


1.5 & 2nd Generation Luso-Canadian Mothering: Language and Cultural Retention in the Greater Toronto Area



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Presentation Outline:

Introduction

Literature Review

Theoretical Overview

Methodology

Data Analysis

Conclusion

Thesis Statement:

- Do 1.5 and 2nd generation Luso-Canadian mothers desire to sustain Portuguese language and cultural habits in themselves and subsequently teach their child/ren?
- If so, what progressive steps do they take to ensure this?

Review of Literature:

- Major Themes:
- Gender roles and patriarchy
- Migration to Canada, and migration within the GTA
- Language Retention
- Linguistic Life Expectancy
- Cultural Retention
- Academic Underachievement



Theoretical Overview:

Foucault- 'Discourse'

Bourdieu- Language and symbolic power, language and social capital

Diaspora Studies

Methodology:

- Qualitative Sociological Study
- Data Collection Techniques:
 - Finding sample
 - Seven semi-structured qualitative interviews
 - Recording
 - Transcribing
 - Coding
 - Self-reflexivity

Sample of Participants:

Women

Luso-Canadian

Average age of mother is 32

Children's ages varied from 12 months to 15 years

Average age of children is 6

1.5 or 2nd generation (two were 1.5, five were 2nd generation)

Living with partner and father of child/ren

Living in the GTA (Greater Toronto Area)

All of the women were fluent in Portuguese even though this was not a requirement

Education ranged from not completing high school to obtaining a doctorate in medicine.

Self- Reflexivity:

Insider:	Outsider:
Luso-Canadian	Not a mother
Fluent in Portuguese	Younger than the average age of the women
Woman	
Familiar with the Portuguese community in the GTA	

Data Analysis:

5 Themes:

- Fear of academic underachievement in children
- The grandparent connection
- The partner (father of child's) inability to speak the language
- A sense of detachment from the perceived Portuguese culture
- Prospects of providing a childhood that is different than their own.

Two themes for today:

1. Fear of academic underachievement in children
2. 'The grandparent connection'

1. Fear of Academic Underachievement in Children

“Bottom line is we didn’t want to confuse him because us being Portuguese and talking, speaking English with my mom. You know Portuguese people talk English and talk Portuguese at the same time right? So with Andrew we didn’t want to confuse him.” - Diedra (33 years old, son is 3)

“...What I learned from our time is education is very important... I have to look after my son and I always have to, I’m also worrying about his education already at this point in time.”

Susana, 39 years old

“... I don’t want them to be you know, in school ‘in school’. See when I was young I had to learn the English, the French, you know what I mean, and then the Portuguese. I had to learn those and they were very difficult for me. It was hard. So with my kids I don’t want them to go through that. I’m like you know what when you get older this and that, eventually you’ll want to learn our culture, they have classes there. Go learn it. You know they’re going to learn French in school. They’re going to have to take that so I don’t want to put all that pressure on the kids.”

Desiree, 35 years old

“Because my parents were from Portugal we spoke Portuguese at home which was cool and all but because I was born here and I was learning English at the same time and a lot of the Portuguese was lost, I found it harder to communicate.”

“Actually it still to a certain extent amazes me that umm.. I guess that some kids grow up speaking English to their parents because that’s the way they were raised and I thought wow you know if I spoke English to my parents I’d be able to communicate a lot better.”

2. The Grandparent Connection

Me: “Do you speak Portuguese to your children?”

Desiree: “I do. I did more with Zeriah but not so much with Brandon. The difficulty with that is because Jose doesn’t speak Portuguese he cant really... I guess join in the conversation that way. But um I thought with Zeriah it was a lot more important but now that I see it hasn’t really worked... it’s worked to a point where she can understand her grandparents, she understands it but she’s not fluent in it because I don’t force her to speak.”

(Desiree, 35 years old).

Diedra, 33 years old

“I really want my son to be able to speak Portuguese to my parents and be able to have a normal conversation and not just like oh hi, bye. You know. I don't like that. That really bothers me. When I realize that, that's when I'm like ok you know what Andrew really needs to know at this point, has to speak Portuguese cuz it's not fair because it will impact their relationship.”



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Thank You! I invite your questions and feedback 😊