Indigenous Heritage and Arabic Heritage Communities' Perspectives on Language Instruction and Other Cultural Supports in Education Settings

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BACKGROUND

- There is a **lack of prioritization** of Indigenous/Arabic heritage languages within educational settings
  - The K-12 curriculum in U.S. schools rarely offer Indigenous and Arabic Heritage languages
  - A sense of alienation and treatment as if these cultural groups are figments of the past have been documented (Shear 2015; Najjar et al. 2019)
- **Purpose**: Get community insight on the problems/issues that they identify within educational settings

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. What issues, priorities, and/or problems did community members identify when answering the questions about what they would hire scholars to address?
2. What problems do members of Indigenous and Arabic heritage communities identify in regard to the lack of adequate support for heritage languages?

METHODS

- Participatory Action Research (PAR)
  - Including ordinary community members to be a part of your research team, with the goal of solving societal issues (Schneider 2012)
- Feedback collected at 3 community forums
- Qualitative Coding
  - Borrowed from grounded theory
  - Identified themes & used axil coding
- Problem Solution Tree Diagram
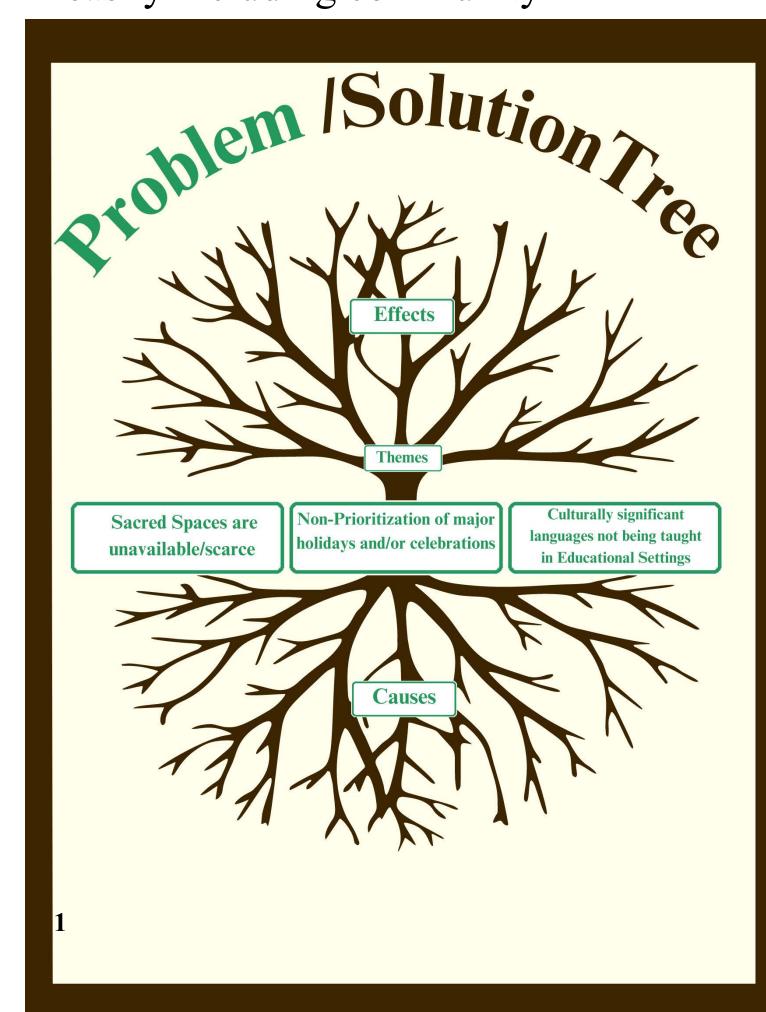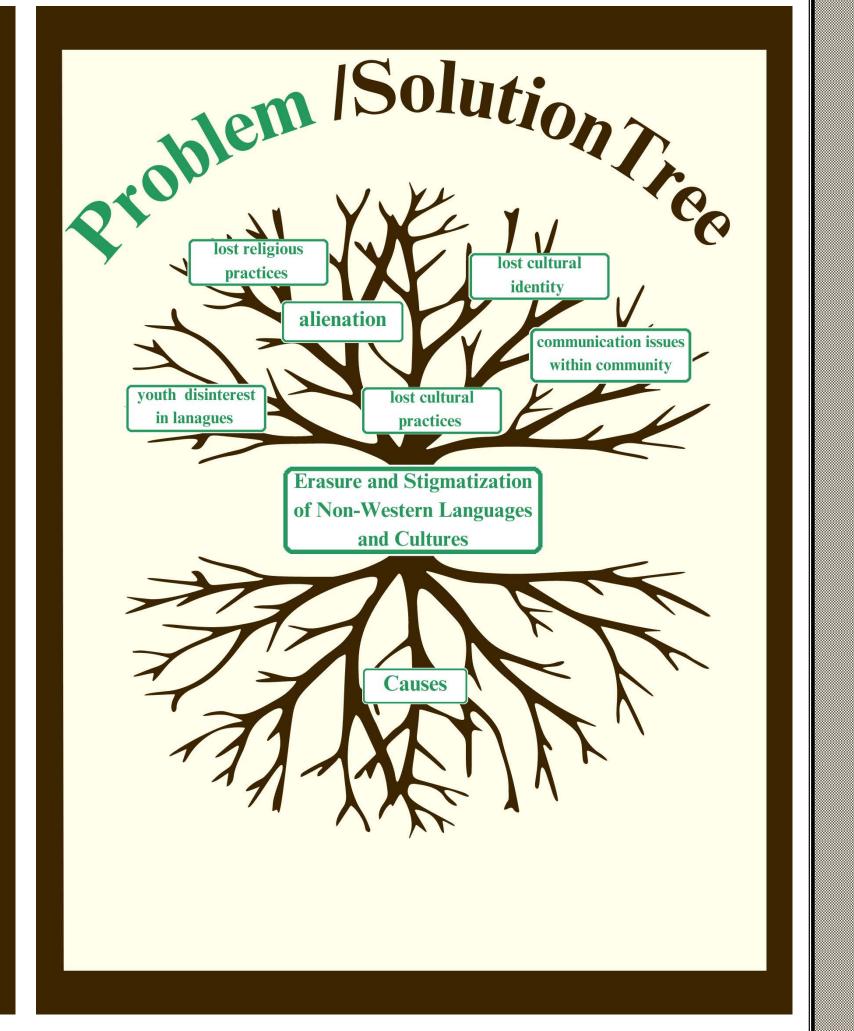 - Input current identified themes

METHODS: DATA COLLECTION

Pictured above are (2) images from community forum events

RESULTS

- Problem/Solution Tree's are utilized because of their accessible research aspects, easily including community

Figures 1 & 2: *Problem & Solution Tree diagrams*

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

- As in the problem solution tree, the (3) identified themes include:
  - Sacred spaces are unavailable/scarce.
  - Non-prioritization of major holidays and/or celebrations
  - Culturally significant languages not being taught in education settings
- The overarching theme identified was the erasure and stigmatization of Non-Western Languages and Cultures
  - This theme will be focused on in future projects

FUTURE WORK

Next phase of research:
- Interpersonal focus groups
- Completion of problem tree (causes & effects) and solution tree (pathways & benefits)
- Added contextual evidence for more extensive project that is "Forcibly Removed" led by Dr. Lory Dance

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS