



## **Linguistically Appropriate Practice: A Guide for Working with Young Immigrant Children**

By: Roma Chumak-Horbatsch

*A Book Club Study for ECE/K Teacher CODE-WCDSB*

### **Overview:**

Many early years teachers find themselves in classrooms where the language of program delivery is different from the language the child has learned first and continues to use in the home. All students come to the classroom with skills, however, many of these skills are masked by their apparent inability to demonstrate them. Language is sometimes the barrier. The language world of immigrant children is rich and varied. They do not enter their classrooms as blank language slates (Chumak-Horbatsch, 2012). Immigrant parents see their children exposed to the majority language (TV, radio, speaking with peers, etc), and many immigrant parents want their children to continue to develop in their home language and literacy skills and to stay connected culturally. But immigrant parents also want them to learn the majority language in order to ensure they succeed in school and in their later lives. In Chumak-Horbatsch's book, she suggests that in most cases (be clear that she is not suggesting in all cases, as she has witnessed many EC practitioners who welcomed home languages into the class and worked very closely with families to promote **bilingualism** and **bi-literacy**), classroom practices are not taking into account the bilingual potential of the immigrant children they teach and do not adequately address their language and literacy needs (as they are different for native majority language speakers).

Immigrant children are a very important demographic and inclusive practice holds benefits for all. Monolingual children who are exposed to other cultures and languages develop an awareness of language differences and can spark interest in their own heritage language long gone.

**Purpose:**

Why should the language and literacy needs of immigrant children be of concern to early childhood educators?

LAP-Linguistically Appropriate Practice will raise awareness and help you understand immigrant children and their two worlds of language. This approach will help explain their language learning, provide suggestions for bridging the family and the school relationship, and show you how to welcome all languages into your classroom.



## **Book Study Part 1**

### **Forward, Acknowledgements and Introduction**

In his forward, Jim Cummins (world renowned researcher in the field of second language acquisition-OISE- University of Toronto) has written the *Forward* for Chumak-Horbatsch's book.

Why does Cummins suggest the book could have been titled "Educationally Appropriate Practice"?

What do you believe is Jim's overall message in his Forward?

**Further Notes:**

## Introduction

In your opinion, why did Roma write this book?

On *page 4* for the introduction, Roma asks, "Is this book for you?" Explain why this book is or isn't for you.

**Part 2**-Chapters 1 and 2

**Chapter 1** *Immigrant Children in the Classroom*

Read Chapter 1 in its entirety before doing the following:

Select a sentence or group of sentences that you find significant from the chapter and write them here:

Select some words that you find significant from the chapter

Why did you select this sentence (s) and words from this chapter?

## Chapter 2 *A Language Portrait of Young Immigrant Children*

Read the entire chapter before working in the chart below:



The four As-assumptions/agree/argue/aspire

<p>What <b>assumptions</b> does the author of the text hold?</p>	<p>What do you <b>agree</b> with in the chapter?</p>
<p>What do you <b>argue</b> with in the text?</p>	<p>What <b>aspirations</b> do you have that relate to the text?</p>

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**Additional Notes:**

**Part 3 Chapters 3 and 4**

**Chapter 3** *Classroom Practices with Young Immigrant Children*

In your own words define:

Assimilative Classroom Practice	Supportive classroom Practice	Inclusive Classroom Practice

How would you define your classroom in terms of the above?

Do you feel your classroom would benefit from a shift in practice from one more to the other? (i.e. from more assimilative to more supportive for example).



What are some things you can do to shift your practice (assuming you feel the need)?

Why is it important to move from a monolingual to a multilingual classroom practice?

**Additional Notes:**

#### **Chapter 4** *Linguistically Appropriate Practice: Background*

What is LAP?

So you feel LAP has a place in your classroom in part or in whole? Explain.

**Discussion items:**

What has your experience been with other languages?

How do you feel about the children in your classrooms using languages you don't understand?

Are there any ideas from Chapter 4 you would like to try in your classroom? Why do you think these are beneficial?

Are there any other strategies you'd like to try beyond what is listed in the chapter?

**Additional Notes:**

**Part 4** Chapters 5 -7

**Chapter 5** Preparing the Classroom for LAP

Reflect: Is my classroom a multilingual classroom?

**Additional Notes:**

## **Chapter 6** *Adopting LAP in the Classroom*

Are there any bilingual myths (pg. 85) you held on to that were clarified in this chapter?

What do you see as the benefit to Language and Literacy Record Keeping?

What are the challenges?

**Additional Notes:**

## Chapter 7 *LAP Activities*

Are there any specific activities that made you want to try them?

Page 137 lists some websites (dual language). Visit two of these sites and make notes (something that inspired you/ made you want to try):

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Notes:**

**REFLECT on the Learning**

To reflect on the learning, we will engage in some “Chalk Talk”. To prepare your chalk talk (as you will be sharing), please get a piece of chart paper. Divide the chart paper into 4 squares. Title each of the squares as follows:

My key learnings:	One thing I am going to try.....
One thing I am going to do less of.....	Now what? how will I commit to making my classroom a more multilingual one?

**Additional Notes:**

**Would you recommend this book to a colleague?**