether I am tired or not, to remind my kids that you need to speak English"). Silvia's approach in learning and integrating English language proficiencies carries weight and power, as she believes that children will be motivated to speak English when they see their parents projecting support and stepping out to take charge of their children's language and learning skills.

Both Olivia and Silvia's method of interacting with their children with regard to learning and emphasising on English language learning highlight their function as authoritative figure. As mothers of indigenous children, they are aware of their agencies to secure their position as dominant knower about what happens in their children's microsystem, exosystems, and macrosystems. Certainly their children can count on their mothers to sustain learning strategies and English language learning as indigenous parents like Olivia and Silvia wish for their children's prosperity, highlighting the importance of familial support that empowers and engages their children learning inside and outside their homes. This authoritativeness on the part of Olivia and Silvia's parenting reflects what Jaeger (2016) argues as supporting the ecological perspectives; "these processes involve the developing" learners "along with: teachers, peers, and parents…all within a particular environment" (p.174). By focusing on indigenous learning, Olivia and Silvia's actions of interacting with their children, from ecological perspectives, "effectively support literacy growth, adjusted to meet the academic and personal needs and desires of individual children" (Jaeger, 2016, p.176).

On cross-cultural class complexities: Indigenous traditions as a source of empowerment and encouragement

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Many indigenous parents in our study highlight that a learner's success in mobilising social advantage bears the identity of the parents, which the learner acquires along with the ways of how he/she is brought up. One of these ways establishes how parents relate to cross-cultural complexities, which refers to a sense of 'obligation' to glorify cultural traditions and adapt to challenging socio-economic mobility in appropriate ways; the impacts of socio-cultural traditions and reproduction of social advantage are contingent upon each other. While acknowledging the development of modern Malaysia, parenting approaches by indigenous mothers, Chenta, Azni, Halimah, Lily, Bunga, and Zelda, embody indigenous tradition. A male parent, Razak, and two female parents, Zelda and Bunga, feel empowered and elevated to higher socio-cultural standing for their ability to provide their children with the knowledge of beading and weaving. These arts and crafts, based on careful, meticulous indigenous scheme of procedures, allow these parents to feel a sense of completeness. That is, through exposing their children to traditional, familiar fragments of indigenous arts and crafts, they explain that a notion of loyalty and indebtedness that honours their ancestors are both placed and reciprocated when these are taught to their children, as they negotiate in the 'wants' and 'needs' of being hired in the corporate world(s). Zelda, Lily, and Halimah, for example, explain, "I ensure what I have learnt about beading and weaving from my grandmother and grandfather are circulated among my children even though the books say a lot about becoming accountants, engineers, lawyers." Parents, Bunga and Razak, identify with the notion of equals; the knowledge of other traditions such as blowpiping and snare- preparation need to be received and returned / recirculated. According to Bunga and Razak:

> "Yes, I have taught my children the tradition of using the blowpipe, it is a normal/popular activity. Even my son's friends have learnt how to use blowpipes, including preparing snares and spearfishing. My children have become good at it and I can imagine them holding good positions at their workplaces but knowing full-well that they can use our tradition along with the modern idea of material values and goals. This makes me happy if they are more successful than I am".

Discussions by Razak, Chenta, Azni, Halimah, Lily, Bunga, and Zelda position their parenting practices of indigenous tradition as important to 'nourish' and 'empower' their children. To obtain a sense of loyalty and kinship, their children are taught indigenous values to reciprocate what their grandparents have 'gifted' their parents. That is, while the socio-cultural demands placed on learners at school may distinguish what and how individuals should behave cross-culturally different societies, our interviews with indigenous parents seem to show that indigenous learners are the socio- cultural manifestations of contributions from parenting practice; indigenous learners' identities are composed of traditional arts and crafts, and the relationships that these crafts and arts may embody. This accords with a logic that indigenous learners' education and understanding of class may be reflective of parenting practices, and that these parenting practices are acquired from the experiences at homes and the ways these experiences affect their children's learning about the importance of material values at schools. The same is true of our interviews with indigenous parents.

Crawford, Snyder, and Adelson (2019), Jaeger (2016), and Neber (2018) similarly highlight that learners bear their socio-cultural identity that are involved in microsystems, mesosystems, and macrosystems that created and sustained them. Jaeger (2016) suggested that in facing changing socio-economic mobilities, parenting practices are concepts aligned with "a range of individual characteristics, including literacy strengths, beliefs, and experiences" (p. 182). The concerted cultivation and emphases on familiar, indigenous cultural fragments as parenting

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practices are notable because they re-visit the intensive role of families within ecological model. The interviews above enhanced the ecological perspective, as Crawford, Synder, and Adelson (2019) point out, "other family and school-related factors are often tied to larger cultural considerations" (p. 3). The interviews presented here have, additionally, taken up Jaeger's (2016) challenge to investigate how parenting practices are "adjusted to meet the academic and personal needs and desires of individual children, suitable for the peer or adult involved" (p. 176), and that these culturally-oriented parenting by indigenous parents reflect "a complex, reciprocal interactions between the developing person and the people, objects, and symbols present within a given microsystem" (p. 168).

While the indigenous parents above emphasised indigenous arts and crafts, other parents encourage their children in intensive involvement in indigenous music and dance. Azni, for instance, emphasises the indigenous dance, Sewang, to glorify indigenous, cultural roots. Azni specifically described that Sewang dance is a symbol of honour to indigenous communities, particularly when one is down with sickness. According to Azni, "I know I ask my children to go study and learn about other Western cultures. But my children are also exposed to Sewang when one is sick. The people in our village gather before the sick are sent to nearby clinics. That is how we have come to appreciate one another." Halimah concurs by highlighting that Sewang is "our method of knowing our people; our way." Such balanced 'reciprocity' is a tradition that contributes to indigenous community commonality, cooperation, and perpetuity since this indigenous kinship of helping one another among indigenous families, according to Azni, needs to be returned when needed. To mothers, Chenta and Bunga, Sewang is considered a 'gift' for higher-ranking officials visiting their villages. According to them, Sewang is a public display of congregation of the indigenous community as they keep interpersonal relationships alive, creating wider networking between indigenous and non-indigenous communities, and re-forging a number of other desirable indigenous things to powers that-be. Bunga, for instance, articulates, "when there are big shots visiting my village, my children and I dance to Sewang." Chenta seems to reach similar agreement, explaining "Sewang is performed on the basis of request, particularly when people in authority are invited at wedding ceremonies and these are exposed to my children." In other words, Sewang is an indigenous practice that is characterised by the re-generation of a number of elements, aspects, and valuable components that are useful for indigenous children to learn about power, social relations, and class. Indigenous parents' viewpoints above have signalled important points that are aligned with what Neber (2018) argues as helping learners negotiate with mesosytems that are "made up of cultural beliefs and ideologies" (p. 43).

CONCLUSION

The article has weighed in indigenous parents' views of how parenting approaches are central to understanding indigenous literacies, class, and education by taking Malaysia's indigenous parents as examples. That is, expectations on what indigenous learners can and cannot do, how literacies (do not) collide between what they experience inside and outside their homes, and how the extended kinship and social relationships among themselves and across other communities are built, empower indigenous parents' voices to burst through the matrix of ecological systems. They reveal indigenous parents' agenda to render mute challenges that disrupt their socioeconomic advantage tendencies. Through understanding indigenous parents' voices, parenting approaches generate 'dialogues' out of which indigenous learners and parents become aware of socioeconomic possibilities and alternatives in microsystems, mesosystems, and macrosystems. Bronfenbrenner's ecological concepts provide necessary 'tools' to explain

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how these indigenous parents bridge socioeconomic gaps that simultaneously meet education demands placed on their children.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This study has been funded by Malaysia's Ministry of Education (grant no.: FRGS/1/2017/SSI09/USIM/02/5). We thank anonymous reviewers. Errors are our own.

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