Educational Linguistics

Doris S. Warriner *Editor*

Refugee Education across the Lifespan

Mapping Experiences of Language Learning and Use

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Editor

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Mapping Experiences of Language Learning and Use

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Introduction: An Educational Linguistics Perspective on Refugee Education: Bringing into Focus the Language and Literacy Dimensions of the Refugee Experience

Doris S. Warriner

Refugee resettlement has never been more urgent. With dramatic increases in global ethnic conflict, religious persecution, political instability, disasters caused by extreme weather, drought and famine, the number of forcibly displaced persons had surpassed 80 million by the summer of 2020 (UNHCR Press Release, December 2, 2020). In 2020, 80% of the world's refugees were being hosted (temporarily) in developing countries (UNHCR Fact Sheet, March 2020). Recent news headlines demonstrate that the convergence of multiple global and local forces (political, economic, environmental) has created conditions of extreme uncertainty and precarity in a growing number of regions – creating unstable or unsafe conditions that have pushed large numbers of people to uproot themselves, their families and their lives in search of safety and security. New displacements are also driven by recent increases in violence in Syria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mozambique, Somalia, Yemen, and Central America.

This volume takes up and responds to the urgency of the moment by bringing together accounts from a wide range of perspectives on refugee education. With a particular focus on the role of language and literacy in educational access, assessment, practice, and policy, contributors identify and critically examine the relationship between the contexts, priorities, practices, and outcomes of various learning and teaching processes for refugee-background learners from across the life span. They take up questions and debates about language and literacy education, language and literacy policy, language and literacy ideologies, language and literacy socialization, and language and literacy assessment. And they draw on various subfields within educational linguistics to examine relevant phenomena in a wide range of contexts (e.g., K-12 classrooms, after-school programs, community-based programs, the workplace, spaces of healthcare delivery, online spaces, or nontraditional spaces of language use/learning). Collectively, authors demonstrate that an

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educational linguistics approach to inquiry is well positioned to identify, examine, and theorize the language and literacy dimensions of the refugee experience.

1 The Scale and Scope of Displacement

For many years, forced migration has occurred in response to political persecution, ethnic conflict, and human rights violations. Now climate change, drought, and famine are among the reasons. Displaced persons are now representing a greater number and variety of regions and countries than ever before. According to the UNHCR, hundreds of thousands of forcibly displaced persons have fled violence in northern Central America and Nicaragua in search of stability and security (December 8, 2020 Press Release, UNHCR). Although Central America and Mexico reaffirmed their commitment to address the needs of peoples displaced by violence and persecution in 2020 (through adopting the San Salvador Declaration), the scale of the problem remains larger than efforts to create responsive and proportional policies. According to a MPI commentary from December 2020, many Latino youth (U.S. born and immigrant) are experiencing severe anxiety and other mental-health symptoms: "Beyond the stressful life experiences and transitions that all adolescents experience, Latino teenagers face discrimination and fears related to their precarious position in the United States as immigrants or children of immigrants, a status that has become more tenuous with ramped-up immigration enforcement in recent years. "Another factor contributing to increased levels of anxiety is perceived discrimination due to race, ethnicity, or language. When Latino students fear that a family member or friend might be deported, they were more likely to feel discriminated against." (MPI Commentary, Dec 2020)

Climate change has also dramatically increased displacement and in ways that necessitate a more coherent and well-planned refugee resettlement strategy. In the year 2019 alone, nearly 2000 weather-related disasters precipitated 25 million new displacements: "the world's vulnerable endure some of the worst effects of climate change. Rising temperatures can increase food, water, and land insecurity, while disrupting services necessary for human health, livelihood, settlement, and survival. Invariably, among the most affected are older people, women, children, people with disabilities, and indigenous peoples." (UNHCR Press Release Dec 2, 2020). As the Migration Policy Institute's recent special issue on *Climate Change and Migration* argues, "climate change is affecting human movement now, causing internal displacement and international migration, and will do so in the future. But the impact is often indirect, and rarely is the process as straightforward as one might think." (see also the MPI podcast, *Changing Climate, Changing Migration*, hosted by *Migration Information Source*).

According to an October 2020 Center for Strategic and International Studies analysis of Internal Displacement Monitoring Center data, "extreme weather is the world's leading cause of forced displacement. Droughts, wildfires and other weather events have displaced an average of 21.5 million people every year for the past

decade." The Los Angeles Times Editorial Board (2/4/2021) puts it this way: "Some 80 million people currently are displaced, most by war, political instability and drought exacerbated by global warming in the Middle East, sub-Saharan Africa and Central America. Experts predict that the vast majority of those folks will eventually return home. But for a small subset, returning will be impossible. It is from that pool that the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees vets and then recommends candidates to individual nations for permanent resettlement." There are concerns that the Refugee Resettlement Program established by the U.S. in 1980 was "originally designed for people fleeing armed conflict or persecution" and may be unprepared and unable "to help people displaced by climate impacts. It struggles even to define them, because climate change is often an indirect or contributing factor to the proximate causes of migration, such as famine or floods." (Scientific American 2/8/2021).

The COVID-19 Crisis has driven home the need for a more coherent and comprehensive approach to refugee resettlement – in part by contributing to and exacerbating the financial insecurity, educational challenges, and social turmoil experienced by displaced individuals in search of safe haven. On January 12, 2021, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) tweeted about the pandemic's impact: "As high-income countries roll out COVID vaccines, concerns are rising that billions will not receive it, prolonging the pandemic." According to an MPI Fact Sheet produced in November 2020, immigrant and refugee women living in the U.S. have experienced a disproportionate amount of economic hardship: "they have been among the most affected by pandemic-related job losses, seeing their unemployment peak at 18.5 percent before declining to 11.2 percent in September 2020 – even as jobless rates for immigrant men and U.S.-born men and women never topped 16 percent and fell below 8 percent in September."

Forced migration is not the only phenomenon on the rise. Increasingly hostile rhetoric, discriminatory policies, and a surge in far-right populism have spread across the United States, the United Kingdom and the European Union – fueling uncertainty in the policy realm, volatility in the political landscape, and unease among immigrant and refugee advocates. The precarious status of refugees, asylum seekers and other displaced persons is thus amplified by worsening global crises on three distinct but related fronts – climate change, racism, and limited access to healthcare (which the COVID-19 pandemic has made more visible). Effective and efficient processes of refugee resettlement are necessary not only to stabilize the lives and livelihoods of a large and growing number of forcibly displaced individuals and families; they are also necessary, indeed critical, for creating conditions of stability in the societies that receive vulnerable and displaced persons.

2 Increased Precarity Amidst Shifting Commitments

Even though we have more forced displacement (and for more reasons) than ever before, the number of global resettlement spaces has decreased sharply in recent years – from 126,000 in 2016 to 63,000 in 2019. In the face of increased instability and precarity among the world's displaced, the U.S. has steadily decreased the amount and nature of its commitment to refugee resettlement. In 2019, only 30,000 refugees were resettled to the United States; 54% of that number were from Africa, 17% from Asia, 17% from Europe, and 9% from Near or South Asia (UNHCR Fact Sheet, March 2020). In the U.S., only 11,800 refugees were resettled in the year 2020 (compared to 63,000 per year between 2004 and 2016). According to the MPI's June 2020 Report, "the refugee resettlement landscape has shifted considerably in recent years. A number of countries in Europe and elsewhere have launched or expanded their resettlement programs, and some have experimented with new models such as community-based or private sponsorship. At the same time, the United States – long the world's largest resettlement country – has significantly cut its refugee admissions, leaving other countries to take the lead in global efforts to address displacement."

In recent years, Australia, Canada and many European and Latin American countries have launched or expanded their refugee resettlement programs – and this has helped to address the gap created when the U.S. stepped back from its role[1] in refugee resettlement. Some EU Member States, such as Germany and Sweden, have expanded their resettlement programs while others, including Romania and Lithuania, have launched new ones. Additionally, a number of small and rural communities throughout Europe have recently welcomed and engaged large numbers of refugees (MPI Report, Nov 2020). Even so, Europe's actions and policies have addressed only a small portion of the problem – which means that "a tremendous gap remains between resettlement needs and the places made available by governments around the world" (LA Editorial Board, 2/5/21 statement). According to a statement recently issued by the UNHCR (2/5/2021), "only 4.5 per cent of global resettlement needs were met in 2019"; and the number of refugees who were resettled that year grew by only 14% compared to the previous year (when 55,680 people were resettled).

3 The Need to Reprioritize and Re-commit to Resettlement

Although many U.S.-based agencies and organizations that coordinate and/or sponsor refugee resettlement have been gutted or weakened in recent years, the United States' resettlement program remains the largest in the world, and the UNHCR

[1] According to The Los Angeles Times Editorial Board (2/4/ 2021), the U.S. has resettled 3.4 million refugees since the Vietnam War.

continues to work closely with U.S. governmental agencies and NGOs responsible for resettling refugees in the U.S. Just a few months into the Biden Administration, there is reason to be cautiously optimistic about the Administration's commitment to restoring the strength and vitality of the United States Refugee Resettlement Program and asylum system. If early actions and announcements are any indication, refugee resettlement will become a priority once again. Since Inauguration Day, the Biden Administration has introduced an immigration bill to Congress that proposes increasing aid to regions that are unstable such as central America; signed an executive order that outlines a framework to rebuild the Refugee Resettlement Program and increase the number of arrivals to 125,000 per year by 2022; and signed an Executive Order to reverse a policy called the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP) which sends asylum seekers back to Mexico to wait for their case to be heard. The Biden Administration also reversed the discriminatory travel ban against Muslims and restarted conversations about the value of allocating money to humanitarian aid efforts to help combat the COVID-19 virus in vulnerable communities around the world. With regard to climate change and its impacts, the U.S. has rejoined the Paris Climate Agreement and ordered a government study of climate change's impact on migration, including options for refugee resettlement (Scientific American 2/8/2021). The Executive Order that was signed on 2/4/2021 [*Rebuilding and Enhancing Programs to Resettle Refugees and Planning for the Impact of Climate Change on Migration*] is particularly notable – as it directs administration officials to undertake a six-month study of climate change's impact on migration, including "options for protection and resettlement." In addition, the Biden Administration announced that it will revive its longstanding commitment to World Health Organization and also join the COVAX facility (made up of governments and manufacturers) which prioritizes vaccine distribution to low-income countries and those in need (235 million people). This is important and necessary, given the fact that the U.S. has historically led the world in maintaining a moral obligation to help the vulnerable, dispossessed and displaced (Los Angeles Times Editorial Board, 2/4/2021).

At the same time, even while there are signs of hope in recent actions, announcements, and commitments, refugee resettlement efforts face significant challenges and increasingly complex systems. On March 17, 2020 – the 40th anniversary of the U.S. Refugee Act (Public Law 96–212[2]) – the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the UNHCR announced the temporary suspension of resettlement travel for refugees. Although this was intended to be a temporary measure (in response to the pandemic), it has not yet been lifted. According to the Los Angeles Editorial Board (2/4/2021), "while it's good that Biden has pledged to restore refugee resettlements, he also will need to restore the system used to make sure the new arrivals find a place to live, obtain jobs, and begin their new lives. It will take time and money to restaff gutted consulates and other federal offices and to

[2] Public Law 96–212 was approved with robust bipartisan support in the U.S. Congress and signed into law by President Jimmy Carter on March 17, 1980.

reinvigorate the resettlement network that collapsed under a lack of funding during the Trump years." All of this will require resources and coordination between agencies (e.g., the Department of State, the Department of Homeland Security, and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services). In addition, local charities, faith-based organizations, and agencies will also need to take a more active role (Lancaster Online 2/8/2021). According to the Voice of America (VOA), "it will take time and resources to reverse the Trump administration's cutbacks in refugee resettlement that pared admissions to their lowest levels in decades," but the goal is to admit 125,000 refugees a year starting in October 2021 (Barros, 2021).

The United Nations Secretary General (Antonio Guterres) has recently expressed optimism about the potential for the Biden Administration to play a larger role in Refugee Resettlement, but he also said that he "hopes to see the United States join the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration" (UN News, 2/20/2021). In the words of the LA Times Editorial Board, "while shifts in federal policy and rhetoric are important, they will need to be accompanied by sustained attention in schools and other institutions to the mental-health issues faced by Latino youth and provision of counseling and other services to address these issues. These children represent one-quarter of all U.S. high school students, and they constitute the fastest-growing segment of the U.S. labor force. Their well-being and success are ultimately the country's." (Los Angeles Times Editorial Board, 2/4/2021).

4 An Educational Linguistics Perspective on Refugee Education

As refugee resettlement re-emerges as an international priority, it's clear that questions about how to improve the educational experiences of refugee-background learners of all ages will once again take center stage among teachers, parents, policy makers and educational researchers. As this volume demonstrate, a focus on language, language learning and literacy advances research, pedagogy and practice in ways that improve the educational, social and economic opportunities available to refugee-background learners across the lifespan. With attention to the creative use of existing or emerging resources as well as the dynamic and social nature of language learning, this collection promises to contribute research-based analysis that will be of interest to socially responsible language teachers, teacher educators committed to linguistic equity and diversity, curriculum developers, those involved with language assessment, educational researchers, and applied linguists.

Chapters in this collection showcase exemplary research on/with displaced persons and refugee-background learners of all ages (from preschool to youth to young adults to older adults to elderly) and cover a wide range of topics/theories relevant to the fields of educational linguistics, applied linguistics, and education. For instance, authors have analyzed classroom interaction, ideologies of language, language ecologies, translanguaging, digital bilingual storytelling, language and

identity, transnationalism, family literacy, emergent literacy, language policy, assessment design for refugee-background L2 adult emergent readers, and citizenship education. The authors have applied and theorized a wide range of methods/methodologies for exploring these issues – e.g., case study, comparative life history, critical sociolinguistics, narrative analysis, multimodal social semiotics, multi-sited ethnography, and critical policy analysis (to name a few). The volume includes the perspectives, reflections, and analyses of senior scholars, advanced mid-career scholars, and junior scholars.

This edited collection builds on and contributes to existing scholarship on the role of language and literacy in refugee education and refugee resettlement (e.g., Bigelow et al., 2017; Bigelow & Vinogradov, 2011; Brown et al., 2006; Chapman & Williams, 2015; Chishti & Pierce, 2021; Duran, 2017; Gilhooly & Lee, 2014; King et al., 2017; McBrien, 2005; Mendenhall et al., 2017; Omerbasic, 2015; Shapiro et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2019; Woods, 2009). The timing of its publication may be particularly useful to teachers, researchers and policy makers committed to improving and strengthening educational policies and practices that dramatically impact refugee-background learners across the lifespan.

5 Overview of Chapters

In Part I, authors identify and analyze the practices, ideologies and policies that shape or influence language learning among refugee-background children and youth. Topics explored include the role of community-based partnerships in creating safe spaces for teaching/learning; parents' views on the importance of their children learning Turkish as a second language; strategies for fostering academic/disciplinary literacies in formal educational contexts; parents' responses to language in/accessibility in two elementary schools; the views of Mayan-speaking youth on the value and prestige of their language; and challenges faced by refugee-background learners in higher education contexts.

In "Schools Alone Cannot Educate Refugees, It Takes a Community" by Edwin Nii Bonney, Vida Nana Ama Bonney, and Heather Sweeney, we learn about the valuable role that a refugee support organization (this one located in the Midwestern United States) might play when partnering with schools to support refugee-background students' educational opportunities and thereby create safe spaces for teaching and learning. This chapter demonstrates the importance of long-term involvement in a community-based organization as well as the value (to researchers and scholarship) of gaining an insider's (emic) perspective via active participant observation.

"Syrian Refugee Children's Language Learning: A Multiple Case Study in the Turkish Context" by Adnan Yilmaz and Heather Smyser takes us to Turkey (home to more than 4 million Syrian refugees) to examine Syrian refugee-students studying Turkish as a second language, their parents' views related to learning Turkish (in relation to learning Arabic), and the active role of parents. The findings of the study

shed light on the students' learning of Turkish as a second language in Turkey and the incredible support their families provided.

"Implications of Genre Pedagogy for Refugee Youth with Limited or Interrupted Formal Schooling" by Kathryn Accurso, Meg Gebhard, Grace Harris and Jennie Schuetz shows that systemic functional linguistics (SFL) can be employed effectively while teaching disciplinary literacies to refugee-background youth living in the U.S. Drawing on a critical applied linguistics perspective, the analysis shows that refugee-background students arrive in U.S. classrooms with rich collections of semiotic resources and the ability to flexibly mobilize them, but can expand those resources in response to explicit instruction (e.g., genre pedagogy) when learning to read and write various disciplinary genres. This chapter highlights the power and utility of a professional partnership between university-based researchers and schools serving refugee youth from a variety of ethnic and language backgrounds (some with limited formal schooling).

In "Mexican Migrant Parents' Access to School Resources and Perceptions of U.S. Schools: The Interstice of Linguistic Structural Realities and Family Cultural Backgrounds", Rebecca Campbell-Montalvo and Anne Pfister explore the relationship between the efforts of public schools serving Latino im/migrant families and the views of Latino im/migrant parents. With implications for how U.S. schools might better meet the needs of displaced children and families from Mexico and Central America (including those who may be refugees or asylum seekers), this longitudinal multiple site study identifies and compares factors that contributed to language in/accessibility and school resources in two elementary schools located in the rural Florida Heartland. Their analysis of data shows that, when access was limited, Latino im/migrant parents put forth extra effort, through emotional and unpaid labor and ingenuity, in the face of linguistic inaccessibility in order to access school resources for their children.

The chapter by Stephanie Canizales and Brendan O'Connor, entitled "From *Preparación* to *Adaptación*: Language and the Imagined Futures of Maya-Speaking Guatemalan Youth in Los Angeles", investigates the beliefs and practices of Maya-speaking young adults who arrived in Los Angeles (from Guatemala) as unaccompanied, undocumented youths between 2003 and 2013 and examines how these Maya-speaking youths recount their own Spanish and English learning. The analysis focuses on how these youth connect their language learning experiences to a two-step process of immigrant incorporation, which they described as *preparación* (preparation) and *adaptación* (adaptation). This chapter also explores how the youth talked about Spanish and English learning in relation to their imagined futures – which were influenced by narratives of employability and easier work.

In ""We Were Taught English Using Nepali": Bhutanese-Nepali Youths Reflecting on Their Prior Literacy Experiences in Negotiating Academic Literacies in a US University", Madhav Kafle examines the literacy challenges and negotiations of refugee-background students transitioning to higher education in relation to their past views and literacy experiences. The analysis illuminates the value of qualitative accounts of the experiences of refugee-background learners in higher

education, the challenges they face, and the resources they use or create while managing such challenges.

The chapters in Part II illuminate and critically examine practices, ideologies and policies that permeate adult English language teaching processes and contexts. Authors draw on qualitative methods to understand language learning and literacy practices, to critique the limits of educational and language policy, and to imagine alternative structures or opportunities. Collectively, they capture the complex and shifting landscape of adult language and literacy education while also demonstrating new ways of thinking about those practices and policies.

The chapter "Assessing Refugee-Background Adult Second Language Learners with Emerging Literacy: How a Social Semiotic Analysis Reveals Hidden Assumptions of Test Design" by Jenna A. Altherr Flores draws on systemic functional linguistics and critical multimodal social semiotics to provide a critical analysis of English literacy tests administered to refugee-background adult learners of English with emerging literacy. Findings show that ideologies of language and assumptions about visual and multimodal literacy influence assessment practices and materials design in ways that can adversely impact the experiences and learning trajectories of those tested.

The chapter by Sally Wesley Bonet entitled ""Without English There Are No Rights": Educating the Non(citizen) In and Out of Adult Education" examines the connections between Iraqi refugees' lives before resettlement, their educational experiences in the U.S. after resettlement, and their views on possibilities for belonging and citizenship. Bonet's analysis shows that refugees' early experiences with schools and literacy programs influence whether they feel able to become full members of their new communities (or feel "dispossessed of their rights"). In the next chapter ""They Prefer You to Have a Conversation Like a Real American": Contextualizing the Experiences of One Somali (Former) Refugee Student in Adult ESL", Tanja Burkhard explores the impact of deficit orientations and ideologies of race, gender and language on pedagogical practices utilized in adult ESL programs and how they contribute to the continued "othering" of already marginalized adult learners of English.

In "Performing Neoliberalism: A Synecdochic Case of Kurdish Mothers' English Learning in a Nebraska Family Literacy Program", Jen Stacy explores the influence of neoliberal ideologies (about learning, about parenting) on the experiences of Kurdish mothers enrolled in a family literacy program in Nebraska. Findings highlight the tension between improvisation and replication that exists in many learning contexts. The analysis raises questions about whether and how teachers and/or parents might be able to resist dominant ideologies (e.g., about language and language learning) that circulate more widely in society.

"More than Maintaining Arabic: Language Ideologies of Syrian Refugees in a Bilingual City in Southern Texas" by M. Sidury Christiansen & Einas Albadawi shows the powerful role that language ideologies might play in the lives of Syrian refugees living in a multicultural bilingual borderland context where Spanish and English are valued over all other languages. Findings and analysis demonstrate that whether the Syrian refugees who acquired English and Spanish were able to

maintain their heritage Arabic language was shaped by their own perspective on that language, including the beliefs they held about the value/purposes of that language in the local bilingual context.

In "Writing the Story of Sabadullah: Transnational Literacies of Refugee-Background Parents", Fares Karam explores the journey and perspectives of two Syrian refugee-background parents who endeavor to maintain a bedtime storytelling tradition while negotiating the various influences of transnationalism and its accompanying distinct frames of reference. The chapter examines the two parents' different investments in maintaining the cultural practice of bedtime storytelling and how those different investments influenced the versions of the bedtime story they each created. While the father worked to maintain what he called "authenticity," the mother transformed her story in light of her current situation and emerging understanding of parenting in the United States.

In a chapter entitled "Identifying Language Needs in Community-Based Adult ELLs: Findings from an Ethnography of Four Salvadoran Immigrants in the Western United States", Kathryn Watkins, Gregory Thompson, Alessandro Rosborough, Grant Eckstein, and William Eggington provide a qualitative analysis of the experiences of four Salvadoran first-generation immigrant women living in a suburban neighborhood in the western United States. An analysis of their everyday interactions in Spanish and English demonstrates that the women have few occasions to use English in their daily lives even though they believe that acquiring English will be critical to fulfilling their goals (economic, educational and social). This chapter documents and analyzes the assets, strategies, and skills the women use and then discusses implications for ESL programs serving adult learners of English with limited opportunities for practice.

In the final chapter in Part II, "A System of Erasure: State and Federal Education Policies Surrounding Adult L2 Learners with Emergent Literacy in California", Lisa Gonzalves conducts a critical policy analysis of current educational policies in California's adult education system to show the disconnect between the language learning realities of adult learners with emerging literacy and the policies and practices that permeate the adult ESL programs they attend. This chapter demonstrates that a lack of standards for low/emerging literate learners can contribute to their continued exclusion from educational and social opportunity.

The chapters in Part III directly and explicitly take on questions about pedagogy and practice. All the contributors explore the ways in which shifts in pedagogy or practice can improve or extend the experiences of refugee-background learners and/or their teachers. A few authors also offer insightful observations on the relationship between one's approach to inquiry, the kinds of data generated, and the possibilities for analysis.

In the chapter entitled "Shifting the Interaction Order in a Kindergarten Classroom in a Somali-Centric Charter School", Leslie C. Moore and Sirad Shirdon take a close look at classroom management practices in order to understand what pedagogical or behavioral strategies are needed to cultivate a supportive and inclusive learning environment. Drawing on language socialization theory, the authors analyzed students' behavior and their teacher's response in a Somali-centric charter

school in the American Midwest and found that the teacher's strategies used to "quiet" students evolved over the course of an academic year in ways that allowed students to assume new, more active roles in classroom management. This chapter has implications for conversations about what culturally responsive pedagogy and classroom management might look like in practice and for questions about how "teacher-fronted" a kindergarten classroom with refugee-background learners should be.

The chapter by Theresa McGinnis, "“Nos Somos Emigrantes Non Defraudadores”: Central American Immigrant Youth Exploring Linguistic and Political Borders in a U.S. High School Through Multimedia Narrativity", takes us to a high school context serving more than 400 youth from Central America to explore the linguistic, political and discourse boundaries that are experienced by displaced students' movement across borders. With a view of digital narratives/testimonios as a form of culturally responsive pedagogy, McGinnis's analysis shows that the youth use multimedia narrativity to understand and construct identities, social worlds, and (in some cases) imagined futures that contest the status quo.

In Chapter Eighteen "Translanguaging as Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy: Transforming Traditional Practices in an ESOL Classroom for Older Adults from Refugee Backgrounds", Valdez and Park examine translanguaging as a form of culturally sustaining pedagogy and its role in nurturing linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism in an ESOL classroom for adult learners of English. Analyzing data collected with and from Nepali-speaking Bhutanese older adults resettled in the United States as refugees, the authors argue that implementing translanguaging pedagogy enabled the reimagination of students' and teachers' traditional power roles toward becoming co-teachers and co-learners and challenged the linguistic hierarchy that places English and English speakers above other languages and speakers of those languages.

In the nineteenth chapter, "Learning Together: How Ethnography and Discourse Analysis as Practice Influence Citizenship Classes with Nepali-Speaking Bhutanese Refugee Elders Living in Superdiverse Central Ohio", Brian Seilstad, explores the experiences of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese elders who identify as refugees and live in central Ohio. Drawing on ethnography and classroom discourse analysis, this chapter argues that culturally responsive pedagogies and translanguaging, while critical to valuing the languages and cultures of learners and essential for working with refugee communities, must be accompanied by broader ethnographic approaches to inquiry in order to understand the histories, lives, languages, and cultures present within any group of people.

In Chapter Twenty, "Partners in Resettlement and Adult Education: Former Refugees and Host Communities", Jenny Field and Celine Kearney explore the challenges faced by refugee-background adults with emergent print literacy living in New Zealand. Highlighting the changes that accompanied the expansion of New Zealand's resettlement program in 2018, the chapter demonstrates the power and value of partnerships between host communities and local refugee communities – for instance, for instance, the welcome offered by Māori to newcomers and the support provided by bilingual tutors of adult learners with emergent literacy.

In "*"I feel like a human again:"* Experiences of Kurdish Asylum Seekers Navigating the Legal and Education Systems in Canada", Zehra Palta uses qualitative methods and an "arts-informed" approach to inquiry to examine the nature of the post-migration experiences of Kurdish and Turkish asylum seekers residing in Canada. After showing that a number of barriers (including legal status and discrimination) limited their educational and language learning opportunities, the author argues for a more holistic approach to resettlement.

In ""Es porque tienen ganas de aprender": How a Non-profit Teacher Creates a Learning Environment to Help College-Aged Syrian Displaced Students Adapt and Learn Spanish in México", Brenda Sarmiento-Quezada explores the processes and constraints facing college-aged Syrian students living in Mexico and working to learn Spanish. The author describes the ethnographic and discourse analytic approach she used to examine how a Spanish language arts teacher promoted a learning environment where the displaced Syrian students were engaged and willing to participate.

The final chapter in Part III, by Jonathan Marino and Chris Dolan, is entitled "Speaking Rights: Translanguaging and Integration in a Language Course for Adult Refugees in Uganda". This chapter analyzes the innovative pedagogical practices utilized in the Refugee Law Project's English for Adults program and highlights the benefits of enacting a translanguaging pedagogy in a non-traditional teaching/learning contexts. The chapter examines teachers' and students' perspectives on the value of taking on unconventional roles (e.g., as detective, co-learner, builder, transformer) and represents the first case study of an adult language program in one of the world's largest refugee hosting contexts. Implications for pedagogy and practice are considered, and directions for future research are discussed.

6 Conclusion

The research featured in this collection demonstrates how close attention to language, language in use, literacy and linguistics might contribute to scholarship and/or educational innovations needed to advance the research base, inform professional development of teachers (in preschool, K-12, and continuing/adult education settings), and improve the educational, social and economic opportunities available to refugee-background children, youth and adults. Contributors have reported on research explicitly focused on language learning, language use and literacy from a range of international contexts and with refugee-background learners of all ages. Some have embraced new theoretical and methodological perspectives; others have proposed innovative policies or encouraged the use of new pedagogical practices. Collectively, these compelling accounts of how language ideologies, language policies, and processes of language socialization in a range of social spaces (e.g., K-12 classrooms, after-school programs, community-based programs, the workplace, spaces of healthcare delivery, online spaces, or nontraditional spaces of language use/learning) illuminate that many factors must be taken into consideration to

understand processes of language learning, language teaching, and literacy/biliteracy development.

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Part I
Language, Literacy and Learning Among Refugee-Background Children and Youth

Schools Alone Cannot Educate Refugees, It Takes a Community

Edwin Nii Bonney, Vida Nana Ama Bonney, and Heather Sweeney

Abstract This chapter explores how a refugee support organization in the Midwestern United States supports the educational experiences of refugee-background learners from various countries in Africa and Asia. Researchers spent over a year as both observers and volunteers in a refugee support organization that directly interacted with students who were refugees. The study found that because refugee support organizations interacted directly with refugee families, parents, and students, they were well equipped to identify struggles students faced and assisted them in resolving those issues. The scholarship on the education of children who are refugees is centered on examining how school climate, pedagogy, and school resources can enhance the experiences of these refugees. There are missed opportunities with this focus because it overlooks how community-based organizations can and are already helping to improve the educational opportunities of children who are refugees. In this chapter we argue that schools, working collaboratively with community-based organizations, can create safe learning spaces for refugee-background students that improve their language learning and educational experiences.

Keywords Community partnerships · Refugee support · Refugee support organization

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1 Introduction

Daniel is 11 years old. He is a refugee from Congo living in Midtown (a pseudonym for a city in the Midwest) with his parents and four siblings. Edwin (first author) met Daniel when he volunteered to be part of a carpool volunteer program provided by Refugee Haven, a community-based organization serving refugees in Midtown, that picked up Daniel from his speech and physical therapy sessions once a week. Daniel has a physical disability in his left arm and left leg which makes walking a challenge but not impossible. His left arm is in a sling most times and he drags his left leg behind him as he walks. On their drive from therapy, Daniel and Edwin chatted about school, home, and life in the US and back in Congo. He always asked Edwin when they walked back to the car, "can I drive?" Edwin's answer was always, "of course you cannot drive now." Daniel smiles at Edwin and shakes his head as if to test if it would work this time. They go through the same routine on every drive. It was not always like this. During the first couple of weeks, Daniel was quiet. He would say "huh?" when Edwin asked him about his day or school, or he would just simply remain silent and say nothing beyond "hi" and "I'm good."

When Edwin asked Daniel to teach him how to say certain things in Swahili, Daniel told him that he did not speak any other language except English. Edwin knew that was untrue. The first time he dropped Daniel home from therapy, his mom and a friend were standing on the curb outside their home, and Daniel loudly said something to his mom in Swahili. Edwin knew it was Swahili because he is a little familiar with the language but he is not in any way proficient in it. Edwin mentioned to Daniel's mother that Daniel lied about speaking Swahili. His mom smiled. The next time Edwin picked Daniel up, he told him a bit about himself; that he is from Ghana and that he knew Daniel did not just speak English because he had heard him speaking in Swahili when he dropped him off last week. Daniel laughed so loudly. Edwin laughed too. Daniel asked if Edwin understood Swahili and he admitted that he did not. About a month after their first meeting, Daniel would not stay quiet. Daniel talked about everything when Edwin picked him up. He spoke about his life in Congo, his grandfather who was still there, how schools are different in America, and the things he likes to do at home. In the car, they learned about each other's home languages, joked and laughed about their mistakes trying to pronounce words in each other's home languages.

As Edwin's relationship with Daniel grew with each 15-min ride back and forth, he began to wonder why Daniel was initially quiet and would not say a word to him. It was not because Daniel was not fluent in English, he was. Daniel could hold long conversations in English. When Edwin asked other people who picked him up as well, they said he did not really talk and that he was always quiet like Edwin's initial's experience. About school, Daniel confessed to Edwin that he was mostly quiet in class and he felt some of his teachers thought he did not understand much of what was going on in class because English is not his first language. He admitted that he liked that because it meant he did not have to contribute a lot. Daniel, at home and interacting with Edwin, was completely different from how he said he acted at

school. Even though he was the second child among his siblings, he often told his siblings what to do and how to do it. His siblings came to him when they had questions about school work as well.

2 Problem Statement

As co-authors, we talked about Edwin's experience with Daniel and we learned that across the broad scholarship on the educational experiences of refugees, there is very little research on how other spaces outside of the school environment help support the education of refugees (Morland & Levine, 2016). Community-based organizations and other spaces outside of schools are often perceived mainly as spaces that provide social services (Eby et al., 2011). From the experience with Daniel, we began to explore how other spaces can help foster a learning environment for refugees that can support the efforts of mainstream schools. We recognized that for a student like Daniel having an environment that engaged with him personally opened him up to learning. Can schools do that? Yes, but schools are often underresourced such that a student with a refugee background is likely to get lost in the day-to-day (McBrien, 2005). This chapter is a part of a larger study on refugee support systems in the Midwest. Specifically, in this chapter, we broadly examined how a sense of community shapes the educational experience of refugees. We focused on out-of-school spaces because we recognized that the broader literature on the educational experiences of refugees focused mainly on the school environment, pedagogy, and school support. We argue that this narrow focus in existing literature misses out on what the broader community does, and can do, to support the education of refugees.

In this chapter, we examine how one refugee support organization fosters direct relationships with refugee-background students in ways that support and improve their educational experience. We explored how community partnerships and organizations might fill the gap in supporting and enhancing the educational experience of refugees by complementing the efforts of schools in addressing the social, academic, and psychological needs of refugees. By doing this, we demonstrate some of the ways that community-based organizations might support and amplify the efforts of schools in educating refugee-background students.

3 Review of Literature

Few educational institutions offer resources to meet the psychological, emotional, and developmental needs of refugee students (Boyson & Short, 2003; Igoa, 1995; Zhou, 1997). During their transition to the public schooling contexts of the U.S., refugee students face a number of difficulties which are compounded by a lack of access to academic and counseling support services (Guerrero, 2004; Olsen, 1998; Suárez- Orozco, 2000). While refugee students face many challenges similar to the

experiences of other racialized minority groups or those in living in poverty here in the U.S., the extended period of time away from school due to war, persecution or discrimination is an important differentiation, which requires an educational system capable of understanding the unique needs of this student population. Therefore, welcoming refugee students into the U.S. classroom must incorporate successful community building approaches that are also culturally responsive to their needs (Candappa, 2000; Goodwin, 2002; Olsen, 2006).

The literature on refugees in US schools indicates that when schools take a multifaceted approach to educating refugees including addressing their social and psychological needs, students are more engaged in learning content in the classroom (Birman & Tran, 2017). Schools created specifically for large refugee student populations had a host of school and community resources that helped address the social, psychological, and academic needs of students in addition to fostering a welcoming environment that positively shaped their learning experience (Bartlett et al., 2017; Mendenhall et al., 2017). Unfortunately, in the US not all refugees have access to these resources as many attend regular public schools which may not be adequately funded to address the diverse needs of refugees (Bartlett et al., 2017; Mendenhall et al., 2017).

Because refugees in US schools are often categorized as English Learners, they typically receive the same services as other immigrant groups who speak languages other than English. We know from research that when schools approach educational services such as providing the same amount of EL instruction to refugee students as other immigrant students, refugee students make much slower academic and linguistic progress and are more likely to be referred to special education programs (Nykiel-Herbet, 2010). Nykiel-Herbet's (2010) study of Iraqi refugee students in the US highlights how crucial it is for refugee students to be viewed as different from other immigrant groups and how important it is for schools to use a multifaceted approach that addresses the diverse academic, psychological, and social needs of their refugee-background students. Nykiel-Herbet (2010) shows that EL programs alone are not enough to support the educational attainment of refugee students.

Several studies describe how a multifaceted approach has helped refugee students succeed in educational spaces. Yaafouri-Kreuzer (2017) explains how visiting the family homes of his refugee students helped him to understand firsthand the difficulty they faced with assignments written in English. Some of his students had trouble finding people who understood enough English to assist them. Family visits also helped connect his teaching to the backgrounds and histories which his students' families shared with him (Yaafouri-Kreuzer, 2017).

The multifaceted approach recommended by Amthor and Roxas (2016), Banks (2008), and Yaafouri-Kreuze (2017) goes beyond highlighting food, music, and clothing as cultural objects to fostering real cross-cultural relationships in and out of the classroom. Teachers who took the time to learn more about their students' cultures were more flexible, patient, and supportive of their refugee-background students and would make extra time for them outside the class (Bartlett et al., 2017; Roy, 2015). Refugee students who felt supported by such teachers described their

classrooms as positive learning environments as they engaged personally with instructors (Hos, 2016). We understand that not all teachers can visit the homes of each student in their class and that is why we argue in this chapter that community organizations who may already serve refugees in the community can help create a sense of community and a safe and engaging learning atmosphere for refugee-background students in a way that can further their educational attainment and language learning.

4 Guiding Framework: Educating Refugees by Building Community

As discussed in the literature, supporting refugee-background students requires an interconnected and multifaceted community approach. Acknowledging this, we applied Westoby's (2008) participatory community-building framework because it helped us examine how refugee-support organizations dialogue with refugees to try to address their specific needs and to support the efforts of schools in educating refugees by breaking down barriers that could affect their learning. We used Westoby's (2008) understanding of what community building should look like to identify and describe the practices of Refugee Haven as it creates a safe space for refugee-background students and how that environment shapes learning. Through extensive work with Southern Sudanese refugees as they navigated resettlement in Australia, Westoby (2008) recommends that a participatory community-building approach is helpful to meet the diverse needs of refugee communities and their members including students, rather than just relying only on schools and/or EL programs. Westoby's (2008) begins with considering the emic perspectives of refugees, implements a negotiated dialogical process, then focuses on existing refugee resources of culture, community, and power (Westoby, 2008).

Privileging the Emic Perspectives of Refugees Emic means an insider perspective. Therefore, privileging the emic perspectives of refugees involves the critical evaluation of assumptions, listening to how refugees define their own needs, and stepping back to reconcile the two before re-engaging with refugees (Westoby, 2008). By privileging emic perspectives, we can build an understanding of the challenges faced by refugees as they navigate their new communities. Community organizations, especially refugee-based organizations, because they work and interact directly with refugees have learned through several exchanges what refugees need to succeed in their new host communities. Schools could partner with these organizations and learn more about their refugee-background students and their needs.

Engaging in a Negotiated Dialogical Process This means to create a safe space for refugees to make sense of resettlement, their new community, and schools through discussions of the distress and confusion they feel as they navigate a new context with unsettled resources and different social, cultural, and political practices

(Westoby, 2008). Community organizations specific to refugees can initiate dialogue with families, parents, children, and refugee-background students to learn what can best help them regain control of their lives. Community-based organizations can help create those spaces away from the dominant host culture and institutions like schools but still allow for community engagement.

Locating Existing Resources Disrupted resources paired with a difficulty in accessing local community resources places a barrier before refugees who are working to overcome a myriad of social distresses such as poverty, unemployment, differentiated educational access, and quality. Westoby (2008) identified three categories of community spaces where refugees can gain access to host community resources of culture, community and power in order to break down these barriers. These three categories are power and social healing, cultural resources, and community. For the purpose of this chapter, we focus our attention on a community space where refugees, especially students, can gain access to resources that can help them further and improve their educational experience. While refugees might experience a shattered social world, the community agent brings together community resources that can help improve the lives of families, parents, children, and refugee-background students.

5 Method

To broadly understand how a community-based organization might help shape and support the educational experiences of refugees, we used ethnographic methods. This method was appropriate because it allowed us to appreciate the refugee-background students' experiences from their own perspective and understand the multifaceted and complex realities of the work of community organizations and community spaces for refugees (LeCompte & Schensul, 2010; Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). We selected a community space that specifically interacted and engaged with refugees including refugee-background students as a research site. We also wanted a site where refugee-background students participate in some sort of educational activity so we could learn how refugees engaged or not with the space. We recognized that in order to understand how a sense of community is developed in community spaces in a way that supports learning for refugees, we believed it was necessary to become immersed in this space over a long period of time (LeCompte & Schensul, 2010).

Our overarching research question is: How does a community-based organization committed to supporting the education of refugees engage in this work? We also ask: What is the community-based organization's role in creating an environment that fosters learning for refugee-background students in ways that support and shape their schooling experiences?

5.1 Research Context

We selected Refugee Haven (a pseudonym) as our research site because it met Westoby's (2008) criteria for participatory community building for refugees. This community-based organization serves refugees in Midtown. Refugee Haven serves Midtown refugees through a three staged approach: first, engaging with refugees to learn what they need; second, connecting them to resources within the community that can help meet that need; and third, providing a safe space for refugees to learn, ask questions and share their knowledge or expertise with other refugees as well as the larger community. This three staged approach fosters a sense of agency (power), social healing, community, and cultural resources that helps refugees to succeed in their host communities (Westoby, 2008).

The organizational mission of RH is "to help refugees and immigrants become productive, successful, contributing members of our community." It accomplishes this mission by offering a broad range of free services such as trauma and health counseling; emergency needs for refugees which includes basic items such as clothing, toiletries, transportation to the hospital; educational programs as well as professional development for refugees wanting to gain some level of independence and control over their lives. As our focus in this chapter centers on examining how spaces like Refugee Haven (RH) can partner with schools serving refugee-background, we focused on how this organization engages with refugee-background students through its two educational offerings: English Buddy and Homework Helper.

English Buddy is one of RH's flagship programs; it provides volunteer opportunities for Midtowners to be paired with either a refugee-background student or parent/adult for a year. During this year volunteers and their refugee buddy spend 1 h a week practicing English. The English buddies – refugee and volunteer – over the course of a year often become intertwined in each other's lives such that the relationship evolves into a friendship that is maintained well beyond the one-year period.

The Homework Helper program by RH involves a weekly 2-h meeting between a refugee-background student and a volunteer in RH's building. Refugee-background students of different ages are encouraged to bring their homework from school or any class-related content questions to tutors who help and explain challenging or unclear questions. These tutors are mostly college students from Midtown University or other Midtowners interested in tutoring. RH provides orientation and training for volunteers of these two programs to help their volunteers navigate the challenges in teaching students whose main language is not English. We discuss these two programs because most refugee-background students in Midtown have interacted or engaged in one or both of RH's educational offerings at least once while residing in the area.

5.2 Positionality

Two of the authors have volunteered with RH. Edwin volunteered as an English Buddy for a year and also as a Homework Helper after his interactions with Daniel. He became interested in learning more about the resources that are available to help students like Daniel succeed. Vida volunteers about two or three times a year with RH to assist the organization in planning events focused on providing basic needs and care for refugees in Midtown. Heather, has worked with refugee-background students and families both within Midtown and surrounding areas through migration and school choice research exploring the connection between residential change and school curriculum. Both Edwin and Vida grew up in Ghana and even though Ghana over the years has hosted refugees from different countries, neither ever heard public or private discussions about the rights and needs of refugees in Ghana. Even though they lived along side refugees in Ghana, they did not engage with them. But hearing Daniel's story caused them to realize the importance of community support in overcoming barriers that stall many refugees attempting to thrive or succeed in their host country. It is through this and other work that Heather has come to understand that as refugee-background families and students relocate to a new residential space it is imperative for school leaders, parents, and instruction to address the unique needs of this population by blurring the boundaries between school communities and the local community.

5.3 Data Collection

Over the course of 14 months researchers conducted 10 observations (about 20 h) of RH's Homework Helper sessions between refugee-background students and their tutors. Edwin also participated as a tutor during these 10 observations. We documented extensive field notes after each volunteer session detailing observations, interactions, and impressions of the sessions, the interaction between tutors and refugees in and out of the building, interaction among refugee-background student in and out of RH's building, actions and non-actions of refugees and tutors including our own. Because we were drawing on an ethnographic approach to learn how RH's creates a learning environment for refugee-background students, in addition to how these students interacted with the space, we assumed everything was data even though we recognized that not everything could answer our research questions.

We also documented the conversations we had with refugee-background students, their tutors, and RH's volunteers about a variety of topics including family, sports, school work, and their engagement with RH in our field notes. Overall we had 113 single-spaced pages of field notes. We gathered 40 artifacts from tutoring sessions and from RH's building over the 14 months. These artifacts included (1) pictures of the cover of books tutors read with refugees during tutoring sessions and

school assignments students and their tutors worked on, (2) practice activities students worked on in RH and (3) posters and notices in RH's building.

We formally conducted three separate hour-long interviews of 4 staff of RH, including the Program Co-ordinator. Two staff members were interviewed together because their roles overlap and they work together to learn from their perspective how they engage with refugees in Midtown and especially how they create learning spaces for refugee-background students. We also conducted a (one and half hour) focus group interview of four tutors who volunteered regularly as Homework Helpers during the 14 months we conducted our observations because we wanted to learn how they supported their tutees' learning especially when none of them shared a first language with their students.

5.4 Data Analysis

We wanted to immerse ourselves in the data, first by reading through the entire body of data to paint a broad picture of what RH does (Emerson et al., 2011). Next, we analyzed each piece of data – field notes, interview transcripts, and artifacts by open coding our data by jotting "questions, comments, observations, queries in the margins" as a way to keep track of our initial analytical thoughts (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 204). We consistently pair checked findings to ensure the representativeness of different data types (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). After, considering our research question we re-analyzed our initial codes to understand (1) how RH fostered a sense of community in their building and through their programs and (2) how that shaped students' educational experiences (Emerson et al., 2011; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Two broad themes stood out in the data and in our discussion – RH provided stability and encouraged relationship building (Emerson et al., 2011). We present our findings below with representative data from our analysis.

6 Findings

We found that RH supports the educational experience of students through helping students and their family first with basic needs so that both parents and children are free to engage and participate in school activities. Also, by creating programs such as English Buddy and Homework Helper where refugee-background students could interact with the larger community, students in RH's space also developed friendships which become a way to make them comfortable with their (language) learning experience. Based on their friendships with their tutors and RH's volunteers, refugee-background students posed many questions about challenging course concepts in schools, the community and life in the US. Through those relationships, RH volunteers and tutors also learned what worked well and what did not when helping

students learn. Over time, we saw that students became eager to showcase their literacy and language skills.

6.1 Providing Stability

RH leaders felt that it was impossible to support refugees in schools if their lives outside of the classroom were uncertain – if their parents did not have enough to financially support the family or they did not know where their next meal would come from and if they did not have warm clothes for the winter or access to affordable housing. One RH leader, James, felt that even though the federal government provided some basic support when resettling refugees, it was for a very short period which was not enough to help refugees "regain control of their lives." James said, "we want to make sure that they [refugees] feel and know they are not alone. We really just want to help provide stability for people whose lives have kind of been turned upside down."

6.1.1 Meeting Basic Needs

James talked about attending a conference in Midtown where Midtown teachers asked him about how they could help refugee families get involved in schools and attend school programs. He said that there were obstacles to that, apart from the language barrier, emphasizing that refugees have more pressing basic needs like access to housing, food and clothing, and securing employment. James said: "Helping parents and their children meet their basic needs first relieves the stresses that just normal day in and day life presses them" and when those needs are met, it frees up students and their parents to participate in other educational opportunities.

During Homework Helper nights in the RH building, we observed and recorded many times where parents, after dropping off their kids for tutoring sessions, stayed behind and received lessons from tutors in another space of the RH building. When we asked RH's program coordinator, Lily, about why some parents stayed behind explained that RH recognized that some parents who were refugees had a hard time finding jobs because they did not meet some of the requirements jobs in Midtown specified like a General Educational Development test (GED), a high school diploma. RH, therefore, partnered with a literacy-focused organization to provide GED classes to parents while their children were being tutored. Lily said, "in order for them [refugees] to have some sort of economic mobility and, you know, better raise and be able to be more financially stable, and provide for their family, they need to have a basic educational level that is appropriate [to get those jobs]". RH also realized that for some refugees who were highly educated back in their home countries those Wednesday nights focused mostly on helping them learn English.

6.1.2 Reducing Barriers to Learning

Throughout the data, we noticed that providing stability in terms of basic needs for refugee students and their parents (which required first listening to what they said they needed) allowed more parents and students to participate in educational activities. The GED classes for refugees, for example, were initially poorly attended, but after talking with refugees, RH realized that because it was held in the other organization's building, it felt unfamiliar to refugees. It also did not have a child care option, which hindered participation.

When RH resolved those two issues by providing child care and moving classes into their own building, attendance improved. Lily said in an interview, "It has been a lot more successful since we added a child care option for refugees. And then also offering it here at our [RH] building provides some familiarity and some comfort. So they're less likely to go to a different building if they've never been there before because it's a little bit more scary."

6.1.3 Assisting with Employment Needs

Sometimes for older refugees who still could not participate in the classes and needed a job immediately, RH leaders would personally speak to businesses in the community to hire parents who were refugees so that they could have some financial stability for their homes. Ben, an RH leader who worked mostly with older adult refugees recounted one encounter:

> We found out that they [a large distribution factory in Midtown] were hiring. So I helped him [a parent who is a refugee] with the application. I called management to talk about it. 'Here's what we got. We have people who don't necessarily speak English fluently. They're not necessarily familiar with all our culture and our customs and our language and etc. but they are hard workers and they'll show up on time, and they'll put in a hard day's work.'

The company then sent an email to interview the parent who asked one of RH's leaders to go with him. The parent got the job. RH's position is that, to help refugee families, both students and parents fully taking on educational opportunities and helping them find stability by meeting their basic needs would serve as a foundation.

In order to provide more stability and familiarity, RH requires that anyone who volunteers to tutor a refugee student commits about a year to be in the student's life. Speaking to Lily, she explained that "having a volunteer [or a tutor] commit to staying for a year, helps to provide some stability, builds friendship, and then we know that there's an extra set of eyes and ears that are helping that person." RH volunteers are expected to be a constant and familiar person who students can learn to trust because they are always present. One volunteer, Steven, described how it was initially challenging to engage with his tutee, but because they met constantly over a year he saw what helped him learn more effectively. Steven admitted that although it initially felt frustrating, asking personal questions got his students to open up. He said, "it helps to get to know them and their personality a lot better because that

would also help when we needed to kind of sit down and help them with studying for a test or homework. When we know them a little more personally we know how they study better."

6.2 Developing Relationships

Interviews with RH's leaders and volunteers indicated that without developing friendships with their tutees, the learning process would be difficult. Lily, RH programs co-ordinator, emphasized in an interview that by connecting students who are refugees to other Midtowners, both groups would be able to fully engage, understand, and participate in each other's lives. "I don't feel like our refugee friends would ever fully engage with the community unless they have an actual native [Midtowner] here helping and guiding them along the way."

One volunteer, Ella, described going to Walmart and Target with her buddy to wander around the store on weekends. Ella noticed it was helpful because she would point to things in English in the store that they had read about on Wednesday night during tutoring sessions, therefore her tutees learned words in English better. Ella and some of the other volunteers realized that when these students were unfamiliar with words they came across during their tutoring sessions, their students could not grasp them and so they tried different strategies. Inviting their tutees to go to shops so they could see and feel some of these "abstract" words themselves proved to be an effective strategy for many of their students. Ella told a story of a time when she got to the store with Sesuna and Kidane, 12 and 14 year old siblings from Eritrea. Sesuna saw pineapples stacked close to the entrance. Sesuna blurted out to Ella, "That's a pineapple." She and Ella had gone over that vocabulary a few weeks prior. Ella said in an interview excitedly recounting the story, "oh, that was the coolest thing! We walked into a grocery one time and Sesuna said that is a pineapple and I was like 'yes'!" Ella was very excited because she said it was one of the first times, unprompted, that Sesuna recognized a previously learned vocabulary.

Providing a community space for refugees to develop relationships with other English language speakers allowed them room to practice their language skills without the pressure of classroom expectations. These relationships were of value to both groups. Ella was absent because she had interviews for medical school for about 2 weeks during observations. When she returned to a Homework Helper event, one of the researchers noted the exchange between Sesuna and Ella.

> Sesuna walked slightly ahead of her sibling, Kidane. "Hey, how are you doing?" Ella smiled at them. Sesuna lifted her index finger on her right hand towards Ella, 'you can't do that again,' and then she hugged Ella.

Ella recounting that moment during a focus group interview with other volunteers said, "it is kind of cool the relationships you do get to develop with these kids." Steven, another RH volunteer jokingly added, "you're not allowed to miss a day."

In our observations of RH's Homework Helper programs, Edwin noticed that getting to know his tutees more personally fostered more learning opportunities. During one of these instances Edwin describes how learning how to pronounce a student's name correctly the first time they met allowed him to connect better with him. This student was introduced to Edwin as Hannibal but it turned out this was not his name. Hannibal shared: "American people pronounce my name Hannibal but it is actually Hanibal." Hanibal seemed happy that Edwin took the time to learn how to say his name correctly. Edwin goes on to document the next week and several weeks after that as he and Hanibal learned more about each other, Hanibal would begin to bring his school assignments with him when he was unsure about what they required, including asking him to help prepare for classroom assessments. During one of their meetings Hanibal brought out his school-assigned laptop and opened it up to a program designed to test students on oceans and continents. The screen showed a picture of a globe with blank spots for students to fill in identifying information. Hanibal said "they will be quizzed using the same format so he had to learn how to spell the words correctly. We spent the remaining hour working on correctly spelling the names of oceans and continent because while he could identify them, he had trouble spelling the names correctly." (Fieldnotes, 04/04/2019, p. 3).

While schools bear a lot of the responsibility in education, for students like Hanibal who arrived in the US only 2 years ago, a place like RH provides him the opportunity to receive support for specific things that would help him do well in the classroom. Even though it seems complementary to his learning, it is still a crucial component of his educational success.

6.3 It Takes a Community to Educate Refugees

On Homework Helper night is always lively, busy, and loud with students and tutors either working together on assignments, reading books together, or playing games on one side of the building with older adults on the other side in GED preparation classes. In our field notes, one of the researchers documented how Steven, mentioned earlier, was always talking to Kidane, Sesuna's older brother. The researcher also noted how Kidane seemed engaged during tutoring sessions with Steven, so in an interview we asked about their learning interactions. We learned that outside of RH's Homework Helper program, Steven was Sesuna and Kidane's assigned English buddy. As an English buddy, they spent extra hours together on weekends either hiking, walking at a community park, or playing video games as a way to practice English within context.

6.3.1 Family Connections

Steven knew a lot about the siblings and how they learned best. In an interview, Steven revealed that Kidane and Sesuna were initially tutored separately. However, the tutors realized that this did not help with learning because the siblings relied on each other. Ella, who was the other assigned tutor said, "when you split them apart they completely shut down." Steven added, "they both become completely quiet. And so we decided instead of splitting them up which turned out to be very unproductive, we would work together." When they realized this Steven tutored both of them with support from Ella. Steven said about Sesuna and Kidane, "he [Kidane] is really good with Math problems but she [Sesuna] is kind of struggling with pretty simple multiplication. Sesuna is also way more shy and doesn't really like to write." When they recognized that the siblings loved sports, Steven and Ella would mix basketball and Math questions. During our observations, we recorded how Sesuna was allowed to throw a basketball into the net if she got a Math question right. Sesuna smiled brightly when she got the right answer, eager to make a basket.

Understanding Interests Kidane also loved sports, especially soccer. In an initial interview Steven said, "Kidane definitely has more stuff to say because he is a very vocal person when he is around his friends but when he is speaking English is just completely quiet. Completely night and day." Steven noticed that for Kidane, it wasn't shyness that prevented him from talking, because as English buddies, he saw how Kidane conversed with other kids in Tigrinya. Steven felt that Kidane was quiet initially because he did not know enough in English considering he arrived in the US less than a year before. In an interview with Steven, 2 months after meeting Kidane, he said, "my goal is for him [Kidane] to have like whole conversations when he gets to high school." During tutoring sessions Kidane was asked to talk and write about things that interested him because it got him using more words in English to express himself. They used an old Tigrinya language translator to help navigate words that were difficult to express. Steven said,

> I have had him write stories. I have had him write his full name, where he is from, the town he is from, his favorite buddies and I had him pick his favorite Eritrean food and all the ingredients and write how to make it.

In a later focus group interview with some of RH's volunteers, we learned that both Kidane and Sesuna, just a year into their schooling in the US are able to do more in English. Our field observations in RH also noted this.

> Sesuna and her friend, Fatimah chased each other all around the hall giggling loudly. Sesuna stopped in front of Ella who is carrying the large bowl of candies she always brings with her. Sesuna asked if she could pick one. Ella nodded. Sesuna smiled, and asked if she could pick another. Ella replied… *The conversations back and forth seemed to be in English. I had not noticed it earlier but Sesuna and Fatimah were speaking in English and asking for things in English. Occasionally they would still talk in Tigrinya but months ago Sesuna would have only spoken in Tigrinya.* (Fieldnotes, 04/17/2019, p.7)

6.3.2 Trusted Sounding Board

During our observations, we noticed that students who participated in RH's programs occasionally complained to their tutors, who they had developed close relationships with, about the difficulties they faced in school and asked for help in dealing with some of those issues. Kidane, for instance, mentioned to Steven a number of times how frustrated he felt that he was not allowed to take science courses. Following up in an interview, Steven commented, "They [Kidane's teachers] don't think his reading level is good enough which is what the past year we've been trying to work on. He [Kidane] feels like he is missing out." Steven admitted that Kidane struggled to understand simple science concepts but he said, "that's understandable since he recently arrived from Eritrea but they [Kidane's teachers] assume he is at an age where he can't learn these things so they don't slow down. If they gave him a little support he could still participate."

Ella also described an instance where she was tutoring Muhammad, a refugee -background student from Eritrea. Muhammad was a senior in high school and he was retaking a chemistry class he failed previously. "Words like pressure, system, molecule, like the idea of something being *in* a system or *on* a system, he [Muhammad] knew what all those words meant individually. He knew what 'on' meant. He knew what 'in' meant. He knew what 'system' meant. He knew what 'pressure' meant. He knew all those small [scientific] definitions but when you put them together, it does tend to have a different meaning which was challenging for Muhammad on tests." *In our field notes, we recorded an instance where Muhammad was confused about what momentum meant. Ella searched for the picture of a swing on her phone which Muhammad said he knew what it was. Ella then went on to explain momentum as the push of the swing. Later reflecting on that moment she said, "I could see that it started to click for him and it was so cool."*

As a community space for refugees, RH provides an opportunity for students to receive extra help for school content they find challenging. However, spaces like RH alone cannot do all the work, just as schools cannot shoulder the whole responsibility for educating refugees. RH leaders commented that they hope to have school liaisons who could help share school information with them directly so they could share them with parents. Two of RH's leaders meet once a week with different refugee ethnic groups in Midtown to answer questions from families and parents. Several questions were about school because parents confessed to knowing little about their kid's schooling. One of RH's leaders had this to say:

> I would go into the home of the Karen tribe, for example, and all of the Karen tribe would be there and we would all sit together and share a snack together and talk about their questions: 'What do we do about my daughter who I'm worried about in school,' 'How do I communicate with the teacher,' 'Can you call the teacher and tell us'.

7 Concluding Thoughts

The broader literature on students who are refugees highlights what schools and teachers can do to best serve their refugee-background students. Schools are expected to have all the resources that can address the diverse needs of their refugee students. We do not deny that making schools welcoming for refugees, placing posters in many languages and flags of different countries in hallways and classrooms, or including content that values the cultures of students help to create a welcoming school climate. However, these strategies can be superficial and students like Daniel, Kidane, Sesuna, Muhammad, Hanibal, and many others can get lost on the educational journey because teachers alone can do so little to address the specific needs of each refugee students they encounter (McBrien, 2005).

Our findings address the limited view of refugee educational experiences. One where educational supports stop and start at the school door. Spaces outside of schools like RH may be viewed only as social services hubs with little contribution to refugee-background student educational supports (Eby et al., 2011). However, in this chapter we demonstrate how other community spaces can help foster a learning environment for refugee-background students that supplements and supports the educational endeavors of local schools. We found that an environment such as the one created by RH individually engages with refugee-background students and opens them up to learning in all spaces (also see Morland & Levine, 2016).

As Westoby (2008) showed, community organizations are well positioned to support refugees as they re-build resources in a new home by offering a bridge to power and social healing, cultural resources, and community. In so doing, community organizations must listen to how refugees define their own needs while creating a safe space for the sense-making process. We offer our findings above as a way to reimagine the role of community-based organizations in educating refugee-background students.

Across our data, we found that program participation and educational engagement followed a hierarchy of needs. Before seeking out higher level needs such as educational activities, basic needs such as adequate housing, employment and financial stability must be met. The order of importance of these needs varies across individuals or families. Personal relationships are imperative to addressing basic needs and moving refugee-background students through this hierarchy of needs. In providing a physical hub where refugee adults feel confident that they will be among friends, have easy access to a multitude of supports and services as well as opportunity to meet higher level social needs, RH offers stability to refugee-background students through consistency, familiarity, and meeting foundational basic needs. We found that refugee students relied on the relationships with the Midtown volunteers who worked as tutors and other refugee students who served as sounding boards and confidants when issues or concerns arose at school. In connecting local community members directly to refugee students, RH offers refugees an opportunity to gain community membership in their new space.

While RH supplies resettled refugee families and their students the ability to rebuild broken social networks and resources, it cannot properly address all the skills needed to navigate American pk-12 schools. When refugee families ask how to talk to teachers or how to navigate specific school processes, RH staff can potentially pull from their own experiences, but without being a part of that particular school community, they may be at a loss and unable to aid families. Schools, teachers, and administrators are overwhelmed with responsibilities passed down to them through educational policy, school district initiatives, and federal mandates. If refugee students are to be supported through their academic career, a connection must be made between community organizations and schools, where each carries a part of the load. Perhaps schools and community organizations together can bridge many of the gaps experienced by refugee students.

7.1 Implications

In order to assist students who are refugees, we must either equip our schools do all RH does, which is vast and impossible, or allow organizations like RH to work alongside schools to support educational efforts. We suggest a further exploration of how schools and community organizations collaborate, overlap, and operate as they assist refugee-background students' educational progress. We have found that community organizations provide refugee students with the basic needs and community connection required to fully engage in school. This challenges the view of traditional literature that school support for refugee background students only occurs within the school, and contends that this support should expand to the community at large. Given this, we believe the next step is to explore how school functioning and community organization programs interact in order to develop actionable steps for their future cooperation.

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Syrian Refugee Children's Language Learning: A Multiple Case Study in the Turkish Context

Adnan Yilmaz and Heather M. Smyser

Abstract Refugee-background children face the challenge of acquiring a new language in the country where they resettle. Most studies of refugee language development occur among populations living in English-speaking countries, such as the United States, Canada, and England, yet many refugees have found refuge in countries like Turkey, which is home to nearly four million Syrian refugees, many children. These children face similar challenges as those in the studies mentioned above, yet are only recently finding representation in published works. Informed by hermeneutic phenomenology, this multiple case study explored three Syrian refugee-background students' experiences of learning Turkish as a second language in the K-12 classroom and their parents' views related to learning Turkish and Arabic. The data were elicited through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews with the students' parents and teachers, and student artifacts like written work, projects, handouts, and other class materials. The data were analyzed using a qualitative approach, specifically thematic coding and content analysis. The findings of the study shed light on the students' learning of Turkish as a second language in Turkey and the incredible support their families provided.

Keywords Second language learning · Literacy competence · Oral competence · Refugees · Syria · Turkey

[1] For transcription conventions, please see Jefferson's (2004) glossary of transcript symbols.

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1 Introduction

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), almost 80 million people have been displaced worldwide, and of those, nearly 26 million are estimated to be refugees (UNHCR, 2020). Of these 26 million, half are estimated to be children (UNHCR, 2020). The UNHCR (n.d.) defines a refugee as "someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war, or violence. A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group. Most likely, they cannot return home or are afraid to do so". The need for resettlement greatly exceeds current capacities, and in 2015, less than 1% of those eligible to be resettled were able to officially resettle (Mohdin, 2016). Resettlement often requires the learning of a second language and, in some cases, its writing system. Learning a second language can facilitate integration into local communities (Batalova & Fix, 2010) and the ability to form new social networks (Caidi & Allard, 2005; Lloyd et al., 2012). This task, however, is not easy and takes longer than many instructors expect (Bigelow & Vinogradov, 2011; Shaughnessy, 2006).

1.1 Schooling and the Experience of Refugee Children

Refugee children often face obstacles to learning the language of schooling in the country of resettlement. Many may have limited or interrupted formal education (Brown et al., 2006; DeCapua & Marshall, 2014), which means they may enter school at a grade level appropriate for their age but not congruent with what they have been able to study. They may also be expected to meet performance standards for their age without additional time to compensate for the interruption to their schooling or the difficulty of acquiring a new language. Children with no previous formal schooling may be at a disadvantage compared to their peers with some previous formal education and may take longer to acquire the literacies needed for academic success (Hamilton & Moore, 2004).

One reason for these difficulties is that refugee-background learners typically need to develop oral competence and literacy competence in a second language in order to understand the content of their lessons. Depending on where they have resettled, refugee-background children may enter mainstream classes without any education in the second language in either its spoken or written form (Hamilton & Moore, 2004). They may require extra assistance to learn the language of schooling, which is academic in nature and not necessarily reflective of the language spoken outside the house (Hamilton & Moore, 2004). For English-learning students, it may take as many as 5 years of language study to attain the same level of English as their peers who speak English as a first language (Cummins, 1994). Additionally, schools

may not have sufficient resources (e.g., bilingual instructors) to support these children's learning development (Coskun et al., 2011). Even if a school has second language instruction for the primary language of education, instructors may not be familiar with the learning needs of refugee-background children who may require additional academic and linguistic support (Hamilton & Moore, 2004).

1.2 Refugees in Turkey

Most current research on the academic experiences of refugee-background children has been conducted in English speaking locales, and it is not clear how well this research applies to non-English learning populations. Given the large and growing number of refugee-background learners living in countries such as Turkey, which is home to nearly four million Syrian refugees (UNHCR, 2020), it is important to investigate their specific language learning experiences. Studies investigating the acquisition of Turkish as a second language among refugee-background children are rare, and much of the available research has focused on global issues of language development rather than learners' individual experiences. Findings indicate that those learning Turkish as a second language often struggle to acquire print literacy in Turkish (Dilek et al., 2018) and that low levels of proficiency in Turkish are a major obstacle to public education (Aydin & Kaya, 2019; Crul et al., 2019). Instructors have observed communication issues and the need for materials to address the linguistic needs of refugee-background children studying Turkish (Gokce & Acar, 2018). This study addressed current gaps in the research by exploring learners' language and literacy development in Turkish (their L2) by answering the following questions:

1. What are some common obstacles Syrian refugee-background learners face when learning Turkish as a second language in the K-12 classroom?
2. How do the families of Syrian refugee-background learners living in Turkey view learning Turkish and Arabic?

Although the authors recognize the value and importance of exploring home literacy practices on the development of a child's second language (e.g, Scheele et al., 2010), it is beyond the scope of the chapter to explore the impact of L1 heritage and culture on L2 development. Instead, the authors' intention is to identify how refugee-background parents understand and support language and literacy development in the L2 while maintaining the L1. Future research should explore the complex interaction of L1 maintenance and L2 support on refugee-background children's overall language and literacy development.

2 Research Methodology

2.1 Qualitative Multiple Case Study

Grounded in hermeneutic phenomenology (Heidegger, 1972), which aims to understand and interpret a person's lived experiences, this study adopted a qualitative multiple case study design. It elicited data on Syrian refugee children's experiences of learning Turkish as a second language in school and their parents' views on their children learning Turkish and Arabic. A multiple case study design enabled the researchers to study "real-life, contemporary … multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection" (Creswell, 2013, p. 97) and to present an in-depth understanding of the case(s) under scrutiny. The researchers collected various forms of qualitative data, including interviews, observations, documents, audiovisual materials and student artifacts (written work, projects, handouts, and other class materials) (Creswell, 2013; Seidman, 2013; Stake, 1995, 2005; Yin, 2009). The primary author analyzed data to find common themes across multiple cases and highlight the unique ways each case differed. The authors then used these commonalities to form conclusions. This approach helped the researchers identify similarities and differences in participants' *Daisen* related to their language development, when and how they used Turkish in the classroom, and views of both their teachers and parents.

2.2 Study Context and Participants

This study was conducted in a city in Turkey and included three different groups of participants: refugee-background students, parents, and Turkish teachers. For the purpose of confidentiality, pseudonyms are used for all the study participants, and the city the families resided in has been omitted.

2.2.1 Schools

The schools that the three focal children attended were predominantly composed of children from local low-income and refugee families. To register their children for school, parents participating in this study reported that education officials asked them to either submit a formal document certifying the educational status of their children in Syria or, in the absence of formal documentation, to provide the ages of their children in order to determine the grade level of the children. The students received no Turkish language training before being placed in mainstream Turkish-medium classes and were expected to learn using instructional practices oriented towards Turkish L1 students. The only opportunity they had for learning Turkish was through remedial evening courses offered to both Turkish and

refugee-background students, which are a result of a regulation from the Turkish Ministry of National Education enacted in 2018. The regulation required schools to organize after-school courses to support students with difficulties in Turkish and mathematics.

Three Turkish teachers named Mehmet Bilgin, Remzi Suna, and Seniha Uzun participated in this study. At the time of the research, Mr. Bilgin (51) was the classroom teacher of the second-year students, Mr. Suna (49) the third-year students, and Mrs. Uzun (58) the fourth-year students. All graduated from primary education programs in different Turkish state universities and had served as teachers for 27, 28, and 34 years, respectively. None had received formal training in teaching refugee-background students, nor did any have proficiency in the mother tongues of the refugee-background students in their classes. They faced numerous challenges in terms of addressing the needs of refugee-background students and helping them succeed in their lessons.

2.2.2 Families

Three Syrian families, referred to as the Alghani, Alnidawi, and Aljanabi families, participated in this study. At the time of the study, they had lived in Turkey for 2–5 years. After their arrival, they were first taken to Ankara to be registered in the Directorate General of Migration Management. Following their registration, they moved to their current city. The three families lived in the same inner-city neighborhood with lower-income Turkish and Syrian, Iraqi, and Afghan families. The families represented a broad range of social and demographic characteristics and had at least one primary-school child who served as the focal children in this study (see Table 1).

The Alghani Family

The Alghani family came from Raqqa in June 2014. Mr. Alghani studied electricity in a vocational high school and worked as a furniture maker in Syria. Mrs. Alghani studied handicraft in a technical institute and was a housewife. In Turkey, Mr. Alghani worked as a construction worker and Mrs. Alghani as a server at a patisserie. They faced frequent job insecurity and depended on the limited financial support they received from the United Nations and their neighbors. The only family they had in Turkey was Mr. Alghani's mother and younger brother who lived in the same city at the time of the study. The family otherwise had limited contact with other relatives in Syria. They had two children, Huda and Abdullah who were three and a year and a half when they arrived in Turkey. Both children started school in Turkey and attended a state school in their neighborhood. Huda was a third-year student and Abdullah (the focal child in this study) a second-year student at the time of the study. All in the family had learned Arabic as their mother tongue, and only Mrs. Alghani knew English at a very basic level. Although both children could

Table 1 Social and demographic characteristics of families

Families	Parents: Age, Birthplace	Parents: Education	Parents: Occupation in Syria & Turkey respectively	Children: Gender, Age	Children: Education
The Alghani	M: 30, Raqqa F: 32, Raqqa	M: Technical Institute F: Vocational High School	M: housewife, waitress F: furniture maker, construction worker	Huda: f, 9 Abdullah*: m, 7	Huda: 3rd grade Abdullah: 2nd grade
The Alnidawi	M: 38, Aleppo F: 42, Aleppo	M: high school F: high school	M: housewife F: farmer, construction worker	Taha: m, 16 Rawan: f, 15 Rahaf: f, 15 Hiba: f, 12 Anwer*: m, 9	Taha: 10th grade Rawan: 9th grade Rahaf: 9th grade Hiba: 6th grade Anwer: 3rd grade
The Aljanabi	M: 40, Hasakah F: 49, Hasakah	M: technical institute F: vocational high school	M: teacher, housewife F: merchant, garment worker	Rimas: f, 15 Ahmed: m, 14 Safaa*: m, 10 Riyadh: m, 3.5	Rimas: 9th grade Ahmed: 8th grade Safaa: 4th grade

Note: Asterisk indicating focal child, ages given in years, *M* mother, *F* father, *f* female, *m* male

understand Arabic, they had no literacy skills in it. All had learned Turkish at varying levels since their arrival, and the parents reported that Huda had the highest literacy and oral communication proficiency. She often served as the mediator of family in most social situations.

The Alnidawi Family

The Alnidawi family lived in Aleppo before resettling in Turkey in 2017 with Mr. Alnidawi's parents and siblings. The family followed Mrs. Alnidawi's elder brother and his family to Turkey. However, they chose to settle in a different city and had limited contact with other relatives in Syria. Mr. and Mrs. Alnidawi had a high-school diploma. Mr. Alnidawi was a farmer in Syria and worked in construction in Turkey. Mrs. Alnidawi was a housewife in both countries. The family also depended on financial support from the United Nations and their neighbors. They had five children, the majority of whom had started school in Syria and then continued their education in Turkey, with the exception of Anwer (the focal child in this study). Having left Syria at the age of six, Anwer started school shortly after his arrival in Turkey and was a third-grade student at the time of the study. His parents said the family had learned Arabic as their mother tongue and that Anwer was the only member of the family without literacy in Arabic. In addition to Arabic, Mrs.

Alnidawi and the children had a low-level competence in English. While the parents struggled to speak and understand Turkish, their children had different levels of proficiency in oral and written Turkish. Based on the interview with the parents, their three eldest children had almost no problem with oral and written Turkish. However, their two youngest children, Hiba and Anwer, had some problems both in oral and written Turkish and received help from their elder siblings.

The Aljanabi Family

After a peaceful life in Syria, the Aljanabi family fled to Turkey in 2018 after being exposed to serious physical and psychological threats and harm by the "*groups*" (as expressed by the parents) in their city. For example, Mrs. Aljanabi was threatened numerous times to leave her job. Her resistance resulted in the eldest son's kidnap and subsequent release with a broken leg. Safaa, the focal child in the study, lost one of his eyes during a car bomb explosion. Mr. Aljanabi studied at a vocational high school and owned two clothing stores in Syria. He worked as a garment worker in Turkey. Mrs. Aljanabi had a bachelor's degree in primary education and worked as a primary school teacher in a state school in Syria for 19 years. In Turkey, she stayed home to take care of their four children, three of whom had started school before leaving Syria. At the time of the study, Safaa was a fourth-grade student in his second year of school. All were native speakers of Arabic and had different levels of proficiency in Turkish. The parents struggled to understand or speak Turkish at a basic level. In addition to Arabic and Turkish, all except for the youngest child knew English at a low level.

2.3 Data Collection Tools

This study used multiple instruments (classroom observations, semi-structured interviews with the parents and teachers, and student artifacts such as written work, projects, handouts, and other class materials) to collect data. Each focal student was observed for 10 classroom hours during five separate weeks to capture a range of interactions on the students' oral and literacy activities. Because no audio or visual recording was allowed during observations with the exception of the students' reading aloud practices, one of the researchers observed and took notes using a classroom observation form. The form, developed by the researchers and reviewed by three different scholars, included columns for different aspects of the classroom (e.g., time, instructional focus, activity, material, interaction, engagement, language use, body language, etc.). It enabled the researcher to record student behavior according to these aspects at three-minute intervals.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with classroom teachers and parents to enrich and corroborate the data gathered through classroom observations. Interviews with teachers were conducted in Turkish and consisted of two parts:

basic demographic questions and questions about the Turkish language development of the focal students, including the challenges the learners faced in the classroom. Interviews with the parents were conducted in Arabic with the assistance of a bilingual Arabic-Turkish interpreter due to the parents' limited Turkish. The interviews included three parts: family background, the focal students' Arabic and Turkish language background and use, and the focal students' success in school. Questions about language use included some questions about the family's language of interaction, the importance of each language, and how the focal children improved their Turkish at home. In the final portion of the interview, the parents discussed challenges their children had in school due to their knowledge of Turkish.

2.4 Data Collection and Analysis

The researchers obtained the approval of their respective institutional review boards, the review board of the provincial directorate of national education the target school was affiliated with, and the superintendents of the target school. Then, the primary researcher contacted teachers at the target school who had refugee students in their classes. Three teachers volunteered to participate in the study. Following the recruitment of the teachers, parents and focal children were contacted with the teachers' help. A total of three teachers, three students and three parents (both mother and father) gave written informed consent.

Over a two-month period, the primary author conducted classroom observations (10 h per student), collected artifacts that teachers, students, and parents provided, and conducted one interview each with the families and teachers. Classroom observations were documented using an observation form. Areas of interest for the observations were the instructional focus, the activities employed, the materials, focal student-teacher interactions, focal student-other student interactions, the focal students' engagement, their language use, their body language, and feedback given by the teacher. The primary author also took photos of student artifacts. Teacher and parent interviews were conducted after the classroom observations.

Informed by the hermeneutic phenomenological theoretical framework, this study sought to understand how refugee background children and families understood and interpreted their children's language experiences as Turkish as a second language learners and Arabic L1 users. The primary researcher analyzed the data, starting with transcribing the interviews, to identify experiences and views that clarified the participants' *Daisen* – that is, experiences that illuminate how one interprets and understands one's interactions with others – related to the two research questions of the study. After transcription, the interview and classroom observation data were analyzed using thematic coding (Glesne, 2015; Seidman, 2013). When coding the data, the researchers read and marked all the parts that corresponded to the participants' *Daisen* and assigned specific codes. For instance, if the participant said, "My son has serious problems with understanding what is written in his coursebooks because he can't recognize the letters in Turkish.", the researchers

labelled this excerpt as *letter recognition problem* and used a notation system (e.g., the initials of the participants and Arabic numbers for page number of the transcript on which the excerpt occurs) to designate and retrace its original place in the transcript or classroom observation notes. Based on the given labels, the researchers also created code categories to classify these labels. For example, letter recognition problems and syllable identification problems were coded as *reading challenges*, while case marking or verbal agreement in writing were coded as *writing challenges*. These two code categories (reading challenges and writing challenges) were then merged into a broader theme, namely *literacy competence.* Content analysis of artifacts (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) was used to enrich the findings of the interviews and classroom observations.

Findings from the analysis of interviews, observations, and student artifacts were compared to identify areas of overlap or potential conflict. Overall, findings from all three sources were congruent and provided further insights into findings from the other major data sources. For example, the analysis of the student interaction and engagement data from the observations provided substantial support for the findings from the semi-structured interviews. Another area of strong overlap was between the analysis of the written language in students' notebooks and worksheets and the findings from interviews and observations.

3 Findings

The data analysis yielded significant insights on the language development of these Syrian refugee-background learners and how their families and their teachers viewed their language learning in the classroom. Findings also clarified how the participants' saw and valued their home languages and cultures. In particular, the findings of this study documented Abdullah's, Anwer's, and Safaa's language development and how their families supported them.

3.1 Literacy Competence

Abdullah, Anwer, and Safaa faced many educational challenges due to their low literacy in Arabic and Turkish. While Safaa acquired some Arabic literacy competence in his 2 years in a Syrian school, Abdullah and Anwer arrived in Turkey with no literacy or education in Arabic. Their parents indicated they planned to teach the children how to read and write in Arabic over the summer holiday when the children had more time to study. For example, Anwer's parents lamented, "He doesn't want to learn to read and write in Arabic because he has no motivation and because he prefers Turkish to Arabic." For all the parents, Arabic constituted a part of their identity and was key to their daily religious practices. According to Mr. Alghani,

> There are two important reasons why my children need to learn Arabic. We are Arab, and we have a lot of relatives in Syria. If my children do not learn Arabic, they will soon lose all ties with our relatives. If they lose their ties, I am sure they will also lose their Arabic background. Even more important is our religion and prayers. We are Muslim, and we practice our prayers in Arabic. How can my children practice their prayers if they do not learn Arabic? [Rhetorical question]. So, they need to learn Arabic.

It is clear that Mr. Alghani considered Arabic as the central way for his children to maintain their Arabic identity and to learn about and practice their religion in their lives. Other parents expressed similar reasons as to why they wanted their children to develop literacy in Arabic.

Regarding the children's Turkish language development, Abdullah and Safaa faced more challenges than Anwer both in reading and in writing. Observation and student artifact data showed they struggled with the recognition of letters, spelling, accuracy, fluency, capitalization, and punctuation. Interview data indicated their parents viewed Turkish as extremely important for their success but were concerned by the lack of resources to support their Turkish language and literacy development.

3.1.1 Abdullah

Abdullah had many problems in both reading and writing. According to Mr. Bilgin, his teacher, students in his grade (Grade 2) are expected to read and write in Turkish in order to understand content and complete their homework. Because Abdullah had no literacy in Turkish, he remained silent when Mr. Bilgin asked him to read a text in his coursebook aloud on six different occasions. According to Mr. Bilgin, Abdullah had trouble with symbol recognition. Despite numerous attempts, he could not distinguish pairs of similar letters and sounds – e.g., c and ç, d and b, m and n, o and ö, and s and ş in syllables or words when reading aloud. The following dialogue between Abdullah and Mr. Bilgin during an attempt to read the word "*maşa* (barbecue tong)" clearly shows his confusion with the letters m-n and s-ş.

[1]Mr. Bilgin	:	Simdi hadi bu kelimeleri okuyalım. ((He showed the words in the first line of Abdullah's notebook.)) Now let's read these words.
Abdullah	:	(5.0) n:::na ↑ (--- n:na ↑ ((He was trying to follow the letters of the first word with his right-hand index finger beneath the word "maşa".))
Mr. Bilgin	:	[na?] ↑
Abdullah	:	(3.0) m:::ma ↑ (4.0) s:::sa ↑
Mr. Bilgin	:	[Evet.] (5.0) sa? ↑ Yes.
Abdullah	:	(4.0) sa (---) Evet. Yes.
Mr. Bilgin	:	(3.0) sa? ↑

Abdullah	:	sa (2.0) Evet. Yes.
Mr. Bilgin	:	Kışın ne takarız kafamıza? What do we wear on our heads in winter?
Abdullah	:	hmmm.. Şapka? hmmm.. Hat?
Mr. Bilgin	:	Ev::et. Peki bu hangi harf? Ye::s. Then which letter is this? ((He shows the first letter of the word's last syllable with his finger.))
Abdullah	:	Ş
Mr. Bilgin	:	Aferin! O vakit bu heceyi oku bakalım? ((He shows the last syllable of the word with his finger.)) Good job! Then read this syllable.
Abdullah	:	Ş:::a (---) şa
Mr. Bilgin	:	Çok iyi! Şimdi tüm kelimeyi oku. Well-done! Now read the whole word.
Abdullah	:	na::: --- Yok. ma::şa, ma:şa, maşa na::: --- No. ma::şa, ma:şa, maşa
Mr. Bilgin	:	[na? ↑]

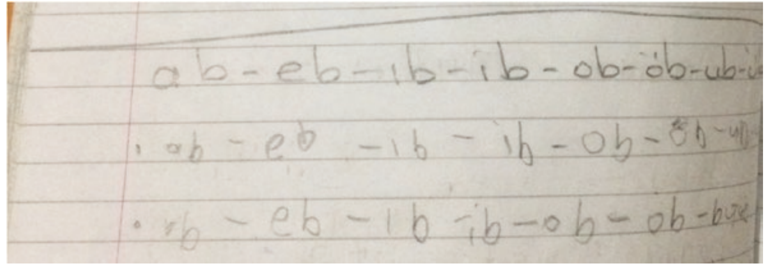

Fig. 1 A screenshot from Abdullah's Turkish notebook

Although Abdullah often failed to read the words in his notebook, he could read the syllables in Fig. 1 in the given order with few to no errors. Mr. Bilgin stated that this near perfect reading was due to Abdullah having memorized the syllables beforehand. However, when asked to read randomly selected syllables, he struggled. This observation indicates that one of Abdullah's Turkish reading strategies was memorizing syllables, words, and even sentences. As a result, he faced serious problems when given novel utterances and faced similar problems in writing. He could accurately copy what he saw written but not what he heard in class. These difficulties further manifested themselves in his notebook as numerous typological errors when copying.

His father, Mr. Alghani, reported that despite his very limited Turkish, he occasionally did reading and writing exercises with his son to help him overcome these difficulties. The exercises included Mr. Alghani asking his son to memorize poems

or copy short texts from the textbook into his notebook. Mr. Alghani added that his daughter Huda, who was a third grader with higher literacy competence in Turkish, also helped Abdullah with his assignments.

3.1.2 Anwer

Anwer, the third grader in this study, had higher literacy competence in Turkish than the other two students. His literacy problems were recognizing some letters, reading multisyllabic words accurately, reading fluently, writing grammatically correct utterances, and using punctuation marks. He could read texts accurately if reading slowly and syllable-by-syllable. However, he struggled with reading multisyllabic words accurately. He also had various problems with writing.

For example, in the following task from his coursebook, Anwer had difficulties accurately writing the accusative and dative cases (see Fig. 2). In this task, students were asked to draw a picture of a technological device they used at home and then describe its functions. Anwer drew a mobile phone and explained its functions in one sentence – "*Telefon Ale'mizle konuşmayı yarar Amca'mızla konuşmayı yarar Dayı'mızla konuşmayı yarar.*" (The mobile phone enables us to speak with our families, enables us to speak with the brothers of our father, enables us to speak with the brothers of our mother.). In this sentence, he used the accusative form "-(y)I" instead of the dative "-(y)A."

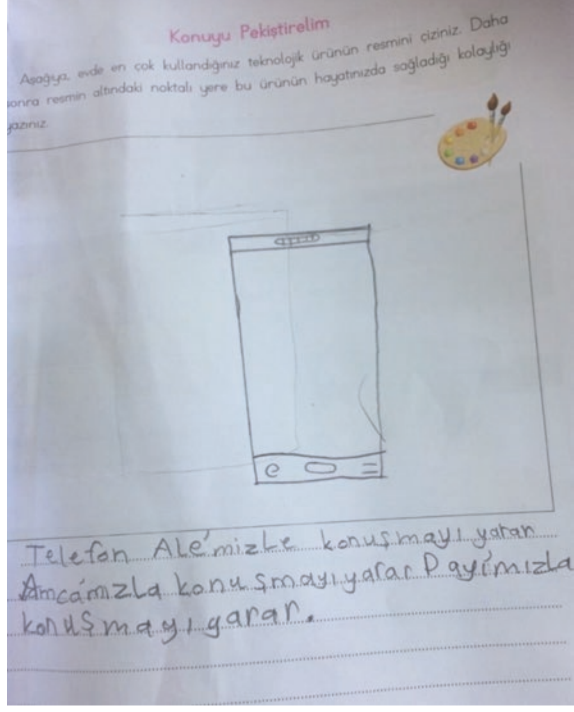

Fig. 2 A screenshot from Anwer's textbook

Student Version: konuşma-yı
speaking-ACC
Corrected version: konuşma-ya
speaking-DAT

Moreover, the word "*Ale'mizle*" should be spelled as "*Aile'lemizle*", and the capitalization and apostrophe mistakes in the words "*Ale'mizle, Amca'mızla, Dayı'mızla*" should be "*ailemizle, amcamızla, dayımızla*". Additionally, this sentence should be separated using a comma because it embeds three sub-sentences which share the same subject – "*telefon*". Therefore, the corrected version of this sentence must be as "*Telefon Ailemizle konuşmaya yarar, amcamızla konuşmaya yarar, dayımızla konuşmaya yarar*."

Interviews with his teacher and parents revealed that Anwer received help from his elder sisters to overcome his literacy challenges. His sisters often did paired reading from his Turkish coursebook and checked his written assignments at home. They also bought him Turkish short stories and did extensive reading with him at home. Similarly, Mr. Suna, his classroom teacher, occasionally gave him Turkish short stories to improve his reading skills.

3.1.3 Safaa

Safaa started school as a third grader in Turkey and was in the fourth grade at the time of the study. Having missed the first 2 years during which foundational literacy skills are taught, he experienced similar literacy problems and challenges in Turkish as Abdullah and Anwer. He had problems recognizing letters, reading accurately and fluently, writing grammatically correct utterances, and using punctuation marks. He could accurately copy what was written on the board or in his textbooks but made several spelling and grammatical mistakes when writing what was presented orally. He also had many challenges when reading. For example, during a classroom observation session, Mrs. Uzun asked Safaa to read aloud the following text in his Turkish language coursebook (see Fig. 3).

As seen in the sample above, Safaa read 25 of 97 words incorrectly, the majority of which were corrected by classmates. While reading, he seemed to become discouraged and demotivated, perhaps due to the number of corrections that his peers made. Regarding this situation, Mrs. Uzun proffered, "Safaa does not want to read aloud in the classroom, and I think this is because his classmates correct his mistakes over and over. I warned them firmly not to do so. But, who listens to me?". She believed that refugee-background students should master the four skills in Turkish before participating in mainstream Turkish classes. Interviews with Safaa's parents revealed that their elder children helped Safaa with his reading and writing. They frequently did paired reading and checked his written assignments at home to help him develop his literacy competence.

The original text from the Turkish textbook

Leylek anne, çocuğunu dinledikten sonra "Gözlerime inanamıyorum." der gibi baktı ve "Sakın gitme!" dedi. "Biz atalarımızdan böyle gördük, böyle işittik! Leylekler, tilkilerin yemeğine gitmez. Giderse de kabını yanında götürür."

O eski öyküye göre kurnaz ve cimri tilki, konuğuna bir şey yedirmek istemediği için geniş ve yayvan bir tabağa çorba koyarmış. Kendisi kırmızı dilini çıkara çıkara güzelce çorbayı yalayıp yutar, leylek ise uzun gagasıyla bu çorbayı nasıl içeceğini düşünür dururmuş.

Oysa bizim kızıl tilki, leylek hakkında çok güzel şeyler düşünüyordu. "Bir gelse…" diyordu, "Ona neler hazırlayacağım! Çünkü kuşlardan dostum olsun istiyorum. Kara karga dışında hiç kuş tanıdığım yok. Kuşlar, gökten gelip gökten

How Safaa read the text

Leylek anne, çocuğunu dinledikten sonra **“Güzel inanıyorum**.’ Der gibi baktı ve “Sakın gitme!” dedi. “**Bizi atamamızdan boyle** gördük, böyle işittik! Leylekler, tilkilerin yemeğine gitmez. Giderse de **kadını** yanında götürür.”

O **eksi** öyküye göre **kuzen** ve cimri tilki, konuğuna bir şey yedirmek istemediği için **geçniş** ve **yakan** bir tabağa çorba **kavurmuş**. Kendisi kirmizi dilini **çıkıra çıkıra güzeclci** çorbayı **yalabı** yutar, leylek **iks uzunu** gagasıyla bu çorbayı nasıl **icenir bosunur burumus.**

Oysa bizim **kiz** tilki, **leri** hakkında çok güzel şeyler **duşunur**. “Bir gelse…” diyordu, “Ona neler hazırlayacağım! **Çonku** kuşlardan dostum olsun istiyorum. Kara karga dışında hiç kus **tendiği** yok.

Fig. 3 In-classroom Reading Activity (The boldfaced words were read incorrectly)

The analyses of the data from classroom observations, semi-structured interviews and student artifacts showed that all three refugee-background students with limited literacy in Turkish fell behind academically because they did not have sufficient proficiency in Turkish to access course content, specifically those tasks and activities that required reading and writing. The children fell behind despite the support each family provided.

3.2 Oral Competence

The three focal students had a higher level of oral than literacy competence in both Arabic and Turkish. The Alnidawis and Aljanabis underscored that since their children had lived in Syria and learned Arabic there, they faced no oral communicative problems in Arabic. However, they added their children preferred to use Turkish with each other and with their friends both in and out of the home despite the fact Arabic was the preferred language of communication in the home. Similarly, the Alghanis indicated that the family used Arabic as the family's medium of interaction, and because of this, their children succeeded in developing oral skills in Arabic. The Alghani children also communicated in Arabic at home because Abdullah's lower-level oral competence in Turkish forced his sister, Huda who had higher Turkish literacy and oral competence, to converse with him in Arabic.

The parents of all three children stressed the importance of Arabic for preserving their Arabic identity, practicing their religious prayers, and maintaining family bonds. This importance is evidenced in the following quote from Mrs. Aljanabi;

> My kids will lose their roots if we do not teach them Arabic. When we return to Syria one day in the future and if my kids cannot communicate with their cousins in Arabic, they will be alienated because their cousins will not accept them. Above all, we practice our prayers in Arabic; even Turkish people do it in Arabic [she looks at the primary investigator]. So, how will my kids learn about Islam and practice their prayers if they do not know Arabic? [Rhetorical question]

For Mrs. Aljanabi, it is clear that Arabic was an important part of her family's identity and a crucial link to maintain familial relationships. Most importantly, she considered Arabic as the primary means of learning about their religion and saying their prayers. She and her husband both expressed concern for their prospective grandchildren because they believed that they might completely lose their Arabic identity unless the family returned to Syria. They emphasized their children's responsibility to teach their future children Arabic.

3.2.1 Abdullah

Of the three, Abdullah had the lowest oral proficiency in Turkish. Although he departed Syria at the age of 1.5 years and started school in Turkey, he seemed to have trouble comprehending and speaking Turkish. The analyses of the semi-structured interview with his teacher Mr. Bilgin and classroom observations showed that he had foreign-accented speech, made many pronunciation and grammatical mistakes, struggled to understand his instructor's directions, and struggled to follow content delivered in Turkish. During one observation, Mr. Bilgin asked Abdullah to come solve a subtraction problem – a topic that had recently been covered – at the board.

Mr. Bilgin	:	Seksen dört eksi yirmi iki? Eighty-four minus twenty-two?
Abdullah	:	(26.0) ((He looks at Mr. Bilgin.))
Mr. Bilgin	:	Evet?
Abdullah	:	(14.0) ((He still looks at Mr. Bilgin.))
Mr. Bilgin	:	Yazamayacak mısın? Won't you be able to write it?
Abdullah	:	(3.0) ((He shakes his head to mean no.))
Mr. Bilgin	:	(2.0) ((Mr. Bilgin comes to the board and writes "84–22 =?" on the board.)) (---) Evet? (---) Yes?
Abdullah	:	(2.0) ((He uses his fingers to solve the problem.)) Altmış dört. ((He writes 64 on the board.)) Sixty four.
Mr. Bilgin	:	Öyle mi? ((He stares at Abdullah.)) Is it?
Abdullah	:	Hmm (4.0) Altmış iki? ((He looks at Mr. Bilgin.)) Hmm.. Sixty two?

Mr. Bilgin	:	Ev::et!
Abdullah	:	((He smiles and writes 62 on the board.))

It is clear from this dialogue that Abdullah failed to understand and write the subtraction problem his instructor gave. His success solving the problem correctly in his second attempt showed that he could recognize the printed characters of numbers but not understand them when presented orally. Interviews with Mr. Bilgin and both parents provided some further insights. His instructor noted that Abdullah had very limited contact with his Turkish classmates, which hindered the development of his oral competence in Turkish. His parents corroborated Mr. Bilgin's answer when they reported that they only spoke in Arabic at home and that Abdullah had no Turkish friends. They mentioned that school was the only context for him to socialize and learn Turkish, and that the current situation impeded his oral mastery of Turkish and caused many challenges for him at school.

3.2.2 Anwer

Anwer had a higher competence in Turkish compared to the other two students. Classroom observations revealed that he had slightly foreign-accented speech, mispronounced some sounds (e.g., overstressing "r"), and occasionally made grammatical mistakes (e.g., verbal agreement). Despite these problems, he spoke very fluently and successfully understood content delivered in Turkish. The following interaction between Anwer and Mr. Suna shows his mastery in conversing with people in Turkish.

Mr. Suna	:	Anwer, nasıl oldun? ((He stands up from his chair and walks towards Anwer.)) Anwer, how are you?
Anwer	:	Sağ olun, iyiyim. Thank you! I am fine. (He stands up from his desk and looks at Mr. Bilgin.)
Mr. Suna	:	Neyin vardı? What was your illness?
Anwer	:	Başım ağrıyordu? I had a headache.
Mr. Suna	:	Nasıl oldu? How did it happen?
Anwer	:	Ben uyuyordum. Gece yarısı kalktım. Kafam ağrıyordu. Boğazım ağrıyordu. I was sleeping. I woke up at midnight. I had a headache. I had a söre throat.
Mr. Suna	:	Doktora gittin mi? Doktor ne dedi? Have you seen the doctor? What did he say?
Anwer	:	Bana sordu "Neyin var?". Başım ağrıyor. Bize ilaç verdi. Oradan eczaneye gittik. İlaç aldık. He asked me, "What is the matter with you?". I have a headache. He gave us a prescription. We went to the pharmacy. We bought my medicine.

Mr. Suna	:	Çok geçmiş olsun! Get better very soon!
Anwer	:	Teşekkür ederim! ((He bows his head slightly.)) Thank you!

In this spontaneous dialogue, Anwer appeared to understand the questions and reply appropriately. Although his responses seem fluent, it is important to emphasize that he used short sentences and no transitional expression during classroom observations. Mr. Suna also noted this sentence structure, explaining that Anwer spoke in this way because he needed time to develop higher-level mastery in Turkish. Anwer's parents were hopeful he would continue to improve his Turkish skills because their children often spoke Turkish among themselves at home.

3.2.3 Safaa

Safaa was directly placed in the third grade after his arrival in Turkey and did not receive any Turkish language instruction prior to his placement. The interview and observation data indicated that although he managed to learn some Turkish, he still faced serious speaking and comprehension problems. Like Anwer, he exhibited difficulties with foreign-accented speech, mispronunciation, and grammatical mistakes. In the following dialogue with one of his classmates during the lesson, he had problems with Turkish verbal agreement.

Classmate	:	Bitirdin mi? ((He sits right in front of Safaa and turns back to face Safaa.)) Have you finished writing?
Safaa	:	Hayır, bitirmedi[1]. ((He still writes down what is written on the board.)) No, I am not finished.
Classmate	:	Bu kelimeyi yanlış yazmışsın. ((He shows a misspelled word in Safaa's notebook.)) You have misspelled this word.
Safaa	:	Anlamadı[2]. Hangisi? ((He looks carefully at what he has written down.)) I didn't understand. Which one?
Classmate	:	Bak, bu. ((He points at the misspelled word with his pencil.)) Look, this one.
Safaa	:	Sen bilmiyor[3] aslında. Ben doğru yazdı[4]. ((He looks a little angrily at his classmate.)) You don't know it. I have written it correctly.
Classmate	:	Hayır, tahtaya bak, göreceksin ne yazıyor. ((He shows the board.)) No, look at the board. You will see what is written on the board.
Safaa	:	(---) Sen neden bakıyor[5]? Ben yazıyorum. ((He yells at his classmate.)) Why are you looking? I am writing.
Classmate		(2.0) ((He does not say anything and turns his back to Safaa.))

Note: The correct translations are written in the dialogue

In this short interaction, Safaa failed to use the inflectional suffixes to mark subject-verb agreement in Turkish – except for the verb in the last sentence of the dialogue ("*yazıyorum*"). The missing verbal agreement markers in this dialogue are the first singular (-Im) and second singular person (-sIn) as elaborated below.

	Use of verbs by Safaa	Corrected version
(1)	bitir-me-di finish-NEGATIVE-PAST	bitir-me-di-m finish-NEGATIVE-PAST-1SG
(2)	anla-ma-dı Understand-NEGATIVE-PAST	anla-ma-dı-m Understand-NEGATIVE-PAST-1SG
(3)	bil-mi-yor know-NEGATIVE-PRES PROG	bil-mi-yor-sun know-NEGATIVE-PRES PROG-2SG
(4)	yaz-dı write-PAST	yaz-dı-m write-PAST-1SG
(5)	bak-ıyor look-PRES PROG	bak-ıyor-sun look-PRES PROG-2SG

Safaa demonstrated this problem in almost all the interactions that he engaged in. He benefited from courses mandated by the 2018 regulation described in more detail in the study context. Although Safaa attended these courses, they did not sufficiently meet his needs according to Mrs. Uzun who recognized the courses were designed for native Turkish-speaking students.

During the observations, Safaa's only friends were the two Iraqi refugee students in his class. All three often spoke in Arabic during the lesson, spent time together during breaks, and did not allow other students into their "private" group. Safaa also had serious physical fights with his Turkish classmates on two different occasions. Mrs. Uzun commented that Safaa avoided socializing with his Turkish classmates, which did not help his Turkish language skills advance. His parents concurred with Mrs. Uzun's assessment. However, the interview with Safaa revealed his belief that his Turkish classmates disliked him because he came from Syria and spoke Arabic with his Iraqi friends at times. He further asserted that his Turkish classmates wanted him to return to his own country. Because of this apparent bullying, he avoided building friendships with his Turkish peers, thus missing the opportunity to advance his Turkish language development and hindering his overall success in school.

4 Conclusion

All three children in this study struggled to develop the requisite level of oral and written proficiency to participate in their Turkish-medium classes. Safaa's and Abdullah's comprehension of Turkish limited their ability to understand their courses. This confirms previous studies that found that proficiency in Turkish is a major obstacle for refugee youth who have resettled in Turkey (Aydin & Kaya, 2019; Crul et al., 2019). Even Anwer, who demonstrated the highest level of

proficiency in Turkish struggled with his literacy competency and with case markings. Moreover, all three children struggled to some extent with reading in Turkish, a finding which is in line with other research in this area (Dilek et al., 2018).

Abdullah, Anwer, and Safaa could have greatly benefitted from more linguistic support in the form of Turkish as a second language instruction. However, the Turkish Ministry of National Education has no clear procedures regulating the enrollment of refugee students in the mainstream Turkish educational system (Icduygu & Simsek, 2016). Schools offer no special language courses to develop these students' Turkish or to promote their educational experiences (Aydin & Kaya, 2017, 2019). Unsurprisingly, these students often face language-related obstacles despite attending after-school Turkish courses. The teachers agreed that these classes failed to meet the needs of refugee-background students due to being primarily oriented towards native speaking Turkish learners. The instructors in this study also suggested specialized courses of Turkish as a second language for their students and more training for teachers.

None of the instructors had any training in how to meet the needs of refugee-background learners, which is common for Turkish instructors (Celik & Icduygu, 2018), and classroom observations indicated the teachers were ill-prepared to meet their learners' needs. For example, an Afghan student was placed in Mr. Suna's classroom; however, she had no knowledge of Turkish and therefore could not understand what was happening in the classroom. He noted he was ill prepared for her needs and recommended the implementation of intensive specialized Turkish as a second language courses for such students before being enrolled in mainstream Turkish classes. Future research should explore how best to support learners like Abdullah, Anwer, and Safaa in ways that work within the current Turkish education system.

One notable finding from this study was the level of support each child's family provided to help their child progress in Turkish, which is not well documented or explored in current literature. The three families, recognizing their children's struggle and acknowledging the value of learning Turkish, did what they could to support their children's acquisition of Turkish while simultaneously maintaining strong support for Arabic in the home. Mr. Alghani occasionally did reading and writing practices with his son, and Huda, Abdullah's elder sister, helped him with his assignments. Likewise, Anwer's and Safaa's elder siblings did paired and extensive reading with them and checked their assignments regularly. The parents believed their children would face more serious problems in school unless they provided this support. They lamented that they themselves did not possess sufficient linguistic resources to adequately support their children's Turkish development and thus depended on their older children to serve as tutors for their younger siblings.

Considering the relatively recent influx of Syrian refugees to Turkey and the limited research on Syrian refugees in general, this study contributes substantially to the existing literature. It is important that future research explore the ways refugee-background parents and older siblings support L2 language and literacy development among children like Safaa, Anwer, and Abdullah. It should also find ways instructors can capitalize on their students' home literacy practices in the

classroom and use those to scaffold L2 language development. Finally, future research should continue exploring the language learning experiences of refugee-background children outside of English-speaking contexts so that the literature is more representative of the lived experiences of refugee-background learners globally.

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Implications of Genre Pedagogy for Refugee Youth with Limited or Interrupted Formal Schooling

Kathryn Accurso, Meg Gebhard, Grace Harris, and Jennie Schuetz

Abstract This chapter explores how systemic functional linguistics (SFL) can contribute to secondary teachers' effectiveness for teaching disciplinary literacies to refugee youth in the United States. The chapter describes the Milltown Multimodal/Multiliteracies (MMM) Collaborative, an SFL-based professional development partnership between a large public university and a high poverty urban school serving high proportions of refugee youth with limited or interrupted formal education from Guatemala, Iraq, Mexico, Rwanda, and Vietnam. We present data from longitudinal case studies of these students' school and work experiences as they participated in MMM curricular interventions, including SFL analyses of changes in the ways they produced and interpreted different genres of texts. These data illustrate how the MMM Collaborative constructed contact zones that supported the expansion of refugee students' semiotic resources and semiotic mobility. Within these contact zones, refugee students drew on gestures, graphics, images, their home and peer languages, and English in learning to read and write disciplinary genres. Further, through their participation in genre pedagogy, refugee students expanded their use of a range of semiotic resources, including the ability to read and write disciplinary texts in English. However, students' social, academic, and economic mobility appeared to be strongly influenced by their immigration status. These findings offer a nuanced perspective on what it means to be a refugee youth tasked with learning disciplinary literacies in the U.S. public school system today, and signal productive ways to rethink the role of critical applied linguistics in teacher education practices.

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> My students don't fit the "typical" ESOL demographic. ESOL out here has been really geared toward Spanish speakers and we've had very strict protocols with how we run lessons. But it's like, "Okay, but this isn't only a Spanish speaking city anymore." Milltown has changed. It's a refugee city now. I have 13 students from a Guatemalan border town, a severely traumatized student from Mexico, a mix of Arab refugees, a Vietnamese student. So, like, there's what's "typical" and then there's what's going on here. And I have to think about what they need, what [the district] wants, and my role.
>
> Grace Harris, Milltown High ESOL teacher (English for speakers of other languages)[1]

In U.S. schools, K-12 refugee students, including those with limited or interrupted formal education (henceforth SLIFE refugee students), often get placed in the broader category of students labeled English learners. However, as ESOL teacher Grace Harris notes above, this means that students with wide-ranging language, immigration, and educational backgrounds are subsumed into a category comprised predominantly of students who are assumed to speak Spanish at home and have been born and raised in the United States (Capps et al., 2005; National Center for Education Statistics, 2019). As a result, SLIFE refugee students often end up in classrooms where teachers have been prepared to teach "typical" English learners, but have had little specific preparation for teaching SLIFE refugee youth or supporting their development of disciplinary literacies (Richardson et al., 2018).

However, recent economic, demographic, and policy shifts warrant a reconsideration of teachers' preparation for teaching disciplinary literacies to this subset of the English learner population. Research indicates that there are increasing numbers of SLIFE refugee students attending urban schools in the United States (DeCapua, 2016). These often under-resourced schools are tasked with preparing these students to meet challenging disciplinary standards, while at the same time taking into account the ways they contend with traumatic histories, different degrees of experience with formal schooling, lengthy and expensive legal issues, and increasing public bigotry and racism fueled by the Trump administration (Darling-Hammond, 2017; McBrien, 2005).

In this chapter, we explore how the four co-authors – Grace, her colleague Jennie Schuetz, and two university researchers – used concepts from systemic functional linguistics (SFL) to navigate these issues and design classroom environments that supported SLIFE refugee student learning. First, we describe the professional development partnership that brought us together, the Milltown Multimodal/Multiliteracies (MMM) Collaborative. Then, we present data from a series of curricular interventions we developed in collaborative and longitudinal case studies of SLIFE refugee students' school and work experiences as they participated in these

[1] 'Milltown' is a pseudonym, as are all refugee student names in this chapter.

interventions, including analyses of changes in their literacy practices. Specifically, we address:

- How do SLIFE refugee students draw on multiple meaning-making systems in learning to read, write, and critically analyze high-stakes disciplinary texts?
- To what extent do these students' disciplinary literacy practices change over time?
- To what extent do changes in their literacy practices influence their academic, political, and economic lives in material ways?

Drawing on extensive qualitative case study data, we illustrate how the MMM Collaborative constructed "contact zones" (Pratt, 1991, p. 31) that supported SLIFE refugee students' semiotic mobility and the expansion of their semiotic resources (Blommaert, 2010). Within these contact zones SLIFE refugee students drew on gestures, graphics, images, their home and peer languages, and English in learning to read and write disciplinary genres. Further, through participation in genre pedagogy, these students expanded their use of a range of semiotic resources, including the ability to read and write disciplinary texts in English. However, despite these promising findings, students' social, academic, and economic mobility over the course of these interventions appeared to be strongly influenced by their legal immigration status, creating stratification among refugee students with similar kinds of SLIFE backgrounds. In other words, it mattered whether they were legally recognized as refugees or had fled their home countries because of war, persecution, violence, or natural disaster but were undocumented.

These findings offer a nuanced perspective on what it means to be a SLIFE refugee youth tasked with learning disciplinary literacies in the U.S. public school system today, and to be a well-prepared teacher of SLIFE refugee youth. Therefore, we close with a discussion around productive ways to rethink teacher education practices and the role SFL might play in designing classroom environments that effectively support these students' learning.

1 A Social Semiotic Framework for Understanding and Supporting SLIFE Refugee Students' Literacy Practices in U.S. Schools

This chapter and our collaboration draw on a social semiotic perspective of language and learning. From this perspective, language is a meaning-making system that develops and expands as a person experiences and participates in new contexts (Halliday & Hasan, 1985). Learning is a language-based sociocultural process involving high levels of interaction (Vygotsky, 1986). In the MMM Collaborative, we did not view SLIFE refugee students as "semiproficient" language users who came to ESOL classrooms to acquire language forms they did not have (Kaplan et al., 2016), either "naturally" or through repeated drills (Gebhard, 2019). Rather, we understood ESOL classrooms as multimodal and multilingual environments that

could be designed in ways that would enable or disable the full use and expansion of these students' meaning-making systems (Blommaert et al., 2005).

This perspective is heavily informed by systemic functional linguistics (SFL), a broad theory of meaning-making that sees language as just one of the systems people have available for making meaning (Halliday & Hasan, 1985). Other systems include visuals, gestures, audio, and the arrangement of space. People make choices from these systems in any situation based on three factors of context: the ideas or experiences they are construing, the social roles they are taking up, and the mode through which they are communicating. The choices people make to construct these aspects of a situation constitute the *register* of communication. Understanding how these three register variables influence language choices at the word, sentence, and whole text level can help ESOL teachers identify and model for students language practices for participating and developing new knowledge in different disciplinary contexts.[2] Moreover, the SFL concept of *genre* is helpful for understanding how patterns of register choices relate to text structure as students work to accomplish cultural goals that recur across situations (e.g., describing, informing, persuading, entertaining, instructing).[3]

In the MMM Collaborative, we perceived SLIFE refugee students as already proficient language users, each with meaning-making systems that reflected incredible amounts of register and genre knowledge, inflected but not inhibited by their prior experiences of trauma, loss, and interrupted schooling (Warriner et al., 2019). Like all people, as these students physically and cognitively matured toward adulthood, the nature of the topics they communicated about, the people they interacted with, and the modes through which they negotiated meaning expanded dramatically (Halliday, 1993; Halliday & Hasan, 1985). This expansion created more choice within these students' functional meaning-making systems as they became young adults who had developed registers used in the multiple communities they belonged to as they navigated complex lives. For some students this included registers associated with different disciplines they encountered in past schooling, for others literacy practices associated with migration and/or the types of work their families did. Moreover, we believed that as these students matured and the meaning-making resources available to them expanded, they were socialized into culturally specific ways of telling stories, describing experiences, explaining their thinking, and making arguments (Martin & Rose, 2008).

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[2] Following Halliday and Hasan (1985), we use 'text' to refer to any oral, written, multimodal, or multilingual representation of meaning. This expanded understanding of 'text' acknowledges the many literacy practices refugee students routinely engage in whether they have ever produced a written "academic" English text in a U.S. classroom. It also recognizes the influence of technology and the way texts are rapidly taking new forms and traveling in new ways across languages and cultures (e.g., animated whiteboard videos, Instagram stories, Twitter Chats, video conferences).

[3] SFL offers a rich metalanguage for talking about register choices at the word-, sentence-, and text-level, as well as in graphics and images (e.g., Halliday & Hasan, 1985; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). See Accurso and Gebhard (2020) for a review of uses of SFL metalanguage in U.S. teacher education and K-12 classroom practice, including examples of the metalanguage at work in different grade levels and content areas.

However, public schools in the United States have not historically recognized or capitalized on the existing resources of designated English learners, and specifically SLIFE refugee students, to provide equitable access and sustained support for learning to read, write, and critically analyze the culturally specific ways these types of meaning are made in U.S. secondary classrooms (Gebhard, 2019; McBrien, 2005). Decades of international research from Australia, as well as a growing body of work in the United States suggest an SFL-inspired teaching and learning cycle (TLC) may be useful for responding to this kind of inequity (de Oliveira & Smith, 2019; Gebhard et al., 2019a; Ramos, 2014; Schwarz & Hamman-Ortiz, 2020).

The TLC addresses what a learner can do on their own versus what they can do with social, linguistic, and cultural guidance from more experienced peers, teachers, family members, and other adults in their community in terms of developing specific ways of talking, reading, and writing about content knowledge in their home language and additional languages (Gibbons, 2003; Vygotsky, 1986). Though many versions of the TLC are now in use, all include four hallmark phases: (1) building students' background knowledge through hands-on, dialogic experiences to prepare for specific disciplinary literacy tasks; (2) deconstructing model texts to name genre and register choices; (3) jointly constructing a text with students to make semiotic know-how highly visible and open to critical discussion; and (4) gradually reducing scaffolding as students become more proficient readers, writers, and analysts of disciplinary discourses over time.

Semiotic mobility is a matter of developing meaning-making resources that allow one to move "across universes of interpretation" (Kroon et al., 2015, p. 4). Therefore, through these phases, the TLC aims to support students' semiotic mobility by creating space and support for students to build an explicit understanding of "norms, expectations, and conceptions regarding what counts" in different disciplinary contexts (Blommaert, 2010, p. 6). Importantly, the idea is not that students will become more socially mobile simply by learning and reproducing dominating language practices. Rather, the TLC aims to create a trajectory in which students are more fully supported to author and participate in disciplinary contexts, recognizing that classrooms are problematically stratified and controlled spaces where dominating language practices are often taken for granted as obvious and inherently valuable while multilingual students' semiotic resources fail to be recognized and valued (Gebhard & Willett, 2015).

In the MMM Collaborative, we used an expanded TLC to embed the planning and teaching of scaffolded curricular units in an action research framework to support student learning as well as teachers' professional development (Gebhard, 2019). Beyond the four phases listed above, we wrote our own model texts and analyzed their genre and register features to inform our teaching. In addition, we collected and analyzed students' work to reflect on their learning and used genre and register analysis to determine the degree to which our goals for instruction had been met. We then used insights from these analyses to plan future instruction and share knowledge with other educators and community members.

Drawing on social semiotic concepts and pedagogies, the goal of the MMM Collaborative was to design an ESOL classroom environment where refugee

students' existing literacies were seen, valued, and used as building blocks in their apprenticeship to disciplinary genres for constructing knowledge in high school and beyond.

2 The Milltown Multimodal/Multiliteracies Collaborative: SFL in Action

To understand our use of SFL in the MMM Collaborative, it is important to understand the changing context of Milltown, which Grace alluded to in the quote that opened this chapter. Grace's 9th grade ESOL class included 19 SLIFE refugee students from Guatemala, Mexico, Iraq, Rwanda, and Vietnam. These students spoke varieties of Spanish, Mam, Arabic, Kinyarwanda, and Vietnamese. All were entering the beginning stages of English language development, had varying levels of home language literacy, and had limited or interrupted formal education in their home countries (see Table 1). Co-author Jennie Schuetz came on to also teach these same students as 10th graders when she joined the collaborative as a first-year teacher at Milltown High.

This group of students reflected economic and demographic shifts in Milltown over the last 50 years. Up until the 1960s, Milltown factories employed large numbers of white European immigrants. However, widespread factory closures in the 1970s and 80s led many of these families to move to the suburbs. At the same time, an economic crisis in Puerto Rico brought many new families to the area, heightening the school district's focus on Spanish speaking students. However, these shifts were followed by the federal government's initiation of a national refugee resettlement program, which brought families from all over the world to Milltown, including substantial numbers of refugees from Central America, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia.

Table 1 Demographics of refugee students in Grace's 9th grade ESOL class (n = 19)

Home country	n	%	Home language(s)	Age	Gender	Year of arrival in U.S.	English proficiency (WIDA)	Legal immigration status
Guatemala	13	68%	Spanish, Mam	15–17	4 female 9 male	2015	Entering (level 1)	Undocumented
Mexico	1	5%	Spanish	15	1 female	2014	Entering (level 1)	Unknown
Vietnam	1	5%	Vietnamese	15	1 male	2014	Entering (level 1)	Approved asylum seeker
Rwanda	1	5%	Kinyarwanda	15	1 female	2015	Entering (level 1)	Approved asylum seeker
Iraq	3	16%	Arabic	14–17	3 male	2014	Entering (level 1)	Approved asylum seekers

Milltown schools struggled to keep pace with the needs of Milltown students and their families as these demographics shifted. In 2014, Milltown High was designated as "underperforming" on a state performance scale and the school was experiencing a graduation rate below 50%. This designation required the school to write a three-year turnaround plan to try and reverse statistics around poor attendance, test results, and most importantly to district administrators, graduation rates (Peck & Reitzug, 2014). At the time, one in five Milltown High students were designated English learners. Students in this category were required to take grade-level state assessments after just 1 year of language support leading to the lowest scores of any other student sub-group, and the school supported only 32% of these students to graduation. As a result, a key part of the school's turnaround plan was to create a "school-within-a-school" focused on better serving English learners. This school-within-a-school included ESOL teachers like Grace and Jennie, content teachers, and administrators who focused exclusively on the school's English learner population.

The school-within-a-school included high numbers of SLIFE refugee students who had experienced limited or interrupted schooling because of challenging or traumatic experiences that ultimately led them to seek refuge in the United States. Therefore, some classes were designated as SLIFE-specific, such as Grace's 9th grade ESOL class. Generally speaking, not all SLIFE students are refugees, or vice versa, but the groups do tend to overlap (DeCapua, 2016). This was certainly the case at Milltown High and in Grace's 9th grade ESOL class where all students were both. At the time, there was not yet any state guidance in place for identifying and supporting this subset of English learners. What Grace, Jennie, and their colleagues knew was these students had fled untenable living conditions in their home countries and were assessed to be two or more years behind their grade-level peers in literacy and numeracy skills in their native languages. In this context, that meant these students were uniquely tasked with learning a new language and grade level content; backtracking to learn literacy skills, numeracy skills and content knowledge from time they had missed in school; and coping with the life circumstances that had led them to flee their homes. Further, for many, the structure and format of the Milltown school day and the academic tasks asked of them was unfamiliar.

Therefore, when the MMM Collaborative formed in 2015, we were thinking about the academic needs of these SLIFE refugee students as they moved through a high school attempting new reforms, but also aspects of the city in which they lived and would likely go on to work. As described at length in Gebhard et al. (2019b), we focused on four main goals: (1) to make better use of students' linguistic and cultural resources in designing standards-based curriculum; (2) to set high expectations for students and even higher expectations for ourselves in regard to scaffolding disciplinary literacy practices to assist students in developing their interests and graduating from high school; (3) to reflect on changes in students' literacy practices over time; and (4) to share insights from our work with others to support our continued professional development and contribute to the professional development of others.

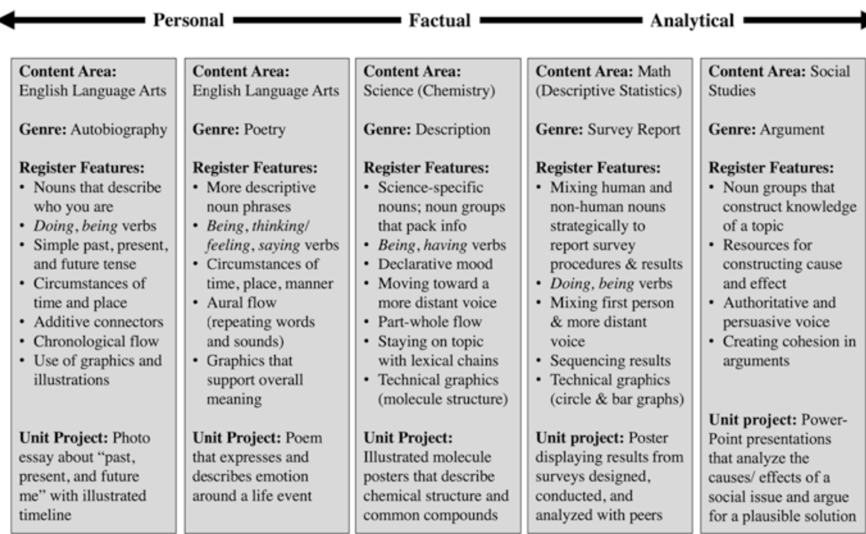


Fig. 1 Five curricular units planned along a genre spectrum

Throughout students' 9th and 10th grade years (2015–2016 and 2016–2017), we collaborated using an expanded TLC to design, implement, and collect data from five curricular units that simultaneously targeted English language development and content area standards. Each unit lasted 4–6 weeks. Figure 1 shows how we planned the units to build students' capacity to read, write, analyze, and discuss increasingly dense texts across different disciplines and genres over time. First, we supported students in analyzing the construction of personal experiences in English language arts. Then we progressed toward analyzing abstract and technical meanings in science, math, and social studies, being sure to identify specific state standards for each unit. Across these units, we focused on supporting students to gradually make sense of more complex and varied English clause structures; long, packed noun groups; and different types of verbs, grammatical participants, and circumstances of time, manner, and place. We chose these disciplinary genre and register features because even though these students had just arrived in Milltown under stressful circumstances and with limited formal schooling, they would be required to sit for state content exams in English language arts, math, and science after just 1 year, and would need to pass these exams to eventually graduate.

We produced a multilingual curriculum packet for each unit that included: a coversheet with the purpose of the unit, final project assignment, schedule of activities, and list of standards addressed; an overview of the target genre, its structure, and some register choices effective for constructing this genre; multimodal model texts representing the target genre and register features; a rubric that aligned to the model texts and specified how students' final projects would be assessed relative to the content and language objectives; activities to build background knowledge on the content topic; annotated model texts, reading guides, and graphic organizers to

scaffold reading and writing; expectations for independent construction; and information regarding final presentations of the unit's final project to a wider audience of peers, teachers and staff at Milltown High School, and guests from the university (see Gebhard et al., 2019b for sample materials).

As Grace, and later Jennie, implemented these units, other MMM members conducted classroom observations and wrote field notes; transcribed audio and video data of classroom interactions; collected samples of students' writing; interviewed Grace, Jennie, and the students formally and informally; and collected test score data. We kept in touch with students through their 11th and 12th grade years, as well, conducting follow-up interviews and continuing to track their standardized test scores. Over these 4 years, we used qualitative case study methods to document how we planned instruction, implemented scaffolding practices, and reflected on changes in students' literacy practices (Dyson, 1993).

3 Semiotic Mobility and Refugee Students' Literacy Practices

Over time, we found that using SFL concepts to design and implement curricular units created a classroom "contact zone" where SLIFE refugee students and MMM Collaborative members could "meet, clash, and grapple with" each other's languages and cultures in ways that supported the expansion of students' meaning-making resources and semiotic mobility in school (Pratt, 1991, p. 23). Within this contact zone students drew on gestures, graphics, images, their home and peer languages, and English in learning to read and write disciplinary texts. Further, through Grace and Jennie's use of the expanded TLC and SFL ways of talking about language choices at the word-, sentence-, and text-level in terms of their social functions, students expanded their use of a range of semiotic resources, including the ability to read and write disciplinary texts in English. The sections that follow detail these findings.

3.1 Mobilizing Multilingual/Multimodal Resources to Construct Disciplinary Literacies

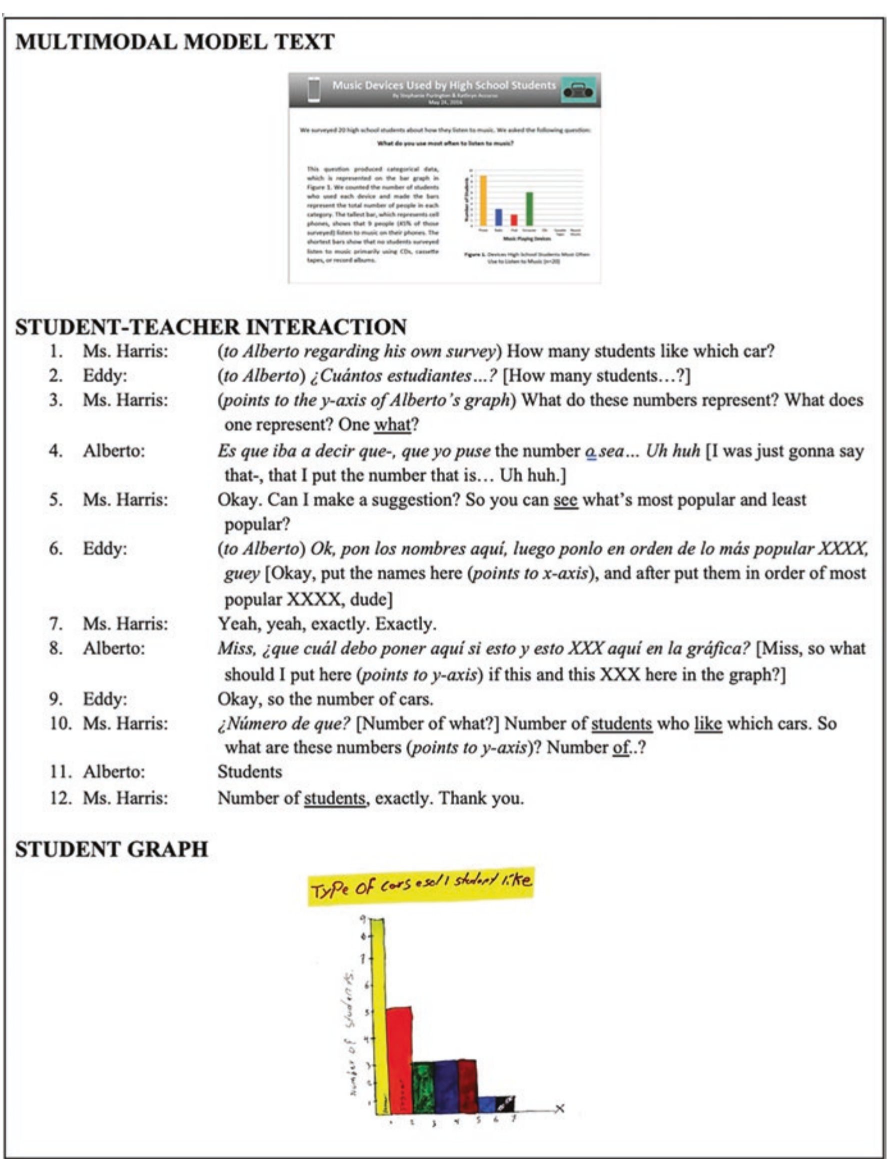
The prevailing view of language at use in Grace and Jennie's classes was that language is a dynamic, context-sensitive resource for accomplishing social purposes, including but not limited to disciplinary purposes (Halliday & Hasan, 1985). This perspective led to the creation of classroom and curricular spaces where dynamic meaning-making was not only expected, but encouraged. Students' multilingual and multimodal resources were seen as valued assets that teachers could build on. In Blommaert's (2010) terms, students' semiotic resources were mobile; they were

useful for moving through this instructional space. The types of semiotic resources students mobilized in this space included gestures; home, peer, and disciplinary languages; translating apps on cell phones (e.g., Google Translate); and multimodal graphics.

One example of this type of multilingual/multimodal meaning-making comes from the MMM math unit, where students designed, administered, analyzed, and presented survey data using descriptive statistics. In this unit, students worked with partners to write survey questions, collect responses from peers in another ESOL class, analyze and graph the responses, and report their findings orally and in writing on posters. Each partner was expected to create a circle or bar graph representing their survey results and write a two-paragraph report to accompany the graph. Figure 2 shows an interaction that took place toward the end of this unit between Grace, Alberto, and Eddy, two students from Guatemala. These students had read model texts, created and administered their own survey about students' favorite car makes and colors, and were now graphing their data. In this interaction, Alberto is trying to figure out how to organize his data regarding favorite makes of cars into an effective bar graph.

Though brief, the interaction shown in Fig. 2 captures the ways SLIFE refugee students in Grace's class drew on a wide range of semiotic resources to make sense in disciplinary situations, simultaneously developing disciplinary understandings and ways of representing those understandings. In this interaction alone, Grace and her students relied on a model text, multiple languages (Spanish and English), their own multimodal bar graph, gestures, and each other as resources for making mathematical meanings in visually accessible ways. Moreover, these resources were dynamically distributed. No one language, or any type of semiotic resource, belonged to one person. Rather, all types of semiotic resources were available and acceptable for Grace and her students to draw on as they needed to navigate the situation. As a result, Alberto and Eddy developed an expanded set of choices for communicating their survey analysis (e.g., ordering results in particular, meaningful ways), as evidenced by the final bar graph Alberto produced following this interaction (see Fig. 2). This data illustrates an important point: in Grace's class – an SFL-inspired contact zone – SLIFE refugee students did not develop English literacies by simply imitating or reproducing the kinds of texts they were asked to. They selected and adapted language in their environment, while also using their existing resources, and the home languages of their peers to accomplish their work and express their interests and aspirations in ways that gave them a foothold in an academic space. Therefore, even though the texts students produced by the end of each unit were entirely in English, they do not represent heterogeneous English literacy.

This level of semiotic mobility stands in contrast to ESOL classrooms where monolingual policies, practices, and ideologies lead students to be viewed reductively (Accurso et al., 2019). When multilingual students' full range of meaning-making resources fail to be recognized and taken up in disciplinary contexts, these semiotic resources become "immobile," which can lead to further perpetuation of deficit perspectives. The irony is that most SLIFE refugee students have experienced high levels of physical mobility by nature of their experiences arriving in the



MULTIMODAL MODEL TEXT

STUDENT-TEACHER INTERACTION

1. Ms. Harris: (*to Alberto regarding his own survey*) How many students like which car?
2. Eddy: (*to Alberto*) *¿Cuántos estudiantes…?* [How many students…?]
3. Ms. Harris: (*points to the y-axis of Alberto's graph*) What do these numbers represent? What does one represent? One what?
4. Alberto: *Es que iba a decir que-, que yo puse* the number *o sea… Uh huh* [I was just gonna say that-, that I put the number that is… Uh huh.]
5. Ms. Harris: Okay. Can I make a suggestion? So you can see what's most popular and least popular?
6. Eddy: (*to Alberto*) *Ok, pon los nombres aquí, luego ponlo en orden de lo más popular XXXX, guey* [Okay, put the names here (*points to x-axis*), and after put them in order of most popular XXXX, dude]
7. Ms. Harris: Yeah, yeah, exactly. Exactly.
8. Alberto: *Miss, ¿que cuál debo poner aquí si esto y esto XXX aquí en la gráfica?* [Miss, so what should I put here (*points to y-axis*) if this and this XXX here in the graph?]
9. Eddy: Okay, so the number of cars.
10. Ms. Harris: *¿Número de que?* [Number of what?] Number of students who like which cars. So what are these numbers (*points to y-axis*)? Number of..?
11. Alberto: Students
12. Ms. Harris: Number of students, exactly. Thank you.

STUDENT GRAPH

Fig. 2 Example of mobilizing multilingual/multimodal resources in a math lesson

United States. They have moved across complex social, institutional, economic, and political boundaries in ways that most students have not, no doubt engaging in high levels of semiotic flexibility in the process (Choi & Najar, 2017). Data from our study suggest that a social semiotic perspective can support teachers in designing classroom environments where refugee learners are not semiotically restricted, but expected and encouraged to move between varieties of languages selectively,

fluidly, creatively, and productively in ways that provide them with an expansive and functional meaning-making system upon which they can reflect and build disciplinary literacies.

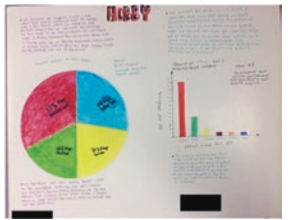
3.2 Expanding Disciplinary Englishes: The Case of Abad

To illustrate how this classroom environment supported specific advancements in SLIFE refugee students' disciplinary literacies, we offer a brief case study of another student, Abad, including an analysis of his final written projects across the five MMM curricular units. At the time the MMM Collaborative formed in 2015, Abad was a 15-year-old 9th grader. He had arrived the previous year from Iraq with both parents and four siblings after his family was granted asylum from the intense violence and warfare Iraq experienced following Saddam Hussein's ouster in 2003. Prior to their arrival in the United States, Abad and his family had moved several times, first living as refugees in Jordan and Syria. Abad attended elementary school in Syria. However, when civil war erupted there, his family was forced to return to Iraq for a year before fleeing to Jordan and ultimately coming to Milltown.

Abad was initially surprised to arrive in Milltown, a small formerly industrial city. He had imagined it would be more like the state's major metropolitan area. Nevertheless, he settled in and made friends quickly, especially with other refugee students and Arabic-speaking staff, and reported enjoying the lack of corporal punishment at Milltown High. He was eager to succeed in school and wanted to go on to college to pursue a career in civil engineering. Because he had arrived in the United States during the previous school year, Abad was expected to sit for the state's standardized content tests in the first year of the MMM Collaborative. And though Grace was not interested in "teaching to the test," she did have an eye on the ways state tests were consequential for movement in and beyond Milltown High. For example, test scores routinely paved the way (or shut down) opportunities for students to be placed in mainstream content classrooms designed to prepare them for college level courses.

Like Alberto and Eddy, Abad relied heavily on the model texts provided in each unit to produce extended texts of his own. Like them, he also relied on an expansive range of multilingual and multimodal resources in overlapping and productive ways to complete the challenging unit projects in English. Here, we focus on how the availability of those resources in Grace's classroom environment supported Abad over time in producing longer, more coherent content-based texts to achieve a variety of purposes using a variety of multimodal resources (e.g., illustrated timelines, images, circle graphs, PowerPoint slides), showing a gradual increase in his capacity to produce texts using an expanded range of genres and register features. Table 2 shows excerpts from each of the projects Abad completed in the MMM curricular units, illustrating how he moved from using English to construe his personal experiences in grammatically congruent ways to more poetic ways, eventually using

Table 2 Samples of a SLIFE refugee student's texts across disciplinary genres

Unit focus	Abad's texts	Typed excerpt
Language Arts **Topic:** Myself in the past, present, and future **Genre:** Autobiography	I was born on June 21,2000 in 2002 Me and my family went to Joldan because we need to see my ount In 2003, my uncle was killed because he is Muslim, I storeted school my first day in school I am very Scared. from 2006 until 2013 I lived in Syria because in Iraq war, in 2013, I come back to Iraq because in Syria War and I lived in Iraq for 11 months than I went to Jordon because therews a war in Iraq too. In 2014. I come to The United Stated in 2015, I went with my friend to make a Snow man.	I was born on June 21, 2000 in 2002 Me and my family went to Jordan because we need to see my ount In 2003, my uncle was killed because he is Muslim, I storeted school my first day in school I am very scared. from 2006 until 2013 I lived in Syria because in Iraq War, in 2013, I come back to Iraq because in Syria War and I lived in Iraq for 11 months than I went to Jordon because therews a war in Iraq too. in 2014. I come to the United Stated in 2015, I went with my friend to make a snow man.
Language Arts **Topic:** Expressing experience and emotion **Genre:** Poetry	FRIGHTENING LIFE My mom told me, her eyes flooded like rivers. But were red like blood. She screamed that he was dead. My whole body felt empty and fell to the ground. ☹☹☹☹☹☹☹☹☹☹☹☹☹ She yelled, "They killed him". When I understood, I felt the life is done. By:	**Frightening Life** My mom told me, her eyes flooded like rivers. But were red like blood. She screamed that he was dead. My whole body felt empty and fell to the ground. ☹☹☹☹☹☹☹☹☹☹☹☹☹ She yelled, "They killed him". When I understood, I felt the life is done.
Science **Topic:** Chemistry/ molecular structure **Genre:** Description		We cannot see sugar molecules without a special microscope because molecules are so small. The chemical formula is $C_{12}H_{22}O_{11}$. Sugar has 12 atoms of carbon 22 atoms of hydrogen and 11 atoms of oxygen.
Math **Topic:** Surveys/ descriptive statistics **Genre:** Survey report		We surveyed 24 students in ESOL 1 class about their favorite hobbies. We asked the following: What is your favorite hobby? We counted the totals for each category. Then we calculated the percentage for each hobby If you look at figure 1, the most popular hobby is playing basketball. The second most popular hobby is playing volley ball at 29%. The third most popular hobby is playing soccer with only 21%. The least popular hobby playing Football. With only 17 popularity Our hypothesis was that playing soccer would be the most popular hobby. The data didn't support our hypothesis because playing Basketball was the most popular.

(continued)

Table 2 (continued)

Unit focus	Abad's texts	Typed excerpt
Social Studies **Topic:** Causes, effects, and solutions to issues affecting our community **Genre:** Argument		Endangered animals are animals that are close to extinction. Why are animals endangered? 1. The first reason is because of the destruction of the habitat of these animals. 2. The second reason animals are endangered is because of the exploitation of animals to make profits. 3. The third reason animals are endangered is because pollution is destroying animals' natural environments. 4. The fourth reason animals are endangered is because of the spread of diseases. Having an abundance of habitats for plants and animals is what keeps us all healthy and happy because if we loss one plant or animal we will loss the balance of our ecosystems.

English to construct scientific generalizations, mathematical analyses, and arguments for social action.

In presenting these findings, we offer an SFL analysis of the autobiographical text Abad produced in the first unit of our collaboration and then compare it with excerpts from texts he produced in later units. At the time Abad wrote his autobiography, he had been in Milltown for a little over a year and was able to produce a mix of short and some expanded sentences in English as opposed to the single English words, gestures, and intonation he relied on to communicate in school when he first arrived. Drawing on the strong forms of scaffolding provided in the first curriculum packet, the final autobiography he presented to the class, titled *My Happy Life*, showed he was able to produce a booklet that included four sections: one about his past; one about his present; one about the future; and one that united past, present, and future in a timeline. His text included maps, graphics, and photographs of himself as a baby in Iraq and as a teenager in Milltown.

As the excerpt in Table 2 shows, Abad initially constructed sentences by repeating the same pattern: circumstances of time followed by common English noun and verb phrases. For instance, "From 2006 until 2013 I lived in Syria" and "In my free time I play soccer with my friends." By using this predictable sentence pattern, he was able to effectively construct meanings about his lived experiences and future aspirations. Moreover, Abad attempted to introduce cause-and-effect into his text by adding "because" clauses in some sentences. For example, "in 2013, I come back to Iraq because in Syria War."

In the subsequent poetry unit, Abad expanded his range of English resources to achieve more poetic purposes in construing his lived experience, to communicate emotions rather than just events. In this unit, he took one experience recounted in his autobiography – his uncle's death, which was the traumatic result of a car bombing – to construct the emotionality of that experience. In *My Happy Life*, his autobiography, Abad constructed his uncle's death as simply a thing that happened. His poem, *Frightening Life*, explored the emotional impact that event had on him (see Table 2). A register analysis of his poem shows that to accomplish this different purpose, Abad drew on an expanded range of graphic resources such as facial emojis, a wider range of verbs that communicate high emotion (*flooded, screamed, fell, yelled*), and more consistent use of the simple past tense.

Over time and with instructional support, Abad continued to expand his literacy practices and produce longer texts comprised of multiple, well-written paragraphs to achieve purposes such as describing, recounting procedures, reporting, and arguing. However, it is not just that he produced longer, less personal texts. Rather, drawing on multilingual and multimodal supports provided by the expanded TLC, Abad developed a range of English resources for making disciplinary meanings, as well as a more conscious ability to make choices about which resources to use in which contexts. For example, Abad's social studies text shows he was able to construct abstract content knowledge using technical terms and more complex and varied sentence structures while also connecting personally with his audience to persuade them. As Table 2 shows, he wrote, "Having an abundance of habitats for plants and animals is what keeps us all healthy and happy because if we loss one plant or animal we will loss the balance of our ecosystems." Here, he showcases new levels of syntactic complexity, cohesion, and disciplinary vocabulary (e.g., *habitat, ecosystem*). In comparison to his initial autobiography text, Abad is now using "because" to combine multiple complex clauses in ways designed to appeal to the collective humanity of his audience and persuade them to action, as opposed to constructing his personal experience. Abad also developed an ability to pack English noun groups with more abstract information, as in the following sentences that illustrate increases in his use of lexical density and abstraction over the science, math, and social studies projects.

Science: Sugar has 12 atoms of carbon, 22 atoms of hydrogen and 11 atoms of oxygen.

Math: We counted the totals for each category. Then we calculated the percentage for each hobby.

Social studies: Why are animals endangered? The first reason is because of the destruction of the habitat of these animals.

After his participation in the MMM units, Abad went on to take and pass mandatory state exams in English language arts, math, and science; graduate from Milltown High; and begin taking classes at Milltown Community College to pursue the goal of becoming a civil engineer. In fact, all 19 SLIFE refugee students who participated in the MMM units passed their state content exams and graduated high school. Two students, including Abad, enrolled in college courses directly after graduation;

others had plans to continue studies after taking time to work and save money for tuition. We certainly are not claiming that the MMM units or Grace and Jennie's use of the TLC caused these achievements. After all, Abad, like all of the SLIFE refugee students in this study, had a wide variety of other literacy experiences and supports in and outside of school during this time. However, we do believe based on a longitudinal analysis of the MMM curricular materials, students' use of these materials in classroom interactions, their writing samples, and performance on standardized measures of disciplinary literacy over time, that the semiotic expansion students experienced in the MMM units was useful in other school contexts. In other words, these resources were mobile.

3.3 Semiotic (Im)mobility and the Influence of Legal Immigration Status

Inasmuch as students' semiotic resources were mobile in the context of the MMM Collaborative and Milltown High, they were not always mobile in the broader Milltown context. Over time, we found students' experiences of semiotic immobility to be closely related to the material affordances and constraints of their legal immigration status. That is, whether they were legally considered a refugee or not. Commonly, a refugee is anyone who has escaped their home country because of war, persecution, violence, or natural disaster. All the students in this study certainly met that definition. However, according to U.S. immigration policy, only a few were legally recognized as refugees.

As Table 3 shows, students held three distinct immigration statuses.[4] When the MMM Collaborative formed in 2015, most of Grace's students were undocumented minors. They had arrived at the southern U.S. border without parents and were immediately identified by immigration authorities which led to their inclusion on a list for removal. However, these students were eligible to apply for special immigrant juvenile status through the family court system. Applying for this status was often financially and emotionally costly. The application process required students who had already experienced a great deal of turmoil and instability to obtain a lawyer and testify to parental abandonment in a courtroom setting. However, applying for special immigrant juvenile status would allow them to be recognized as

[4] SLIFE refugee students with other immigration statuses may experience different affordances and constraints associated with these statuses (e.g., Iraqi Special Immigrant visas, asylum granted after arrival in the United States, DACA). In Table 3 it is important to note that students with special immigrant juvenile (SIJ) status are eligible to apply for increased levels of state health coverage and in-state college tuition; however, these affordances are not automatically triggered. They may apply for work permits and driver's licenses only after an immigration judge submits their request for permanent residency and a provisional social security number has been issued. These application processes are often confusing, subjective, and require initiative and know-how to navigate, making it difficult to materialize the affordances of SIJ status without the assistance of an advocate.

Table 3 Material affordances and constraints of Milltown students' legal immigration status

Status	Material affordances (cumulative from top to bottom)	Material constraints
1) **Undocumented,** but eligible to apply for special immigrant juvenile status and permanent residency	• K-12 public schooling • Emergency health coverage	• No driver's license • No work permit; must rely on under the table work • Challenge to find lawyer to apply for special immigrant juvenile status before removal proceedings • Missed school and work for lawyer and court appointments • Pressure to contribute to household finances/send money home • Only eligible for international college tuition
2) **Special immigrant juvenile,** applying for permanent residency	• Basic health coverage • In-state college tuition • Work permit • Driver's license	• Long wait for permanent residency • Not eligible for state or federal financial aid or loans for college
3) **Permanent resident**		
a. Via special immigrant juvenile status	• Standard health coverage • Eligible to apply for state and federal financial aid and loans • Can apply for citizenship after 5 years	• Debt from lawyer fees (up to $13,000)
b. Via successful asylum application (i.e., legally recognized refugee)	• U.S. passport • Resettlement assistance (housing, food, small stipend, case worker) for 8 months • Food stamps for 2 years • Can come as family if approved before arrival	• Had to leave behind married and older siblings, other extended family • Cannot visit home country and return to U.S.

"lawfully present," a key step in avoiding deportation and opening a pathway to permanent residency and ultimately citizenship. Alberto, Eddy, and the other 11 students from Guatemala were in this situation (see Table 1). In contrast, four of Grace's students were already recognized as lawfully present when they arrived in her class. Their families had successfully applied for asylum – legal refugee status – before they came to the United States. This included Abad, two other Iraqi students, and their classmates from Rwanda and Vietnam; in other words, all the students from overseas. Their immigration process was also laborious and traumatic, but many hurdles were behind them by the time they arrived in Grace's class.

Expanded semiotic repertoires supported all of these students in passing high stakes exams and earning high school diplomas. Yet 4 years of extensive formal and informal interview data suggest students' academic and economic trajectories were also strongly influenced by their immigration status. Thus, the nuances of refugee students' different legal statuses complicate race, class, and gender analyses of educational inequities experienced by more "typical" English learners (e.g., Callahan, 2005; Cammarota & Aguilera, 2012; Partes & McLeod, 1996).

For instance, as Table 3 indicates, the undocumented refugee students were separated from one or both parents and were unable to receive various kinds of public assistance. Therefore, these youth shouldered the responsibility of paying for their own food, rent, and costly legal fees associated with moving through the family court system toward lawfully present status. Many were also trying to save money to support family members in their home countries, and in some cases fund a sibling's migration to the United States. Yet these students were initially ineligible for work permits, so were under intense pressure to find under-the-table work. Jobs available to undocumented minors in and around Milltown were physically grueling, low paying, and often seasonal, leaving students scrambling to combine agricultural work in the warmer months with late night cleaning or kitchen work such as washing dishes through the winter. Working 30 or more hours per week contributed to some undocumented refugee students' inability to concentrate in school. For others, it meant not being able to participate in after-school activities, such as playing soccer or participating in art and music programs despite having interest and talent. Further, because these students' immigration status would not allow them to get a driver's license, many had to rely on public transportation to get to work or face the high risks of driving without a license.

Meanwhile, students who were approved asylum seekers and had official legal designation as refugees received substantially greater material supports. For example, they were eligible to come to the United States as a family. This was a complicated benefit for some students because 'family' is legally defined as parents and minor children, meaning some students were faced with leaving older siblings behind when their asylum applications were approved. However, once approved for official refugee status, these families received a resettlement package that included housing, food support, a small monthly stipend, and a case worker to help facilitate doctor appointments, applications for employment, English classes, transportation, school placements, and the like. Further, these students were automatically eligible for driver's licenses and work permits, which meant they had access to different kinds of teenage jobs and were protected by minimum wage laws that, at the time, supported them in earning at least $11/hour.

In terms of students' daily routines, these statuses made all the difference. As newly arrived 9th graders, undocumented students like Alberto and Eddy went to work every day after school before going home. In contrast, Abad came home every day after school and reported that his typical routine was to have a snack, do homework for 30 min, and sometimes take a nap. He did not have to have a job to contribute to the family income, and his mother was at home when he and his siblings came home.

Over time, many of the undocumented refugee students became special immigrant juveniles and moved toward permanent residency, gaining the material affordances of these legal designations at the same time their English literacies were expanding (Table 3). For instance, as some of these students gained work permits and increased English proficiency, several moved into jobs waiting tables, enjoying regular hours and higher pay than in harvesting and dish-washing jobs. However, they also experienced significant stress moving into positions where they were more visible to the public. As teenagers with incomplete understandings of the U.S. immigration system and the implications of their specific legal status at any given time, these students routinely reported worrying about being harassed or even deported when they went to work. These worries became particularly marked following the 2016 election of Donald Trump, which ushered in rapid changes to interpretation of federal immigration policies, a series of high profile raids, and more open and virulent racism toward Latinx people in Milltown. Though students were experiencing demonstrable multilingual expansion in school, outside of school they were "communicatively incapacitated" to some degree by a legal status and presidential discourse that designated them "out of place" (Blommaert et al., 2005, p. 198). They did not lack an individual capacity to communicate or interact, but were incapacitated to some degree by "the particular environment [which] organized a particular regime" (p. 198).

On the other hand, students who had legal refugee status did not have to navigate changes in their immigration status, which freed them up to move through school and society in different ways. For example, because he was not bound by legal debt, lack of transportation, or a need to pursue under-the-table work, Abad was able to participate in different extracurricular activities and use his increasing English proficiency in different ways. In the summer following 9th grade, for example, he participated in a summer conservation camp at the university with a pre-service teacher from the MMM Collaborative. In this environment, his emerging disciplinary English literacies were both recognized and praised. He later worked seasonal positions where he interacted with the public (e.g., taking tickets at a local theme park, holiday cashiering at a department store). And though he worried about the implications of the Trump presidency for his family's immigration status, by 2019 they had secured citizenship.

4 Summary and Discussion

In sum, this chapter has described how SFL concepts offered a team of university researchers and high school ESOL teachers an asset-oriented way to perceive SLIFE refugee students' literacy practices and design rigorous but supportive English literacy instruction for them. Moreover, we have shown how aspects of different classroom and community environments influenced the mobility of students' expanding literacies, leading to a more nuanced understanding of the high school experience for newly arrived SLIFE refugees.

Together, these findings offer a nuanced perspective on what it means to be a SLIFE refugee youth tasked with learning disciplinary literacies in the U.S. public school system today. They also offer a refined view of connections between SLIFE refugee students' development of disciplinary literacies and their economic and political lives outside of school. By looking at students' movement through different environments in and outside of school, we were able to get a glimpse of the larger frames that influence what moves "are possible, get enabled, get denied, and have effects" and "what counts as competencies in real environments" (Blommaert et al., 2005, p. 199). SFL concepts enacted through an expanded TLC were productive for designing curriculum and classroom spaces where multilingual SLIFE refugee students experienced semiotic expansion and academic success. Yet the ways that characteristics of the broader environment influenced students' semiotic mobility highlight further questions about the situatedness of language teaching and learning for SLIFE refugee students in the United States, such as: How can schools and communities better support the semiotic mobility of SLIFE refugee students' with different immigration statuses? What are the implications of legal designations for the design of equitable disciplinary literacy curriculum and instruction at the secondary level?

Our collective experience in the MMM Collaborative suggests these questions might productively be pursued within university-school partnerships, though we recommend formally including community partners, as well. In our case, the long-term nature of the partnership allowed us to address some issues Grace and Jennie were facing in SLIFE refugee education with greater awareness of the material affordances and constraints presented by the surrounding environment, and with occasional support from different community members in our networks. However, as Grace and Jennie reflected at the end of the study, this work was messy at times and came with significant ethical considerations, such as how and when to share information students confided (if at all); how teachers and researchers were checking their own biases, assumptions, judgments, and conclusions about information students confided; and how to take care that information students shared about their lives was actually informing curriculum development, instruction, and the classroom ecology in ways that supported students. Therefore, in addition to the theory and pedagogy we oriented to in the MMM Collaborative, we recommend future university-school-community partners also spend time explicitly discussing issues of relationship, power, and responsibility.

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Mexican Migrant Parents' Access to School Resources and Perceptions of U.S. Schools: The Interstice of Linguistic Structural Realities and Family Cultural Backgrounds

Rebecca Campbell-Montalvo and Anne E. Pfister

Abstract The two goals of this chapter are: (1) to investigate the resources provided by public schools to students from migrant farmworking families with varying citizenship status; and (2) to understand how their parents perceive their children's U.S. school experiences. These Mexican and/or Indigenous families have come to the U.S. in fear of violence, to escape poverty, and with a lack of educational or social opportunity in Mexico. This study contributes to understandings of how U.S. schools might better meet the needs of children and families from migrant farmworking (often Indigenous) backgrounds who are forcibly displaced from their homelands due to economic inequality and political upheaval. As Campbell-Montalvo has written about elsewhere (2019), "Indigenous migrants are at the margins of multiple racial, ethnic, and national spaces" (see also Casanova SB. Hisp J Behav Sci 34(3):375–403, 2012; Casanova SB, O'Connor B, Anthony-Stevens V. Lat Stud 14(2):192–213, 2016; Zúñiga ML, Lewin-Fischer P, Cornelius D, Cornelius W, Goldenberg S, Keyes D. J Immigr Minor Health 16:329–339, 2014). Of the one million Indigenous Latinos who have migrated to the U.S., the largest groups are Mixtec, Zapotec, and Triqui from Oaxaca (McGuire S, Georges J. Adv Nurs Sci 26(3):185–195, 2003).

Set within the agricultural and rural Florida Heartland, this chapter draws on more than 100 observations of elementary school offices and classrooms, 21 interviews with teachers and staff, and 13 interviews with Mexican migrant parents. Analysis of data shows that language accessibility and access to school resources differed between two elementary schools (Emerald and Apple) in a rural district serving migrant farmworking families fleeing economic insecurity, social unrest, and political turmoil in Mexico. One of the elementary schools (Emerald) was known to be accommodating to families and comparatively more linguistically

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accessible. Although half of the interviewees' children attended Apple, which grappled with linguistic accessibility, all parents interviewed had positive views of both schools. The chapter outlines the ways these parents put forth extra effort, through emotional and unpaid labor and ingenuity, in the face of linguistic inaccessibility in order to access school resources for their children.

Keywords Bilingualism · Elementary schools · Florida · Indigenous Latinos · Language accessibility and ideology · Latinization · Mestizaje · School ethnography · Spanish.

1 Introduction

The goal of this chapter is to understand both how public schools serve Mexican migrant families, including the many who are Indigenous, with attention to the degree to which school resources are linguistically accessible (e.g., available in languages understandable by parents), and how these parents perceive their children's school experiences in Florida schools. We frame our research within an educational linguistic perspective to ask how language policy and practices impact families' abilities to access school resources (Spolsky, 2010). We specifically seek to understand how student and family language use is understood by schools and how that information is utilized in decisions about program changes to meet the needs of families. At the same time, we also analyze how families perceive their children's schooling and the factors that influence those perceptions.

Addressing this goal is important to supporting more equitable practices in schools. This study considers immigrant movement from Mexico to the U.S. and migratory movement within the U.S. This chapter contributes to understandings of how U.S. schools might better meet the needs of migratory children and families who have been displaced as a result of economic inequality, financial insecurity, and political turmoil. It specifically informs understandings of global contexts where migration and refugee resettlement are commonplace and where linguistically-appropriate pedagogy and policy is needed. Schools across the U.S. face challenges providing education to immigrants (Winders, 2013), and migration within the U.S. presents its own educational challenges (Florida Department of Education, 2020a).

As recently as a few years ago, there were an estimated one million Indigenous Latinos living in the U.S., with the majority being Mixtec, Zapotec, and Trique people from Oaxaca, Mexico, with many migrating to pursue economic opportunity through securing farm work (McGuire & Georges, 2003; Holmes, 2013). In addition, the U.S. has experienced an increase in immigration of Central Americans from Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador who seek to escape poverty and violence in their countries of origin (Larson, 2019). Like the participants in this study, many of these immigrant families have little formal education (or none) and many speak Indigenous languages (Medina, 2019). The immigrant share of the U.S. population, 14% in 2019, is approaching some of the highest rates observed—nearing

those of the 1900s (Connor & Budiman, 2019). The increase in immigration is connected to the increasing rate of people who live in homes where languages other than English are spoken; approximately one out of five people over age 5 years uses a language other than English. However, in U.S. public schools, there is often a linguistic, racial, and ethnic mismatch between the majority of the monolingual, U.S.-born white teaching workforce and the more diverse body of students they serve (La Salle et al., 2020). In addition to this mismatch, students from migrant families may be underserved by their schools, socially neglected, living apart from their immediate family members, and navigating school while fearing–or experiencing–deportation of their parents or other community members (Arzubiaga et al., 2009).

This chapter draws from a larger ethnographic study conducted in two Florida elementary schools serving a large number of Latino migrant students. For this chapter, we analyze school observations, interviews with school employees, and interviews with migrant Mexican students' parents about their experiences in and with U.S. schools. These schools that are the focus of this chapter are located in Central County,[1] where many families have sought farm work and refuge–not entirely voluntarily– as they fled violence and economic deprivation in their countries of origin. Their movement into local schools and communities has changed the face of the local population in recent decades, increasing the proportion of the county's Latino population from 23% in 1990 to 47% in 2019. Twelve percent of the district's students are children of migrant farm workers and many students and families are undocumented (Campbell, 2016).

U.S. law mandates that the language of all students, including those from Mexican-origin and/or Indigenous families, is recorded during registration in order to help the school support their education. Previous research shows that Indigenous Mexican language speakers are generally undercounted by a factor of 19 in school records (Campbell-Montalvo, 2020b), while the Indigenous racial identities of Indigenous Mexican students are undercounted by a factor of 10 in some Central schools (Campbell-Montalvo, 2020a). However, the procedures used during school registration in Central erase linguistic and racial Indigeneity and are the result of school and state processes that Latinize Indigenous Mexicans as Latino Spanish speakers (Campbell-Montalvo, 2020a, b). The inaccurate accounting for these families, locally and in state-sponsored reports, underscores their marginality and vulnerability in U.S. structural systems. Scholars have also found the Latinization of Indigenous Mexican students as Latino Spanish speakers in other contexts (i.e. Baquedano-López, 2019). While most the families interviewed for this research spoke Indigenous languages, including Náhuatl, Mixtec, Trique, and Zapotec, they all could also communicate in Spanish (with varying degrees of fluency). In this chapter, we describe and analyze some of the ways that Central County schools attempted to accommodate the migrant farmworking families by making material and communication available in Spanish (the first language of some but not all of the families from Mexico).

[1] The county, school, and participant names in this work are all anonyms.

Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) of ethnographic data shows that language accessibility and access to school resources differed between the two elementary schools featured in this chapter (Emerald and Apple). Emerald was generally quite accommodating to migrant Mexican families and comparatively linguistically accessible, especially for parents interacting with school office staff. However, even though half of the interviewees' children attended Apple, which grappled with linguistic accessibility, all migrant Mexican parents interviewed relayed positive views of the schools. Our comparative analysis shows that inadequate or inaccurate understandings of migrant families' language(s) influence the kinds of goods, services and accommodations that are provided to migrant families. However, we also show that, even though the accommodations provided by each school were not sufficient, parents continued to hold positive views of both schools. The following sections provide a description of the county context and the methods used in this research. We then present (1) key findings from interviews with school employees and school observations concerning how language diversity was accommodated in two Central County elementary schools, and (2) key findings from interviews with parents on their opinions surrounding their children's schools.

2 Central's County and School Context

Central County is part of the Florida Heartland, a culturally distinct area that is more rural than many other parts of Florida. Its cultural features and structural inequalities are grafted upon a backdrop of migration and racial and ethnic intergroup dynamics (Campbell, 2016; Saldana et al., Forthcoming). Christianity and political conservatism are prevalent, evidenced by high church attendance and some of the highest Republican voting trends in all of Florida. Many locals wear cowboy hats, boots, or camouflage and drive pickup trucks; and confederate flags are not an uncommon sight.

Beginning in the 1950s, *Tejanos* (Texan-born Mexicans) migrated to the area to harvest watermelon (Mize & Swords, 2010; Campbell-Montalvo & Castañeda, 2019), and slowly replaced the existing harvesting workforce, which was comprised of white, African American, and African Caribbean people. During the 1970s and 1980s, more migrants arrived directly from Mexico. The movement of Latino migrants, mostly Mexican Latinos, into the area for agricultural farm work contributed to a population change such that Central's population now approaches a majority of Latino residents. After 2015, more H-2A workers[2] were employed than previously and more migrants came from Guatemala than in years past (Campbell-Montalvo & Castañeda, 2019).

Today, almost two-thirds of the district's ~ 5000 students are Latino, according to state records. However, these records do not delineate the countries of origin of these families, nor do they provide insight into their primary languages. During the

[2] The H-2A is a special visa that allows foreign nationals to work in agriculture in the United States (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2020). The visas support domestic agricultural needs and are typically valid for no more than 10 months.

Table 1 Ethnic and racial demographics of central students, 2014–2015

School/District	Latino	White	Black	Multiracial	Asian	American Indian
Apple	61%	29%	7%	2%	<1%	<1%
Emerald	80%	17%	<1%	<1%	<1%	0
District	61%	30%	6%	2%	1%	<1%

2014–2015 school year, when this research was conducted, state records showed that both schools described in this chapter had a significant number of migrant students[3] (12% of students at Apple and 21% at Emerald). Both also had a significant number of students identified as "English Language Learners" (21% of students at Apple and 48% at Emerald). Table 1 shows that roughly two-thirds of Apple's students were Latino and one-third were white, while four-fifths of Emerald's students were Latino and nearly one-fifth were white. In considering these racial and ethnic demographic figures from 2014–2015, it should be noted that the Florida Department of Education counts Latino students only in the Latino category, erasing, for instance, the 10% of students at Central Junior High who were Indigenous (Campbell-Montalvo, 2020a). Emerald, with 373 students, was about 70% of the size of Apple, which served 547 students. More than 80% of students in each school were economically disadvantaged. The overall demographics of students in the distract largely mirrored those found in Apple.[4]

3 Research Methods

All 34 interviews were audio-recorded, except one with a school employee due to participant preference, in which case notetaking was used with periodic checks with the participant to confirm accuracy. Interviews were conducted in quiet public places, school offices behind closed doors, or outside of participants' homes. Campbell-Montalvo conducted English interviews alone and conducted those in Spanish with Yenny Saldaña, a bilingual (Spanish and English) Mexicana from Central who is a longtime collaborator of the author (e.g., Saldaña et al., forthcoming). The italicization of transcript passages reported in this chapter denote when they are translations. Semi-structured interview guides were used, with additional probing follow-up items to elicit more information. For example, school employees were asked open-ended questions, including:

- Have you ever had a language-related problem in your class?
- Do you have any problems talking with parents?
- Do Spanish or English language skills impact access to school resources?

Examples of questions asked in parent interviews included:

[3] During the time of this research, the No Child Left Behind Act qualified migrant children as those part of a family that traveled in the past three years for seasonal, temporary, or agricultural labor.

[4] See Campbell-Montalvo (2020b) for robust language information about both schools.

- Do you recall any language-related issues arising in your child's education?
- Do you think that children in Central are receiving a good education?
- Does your child receive an equal quality of education compared to other children?

The 100 observations or participant observations in school spaces, including classrooms, school offices, and meetings across the schools, were recoded via field notes taken by Campbell-Montalvo, and many were also audio recorded. Portions of audio recordings during relevant observations were transcribed to offer more detailed examples. Artifacts of school communication used by school workers during observations were also collected to support analyses.

The interview transcripts and observation fieldnotes were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), which entails the creation of a codebook based on research questions and concepts therein, interview protocol, and the content of the interviews. Data were coded using the established codebook, and passages that had been coded with particular codes (e.g., language-related problems in school, school resource access, school translation efforts, perceptions on schools, perceptions on school equity) relevant to the study's focus on school language accessibility and school views were reviewed for this chapter by Campbell-Montalvo. Themes emerging from this procedural review then became the components of main findings, which were then reported with excerpts exemplifying the larger themes used for illustration.[5]

Researcher reflexivity is an important component of ethnographic research where relationships are developed in the field because researcher positionality can affect participant responses. The primary investigator, Campbell-Montalvo, is a white woman who speaks English as a first language and learned Spanish as an adult. This positionality likely affected participant responses in ways that are important to reflect upon, though the content of interviews suggests rapport was successfully built and maintained throughout data collection. Saldaña offered additional context after parent interviews, suggesting that sometimes people might have held back, specifically noting that families may not have wanted to voice concerns for fear of calling attention to themselves, but that based on her experience as a member of communities from which participants come, she felt interviews generally successfully captured people's views (see also Campbell, 2016).

4 Linguistic Accessibility at Apple Elementary and Emerald Elementary: School Observations and Employee Interviews

Based on observations of classrooms and interviews with school staff and parents, migrant students' access to school resources was restricted at Apple and facilitated by the language(s) used and linguistic accommodations provided at Emerald. Differences emerged between language(s) in use at both schools. In the sections that

[5] See Campbell (2016) for further details on measures and methods, including complete protocol used in interviews and observations, and details on participants and observation contexts.

follow, we analyze (1) the extent to which school communications and notes sent home to families from school was accessible to families in Spanish; (2) availability of interpreters in the school office and at school meetings; and (3) the larger school infrastructure or systems, including people, resources, or protocol supporting (or restricting) interpretation or translation.

4.1 Translations of School-Home Correspondence

At Apple, notes sent home to students from its main office on behalf of the district and state, on behalf of administrators, and on behalf teachers were almost always in English only, according to observations and interviews with school employees and parents. A monolingual English-speaking white woman, Barbara, was responsible for Apple's school-wide correspondence which was rarely sent home in Spanish. Sometimes the district or state provided Spanish versions of documents, but Barbara only made ten or so copies. These were not distributed to Spanish-speaking families, but instead were kept at the office for students to "come up and get." Campbell-Montalvo observed and confirmed that it was rarely made explicit to teachers and students that the option for them to "come up and get" these translations existed.

As an example, Campbell-Montalvo observed Apple's administrators send home a form to families asking if they wanted to use Summer Bridge books, educational enrichment for students to take home and use with parents during the summer. Apple's school advisory council approved the purchase of $2000 worth of books. Administrators planned to use responses to the forms to determine which students would receive the books. However, the forms were sent home only in English (Fig. 1[6]). Another form from a school advisory council meeting was the Contract for Learning, an agreement between students, parents, and teachers about their responsibilities. This document was sent home to students in English and Spanish; however, the Spanish version had not been updated after changes were made to the English version. This resulted in a signed agreement for a different educational experience for children based on the languages they spoke (compare the bullet points on each form, Fig. 2).

Letters sent to families from Apple teachers were almost always sent home in English only, even though some teachers had requested that such letters be translated into Spanish. For instance, Campbell-Montalvo made copies of a field trip form for Mrs. Wilson, a white monolingual English-speaking first-grade teacher, during participant observations. Campbell-Montalvo asked her why the form was not also in Spanish. The transcribed conversation showed that Mrs. Wilson responded that she had asked Mrs. Reyes, one of the bilingual teachers on her team often tasked with translating, to translate the document on three occasions. Mrs. Reyes reportedly told Mrs. Wilson to "'just tell the kids they can understand it. They can read it without it [the translation], they don't need it.'" Mrs. Wilson stated that there was a legal imperative to provide translation of school correspondence, to which Campbell-Montalvo asked, "Legally? What do you mean?" Mrs. Wilson

[6] Note, identifying information (i.e. school names) have been edited out of all figures for privacy.

Elementary School

Florida

Principal

Assistant Principal

April 20, 2015

Here at Elementary, we value learning as a team effort between the family, the child, and the school. While we all look forward to the relaxation and fun that summer brings, some parents have asked how they can help their children continue to grow academically.

In an effort to address this concern, our School Advisory Council is looking into the possibility of purchasing Summer Bridge workbooks and/or summer activity packets for students transitioning from grades K to 1, 1 to 2, and 2 to 3. Because funding is limited, we're surveying families to see who would be committed to making proper use of such materials during the summer months.

___ I would like these materials to be provided for my child. We will commit to completing the workbook/packet and returning it to school in the fall. I will assist and encourage my child as needed.

Parent Signature: ___________

Child's Name: ___________

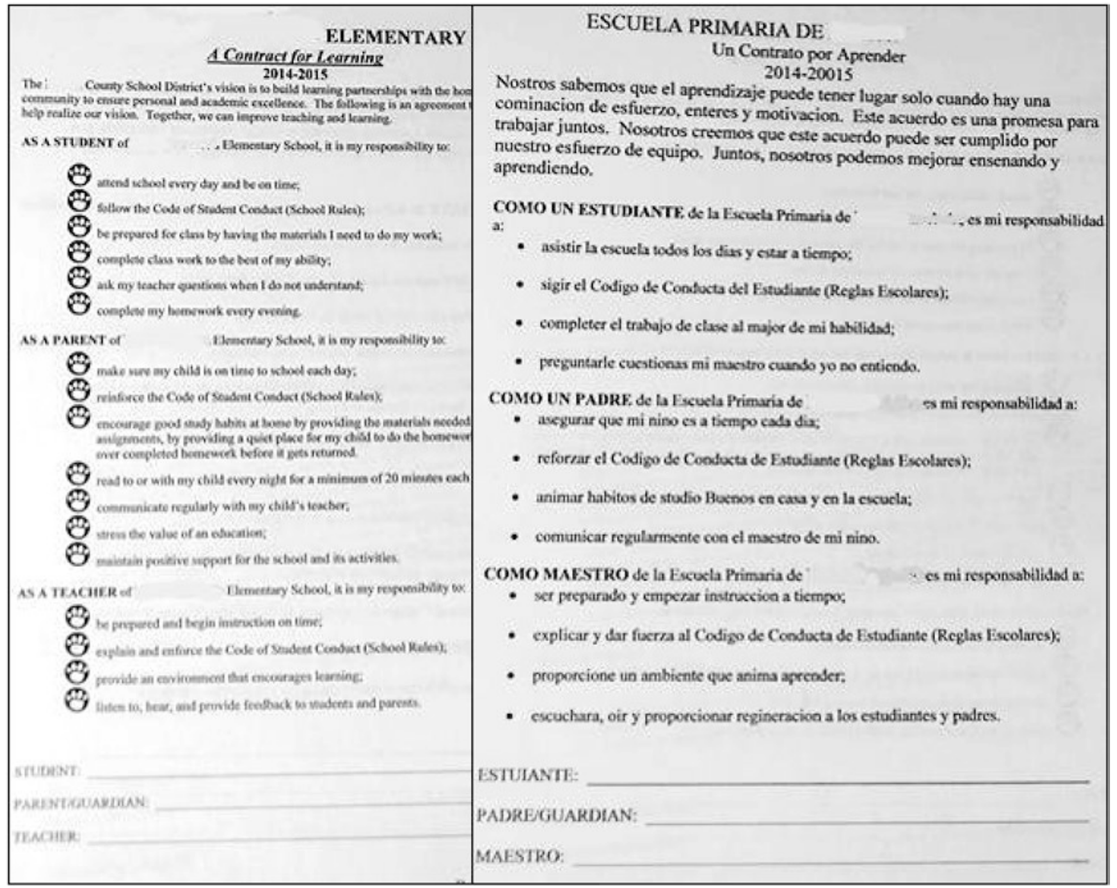
Teacher's Name: ___________

Current Grade Level: K 1 2

Please return by Friday, April 24th!

Fig. 1 Summer bridge book form at Apple

replied that she was told that documents needed to go home in English and Spanish. Campbell-Montalvo asked, "When did they tell you that? Did they send you an email?" Mrs. Wilson explained that providing information to families in English and Spanish had (until recently) been a common practice during her time at Apple. In fact, a joint statement released by the U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Education (2020) confirms her understanding. It states, "Schools must communicate information to limited English proficient parents in a language



ELEMENTARY

A Contract for Learning

2014-2015

The County School District's vision is to build learning partnerships with the hom community to ensure personal and academic excellence. The following is an agreement t help realize our vision. Together, we can improve teaching and learning.

AS A STUDENT of . . Elementary School, it is my responsibility to:

- attend school every day and be on time;
- follow the Code of Student Conduct (School Rules);
- be prepared for class by having the materials I need to do my work;
- complete class work to the best of my ability;
- ask my teacher questions when I do not understand;
- complete my homework every evening.

AS A PARENT of Elementary School, it is my responsibility to:

- make sure my child is on time to school each day;
- reinforce the Code of Student Conduct (School Rules);
- encourage good study habits at home by providing the materials needed assignments, by providing a quiet place for my child to do the homewor over completed homework before it gets returned.
- read to or with my child every night for a minimum of 20 minutes each
- communicate regularly with my child's teacher;
- stress the value of an education;
- maintain positive support for the school and its activities.

AS A TEACHER of Elementary School, it is my responsibility to:

- be prepared and begin instruction on time;
- explain and enforce the Code of Student Conduct (School Rules);
- provide an environment that encourages learning;
- listen to, hear, and provide feedback to students and parents.

STUDENT: ________

PARENT/GUARDIAN: ________

TEACHER: ________

ESCUELA PRIMARIA DE

Un Contrato por Aprender

2014-20015

Nostros sabemos que el aprendizaje puede tener lugar solo cuando hay una cominacion de esfuerzo, enteres y motivacion. Este acuerdo es una promesa para trabajar juntos. Nosotros creemos que este acuerdo puede ser cumplido por nuestro esfuerzo de equipo. Juntos, nosotros podemos mejorar ensenando y aprendiendo.

COMO UN ESTUDIANTE de la Escuela Primaria de , es mi responsabilidad a:

- asistir la escuela todos los dias y estar a tiempo;
- sigir el Codigo de Conducta del Estudiante (Reglas Escolares);
- completer el trabajo de clase al major de mi habilidad;
- preguntarle cuestionas mi maestro cuando yo no entiendo.

COMO UN PADRE de la Escuela Primaria de es mi responsabilidad a:

- asegurar que mi nino es a tiempo cada dia;
- reforzar el Codigo de Conducta de Estudiante (Reglas Escolares);
- animar habitos de studio Buenos en casa y en la escuela;
- comunicar regularmente con el maestro de mi nino.

COMO MAESTRO de la Escuela Primaria de es mi responsabilidad a:

- ser preparado y empezar instruccion a tiempo;
- explicar y dar fuerza al Codigo de Conducta de Estudiante (Reglas Escolares);
- proporcione un ambiente que anima aprender;
- escuchara, oir y proporcionar regineracion a los estudiantes y padres.

ESTUIANTE: ________

PADRE/GUARDIAN: ________

MAESTRO: ________

Fig. 2 School code of conduct at Apple, with fewer bulleted sentences on the Spanish version

they can understand about any program, service, or activity that is called to the attention of parents who are proficient in English."

On another occasion when translation of correspondence was not made available in Spanish, a different white monolingual English kindergarten teacher at Apple chose to send those materials home in English only. Afterward, a Spanish-speaking mother came into Apple's main office where Campbell-Montalvo was doing observations to ask about the two documents that were sent home to her child. Campbell-Montalvo looked at the documents and explained the documents to the mother in Spanish. One document was a newsletter from her child's teacher explaining how parents can help their children study and included the Sight Words her child should learn, while the other was a class t-shirt order form. Campbell-Montalvo translated the newsletter in Spanish and emailed it to the teacher who sent it home. Campbell-Montalvo offered to translate further classroom correspondence for that teacher, but the teacher did not make any requests.

At Emerald, by contrast, observations and interviews showed that documents sent home on behalf of the district and state, administrators, and teachers were almost always distributed in two languages, English and Spanish. The person responsible for correspondence at Emerald was a bilingual Mexicana office worker, Juana, who had grown up in a family of migrant agricultural workers. It was clear during observations, and Juana also shared examples during her interview, that she routinely (and meticulously) translated long forms, field trip forms, district and state notices, principal notices, and more (Fig. 3). During her interview with Juana, Campbell-Montalvo asked about her motivation to send documents home in both languages. Juana showed a district letter that indicated that all children would start to receive free lunch and breakfast and remarked that she and the assistant principal were "unwilling" to send the letter home only in English, pointing out that it used a lot vocabulary that may have been complicated for people for whom English is not their first language. While conducting observations at Apple, Campbell-Montalvo noted that the same letter was sent home to families in English only; it had not been translated into Spanish.

Both Apple and Emerald are designated Title I schools. Under Title I statutes, the State of Florida provides "additional resources to schools with economically disadvantaged students" (Florida Department of Education, 2020b). The additional resources include free and reduced lunches. Most, if not all, migrant families would qualify for these targeted services, but letters like the one referenced here are often a connective step for families to understand and take advantage of those resources.

Juana and school administrators prioritized translation and linguistic accessibility at Emerald. However, Juana revealed in her interview that all Emerald teachers did not share these views. She mentioned that when it came to translation and interpretation, district employees made comments including, "This is America, speak English." Juana continued, "Some people don't understand still why we bilingual everything [sic], 'What a waste of piles of paper,'[they think]. I think [to myself], 'Wow.'" When asked who made such comments she replied, "The educators…ignorance is not just for the simpleminded and undereducated, ignorance is well and alive among the educated people."

Additional information for Outdoor Classroom field trip

Clothing:
1. Tennis shoes or other closed shoes or boots should be worn to protect feet from cuts and scratches.

2. Shorts of reasonable length and appearance are permitted. Check with your teacher to find out what activities are planned, and the appropriate dress code for your school.

Food:

Bagged lunches and drinks may be brought from home or purchased from the school lunchroom. Tell your teacher ahead of time which you will do.

Charlotte Harbor Boat Trip:

This experience will include a trip in Charlotte Harbor aboard a commercial cruise boat. The boat is run by Kingfisher Cruises operating out of Fisherman's Village Marina in Punta Gorda. It can carry approximately 80 people but we will have about half that many on board at any one time. This boat is fully equipped with life preservers, life rafts, and other safety gear. It is inspected by the United States Coast Guard every year. We will use the boat to study the water in the Peace River and Charlotte Harbor. The Southwest Florida Water Management District is helping to fund this field trip. Unfortunately, the boat trip is expensive so each student is required to contribute $5.00 toward its cost.

Helpful Hints:

1. **Wear shoes and clothing that can get wet from boat spray.**
2. **Bring a hat, cap, and sunscreen to prevent sunburn. (We will have some sun screen available.)**
3. **Never run on the boat.**
4. **Do not bring radios or electronics. The salt air is bad for them. Cameras are ok.**
5. **You can bring snacks or money to buy them on board the boat.**

Special Permission :

Since this activity takes place on open water, there is a possibility of seasickness. If you would like for us to be able to give sea sickness medicine to your child please sign below.
I give my permission to give my child sea sickness medicine if they need it. ________________ Date ________

Información adicional para el viaje de campo de Aula Al aire libre

Vestuario

1. Los tenis, o otros zapatos cerrados o botas deben llevarse para proteger pies de cortaduras y rasguños

2. Se permiten pantalones cortos de longitud razonable y apariencia. Verifique con su maestro para saber qué actividades se planean, y el código de vestuario apropiado para su escuela.

Comida:

Pueden traerse almuerzos empaquetados y bebidas de casa o pueden comprarse de la cafetería escolar. Dígale adelantado a su maestro qué usted hará.

Puerto Charlotte Viaje del Barco:

Esta experiencia incluirá un viaje a bordo un barco del crucero comercial en Charlotte Harbor. Este barco es corrido por Kingfisher Cruises, operando fuera de Fisherman's Village Marina en Punta Gorda. Puede llevar a aproximadamente 80 personas, pero nosotros sólo tendremos sobre la mitad de eso a borde en cualquier momento. Nosotros usaremos este barco para estudiar el agua en Peace River y el Puerto de Charlotte. El Distrito de Dirección de Agua de Sudoeste Florida está ayudando con fondos para este viaje del campo. Desgraciadamente, el viaje del barco es caro y cada estudiante se exige contribuir $5.00 hacia el costo. El SWFWMD está pagando el resto.
Indirectas útiles:

1. **Use zapatos y vestuario que se puede mojarse de rocío del barco.**
2. **Traiga un sombrero, gorra, y sunscreen para prevenir quemadura del sol. (nosotros tendremos algún sunscreen disponible)**
3. **Nunca corra en un barco.**
4. **No traiga radios o electrónicos. El aire de sal es una pena para ellos. Las cámaras son ok, nosotros recomendamos los tipos disponibles impermeables.**
5. **Siga todas las direcciones dadas.**
6. **Usted puede traer bocados, o dinero para comprarlos en el barco.**

Permiso especial:

Así como esta actividad tiene lugar en agua abierta, hay una posibilidad de mareo. Si le gustara para nosotros poder a favor darle medicina de mareo a su niño firme debajo.

Yo doy mi permiso para darle a mi niño medicina de mareo si ellos Lo necesitan. ________________________

Fig. 3 A translated fieldtrip form at Emerald

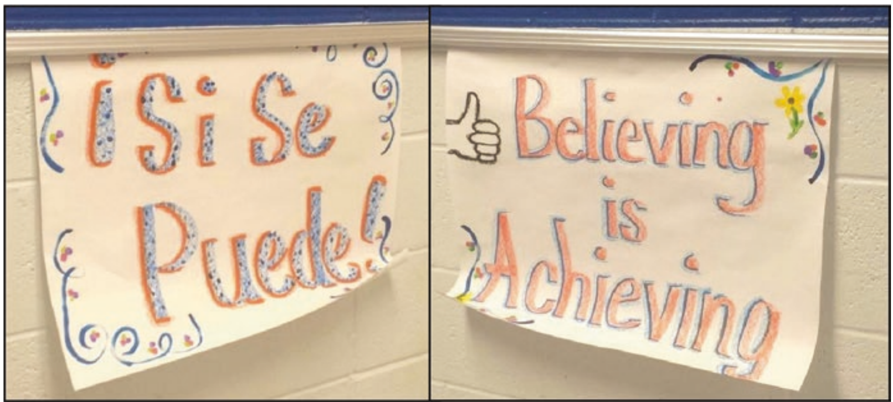


Fig. 4 Signs posted during testing at Emerald

In addition to school-home correspondence being markedly more accessible for Spanish- speaking families at Emerald, the school also had a small number of signs displayed on campus in Spanish, whereas Apple did not have any conspicuous signs in Spanish. For instance, during the week near the end of the school year when students completed standardized tests, a bilingual Latina paraprofessional, Victoria, created motivational signs, a common practice at the time of year. Figure 4 shows these signs posted in the hall at Apple, one in English and another in Spanish. The choice to make the sign reading "*¡Sí, se puede!*" could be especially meaningful for students, especially the 21% students who are migrant. The phrase has been used by Cesar Chavez, the founder of United Farmworkers, and other important leaders to engage people in revolutionary changes. It is not a direct translation of the English sign "Believing is achieving" although it communicates a similar message. "*¡Sí, se puede!*" roughly translates to "You can do it!" or "It can be done!"

4.2 *Interpreters at School*

At Apple, observations and interviews showed the struggle for families to access school resources in Spanish in the main office. Interpreters were not hired, availability of English-Spanish bilingual personnel at school was rare, and most of the time there was simply not a Spanish-speaking employee to accommodate parents. For instance, during school registration in Apple's office, Campbell-Montalvo observed monolingual English-speaking employees attempting to assist Spanish-speaking families and intervened to assist with interpreting. Later, she then told one of the two bilingual paraprofessionals that she tried to help, to which the paraprofessional responded, "The kids speak English so it is ok." Office worker Barbara added that the school "bends over backwards [to accommodate Spanish-speaking parents]," and the paraprofessional agreed. However, when Campbell-Montalvo spoke with the third grade child of the family that came in for enrollment, it was apparent

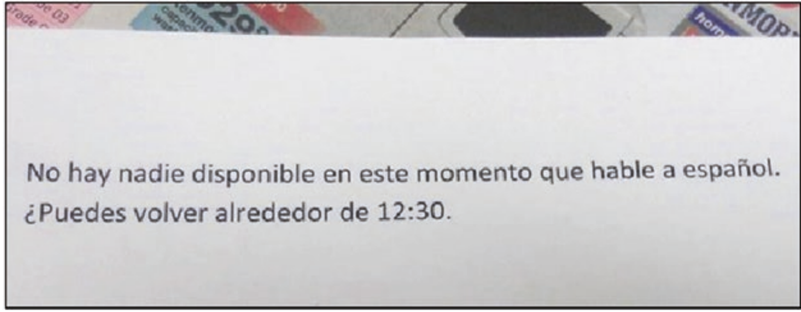


Fig. 5 Note left at Apple's front desk that reads, *There is no one available in this time who can speak Spanish. Can you come back around 12:30?*

that the child did not understand the directions she had received for her family in English (that she was supposed to bring back her emergency card after it was filled out by her Spanish-speaking parents).

Figure 5 shows a note that Apple's principal placed on the counter of the school office when there were no bilingual employees available to assist Spanish-speaking families. The sign advised the reader to come back later when a Spanish speaker would be available. This indicated that for Spanish-speaking parents, there were times when they were not free to children's school to access resources or make inquiries spontaneously. Instead, these families were restricted to limited windows of time.

Apple's front office did not employ a Spanish-speaking office worker, but there was a bilingual nurse, Martín, who retired after the first half of the school year. During observations of activity in the front office, Campbell-Montalvo heard Dorothy (a monolingual white office worker at Apple) express concern about Martín's retirement. Dorothy noted that she "didn't know what [she] was going to do" because she was unable to communicate effectively with Spanish speakers who did not speak English. She noted that she had shared her concerns with Apple's principal, adding that "all schools need someone [who is bilingual] everyday" for medical reasons, and that she hoped the next person hired in the office was bilingual. Campbell-Montalvo later found out that the next person hired was not bilingual. During an interview, Martín explained that he did not mind translating. However, according to district policy, school nurses were not supposed to interpret or translate anything outside of medical issues. Yet, when Dorothy was asked in the beginning of the year if people who did not speak English came to register their kids, she had replied, "Yes, we have a Spanish-[speaking] nurse and custodian and they help. When they aren't here, we help [Spanish-speaking parents] as best we can." Interpretation was not part of the job duties for Apple's school nurse, Martín, nor its custodian, and neither were compensated extra for performing these specialized duties.

At the midpoint of the school year, Campbell-Montalvo attended Martín's school retirement party and overheard teachers commenting about how the loss of his language skill would affect Apple. One said, "I don't know what to do about translating

since Martín is leaving." The other agreed, "He does all my translating." Martín was temporarily replaced with a monolingual English-speaking nurse who told Campbell-Montalvo during observations that language impacted her ability to communicate effectively with students because the children could not explain their needs in English. She added that she must always have one of the few Spanish speakers at school come to make phone calls to Spanish-speaking parents. This temporary nurse was replaced permanently with a white monolingual English-speaking nurse later in the school year.

At Emerald, teachers and paraprofessionals who were asked to interpret were present at every parent night Campbell-Montalvo observed. One on occasion, administrator Shirley noted, "All the documents that leave this school are in English and Spanish." She continued that interpreters would be at the Title 1 meeting later that day and that her PowerPoint was in English, but that PowerPoint handouts in Spanish were made available on the tables. Later observations at the event corroborated that she followed through with her plans.

However, even though Emerald had a solid record of making interpreters available, school employees' comments during observations and interviews suggested a lack of professionalization of translators and interpreters. Specifically, several bilingual Latina teachers and paraprofessionals commented on a lack of formal training, which discouraged them from translating documents or serving as interpreters because they lacked confidence in their abilities. These feelings were compounded by treatment from parents for at least one paraprofessional, Carmen, a bilingual Latina who shared an interaction underscoring the variability in interpreting skill. She said:

> We were having our data night [where parents come in and we share about student progress], and my Spanish is different from others', especially if their Spanish is more fluent than mine. I had another parent correct me in front of the whole class. It was kind of embarrassing, but I kind of brushed it off, and just didn't care. At least I'm trying to relate to the parents…I think she did it just to be mean.

Paraprofessionals commented in interviews that translation work was not in their official job descriptions, but was performed in addition to their professional duties. Victoria shared that in the Central School District, employees can petition to earn Flex time for these extra duties. Flex time refers to hours that employees can accumulate to exchange for days off at a later time. However, given that translation is often requested in a manner that gives the employee a small window to complete it, the poor feasibility of making such petitions in advance serves to dissuade them.

4.3 Infrastructure for Translation and Interpretation

As mentioned earlier, US public schools are mandated to provide access to school resources in a language understood by parents (U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Education, 2020). However, it appeared that schools, particularly Apple, utilized discretion regarding how (or if or when) they provided assistance to non-English speaking families. The need to provide interpretation to

families was inconsistently prioritized in hiring practices and funding decisions, predominantly at Apple. Observations showed that the lack of resources and infrastructure for providing translating and interpreting services to non-English speaking families at both schools can be traced to district decision-making, since the decision to hire a full-time interpreter/translator for this school is made by higher administration. In terms of hiring practices of individual schools, various school employees, more so at Apple, noted that some jobs had "no applicants," that employees were sometimes hired without the posting of jobs, and that often positions were filled by acquaintances rather than through a job search process. Observations also showed that most Migrant Advocates, district employees who provided support to migrant students, were actively prevented from translating and interpreting for non-migrant students and families, and could get "written up" for doing so.

Emerald school employees were more equipped (than Apple employees) to accommodate Spanish speakers, but services were not provided to families entirely consistently. There were more Spanish-speaking employees available for translating documents and interpreting meetings at Emerald than Apple. Unlike at Apple, Emerald employees were able to make requests for translations to employees directly. However, this could create a large amount of work. When asked if any of the Emerald teachers who speak only English send notes home in Spanish, Victoria replied:

> I translate all the notes, like 'so and so needs help with spelling, Sight Words, reading'… I do phone calls to parents, parent conferences, letters. I was translating the monthly newsletter that was going home—but I stopped because the kids weren't being serviced [as part of my regular job duties]. The teachers don't want to take the blame for it, because they're giving me all this translating work. That made me look bad. And so [the assistant principal] wants to see the planner and what we're doing. I tell her I'm not going to stay hours after school, I have my own kids. I should be able to do it during the school time. I'm not just translating a little note, it's a big newsletter.

After this interview, Victoria and Campbell-Montalvo talked about the usage of Google translate for translating newsletters. Victoria shared that it gives "lawyer words" and many of the parents "speak a dialect," a common but erroneous reference to Indigenous languages that are distinct languages rather than variations of Spanish. Though Spanish documents were likely helpful to many Spanish-speaking migrant families, the authors recognize the efforts at Emerald were complicated. Furthermore, to Victoria's point, Spanish-translated documents may not be fully accessible to all families for a variety of language issues that include varying rates of Spanish and English literacy, misunderstandings regarding primary Indigenous languages, and others.

5 Parent Interviews: School Communication and Views on Children's Schools and Equity

Data from parent interviews showed that though parents experienced obstacles to accessing school resources and were burdened by the lack of translations and interpreters, they still had positive views of the schools. However, they were unsure how their children's education stacked up to that of other students attending the same schools.

5.1 Lack of Translations and Interpreters

Parents commented on how the lack of translated materials affected their understandings of school-home correspondence. For instance, when asked whether his children participated in field trips, Carlos explained that his children, who attended Apple, do participate and that the school sends home permission slips to allow participation. However, he also noted that forms are almost always only in English, *"It comes in English, but when we don't understand, my children tell me what the form is about."*

When asked if she had to cope with linguistic differences in the education of her child, Daniela noted that it was a frequent issue in Apple's main office because "*There is nobody that speaks Spanish [at school]…that is a problem. I need someone who can speak Spanish."* When asked to go into more detail about this issue, she shared the following.

> *When there are school meetings, there's never someone to translate [sic]. Many parents do not understand English and thus many Hispanics don't go to the meetings because they don't understand. That's what I would like the school to do, put a translator [sic] in the meetings.*

Daniela shared that she really liked her son's teacher, Mrs. Wilson, who was popular among many parents and during observations regularly practiced culturally responsive pedagogy. Daniela indicated that she received notes from the school and her child's teacher in both English and Spanish, something observed less frequently at Apple. Daniela commented about the notes, *"If I don't understand them, I go to the teacher and she explains it."*

Only a small portion of teachers in Apple and Emerald were fluent in Spanish. Parents talked about how the lack of Spanish-speaking teachers, compounded by the scarcity of translations and interpreters, negatively impacted their ability to interact with teachers and the school. For instance, father Anam said of Emerald, *"There are teachers in the schools, and none speak Spanish."* His wife Yatzil nodded, "*Oh yes, when I go to the girls' school, I want someone to speak Spanish and help me, to help me understand what the teacher says in English*." She recalled the following about this language-related experience (from the previous school year):

> *It was difficult because the teacher told me [something] and then I did not understand what he said. I called one of the people who was working there. She told me what the teacher told me.*

Yatzil contrasted her interactions with the monolingual teacher her children had in the past to their current bilingual Mexican teacher, Mrs. Zayas. Mrs. Zayas was observed enacting culturally responsive pedagogy often. Yatzil said, "*Mrs. Zayas explains how my daughter [who struggles more than her twin sister] is doing, how she behaves, how her grades are, everything.*"

5.2 Views on Schools and School Equity

These findings are indeed mixed: while Spanish-speaking migrant parents talked about wanting better school communication and programming, parents of Apple students and Emerald students indicated that they were overall quite pleased with both schools. Nonetheless, they described being unsure if their children received the same quality of education received by others.

For instance, when asked about their children's schools in interviews, parents often said they had "no complaints". For example, Alejandra said, "*[My children] go to Apple Elementary…I like how they teach them there…My kids started in kindergarten. There are no complaints from my children,…everything else is good with my children in the school.*" Adrián concurred, "*Right now, they are learning well, and we haven't had any issues with the schools… from what we have seen, everything has been perfect. I mean, the kids are learning well.*" Ernesta agreed:

> *In my kids' school, they get a good education. I haven't had any issue with a teacher. They are always aware of what happens to them, like if they don't go to school or something. So, I don't have any problem with school.*

Vanessa also shared positive sentiments:

> *For me, I like it very much because all my children came out good. They all went to Apple. My youngest daughter goes to that school and she likes how she is learning. My daughter likes Mrs. Wilson very much, she comes here talking about her. She does her homework because her teacher is good. She teaches a lot.*

While parents appeared to be happy with the schools overall, many could not say definitively whether they believed their children received the same education as children from other groups. For instance, Malinalli commented that she "believed" that her daughter received a comparable education since she did not "complain" to her mother about it. When probed further, she added, "*I don't know, because every time I take her from Florida to North Carolina, they say she is very advanced. But from there to here, she gets a little unbalanced because of the change of schools.*"

Alejandra agreed that children in Central received a good education overall but appeared less sure that her children received a comparable education. In response to being asked about education in Central, she said, "*I would say yes [that Central children receive a good education] since my children go to the school. I haven't*

seen that they are bad kids or kids acting badly, they don't use foul language." Yet, when asked whether her children receive the same education as other Central children she said, *"I don't know. I really don't know."*

Similarly, Jimena (a parent of a child attending Emerald) believed Central schools did a good job. When asked if *all* children similarly received this "good" education, she agreed in principle but noted that her son was not getting the help he deserved, so she had to go to the school to advocate for him. When asked if she had ever gotten into an argument or a discussion with another parent or teacher about her child, she replied, "*There's been some back and forth with teachers…because my son didn't get 'special' help, as it is called. I had a problem, so I went to fix it. I asked them why they weren't paying attention to my son.*"

Looking at these comments collectively, it appears that parents liked –or at least approved of– the schools in an abstract sense. This occurred even when linguistic inaccessibility presented extra challenges, or when their own children had specific, sub-optimal experiences.

6 Discussion: Ideological Underpinning of Linguistic Accessibility and Parent Views

Observations and interviews showed that Apple's teachers and staff at least partly based their communicative practices on the precedent set by Apple's administration, which did not prioritize sending communications home in English and Spanish and therefore limited accessibility for many Spanish-speaking families. Specifically, the fact that the principal's monthly, school-wide newsletter was distributed in English only was mentioned in interviews by several faculty and staff for justification as to why they sent documents home in only English. It appears that employees at Apple often assumed that Spanish-speaking families were able to read in English or that their children (even as young as first grade) could read and interpret English communication, such as fieldtrip forms, to their parents in Spanish. One set of parents noted in an interview that their children were sometimes pulled out of instruction to interpret in the office; the parents did not mention how their children missing instruction to perform might have affected them. However, as mentioned earlier, the assumption that children are capable of accurately relaying information to adults was not supported through observational data. In addition, though much evidence suggested that linguistic accessibility at Apple could be improved, various employees claimed the school already went out of its way, or "bent over backwards" as Barbara commented, to offer translation and interpretation. These attitudes circulated in the school and encouraged a school-wide lack of follow through regarding the provision of translation and interpretation services.

By contrast, Emerald's administration seemed to take pride in ensuring correspondence was regularly sent home in Spanish. Administrators at Emerald communicated the importance of linguistic accessibility and the school's staff generally followed leadership in valuing translation, as exemplified by Emerald's *"¡Sí, se puede!"* sign—though not without occasional objection, as noted by Juana. At

Emerald, observations showed that more employees perceived that migrant Mexican families took education seriously and appreciated the value that families and their children saw in the school. Employees mentioned that migrant Mexican students often had better attitudes toward schooling than students from other groups, cause less trouble, and complain less, probably resulting from their parents' advice. We learned from this analysis that, despite district administration failing to prioritize professionalized translators and interpreters and support school infrastructure that would have mandated (at best) or encouraged (at least) more linguistic accessibility, Emerald was able to better serve Spanish-speaking families.

The findings discussed here suggest that a school's approach to serving migrant children from Mexico and elsewhere, including the provision of language accessibility, affected student and parent access to school resources. Migrant Spanish-speaking parents faced serious issues accessing school resources at Apple, these issues included not having interpreters during office visits, and not receiving documents in a language they spoke (i.e. enrichment opportunities like the summer bridge books or forms for advanced classes that were provided in English only).

Linguistic inaccessibility directly influenced parents' desires for involvement with the school, since after attending meetings without translation or interpretation, Apple parents like Daniela reported that they stopped going to meetings since they could not understand what was being communicated. This relationship between linguistic accessibility and parent involvement underscores the importance of linguistic accessibility, through interpreters and translated materials, at both schools.

Apple and Emerald both had structural obstacles to accessibility and services supporting migrant farmworking families. For example, Apple requirements that translation requests be sent to an administrator for approval before being sent to the paraprofessional for translation or Emerald's Flex Time policy both had the potential to slow down or dissuade such requests, especially since many teacher notes sent home are written only hours before they are sent home, according to observations. Translation is often an additional or unpaid duty for already overburdened school employees (Colomer & Harklau, 2009). Interviews with bilingual staff revealed that this pattern existed among employees from both schools.

Because of the lack of translations and interpreters, children were often asked to interpret. As evidenced by the paraprofessional's comment that "The kids speak English so it is ok" or Mrs. Reyes' suggestion to "'just tell the kids they can understand it,'" employees at Apple often assumed that children had technical knowledge in both languages and the confidence to interpret on behalf of adults (Campbell-Montalvo, forthcoming).

White monolingual English-speaking teachers at Emerald as well as Apple, and bilingual Latina teachers and paraprofessionals at Apple appeared to think about language accessibility less in their day-to-day work. All office staff who dealt with parents on a daily basis shared that they believed that the schools, especially Apple, needed more bilingual employees. Similarly, Valentina, the Migrant Advocate assigned to Emerald, remarked that when representatives from Florida Department of Education visited the district, they wanted to see which documents were offered in Spanish. Consequently, she said she did a lot of translating for the district website

that year. She said, “Personally, [I have noticed] many documents [at the Junior High, which shares a campus with Emerald,] are not available in Spanish and should be,” especially, she noted, communications about school lunch applications. She noted that oversights like this cause many Spanish-speaking parents to visit the schools in person, in one case she recalled parents arriving by taxi, to ask for translations of forms. Similar to Dorothy’s comment earlier about the need for bilingual staff, Valentina stated, “Schools here should have at least one bilingual person at the front desk since other bilingual employees have a lot on their plate.”

On the one hand, the parents Campbell-Montalvo interviewed were generally very positive about the kinds of supports provided by their children’s elementary school. The positive view of schools these parents expressed contrasts with prior research with Mexican American parents who were born in the U.S. or who had lived in Central for decades reported dissatisfaction with the schools related to differential treatment due to race and ethnicity (Campbell, 2016). The migrants and more recently arrived immigrants at the focus of this chapter tended to hedge on whether their children received an equitable education in comparison to the education others receive and were less likely than non-immigrant and non-migrant families to claim that their children were discriminated against.

On the other hand, even though many migrant Mexican Spanish-speaking parents reported being satisfied with and appreciative of the schools, virtually all parents expressed a desire for more accommodations, greater linguistic accessibility, and more culturally-appropriate meetings and events. Further, observations indicate that families with children who were not fluent in either English or Spanish were even more marginalized. To increase the involvement of migrant parents, both schools should provide information in multiple languages, including but not limited to Spanish.

Finally, the data we analyze here reveal how migrant farmworking families from Mexico (including Indigenous, non-Spanish-dominant families) are typically required to make an extra effort to understand their children’s teachers and school staff, something English-speaking parents rarely need to do. Migrant Mexican parents often make extra trips to school and reach out to people at school in person and rely on their own personal networks to improve their children’s access to education. So, while faculty, especially non-Latino white faculty, may believe that Mexican parents are not involved in the ways deemed institutionally important (Campbell-Montalvo, forthcoming), we understand from these narratives that migrant parents are often engaged in emotional and time-consuming labor on behalf of their children’s education and this labor often goes unrecognized or underappreciated. In other words, parents like Daniela, operating in English as their second or even third language, often worked double to understand basic school-home communications.

7 Conclusion

This chapter explores how public schools serve migrant Mexican families in Central Florida, how migrant parents view the schools their children attend, and the value of resources that support students who speak a language other than English at home. Because one elementary school (Apple) had far fewer bilingual employees than the other (Emerald), many, administrative attitudes toward language accessibility trickled down to teachers. Conversely, because Emerald had more bilingual employees and office staff and administrators, it was able to prioritize translation and interpretation—and to "refuse" to offer communication in English only. As a result, Emerald had a more welcoming public-facing culture that appeared to better serve migrant parents and families—and this was true even when they could not provide accommodation to students speaking Indigenous languages. Structural and ideational obstacles to translation and interpretation meant that Spanish-speaking parents at Apple did not have the same access to school resources as English-speaking parents, an issue not faced nearly as often at Emerald. Assumptions that children could easily translate and interpret often resulted in children being the default interpreters for their parents. Structural realities within the schools interacted to co-construct an experience for migrant children that was unequal to many of their peers and differed in the two schools where this research was conducted. Ultimately, this chapter illustrates that it was Mexican migrant parents who did the heavy lifting, making up for linguistic inaccessibility through emotional and unpaid labor and ingenuity, in order to access school resources for their children despite the legal mandate that the district make these accommodations. It also raises questions about whether and how schools might support students who speak a language other than Spanish or English at home. Future research might unpack and investigate how family-based ideologies of language influence views of Central District schools – and how those views are shaped by first-hand experiences of linguistic inaccessibility or marginalization.

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From *Preparación* to *Adaptación*: Language and the Imagined Futures of Maya-Speaking Guatemalan Youth in Los Angeles

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Scholars acknowledge that Indigenous Latinx immigrants' complex process of adapting to life in the United States, or incorporation, differs from that of their non-Indigenous counterparts. Understanding these differences is especially important as arrivals of Indigenous refugees and asylum seekers from Central America have increased steadily over the past decade and intensified in the last few years. Among them are undocumented, unaccompanied youth, whose migration to the U.S. reached a historic high in 2014 and has persisted into the present (U.S. Customs and Border Protection, 2020). Guatemalans make up the largest segment of the unaccompanied minor migrant population arriving from Central America today. In 2019, Guatemalans made up about 41% of unaccompanied minors apprehended at the U.S.-Mexico border (U.S. Customs and Border Protection, 2020). Many come from rural, often predominantly Maya regions such as the Western Highlands (Stinchcomb & Hershberg, 2014). Their migration is due largely to a legacy of political and gang-related violence and economic instability in the aftermath of a civil war in which Indigenous Guatemalans were targets of ethnic cleansing.

The Maya-speaking Guatemalan youth in this study migrated to the U.S. fleeing this political and economic instability. Though not classified as political refugees or asylum seekers according to the U.S. immigration system, they can be considered refugees insofar as their decisions to migrate were shaped by the intergenerational effects of a genocidal war, including economic devastation and a lack of effective governance leading to what has been termed an ongoing "homicide crisis" in Central America. Today's unaccompanied minors are commonly depicted as searching for family reunification (Donato & Sisk, 2015); yet the long-settled, unaccompanied

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youth in this study often worked alone or alongside parents or caregivers in their home countries and therefore arrived in the U.S. in search of work to support left-behind families, frequently ending up in hazardous and exploitative occupations. Meanwhile, they navigated everyday interactions in the host society without dense familial and community support.

Given these trends, this chapter examines how unaccompanied, undocumented, Maya-speaking Guatemalan youth experience migration, work, and language in the U.S. Specifically, we analyze how youth understand the salience of language within their social worlds and perceive their linguistic proficiency as it relates to their imagined futures. Our analysis draws on data from 36 in-depth interviews with Los Angeles-based, Maya-speaking young adults who arrived in the U.S. from Guatemala as minors. The data are from a larger ethnographic study of unaccompanied, undocumented Central American and Mexican youth's experiences. We find that Maya-speaking Guatemalan youth's ideologies and experiences of language learning and maintenance are institutionally and situationally shaped. That is, youth learn that achieving spatial, socioeconomic, and cultural mobility requires them to draw on different elements from their evolving linguistic repertoires in different contexts.

Maya-speaking youth in this study describe immigrant incorporation as a two-step process: first, youth engage in a process of "*preparación,*" or preparation, which they deem necessary for subsequent "*adaptación*," or adaptation. *Preparación*, according to unaccompanied, undocumented youth, is a process of socialization they undergo in order to gain the human capital necessary to participate more fully in U.S. society in the absence of parental guidance and formal education. The larger dataset from which this chapter draws elucidates that unaccompanied, undocumented Latinx youth seek *preparación* in various spheres of life, including financial, spiritual, and occupational spheres and in intimate relationships, among others. For Indigenous Maya youth, *preparación* also includes pursuing greater proficiency in one or more languages in order to communicate with people in their neighborhoods, workplaces, and the broader Los Angeles landscape. Maya youth connect the need for *preparación* in Spanish to their *adaptación* within Latinx community life. On the other hand, moving beyond the Latinx immigrant community to ethnically diverse contexts and networks, such as workplaces and community spaces, requires English-language *preparación*. All the while, retaining transnational family ties requires that Maya-speaking youth maintain their Indigenous language. Youth understand the importance of using at least three languages to navigate an array of local and transnational social spaces while living in the U.S. Processes of *preparación* contribute to *adaptación* to life in the U.S. for unaccompanied, undocumented, Indigenous Maya youth who seek to maintain transnational family ties and obligations. Together, *preparación* and *adaptación* are intertwined processes that youth who are coming of age in the U.S. manage in order to work toward an imagined future that includes long-term settlement in their host society. The stories presented here give us a rare glimpse of what might be ahead for Maya youth who have arrived and continue to arrive in the U.S.

1 Indigenous Language Speakers from Latin America in U.S. Immigrant Communities

There is ample evidence that speakers of Indigenous languages often come to view their languages, in part, as problems (cf. Ruiz, 1984), since the languages are associated with a lack of economic opportunity and a history of racial and cultural stigmatization. Indigenous language proficiency is a highly salient feature of Indigenous identity, because of which migrants fleeing "political and economic violence and colonial structures in their countries of origin" often encounter "entrenched anti-Indian hatred enacted by mestizos and Ladinos" both in Latin America and in U.S. Latinx immigrant communities (Blackwell et al., 2017: 127). Pérez et al. (2016) comment that pressure to assimilate to national, European languages like Spanish and English does not begin with immigration but is already present for Indigenous speakers from Mexico and Guatemala. Responding to negative attitudes toward indigeneity in Mexico and the U.S., parents may choose not to pass their Indigenous language(s) onto their children to spare them from the discriminatory experiences they themselves have encountered (Bishop & Kelley, 2013).

Youth may elect to hide or "cloak" their Indigenous language proficiency, and keep their Indigenous identities secret, in response to teasing and harassment about being Indigenous and their resulting feelings of shame (Kovats Sánchez, 2018; see also Barillas Chón, 2010; Machado-Casas, 2009). Others may maintain a sense of pride and comfort in their Indigenous language but still have to contend with a system of racial classification that erases Indigeneity (grouping Indigenous immigrants with other "Latinxs") along with school systems that "are not equipped to extend or even maintain [youth's] learning in their Indigenous languages" (López & Irizarry, 2019, p. 10) and "[render Indigenous languages] mute" in the process of English and Spanish language socialization (p. 15). In this context, it is not surprising that Indigenous languages remain largely hidden and that young Indigenous immigrants display "great variability in their proficiency" in these languages (Morales et al., 2019, p. 115). Furthermore, the stigmatization of Indigenous identity and language in immigrant settings contributes to intergenerational language shift, or a movement away from Indigenous language maintenance and toward English and/or Spanish, on a community level.

Despite the bleak scenario described above, many Indigenous families and youth display a "resilient Indigeneity" (Casanova, 2019) that leads them to pursue creative, translocal strategies for Indigenous language maintenance and to defy the "hybrid hegemonies," both anti-immigrant and anti-Indigenous, that discourage Indigenous language use (Blackwell et al., 2017, p. 128). The participants in Martínez and Mesinas's (2019) study engaged in what the researchers call "linguistic motherwork," or ways of socializing children to speak, understand, and value the Indigenous language (in this case, Zapoteco), to "construct and sustain indigeneity in diaspora" (p. 122). Similarly, while Morales et al. (2019) remark on the complexity of Indigenous self-identification for their Zapoteco-speaking participants, they also show that parents and youth affirmed the importance of learning or maintaining

the Indigenous language for both instrumental and sentimental reasons. Specifically for Maya-speaking communities, the intergenerational disruption of Maya language and traditional cultural practice does not imply "a complete loss or rupture," since youth, families, and community groups "frequently create tools and strategies that can account for the complexity of indigeneity in the 21st century" (Blackwell et al., 2017, p. 134), and Maya youth continue to see Indigenous language use as integral to identity and well-being (Casanova, 2019, p. 52).

It is essential not to oversimplify immigrant Indigenous Latinx youth's language ideologies, which take shape in tremendously complex language ecologies. As others (Messing, 2013; Pérez et al., 2016) have pointed out, Indigenous youth often talk and act in highly ambivalent and even contradictory ways about language. The same is true of the Maya-speaking Guatemalan participants whose experiences of linguistic adaptation and ideologies of language learning (Warriner, 2007) we discuss in this chapter. Immigrant Maya-speaking youth confront "hybrid hegemonies" (Blackwell et al., 2019, p. 128) in their language behavior. They acknowledge a history of language hegemony in Guatemala, according to which Mayan languages were subordinated to Spanish, considered unsuitable for modernity, and indexed poverty and lack of education. They also testify to the effects of anti-Indio discrimination in U.S. Latinx immigrant communities, while taking ambivalent stances toward Indigenous language maintenance. Maya speakers in U.S. immigrant communities often rely on "models of 'standard' Maya, Spanish, and English, shaping both behavior and motivation" (Whiteside, 2009, p. 228). Diasporic Maya speakers reveal a diversity of ideologies and approaches to learning dominant languages in multilingual, transnational contexts (Whiteside, 2009, 2013), in which stigmatization coexists with new valuations of Maya languages (Kramsch & Whiteside, 2008). A number of researchers have documented Maya and other Indigenous Latinx youth's experiences of acculturation, discrimination, and resilience in school, family, and community contexts in the U.S. (e.g., Barillas-Chón, 2010; Casanova, 2019; Kovats Sánchez, 2018; Morales et al., 2019). The growth of the unaccompanied migrant youth population challenges the typical portrait of immigrant children in the U.S. that situates youth's language learning within parent-led households, co-ethnic communities, and formal schooling contexts (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006; Portes & Zhou, 1993). In this chapter, we focus on how unaccompanied, undocumented, Maya-speaking Guatemalan youth workers understand and use language as they imagine futures that include host and home country attachments.

As child migrants growing up without parents or legal status, Indigenous Maya-speaking youth's experiences of incorporation differ dramatically from other immigrant groups, including their school-going, parented counterparts. They are more likely to work labor-intensive occupations that do not require English-language proficiency with Maya- or Spanish-speaking coethnics, be detached from traditional educational institutions (like middle and high schools) and have limited access to networks of adults who can provide support in times of need (Canizales, 2018, n.d.). We might expect that unaccompanied youth's institutional contexts, language-learning expectations and experiences, and imagined futures differ from the idealized childhood experience or child migrant incorporation trajectories (Aries, 1960;

Canizales 2021; Zelizer, 1985). In what follows, we explain our research methods and the demographics of our study participants, discuss the role of language in youth's imagined futures, and offer concluding thoughts with suggestions for future research.

2 Research Context and Research Methods

Destinations for the majority of new Maya immigrants are urban centers that have historically been home to Mexican immigrant and/or Mexican-descent communities. Established migration networks and proximity to the low-skilled, low-wage industries of Downtown Los Angeles draw many unaccompanied Guatemalan youth to Los Angeles. Though Guatemalan migration to the U.S. began during the 1950s, Maya refugee migration to Los Angeles became more visible in the 1970s and 1980s as political conflict and economic instability in Guatemala intensified (Hamilton & Chinchilla, 2001). Today, over 1 million Guatemalans live in the U.S. and Los Angeles is home to the largest Guatemalan community outside of Guatemala (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016), concentrated in the Pico-Union/MacArthur Park neighborhood west of Downtown. It is estimated that between 50% and 60% of Guatemalans in Los Angeles are Maya (Canizales, 2018; Obinna & Field, 2019). Indigenous Maya immigrants in the U.S. are not acknowledged as refugees and navigate settlement in the U.S. without the protections and support of formal refugee status. Unaccompanied youth fleeing Guatemala are an extension of this migration flow and nearly 40% of Guatemalans arriving to the U.S. are Maya-language speakers (Jawetz & Shuchart, 2019). Guatemalan Maya youth are the most vulnerable subgroup of the unaccompanied Central American child migrant population because of their extreme impoverishment in their home country and their Indigenous languages, cultural practices, and phenotype.

The ethnographic and interview data from which this chapter draws are part of a larger study on the migration and incorporation experiences of Central American and Mexican youth who arrive in the U.S. as minors and grow up without parents and legal status. Ethnographic observations began in 2012 upon encountering an informal support group for unaccompanied, undocumented Indigenous Central American youth factory workers. Canizales gained access to this group through its coordinator, a Salvadoran immigrant and well-recognized community leader in his late forties who sought to address the social, financial, and legal precarity of this population. A snowball sampling strategy followed initial introductions. In total, 6 years of Spanish-language participant observation at multiple sites throughout the Westlake/MacArthur Park community west of Downtown Los Angeles were completed between 2012 and 2018. Observational data in the larger study are integrated with 75 in-depth interviews with undocumented young adults (18–31) who arrived in the U.S. as minors (9–17) from Central America and Mexico in the decade preceding the "humanitarian crisis" of 2014 (2003–2013). In total, 48 participants were of Guatemalan origin, 36 (75%) were of Maya descent and were first-language

Maya speakers, and nine (25%) participants were women. The interviews were conducted between 2012 and 2016 and conducted entirely in Spanish. All participants' names have been changed to protect their identities.

In total, 68 participants (97%) were full-time workers since their arrival in the U.S. Many unaccompanied, undocumented youth enter low-wage occupations with prior work experience gained in the home country, making the work that they do in Los Angeles seemingly familiar. The majority of study participants worked in three occupations: garment manufacturing (n = 30, 44%), restaurant service (n = 8, 12%), and domestic and janitorial work (n = 7, 10%). Others (n = 23, 34%) worked in occupations such as construction, carwashes, mechanic shops, day laborers, and the like, and two (3%) were unemployed. Unlike "Dreamer" youth, who immigrated with parents or older family members at a young age, the unaccompanied minors in this study did not enroll in the U.S. K-12 educational system, though some eventually enrolled in adult ESL schools for a few hours each day, Monday through Thursday. This was the case for 22 (32%) of full-time workers in our study sample. Men were over-sampled due to their more consistent participation in public settings, likely due to gender ideologies and occupational structures that confine Maya women to private spaces (Hagan, 1994; Menjivar, 2000). All Indigenous youth shared experiences of familial poverty in Guatemala and thus had interrupted formal schooling but significant work experiences prior to migration, having worked alongside parents or caregivers in Guatemala.

The Maya languages spoken among participants include K'iche (32), Q'anjob'al (2), Mam (1), and Akateko (1). K'iche and Mam are widely spoken Maya languages belonging to separate sub-families of the Quichean-Mamean (Eastern Mayan) branch of the Mayan family, while Q'anjob'al and Akateko are somewhat smaller and much smaller languages, respectively, belonging to the Western Mayan branch (Glottolog, n.d.; Richards, 2003). Some closely related Maya languages are mutually intelligible, to varying degrees, but many members of the Mayan language family, both closely and more distantly related, are not mutually intelligible (England, 2003; Romero, 2018).

3 The Place of Language in Preparación, Adaptación, and Maya Youth's Imagined Futures

The Maya-speaking youth in this study articulated imagined futures connected to home and work life, local and transnational community spaces, and short and long-term migration goals. These imagined futures were predicated on the possibility of belonging to particular discourse communities (Kanno & Norton, 2003), which youth explored with reference to their ideologies of language learning (Warriner, 2007), or their beliefs about the desirability and feasibility of learning different languages and their understanding of their own and others' language proficiency. Below, we outline three key areas in which talk about language learning and

maintenance was intimately connected to youth's imagined futures: pursuing greater employability and easier work, cultivating family and community belonging, and preparing for long-term resettlement.

3.1 Employability and Easier Work

Without parents to support them financially and act as community liaisons or buffers from social and economic poverty, work becomes the primary site that Indigenous Maya youth must learn to navigate in the U.S. (Canizales, n.d.). Adding to its importance is youth's role as financial providers for left-behind families. Unaccompanied Indigenous youth view their language ability as directly related to their employability in the U.S. and as providing access to easier work. Linguistic *preparación,* then, is seen as a prerequisite for financial stability in the short term and socioeconomic mobility in the long term. Research finds that Indigenous adult migrant workers are infantilized and deskilled within ethnoracial hierarchies (Herrera, 2016; Holmes, 2013). Youth are aware that racial stereotypes of Indigenous people as "backwards" and "uneducated" affect their employment prospects and workplace experiences. A participant named Andres, for example, described how being Maya is "a bit difficult because people do not understand your culture. They discriminate against you. They want nothing to do with you because you are '*indio*'." His encounters with non-Indigenous people, and Mexicans in particular, who say things like, "You don't speak Spanish well, you are an *indio*," or "You have a lame dialect," have affected him. In the garment factories where he works, this disparagement translates into racialized exclusion as non-Indigenous coworkers say, "You shouldn't be here, you should be in the mountains taking care of animals." As non-Indigenous language speakers deploy stereotypes of Indigenous Latinxs as uneducated, rural folk fit only for agricultural labor, they act as gatekeepers of real and perceived opportunities for employment and mobility. For this reason, Spanish and English language proficiency are perceived as necessary to avoid being typecast as rural, agricultural workers in global cities like Los Angeles.

The relationship between language and youth's employability is shaped by the industry that employs them and, for some, goes hand-in-hand with job security. For example, Marianna was able to find employment as a domestic worker at the age of 16 with her limited Spanish proficiency; however, she quickly learned that retaining her job and securing safe and fair work conditions would require clearer communication with her employer and the two children she looked after. Since she was unable to attend a traditional high school, Marianna began sharpening her spoken Spanish skills in her church youth group on weekends and learning English by setting subtitles on the television programs the children watched during the week. Marianna recalls that as the years passed and the young children entered school, they would enthusiastically share their worksheets with her, allowing her English proficiency to progress alongside the school-aged children. In Marianna's case, her *preparación* in Spanish and English proceeded in tandem with her *adaptación* to

her workplace. Her experience demonstrates that unaccompanied Maya-speaking youth without access to formal education pursued creative strategies within workplaces and community groups to "prepare themselves" for more favorable work conditions in the future. Over time, Marianna's confidence to communicate in English grew and she was increasingly able to speak to her employer, the mother of the children, in English.

In addition to providing employability and greater job security, youth believe that linguistic *preparación* improves their ability to find less tedious, physically demanding, and repetitive work and to counter exploitation and violence in the workplace. Among factory workers, language needs include speaking Spanish to non-Indigenous Latinx co-workers and English with non-Latinx or non-Spanish-speaking co-workers. Andres speculated that speaking English in the garment industry would allow him to communicate with factory owners and enable him to move from being a double-needle sewer, who makes hundreds of garments per hour for a few hundred dollars per week, to a sample maker who can work on one single project for a flat hourly rate and a secure weekly salary. This signals an opportunity for job and wage security.

Felipe associated learning English with easier work because, in his view, English-speaking employers appreciate when an employee can communicate with them. When asked what kind of work he sees himself doing in the future, he responded, "I am thinking I should learn English first, then I will find a job that's easier where I can speak English, people will understand me and it will be easier. I don't know what I could get now if I don't speak English." As a garment worker, his disadvantages of being an underage worker and the youngest in the workplace were offset by his ability, uncommon among his older co-workers, to use English in limited ways with his employer. He explained, "The bosses like when you can talk with them … That's why [my boss] told me that he was very happy … The boss was Korean, but no other worker could talk to him because they were all from Mexico or around there."

Language is important for inclusion in the workplace but is also essential for mitigating the threat of exclusion, especially through the violence of verbal harassment, wage theft, or underpayment. Gonzalo elaborated on these pressures through his experiences of labor exploitation and wage theft, linking a stereotypical image of Guatemalans as passive and uncomplaining to the history of anti-Indigenous discrimination in Guatemala:

> They don't pay in the garment industry, they pay less, well, they pay for what you do. Sometimes the Koreans take advantage of you, but as Guatemalans we don't speak up because, like I said, like Latinos or like Guatemalans, we come with fear [of discrimination], we don't speak up. Well, in my case, I am a very quiet person. I don't speak. If someone is yelling at me, I only listen. I didn't know how to defend myself and they took advantage of me, well, of us [Guatemalans]. Then, one day I saw I earned 200 dollars for the week. For the week. I said, 'No, that can't be.' I said, 'I am getting out of the garment industry, I am going to look for another job' … with the little bit of experience I had.

Alluding to the influence of hybrid hegemonies at work, Gonzalo identified the importance of voice and language in advocating for one's position within the workplace and securing new jobs when existing ones prove problematic. His description

of discrimination and exploitation within the garment industry is somewhat ambiguous as to whether the fear of speaking up and the inability or unwillingness to defend oneself is a characteristic of "Latinos" or "Guatemalans" or a characteristic of Gonzalo's personality. Likewise, the subjects of Korean bosses' alleged exploitation are ambiguous: "They took advantage of me, well, of us." The phrasing suggests that Gonzalo, to some extent, had internalized the fear of discrimination that he associated with Guatemalans as a group, coming to see himself as a "very quiet person" who "[didn't] speak." However, the unexpected outcome of this personal and communal history – Gonzalo's sudden decision to look for employment outside the garment industry – supports our broader point that Maya-speaking youth consistently assessed their levels of *preparación,* within a long-term process of *adaptación,* to move incrementally toward imagined futures. In this case, Gonzalo's confidence that his "little bit of experience" would allow him to pursue a better-remunerated job is evidence that he was already *más preparado,* better prepared, despite his contention that he "didn't know how to defend [himself]."

3.2 Family and Community Belonging

Indigenous language, and Indigenous cultural practice more broadly, is often stigmatized in Guatemalan and U.S. societies, where racism casts Indigenous people as inferior. During an interview, Aaron shared how discrimination inhibited his ability to develop a sense of community and a sense of self while growing up in Guatemala. His migration was, in part, motivated by experiences of anti-Indigenous discrimination, which he associated with limitations on his prospects for social integration and mobility in Guatemalan society. At the age of 14, Aaron recalled that he,

> started to see the discrimination, so I said, "Why are we the *Indios*? Why do they treat us like this?" And why do we speak dialect and not Spanish?" I started to have like, my self-esteem went down. I felt rejected. I felt humiliated. I noticed that the young people, we all grow up with fear because we are discriminated against so much. They say, "Hey, you are an *Indio*, you don't know anything." I mean, between students themselves.

Aaron's experiences with discrimination caused him to feel isolated from others in his hometown. Once in Los Angeles, he described non-Indigenous Latinxs' attitudes toward him as "worse or the same as when I was [in Guatemala], because [in Guatemala] there was discrimination." These experiences were compounded by the loneliness of being an unaccompanied minor who "didn't have affection, the love of my grandparents or my mother, I didn't have it, and then [the] discrimination. I felt lonely." The isolation of being Indigenous within a largely non-Indigenous immigrant community may be even more acute for youth who arrive without supportive older family members. However, Aaron's rhetorical questions ("Why are we the *Indios*? Why do they treat us like this?), which echoed other participants' revoicings of anti-*Indio* sentiment (see, e.g., Andres' comments, above), also point to a developing critical awareness of the pervasive, systemic nature of anti-Indigenous

discrimination, which many youth in the study honed in diaspora. In this context, Aaron's view of linguistic *preparación* is connected to an imagined future where language learning will allow him to overcome the linguistic and social isolation he experienced in Guatemala and Los Angeles and to participate actively in his local community. With this *preparación,* his *adaptación* will be evident when he is able to interact with others without fear of "rejection" or "humiliation." Overcoming discrimination and loneliness therefore requires that youth traverse linguistic barriers to community integration in the host country as they simultaneously deal with the continuing effects of racial and linguistic discrimination from their countries of origin.

The connection between language and community integration and sense of self can be glimpsed in youth's accounts of their interactions with others in the immigrant community. Aaron observed this in relation to his improved ability to engage with other Spanish speakers from diverse national origins:

> That's why now, since I am also learning Spanish, I don't have a problem speaking Spanish with another culture from Mexico, South America, Central America, or Spanish speakers from Europe. I don't have a problem speaking with them… That's not me anymore. I have a ton of friends from different cultures and I feel good.

Aaron demonstrated how language proficiency can prompt increased feelings of place and community belonging, as language shapes youth's ability to relate to others. In this way, language proficiency is also important for Maya youth's well-being and ability to "feel good" as "speaking Spanish with another culture" asserts their ability to build community and overcome feelings of isolation. Speaking Spanish in Guatemala and both Spanish and English in the U.S. serves, at the least, as a buffer against the intersectional social disadvantages of being an unaccompanied Indigenous newcomer in an immigrant context shaped by hybrid hegemonies.

As transnational youth are often the first in their families to migrate, left-behind families rely on unaccompanied Maya youth for financial and social resources. Hence, youth's imagined futures are not linked only to issues of employability and belonging on an individual level but include the futures of their families. This is often realized in and through language ideologies and linguistic practice. Aaron expressed that linguistic *preparación* was the first step toward *adaptación* for his brothers living in Guatemala, in hopes of alleviating the suffering due to exclusion that Maya youth experience in their home and host countries.

> For me, adapting to this country is learning the language, like I am doing with my brothers. That is the first thing. Why did I suffer here for five years? Because I didn't, I didn't adapt to the language. That was it, that's why I suffered so much. Over there [in Guatemala], I suffered a lot because I didn't adapt to the other language, other cultures, for example, Spanish, and then when I got here, it was the same thing. I didn't adapt. I felt the discrimination.

Here, Aaron contrasts his experiences of discrimination and loneliness in Guatemala with those of linguistic *preparación* and *adaptación* as modes of community and self-esteem building in the U.S., framing them as lessons he can share with his left-behind family. In doing so, he relays the value of linguistic proficiency to his

family's safety, security, and well-being in Guatemala, instructing them, "'If you want [to succeed] you need to adapt to everything, learn these things, language first,' I tell them." Much to his gratification, he reports that "now they know Spanish." There is a striking contrast between Aaron's lack of self-esteem and feelings of rejection in Guatemala, in part due to his Mayan and Indigenous identity, and the feelings of empowerment he gains through Spanish *preparación* in the United States, which he is determined to pass on to his family in Guatemala. Aaron's comments, like the other participants', also reveal Maya immigrant youth's discursive agency in pursuing various forms of linguistic competence in order to adapt more successfully. Linguistic *preparación* is not merely a matter of hiding one's Indigenous language proficiency or adopting features of Mexican Spanish, as some youth felt pressured to do (see Canizales, 2015 for more on this), but also involves an active process of choosing to prepare oneself linguistically in certain ways, with particular future outcomes in mind (Canizales, 2021). These outcomes are connected to imagined futures for oneself, one's family, and one's community – all intertwined – where *adaptación,* dependent on linguistic and other forms of *preparación*, will transform the social and economic position of Maya-speaking Guatemalans in the U.S.

Youth's imagined futures also include the future of the Maya community in Spanish- and English-speaking Los Angeles. As they overcome barriers to improved self-esteem, family integration, and community belonging, youth begin to see themselves as potential resources for others. Learning Spanish and English to particular degrees of proficiency endows youth with cultural capital that can equip them to fulfill a goal of mentoring or guiding similarly situated peers.

For example, Omar saw his trajectory of language learning as closely related to his ability to broker community ties for other Indigenous Maya newcomers in Los Angeles. He reflected that, during his first few years in the U.S., he "didn't understand life … life was just entertainment, I didn't think of doing anything. I didn't think about studying. I did think about learning English, but only to communicate with girls." With time, however, he came to "think differently." Beyond the individual benefits of finding enjoyment in entertainment or communicating with love interests, he became motivated to "learn English [so] I can help people because, sometimes, say I have *paisanos* that don't even speak Spanish well and English either, so then I can help with anything they need because it is necessary for someone to prepare themselves. That's what I am seeing. It is necessary." Omar recognizes that his K'iche-Spanish bilingualism helps him support others' *preparación* and *adaptación* and anticipates that *preparación* in spoken English would also contribute to this goal. Omar's imagined future is interwoven with the future he imagines for the Indigenous Maya community in a predominantly non-Indigenous Latinx Los Angeles.

3.3 Long-Term Resettlement and Sobrevivencia

In our study of Indigenous Maya youth workers living in Los Angeles, linguistic *preparación* is a key component of *adaptación* to immigrant life, especially for those who are members of trilingual (at least) transnational communities. Many youth interviewed for the larger study indicated that they planned to live and work in the U.S. for less than 5 years and eventually planned to return to their home country to see their families again. Despite this aspiration, youth workers often find that the structure of the labor market, low wages, and their undocumented status, along with political and economic uncertainties in their home countries, keep them in the U.S. as they transition out of their adolescent years and into young adulthood. Over time, youth's imagined futures shift from being home-country oriented to host-country oriented (Canizales, 2015, 2021). Hence, their everyday efforts of *preparación* and *adaptación* likewise become directed toward an imagined future of long-term residence in the U.S. This is evident in youth's descriptions of the importance of language as a mechanism for *sobrevivencia*, or survival. Youth conceptualize *sobrevivencia* as an overarching goal of immigrant life, one that draws upon both *preparación* and *adaptación* as processes that make it possible to survive as an immigrant over the long term.

Beyond employability and better day-to-day work experiences, Maya youth workers' long-term resettlement requires them to think strategically about how to remain competitive in a neoliberal and globalized labor market that seeks to extract the greatest amount of labor at the lowest cost from the most vulnerable workers. Maneuvering with language can be the difference between getting by and getting ahead as unaccompanied Maya youth come of age. Juan realized this after attaining the coveted job of being a sample maker – the same job for which Andres wanted to prepare himself (see above). When asked what allowed him to enter into and maintain this position, he pointed to his confidence in his limited spoken English-language skills, which proved especially important when he was assigned independent tasks by non-Spanish-speaking supervisors:

> I think that, yeah, because where I am working, it's mostly English speakers … They give you a paper and they say, 'I want it like this, like that.' For example, they gave me this blouse today … The sample, you read it and you make it, it's like a jigsaw puzzle. Sometimes you get stressed, but what helps, back to your question, is that I speak a little bit of English. Not 100%, but I understand it.

Juan's knowledge of the English language, and his attitude toward it, gave him a perceived advantage relative to other predominantly Spanish- or Maya-speaking workers. As DuBord (2018) has noted, immigrant workers' understanding of their own and others' language proficiency allows them to leverage their bilingualism strategically in work contexts where such bilingualism is relatively rare. Despite not speaking English "100%," Juan engaged in strategic linguistic risk-taking. He said, "Sometimes I talk low, but, I mean, I take a risk. I am not afraid … There are many people who are in high school here, but they don't take the risk to look for another

job. So, what I have to do is go for it … What is helping me is speaking English at work."

For Indigenous Mayas who are subject to an ethnoracial hierarchy that results in harassment and ridicule, *sobrevivencia* is also tied to everyday interactions. As Felipe ruminated about the extent to which he felt comfortable moving about Los Angeles and his future in the U.S., he explained that speaking English has "really helped me to *sobrevivir* (survive)." He underscored the importance of language in his long-term *adaptación* in the U.S. by comparing his interactions with English speakers in public when he first arrived in Los Angeles to similar interactions at the time of our interview. Initially, he did not understand what others were saying when they spoke English to him, but "now, when someone asks me something, because the words people ask on the street are very basic, and you can answer them." Fairly limited English proficiency is sufficient for these "basic" street conversations, but greater English proficiency is necessary in different contexts, including the workplace where "it's different because there you really need more [English-language ability]." Another participant, Jorge, saw his *sobrevivencia* as more secure because his linguistic proficiency allowed him to move confidently through an increasingly wide variety of social situations. Relative to his initial arrival in Los Angeles, at the time of the interview, he described feeling "better because I understand what [people] mean." The ability to navigate social interactions while parsing out instances of discrimination is an important component of youth's imagined futures of long-term settlement in the U.S.

Sobrevivencia can also refer quite literally to youth's physical health. Enrique was among the many young people in this study who worried about physical illness, injury, or the possibility of a health emergency in the U.S. He often worried that his inability to speak English fluently would impede his ability to seek assistance in the event that "something happens." When asked where the English language would help him, he responded:

> At school, at work, on the street. It would help me. If something happens at work, for example, say I get into an accident, how would I report it if I can't speak English? If a doctor speaks English and asks me what pains I have, and I don't know … That's why I have to learn, *para sobrevivir* (to survive).

Enrique worried that he would not be able to communicate his injury to authority figures, such as factory floor supervisors or factory owners, or medical professionals, including doctors. As youth imagine their long-term futures in the U.S., English language proficiency becomes more salient as it is seen as a deciding factor in their well being as unaccompanied and unauthorized migrant workers. Enrique's description of needing English to report work injuries also fits with a broader discourse of youth's needing English (and, to a lesser degree, Spanish) in order to advocate for themselves in the workplace. As was addressed earlier, this was necessary not just in case of injury, but to report wage theft, seek easier or better paid work, ingratiate themselves to bosses, and defend themselves from discrimination.

Finally, while this analysis has focused on Spanish and English learning in the context of Indigenous Maya youth's imagined futures, it is important to

acknowledge that *preparación* and *adaptación* also entailed reimagining a place for Maya languages and reconsidering how youth's stigmatized Maya-language competence might be reframed and reconsidered in immigrant settings. Youth workers in the study expressed ambivalent language ideologies around Maya languages (cf. Messing, 2013), sometimes asserting that Maya languages had "set them back" with respect to Spanish and English, and at other times professing pride in Maya identity and thanking God for the continued presence of the Indigenous language. Some, like Andres, also reflected on the prevalence of Maya-Spanish translanguaging or syncretism in ways that suggested concern for how transnational migration might be contributing to language shift: "And sometimes in K'iche, *'Oh disculpa'* [Spanish: 'oh sorry'] – we don't say what it is in K'iche anymore. It's been combined so that's why I say that I speak 90% [of K'iche], not all of it, there are also words that I don't know anymore." Space precludes us from providing a nuanced discussion of Maya language ideologies and maintenance though we analyze these processes fully elsewhere (Canizales & O'Connor, n.d.). However, while we have emphasized Maya-speaking youth's self-positioning with respect to Spanish and English, it is critical to acknowledge the continuing role of Maya languages as expressions of "resilient indigeneity" (Casanova, 2019) for many of the participants.

4 Discussion and Conclusions

Researchers from a range of disciplines have called for greater attention to the experiences of Indigenous immigrants from Latin America in the United States. The homogenization of Latinx immigrants in media and scholarship overlooks the multiethnic nature of contemporary Latinx immigration and the presence of migrants from Indigenous communities whose languages, cultural practices, and ethnoracial identities have placed them "at the margins of multiple racial, ethnic and national spaces" (Casanova et al., 2016, p. 193) and set them apart from their non-Indigenous Latinx counterparts. Latinx immigrant homogenization also overlooks the diverse home country conditions that prompt migration. Central Americans have long been cast as economic migrants rather than refugees in the U.S. (Garcia, 2006). Yet civil wars across Central America, generally, and genocidal tactics targeting Indigenous communities in Guatemala, specifically, resulted in the disappearance or displacement of millions of Central Americans from the 1960s to the 1990s. The social, political, and economic destabilization in the wake of these civil wars continues to displace Central Americans and disproportionately affects Indigenous communities today. Because of this, we argue that it is appropriate to consider the Indigenous Maya youth in our study as refugee language learners.

Our analysis shows that Maya-speaking unaccompanied immigrant youth's social incorporation includes a two-step process of linguistic *preparación* and *adaptación*. Throughout this chapter, we have demonstrated that the linked processes of *preparación* and *adaptación* function as mechanisms to promote Maya-speaking unaccompanied youth's *sobrevivencia,* or survival, in U.S. immigrant contexts. The

participants' talk about *preparación*, *adaptación* and *sobrevivencia* demonstrated their keen understanding of their disadvantaged position as legal, cultural, and social outsiders who must be proactive in accessing knowledge and resources and patching them together to make ends meet. Discourses of *preparación*, *adaptación* and *sobrevivencia* also reveal how unaccompanied youth workers interact independently with institutions typically thought to be reserved for adults and actively negotiate the terms of their involvement within these institutions. Given that the interviews analyzed here were conducted individually, not as focus groups, the consistency of the terminology (of *preparación*, *adaptación* and *sobrevivencia*) used across participants is striking.

Maya-speaking Guatemalan youth imagine futures that encompass their roles as workers, as members of transnational households and communities – in some cases operating as liaisons for compatriots, parents, and/or siblings in the country of origin – and as young people transitioning into adulthood while away from their families. These data show that youth conceptualize preparation as a multidimensional process that is necessary for adaptation to life in the U.S. and that both processes, preparation and adaptation, contribute to their long-term survival in Los Angeles as undocumented, unaccompanied Maya-speaking youth. It is evident that there is not a single process of *preparación* or *adaptación* that can be identified for Maya youth; rather, the specific form of these processes depends on youth's nested contexts of incorporation (Golash-Boza & Valdez, 2018), including, but not limited to, their ties to coethnic community members and interactions outside of their ethnic enclave and their occupation and occupational aspirations.

This research heeds the call "to address Indigeneity – particularly as it intersects with Latinidad" (López & Irizarry, 2019, p. 5) in order to build understandings of diversity within the "Latino/a/x" category and address the challenges of educational equity and linguistic discrimination for Indigenous Latinxs in the U.S. Ultimately, immigration researchers working with Indigenous Latinxs must do "theoretical/analytical work that allows us to build policy and practice around these logics" (Calderon & Urrieta, Jr., 2019, p. 1). Future research should consider how youth's perceptions of language proficiency contribute to their experiences of *preparación* and *adaptación*, document Maya speakers' efforts to counter and mitigate linguistic discrimination in the workplace and elsewhere, and examine the role of Maya languages in diasporic ecologies of adaptation (Casanova et al., 2016).

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"We Were Taught English Using Nepali": Bhutanese-Nepali Youths Reflecting on Their Prior Literacy Experiences in Negotiating Academic Literacies in a US University

Madhav Kafle

Abstract While UNHCR estimates there are approximately 26 million refugees globally, only 1% of them have access to higher education. In US higher education, number of refugee-background students is often not tracked as they tend to be lumped together with other domestic students. While we do have some studies that explore transition and acculturation issues, studies that focus on academic literacy experiences of students with refugee-backgrounds are still low. As part of a bigger longitudinal study, which explored literacy challenges and negotiations of such students, this chapter discusses the need for understanding students' prior views and literacy experiences in designing effective pedagogical practices so that such academically underprepared students also can succeed in higher education.

Keywords Academic literacies · Higher education · Literacy socialization · Pedagogy · Refugee-background students

1 Introduction

While there are numerous studies on challenges refugee students enrolled in U.S. schools face (see chapters in Kanno & Harklau, 2012), we do not know much about the academic literacy challenges of refugee-background students enrolled in universities or colleges. Studies on refugee-background students' experiences in English-dominant settings show that they have difficulties even in accessing higher education (Duff, 2001; Kanno, 2018; Kanno & Harklau, 2012; Kanno & Varghese, 2010). Ortmeier-Hooper and Ruecker (2017) contend that bilingual and immigrant university students face severe challenges in part due to inadequate college

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preparatory curricula, insufficient guidance in the college application process, their immigration status, and a lack of financial resources.

Those who are able to get access to higher education still struggle in many areas that are considered basic because of the huge gap between their previous education and the university's academic expectations. One of the most common challenges for refugee students (as with most underprepared multilingual students) is their difficulty with vocabulary, grammar, and critical reading (Kanu, 2008; Taylor & Sidhu, 2012). In addition, secondary schools consciously limit immigrants' access to advanced courses (Kanno & Kangas, 2014), and limit real learning opportunities as they focus more on tracking and testing students (Callahan, 2005).

Similarly, research conducted from the lens of refugee integration in higher education has shown that refugees face various challenges in non-academic spaces such as forced departure, interrupted schooling, trauma, loss of identity, and stress and cultural dissonance (Montero, 2018; Reyes, 2013). Thus, while getting admission to an institute of higher education might be the first hurdle for these refugees, being able to continue and complete their degree can be even more challenging for them.

While some studies have highlighted general challenges such as language, cultural insecurities, and finances (Tervo, 2017), studies on literacy challenges of students with refugee backgrounds in US higher education are scant (except for Hirano, 2011; Ortmeier-Hooper, 2008). In a small liberal arts setting, Hirano (2011) studied seven refugee students during their first year of college. All her students, despite various challenges, graduated successfully within 4 years with good grades. Hirano argues that the main reason for such success was substantial support provided by the literacy sponsors throughout the students' degree programs. Hirano concludes her study by indicating the need for longitudinal studies, especially in large public university settings, as such studies are virtually non-existent. My larger study (Kafle, 2019), situated in a large research public university, responds to Hirano's call by exploring refugee-background students' challenges in a northeastern public research university.

Though these studies raise important questions about the academic and social experiences of refugee-background students, they do not address how students view their mobility experiences, especially their prior education in transitional spaces such as refugee camps, in negotiating the academic literacy challenges they encounter while pursuing higher education in the U.S. This chapter, as part of a larger dissertation study, examines how students' views toward their refugee camp education influences their experiences of literacy socialization in the country of their resettlement. The data analyzed were collected from three refugee-background students who self-identify as Bhutanese-Nepali and who attended a large public research university, which I call Dreamland University (DU), in northeastern USA. The larger study, as a multiple case study, explored academic literacy challenges and negotiation of these three refugee-background students across the curriculum for 5 years. This chapter focuses on students' views on their prior literacy education at refugee camps in Nepal as well as their attempts in negotiating literacy challenges at DU. Although my participants often downplayed the role of their multilingual

repertoire in their negotiation process, I discuss in my larger study, how it turned out to be quite crucial in successful literacy negotiation across contexts.

2 Research Context and Participants

As indicated earlier, the data analyzed for this book chapter are taken from a larger longitudinal multiple-case study that explored the academic literacy challenges experienced by three Bhutanese refugee students enrolled at a large public university and how they negotiated these challenges. Initiated as a teacher research-based study in an undergraduate ESL writing class that I taught, I observed the participants in 11 different general education courses, and various out-of-class settings such as Learning Centers, dorms and off-campus apartments during their 5 year long undergraduate study. In addition to conducting eight semi-annual in-depth interviews with each participant, I collected relevant course artifacts, participant writings across the curriculum, and numerous informal chats throughout their undergraduate years.

2.1 Research Context

The primary research context for this study was a large northeastern public research university in the United States. When the study began, the university was one among the top 10 institutions with the highest number of international student enrollment in 2013 (citation removed for anonymity). Honoring how my participants often referred to it, I have called it the Dreamland University (DU). All three participants, along with other 40 migrant students, were admitted to the DU through Campus Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP). In their first year at DU, they could not register on their own and were placed in different classes based on their CAMP test scores taken during the beginning of the semester. Though I observed the participants in the US university setting, they frequently refer to their education in refugee camps (in Nepal) as well the US high schools while talking about their current challenges. In this sense, the overall research context includes multiple educational institutions in Nepal and USA.

I first met my participants as my students in ESL classes I was teaching in 2012. At that time, my participants had already been resettled in the US for at least 2 years, and had graduated from US high schools and were studying as freshmen at DU. Unlike remedial classes at many academic institutions (e.g. Giordano & Hasse, 2016), DU ESL classes were credit bearing and fulfilled the requirement of first year composition course for multilingual students. However, some of the classes my participants took were not credit bearing.

2.2 Story of Bhutanese Refugees

As all three research participants are Bhutanese refugees, who grew up and had their schooling in refugee camps in Nepal, it might be helpful to provide some background about how large numbers of Bhutanese became refugees and the nature of education at the refugee camps.

According to Dhakal and Strawn (1994) Nepali people had been living in Bhutan for at least 200 years, when the civil unrest began in mid-1980s, after Bhutan's promulgation of one nation one people policy. Prior to the policy, Lhotsampas, as they were called by the Bhutanese administration, were living peacefully, including running schools in Nepali medium in Sothern Bhutan. With the policy, Nepali was banned in schools, and "the Lhotsampa faced fines and imprisonment if they refused to wear traditional Drukpa dress" (Pulla, 2016, p.7). The Lhotsampas, of course, resisted such eradication of their language and culture which eventually resulted in an uprising. To cut the long story short, Lhotsampa community leaders were jailed and tortured by the Bhutanese military, thus forcing the common citizenry to flee the country. Within a year, more than a hundred thousand of these Nepali speaking people landed and created refugee camps in eastern riverbanks of Nepal (for a more detailed historical and cultural narrative of their flight from Bhutan see Dhakal & Strawn, 1994; Pulla, 2016).

It is often misperceived that Bhutanese refugees are a homogeneous group of people. It is constituted by as many castes and ethno-linguistic groups such as Brahmans, Chhetris, Rais, Limbus, and Gurungs (Hutt, 2003). In fact, the case of Bhutanese refugees is one of the best hidden stories of plight (Sharma, 2016; Banki, 2008) as not many people are aware about their situation.

2.3 Education in Refugee Camps

Three languages had a conspicuous role in the education system in the refugee camps: Dzongkha, as the national language of Bhutan, English as the medium of instruction as is the case in Bhutan, and Nepali as the requirement for high school graduation from Nepal (Brown, 2001). While Dzongkha was taught until the 8th grade, according to my participants, the teaching was more symbolic than practical. Likewise, education until the 8th grade was based on the Bhutanese curriculum, including teaching of Bhutanese social studies (Brown, 2001). However, secondary education was based on the Nepalese education system because they could take part in the national educational exam at the end of the tenth grade. Both the Nepalese and Bhutanese education systems had some affinity with the colonial educational system applied in India by the British. The medium of education in refugee camp was English following the Bhutanese tradition. At one point, education in the Bhutanese refugee camps was regarded of high quality globally (Brown, 2001) even when "the refugees had to endure a less than basic life" (Pulla & Dahal, 2016, p. 33).

2.4 The Participants

I call the three participants Gyan, Lal, and Raj (all pseudonyms). As indicated above, they were admitted to DU through CAMP. I first met Raj in my Fall 2012 ESL course, who was directly placed in this class by CAMP along with three other Bhutanese Refugees students. I met Gyan and Lal in a similar way in my Spring 2013 class. Unlike Raj, who was tested out of the beginner level ESL classes, Gyan and Lal had to take the remedial class as their scores were lower than Raj’s. In the exploration phase of the study, I began studying both classes holistically to explore literacy challenges of multilingual undergraduate students as both classes had international students from countries including China, Korea, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Indonesia, Malaysia, India and a total of nine Bhutanese students with refugee backgrounds, who were relocated in the US from refugee camps in Nepal. Based mainly on their schooling trajectories in refugee camps, and also in US high schools, I decided later to do a multiple case study on three Bhutanese refugee students. All my participants were educated in different refugee camps in Nepal and went to different high schools in the US as well before joining DU. They also wanted to major in three different disciplines initially, even though two of them ended up taking the same subject.

While I was only expecting my students only fluent in Nepali and Dzongkha initially, it was only during the longitudinal study that I came to further understand their rich and fluid linguistic repertoire (see below). Like many other immigrant students they perform family obligations unusual for adolescents (Leki et al., 2008; Duran, 2017), serving their parents as translator for interactions with authorities, for example. Below, I present their brief linguistic and academic portraits:

2.4.1 Gyan

Gyan was born in a refugee camp in Nepal. Gyan’s repertoires consists of at least three languages: Nepali, English, and Hindi. While Nepali is their first language, English was the medium of instruction in refugee camp schools. All my participants acquired Hindi informally from the local context where Hindi songs and movies were present and accessible. Gyan initially wanted to major in Kinesiology (Gyan, ESL015 Journal, Y1) because he wanted to help his community to stay fit and healthy in a new country, i.e. USA. However, he ended up majoring in Nutrition along with Hospitality Management as a minor.

2.4.2 Lal

Lal was born in Bhutan and can speak Dzongkha relatively better than Raj and Gyan. Lal has the largest social network among the three. He calls himself a *haude* (silly) (Lal, Int. 6, Y5). Given his rich linguistic repertoire of at least six different

languages including Nepali, English, Hindi, Dzongkha, Bengali, and Spanish, his social skills are hardly a surprise. Among the six, he learned two (Bengali and Spanish) in high school after coming to the US. He was over 18 when he arrived in the US and was told that he could not join High School at that age (Lal, Int. 1, Y1) only to find it to be false a year later. Therefore, unlike, Gyan and Raj, both of whom attended US High School for 2 years, Lal went to it for only 1 year. Lal wanted to become a registered dietician from the beginning, just like Gyan to be able to help people in his community stay healthy. Therefore, he pursued Nutrition as his major and Hospitality Management as his minor.

2.4.3 Raj

Raj was born in another refugee camp in Nepal. Based on my early interactions with him, I got a sense that Raj considered himself the most intelligent young man among the cohort of refugee students. Raj even claimed that he was the highest achieving person in CAMP during the first year (Raj, Int. 1, Y1). He initially wanted to be a computer engineer and took courses in Mechanical Engineering but ended up majoring in Nuclear Engineering. In the later years, he also faced various difficulties, and presented himself humbly as one of the underprepared students.

Despite serious difficulties and considering dropping out half way through, all three successfully graduated from the program within 5 years. However, Gyan had the hardest journey to graduation because of his repeated failures in passing the certification exam called Servsafe, a requirement for graduation.

3 Methods

3.1 Data Collection and Analysis

Since I share Nepali language and culture with my focal participants, I used both Nepali and English in our interactions, including in interviews. While multiple forms of data were being generated simultaneously, the data generation moved in a progression from observation of participants' literacy in language classes (Spring 2013) to content classes consisting of three academic semesters (Fall 2013, and Spring 2014). In the beginning of Spring 2013, I started a collection of course artifacts in my own class for this study. In the latter half of the semester, I observed the participants in two other language and literacy classes run by CAMP, Gyan's and Lal's individual Writing Center sessions, and content class tutoring sessions, and two self-study hours. During the second semester, i.e., the Fall 2013, with their instructors' approvals, I followed the participants to 11 different classes and conducted participant observation by listening to the lectures, taking notes, and participating in class activities. I audio recorded the classroom discourse and took field

notes to capture my observations of when and how study participants were engaged during class. After observing them in class or out-of-class settings, I conducted semi-structured formal interviews with each participant. During spring 2014, I also closely observed each participant in the courses, which they had late-dropped the prior semester and were then retaking this semester. Similarly, I informally interacted with them on many occasions (more than 60 hours of audio recorded). My main goal was to study what challenges they were having and what strategies they were employing to negotiate those challenges. I kept interviewing and following the students until their graduation in July 2017.

Major data types used in the larger study can be categorized into artifacts, interactions, (and) direct observations. **Artifacts** consist of various kinds of documents students produced during their undergraduate years, as well as artifacts from many literacy sponsors involved in these students' literacy trajectory. **Interactional data** included eight semi-structured *interviews* and informal conversations with the participants during individual conferences, Nepalese gatherings, walks to/from content class observations, occasional grocery trips, and multiple informal chats with the participants. To explore if there was any disconnect between what the focal participants told me and how they performed, I used direct **observations**. Observing them allowed me to better understand their lives, particularly their study habits. During numerous visits, I took notes; but audio recorded the group study and at times interacted with them. Through their narratives, I came to know about their linguistic and educational backgrounds, current challenges, and aspirations. For this chapter, I rely mostly on interactional data.

I followed principles of qualitative thematic analysis (Holliday, 2010; Bazeley, 2013) to analyze data. Essentially, my data analysis involved multiple iterations of these four steps: coding, determining themes, constructing an argument, and going back to the data (Holliday, 2010, pp. 102–03). First, following principles of open coding, I developed categories that represented various forms of data. After multiple readings of data with manual highlighting for interesting portions of the data, I grouped similar ideas or phrasings under different categories. The categories emerged from the data but were also mediated by my readings of relevant literature. Here are some examples of categories developed: use of translation in teaching (translanguaging), positive views on translanguaging, negative views on translanguaging, and strength of refugee camp education. Next, I used select coding to arrive at representative themes. Finally, concepts such as learner beliefs, language standards, linguistic borders, hybridity, and language ideologies framed my focused coding.

4 My Positionality

It is necessary to reflect on my positioning as I acted both as their teacher and also researcher in this study. Even though I began studying the students when I initially met them through my writing classes, I expanded my observations over a relatively

long period in their dormitories, classrooms, and study spaces during the first year and in their apartments and content classes during the second year. The fact that I was their academic writing instructor could have put the students in a conflicting position. They might have felt ambiguity in terms of what kind of responses I would value more as their teacher and also a researcher. My initial role as teacher transformed into a sort of guardian, i.e. *dai* in Nepali, and also a colleague over the years. I would have no way of assessing the impact of my positioning in their views had this study not been a longitudinal one. I could rarely have done this kind of in-depth study if I was studying other student groups.

5 From Refugee Camps to a US Research University: My Participants' Literacy Challenges

Qualitative analysis of data (Bazeley, 2013) showed that my students routinely undervalued the English literacy as well as their multilingual repertoires. However, it is their multilingual repertoire, which helps them in building translocal networks in negotiating the literacy challenges while attending a large public university in the U.S.

While analyzing the data, I draw on the concept of literacy as a (transcontextual) social practice (Brandt & Clinton, 2002; Baynham & Prinsloo, 2009; Johns, 1997; Kell, 2017; Lam & Warriner, 2012; Lea & Street, 2006; Leung & Lewkowicz, 2017; Lillis & Scott, 2007; Lillis, 2014; Nordquist, 2017; Wingate, 2015) to understand and theorize how an analysis of my participants' literacy trajectories helped to facilitate my analysis of their views on academic literacy. Therefore, I discuss the nature of refugee camp education as described by the participants here.

According to my participants, except for English classes, education in Nepal[1] was overall good as it helped them to graduate from US high schools and get admitted to a large public research university. All three students told me that courses in Nepal were as good as or even better than in the US high schools especially in mathematics and science. However, they thought that English language and literacy courses in refugee camps were not that good mainly because of teachers' heavy use of Nepali while teaching English.

[1] I am using this term in the sense my participants used it, i.e. interchangeably with literacy education they received in refugee camps.

5.1 “The High School Education Here Is More Positive Than There”

Lal replies to my question to what extent the refugee camp education in Nepal was useful or not for their education in the USA:

M: So let’s go back to the question we were talking about we were discussing what part was good in Nepalese education system and what part was good in US education system and you said like in the US education system there is no requirement for memorizing things here, you need to be more practical right but did you find any[thing] good about Nepalese education system also?

L: Ya, there was good, but the high school education here is more positive than there because the everything that I learn in Nepal help me even now also so that is the important part of Nepalese education because I still remember those things. So once I do math problem or other that works, but English was not helpful because even English teacher they used to teach in Nepali even in English class so I don’t think that is helpful. We used to write essay in may be may be one hundred words then that’s not totally helpful.

In this quote, Lal is responding to my question, if education he received in Nepal is contributing currently in the US in any way. He first says that the overall quality of education he received in refugee camp was good. However, he immediately compares the overall quality of education with the US high school he attended and labels it more “positive.” While not quoted here, from my extensive informal chats done later, I came to know that what means by this seemingly confusing phrasing (good in Nepal… here positive) is the quality of strength of other content literacy is overshadowed by the weakness of language and literacy competency he had in refugee camps. Lal, like Raj and Gyan below, explicitly mentions that “English teachers, they used to teach in Nepali even in English class.” For him, as a person who had to take ESL classes again in the university in addition to the US high school, this “weakness” was mainly the fault of translanguaging pedagogy in refugee camps. Similarly, he faults present writing challenges to the lack of extensive writing practice in his prior schooling.

Gyan and Raj’s responses also attest to this pattern of viewing their prior English education of weaker quality, unlike education in other subjects such as math and science. For example, Raj first affirms below that the courses he took in Nepal have been of great help in his US studies:

R: Oh ya the courses that I took in Nepal were very effective and they were very important.

M: So in what sense?

R: Ahh it’s a lot easier for us because we already taken it in Nepal, so a lot of classes especially in math, biology and chemistry, we used to take same

class in Nepal, which means we were taking it again which makes us easier class.

M: So that means did you take similar courses in US High School that you'd taken back in Nepal?

R: Yes. You are right. (Raj, Int. 2, Y2)

As Raj clearly asserts above, the courses he took in Nepal dealt with similar topics as did the courses he had to take in the US high school he studied. Thus, Raj found US high school at times even easier than the refugee camp high school in Nepal. In US high school, Raj says that he "just went to class, teachers gave lectures and home works, and do what they say" (Raj, Int. 2, Y2). Here, Raj indicates that going to high schools in USA did not pose significant academic challenges. Gyan also expressed similar views that he was able to do better in US high schools because of the good education he had received in Nepal.

5.2 *"Because the Teacher Used to Explain in Nepali, Even the Courses, Like Classes in English"*

However, all my participants believe that their English courses in Nepal were least useful in their country of resettlement. The main reason English was not that useful, as per my participants, is that it was taught through translation, i.e. by using Nepali, in refugee camps. Their English teachers, as well as other subject teachers, mixed Nepali and English all the time even though the textbook was in English as the excerpt below illustrates:

M: Even in Nepal your textbooks were all in English right? So,

G: Ya.

M: so you didn't have problem of understanding the reading the questions?

G: Because the teacher used to explain in Nepali, even the courses, like classes in English, the books the teachers used to teach in Nepali, like they just read whatever is written in the book, and explained it in Nepali. That's what happened. (Gyan, Int. 2, Y2)

As Gyan informs above, despite all the textbooks being in English, translation method was used to teach almost all the subjects, including English. Lal, as already shown above, stated that he did not find English courses in Nepal helpful. While this strategy does not seem to be doing any harm to the students' perception of other subject teachers, English teachers became the target of student criticism.

As a former English teacher in Nepal in mid-1990s, when the English manpower in Nepal was still lacking, I had heard about private schools competing for employing Bhutanese-Nepali teachers because of their high quality of English (though see Pulla & Dahal, 2016 for possible exploitation of these teachers by such schools). Therefore, it was striking for me to hear criticism of these teachers by my students. I cross-checked my understanding about use of English in refugee camps with Lal, who gave me a negative answer:

M: In Nepal (i.e. in refugee camps), the education was, instruction was in English?
L: I will say no because there were all Nepalese teacher they can speak ok English but every one they preferred Nepali the books everything are in English but the student and teacher they want to speak in Nepali, so pretty much they never explain in English. I will say that.
M: I, but I think because the book was in English, so you did not have problem reading the questions and understanding?
L: Ya that's the thing. There was like one Bhutanese language Dzongkha and another is Nepali beyond that all courses are [were] in English, so that was helpful. (Lal, Int. 2, Y2)

Here, Lal firmly denies being taught in English despite the fact that English was the medium of instruction in refugee camps (Brown, 2001). Lal agrees that everything except for Nepali and Dzongkha classes was in English. While one would envision a relatively easier transition process from refugee camps to US high schools – and then to the university – because of their exposure to English in the camps, that is not the picture Lal shares. However, he keeps reasoning that he is having all these hurdles in university classes because of poor English teaching in camps.

Raj seconds Lal, when he says: "Ya, I mean the teacher used to speak in English, only the teacher but within students they ask questions, they just raise their hands and talk in Nepali too which is not a good way to learn English" (Raj, Int. 2, Y2). While I was quite familiar with the positive role of translanguaging in various school settings as a researcher during this data collection time, I tried my best to refrain from imposing my views to the students in hopes of getting their emic views to the extent possible.

5.3 *"They Should Like Explain in English Itself"*

Asked what suggestions they would like to make to their English teachers in Nepal, Gyan suggested, "they should like explain in English itself so that students gonna be able to, if like in English itself…" Gyan explains that if the students are being resettled to an English speaking country, they should be taught in English itself because "if they [students] come to the other country, as soon as going to be the problems or hard for them." Therefore, he thinks, "the teachers should change the way they are teaching" (Gyan, Int. 2, Y2). However, we should remember that such a suggestion would be after the fact, as many teachers while teaching in the camps perhaps did not see any resolution of the protracted situation. Once the teachers became aware of the possible third country resettlement around 2007, they were in fact the first batch of people to enlist for the resettlement (Sharma, 2016). Therefore, when my participants, who arrived in the US in 2010, speak of low quality of teaching in refugee camps, we also need to keep in mind the impact of the resettlement process itself in refugee camp teaching and learning.

5.4 *Overemphasis in Memorization and Formulaic Writing in Nepal*

While my participants believed that English teachers' use of Nepali created linguistic challenges, they also thought that the overall teaching and learning style in Nepal created other challenges for them. For instance, my participants criticized refugee camp education for its overemphasis on memorizing. For them, learning in Nepal meant having to memorize everything taught in the classes. Therefore, the students' job was to learn by heart the answers to the essay questions given in the textbook or provided by the teachers. However, in the USA, even though they had to remember what was taught, only remembering would not be of great help because most of the time they had to apply what they had learned in class in new situations. Lal emphasizes the role of memory when he says he could learn even when he actually does not know the matter in Nepal: "if I don't know the materials I mean if I just learn the things and I just remember the words in Nepal" that will work. Lal also went to a university in Nepal, "but there also I [he] found remembering the whole stuff (Lal, Int. 2, Y2). Thus, according to Lal, memorizing is also used in university education in Nepal.

The emphasis on memorizing is manifested mostly in assessment. Most of the questions in Nepal were what Gyan calls "plug-in" questions (Gyan, Int. 3, Y2): asking students to remember a formula by heart and to plug it in to answer a question being asked. In other words, if they did not remember the formulae, they would be almost helpless in exams. On the other hand, in the USA students were expected to apply what they learned in class in solving new problems. Students did not have to worry that often about remembering the formula as they were provided the formula even in the exam, but students needed to know how to apply them in a new context.

Finally, my participants also believed that writing in Nepal was quite formulaic as Gyan mentions below:

G: Ya in Nepal while we were writing the essay, we just know like in essay there would be introduction body and conclusion, and we just like make a short paragraph as introduction and big body part and then conclusion, we did not know like then in the essay there is gonna be the topic sentences or thesis. (Gyan, Int. 2, Y2)

For Gyan, writing an essay in Nepal thus meant following the tripartite formula of intro-body-conclusion and writing paragraphs of different lengths. While literacy is a social practice and situated on time and space, Gyan here seems to be generalizing that to be a good essay, one needs to explicitly know about metalanguage such as topic sentences. Similarly, Raj also said they did not have to worry about essay organization in Nepal: "Nepal we just write essay in Nepal it does not matter how they are like, here we need to make it like structure, we need to form structure like the fluency, the essay should flow" (Int. 2, Y2). Just like Gyan, Raj is also commenting based on the metalanguage (e.g. flow) he might have picked up from various composition classes, including the ESL one I was teaching.

5.5 Negotiating Norms Across Contexts

Similar to Gyan and Raj, Lal also believes that there is a particular "Nepalese way" of writing which is "just to explain the thing." He provides an example:

L: I don't know about the other private schools [in Nepal] but, for example, if I write about the "woman education", it's important I will say, I will explain mother is the first instructor or maybe I will just explain I will pretty much; while I write essay in Nepal I am not used to give supporting details, I explain top to bottom but used to like introduction body paragraph and the conclusion. I know only that thing I don't know about the supporting details, all those things used to explain like mother is first instructor because she helps the children first time like she teach the children how to speak, how to take shower all those thing, so I used to explain just those thing but I don't use to give like supporting details other full information from where I get this information; so all those thing I mention, those things in my essay in high school then that does not work, and the teacher told me this is the way you have to write. (Lal, Int. 2, Y2)

In this quote, Lal narrates his experience of being rejected when he followed the "Nepali style" in one of his high school classes. As he went to explain further to me in the same interview, Lal wrote an essay in one of his US high school classes as he used to write in Nepal, i.e. by just explaining the topic, but he was told that his essay was not well-written as it lacked a clear thesis and supporting details. As the teacher was trying to help Lal in revising the essay, Lal told the US high school teacher that his teachers in Nepal taught him to write that way. After that, the teacher looked at Lal's essay more favorably. Thus, in this case, he was able to negotiate the assignment to some extent by showing that he was trying to follow the norms, though from a different place.

However, such negotiation was not that common because all my participants often seem to have easily bought into the superiority (or at least perceived so) of American education. They might also be judging their prior education in resource less refugee camp by comparing it with comparatively better equipped high schools and universities in the USA. As my participants are narrating their stories after the resettlement, it could be the case that they have now subscribed to more monolingual view, which would view language mixing by teachers negatively. Thus, their view should be taken as an outcome of complex interaction between the various ecological resources they had access to.

Overall, my participants believed that the education in refugee camps worked quite straightforwardly: learning meant memorizing the text or the teacher, writing essays meant writing around the topic as thoughts emerge instantaneously, i.e. without worrying much about thesis, support, and flow of ideas. Unlike in the US, where my participants felt that each teacher has their own style, they think that teachers in Nepal faithfully follow the textbook and that the same style of writing works for them. However, when I asked if there is anything that they think was better in

refugee camp education than in the US education system, Lal indicated that using memorization and paying respect to teachers was also beneficial for him: "remembering is one part of good, the respecting teachers and the courses is good" (Lal, Int. 2, Y2). This belief counters the notion discussed earlier that they had low-grade education in refugee camps because of the strong emphasis on memorization. Despite this contradiction, my participants still think that they would have fared even better at DU had they been taught to prioritize applying knowledge in solving problems rather than in memorizing it in Nepal.

To draw from the larger study, while my participants viewed translanguaging used in refugee camps by teachers, especially English teachers, negatively, it is through their multilingual repertoire they were able to develop helpful networks, which facilitated negotiating academic literacy challenges throughout their undergraduate years. First, my participants, like most Bhutanese refugees at DU, used Nepali to discuss various course topics in Nepali. For instance, my participants often discussed their academic woes with Nepali graduate students in post-soccer chit-chats (Obs. 07/02/2017). Similarly, I also observed students networking with other peers based on some form of connection, usually linguistic. Lal's bits and pieces of Spanish helped him in connecting with a peer from El Salvador as did his Hindi in befriending another one from Guyana. This kind of being able to connect was quite important as often such friends turned out to be great literacy sponsors for my participants.

6 Conclusion

As part of a larger longitudinal multiple-case study of students with refugee backgrounds, this chapter explored students' views toward language and education they received in refugee camps in Nepal in connection with their current literacy challenges in a US public research university. Specifically, it discussed three students' views on value of their refugee camp education for their literacy socialization in a large public research university setting.

While my students found math and science classes from Nepal quite useful in their transition from refugee camps to US high schools and then to DU, they largely subscribed to a negative view of English classes there as they routinely used translanguaging. While students might be here implicitly comparing the "English" they found in the US with the one they were using in refugee camps, as my students reported being heavily corrected in formal issues such as grammar by their high school literacy teachers (Raj, Int. 6).

However, though not reported in this study, based on the larger study (Kafle, 2019), it is not only language correctness that counts for language/literacy learning, but exploration of various resources that the learner/user might have developed based on their migratory histories, ideologies, and identities. As Duran (2017) showed in her study of literacy practices of three Karenni refugee families, we should keep in mind that there is a complicated relationship between migration and language learning, ideologies of language and literacy practices. Therefore, we

should attend to not only linguistic issues but also learner's investment and ecological affordances in different spatio-temporal dimensions so that we can develop better academic support for a wider range of students, including those with refugee backgrounds, in our increasingly diverse classrooms.

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Part II
Language, Literacy and Learning Among Refugee-Background Adults

Assessing Refugee-Background Adult Second Language Learners with Emerging Literacy: How a Social Semiotic Analysis Reveals Hidden Assumptions of Test Design

Jenna A. Altherr Flores

Abstract This study is a critical analysis of a low-stakes in-house English as a Second Language (ESL) and English literacy test from a local program in a large city in the southwestern United States. From a critical multimodal social semiotic perspective (Kress G. Multimodality: A social semiotic approach to contemporary communication. Routledge, 2010; Kress G, van Leeuwen T. Reading images: The grammar of visual design. Routledge, 2006; Pennycook, Critical applied linguistics: A critical introduction. Routledge, 2001) and through the lens of systemic functional linguistics, the study investigated the test genre elements used, as well as the semiotic resources (multimodal components, multimodal composition) used, to show how test tasks are portrayed to test-takers via these semiotic resources. This chapter explores ideologies of language and literacy, and assumptions made in the multimodal composition and visual design of language and literacy tests for refugee-background adult second language learners with emerging literacy. The results showed assumptions of visual and multimodal literacy, test genre knowledge, and referential background and content schemata, as well as an inherent ideology that visual images, cues, and design are universal. The study has implications for assessment and materials design for this population in both educational contexts and beyond, as well as design for broader populations in any context.

Keywords Adult education · Adult L2 learners with emerging literacy · Assessment · English as a Second Language (ESL) · Multimodal composition · Social semiotics · Visual and multimodal literacy · Visual design

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1 Introduction

In Fall 2015, I worked for a state-funded English as a Second Language (ESL) program designed for refugee-background adults from a variety of educational backgrounds and literacy levels. The program was housed in an adult basic education program and had a community education feel with open enrollment and no attendance policy. One week, four new students with no prior experience with formal education joined my class. That very same week, I was instructed to administer a programmatic assessment to all my students. I was told the data from the assessment would be used for program metrics and would be sent to the funding agency. Because I had substantial experience teaching refugee-background L2 adult emergent readers, I was immediately concerned about how the assessment itself might influence the experiences of students who had varying literacy and formal schooling backgrounds. I was also worried about the content of the test—and what it could usefully measure. There were complex multimodal ensembles, and questions with content potentially more suitable for students enrolled in classes higher than a literacy-level ESL class. However, because I was a new teacher in the program and because I understood the program's funding was partially dependent on metrics generated by test scores, I felt obligated to administer the test. I reluctantly gave the assessment, imploring students to do their best, not be nervous, and simply try. But I saw their faces. I saw their reactions. And the next day, the four new students did not return, nor the next, or the next. This event has profoundly shaped the core of my research agenda which critically examines the design of language and literacy assessments, particularly in-house language and literacy assessments. I know now that even when assessments are meant to be low-stakes, tests of any sort can have an effect on students' personal well-being, and academic self-confidence and performance (see, e.g., Cassady, 2004; Stiggins, 1999).

With concerns and questions about the validity and utility of such assessments in mind, my research has endeavored to uncover and understand some of the ideologies of language and literacy, and assumptions about learning, that drive and shape the multimodal composition and visual design of language and literacy assessments for refugee-background adult second language (L2) learners with emerging literacy. Here, I report on key findings with the following focal questions as a guide:

1. What test genre elements are used in the design of language and literacy assessments?
2. What semiotic resources (multimodal components, multimodal composition) are used in the design of the assessments, and how are tasks and/or messages portrayed to test-takers via these semiotic resources?

1.1 Literacy

Stemming from theories of scholars such as those of the New London Group (1996), the definition of *literacy* used in this chapter is that literacy is embedded in the social context, is more than a set of decontextualized skills, encompasses more than the mode of the written word, and is concerned with what people do with texts in real-world contexts (see also Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Street, 1984). This definition incorporates the social semiotic aspects of images and textual design, and is inclusive of *visual* and *multimodal literacy*, which are the abilities to understand and interact with visual images, multimodal genre elements and components, visual and multimodal design, and the relationships of these non-(print-)word-based modes of communication to both each other and to written words (see Serafini, 2014).

1.2 Adult Emergent Readers

Adult L2 learners with emerging literacy are adults who are becoming literate for the first time in their lives, and whose literacy is developing in a language they are also simultaneously learning (van de Craats et al., 2006). In the United States, for example, their literacy is developing in English. Most are from refugee- or immigrant-backgrounds.[1] As *adult emergent readers* (Bigelow & Vinogradov, 2011), many are learning about sound-symbol correspondences, punctuation marks, orthography, how to read and use a print and/or multimodal text, etc., as well as learning about the visual and multimodal aspects of literacy and of texts (Altherr Flores, 2017, 2019, 2020). Because their emergent (print) literacy is developing in a language other than their first language, they have unique programmatic and pedagogical needs. However, while most adult emergent readers are entering into formal, school-based learning for the first time in their lives, this is not to say they are beginning learners; as adults, they are beginning *classroom* learners, that is, they are learning how to "do school", but they are not beginning thinkers. Following UNESCO's (2018) definition for *adult literacy*, L2 adult emergent readers are aged 15 and older. Most of these learners are served by community or adult education programs, though some secondary school students also belong to this population (Bigelow & Vinogradov, 2011).

[1] It must be noted that not all refugees have emerging literacy or have experienced interruptions in formal, school-based learning. This chapter, however, focuses on the intersection of the two marginalized populations of adult emergent readers and refugee-background students.

2 Literature Review

While there is a small, but growing body of research on adult L2 learners with emerging literacy or who (have) experienced interruptions in formal education, much of it has examined psycholinguistic processes, cognition, and metalinguistic awareness (e.g., Kurvers et al., 2006; Tammelin-Laine, 2015; Tarone et al., 2009; Vainikka et al., 2017). There is very little research—particularly recent research—about visual/multimodal literacy, and more specifically what I have called *the social semiotics of literacy* with respect to this population (e.g., Altherr Flores, 2019, 2020; Bruski, 2012; Whiteside, 2008).

Early work in visual literacy with adult L2 and literacy learners focused on cognition and processing, centering on literacy as a neutral, stand-alone skill. This scholarship included empirical studies, literature reviews, and recommendations for teaching visual literacy and for designing materials for international development work (Haverson & Haynes, 1982; Hvitfeldt, 1985; Linney, 1995). Although researchers in the medical community have researched visual literacy in medical materials (e.g., Dowse, 2004; Hill, 2008), these works are largely concerned with adults with "low" literacy in their first language, with insufficient attention to adult L2 and literacy learners.

More recent literature reviews and pedagogical recommendations for working with this population have mentioned visual and multimodal literacy (e.g., Arbuckle, 2004; Bigelow & Schwarz, 2010; Hardy, 2009), however, research on visual and multimodal literacy, and textual design for adult L2 and literacy learners is particularly understudied, especially in assessment texts (Allemano, 2013; Altherr Flores, 2017, 2020). Because print materials and assessments for this population often rely heavily on multimodal or visual elements, and because of how assessments are used (Shohamy, 2001), it is imperative to critically analyze the design of multimodal assessment texts and to investigate what assumptions may have been made in their design as these assumptions may impact not only test-takers' meaning-making, but also how test administrators evaluate student responses. This review of the literature therefore informs a newer direction of what *literacy*—inclusive of visual and multimodal literacy—is for these learners as it incorporates the social, specifically the social semiotic, aspects of literacy.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by the theoretical framework of what I have called *critical multimodal social semiotics* (Kress, 2010; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006; Pennycook, 2001). Social semiotics is the study of meaning and its social dimensions, but also of the power and processes of signification and interpretation, and how societies and individuals are shaped by these processes (Halliday, 1978; Hodge & Kress, 1988). A multimodal social semiotic perspective is founded on the notion that the meaning

of a multimodal sign is shaped by the norms and social rules that were operating at the moment of its creation (Jewitt, 2009). A critical multimodal social semiotic theory considers how semiotic resources carry intentions, ideologies, and assumptions. Such an approach goes beyond description as it analyzes not only multimodal texts, but also their role in creating, reproducing, and transforming social practices, and considers ways to solve problems and issues of inequality (Caldas-Coulthard & van Leeuwen, 2003).

Modes are material-semiotic resources that are available for representation; they are culturally specific and socially created (Kress, 2010). Examples of modes include image, writing, speech, gesture, music, sound, layout, etc. Each mode can express the same intended meaning as another mode, however, the realization of this meaning differs from mode to mode (Kress, 2010). All texts are inherently multimodal as no written text can be disassociated from the material it was written on, and no visual image can be disassociated from the colors used to create it (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). The present study focuses on the modes of still image, writing, and layout.

This research relies on Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) uptake of systemic functional linguistics (Halliday, 1978), specifically the *textual*, *ideational*, and *interpersonal* metafunctions in their grammar of visual design. The *textual* metafunction allows different configurations of multimodal elements to represent different meanings. This metafunction is concerned with information value (marked by Given/New composition where the Given is located on the left, the New on the right; Ideal/Real composition where the Ideal [the generalized essence of information] is at the top, the Real [the practical or specific information] at the bottom; and center/margin composition where the information in the center is most important); salience (marked by visual weight, e.g., size, sharpness, contrast); and framing (the manner in which elements are connected or separated in a text). Through the *ideational* metafunction, visual structures are categorized as *narrative* (concerned with actions and events, and composed of Actors, Vectors, Goals, Reacters, and/or Phenomena) or *conceptual* (representations of the essence of a participant, shown through Possessive Attributes [parts and/or identifiers] and Carriers [whole structures]). Conceptual structures can be embedded in narrative structures. The *interpersonal* metafunction shows the relationship between the represented participants of an image and the viewer. Finally, this research also follows Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) use of the Peircean (1867) icon-index-symbol sign mode typology where *icons* are signs with a visual resemblance to what is being represented, *indices* are signs that resemble something that implies a concept or an object, and *symbols* are visual representations that do not resemble what they represent. Thus, critical multimodal social semiotics offers a lens through which to study literacy from a broader perspective that includes visual and multimodal design. It highlights assumptions that may have been made in the design of texts for refugee-background adult L2 learners with emerging literacy, and suggests possible solutions to address such expectations.

3 Methods

3.1 Site and Text

My critical analysis of multimodal texts investigates the test genre elements (e.g., multiple-choice questions, fill-in-the-blank questions, etc.) used in language and literacy assessments, as well as the semiotic resources used in the design of assessments, and how tasks are shown to test-takers through such resources. Through this research, I seek to unearth inherent, underlying assumptions in multimodal test design.

With these questions as a guide, and drawing on the theory of critical multimodal social semiotics, I analyzed a set of assessment texts used in a local ESL/literacy program for refugee-background adults in a large city in southern Arizona. The program, housed in an adult basic education program in a community college, is funded through the Arizona Refugee Resettlement Program. On average, the program serves about 600 students a year; it offers four levels of classes (literacy, low-beginning, high-beginning, intermediate). Students enrolled in the program are originally from a variety of countries that include Afghanistan, Bhutan, Burundi, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Iraq, Somalia, Sudan, and Syria, with most students coming from Africa or the Near East.

The text under consideration is a set of in-house assessments that was developed “many years ago” (program director, personal communication, February 24, 2016) by a (now-former) instructor in the program and more recently edited and redesigned by an administrative support assistant. Neither the instructor nor the administrative support assistant have backgrounds in assessment design or in assessment design for ESL/literacy learners. Due to a variety of institutional constraints, these less-than-perfect in-house assessments have been used over the years to assess the language proficiency and literacy levels of all incoming students and place them in the program’s various levels, as well as to assess the progress of all current students. Students are placed into a level based on how many questions are answered correctly; deeper analysis and/or more nuanced evaluation of student responses, in general, does not occur.

There are two assessments: a reading and writing test, and a speaking and listening test. Here I share findings from my systematic analysis of the reading and writing test (known locally as “the literacy test”). It is six pages in length and contains 26 questions. There is one form, ten multiple-choice questions, three fill-in-the blank questions, two short free writes, and one extended free write. Each genre element uses different multimodal components such as clipart images, photographs, lines, boxes, spaces, typed words, numbers, and punctuation, and differing multimodal layouts. Most test questions are demarcated by, at minimum, a number, while the composition and format of the answers varies per the different layouts and multimodal components used.

3.2 Procedure

I collected data by conducting a critical multimodal social semiotic analysis of the literacy test, informed by systemic functional linguistics (Halliday, 1978; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Test questions were coded and then categorized by genre element type: directions, form, multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, short free write, and extended free write. Within each of the test question types (i.e., genre elements), the textual, interpersonal, and ideational metafunctions were investigated, as well as the multimodal components (e.g., boxes, bolding, left/right layout, images, words, etc.). The metafunctions are not seen as separate parts of a text, rather I view them as intertwined and interconnected aspects of a text that collectively shape a text's meaning—both in its design, and in how readers perceive it. While each metafunction can be analyzed separately, it is important to consider how the various multimodal aspects of textual design work together, and to analyze their impact simultaneously.

In the following section, I discuss the findings for the categories of form, multiple-choice, and fill-in-the-blank as those test genre elements use a large number of multimodal components; these findings can be extrapolated to the short and extended free writes. Of particular importance is to keep in mind how multimodal components are used in test questions and answers, and the design assumptions that may have been made by the test designer.

4 Findings

It cannot be overstated that adult L2 learners with emerging literacy are developing literacy for the first time in their lives, and that this literacy is developing in a language which they are also learning. Learners from this population come from a variety of ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds; language classes for refugee-background students in particular tend to have a diverse student population. The following analyses are rooted in a recognition of this combination of adult emergent readers and a diverse population.

4.1 Form

The test's first page is a form (Fig. 1). Forms, in general, are characterized by provided words and blank graphic devices (boxes, lines, etc.). This form consists of a set of directions, with 10 numbered questions aligned vertically under the directions. Each question has either one or more blank lines or a blank box, or a combination of these two graphic devices. The form also has a set of parentheses on the right side of all but one question.

Date ____________

______,34

Fill out the form

1. Last Name ______________________________ (__)
2. First Name ______________________________ (__)
3. Male ☐ Female ☐
4. Address ______________________________ (__)
____
____
5. City ______________________________ (__)
6. State ______________________________ (__)
7. Zip Code ______________________________ (__)
8. Phone number _(Home)____________(Cell)____________ ☐none (__)
9. Date of Birth ______________________________ (__)
10. Signature ______________________________ (__)

.........,10

1

Fig. 1 Assessment page 1

As a text, the elements of a page cannot be decontextualized; all the elements need to be read together. To analyze them, however, it is necessary to discuss them separately. The directions for this form have two distinct parts that are meant to be read in concert. The first part is a blurry clipart image of a pen. The second is a set of words that say, "Fill out the form". This multimodal ensemble is placed at the top and left of the page, making both the image and words salient per the Western[2] top/down (Ideal/Real) and left/right (Given/New) visual design conventions (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). These conventions mirror Western reading norms of reading from left to right, and from top to bottom.

The clipart image is to the left of the words. The image shows a ballpoint pen with a pen clip, and three lines on a piece of paper. The lines are symbolic, representing either writing or movement of the pen, or both. The lines and pen are also indexical, pointing to an action the viewer should recognize, namely that some sort of writing should be performed, and it should be performed on some sort of paper.

The words "Fill out the form" are bolded. Bolding is a graphic means of showing the importance of the words, similar to how in the mode of speech importance is designated by speaking more loudly or changing intonation.

This analysis reveals an apparent expectation that test-takers have taken tests before and are familiar with the format of a test. This is shown in the design of the directions where it is assumed test-takers will understand them and subsequently know how to respond to the question prompts. Test-takers are assumed to be able to: recognize and understand the blurry clipart image of the pen and that it signifies the act of writing; read and understand the words "Fill out the form"; and recognize and understand both that there is a relationship between the clipart and the words of the directions, and also understand what that relationship is between the image and the words—namely that they are both signifying writing in different ways. Another apparent expectation is that test-takers will understand the words are bolded as a means of showing their importance, and also know that the image and words are placed at the top left of this page as a result of top/down and left/right reading conventions, which are Western visual design conventions. Finally, assumptions have been made that test-takers will: comprehend that this multimodal ensemble of image, words, and layout tells them directly to do something (and realize these instructions refer only to this particular page); recognize and understand what this action is (to fill out this form); and know intuitively they should fill out the form *with their own information*. Because the exact content of what should be filled out is not provided here, the final assumption is that test-takers understand what kinds of content will count as appropriate or legitimate answers. Thus, while the idea of directions seems relatively simple, through this critical analysis it has emerged that directions are a quite complex multimodal test genre element.

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[2] Kress and van Leeuwen use the term "Western" to describe their grammar of visual design. I use their term "Western" not to set up a cultural binary, which is problematic for a number of reasons (see Forceville, 1999), but to stay true to their terminology. It is not my intent to make distinctions between cultures.

Regarding the actual questions of the form, each question can be recognized by the bolded number on the left (Fig. 1). Like the directions, the bolding of the number seems intended to highlight something important about the number itself. In this case it highlights that the number is different from the question following it, namely the meaning of the number has no effect on the meaning of the question, but serves to visually differentiate the various questions. The form also utilizes the left/right reading conventions and the Given/New concept to delineate the number from the question. Further employing these conventions, each question is composed of a word or short phrase followed by a blank line on the right. The blank line is a graphic device, which, through indexicality prompts test-takers to write a response in this one specific space. This indexicality, however, relies on knowledge of Given and New, particularly knowledge that the "question" is the Given, the "answer" the New, and test-takers need to produce this New on the blank line. Conversely, the empty space surrounding the blank line, and above and below the words, is space where no writing is expected.

The specific content of the New, however, requires test-takers to know and understand it is their own personal information being requested on this form. As described previously, the format of question-posing reflects assumptions about what test-takers bring to the activity of decoding the form and inserting new, but relevant, information into the form in the expected places. Yet there is no explicit direction to test-takers anywhere on the form that they are expected to provide biographical details and information. Based on my observations over time and across settings, adult L2 literacy students may be tempted to "fill out the form" by performing what they know about school-based literacy and copy the words on the left onto the blank line at the right (see Altherr Flores, 2020). While performing the task in this way would provide new information, and would uphold the norms of visual design, the content would be incorrect per the expectations of this literacy test. This could influence students' English-and literacy-learning trajectories in negative ways if they are not explicitly taught how to determine if a task expects copying—an often-used activity in literacy-level classes, or if a task expects written answers pertaining to the specific individual. Lack of such explicit instruction and explanation could lead to frustration for students.

Finally, there are punctuation marks (specifically, parentheses) on the right side of the page at the end of every question. When juxtaposed to the question and answer as one multimodal ensemble, these empty parentheses represent the New. Here, the new information is the score a test-taker earned for every question. There is no indication, however, from the graphic resources, the writing, or the layout that test-takers should not make marks in this section, and that it is instead intended for completion by another person (the test administrator or absent test grader) in a different temporal sequence.

The format and content of the form's questions reflect assumptions that the purpose of each question is self-evident, and the expectation that the act of providing answers is straightforward. Writing the expected answer on the blank line of this form, however, requires: recognizing that a relationship exists between the number on the left and the words, graphic devices, and punctuation marks that follow it on

the right (because *1* is different from *2,* it signifies that each question, and therefore each answer, is different); understanding the relationship between the words on the left and the blank line on the right; understanding the relationship between the blank line on the left and the punctuation marks further to the right, and the relationship of these marks to the rest of the page; understanding that something must be performed on the blank line and that a key to how to perform it can be found in the directions above; and understanding the implicit directive to provide specific types of personal information in response to various randomly-ordered abbreviated question prompts.

Test designers may use forms as a means of giving students the opportunity to write something they perceive to be "more authentic" than other test question types/content.[3] And yet authenticity is not the issue with a form. The issue is the kinds of *complexity* in a form—complexities which test designers have not considered and have overlooked in their eagerness to provide students an authentic task. Thus, the apparent belief is that because the task is authentic, it therefore is a good test format, and because the purpose of the questions is obvious, the tasks are valid and fair.

From this analysis of the test genre element of a form, numerous assumptions made by the text's designer have emerged. The first is that the provision of an image of a pen writing will be beneficial to test-takers who cannot read the words "fill out the form". This perceived helpful inclusion, however, only further serves to demonstrate ideologies of assumed background knowledge (based on presumed "universal" experience inclusive of visual, multimodal, and print literacy). Most importantly though, the assumption that undergirds the entire form is that test-takers recognize and understand the overall purpose of the form as well as the specific goal of each individual numbered item/question on the form—namely that they should be providing certain types of biographical information in the appropriate spaces throughout the form. This is not a task of handwriting or attention to detail and difference (i.e., correctly copying letters and words), though implicitly those are addressed in this assessment. Rather it is an assessment of one's ability to understand the relationship of the directions to an entire page of text and blank lines, to decode and comprehend the words of each question, to produce one's own information to answer each question, whether by memory or by identifying, transferring, and copying the information from an identification card, and to appropriately interact with all graphic devices and other written modes of communication. What appears to the text designer as a simple task, made "obvious" through a variety of multimodal components, is a quite complex task for adult L2 learners with emerging literacy, one which requires knowledge and understandings of specific literacy and educational conventions and practices.

[3] For example, Item #14 asks students to select a clothing item's material content from an assortment of choices; such an action would not occur in most adult students' everyday lives though they may be asked to complete a form on a regular basis.

4.2 Multiple-Choice

In general, multiple-choice questions are characterized by a question and a set of provided possible answer choices. Of the 10 multiple-choice questions on this test, a variety of multimodal components and forms of multimodal composition are used. While analysis of all the questions revealed rich findings, here I address just Item #11.

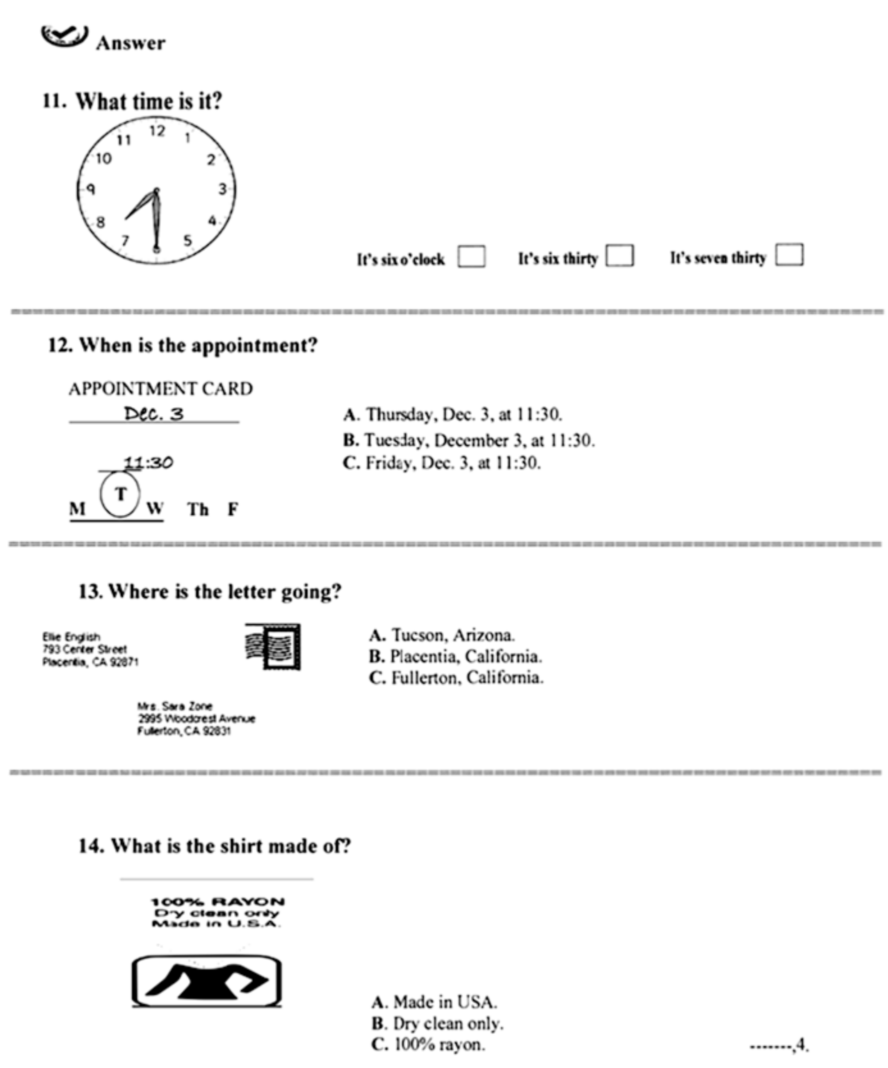
Item #11 is at the top of the second page (Fig. 2). Above this prompt is a set of directions with a stylized, clipart checkmark and the word "Answer". These directions show similar assumptions in design as were discussed for the first page; one difference is the use of a checkmark, which indicates the *manner* in which the answer should be written.

Of the questions on the page, only Item #11 contains the graphic device of the box in which a checkmark can be written. This graphic device is indexical. It points to the specific location where such writing is expected to be done. This design is complicated, however, by the sets of double dashed lines on the page, which are used as dividing lines between Items #11–#12, #12–#13, and #13–#14. Because the answer choices to Item #11 contain boxes, and because of the checkmark in the directions, it can be assumed that test-takers are expected to write a checkmark in a box, and not write on the blank dividing line. The relationships, however, between the checkmark and the graphic devices are socially coded and constructed. What is to stop test-takers from writing a check to the right of the word "answer", or near the displayed clock? This brings the analysis to the next point of determining how genre components of "questions" and "answers" are constructed through multimodal design.

In Item #11, the entire question and answer section is denoted both by the graphic device of the (dividing) lines, and the use of a bolded number. The words of the question, "What time is it?" are also bolded. The bolding signifies the importance of the question, and sets it apart from both the answer choices and also the additional components of the question, e.g., the image accompanying the words "What time is it?". Additionally, the words of the answer choices, while bolded, are smaller than the words of the question. The bolding makes these words salient in comparison to the surrounding white space, however the smaller font size also makes the words less salient in comparison to the question.

The question-and-answer ensemble of Item #11 follows the Given/New layout where the question (inclusive of words and image) is the Given and the answer the New. The Ideal/Real layout is also utilized, where the question (words) are placed on a higher vertical plane than the answer choices.

Aside from assuming test-takers know the Given/New and Ideal/Real conventions, and how they could be applied to a multiple-choice question ensemble, there is also the fact that a multiple-choice question relies on knowledge of question-and-answer adjacency pairs, and the idea that only one of the provided choices is correct (in this example, "It's seven thirty"). While adult L2 literacy learners are not entirely new to the idea of adjacency pairs since they are a commonly-used function of


Answer

11. What time is it?

It's six o'clock ☐ It's six thirty ☐ It's seven thirty ☐

12. When is the appointment?

APPOINTMENT CARD
Dec. 3
11:30
M T W Th F

A. Thursday, Dec. 3, at 11:30.
B. Tuesday, December 3, at 11:30.
C. Friday, Dec. 3, at 11:30.

13. Where is the letter going?

Ellie English
793 Center Street
Placentia, CA 92871

Mrs. Sara Zone
2995 Woodcrest Avenue
Fullerton, CA 92831

A. Tucson, Arizona.
B. Placentia, California.
C. Fullerton, California.

14. What is the shirt made of?

100% RAYON
Dry clean only
Made in U.S.A.

A. Made in USA.
B. Dry clean only.
C. 100% rayon.

-------,4.

2

Fig. 2 Assessment page 2

speech (e.g., Speaker 1: "What is your name?", Speaker 2: "Zeyneb"), the notion of a question and an answer in written communication, particularly where the speaker, or asker of the question (in this case, the asker of "What time is it?") is not present, may be a new genre element. This relationship of first a question—because from a structuralist perspective an answer means nothing without a question, and then an answer is thus represented through the layout of the question and answer and the multimodal components used to compose it.

Delving further into the multimodal composition, the question of Item #11 is composed of two components (words, image) and three modes (writing, still image, layout), which together form a separate multimodal ensemble, the meaning of which exists only in the specific configuration of these components and modes. The words here are the Ideal, with the image as the Real. Thus, the words are the generalized essence, and the image is the details. Without the image, this question could not be answered in a specific manner; that is, a person could provide an answer, e.g., 12:41, but the image provides the details necessary for an exact time, 7:30.

The ideational content and type of image in this prompt must also be considered. The clipart is iconic, resembling an analog clock, and, in this instance, indexical, pointing to the specific time that must be acknowledged to answer the question. Additionally, this image is symbolic as clocks are a modern representation of sundials, which are used to indicate the idea of time in general. To answer this question, test-takers must be able to understand that: this iconic image is a clock; through indexicality the image references both a precise time and a specific tangible item that exists off this piece of paper; and the symbolic nature of a clock is used to represent *time*, the underlying content of the question. Furthermore, this clipart is not an authentic image that students would see in their everyday lives, though the argument could be made that images of this sort tend to litter educational texts and thus students may have had some exposure to them in their ESL/literacy classes, depending on the texts used by their programs. Such exposure, however, is not guaranteed. The use of such imagery is more indicative of a larger, more pervasive, assumption that clipart images are universally known and understood, and are therefore beneficial and/or appropriate for use in classroom materials and in assessment texts.

Relatedly, the composition of the answer of Item #11 relies on two components (words, graphic device) and three modes (writing, still image, layout). The answer choices ("It's six o'clock", "It's six thirty", "It's seven thirty") are provided as the Given. The New is expected to be produced by test-takers through interaction (in this case, writing) with the indexical box. Regarding the answer choice content, there is an incongruity between the clock's numerical numbers and the word forms of the numbers in the answer choices. This could have been done intentionally to assess if test-takers can make the connection between the number symbol and the written number, however such an implicit goal makes this question ever more complex. This incongruity and complexity brings into consideration the intent of the prompt. Is the prompt meant to assess the test-taker's ability to read a clock? To match number symbols and written numbers? Both? These considerations of goal and task must be taken into account when designing assessments for the focal population because all higher-level uses of literacy require knowledge of these foundational skills.

This analysis highlights a number of inherent beliefs held by the designer about test-takers' experience completing this sort of assessment with this genre element type. The fundamental assumption is that test-takers will recognize not only that there are different elements and components in this section of the text, and they are different from the form section (and the following sections), but also that the combination of these particular test genre elements and multimodal components entails

a specific purpose and response. Specifically, it is anticipated test-takers know their answer response should be in reference to the information provided in the question, and should not be creative or individualistic (such as information they produce on a form), and they should instead select one answer from the offered choices. When testing experienced test-takers, it makes sense to ask and expect them to select just one out of multiple answers provided, but this task becomes much more complicated when the test-taker has emerging literacy or has not engaged in this sort of written assessment previously. As my critical analysis of social semiotics here demonstrates, test designers must attend to much more than the written word; they must also take into consideration issues of layout, form, and composition (e.g., the use of bold font, the use of numbering systems, images, spacings, and other visual indicators of meaning).

4.3 Fill-in-the-Blank

The defining characteristic of a fill-in-the-blank test question is the use of a graphic device, specifically a blank line, at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of an already-provided sentence. The blank line is indexical, referencing the location where test-takers should provide an answer. The line's length can also be considered a hint for test-takers regarding the length of the expected written word or phrase.

Item #23 is a fill-in-the-blank question in the middle of page 4 (Fig. 3).[4] It is below a set of directions that are set apart from the page's other multimodal genre elements by the use of two thin double lines serving as dividing lines. Within these lines is a clipart image of a pencil tip, and the word "Write". Because the two lines enclose a space comparable in height to a blank line on lined notebook paper, and because they encompass the pencil tip and "Write", they could appear as if they are meant to index writing, not page division. Furthermore, it is not explicitly stated *what* should be written, or *where* the writing should occur. Thus, test-takers could copy the word "write" or other aspects of the text, write answers from other portions of the test, or write something else entirely; this writing could be done on these dividing lines, or elsewhere on this page.

While Item #23 is located directly below these multimodal directions, it also has an additional subset of directions, "Look at the map." which complicate the design and layout of this page and the items within it. "Look at the map." functions as both directions and as part of the question of this question-and-answer ensemble. More importantly, these directions contain a stylized word, "look," where clipart eyes replace the two letter "o"s in the word. These images are iconic: they look like eyes; indexical: they refer to an action test-takers should do, namely to look at

[4] It must also be noted that the layout of the question-and-answer ensembles throughout the entirety of p. 4 changed to a horizontal organization as compared to the vertical organization on pp. 1, 2, and 5. This inconsistency can be problematic for students with emerging test literacy, in conjunction with emerging literacy, as they navigate this literacy and assessment event.

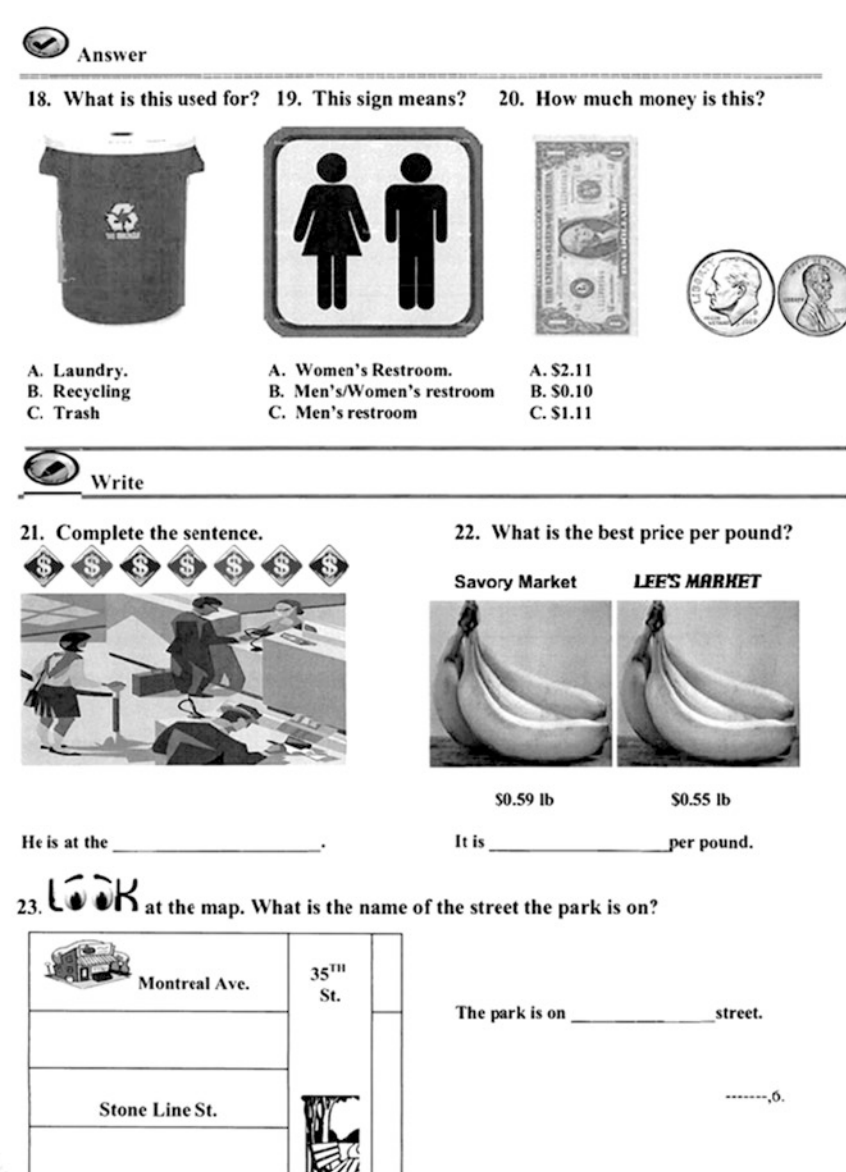


Fig. 3 Assessment page 4

something—this *something* is referenced in the second part of the sentence ("at the map"), but also assumed to be understood by viewers per the Ideal/Real layout with the something located in the Real position (below the eyes); and symbolic: the eyes replace the letter "o." This symbolism is also simultaneously iconic because the eyes are in the shape of the letter "o." This stylization, while it may be intended as

support for beginning L2 learners, may negatively affect the meaning-making processes of students with emerging alphabetic and visual literacy, particularly students who may not realize that round objects such as eyes can stand in the place of letters in words. This iconic-indexical-symbolic stylization adds another layer of signification to the acts of decoding and comprehending a text. These layers could be envisioned as perceived helpful hints for test-takers, however their inherent complexity could be disadvantageous for test-takers to understand and accurately complete the task at hand.

Regarding the image of this fill-in-the-blank question, the focal assumption under examination is the belief that numerous modes and multimodal components can be combined to create an easily recognizable visual representation of a place from an imagined bird's eye view. This assumption must be denaturalized as such combinations, particularly ones which utilize clipart, can be understood in multiple ways by students with varying experiences with literacy and education.

The image in Item #23 is a map with a store, a park, and (named) streets. The image is a conceptual image. It is an analytical process where the parts fit together to make up a larger whole, in this case, the larger whole is a map (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). This map is formed of three smaller analytical processes: the processes for the store, park, and streets. Via Possessive Attributes (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006), the store is identified by the store signs, store shelves, light poles, and trash can; the park is identified by the bench and tree; and the streets are identified by the lines and associated street names. The neighborhood map is subsequently identified by these three items. Reading all these (smaller) identifiers in this image, however, requires culturally-specific content schemata, and this is in addition to the assumed visual literacy of knowing how to read a *map*, which is a specific type of conceptual image. Finally, there is an expectation that test-takers know and understand the abbreviations "Ave." and "St." Because the park is on 35th St., and the answer has "street" provided in the end of the sentence, knowledge of what "St." means is important to prevent test-takers from writing "35th St." in the blank, thereby making their answers read "The park is on 35th St. street."

Like the multiple-choice question discussed above, this type of question also relies on an assumption that test-takers recognize their answers should be in relation to the additional information provided in the question section of the question-and-answer ensemble. Here, this additional information is the image, which is anticipated to be able to be understood by test-takers. This conceptual image, however, is laden with details and conventions specific to particular literacy and lived experiences, and for test-takers, reading such content as presented in such a complex semiotic manner may be as new for them as is the act of taking a test. Furthermore, it is potentially presumed test-takers understand the word they produce must fit syntactically into the sentence provided. This restriction, at first glance, may seem beneficial for test-takers as just one word is expected, as seen in this example, but it complicates the response test-takers can provide as a response with extra words will negate the correctness of the answer. Thus, the expectation that test-takers can read the entire sentence, imagine what word belongs in the blank, and then produce that

word with no or little scaffolding is revealed, through this analysis, to also be quite difficult.

5 Discussion

The study's results illuminate assumptions of visual/multimodal literacy, multimodal design knowledge, test genre knowledge, and assumed content and referential background schemata in the design of this in-house language and literacy assessment. There is an apparent expectation that test-takers already know what to do with this test, how to read it, how to interpret it, and how to respond. In short, test designers expect and assume that test-takers will bring knowledge about how to take a test as well as a nuanced understanding of the kinds of content that are relevant when providing answers. Such expectations assume that test-takers will know how assessments of this sort are used and evaluated, and what is done with the data from these assessments. These assumptions are undergirded by a belief that images, visual cues, and visual and multimodal design are universal or innate, when in fact these are embedded in the social context, and learned through experience and interaction. As Schneck (2005) noted, people are born able to see, but the understanding of the visual images that surround them is a product of learning and habit.

This critical analysis demonstrates that texts involve reading images and layout every bit as much as reading words. It is therefore imperative for text designers to be critically aware of their design in regards to visual and multimodal design. This has implications for assessments of any sort, from in-house classroom assessments with low stakes, to tests with higher stakes such as the U.S. naturalization test, to study materials associated with assessments, and more broadly to the design of texts of all sorts (including signs and handouts used in institutional settings). Thus, there are implications for educational institutions (K–12, adult, community), and makers of standardized tests like CASAS, TABE, and CAL,[5] as well as for the wide variety of institutions that serve and work with this population in other capacities (e.g., health, community, and non-profit organizations, workplaces, refugee resettlement agencies, the International Organization for Migration, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and governmental agencies like the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service).

These results also yield implications for teaching, specifically for educators teaching adult L2 learners with emerging literacy, but also for teaching any population in any context. Educators need to critically reflect on their own teaching and materials and consider the design assumptions they may be making for in-class language and literacy activities that are of the formative, as opposed to the summative, type. Additionally, it would be of benefit to include and/or embed: (1) visual

[5] Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems, Tests of Adult Basic Education, Center for Applied Linguistics

and multimodal literacy (e.g., what bolding, underlining, indexical boxes, indexical lines mean; how to read a visual image; how to read top/down and left/right layouts; how to understand a connection between multimodal ensembles; how to read clipart, line drawings, photographs) (see Britsch, 2009; Hecke, 2015; Royce, 2002 for discussions concerning general populations of L2 learners); (2) test genre knowledge (e.g., directions vs. multiple-choice vs. fill-in-the-blank; how to respond to a fill-in-the-blank); (3) text genre knowledge (e.g., posted sign vs. take-home letter); and (4) information about how to use a text as well as how texts are used by others, in classroom instruction for adult L2 learners with emerging literacy. Research suggests that approaches to language teaching that emphasize diversity—of languages, perspectives, and modalities—such as a multiliteracies approach (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000; New London Group, 1996) could support this population. This approach has been used in education and foreign language studies (see Paesani et al., 2015), and would be beneficial for this population of learners as well.

6 Conclusion

Returning to the vignette that began this chapter, we must consider how the four new refugee-background students may have reacted to the assessment had it not contained such complex semiotic resources. If the tasks had been more transparent through, perhaps, the use of photographs instead of clipart art, if abbreviations had not been used, if answers could be circled instead of checked, if the pages could have been less cluttered by the removal of dividing lines, unnecessary directions and/or examples, or question-and-answer ensembles presented with more space between them, would the students not have been so overwhelmed by the educational experience of taking a test—that is, reading and writing on pieces of paper with no assistance from their instructor or their peers—during their first-ever week of formal schooling (in a new language) that they would have returned the next day? How can tests be designed to be more accommodating for not only L2 adult emergent readers, but also for (recently) resettled refugees who are undergoing a host of new, potentially stressful, experiences? In light of the scarcity of research regarding both assessment design, and visual and multimodal literacy, but also the intersection of these two fields with respect to (refugee-background) adult L2 learners with emerging literacy, additional research is needed to answer these questions. Namely, how do students from this population of learners understand and engage with different configurations and compositions of various multimodal components in assessment texts (see Altherr Flores, forthcoming)?

The results of this study are useful for designing assessments and texts for adult L2 learners with emerging literacy, but they also raise questions for educators (broadly defined) and text designers creating any sort of materials in any context. What other types of assumptions may text designers be making, particularly in the design of materials for readers who may be entering into new literacy practices? The research calls for a deeper level of awareness of semiotic resources in designed texts

for the specific population of refugee-background adult L2 learners with emerging literacy, and hints at implications for broader populations as well.

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“Without English There Are No Rights”: Educating the Non(citizen) In and Out of Adult Education

Sally Wesley Bonet

Abstract Drawing from a three year ethnographic study with Iraqi refugees who had recently resettled to the U.S., this chapter examines how refugees’ pre-resettlement lives shape their educational aspirations, while their (lack of) access to education in the U.S. shapes their understandings and embodiments of citizenship. Focusing on the lives of Samah, a high school graduate who hoped to pursue college education, and Nadia, a mother who aspired to learn English upon arrival to the U.S., I argue that refugees’ encounters with public schools and adult literacy programs are critical to their ability to become full members of their new communities. Samah and Nadia experience various barriers to accessing adult education and language learning due to increasing market fundamentalist attacks on state institutions that are critical for refugees. Staging interventions to improve the lives of refugees involves bucking current resettlement trends that re-traumatize refugees and dispossess them of the ability to aspire to and realize better futures. Rather than following through with its current course of action, which has prioritized self-sufficiency; ever-decreasing case management periods; and the lack of bilingual case workers, we need to reinvest in refugee resettlement. Otherwise, refugees will continue to be dispossessed, again, of their rights.

1 Introduction

> Look at what has happened to my education! I mean I am now 19 years old, and in a couple of years, I won’t be eligible to attend high school here. So what am I going to do? It is just unthinkable for me not to [get an] education. I mean it is the most important thing! I graduated high school with high honors! I wanted to go to college and become a doctor. But what can I do? There is no way out for me. I have to take care of [all of] us. *–Samah Musa, 19-year-old female Iraqi refugee;* translated interview

> People who don’t know me might think, “Go! Take lessons and learn English. What are you doing? Just sitting at home?” My doctor asks me, “Why don’t you have friends?” You don’t

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think that I want to learn and communicate with people? If you have the language skills, you can stand on your own two feet, but I don't so that's that. I want to study English, but I can't." *–Nadia Shaker, 48-year-old Iraqi refugee;* translated interview

Nadia Shaker and Samah Musa were among the two million people who sought refuge from the violence in Iraq in neighboring countries in the aftermath of the American invasion in 2003. Samah is an unmarried young woman who graduated high school with honors in Yemen; she is the primary wage earner for her family in Philadelphia. Nadia is an unemployed mother of two in her forties who left school in ninth grade in Iraq; she spends most of her time at home while her daughters attend nearby public schools. Nadia's family fled to Damascus and was resettled to Philadelphia 5 years later. Samah's family fled to Syria, and then to Yemen, where they resided for 7 years before being resettled to Philadelphia.

While their pre-settlement lives, their flight stories, and their experiences in neighboring countries might be different, what ties them together is their belief in the promise of an American education. Both Nadia and Samah's aspirations for education were produced in their displacement contexts, textured with dispossession, fear, and trauma. In these tumultuous spaces, education took on various meanings for them. Before coming to the U.S., Nadia envisioned education as access to gainful work opportunities to help provide for her family and gain a sense of independence. After her resettlement, though, Nadia framed education as a way to break her sense of isolation and loneliness. Samah, on the other hand, viewed higher education—a lifelong dream—as a route to career achievement. In both cases, these refugee women saw their lack of access to education as permanently locking them out of the lives they imagined, leading Samah to think that "there was no way out" and Nadia to declare that she would never be able to "stand on her own two feet."

In this chapter, I examine how refugees' pre-resettlement lives shape their educational aspirations, and how their access to education in the U.S. shapes their understandings and embodiments of citizenship. By tracing Samah and Nadia's pre- and post-resettlement lives, I argue that refugees' encounters with public schools and adult literacy programs, which are often exclusionary or at best apathetic, are critical to their ability to become full members of their new communities. Through the various barriers that they face in accessing education, refugees are unable to become true members of their communities. Samah and Nadia's experiences point to the need for more flexible, consistent, and responsive opportunities for refugees, whose unique needs must be taken into consideration.

2 Citizenship as the Right to Have Rights

While definitions of citizenship abound, this study understands citizenship as Margaret Somers (2008) does, as "the right to have rights." Somers argues that citizenship is composed of two distinct types of rights: a right of membership in a political body with full membership as part of human community, and a group of

civil-juridical rights, often summarized as Marshall's (1964) civil, political, and social rights. Somers frames the "right to have rights" as an ideal and an aspiration, which she understands within a continuous structural relationship between the institutions of the state, market, and civil society. This relationship is marked by a constant struggle for stability and power, endangering citizenship when balance is disrupted. Somers maintains that the past 30 years have been marked by such an imbalance due to market dominance. While other scholars have referred to this phenomenon as neoliberalism (Harvey, 2005; Lipman, 2013; McCluskey, 2003), Somers argues that we currently live in an era of "market fundamentalism," which she defines as "the drive to subject all of social life and the public sphere to market mechanisms" (p. 2). Three decades of governance under market fundamentalism have rendered many once rights-bearing citizens socially excluded and rightless. The most prominent force in the erosion of rights is what Somers refers to as the "contractualization of citizenship." As market power grows, social inclusion and moral worth are perceived as *earned* privileges, given only to those who are able to reciprocate with something of equal value, rather than an inherent right. Rather than viewing citizenship as a shared fate, controntractualizing citizenship distorts it to conditional privilege, which has transformative and arguably devastating effects on civil society.

Most relevant to this analysis, however, are the destabilizing effects of contractualization of citizenship on state institutions responsible for educating refugees, namely public schools and adult literacy education programs. These institutions are central to the "good life" refugees have imagined for themselves after resettlement (Berlant, 2011). If public education ever was, or might have been in theory, the "great equalizer" (Katz, 2010), it is now undeniably at the heart of the market fundamentalist attack. The market fundamentalist framework has transformed education from a public good to a private one, and from a social benefit for individuals and society to an investment made in oneself or in one's child (Cucchiara, 2013; McWilliams, 2019). The marketization of public schooling has been devastating, and its effects can be seen everywhere: from for-profit schools to the promotion of school choice (Lipman, 2011; Saiger, 2013). In Philadelphia, where my study was situated, the marketization of education has led to unprecedented budget cuts (Conner, 2014; Stern et al., 2015). These cuts have had devastating effects on refugee youth due to the layoffs of bilingual counselors, ESL teachers, and other support staff critical to refugee students.

These budget cuts have also had an impact on adult literacy programs, which are often poorly funded and threatened with shortfalls (Greene, 2007; Parrott & Wu, 2003). Historically, formal adult literacy classes for refugees in the U.S. has been provided by refugee resettlement agencies (Finn, 2010; McWilliams & Bonet, 2015; Nawyn et al., 2012). However, due to Trump's historic reductions to the number of refugees accepted for resettlement to the U.S., resettlement agencies and the programs they have been drastically affected (Isaacs, 2019). The Trump administration's policies and changes have resulted in the closure of 100 refugee resettlement offices nationwide, which account for one third of the local reception and placement programs around the country (RCUSA, 2019). These closures put refugees at

further risk of disrupted or inadequate language learning as well as barriers to other important supports. This chapter will explore how barriers to education inform refugees' ability to access their "right to have rights."

3 Educational Aspirations of Refugees

Within the literature, refugees are often merely counted as immigrants, despite differences in their migratory experiences. However, this obfuscation can be particularly harmful because information about their pre-resettlement histories—and educational trajectories—is essential to understanding refugees' aspirations for education (Boyden et al., 2002; Winthrop & Kirk, 2008). Many refugees come to their new contexts with unique pre-resettlement challenges shaping their educational needs, such as long educational interruptions; linguistic and foundational barriers; and lack of familiarity with their new educational contexts (Boothby, 2008; Winthrop & Kirk, 2008). Upon arrival to their third countries of resettlement, they may face additional challenges, such as lacking or nonexistent policy or program supports to assist them in their transitions (Arnot et al., 2009; Jones & Rutter, 1998). Refugees may experience several complications due to interruptions in their educations. They are often several years older than their peers and may eventually age out of public education (Bonet, 2018; McWilliams & Bonet, 2016).

Despite these challenges, refugees in my study—both youth and adults—identified education, and particularly language learning (Cooke, 2006; Watkins et al., 2012) and higher education—as their ultimate goal (Chopra & Adelman, 2017; Shakya et al., 2012; Stevenson & Willott, 2007). Refugees like Samah viewed education as means to improve their financial situations, as well as to better care for family members (Bonet, 2018; McWilliams & Bonet, 2016; Warriner, 2007). My research with recently resettled Iraqi refugees uncovered similar ambitions: they came to the U.S. with educational aspirations for a "bright future" vis-a-vis postsecondary education, which they would then leverage to secure stable careers. These hopes are not just a product of the longing for stability but are confirmed by bodies of research that highlight postsecondary education as increasingly central for access to gainful employment and survival in the United States (Card, 1999; Hout & DiPrete, 2006). Refugees therefore recognize after arrival that access to postsecondary education is critical not just for stability but for survival in their new contexts. However, these refugees face key barriers to accessing public education and adult literacy programs due to other pressures and priorities, which I will trace through the educational aspirations of Samah and Nadia.

4 Methods

The data analyzed in this chapter comes from a 3-year, multi-sited, multilingual ethnography, conducted with four focal Muslim, Iraqi refugee families (eleven youth and six parents) who had been recently resettled to Philadelphia. Much of my data collection took place in refugee households and consisted of extensive field-notes; interviews with individual family members; family focus groups that resembled semi-structured focus groups, but were with the entire family; and document analysis of relevant documents sent to refugee families by various state institutions. As an Arab American and a native Arabic speaker, I was often asked to accompany participants to various institutions that textured their early experiences in the U.S., such as public schools, welfare offices, hospitals, and refugee resettlement agencies. Since refugee families only had access to a bilingual case manager for the first few weeks after their resettlement, my bilingualism was an asset to families. These institutional visits allowed me to observe firsthand how the state disciplined refugees living in poverty. Through constant cuts to their welfare checks, endless lines at the free clinic, and intimidating meetings with school administrators, refugees learned how they were expected to embody citizenship.

My role with the participants differed, even within the same family. During my family visits, I spent most of my time with the mothers speaking about their lives in Iraq, flipping through family albums, or helping them make sense of the bills and other documents that arrived daily. Through these documents, I traced how the state penetrated the home. It became my role to translate these documents for refugee parents, attempting to help them understand why food stamps were reduced, why the family owed taxes, why they were asked to attend truancy court, or when to pay their monthly travel loans (which they owed for their airfare to the U.S.). When spending time with refugee youth, my role was to assist them with schoolwork, prepare for the GED exam, or navigate important websites, for instance when applying for jobs online. I visited each family at least once or twice a week. In addition to working with the four focal families, I conducted a 1-year ethnographic study at a refugee resettlement agency in Philadelphia. There, I conducted interviews with dozens of newly arrived Iraqi refugees as well as case managers, the director of the agency, and volunteer workers. All my participant observation, focus groups, and interviews with Iraqi refugees were conducted in Arabic and then later transcribed and translated into English.

5 Samah's Story: Caught Between Survival and Schooling

5.1 Pre-resettlement Life

Most of the refugee youth who participated in my study came to the U.S. with lofty educational aspirations. Samah Musa, age 19 when we met, was one of the first young people I met in my study. I was introduced to Samah through her sister Ghada, who was enrolled at a local school where I was conducting a pilot study. After meeting Ghada, I was invited to the family home to meet her mother, Baheera. It was there that I met Samah. The first time I met Samah, she wore carefully applied makeup and a colorful hijab that complemented her jeans and sweater. During this visit, she, Ghada, and their mother all agreed to be part of my study. After that initial meeting, I began visiting the Musa household once a week. Within a few weeks, I became a regular visitor, helping Ghada with her homework and speaking with Samah about her life before arriving in the U.S.

In 2003, soon after the American occupation of Iraq, when she was only 11, Samah's father left for work one morning and never returned. After months of searching for him in hospitals, prisons, and morgues, he was officially classified "*mafqood*" (permanently missing) and has since been presumed dead. Without an adult male in the home, their household was more vulnerable to violence and attack. Due to the rise in sectarian violence and general lawlessness, Baheera decided to keep her children at home, fearing for their safety at school. On days when her mother needed to go to the market—which became increasingly dangerous —she instructed Samah and her siblings to hide that they were home alone.

After the disappearance of her father, Samah's family had to rely on the generosity of family, friends, and neighbors for survival. Baheera had previously worked outside the home, but she couldn't leave her children alone. Eventually, it became financially impossible to remain in Iraq so the family fled to Syria. They sold the house and all of their belongings, and packed into the car of a smuggler who drove them to the border for an exorbitant fee. The trip was harrowing; Samah recalled kissing the ground once they arrived in Syria.

Life in Syria proved too expensive for the family, forcing them to move to Yemen. In Yemen, both Samah and her younger sister Ghada worked to support the family. They found work at a local beauty salon; Ghada as a shampoo girl, and Samah as an assistant manicurist. Samah described how difficult it was to juggle school and work. Eventually, she was enrolled in a magnet school in Yemen. To keep up with her studies, Samah studied through the night, went to school during the day, and worked at the salon in between. She was exhausted, but felt it was worth the effort because education was her top priority. Samah graduated with high honors.

5.2 Post-resettlement Life

When the family was notified that they would be resettled to the U.S., Samah was thrilled, assuming this meant that she would be able to continue her studies. However, upon arriving in the U.S., it quickly became clear her aspirations would be hard to achieve.

> When we came here, the case manager met with us and told us someone has to work to support the family because the money they gave us every month would be taken away after four months. My mother is an older woman…. She has high blood pressure and diabetes, and has a hard time even walking sometimes, so I am not going to ever let her work!… [I]t fell on me to take care of everyone.

Resettled without an adult who could work, Samah needed to work fulltime to support the family. As a non-English speaker without a high school diploma, the only job she could find was as a cashier at a local Middle Eastern grocery store where she was paid well below the minimum wage. She was forced to work 60-h work weeks to make ends meet. To make matters worse, the market where she was employed was nearly 2 h away via public transportation. Working 60 h a week and commuting 20 h, Samah’s days were eaten up by work. She was effectively excluded from secondary education.

Samah’s inability to access secondary and subsequently higher education was source of much distress and anxiety for her. A few months after we met, Samah asked me to assist in finding alternative ways to pursue her education. We spent multiple evenings looking up General Educational Development (GED) classes for her to attend, especially ones that would accommodate for her needs as an English language learner, but our search was futile. It seemed that these programs simply did not exist nearby. Nancy, the director of the refugee resettlement agency, spoke of the difficulties that other Iraqi refugees had in accessing adult education programming.

> A few years ago, in the Northeast, where most Iraqis live, no in Philadelphia in general, I want to say there were at least 35 state-funded adult education programs available. That included GED classes, ESL classes, and other classes as well. So Iraqis would have had access to those, they would have found them, and they could have done much of it on their own. Now there are only six classes in the whole city. So the likelihood of them being able to find one in their local community is not very good.

Due to the citywide dearth of adult education programming, coupled with her demanding work schedule, Samah was unable to find GED classes that met her needs as an English language learner. After speaking to him about Samah’s case, an administrator at a local GED center advised me that Samah’s “best bet” was to study independently. So, for a few months, Samah and I worked together a few hours a week to prepare her for the exam. However, despite her best intentions and our best efforts, our tutoring sessions were often postponed or canceled due to her schedule. When we *did* manage to meet, Samah was often tired or agitated. She lamented that she had already gotten her diploma in Yemen and could not see why she had to go through it again. Eventually, after a few months, I received a difficult phone call

from Samah. She said, “It’s just too hard. It’s too much.” She told me it would be impossible to balance her heavy workload with her studies. In essence, the structure and programming of the remaining GED classes available, none of which accommodated her needs as an English Language Learner, coupled with a schedule almost completely swallowed up by work effectively excluded Samah from the opportunity to access a secondary education, and her lifelong dream of a college education.

6 Nadia’s Story: The Hope in Education as a Redemptive Force

6.1 Pre-resettlement Life

Nadia Shaker was resettled to Philadelphia from Syria a year before I met her. A slight woman who wore the hijab in public, she often greeted me at the door wearing bright velvet sweat suits, her long hair in a ponytail. Twice a week, we would sit in the living room of her small apartment, sipping tea with cardamom, and talk about her life. Nadia told me of the difficult decision to leave Iraq. She and her husband loved Baghdad. It was the only home they knew. However, as the violence escalated in the aftermath of the American invasion and occupation, they began to reconsider.

A few months after the bombing of Al-Askari mosque in Samara, one of Shiite Islam’s holiest sites, a militia attacked Nadia’s elder daughter’s elementary school, shooting students and teachers. Her daughter, Zeina, who was only 9 years-old, saw her best friend shot and killed. Nadia cites the incidents that followed this horrific event—which include a threat to her husband’s life by a sectarian militia; the near kidnapping of her younger daughter Dima; the violent death of her brother; and witnessing a shoot-out between American soldiers and an armed militia—as leading them to finally leave Iraq. These events all took place within a manner of months. By the time they agreed to leave, Nadia’s eldest daughter, Zeina, had taken to sitting in a corner of her room, rocking back and forth while holding a stuffed animal. What Nadia had hoped was a temporary state of shock became a long-term trauma response for Zeina. Dima, Nadia’s younger daughter, became clingy and afraid to play outside, and suddenly began wetting the bed at the age of seven. Even though they never wanted to leave Iraq, life became impossible, so they fled to Syria.

Unfortunately, life in Syria had its own difficulties. Nadia’s husband Sayed found blue collar work, but the family struggled to make ends meet. Zeina still refused to attend school, visibly shaking and dissolving into tears when the topic was raised. As a result, she remained unschooled for 8 years. Nadia’s days were marked with caring for Zeina and stretching the meager earnings Sayed brought home to ensure that her family’s needs were met. As the girls grew older and civil unrest began to foment in Syria, Nadia strove to keep watch over her daughters after overhearing Syrian men make suggestive comments about them. She began insisting that the

girls stay within her sight at all times. She lost sleep, getting up several times a night to check on her daughters or to ensure that the door was locked.

Four years after they arrived in Damascus, Nadia’s family was contacted by the UNHCR, where they had registered soon after arriving. During the trying resettlement process, which took nearly 2 years, Nadia found comfort in the promise of her post-resettlement life. She shared,

> I would always say to my husband when we would face hardships, “It’s OK.” Even in the most harrowing experiences we would have, I would say, “It’s OK, Allah (God) will give us better days once we arrive [in America]. We will have a different life, a good life….” I would tell him. “We can get an education, complete our studies, go to college and make up for what we’ve lost.”

For Nadia, it was the promise, not simply of life in America, but one centered on education that made the most difficult times seem tolerable. She imagined that she and her husband would be able to “make up for lost time” through education. Education became not only a means to an end, but a redemptive process that would lead to the “good life” (Berlant, 2011) refugees like Nadia hoped for, an imaginary produced in contexts rife with trauma, deprivation, and loss. Luckily, hers was one of the 1% of refugee families resettled by the UNHCR to a third country, which is how they found their way to the U.S. However, life—and education—in the U.S. were not what she dreamed they would be.

6.2 Post-resettlement Life

Soon after arriving in the U.S., Nadia and Sayed learned that being “given the opportunity to get an education” was not feasible, due to the American resettlement program’s prioritization of “self-sufficiency.” In their first meeting at the agency, Sayed was informed that he needed to procure employment immediately. With few opportunities for refugees with limited English, Sayed could find only a job stocking shelves at a superstore, earning minimum wage. Between his 9-h work days and his daily commute, Sayed had no time for the dream he shared with Nadia of an education.

Nadia, on the other hand, found herself spending several hours alone every day. With both her daughters at school, and Sayed at work, she began searching for language learning opportunities. The most consistent language classes were those held at the resettlement agencies. Since she was not eligible for the employment-oriented class funded by the Office of Refugee Resettlement, Nadia attended the general language class, staffed mostly by volunteers. She spoke of her experience there,

> When I went to class, I found that the teacher only speaks English, so how am I supposed to learn from her? I need an Arab to teach me. I tried, I really did. I also went to English lessons at a church near me, and another time at a library in my neighborhood. I felt like I was being treated like cattle there. They would write things on the board and I had no idea what was going on…. And every time, there would be a different teacher! So I stopped

> going. And I have been here almost two years, and I had high hopes of learning English…but it seems that is not going to happen.

Nadia spoke of the shame she experienced in her English classes. Her commentary of feeling disrespected and being treated in an animal-like manner referred to the time that teachers would use gestures to ask her to follow their directions, to move from one side of the classroom to another, or to join students in another class. Nadia, who identified as an independent, strong woman, resented the feeling of helplessness that she experienced in these classes. Sharing her learning space with other learners that she could not communicate with, being a "neophyte," being taught by someone who could not communicate with her, and being unable to make a lasting connection due to the revolving door of volunteers involved in language teaching—all of this seemed like too much to handle. Nadia's motivation to learn was overpowered by what seemed to be insurmountable barriers.

Nancy, the director of a local resettlement agency hosting language classes, confirmed Nadia's account.

> Our weekend English classes are maxed out. Those are open for everyone, and we have about 28 people in it right now. The class is really only designed to hold 20 people, but we have crammed folks in. Also there are about seven or eight levels of language abilities represented in each class…. In the same class, you might have preliterate folks and then people who are quite articulate, and that is just within the Iraqi group…. There are people from all over the world in those classes.

Nancy's testimony highlights the difficulties faced by teachers in the classroom and points to the needs of the learners. In further conversations, she also confirmed that the non-employment classes, which were open to all refugees, were mostly staffed by volunteers including college students and retirees ill equipped to work with students who'd suffered trauma.

Nadia shared that her inability to speak English impacted her life. She often spoke of feeling isolated and lonely. She spent her days alone, too afraid to brave the English-speaking world alone. After just 1 year in the U.S., her daughters had gained enough English to help Nadia get by, but she felt overwhelmed without them. She spoke to me of the root of this fear, an incident that occurred soon after her arrival.

> I needed to go to the resettlement agency to get some of our paperwork done, but Sayed was at work. I made it there OK, because our case manager, Ahmed, had shown us how to make this trip using the bus. After the appointment was over, I got on the same bus, and soon realized that we were lost. I called my husband, but he didn't answer, because he can't talk at work. So I kept calling Ahmed, our case manager… but he didn't answer. So here I was, in a foreign land and a strange place. I am holding on to my girls, they are crying and I am crying. All we want to do is go home…. I remember feeling so low…that I thought to myself "I wish I could go back to Syria," despite the war there. Finally, my husband called me back when he was on break. He put an American coworker on the phone to speak with someone on the bus near me. I learned that I was supposed to take the bus in the opposite direction….Without speaking English, and knowing how to ask questions, how would I know?!

Nadia told me that her deeply embedded fear of venturing to the outside world without her family was quite uncharacteristic for her. She was the first of her siblings to learn how to drive, even though she was the youngest and the only girl. In both Iraq and Syria, before the unrest began, she had always loved going shopping, sitting in cafes, and walking through the markets and malls. But in the U.S., her inability to speak English robbed her of much of her confidence and sense of self. She cited the bus incident as one that jarred her, and even after she became more familiar with the transportation system, she preferred waiting for her husband's days off so they could go out together as a family.

Not speaking the language textured every aspect of Nadia's world. It was not only a constraint on her daily life; it deeply shaped her ability to imagine herself as a full member of her new community. When I asked her what citizenship meant to her, she replied,

> Citizenship means nothing. There are no rights. This whole resettlement process, and becoming a citizen, it is a farce. I will stay here for five years, and I will have nothing, not even the ability to read one letter of the English alphabet. And I probably won't be able to get the citizenship because I will fail the test. I don't read ***any*** English! When will I learn? I wish I could learn! What does a refugee mean, and where are a refugee's rights? I have no rights. They just send me a green card and that is supposed to shut me up? I don't want the card. Keep it, and tell me, ***show*** me where my rights are. I want these rights they talk about. I haven't even learned one word of English in all this time. So where are my rights?

In making sense of her relationship with citizenship, Nadia centers her inability to speak English. She argues that without English proficiency, she is unable to make the transition from permanent resident to legal citizen. At the heart of her testimony, Nadia frames her identity as a rightless refugee as tied to her inability to access language learning. In fact, to Nadia, the de jure rights of citizenship awarded to her through the asylum-seeking process were meaningless. In this formulation, citizenship and refugee rights are deeply entangled with, if not equated to, English proficiency. Without speaking English, Nadia was rightless, unable to access any of the "supposed" rights of a legal future-citizen, leading her to reject the whole project. She tells the invisible state to "keep the card"—but to give her access to language learning instead.

7 Discussion

While the ages, pre-resettlement histories, and educational trajectories of Samah and Nadia are different, their deep desire and aspirations for education brings them together. These aspirations were produced in contexts rife with war, violence, loss, trauma, instability, and fear. For both Samah and Nadia, the hope in education got them through the difficulties they faced in Iraq, and then again where they sought refuge before resettlement to the U.S. However, as Berlant (2011) points out, there is an element of 'cruel optimism' in these kinds of aspirations; in this case, in the process that refugees undergo as they transition from war, to illegal alienage, to the

denial of educational opportunity in the U.S. In their newly resettled contexts, Samah and Nadia's aspirations met a resettlement landscape prioritizing immediate self-sufficiency over long-term investment in education and language learning. While learners new to English need a minimum of 18 months to 2 years to gain Elementary English proficiency (Benseman, 2012), the most consistent language programs available to refugees are focused on employment, and last only 60–90 days.

Refugees also arrived in an educational context gutted by market fundamentalist reforms: adult education programming with an ESL component had all but disappeared in Philadelphia. Berlant argues that at the heart of cruel optimism is a fantasy of "the good life," a set of conditions including but not limited to "upward mobility, job security, and political and social equality" (2011, p. 3). In advanced capitalist societies, she posits that "the good life" defined in these terms has become increasingly difficult to attain, creating a sense of fraying possibility. Before and during displacement, refugees expect educational attainment in their post-resettlement contexts to deliver them from a life of further suffering. However, Samah and Nadia find that they are unable to access the education they hoped for, leading them to question their ability to become full citizens and access their "right to have rights" (Somers, 2008).

While they share aspirations for education, Samah and Nadia do have some noteworthy differences. Samah's days were swallowed up with low-wage work, which effectively excluded her from enrolling in public school. Due to prioritization of self-sufficiency in the American resettlement policy, and without another adult to help carry the burden of providing for her family of four, Samah was locked into low-wage labor and locked out of education. Samah's case reminds us that the second priority of the American resettlement program, language learning, will always lose out for one simple reason: refugees cannot be a financial burden (Bonet, 2018).

While Samah's barriers to education are clear, it might appear to some that Nadia is *choosing* not to learn English and to self-isolate—an illusion that she addresses in the opening excerpt of my interview with her. Whereas scholars have pointed to barriers that refugee youth face in accessing schooling (Bonet, 2018; McWilliams & Bonet, 2016; Shakya et al., 2012), I contend that we must look more closely at the exclusions that refugee *adults* face in accessing adult education and language learning. To do so in Nadia's case, we must look to her pre and post-resettlement experiences. Adkins et al. (1999) discuss the stress that develops when the burden imposed on refugees by external or internal pressures exceeds their resources to cope. They identify three types of stress that refugees face: (1) migration stress, brought on by fleeing from war, violence, or other catastrophes and often associated with the loss of usual supports, such as family, friends, and community; (2) acculturative stress, resulting from the need to learn to function in a new culture, where even the simplest daily tasks may be markedly different and foreign; and (3) traumatic stress, stemming from extreme events that cause harm, injury, or death, such as accidents, assault, and war-related experiences.

Looking back at Nadia's life, it's clear her life was textured with all three levels of stress. We can trace the migration stress by recalling how difficult it was for her family to make the decision to leave Iraq. Eventually, violence and instability

pushed Nadia to leave behind her home, her community, and the city where she was able to be the "independent woman" she wanted to be. Overnight, she became a refugee in Damascus, where she was a second-class citizen, and a few years later, she became a refugee once again in America. The incident on the bus perfectly embodies the toll that acculturative stress can take on a refugee. Nadia spent several hours lost in her new city, wishing to return to Syria—an active site of war—rather than experience the humiliation and disorientation of being unable to return to her house. Finally, the incidents that led Nadia to leave Iraq, and the subsequent toll that they took on her, are a testimony to the effects of traumatic stress that she experienced. In the matter of a few years, her brother was brutally killed; her eldest daughter was injured in a school shooting; her youngest daughter was nearly kidnapped; her husband was nearly killed by an armed militia; and her family was caught in a crossfire between American soldiers and an armed group. In Syria, Nadia had to keep continuous watch for her daughters' safety, as the upheaval and unrest there began. These incidents had lasting effects on the whole family, but most relevant to my argument here, Nadia was deeply impacted by them. In the U.S., Nadia complained of migraines, nightmares, insomnia, generalized anxiety, and physical ailments such as joint pain and high blood pressure. As other scholars have noted, many refugees who suffer from trauma present with somatic symptoms, especially in communities where mental health problems might be stigmatized (Gordon, 2011; Ying, 2001). The events of Nadia's life had taken a toll on her.

Adkins et al. (1999) urge ESL teachers of refugee students to attend to the various sources of stress that their students might have encountered during instruction. Scholars have also argued that ESL teachers of adult language learners need to be attuned to students' trauma. Recommendations for educators who work with refugees include, but are not limited to, learning to recognize how trauma presents in the classroom (Gordon, 2011); envisioning the classroom as a space to bridge the gap between education and therapy (Horsman, 2004); and developing with individuals and organizations that work with refugees (Benseman, 2012). While these are helpful recommendations, the assumption undergirding this scholarship is that students who experience trauma and stress not only attend but persist in their adult literacy classes. However, as I've demonstrated here, refugee adults experience multiple layers of barriers to accessing education.

Many refugees who have experienced traumatic stress have difficulty beginning new tasks (Finn, 2010), such as language learning. Furthermore, in her analysis of the role of trauma on learning for refugees, Magro (2007) cites Patricia Cross' seminal study about how barriers and opportunities impact adults' motivation to learn. Cross identifies three categories of barriers: (1) dispositional, which are internal negative feelings; (2) situational, or external life constraints; and (3) institutional barriers, the structural limitations of educational institutions. Seen from this lens, it's clear that Nadia's dispositional barriers, such as fear for her daughter's safety and anxiety, were exacerbated by the traumatic stress of migration (Adkins et al., 1999). She also experienced institutional barriers: the most consistent language programming was offered at the resettlement agency an hour and a half away from her home via public transportation—a mode of transportation that had become a source

of acculturative stress for her. Viewed through the framework of sources of migration stress and barriers to education, Nadia's seemingly "purposeful" resistance to English classes is not an individual failure, but a call to take seriously the pre-resettlement experiences of refugees in the provision of educational opportunities.

Another key difference between Samah and Nadia's experiences is related to their day to day lives. Feeling unable to navigate the English-speaking world, Nadia spent most of her days at home. This isolation takes a toll on a person's coping. As Baker (1990) reminds us, "whatever blocks or distorts a person's ability to communicate will separate him from the context in which he finds meaning and a sense of identity. This, in turn, will inevitably increase tension and anxiety" (p. 64). Migration scholars have also documented the gendered nature of post-immigration isolation, noting unequal opportunities for women (Hou & Beiser, 2006; Watkins et al., 2012). As Nadia expressed deep disappointment at experiencing many of these barriers, Nawyn et al. (2012) draw our attention to the effects of linguistic isolation on feelings of belonging or exclusion for refugees. Through an ethnographic study with recently resettled Burundian and Burmese refugees in Michigan, Nawyn et al. argue that linguistically isolated refugees resettled in resource-poor communities will inevitably "experience significant barriers in communicating with English speakers, which positions them as speechless subalterns… incapable of political speech and thus animal-like" (p. 259). In other scholarship (Bonet & McWilliams, 2015), I trace how Iraqis, who live in the northeastern region of Philadelphia, have much less linguistic support than other refugee groups in other parts of the city, leaving them with few options for language learning, institutional support, and community building. In contrast, Burmese and Bhutanese refugees were resettled in resource-rich communities, due to the support of educational and community-based non-profits in their region of the same city. By framing linguistic isolation not only as an individual struggle, but also as a community-level form of social capital, Nawyn et al. (2012) link this isolation to the inability to access one's social rights, and the ability to belong to a polity (p. 276). In other words, as Nadia said, without the ability to communicate with others in English, "citizenship means nothing."

8 Conclusion

The experiences of the two refugee women in this chapter point to the need for more robust post-resettlement support. Samah's experience demonstrates that refugee youth should not have to choose between survival and education. Refugees should receive long-term, adequate financial support so they can prioritize education. Nadia's experience points to the need for more adult literacy programs, particularly those that are easily accessible to recently resettled refugees. These classes should be staffed by trained professionals, rather than a revolving set of volunteers, making it easier for students to create trusting relationships with their teachers—especially important for students with trauma in their backgrounds (Adkins et al., 1999). Also needed are bilingual teachers trained to work with students who might have

experienced trauma (Horsman, 2004). This might include recruiting and training refugees to become language teachers or hiring them as case managers, a practice already in place in several cities (McWilliams & Bonet, 2015).

Refugees are learning critical lessons about American citizenship through their encounters with and exclusion from education. Staging interventions to improve the lives of refugees involves bucking current market fundamentalist resettlement trends that re-traumatize refugees and dispossess them of the ability to aspire to and realize better futures. Rather than following through with its current course of action, which has prioritized self-sufficiency; ever-decreasing case management periods; and the lack of bilingual case workers, we need to reinvest in refugee resettlement. Otherwise, refugees will continue to be dispossessed, again, of their right to hope. Furthermore, their negative experiences, which exclude them from education in America, will continue to deeply impact their ability to imagine themselves as citizens with the right to full membership in their new contexts.

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“They Prefer You to Have a Conversation Like a Real American”: Contextualizing the Experiences of One Somali (Former) Refugee Student in Adult ESL

Tanja Burkhard

Abstract Research in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) shows that English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms are not only embedded in dominant institutional, global, and local discourses about race, gender, and language, but often also reflect and contribute to the Othering and marginalization of students, as they are implicit or explicit vehicles for the teaching of cultural values and ideologies (Ibrahim A. TESOL Q 33:349–368, 1999; Rich S, Troudi S. TESOL Q 40(3):6, 2006). Drawing on a yearlong, qualitative study that explores the racialized and linguistic identities of Black transnational women, this chapter will focus on data from one focal participant, Naima. Naima is an adult ESL student from Somalia who was a refugee and now holds U.S. citizenship. The purpose of this chapter is twofold: (1) It will show how Naima's experiences in one ESL course were not only steeped in racial, religious, and gendered biases, but also the ways in which they impacted her self-understanding as a learner (2) It will illustrate how ESL pedagogies became strong contributing factors to Naima's multi-faceted marginalization due to race, ethnicity, religion, gender, and language in the context of the United States.

Keywords Critical TESOL · Transnational black feminism · Black immigrants · Intersectionality

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1 Introduction

> [My teacher] is very strict and it seems she doesn't like people of color. Naima, text message, November 2016

Naima [name is a pseudonym], a Somali woman and English as a Second Language (ESL) student, sent me the text message above in reference to her ESL instructor. I received her message after months of listening to Naima's frustrations with her ESL writing class, which was both a stepping stone and an obstacle in her decades-long pursuit of improving her English proficiency to achieve her goal of becoming a medical professional. Her frustration was also framed by the proliferation of anti-Black and anti-Muslim violence in the post- 9/11 United States, leading up to and under the Trump administration, as well as the specific context of the Midwestern town in which we lived. In this particular context, the local Muslim, but specifically, the local Somali community, feared backlash after a Somali student was shot and killed on a university campus after what was framed as a "terror attack."

As a tutor-turned-family-friend and adult ESL educator, who had been working with Naima for roughly 2 years at the time, Naima's words regarding her teacher did not necessarily surprise me. Indeed, since I had met her, I had witnessed her entering, leaving, and re-entering ESL courses with what felt like an endless number of obstacles in her way (including health issues, family issues, the political context). However, as an educational researcher, former ESL instructor, and Naima's tutor (and family friend), I was interested in why Naima believed her instructor "is very strict" and seems "as though she doesn't like people of color," and wanted to learn more about her overall experiences in her ESL classroom. I also wanted to how and why Naima deduced that her teacher's interactions with her were impacted by, if not steeped in, racism and xenophobia/Islamophobic sentiments and what her experience may teach us about the pursuit of equity and social justice in ESL teaching and learning.

I met Naima in 2014, years before she sent me the text message that opens this chapter, after a colleague who was teaching her ESL course at the time referred her to me for tutoring. Over the years, as a teacher, I had supported her in English grammar, writing, and math and listened to her concerns, victories, and moments of despair. Naima had also participated in my yearlong qualitative study of the educational narratives and identities of Black transnational women, which explored some of the same issues related to ESL pedagogy and educational access as her text message. In this project, I interviewed, spent time with, and observed seven adult Black women who migrated to the United States as adults or spent several years of their adult life in the United States. This chapter focuses on findings from my study with Naima, a focal participant, to explore the following question: "What implications for teaching and learning in TESOL classrooms emerge, as we consider the othered experiences of one adult ESL student and former refugee?" I demonstrate how Naima's experiences in one ESL course were not only steeped in racial, religious, and gendered biases but also impacted her self-understanding as a learner and eventually become an obstacle in her self-actualization (Hooks, 1994). In addition, it

illustrates how ESL pedagogies became strong contributing factors to Naima's multi-faceted marginalization due to race, ethnicity, religion, gender, and language in the context of the United States.

In so doing, I follow Black (2017), who notes, "language scholars should go beyond social categories defined in the national imagination and incorporate the nuances of how groups and individuals understand themselves without the imposition of the national ideology of race (p. 154)." In particular, it will take up this notion by viewing Naima's ESL class as one space in which ideologies of race were (re)produced and ascribed to her through a deficit lens (Ladson-Billings, 2007) rather than drawing on her rich experiences and knowledge as a multilingual woman who came to the United States as a refugee. However, it should be noted that this is not done to condemn the effects of ESL pedagogies in general or speculate about the intentions, worldviews, or ideologies of Naima's ESL instructor specifically. Rather, I invite readers to contemplate how pedagogical practices and implicit biases may contribute to the internalization of deficit perspectives (Ladson-Billings, 2006) their instructors may ascribe to their students and how adult ESL classrooms might become sites of violence, rather than spaces of self-actualization and empowerment (Hooks, 1994).

Taking into consideration the ways Naima had come to understand her interactions with her instructor as rooted in the contexts and histories of racism, xenophobia, and anti-Muslim sentiment, I will locate Naima's interactions with her ESL teacher in one class as one nexus of marginalization that ultimately impacted her educational trajectory, as well as the choices she now makes as a mother with respect to the languages she encourages her children to learn. This work has implications for English as a Second Language instruction and instructor preparation, particularly with respect to instructors examining the biases in their teaching.

2 Contextualizing Adult English as a Second Language Classroom

Historicizing adult ESL, Ferguson (1998) notes that the institutionalization of adult English as a Second Language (ESL) after World War I was based on the idea that immigrants should learn English upon arrival to the United States for the purposes of assimilation and production of "good citizens," rather than personal empowerment. Politically, this institutionalization was reinforced through the Immigration Act of 1917, which required adult immigrants over the age of 16 to take a literacy test upon arrival in the United States. According to Oh (2012), "America started ranking immigration populations [including European immigrants] into hierarchies of assimilability, in which some groups were regarded as more likely to 'fit in' than others" (p. 31). To be considered a "good" American, then, one had to be literate, healthy – ideally Christian- and able to assimilate into the settler state by adopting its language and ideological underpinnings. Thus, immigrants and refugees whose

identities related to race, gender, (dis)ability, language, and/or religion positioned them in such a way that it was more difficult or impossible to "fit in," often experienced violence and (micro)aggressions in the public sphere, as well as within educational settings. In the context of ESL, Shim (2017) defines such microaggressions as "subtle verbal or non-verbal assaults directed toward those who speak languages other than English" (p. 2). However, considering the various other intersections at which micro-aggressions are produced and compounded by holding multiple marginalized identities, ESL students of color often experience aggression rooted in racism and xenophobia, requiring them to navigate this difficult terrain in their daily lives.

In this context, Ferguson (1998) further notes that as literacy and ESL instructors, "we truly are both in the middle – acting as buffers between our students and often-hostile communities – and on the front lines. We are political works, whether we intend to be or not, whether we are trained to be or not" (p. 4). However, the idea that adult ESL instructors are political workers rather than merely responsible for instructing content is not a generally accepted assumption that underlies the efforts of ESL teaching and learning. As Buendía et al. (2003) argue, the aim of moving ESL beyond a focus on language acquisition by centering educational equity and inclusion is not commonly pursued. More importantly, they note that simply calling for a more diverse teaching force is not enough if the program and administrative structures and discourses are not aligned with an antiracist, culturally relevant (Ladson-Billings, 2006) agenda. In the absence of structural support, they argue that even immigrant instructors of color, who may share certain experiences with their students, struggle to interrogate and examine the marginalization of ESL students consistently.

Thus, calls for a more diverse P-12 teaching force and teacher preparation programs to train and retain more teachers of color (Banks, 2003; Gay & Howard, 2000; Milner & Sleeter, 2011) with the goal of better supporting immigrant students should not only be expanded to include adult education; they should also prepare teachers to understand the contexts of cross-national contemporary and historical dimensions of racialization and racism, coloniality, oppression due to gender identity and sexual orientation, geopolitical contexts and conflict, and others. Understanding the ESL classroom as a microcosm of society, in which marginalization may play out along raced, classed, and gendered lines, dispels the notion that ESL classrooms are apolitical spaces, but rather confirms that English language teaching "draws connections between what happens in language learning classrooms and larger social, historical, political, and ideological influences" (Warriner, 2004, p. 208). Teaching ESL in the United States, then, necessarily requires us to consider how language ideologies, racism, and xenophobia have functioned to marginalize various communities over time.

Moreover, it also requires us to examine how ESL classrooms may operate as extensions of the settler-colonial state and its logics, whose establishment, in part, required both the dispossession and subjugation of Native peoples and the forced extraction of labor from chattel slaves (Tuck & Yang, 2012). For the United States, these particular foundations of settler colonialism are also the framework through

which Blackness became attached to discourses of threat and fear, as "[t]he violence of keeping/killing the chattel slave makes them deathlike monsters in the settler imagination; they are reconfigured/disfigured as the threat, the razor's edge of safety and terror" (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 6). Black refugees and immigrants, then, enter this context of the United States and undergo processes of racialization that are rooted within the larger contexts of settler colonialism, anti-Black racism, xenophobia and in Naima's case, Islamophobia, manifested as "attitude[s] of fear, mistrust, or hatred of Islam and its adherents" (Zine, 2004, p. 113). According to Morrison (1998), Blackness in the United States is reconfigured as a "threat" and mediated through the white gaze. As Yancy (2008) notes: "On any given day in North America, the Black body vis-à-vis the white gaze – that performance of distortional 'seeing' that evolves out of and is inextricably linked to various raced and racist myths, white discursive practices, and centripetal processes of white systemic power and white solipsism – undergoes processes of dehumanizing interpellation" (p. xviii). From an intersectional perspective (Crenshaw, 1998), then, Muslim Somali women in educational settings are frequently positioned "within the confluence of gazes – feminist, colonialist, multiculturalist, and academic" (Langellier, 2010, p. 68).

Despite their multiracial makeup, ESL classrooms, in which social dynamics are often reproduced, are not exempt from being sites of racialization and the power dynamics and dehumanization that go hand in hand with the white gaze. In fact, Lee (2015) notes that ESL classrooms are often spaces in which cultural and racial identities are produced and reified through discourses of cultural difference. In these ways, they continue to function based on the logics on which they were founded, namely the fear of the Other, who is not "like us" (Ferguson, 1998). Thus, adult ESL instructors who wish to disrupt these dynamics must interrogate biases and deficit perspectives (Ladson-Billings, 2006) they hold about their students, and how the gaze through which they read their students may contribute to their dehumanization, even in classrooms which they perceive to be pedagogical "safe spaces" (Waterhouse, 2017).

3 Deficit Perspectives and ESL Pedagogies

The political nature of ESL classrooms as spaces that oftentimes play a role in the perpetuation and reproduction of dominant ideologies (e.g., the project of producing "good citizens") also comes to light when examining the ESL curricula (Auerbach, 1992; Shah et al., 2019) that guide instructional content. For instance, Benesch (1998) argues that the ideology of pragmatism in ESL, specifically English for academic purposes, has perpetuated the absence of critical and feminist approaches because it "seeks to fit students into existing academic and social structures, not to encourage them to question and revise those structures" (p. 101). However, there is less research that inquires how deficit beliefs and perspectives (Ladson-Billings, 2006) held by ESL instructors about their students' cultures and languages may govern their pedagogies and interactions, and in turn, impact how

students see themselves and their English proficiency. Research in K-12 settings has shown that the impact of these beliefs can greatly impact the students' trajectories, particularly with respect to assessment and the tracking of students into particular courses (Riley, 2015).

Hertzog (2011) points out that even "successful" ESL teachers often subscribe to dominant discourses regarding ESL students, such as their unwillingness to learn English and perceptions of bilingualism as anti-American. If students' home languages are treated as obstacles to overcome, rather than funds of knowledge (González et al., 2005), which are just as valuable as the English language and cultural repertoires taught in the classroom, this perpetuates the notion of a remedial ESL identity (Marshall, 2009). Steeped in deficit perspectives about English Language Learners, the remedial ESL identity is an identity marker students internalize as they "are ESL," or "no longer" ESL, labels, and discourses about language learning that are both largely shaped by the "social stigma and delegitimization" (Marshall, 2009, p. 45). Based on this notion, ESL classrooms and coursework, then, are stigmatized spaces to be overcome, rather than spaces in which the already rich linguistic and cultural repertoires of students are expanded, and social contexts are examined critically. As Taylor (2006) asserts, Teaching English as a Second Language is "permeated by racialized power relations that create hierarchies of speaker identities and resilient images of linguistic impurity and Otherness" (p. 519). Students' internalization of their position within the power relations and hierarchies (for instance, by taking on the stigmatized "remedial ESL identity") can further work to alienate these students as learners.

For Black refugee and immigrant ESL students, contending with this "remedial ESL identity" may also occur in combination with other processes of identity formation. This is in large part because immigrants of color are also required to contend with the contexts of race and racialization in the United States, and Black immigrants and refugees must contend with the specific effects of anti-Black racism – and this is on top of anti-immigration policies and practices. Further, the existence of these structures requires Black women immigrants and refugees to contend with what these contexts mean in relation to their own social position, or the "unique angle of vision" (Collins, 1990) that is the Black woman's standpoint. Thus, for Black women like Naima, this specifically means understanding one's position "within intersecting hierarchies of race, gender, and class" (Harnois, 2010, p. 68). Considering how these multiple layered contexts of marginalization and identity development intersect in Naima's daily life, including the ESL classrooms she has been navigating, sheds light on her statement about her teacher while also raising difficult questions about what it might look like to attend to these intersections within adult ESL teaching and learning.

In addition, it is necessary to also understand the many ways in which learning English as a Second language is perceived as both a vehicle of freedom and upward mobility, (Warriner, 2007) that carries the hopes and dreams of many refugees and immigrants, and a site of terror. Hooks (1994) points out that during chattel slavery, terror "extended beyond fear of punishment, that it also resided in the anguish of hearing a language they could not comprehend. The very sound of English had to

terrify" (p. 169). Thus, viewing the English language and acquiring it as both sites of hope and possibility, as well as a historical and contemporary site of terror for many people of color beckons us to disrupt deficit perspectives through which ESL students, specifically refugee and immigrant students of color, are evaluated.

4 Study Context, Methodology, and Methods

The data I draw on for this chapter stem from a larger study on the educational experiences, identities, and languages of 7 Black transnational women, whom each navigated different educational settings, including adult ESL spaces, community college, universities, and high-schools. The participants' diverse nationalities and migration backgrounds (some resettled, some on student visas, some undocumented, and others who hold citizenship in more than one country and spend part of their year in the United States). Theoretically and methodologically, the study is rooted in an anticolonial (Dei & Kempf, 2006), transnational Black feminist approach (Burkhard, 2019; Hall, 2016). This approach specifically engages transnational feminist traditions and Black feminist traditions to center the lived experiences of Black women immigrants and to understand how they believed racism, sexism, and globalized White Supremacy (Allen, 2001) impacted their lives pre- and post-migration. Rajan and Desai (2012) note that transnational theory and praxis address "gender within a shifting, differential global context" (p. 2).

According to Hall (2016), transnational Black feminist approaches are guided by "intersectionality, scholar-activism, solidarity building, and attention to borders/boundaries" (p. 91). Methodologically, attending specifically to the tenets of intersectionality and the processes of border/bounder-creation meant in practice that data collection, analysis, and representation also needed to take into account contexts of coloniality and nation-states, as well as how the particular intersections of race, gender, class, religion, and immigration status worked specifically to shape the identities and lived experiences of the participants. Rather than centering only one axis (race or gender) to capture the systemic marginalization of Black women, Crenshaw (1998) contends that we must simultaneously analyze these intersections. She argues "because the intersectional experience is greater than the sum of racism and sexism, any analysis that does not take intersectionality into account cannot sufficiently address the particular manner in which Black women are subordinated" (Crenshaw, 1998, p. 315). Drawing on what Crenshaw advises as well as what Collins (1990) terms the "matrix of domination" (when systems of oppression interlock), I adopt an approach that examines how globalized structures of oppression influence and shape the lived experiences of Black transnational women.

This study examines the lived experiences of Black transnational women in relation to global structures by engaging these principles from a qualitative methodological perspective and sought to work against the trap of essentializing the categories used for analysis. For instance, all participants in the study self-identify as Black women, but both categories "Black" and "woman" are contested, as both

can assume meanings that greatly differ from context to context. Adding, in Naima's case, the dimension of religion as a Black Muslim woman requires a transnational Black researcher to contend with the dominant tropes that are evoked when the term "Muslim" woman is used, such as the idea that Muslim women require saving (Gökarıksel, 2017). Taking up the tenet of scholar-activism in the tradition of transnational feminist practice, which seeks to "re-frame domestic issues in the context of international, transnational, or global issues" (Hall, 2019), requires qualitative researchers to contend with these tropes and work to disrupt dominant narratives that work to Other women, specifically in and from the global South. In so doing, a transnational Black qualitative approach radically centers the voices, experiences, and knowledges of Black transnational women to better understand the global and transnational dimensions of knowledge production.

Naima became a focal participant due to the richness of the data and narratives that our time engaging in research produced, but also because of how much about global dimensions of power were revealed through her narratives. The qualitative data I collected with her and the other participants include audio-recorded interviews, purposeful "hanging out" (Ibrahim, 1999), observations, and artifacts, such as some of her classwork and immigration paperwork. Because the focus of the study was on the women and their lived experiences, I did not gain access to their instructors or educational institutions. I came to this work as a participant-observer, who, at the time of data collection, was an international student and visa holder. Often finding ourselves in conversation about our racialized, gendered, and national identities, Naima and I both came to this work identifying as Black women, learners, mothers, and friends to each other. She enthusiastically invited me to share her stories.

5 Naima's Story

The title of this chapter, "They prefer you to have a conversation like a real American," is a direct quote from Naima. It hints at her complicated relationship with the concept of citizenship and authentic "Americanness." As a former refugee, who has been an American citizen for almost half of her life, Naima reported that some people in the public sphere, and even in the educational settings she has navigated, subjected her to micro-aggressions due to her speech, which signaled to her that "real," or "good" Americans speak with an "American" accent.

She stated this sentence, noting that although some people with whom she interacts in the public sphere encourage her and point out how good her English is others:

> […] see your accent [and] they prefer you to have a conversation like a real American. [They say] "What? What? What do you mean? What?" My English is not good. My husband's English is good. So when we walk, me and my husband together, some people, they act you don't know English. And they say, "What do you mean by that? What is that?" They kind of confuse you, and they talk loud. They want to embarrass you.

What Naima describes here are interactions she has experienced at stores, hospitals, or city offices in which people have responded to her by speaking louder and slower because, as she interprets it, they prefer those who can have conversations like a "real American," meaning those who speak Dominant American English (Paris, 2009). She describes her own English as "not good" in contrast to her husband's, who migrated to the United States at a younger age. I see her assessment of her own English proficiency, however, as a direct result of certain negative interactions outside of her home, including her repeated attempts to complete and move forward in her ESL courses. However, I observed that Naima was able to navigate most contexts in English very well. With her husband away most of the day for work, she was responsible for the children's schooling, doctor's visits, and grocery shopping, all of which required a versatile vocabulary, as well as advanced reading and listening skills. I perceived Naima's assessment of her own English in relation to her husband's to be mostly tied to accent, as well as her remaining in ESL classes for many years, despite the progress she has made.

When I first met Naima, she often requested my aid in navigating the public sphere (e.g., department stores, official phone calls, etc.), even though she had been in the United States longer than I had and was able to navigate these spaces competently. When I asked her why we went on shopping trips for beauty products during our English tutoring time, she pointed out to me that with me by her side, she received the attention of store clerks, who had otherwise turned away from her. I started to realize that although I was an international student at the time, I was able to "pass" for "American," and therefore was not perceived in the same ways that Naima, who wears a hijab and whose speech is more markedly accented, was. Through our outings, Naima and I established a friendship, and she often confided in me about her experiences in the adult ESL and mathematics classrooms she navigated in pursuit of her General Education Development diploma. I celebrated with her when she did well on tests and was similarly crushed each time her work went unrecognized. When she began telling me about positive and negative interactions she had with her teachers, as well as her struggles to move forward in her education, I started viewing our joint experiences in stores and other public places as continuous sites in which the larger interlocking contexts of xenophobia, racism, and sexism continuously impacted Naima's self-understandings as an English Language Learner whose English was "not good," and as a "person of color" who was exposed to daily racial microaggressions (Sue, 2010).

Naima came to the United States as an 18-year old woman in the late 1990s. In Somalia, she had grown up in a loving family that was greatly affected by a civil war. When she was six, Naima's school, which had an Islamic focus, was attacked by bombers while she was in it. She was one of the few survivors and, after this incident, no longer had access to schooling until she came to the United States as a teenager. Today, Naima is a wife and a mother of four children. After years of applying for her mother's green-card through her familial relationship, it was approved in late 2016. While her mother was on a plane headed for the United States, the 2017 executive order known as the "Muslim ban" was issued by the current administration.

For Naima's family, the executive order directly and immediately impacted the migration experiences of Naima's mother, husband, and 2 of her children, as her mother was left stranded at an airport in Ethiopia and her husband and children, who are U.S. citizens, were able to travel to the U.S. While waiting for news from her mother, Naima was worried and disappointed. The financial burden of applying for the green-card and travel, the fear for her mother being stranded in a strange place, and the knowledge that a ban was issued to exclude people from her own home country to come to the U.S. weighed heavily on her. One consequence was that Naima stopped attending ESL courses for a while.

Only a few months before Naima stopped going to class due to the turmoil in her family, she had already considered quitting her ESL classes to pursue an alternate path. At the time, she was making alternate plans because she was not confident that she would move on. Naima had explained to me that one contributing factor was the sense that her teacher did "not like people of color" or disliked certain students due to their religion. When I asked Naima more about this, she explained that her teacher engaged the students at times but also accused them of dishonesty. Naima had experienced this herself:

> Every time I ask a question, she has an attitude, or she doesn't want to answer really clear, or maybe sometimes I say she doesn't like you because of my skin, my religion. One time I took a test, and I passed it, and she [made me] repeat it again. She said, "I didn't see your folder." [I don't know if you remember. I told you that.] She said, "I didn't see your folder, and I think you're going to fake your test. You have to take it again." And I was so angry and nervous, but I'm willing to take it again, because I did last time really good. So I take again and my scores become, wow, very, very, very, very high. (beams with pride)

As shown in this interview excerpt, Naima's teacher not only interacts with her in ways that make Naima feel that "she has an attitude" and doesn't want to answer her questions clearly, she also asks Naima to repeat a test after she had already taken it, because she was unable to find the test folder. In addition to potentially having misplaced Naima's test herself, the teacher also accuses Naima of this loss and assuming that she was "faking the test" when she pointed out that she had already taken it. Naima interprets her teacher's behavior as a response to her race and/or religious expression as a Muslim woman who wears a hijab.

Considering a study that shows racist biases in assessment, Auestad (2015) notes that these studies often do not reveal the teacher's motivation, but rather displays what their motivation might be and that their racist biases may be subconscious, rather than "entertaining any conscious beliefs about causal connections between skin colour or ethnicity and intellectual performance" (p. 4.). Thus, despite the teacher's intentions or reasons for assuming that Naima would cheat on her test, this instance can also be read through the lens of anti-Black racism in the United States, which renders Black people as suspicious or threats, and the context of gendered anti-Muslim sentiment, which also positions Muslim people as threats. Intentionally, or unintentionally, Naima read the teacher's suspicion as a (micro)aggression, which reflects her racialized and religious positioning. Once again, it should be noted, then, that the focus of this inquiry is not about the teacher's intentions,

attitudes, or motivations, but rather, how Naima's understanding of anti-Blackness and Islamophobia informed how Naima perceived her teacher's treatment.

Through observations and interviews, I learned that Naima was aware of certain negative stereotypes, dominant discourses, and readings of her various identities. It seems safe to assume that the teacher's accusation that she may "fake" her test is an indicator of how she perceives Naima as a student: someone who would be capable of cheating and lying. Thus, considering Naima's experiences with racism and gendered Islamophobia (Deiri, 2018), Naima understood her instructor's response as a reproduction of anti-Black and anti-Muslim sentiments. In her retelling of the story, Naima notes that her scores in the second iteration, after her teacher had lost her exam and accused her of cheating, went from "good" to "very, very, very, very high." I interpreted Naima's emphasis on how good her scores were when she retook the test after being accused of losing or purposely misplacing her exam folder as her way to express victory over her teacher's raced, gendered, and Islamophobic assumptions and suspicions about her. Even though she was "angry and nervous," Naima took the exam again and proved her teacher wrong by showing that she did not need to falsify a test for her own benefit.

Although Naima received excellent scores the second time she took the test, she became discouraged over time. As she told me later, she felt her continuous efforts to complete her ESL coursework had not produced the results she had been hoping for. The Muslim ban reinvigorated anti-Muslim discourses and sentiments in ways that have created unrest and fear of physical racist violence in her community and family. According to Naima (and the other participants in my study), the experience with the teacher from the excerpt is not an isolated incident. Although Naima praises the various "good" teachers she has had for not treating her carelessly, she explained that many of her teachers seemed to hold stereotypical or anti-Muslim views. With each incident such as the one described in this section, Naima has become increasingly discouraged. Recently, Naima chose to defer her dream of becoming a nurse and abandoned the ESL courses that seemed to go nowhere in order to have more time to seek out opportunities that do not require a college degree or high school diploma.

6 Discussion

Naima's perception of her interactions with her teacher illustrate some of the ways in which interactions that may seem minor in everyday ESL instruction can have a significant impact on how students interpret these interactions with their teachers, as well as the beliefs the teachers may hold about them. During an intertview, Naima recalled the interaction she had with her teacher 2 years after it occurred. She had told me the story before (as indicated in the excerpt, where she notes: "I don't know if you remember, I told you that"). In fact, I had not remembered this story at the time of her retelling because when she had initially presented me with the test scores, I was very happy for her success and did not read the subtext regarding the

excellent scores were achieved. Of course, Naima's teacher may not have anticipated that Naima would read her request to retake the test as rooted in existing narratives of anti-Blackness and Islamophobia. Based on these narratives, Blackness is associated with laziness and shiftiness (Myers, 2005), and Muslim women are both under suspicion and requiring surveillance (Shams, 2018), yet simultaneously seen as oppressed by Muslim men (Deiri, 2018). Thus, Naima's analysis when she notes "maybe sometimes I say she doesn't like you because my skin, my religion" reflects Naima's awareness of how these larger contexts inform the White Gaze (Morrison, 1998) and functions to an element of suspicion and distrust between her teacher and her.

7 Toward Racial Literacy and Anti-racist Praxis in Teaching Adult ESL

In *The Souls of Black Folk*, W.E.B Du Bois (1903) introduces the concept of double-consciousness, describing it as "a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity […]" (p. 2). Based on her analysis of her interactions with her teacher, Naima, who came to the United States as a young adult woman has quite obviously learned what it means to look "at one's self through the eyes of others," as Du Bois (DuBois, 1903) describes, in part due to her experiences in teaching and learning spaces.

For ESL educators, who are invested in the well-being of our students, we must reckon with the discourses, practices, and contexts of anti-Black racism, xenophobia, and Islamophobia that some of our students are navigating, and interrogate how our own actions (or inactions) may contribute to the students' experiences of oppression. This includes interrogating actions that may seem innocent to us, such as the way we frame our suspicions of plagiarism or cheating, or, as in Naima's case, our assumptions about a student's intent. We must recognize that in these contexts, assuming a lost exam is not simply a lost exam, but hidden or misplaced for nefarious reasons, can cause our students to not only question how we see them, but also whether they will be able to succeed in our class. Furthermore, knowing that many of our students are intimately familiar with the deficit perspectives with which their cultures and languages are regarded should prompt us to interrogate our own teaching practices, biases, curricula, and pedagogical approaches. Doing so, however, requires both the reflective analysis (Gay & Kirkland, 2003) and study. According to Ribeiro (2005), "the education of adult learners, then, needs to incorporate opportunities that provide an assessment of their cultural beliefs and values, followed by a critical reflection of how their assumptions and biases affect their own and others' worldviews" (p. 92). However, I argue that before instructors are able to provide adult learners with such opportunities of interrogation, they should engage in this type of reflective practice themselves. Given the oftentimes violent experiences that

refugee and immigrant students are subjected to in everyday life, it is the responsibility of the educators, as well as the programs that prepare them to engage in an ongoing process of reflexivity to interrogate their own beliefs, actions, and assumptions (Strekalova-Hughes & Wang, 2019). In doing, so they may ask themselves the following questions (among others):

- What assumptions and/or understandings (positive and negative) about my students' raced, gendered, classed, linguistic, or (dis)ability-related experiences do I hold?
- How do the assumptions and/or understandings about my students' raced, gendered, classed, linguistic, or (dis)ability-related experiences impact my interactions with them?
- (How) do the curricula, materials, and activities I use incorporate opportunities for critical reflection about the "assumptions and beliefs of the students' worldviews" (Ribeiro, 2005)? If not, what power dynamics shape my selection?

Engaging in this type of reflection recognizes that learning in adult ESL classrooms goes beyond the acquisition of language but also produces new understandings of one's own identity, social world, and positioning (Waterhouse, 2017). Of course, while the personal commitment to reflective practices is very important, this work cannot occur in a vacuum, specifically if schools, colleges, and programs remain complicit in and continue to perpetuate racist violence (Deiri, 2018).

If adult ESL instructors desire to disrupt the reproduction of dominant discourses, deficit-perspectives about learners, and dehumanizing practices within their classrooms by fostering critical consciousness (Freire, 1973), and seek to work towards social justice, they must take into consideration the various contexts -local, global, and transnational- their students navigate and how these contexts are shaped by coloniality. As Taylor (2006) points out, "historical processes of imperialism and racism are not incidental to our field, but rather, central to its discursive and material practices" (p. 523). This requires teachers to engage in an ongoing study of the histories of colonialism and imperialism, particularly as they impact their students.

As Naima's example shows, students of color are often well aware of the multiple ways in which structural racism impacts their lives and is reproduced in encounters with their instructors. In other words, both white ESL instructors and ESL instructors of color should work to develop contextualized understandings of racism and racialization in the United States by developing racial literacy, which means "rethink[ing] race as an instrument of social, geographic, and economic control of both whites and blacks" (Guinier, 2004, p. 114).

Combined with engaging in ongoing processes of critical consciousness development, as well as understandings of global histories of contexts and coloniality, these understandings of the local context of racism and racialization can help instructors interrogate their own hegemonic gazes and implicit biases in their interactions with students. In Naima's case, the relationship she and her teacher had built did not allow for a humanizing and careful negotiation of the issue at hand. Although the interaction only lasted a few minutes, it caused her to question how the teacher saw her as a student for years to come. This example highlights the importance of

engaging in humanizing pedagogies and relationship building, particularly for students who experience racialized and xenophobic violence in various contexts outside of the ESL classroom.

8 Conclusion

The few incidents of Naima's adult ESL experience relayed and examined here are not unique to her experience. As an ESL instructor, I have witnessed how deficit narratives held by ESL instructors often inadvertently contribute to the marginalization of their adult ESL students in real-time. Naima's assessment of the incident with her teacher shows that when working with marginalized students, we must contextualize and interrogate how we engage in our everyday instructional practices by reviewing not only our classroom materials, assessments, and objectives but also the micro-interactions we have with students and how they may be interpreted by students who experience marginalization, racism, and other forms of oppression in so many different areas of their lives. However, as an adult ESL instructor, I also recognize the potential of ESL classrooms as sites of hope and restoration. In many ways, Naima's hopes and dreams of a future and career were attached to her navigation of adult ESL courses and English proficiency and, therefore, deeply entangled with her own self-actualization and empowerment (Hooks, 1994). If Naima's teacher had allowed for the possibility of the lost exam being simply that – a lost exam that needs to be retaken or recovered- rather than an attempt for Naima to cheat and falsify, it is unlikely that the event would have haunted Naima enough to recount this incident multiple times.

Of course, Naima's departure from ESL courses is not solely due to this particular interaction, or even others. It is the nature of micro-aggressions that they represent both isolated incidents and extensions of systemic oppression. Despite these interactions, Naima has mastered her education with incredible resilience. Despite her teacher's suspicions and interactions that felt dehumanizing to her, she retook tests and courses, took tutors, and bought additional books. However, her latest departure from adult ESL classes constitutes yet another disruption in her education and reflects the failure of the institutions she navigates to provide her with effective instruction over the past 20 years. The departure of a student as resilient, ambitious, and resourceful as Naima, who in light of racism and xenophobia, fear and violence, simply could not see a way through, says more about the need for ESL programs and teacher preparation programs to reckon with the continued need to foster engaged pedagogues, who seek to disrupt the white gaze through which their students are regarded and instead create opportunities for students to better understand their own contexts and the social positioning and to pursue social change. If we, as adult educators, regard ourselves as "healers" (Hooks, 1994), who are "committed to a process of self-actualization that promotes their own well-being if they are able to teach in a manner that empowers students" (Hooks, 1994, p. 15), this goal is not out of reach.

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Performing Neoliberalism: A Synecdochic Case of Kurdish Mothers' English Learning in a Nebraska Family Literacy Program

Jen Stacy

Abstract Adult refugees often turn to informal learning opportunities, such as family literacy programs, to learn English. These programs often promote dominant, neoliberal ideologies and invoke a deficit lens that intends to fix newcomers. This chapter looks at the learning experiences of Kurdish refugees who participated in a family literacy program in Nebraska and examines how their English learning was mediated by neoliberal ideologies. Using ethnographic methods, this case illuminates a synecdochic moment: Kurdish mothers improvised to finish a homework assignment minutes before class and were prodded by interpreters to write down ideas that later receive praise from the instructor. The assignment reflected the school's underlying ideology of what it means to be an involved parent: one who replicates school activities with their children. The mothers' use of the interpreter to complete this assignment indicated their understanding that achievement was connected to the school's perception of their parenting. Findings shed light on how parents perform in the context of institutionalized family literacy and how the program personnel's perceptions of refugees become embedded in language teaching and learning.

Keywords Family literacy · English learning · Adult education · Parent-school relations · Ethnography

> They need to understand what our routine is, what our expectation is, what the expectation is for the child. Anne, Family Literacy Site Coordinator

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Fleeing persecution, violence, and war, Kurdish families have sought refuge in Chesterfield,[1] Nebraska since the early 2000s (Nebraska Mosaic, 2017). Unlike their children enrolled in public schools, parents are not guaranteed sustained support in adjusting culturally and linguistically to a new land. While learning English permits access to and navigation of the dominant culture, adults have less access to formal learning opportunities, making them one of the most marginalized groups within American education (Cuban, 2009).

In partial response to refugees/newcomers, public schools turn to learning initiatives like family literacy programs with an adult English learning component as one way to address adult refugees' needs and mediate their relationship with the community (Lamphere, 1992). While parents view these community-based classes as valuable resources, they often are couched in neoliberal ideologies (Stacy, 2019) that view humans as economic subjects, conceive learning as individual choice, and support, supposedly, transactional skills (Campi, 2020). This reductive approach to English learning repurposes reading, writing, and other language abilities as commodities to be exchanged for goods (Brandt, 2001). Inherently, neoliberalism is hegemonic in that the ruling class preserves its status through the internalization of ideals of individualism and meritocracy that will be measured against market forces (Robinson, 2019). This broader ideology permeates refugees' English learning experiences in programs that are designed to *fix* immigrants so that they will have the skills to contribute to and benefit from the U.S. economy. Given that these skills are designed in the image of and measured by pillars of whiteness, there is a strong assimilatory undercurrent to neoliberal education that expects immigrants and refugees to modify their behaviors, languages, and literacies.

Such thinking is evident throughout broader adult education policy and philanthropy which often views immigrant families through a deficit lens (Baquedano-Lopez et al., 2013; Stacy, 2017). In addition to teaching English, family literacy programs include parent education components that are designed to alter the parents' practices to be more in line with the school's expectations and the dominant (White, middle class) cultural norms. Take, for example, the quote at the beginning of this chapter. While explaining the family literacy program, the coordinator articulated how parents must learn "our expectations", indicating that English learning includes assimilating to the school's expectations. From this perspective, English learning in a family literacy program becomes understood as transactional and assimilatory.

This chapter discusses findings from a study that examined the experiences of Kurdish refugees participating in a family literacy program in Chesterfield, Nebraska. Utilizing ethnographic methods, I investigated the cultural space of the family literacy program guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the cultural practices of the family literacy program?
2. How do the program stakeholders' cultural practices illuminate the school's perceptions and expectations of newcomers?

3. What are the language-learning experiences of refugees attending a family literacy program in a society that economically values immigrants, but also expects cultural and linguistic assimilation?

I present and analyze a scenario from the program's parent-time class to understand how it serves as a synecdoche of the school's broader neoliberal ideologies that played out through the refugees' English learning experiences. The Kurdish mothers' actions to complete a homework assignment are examined through Goffman's (1959) theory of performance of social roles. The mothers modified their behaviors based on their understanding of the school's expectations. Intriguingly, the mothers also utilized the semiotic cultural structures of the program to navigate and thwart neoliberal expectations.

1 Refugees in Chesterfield, Nebraska

Welcoming refugees has been a practice in Nebraska since the passage of the 1980 Refugee Resettlement Act. In 2016, Nebraska received the most refugees per capita in the nation: 76 refugees per 100,000 residents (Radford & Connor, 2016). Chesterfield is home to over a quarter of the state's refugee population with the majority arriving from Iraq, followed by Burma/Myanmar, Ukraine, Sudan, Vietnam, and Iran (Omaha World-Herald, 2018). At the time of study, Chesterfield was noted for its large Middle Eastern population and particularly for the substantial number of Kurdish and Yazidi refugees, whose population in Nebraska increased during the Iraq War and after the 2014 ISIS genocide (Williams, 2018). The mothers featured in this chapter are from Iraq and were categorized as Kurdish by Chesterfield Public School's (CPS) because of the language in which they received interpretation services. Within the group of eight women, half ethnically identified as Yazidi.

When refugees arrive in Nebraska, they join a demographic shift already underway. Geographical trends in meatpacking and other agricultural labor have attracted new immigrant labor and resulted in a growth of newcomer populations, including refugee and Latinx populations, coining it a member of the New Latinx Diaspora (Hamann & Harklau, 2010). Research has documented the transnational characteristics of Nebraska's communities, their changing language and cultural practices, and the responses of the receiving communities (Wortham et al., 2001; Hamann et al., 2015). Social institutions, especially schools, are important for how this migration is mediated in communities (Lamphere, 1992; Hamann et al., 2015).

Upon arrival to Chesterfield, refugee families are met with a network of social services. The Nebraska Department of Health and Social Services catalogs services for refugees on its website. Listed third after cash assistance and healthcare is – in the same sentence – "employment and English as a Second Language (ESL) services" (Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, 2019). The first bullet directs visitors to Lincoln Literacy, an organization that provides free English classes in the state's capitol. Prioritizing learning how to speak, read, and write in

English, and attaching these skills to work, is common and exemplifies neoliberal movements that promote English-learning as the key to job attainment and to assimilating to a certain type of American life.

The CPS Family Literacy Program in Nebraska was generally reflective of these broader trends. Aster Elementary, where the data analyzed in this chapter was collected, is a Title I public school that, according to its website, "served a multi-racial and ethnic student population that face serious challenges associated with living near or at the poverty level." At the time of data collection (2013–2015) nearly a third of students were classified as multilingual and most (92%) were eligible for free and reduced lunches (Nebraska Department of Education, 2014) (see Table 1). It is worth clarifying that much of the student population identified as both White and Middle Eastern. Most parents in the family literacy program at Aster Elementary were Arabic and Kurdish-speaking refugees from Iraq, Syria, and Sudan (see Table 2).

Parents told me that they were eager to learn English in order to facilitate their lives in Chesterfield and to spend time with their children. They also said they were attracted to the CPS family literacy program because of its reputation as the best quality English program in town (Stacy, 2019). This was similar to what CPS staff said about the value and utility of the program. CPS personnel believed that if newcomer parents studied English while simultaneously learning about children's academics and certain parenting practices, their children would fare better in school. Such comments reflect broader neoliberal ideology that relied on a family literacy framework built around a transactional model of English learning. While this phenomenon has been examined and critiqued for at least half a century, it remains prevalent in the field of adult English education (Rose, 1991).

Table 1 Demographic profile of Aster Elementary School

	American Indian/Native Alaskan	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	White	Two or More Races
Aster Elementary School	1.3%	6.5%	24.8%	21.6%	0	36.6%	9.2%

Source: Nebraska Department of Education State of the Schools Report

Table 2 Family literacy class demographics by First Language Group

<table>
<tr><th>School</th><th colspan="2">Total parent participants</th><th colspan="2">Spanish</th><th colspan="2">Arabic</th><th colspan="2">Kurdish</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Aster Elementary School</td><td colspan="2">20</td><td colspan="2">4</td><td colspan="2">8</td><td colspan="2">8</td></tr>
<tr><td>Female</td><td>Male</td><td>Female</td><td>Male</td><td>Female</td><td>Male</td><td>Female</td><td>Male</td></tr>
<tr><td>19</td><td>1</td><td>4</td><td>0</td><td>7</td><td>1</td><td>8</td><td>0</td></tr>
</table>

2 Review of Literature: Refugee Literacy Education

Adult refugee learners fall into the U.S. Department of Education's category of Adult Education and Literacy and, due to their educational backgrounds, the Adult Basic Education (ABE) subcategory. In 2016, more than 1.3 million adults were enrolled in ABE programs in the United States; of these, approximately 40% were adults in English as a Second Language programs (NCES, 2016). The state of Nebraska's enrollment parallels that of the nation: of the 5209 adults enrolled in ABE programs in 2016, about 42% were learning English (OCTAE, 2014). The English classes in this study were categorized as ABE and made possible through a partnership with a community college. This section reviews the literature on basic English classes for adult refugee learners, situating family literacy programs within the larger adult education movement in the United States.

2.1 English Learning in the Borderlands

Since the middle of the twentieth century, ABE programs have largely been developed through a neoliberal premise that human resources, like English literacy skills, could be channeled into economic productivity (Rose, 1991). Since the 1980s, ABE programs have moved away from being understood as social goods to "being shock absorbers of these neo-liberal reforms and economic launching pads for the new service-based economy and privatized public services" (Cuban, 2009, p. 8). The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) (U.S. Department of Labor, 2015) – not the Department of Education – funds family literacy and English literacy education programs as way to enhance employability. Attaching employability to English learning advances a neoliberal agenda that views learning English as self-improvement and suggests that newcomers are economically valuable only when they assimilate.

Warriner (2016) illustrates how neoliberal ideologies play out in adult English classrooms through "interactions of practices, material relations, and the representational" (p. 3). She documented how neoliberal ideas were held by teachers and students and manifested in daily English learning practices. Standard-based, traditional, decontextualized language learning was equated to job preparation. This view that English skills in and of themselves can transform into human capital is narrow: many other skills and resources are necessary for adult refugee students to attain employment goals and to enhance their lives (Warriner, 2016). Eyring (2014) found that most adult English classes "follow a competency-based syllabus in which students learn functions and structures [of English] in order to accomplish practical daily tasks" (p. 126) at work or in the home. Decontextualizing the learning experience and ignoring adults' funds of knowledge (culturally specific ways of knowing and doing) (Moll et al., 1992) and multiple literacies (New London Group, 1996) permits assimilatory English learning approaches (Eyring, 2014).

Newcomer adults find themselves taking English classes in a sociopolitical context that economically values immigrants but views them through a deficit lens (Santa Ana, 2002; Cuban & Stromquist, 2009; Hamann &Harklau, 2010). Adults generally learn English from teachers with varying levels of preparation and with a curriculum that has a limited scope for teaching print literacy (Crandall, 1993; Vonogradov & Liden, 2009). Perry and Hart (2012) found that adult ESL teachers needed training in language acquisition, print literacy, pedagogical content knowledge, curriculum, lesson planning, teaching materials. Quality professional development must be specific to the ABE context and include context-rich instruction for multi-leveled learning, L1 literacy instruction and a "buffet of learning opportunities" that build on learners' strengths (Vonogradov & Liden, 2009, p. 140–141). Furthermore, adult English classes are mostly attended by female newcomers and refugees (Cuban & Stromquist, 2009) who play a critical role in their family's linguistic transition to the United States (Velázquez, 2014) yet formal ABE policies have long ignored the needs of women, such as self-esteem, time commitment, and cost for childcare and/or transportation, by labeling these needs as personal as opposed to programmatic/structural (Hayes, 1989; Cuban & Stromquist, 2009).

Consequently, ABE programs suffer from a lack of professionalization and professionalism (Crandall, 1993; Cuban, 2009; Eyring, 2014). What emerges are community-based programs that are highly sought out by adult newcomers and refugees but function through a hodgepodge of vulnerable funding streams and instructors who "just kind of wing it" (Perry & Hart, 2012). Educators must learn essential skills, like differentiated instruction, on the spot and find that much of the supportive material has been developed for working with learners with established print literacy skills and more formal education (McCluskey, 2012). Adult refugees' English learning experience is affected by the field's underdeveloped infrastructure: teaching may not be informed by research on language acquisition, lessons may be conceived and implemented without pedagogical backbone, and textbooks and exams, not funds of knowledge, drive teaching and learning (Christoph, 2009; McCluskey, 2012). Most worrisome are the underpinning, deficit and neoliberal, ideologies that perpetuate the treatment of "learners as outsiders with unsophisticated understandings of adult life who should be brought into mainstream America" (Christoph, 2009).

Research calls for instruction aligned with principles of adult learning: self-directed, experience-based, problem-solving, real-life application, and explicit rationale for learning (Schaetzel et al., 2007). However, many adults find themselves in programs that use an interventionist approach that include teaching, learning, and measuring language skills out of context (Condelli et al., 2010; Kassim, 2018). Topics may be disguised as "relevant" by addressing home and work but are superficial in their congruency to refugees' lived experiences, not reflective of actual communicative exchange, and include a neoliberal hidden curriculum (Auerbach & Burgess, 1985; Christoph, 2009). Ewert (2014) suggests that content-based English instruction develops essential real-world skills like interpretation, collaboration, and problem-solving in connection to language knowledge. Drawing upon students' home language(s) serves as a scaffold for English instruction, promotes

participation, and enriches learning outcomes (Lukes, 2011). Furthermore, perceptions of adult English students with low print literacy skills mediated teachers' relationship formation with students and their teaching (Ollerhead, 2012).

2.2 English Learning in Family Literacy

Family literacy programs housed in elementary schools often contain an ABE component and qualify for federal funding through WIOA and Title I. The school's infrastructure may make these programs may be more stable. At CPS, whose program was first funded by Toyota and utilized the National Center for Families Learning (NCLF) framework, the adult English class was staffed through the local community college. Instructors held degrees in relevant areas and had some formal teaching experience. The school provided a classroom outfitted for adults and the community college supplied curricular materials. Still, the program survived on a hodgepodge of grants and donations, most teachers juggled multiple positions for fulltime work, and curriculum was heavily determined by textbooks that reflected transactional learning and unsophisticated representation of adulthood (Christoph, 2009).

The concept of family literacy encompasses multiple definitions and interpretations (Auerbach, 1989; Caspe, 2003). Stemming from research that pointed to the interconnectedness between students' homes and school achievement (Sidle Fuligni & Brooks-Gunn, 2004), studying families' lives outside of school became a way to illuminate the degree to which school literacy practices and home literacy practices mapped on to each other (Delgado-Gaitan, 1990; Heath, 1983; Moll et al., 1992; Purcell-Gates, 1995; Street, 1995; Taylor, 1983) and to unveil new forms of literacies (New London Group, 1996). From a similar vein, the family also came to be viewed as a site for literacy intervention justified on the premise that altering families' home practices would alter their children's school performance (Caspe, 2003; Sénéchal & Young, 2008). The divide between the interventionist and home literacies approaches to family literacy has been plagued by scholars on one side calling for educational shifts that are responsive to and sustain families' home practices and with those on the other advocating for innovative interventions linked to quantifiable school outcomes (Gadsden, 1994, 2004).

A recent scan of the field supports the notion that most family literacy programs employ what Auerbach (1989) calls an intervention/prevention approach that seeks to change parents' literacy practices to resemble those of schools (Baquedano-Lopez et al., 2013). These programs typically include some kind of ABE class, like English classes for newcomers and refugees, that promotes print literacy (Comings, 2004; Spruck Wrigley, 2004; Strucker et al., 2004; Sherow, 2012). Family literacy programs often integrate parenting classes (Gomby, 2012; Powell, 2004) and structured parent-child interactive activities, like storybook reading (Mandel Morrow & Temlock- Fields, 2004) which perpetuate a deficit and assimilatory ideology that ethnically and linguistically diverse parents are in need of an intervention to modify

their parenting to match school expectations (Lightfoot, 2004). The outcomes of interventionist family literacy programs are largely inconclusive: programs mostly report short-term gains in print literacy skills as opposed to long-term, substantial results (Mandel Morrow & Temlock-Fields, 2004; Von Steensel et al., 2012). Given that funding is attached to neoliberal programming, it is not surprising that the CPS Family Literacy program operated mostly as an interventionist model and included most of the aforementioned activities.

Like ABE, family literacy programs are promoted by federal legislation and philanthropy but remain marginalized. Neoliberal undercurrents are strong: funding attaches adults' print literacy in English to notions of 'parent involvement', parenting, and employability (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). Such was the case at Aster Elementary. Still, parents were attracted to the program. My previous research showed that there was some congruency between the literacy sponsors, or agents that "enable, support, teach, and model, as well as recruit, regulate, suppress, or withhold, literacy – and gain advantage by it in some ways" (Brandt, 2001, p. 19) that undergirded parents' participation and the school's goals (Stacy, 2019). Both parents and personnel articulated enriched livelihoods and time with children as motivation for staying in the program. Mothers valued learning when it aligned with these sponsors. When class veered away from these goals or became overtly assimilatory, the mothers manipulated the cultural space so as to better advance their own goals. The following case of Kurdish mothers exemplifies the latter.

3 Research Methods

This 18-month ethnography looked at the cultural space of the Chesterfield Public School's family literacy program. Research was conducted from 2013 to 2015 across three school sites that were representative of the ethnic diversity of newcomers and refugees in the city. The CPS family literacy program followed a five-component framework that was inspired by the NCFL and Toyota Family Learning models. It included: adult English literacy class, children's literacy, parent and child together (PACT) time, parent time, and childcare literacy. Parents met for a 2 hour English class 4 days a week. Once a week, Parent Time class focused on parenting and community resources and was interpreted by cultural liaisons. On the fifth day, parents visited their child's classroom for PACT time. Very young children attended literacy-focused childcare.

Participants included parents, teachers, teacher assistants, volunteers, site coordinators, and directors; children were included when they were naturally involved in the cultural space. Program observations were conducted on average three times a week and documented through field notes and relevant artifacts like handouts, curriculum documents, and student work samples (Emerson et al., 2011). In addition to onsite informal conversations, formal semi-structured interviews were conducted and followed Spradley's (1979) ethnographic interview methods. Field notes and artifacts were analyzed using open-coding that signaled what was going on in large

pieces of the data and focused-coding to zoom on specific data under an open code (Emerson et al., 2011). The coding process linked cultural practices to broader analytical issues and memos explored theoretical directions. Interview data and verbatim talk were coded through domain analysis to identify semantic relationships amongst symbols and decode meaning specific to the cultural space (Spradley, 1979). I triangulated coded data to draw conclusions about emerging cultural themes.

The cultural theme emerged of *(un)fulfilled neoliberal language-learning activities.* Under certain circumstances, mothers demonstrated an understanding of the ideology by which the program personnel expected them to operate and they performed to this expectation during class. This made me question what ideological material was intertwined with English learning and how much of this learning experience was performance of social roles to gain personnel's approval as a *good* mother in connection to learning language. Goffman's (1959) theory of the performance of social roles supports understanding how this phenomenon played out in the family literacy program.

4 Performance of Social Roles in Family Literacy

In *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Erving Goffman (1959) traces face-to-face social interactions to suggest how roles are established and maintained. When individuals enter the presence of others, the process of information-seeking begins. An individual conveys different meanings about herself and how she is situated in society through myriad semiotic systems, referred to as "sign-vehicles" (Goffman, 1959, p. 2), and those signs are received by others, interpreted, and, to varying degrees, accepted or rejected. What emerges is a codependent construction of social roles, expectations, and perceived realities. It makes sense that ethnography, as it documents the semiotic construction of cultural spaces (Geertz, 1973), captures the development of social roles as they are unique to a particular context, like the family literacy program.

Goffman (1959) defines a social performance as, "all the activity of an individual which occurs during a period marked by her continuous presence before a particular set of observers which has some influence over the observers" (p. 22). Within a performance, there are those who perform, those who are performed to, and outsiders or bystanders. Much negotiation of cultural material goes into enacting and maintaining a social performance to the extent that it is believed and accepted in a particular social realm. In this section, I present a vignette of Kurdish mothers in CPS's family literacy program and analyze it utilizing Goffman's (1959) elements of social performance: fronts, teams, and moral and instrumental standards. Deconstructing this moment clarifies how mothers and teachers co-constructed the cultural space and negotiated neoliberal ideologies.

5 Performing Parenthood in Family Literacy

> About 15 minutes before class, four Kurdish-speaking women gathered around Zara, the bilingual liaison. With notebooks and pencils in hand, the mothers watched Zara intently. They were discussing the homework assignment: make a schedule of activities to do with their children during spring break. Zara spoke to the group in English: “Write art. A-r-t.” The women began writing in their notebooks. Zara and the women continued talking in Kurdish. She then spoke in English, “Maybe you can do cleaning time.” Zara instructed them to write clean and then spelled it for them: “c-l-e-a-n”. They wrote accordingly. She suggested that, “You can even put TV time.” The women continued writing what Zara instructed and speaking to each other in Kurdish until Anne, the teacher, walked in. At that point, they hurriedly closed their notebooks.
>
> Later, after the bilingual liaisons left, Anne asked the parents to share their homework assignments. Belim, a Kurdish-speaking mother who had worked with Zara that morning, eagerly raised her hand. Belim read from her paper, “On Monday [we] will do spelling words. [We] will go to the library.” Anne nodded and said, “Great! Anything else?” Belim answered, “Art. Draw pictures.” Next, Anne called on Sabat to share her schedule. Sabat, who had also worked with Zara, read from her paper: “On Monday we will work with math. And watch TV.” Anne exclaimed, “Ooh, I like that. Get a little school in there. Good job.” Sabat smiled brightly. (Field Notes, Aster Elementary)

5.1 The Front of an Involved Parent

As the morning at Aster Elementary unfolded, it became clear that the Kurdish mothers and Zara were collaborating on a social performance regarding Anne’s expectations of them as parents while they completed an English assignment. Their collective effort to complete the assignment before Anne arrived suggested that they anticipated a social performance in connection to the homework. In doing so, they defined the social situation of sharing homework that would come. Goffman (1959) labels this a *front*: the part of the performance that draws on one’s expressive equipment to be intentionally or unwittingly employed in order to define the situation for those who observe a performance. The Kurdish women, with the support of Zara, understood the program’s expectations and that their homework should fulfill those expectations when it came time to share.

The program leaders wanted participants to learn the school’s expectations for them as parents. Nancy, the program director, explained:

> [Parent-time class] is kind of driven by the needs of the parent, or perhaps the needs of what the principal or the faculty is seeing the parents need to understand about…how school is done here. (Interview, Nancy, Director)

In her explanation, we see that the “needs of the parents” were not really determined by the parents but by the school. The topics and homework assignments connected to the parent-time and English class reflected this perspective, like learning about Common Core math, USDA My Plate, and authoritative discipline. In each session,

parents were assigned an English homework activity, similar to the spring break schedule (Field Notes).

The spring break assignment captured Anne's expectation for parents to implement school-like activities in their home. By including academic activities in their schedule, parents demonstrated understanding of these expectations and anticipated Anne's approval. It did not matter whether the mothers actually implemented these activities. In fact, after spring break the mothers shared what they did: cooking, playing outside with their children, going to local spots like Skate Zone, attending immigration meetings, and caring for relatives. When a bilingual liaison mentioned the homework assignment, Anne brushed it off and focused on what families actually did – activities not on the schedules. (Field Notes). Preparing schedules with Zara, then, reflected more about the mothers' anticipation of Anne's expectations rather than their spring break intentions.

A social front is selected, not created. Goffman (1959) explains that a front can become institutionalized in terms of the abstract stereotyped expectations to which it gives rise, taking on meaning and stability and becoming a "collective representation" of the tasks performed in its name (Goffman, 1959, p. 27). In this case, the front that the Kurdish mothers enacted reflects the normative discourse around what constitutes good parenting and parent involvement. Lightfoot (2004) shows how the dominant definition of *parent involvement* includes being physically present in school and replicating school activities in the home, aligning with white, middle class norms. Ethnically and linguistically diverse families', like the Kurdish mothers', home cultural practices are not seen as a form of involvement and but as *at-risk* and *in need* of training to be involved in these ways (Lightfoot, 2004). The spring break schedule evidenced how the family literacy program (supposedly) altered parents' home practices and was something Anne could use to show attainment of neoliberal goals of enhancing parent "involvement".

The schedule assignment upheld the essentialized understanding that *involved parents* organize their time similar to school days and replicate school activities. Zara understood this and aided the Kurdish women in momentarily performing it. Goffman (1959) explains that one's performance before others offers an idealized view of the situation that fits into the understandings and expectations of the society, thus accrediting society's values. One part of expressing society's ideal standards is to conceal actions that are inconsistent with these standards. In utilizing Zara to complete the homework out of Anne's sight, the mothers maintained the front that they have internalized normative (assimilatory) behaviors of *involved parents* and expressed these norms in their assignment.

A crucial attribute of social performances is that the observers must believe that they are real, natural "unintentional product of an individual's unconscious response to the facts of her situation" (Goffman, 1959, p. 70). Goffman (1959) asserts that most social performances are neither completely authentic nor completely contrived; rather, an individual continuously learns enough pieces of expression to fill in what role she will be given. Anne's praise during the discussion, such as when she tells Sabat, "*Ooh, I like that. Get a little school in there. Good job.*" indicates that, as an observer, she is playing her part in reinforcing the front of *involved parents*.

Anne may also be performing in this scenario. As director, she was charged with operationalizing the school's neoliberal aims, including altering the mothers' parenting practices in connection to learning English. After spring break, however, Anne disregarded her own assignment, suggesting that assigning the spring break schedule may have been a performance to appease broader neoliberal expectations.

There was an intentional connection between parenting and English through many activities. Parents were assigned their children's weekly spelling words as English vocabulary words because "if the parents are practicing how to spell the words, then they're more likely to help their children at home" (Interview, John, English Teacher). Math, science, and art activities were also infused into the curriculum through the rationale that learning the English associated with elementary school activities, the parents would better support their children (Field Notes and Interviews). These activities produced artifacts in which language learning appeared transactional. By fortifying the women's performance on these activities, like the spring break schedule, the overarching narrative of *involved parenting* and its connection to English learning was amplified.

5.2 Subversive Teams

Goffman (1959) explains that the definition of a social situation projected by a participant must be fostered and sustained by the cooperation of the *performance team*. The entire group of Kurdish women synchronously participated in completing their homework with Zara. The team stages performances that fit together as a whole to elevate social impression to a new level of fact that is solidified across contingencies (Goffman, 1959). When Anne walked in, the discussion stopped, and Zara's help was never mentioned. All teammates acted as accomplices and were "in the know" that they were co-constructing a social situation (Goffman, 1959).

Zara was also a team member who was integral to maintaining the mothers' performance of *involved* mothers, acting as a go-between, or one who "learns the secrets of each side and gives each side the true impression that he will keep its secrets but [s]he tends to give each side the false impression that [s]he is more loyal to it than to the other" (Goffman, 1959, p. 149). As a cultural liaison, Zara was a trusted player for both sides: the school and the mothers. Zara formally interpreted on behalf of the school and also played a large part in supporting Kurdish refugee families' lives in Chesterfield beyond school. It was common for the mothers to seek Zara out before class to consult about matters to be brought to the teachers' attention. This happened regarding small issues, like when Belim needed support with a utility bill, or more serious situations, like when Yekta' father was killed in Iraq by ISIS (Field Notes). Similarly, it was common for the teachers to bring something to Zara's attention before class, like reminders about Sabat's upcoming I.E.P. meeting, and have quick meetings in Kurdish (Field Notes).

Go-betweens use their knowledge to guide a performance on behalf of the audience, particularly in reverence to someone in power, but must also translate what

they know in a way that the audience will be willing to accept (Goffman, 1959). The Kurdish mothers' interactions with Zara indicated that they trusted her as a valued cultural broker. The mothers' use of Zara's go-between knowledge for the spring break assignment was calculated. Previous weeks had solidified the routine of sharing out homework and Anne's absence before class meant that the team could gain control of the setting (Goffman, 1959). In this space, the women could draw on Zara's knowledge of Anne's expectations (i.e. what should go on a spring break schedule) and use her insight to redefine how they will perform as mothers who uphold these dominant standards.

When Zara interpreted, she did more than translate from English to Kurdish; she supported the mothers' navigation of the school's ideologies and their performance of meeting those expectations. Unveiling Zara's role in this social scene as a go-between illuminates how the women, as a team, mediated and resisted the school's neoliberal ideologies while appearing to conform. By performing the front of a (school-defined) *involved parent*, the mothers were constructing a social situation in which their actions would gain recognition by Anne, the observer, and ultimately the school. The performance permitted them to gain this recognition without fully complying with or conforming to the prevailing neoliberal ideals.

5.3 Performing Assimilation: Moral and Instrumental Standards

Performing a social role in the family literacy class not only carried social meaning amongst stakeholders but also contributed to the construction of a broader social order, or, a standard (Goffman, 1959). The dominant narrative of *involved parents* (Lightfoot, 2004) guided CPS's family literacy initiative not necessarily because individuals altered their behavior to assimilate, but because their social performances generated the semiotic structure to maintain the standard. Social standards stem from moral and instrumental rationalization and, in order to be maintained, must be sanctioned by someone in power, like Anne (Goffman, 1959). Performers consider whether incorporating the standard will serve an instrumental or moral purpose to what their performance is meant to achieve. This results in the production of a decorum that creates the impression the audience expects to see regarding the standard (Goffman, 1959). For example, Goffman (1959) describes the decorum of "make-work" in a shipyard: when the foreman arrived, leaders would stir their groups into activity to maintain the impression of working, even where no work existed. A similar case could be made for learning exercises often seen in adult English classes where teachers make it seem like students are learning the overarching neoliberal goals.

Moral and instrumental standards overlap as the newcomer parents are asked to make-work of being an *involved parent* in the family literacy program. All program personnel made connections between the parents' learning English as a mechanism

to becoming "involved". The director stated, "We usually say English class plus more…You learn English, but you learn how school is done and that's going to help your child" (Interview). Through the family literacy program, refugees' English learning was connected to very specific standards of "how school is done" in Nebraska and that in order to support their children in this social institution they would need to alter their parenting behaviors to be in line with the standards of an *involved parent*. English class, then, was not just a topic or a skill to learn in order to be able to navigate life in a new country, but a vessel through which to assimilate to broader neoliberal standards.

On one hand, the Kurdish mothers subversively performed to this expectation by using the tools of the system (i.e. Zara). Being viewed as an *involved parent* that replicated the school's expectations gained the women capital: Anne's praise. During class, the personnel were quick to celebrate cases that – anecdotally – showed that a child's attendance became more stable or that their spelling test scores increased once their mother began coming to family literacy (fieldnotes). Performing to Anne's expectations was a functional move for the women so that they would gain capital, receive positive recognition, and have favorable experiences in the program.

6 Conclusions

The vignette about the Kurdish mothers is one moment that represents a broader cultural implication in the CPS's family literacy program: a synecdoche. It highlights how adult students and their teacher were operating past each other through social performances. From Anne's perspective, the mothers completed their homework and, presumably, would implement the scheduled activities over spring break. The back region of the performance unveiled the fronts the mothers enacted through the aid of the bilingual liaison to construct what they anticipated Anne would want to believe about them. However, this moment calls into question the degree to which the neoliberal goals of the CPS family literacy program were even attainable and suggests that there are more intricate cultural realities worthy of attention in adult English learning.

Neoliberal ideology posits that the path from learning English to gaining employment and settling into a comfortable life in the United States is linear. As long as one has individual agency and works hard, the thinking goes, their newfound language skills will turn into human capital and support transition into American life (Campi, 2020). In CPS, this neoliberal ideology was present in the idea that if parents simultaneously learned English and parenting skills, they would alter their parenting in a way that would improve children's academic success. A closer look at the cultural practices that unfolded illustrated how this process was not so simple.

The spring break schedule assignment aligned with the notion that English learning in family literacy should result in *parent involvement:* parents should replicate school goals during spring break. The Kurdish mothers' actions to complete the

assignment indicated that they anticipated and were concerned with Anne's perception of them as parents and those feelings became integrated in the English assignment. The fact that the women did not implement their schedules over spring break suggests that the fervor to complete the assignment was more connected to Anne's perception than it was about the product. The Kurdish mothers simultaneously played to the tune of the neoliberal ideology to appease Anne while staving off its manifestation.

The case of Chesterfield Public School's family literacy program suggests that refugee parents receive myriad cues regarding society's expectations through their English-learning experience and that the classroom serves as space where these expectations are explored, negotiated, and even altered. Neoliberal ideology infiltrated the English learning practices (Warriner, 2016) but mutated once all cultural stakeholders became involved. By focusing on reductive, neoliberal markers of learning like test scores and employability, the textured cultural understandings that refugees gain as they learn English were lost. If program personnel sought to understand and esteem the cultural complexity that was playing out in the English learning process, they could alter instruction to better connect to refugees' realities. This ethnographic research illuminates this complexity and provides readers with "insider knowledge" about social performance in adult English learning. Insider knowledge is powerful, as those with it can influence a performance's outcome (Goffman, 1959). Following this, curriculum and instruction should change to incorporate the ideological tapestries that adult students traverse and the cultural decisions they make in connection to their real lives, not imagined and imposed neoliberal lives, as they learn and practice English.

Family literacy programs can learn from grassroots efforts that redefine the social performance: these programs ask how the school should be performing for parents as opposed to how parents should be performing for schools (Jasis & Ordóñez-Jasis, 2005). By redefining the performer and the audience, family literacy programs can be created in the image of what newcomer families actually want while supporting parents in navigating the culturally complex task of English learning. Programs should center refugees' nuanced cultural negotiations in schools and communities as topics through which to learn English and discuss parenting practices. This is especially important in Nebraska and other states in the New Latinx Diaspora that have been experiencing rapid change in refugee resettlement and immigration so that their family literacy programs become more congruent with adults' lives.

English learning in the borderlands is an act of survival and parents' manipulation of social roles during English-learning should be recognized as a form of capital to be centered in the learning experience. Instead of working to maintain a façade of performed roles, family literacy programs must first see themselves in the performance as the audience/observer who represent larger structures of power requesting that parents enact assimilatory fronts. In order to truly attain transformative goals, programs must be willing to redefine their role in the social production. The must join the parents' team in order to co-construct the performance together.

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More than Maintaining Arabic: Language Ideologies of Syrian Refugees in a Bilingual City in Southern Texas

M. Sidury Christiansen and Einas Albadawi

Abstract Minority groups in the U.S. typically internalize language ideologies that associate English to social and upward mobility at the expense of learning their home language, let alone other languages. This chapter examines the role that the language ideologies of Syrian refugees in Southern Texas play in a dynamic of navigating a community where English and Spanish compete in different domains and are both necessary. This paper draws from a six-month ethnographic case study that included observations of and interviews with five Syrian refugees. Applying notions of language ideology and theories of indexicalities (Silverstein M. Lang and Commun 23:193–229, 2003) during data analysis, findings show how language ideologies inform Syrian speaker practices and their need to deal with English and Spanish in a multilingual city. Based on such findings, we argue that the extent to which Syrian refugees acquire English and Spanish and maintain their heritage Arabic language depends on their specific beliefs about language and language use in a multicultural, bilingual city.

Keywords Refugees · Language ideology · Indexicalities · Bilingual · Heritage language

1 Introduction

On one hot Texas summer day, while looking for shade to wait in, I (Christiansen) was relieved when my friend arrived. She apologized for being late and said that she was the "designated Mexican friend" for her Afghani neighbors who were happy to have quickly found a Mexican friend to help them translate, get around the city, and basically navigate social spaces populated by Spanish speakers. This is, of course, until they were able to move to the apartments in the north part of the city, where

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other international people and refugees live, and there is a higher concentration of Muslims, Arabic speakers, and mosques.

When telling this story in my qualitative methods class, a Mexican student who volunteered at a refugee center mentioned that she had a similar situation, and that her Syrian refugee friends told her they needed a Mexican friend to help them navigate the city. Another student, who is Syrian, became interested in the topic which is when we began conducting ethnography on Syrian refugee language practices and ideologies. We wanted to know how these immigrants view Arabic, English, and Spanish, since they have a unique situation coming to the U.S., and more specifically, Texas. That is, they are in a city where not only do they need to navigate U.S. culture, they also need to navigate a large Spanish-speaking community of Texan, Mexican, and Mexican-American cultures.

Research on refugees typically focuses on acquisition of the host language and sense of belonging in the host culture (Mogli & Papadopoulou, 2018; Sevinç & Dewaele, 2018; Thondhlana & Madziva, 2017). This research has focused on the anxieties immigrants face when learning the host language (Sevinç & Dewaele, 2018); how learning the host language is paramount for the integration and sense of belonging in the host culture (Picton & Banfield, 2018; Thondhlana & Madziva, 2017); and how learning the language can be a challenge if the proper infrastructure and teaching contexts are not in place (Mogli & Papadopoulou, 2018; Şerife et al., 2018). A common theme in these studies is the primary need for the refugees to learn the language of the host country in order to integrate in society, and this is done even at the expense of their language of origin (Orr, 2011). This situation is complicated by a bilingual host culture, such as the case in this southern city in Texas where both English and Spanish are used in all levels of school, government, and public spaces. This prompted our general research question: how do Syrian refugees view and interact with these two languages, and what is the relationship to their maintenance of Arabic? For this specific book chapter, we focus on the language ideologies that inform the language practices of Syrian refugees in the context of a strong Tex-Mex identity and culture. To answer this, we designed an ethnographic case study (described below). First, we give the theoretical background and a brief review of the literature, then we explain our methodology and, finally, we present our findings, a discussion, and our conclusion.

2 Review of Literature

The beliefs that construct the societal norms that dictate language behaviors and inform policy are known as language ideologies (Schieffelin et al., 1998). They are always socially situated and directly related to identity, belonging, and power structures (Woolard, 1992). What this means is that as people use their language in culturally specific ways, express their ideas about language, and make rules about language use, they simultaneously index their social positions which, in turn, helps us understand their linguistic experiences.

In a similar vein and in respect to immigrants and refugees, research on linguistic ideologies has shown that deficit perspectives on language learning and language use are detrimental to refugee and immigrant language development experiences because they create a fear of failure and of making mistakes. For example, in a study of Afghani refugees in Greece, many participants interviewed said they thought their level of Greek language too insufficient to participate in the broader Greek society and feel a sense of belonging (Mogli & Papadopoulou, 2018). While these refugees did not necessarily consider Greek an important language in the hierarchy of international communication, their personal motivations were to integrate into Greek society. Similarly, in a study of Syrian refugees (Karam et al., 2017), findings showed that a positive view of multiple language increases the investment English language teachers put into their lessons and in student learning. Such views include gaining symbolic and cultural capital, empowering refugees, and gaining agency. That is, beliefs that teachers have about language use are directly related to their level of investment in teaching English, which paves the way for students to form new identities as both English learners and as legitimate speakers. According to many studies on displacement, there are two important factors that help immigrants and refugees thrive in a new society. The first is learning the language of the host culture to the extent that they perceive they have good command of it. The second factor is using the language in a way that empowers their senses their multiple identities and personal agency (Tadayon & Khodi, 2016).

However, language learning does not happen equally for all refugees. For example, in a study conducted by Caldwell-Harris (2019), findings show that the influence of environment and society on the learners are experienced differently by children than by adults. She explains that children experience the new environments distinctly from adults, primarily because of their regular presence in formal language instructional settings. Therefore, children transition their language learning to language use with greater ease than adults. In the case of adults, they can face major difficulties, including access to formal or (semi-)formal language learning contexts. Adults also have other responsibilities while learning a new language. They have to learn to navigate the new context, obtain and maintain a job, paying bills, maintaining the household including doing chores and grocery shopping, and other responsibilities.

In the U.S., for example, adult refugees often rely on free ESL classes by different resettlement agencies such as local churches, and local non-profit organizations which are often understaffed with qualified teachers and rely on volunteers. This situation is not unique to the U.S. In the case of the Afghan refugees in Greece, for instance, they were expected to learn Greek as a second language, but the Greek government offered no assistance to help in their acquisition of the language (Mogli & Papadopoulou, 2018). In a similar study examining Syrians in Turkey, participants reported serious challenges learning Turkish because of poor learning environments, difficulty with retention and pronunciation due to the informality of the teaching, and a lack of trained language instructors and audiovisual tools and technology (Şerife et al., 2018). These challenges add stress to adult language learners who equate learning the language with being able to make a living, meet their needs,

and help their children. It is no wonder why many refugees encourage their children to learn the host language, sometimes at the expense of their language or origin (Caldwell-Harris, 2019; Karam et al., 2017; Mogli & Papadopoulou, 2018; Orr, 2011). The emphasizing the host language, in turn, adds stress to younger generations to maintain their heritage language (Sevinç & Dewaele, 2018). As a result, adults experience stress around learning the host language while younger generations stress about maintaining their heritage language. Additionally, existing literature has shown that refugee students suffer greatly from the consequences of the trauma they were exposed to during natural disasters, wars, and journey of leaving their countries. For instance, Söndergaard and Theorell (2004) conducted a 9-month ethnographic study on Iraqi refugee students to examine the impact of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) on their language learning processes. Findings revealed that there is a significant correlation between the severity of the PTSD and the rate at which they learn their host country's language. Other studies explored the symptoms associated with PTSD and language learning.

These studies show the complexity that refugees have in learning the host language in settings with one main language. In this study, we further complicate the context by considering how refugees think about learning a new language and/or maintaining their heritage language when having to communicate using two different new languages within two communities sharing the same geographical space.

3 Methodology

This study is part of a larger ethnographic project on the language learning and literacy experiences of Syrian refugees in Texas. For this chapter, specifically, we focus on part of the study conducted in a large metropolitan bilingual city in Texas where 64.2% are Hispanic/Latinx origin as of 2018 (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.) and at least a third speak Spanish at some level. As of 2016, 897 Syrian refugees had resettled in Texas (Refugee Processing Center, 2020); however, since the 2016 travel ban, no refugees have been accepted in the state. The refugee population is not large and among those groups settled in the city, the largest are from Iraq and Afghanistan. Syrians refugees account for less than 1%, and although there are other Syrian immigrants, they do not have refugee status. We focus on refugees for their unique experience of displacement. To recruit participants, we started at a local mosque where one of the authors (Albadawi) regularly visits. The mosque has community programs and Arabic heritage language classes to learn basic Arabic for reading the Quran. We also recruited by coincidence from other public spaces in the city such as place of work. This chapter analyzes data from four adults (two men and two women) and one teenager (man). All five focal participants signed IRB consent forms to be recorded, interviewed, and observed during the 6-month period of the ethnographic case study.

3.1 Data Collection Methods

Syrian refugees in our study not only had to learn English, but they also had to navigate a social environment largely comprised of Spanish speakers. To understand Syrian refugees' experiences with languages in a prominently bilingual city, we examined their language ideologies using an ethnographic case study approach (Creswell, 2014). We conducted 6 months of weekly observations and interviews with five Syrian refugee participants in informal community programs, including a local mosque. Both researchers attended these locations once a week for a total of 6 months. We observed public cultural events Syrian refugee families participate in and places of work if in public spaces (e.g. a food truck park). During interviews, we took field notes and wrote analytic memos after every observation or interview. Both researchers met regularly to compare notes, discuss ongoing analysis and coding strategies, and consider emerging findings.

The five participants were interviewed two times. The two interviews were based on the guidelines offered by Seidman (2013) where the first one is meant to build a rapport with the participants and the second one aims to answer the interview protocol.

The first interview, conducted during the first two months of the study, was designed to learn the linguistic history of each participant. The second interview focused on their experiences with languages other than English and Arabic. This second interview was conducted after the third month of the study. Both researchers were present for the first interview; the rest were conducted by one or the other. When Albadawi was present, participants were given the choice to answer in any language they wanted to use. All except one participant (Mr. Modar – see below) chose to conduct the interview entirely in Arabic, the rest were in English or English with Arabic expressions or words. The interviews were recorded and transcribed and all Arabic language was translated by Albadawi.

3.2 Participants

Mr. Modar is a 49-year-old father of 6 who fled Syria once the conflict between the Syrian government and rebel forces started. He and his family fled to Jordan and stayed there for a couple of years, but they could not work legally. Thus, they found intermittent jobs and work that paid under the table. Then, they moved to Turkey where he learned some Turkish and worked odd, low paying jobs until they were relocated to Texas with the help of Catholic Charities. His children had interrupted schooling but were all currently enrolled in school. In Texas, he owned his own small business and works 12–14/h a day all week long. They all have residential status and plan to stay in Texas where they have a supportive network of other Syrian friends and an Arabic-speaking community. Both Mr. Modar and his older child speak Arabic and Turkish and his other five children speak Arabic as a heritage

language. While Mr. Modar struggles with English, he is able to conduct doctor's visits and run his business with the help of his older children and friends. He uses visual aids and technology (Google Translate) when alone and working. Despite living in the city for 3 years, he reports rarely using written Arabic and not learning English as quickly as he had hoped.

Randa (Mr. Modar's wife) came with her family to the U.S. and does not speak English. She drives herself around the city as necessary but depends on her children to translate for her at the store, school, doctor's office, and other places. She was a housewife in Syria and continues this role in the U.S. She maintains an Arabic-speaking household to give her children a good life when the Syrian conflict ends and they can go back home.

Matt is a 24-year-old man, living 3 years in the U.S. and currently studying for a professional degree at a public university. He moved from Syria to Jordan after finishing middle school and later moved to the U.S. with his parents and a sibling. He worked full-time without a permit in Jordan while studying to help his family financially. He finished high school in Jordan, where he learned English and French, and then began an engineering career before moving to the U.S. In Texas, Matt volunteers at a local mosque teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers who want to learn the Quran. He conducts the class in English and teaches standard varieties of Arabic. His students are English speakers from different backgrounds including Pakistan, Somalia, and some Arabic heritage language speakers from Iraq, Jordan, Palestine, and Saudi Arabia.

Asmaa is Matt's mother. She learned some Pashto and French while in Syria but does not know much English. In the U.S., although she has tried to learn English, she finds herself busy with her housework and children, and her husband insists he be with her and that she not interact with other people. She feels embarrassed to depend on a translator or her children for everyday chores and appointments. She also depends on female friends to go to the grocery store and bring her to English classes, but she is "bodyguarded" (monitored) by her husband, and she does not drive. She is allowed to volunteer at the local mosque to teach Islamic studies and Arabic. She deeply cares about maintaining Arabic in the household and has found a job for her younger son at an international grocery store so he can use his Arabic.

John is a 32-year-old man who works in retail. He grew up and studied elementary school in Syria but left shortly after the conflict started to continue his education in Jordan. He graduated from the university with a degree in mechanical engineering but could not work in Jordan since Syrians can study but not work there. His family was in a good financial position, and he attended private schools in Syria where he learned English and French. Their financial status also helped them escape the conflict. John was able to travel twice to Texas as a tourist before he applied for refugee status. At the time of this writing, he was awaiting a court decision on his status and is unable to work in his specialty of engineering. He is trying to open a business with a relative (uncle) who is a U.S. resident and also lives in Texas. John wants to return to Syria as soon as the conflict is over.

3.3 Data Analysis

Our data analysis plan included notions of language ideology and theories of indexicality (Silverstein, 2003) to understand how language ideologies inform speakers' practices and views about the need of English and Spanish in a multilingual city. We followed a two-step coding technique similar to the one proposed by Saldaña, (2015). On the first round, we utilized thematic coding to identify explicit language ideologies, for example, when participants made direct comments about language. If the participant said, "English and Arabic shouldn't be mixed," we coded this excerpt as *ideology of separation*. We simultaneously used categorical coding to mark whether a particular language ideology was about English, Arabic, Spanish, some combination of the three, or any other language they mentioned.

In the second round of coding, we identified implicit language ideologies. Thus, we utilized indexicality to see what part of language points to a certain language ideology, stance, and act (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004). Indexicality allows us to see what words or expressions signal meaning in a purposeful way, such as smoke signaling fire. In the case of linguistic data, expressions such as "this sounds ugly" when referring to mixing two languages signals disapproval and can index an ideology of separation or standardization depending on linguistic context. Thus, we utilized indexicality to identify the language ideologies of participants with regards to their uses of English, Arabic, and Spanish. While our main source of data was transcribed interviews, we also used observations and fieldnotes to triangulate and contextualize our findings.

4 Findings

Our analysis revealed that the participants hold an unequivocal value for multilingualism in many shapes and forms. Each language of relevance among these participants—including Arabic, English, Spanish, French, and German—is valued within its context and for its specific role. For Example,

> You know Islam religion is associated with Arabic language, so if you know more Arabic then you can know more about your religion. – Matt

Another example:

> How great is to be a translator between nationalities and how great is to know languages and keep yours and translate among these three languages so you connect among three cultures and get to know them well. Learning more Languages benefits the brain and society. – Asma

As previous research has suggested, the language ideologies that speakers hold are multivalent and multifaceted (Schieffelin et al., 1998). For these participants, however, ideologies allow them to organize their languages, such that each language has a function and no one language takes precedence over another.

In many cases, as previous research indicates, because English is seen as the language of science, technology, formality, legality, workplace, and schooling, English is dominant from a national and international perspective (Groff, 2018) and must be mastered. This is reflected in expressions such as:

> You know English is the first language in the world, so everyone in the world is familiar with [it]. English is for education, science, everywhere that's not just in the US wherever you go all the research and science, everything is in English. – Matt
>
> English language is the language for work… [it] is essential even if I do not like it. I need it in my life. – John

The belief in the importance of English is quite pervasive; participants associate it with social and upward mobility, a sense of belonging to the local, larger culture, and encourage their children to learn it. Although Arabic is the language used for religious practice, English is used as a medium of instruction to teach Arabic language and religion itself. Therefore, each language has a function even if there is an ideology of compartmentalization (Kroskrity, 2004). English is for school work and Arabic is for home and religion.

Unlike some research where people learn English at the expense of their home language (Song, 2010), in the case of our participants, Arabic maintenance was very important. Our participants actively sought to maintain it either by teaching it to others or sending their children to school. As Mr. Modar explained, "English is number 1; the most important. Arabic [is more important] for me, but English [is] for my kids to continue their school and future college here." This ideology is also reflected in Randa's insistence that Arabic be spoken at home and in Asmaa's decision to send Matt's younger brother to work at a grocery store where he can practice speaking Arabic. The value given to English reflects an ideology of language essentialism (Creese & Blackledge, 2010) whereby speakers tend to privilege English over Arabic by labeling it the global language of science, communication, and advancement while limiting other languages to home and religion, as is the case with Arabic here.

4.1 Language Experiences in Bilingual Texas

Although each language is valued for its place and role, our participants build a hierarchy among languages in regards to a language's statuses. For these participants, differences in status among languages exist, influenced in part by two major themes: the bilingual (English and Spanish) context of the city and the national-level language ideologies that promote 'one nation-one language' beliefs and policies. From the perspective of the Syrian community living in a bilingual Texas city, English is valued as the primary language for career and educational advancement, school, and science. And although they also recognize Spanish as beneficial for career advancement, they do not value Spanish as important for schooling or community affiliation.

Matt mentioned briefly that if he found a Mexican girlfriend, he would be willing to learn some Spanish, as would anybody who had a Mexican intimate partner. In some cases, Spanish is viewed as an intrusive language that should be limited to private and not public social spaces. Below, Matt relays beliefs we heard from at least three other participants and also expresses some frustration with having to deal with another language (besides English):

> [Spanish] is the VERY very second language; it's almost first language [in this city]. English is used and most people speak English besides Spanish, but you can be without English [here]… and I get frustrated [laughs]. I'm like 'you cannot ignore English language! You are in the United States. It's good to use [English], you cannot just depend on [Spanish]!… [Texas] is not their territory anymore. Now it is part of the United States, so the first language of the US is English, so they have to learn English [giggles], because many people and immigrants are coming from anywhere in the world so they would be like 'do we learn English or Spanish?' English should be the only language; it's just easier to communicate.

Despite recognizing that Texas was once part of Mexico and so has a history of local Spanish speakers, Matt claims that as part of the United States, all people should adopt English whether they like it or not because, as John suggested, English is necessary in their lives. In the excerpt, Matt explicitly mentions the one language/one nation ideology so common in (mostly conservative) everyday policy, politics, and social narratives in the United States. Although he echoes this narrative by stating that English *should be* the only language and that he gets frustrated that not all people see the need to learn English, this narrative is different from other immigrants who have adopted the typical rhetoric of the one language-one nation policy. This is, Matt does not simply want everyone to learn English because it is the way it should be. Perhaps, he seems to want everyone to speak English because it would be easier for him (and others in his situation) to simply learn one language instead of two.

John's comments differ slightly from Matt. He explains that people do not need to know Spanish unless the person is in a specific part of town:

> the more you go downtown and stuff like this, you feel like people take it [Spanish] for granted, but this side of town [north] they don't. I don't hear Spanish especially when we go to restaurants or like that. I always feel like it's a certain advantage to speak Spanish here [in this city], especially in my type of business you know. I lose a lot of customers 'cause I don't speak Spanish. – John

However, John also recognizes that not speaking Spanish has a disadvantage, even if his business is located in the north part of the town.

Languages are separated by both place and social space with Spanish more common in the south part of town where Spanish Speaking in higher concentrations and English more common in the north part of town.

Our five participants had similar views about Spanish and why they choose not to study or learn Spanish, even though it has lost them business or opportunities to socialize and interact in stores and businesses, such as with the mechanic. Some have only learned basic words such as *hola* (hello, hi), *¿cómo estás?* (how are you?), *gracias* (thank you), *poquito* (a little bit), *adiós* (goodbye). In contrast, the younger generation consider Spanish necessary and advantageous, and knowing it lends a

sense of pride. For instance, both Mr. Modar and Asmaa expressed pride that one of her children already knows Spanish:

> Languages are very beneficial. My son (10th grade) loves to speak Pashto. He got it from his friends. He speaks four languages Arabic, English, Pashto, and Spanish. He speaks Spanish very good and he is good at keeping a conversation in Spanish. He got Pashto from his friends, and he was in Spanish I last year and now in Spanish II. However, he started learning Spanish from his friends in middle school. – Asmaa

Note that the Spanish they emphasize is the conversational variety learned through friends rather than the academic variety learned in his 2 years of Spanish classes. Likewise. Matt claimed that he would feel pride for his future children. This can be seen in the following excerpt:

> I would be very proud of them if they [my children] would learn Spanish because they would have three languages. No matter what they have to learn Arabic, so if they learn Spanish, they would have three languages… I would send my children to bilingual school; it's very amazing to speak more than one language also – Matt

In this excerpt, Matt expresses excitement at the idea of becoming trilingual, and even considers a possibility of sending his children to bilingual schools to learn Spanish. While Asmaa recognizes that some of the learning of Spanish happens informally through friends, Matt only expresses the desire to learn Spanish at school. In both cases, however, their views show the notion that Spanish is part of their social lives, but informally. These views put languages at different hierarchy due to their status: English as more important, Arabic as necessary, and Spanish as something "amazing" or useful to socialize.

4.2 Identity and Language

Pride in multilingualism and using different languages for different purposes and contexts touches on the area of identity formation. For instance, Matt explains that he feels very strongly using Arabic with other Arabic speakers, but that some are in the trend of using more English. He recounts:

> When they [Arabic speaker friends, and friends living in Syria and Jordan] speak English to me or with each other, they just want to show me 'we know English, not just you…' You cannot just speak just English with me and forget Arabic language, no. Arabic is my first language. I'm very proud of it. I am gonna use it as much as I can whenever I can even if he refuses speaking with me in Arabic – Matt.

In this excerpt, we see how English is considered as a form of social capital (Bourdieu, 2002), in this case, linguistic capital. Matt's friends use English to position themselves as equal with other Arabic speakers who know English and are living outside Arabic-speaking countries. There is an underlying assumption that speaking English is better, so they want to demonstrate that even though they do not live in the U.S., they are just as knowledgeable as Matt. This is similar to Mexican-American communities jockeying for membership in a bilingual community with

people from Mexico (Christiansen, 2018, 2019). Speaking English is an identity marker for an immigrant American but, at the same time, their ability to speak their heritage language positions them as a member of that community too. English is a marker of immigrant, refugees, and their children's bilingual identity.

Another identity being alluded to is one of U.S resident, which differs in status from refugee, but speaking English should be left for the public spaces not home. For example, for the parents, maintaining Arabic is important, even if the person is permanently in the U.S., and speaking English is seen as offensive in some cases:

> If I [mother] hear them [children friends] speaking English with their Arab friends, I get mad I tell them 'I hate when you speak English because I do not understand, and you will forget your Arabic. I also tell them if you want to belittle me and make me feel like I am stupid then you switch to English and that is not nice. You speak English in the society that is fine but here at home why speak English? Are you trying to hide something from me? I feel frustrated. Thank Allah that Omar works at [local international market] because he is still surrounded with Arabic, but if he works at Walmart then the distance between him and Arabic will be increasing. – Asmaa

Randa has similar views to Asmaa. In fact, her son Matt explains that he uses English to conceal information from his parents (e.g. smoking shisha).

> At home, we have to maintain Arabic as a main language because there is no reason to speak English with [my brother] and my parents do not understand. However, if I wanna deliver a secret for him I speak English, so my parents do not understand [giggles] yeah. It's so mean but [giggles] we have to do it…– Matt

In this excerpt, Matt explains the importance of maintaining Arabic for identity formation, being part of a household, affinity with older generation, and bonding with brother. However, the bonding with brother can also happen in English, in which case, language is used as a tool to construct a different, non-ethnic identity. It is a way to detach or negotiate the multiple identities they have and distance themselves from their parents without adopting a mainstream American identity (Christiansen, 2019; Gu et al., 2017).

4.3 The Myth of Language Complexity

A major theme that contributes to the multivalence and multifaceted view of language hierarchies among our Syrian participants is the myth of language complexity, which claims that some languages are easier or more difficult than others (Sampson et al., 2009). These hierarchies about languages are fueled by stereotypes they hold about languages and their speakers. We already saw that, for these participants, English is the international language of advancement, opportunity, science, and communication. Arabic is the language of religion and ethnic identity maintenance. Spanish is a language that can give you advantages at the workplace such as helping gain more business or informally receive services. There are other languages that our participants mentioned that they would prefer to learn before they learn Spanish. This is because although they see the value of speaking Spanish

(particularly the children), they are invested in learning a better form of English (language purism and standardization) free of a foreign accent and mistakes before learning Spanish for which they use Google Translate, friends, or acquaintances to get by. For example, both Matt and Randa expressed their desire to learn French, the language of love because it sounds "so pretty" (according to Matt), and because "it's easy" (according to Randa). Mr. Modar considers both English and Spanish "difficult," but Turkish was "so easy" that he became somewhat fluent while he was living there. Asmaa thinks English is very difficult, which is why she has not learned it, although she recognizes that she has also not been given the time to study.

Perhaps the ideology of complexity that came up often in our interviews with participants is that they view Arabic as a "difficult language." All of our participants at one point or another said that they do not think Arabic is easy to learn, even for heritage speakers (the written form), and that they were fine if the younger generations only spoke a little or enough to read the Quran. In many of the classes at the mosque we observed, the expression "Arabic is a difficult language" was repeated constantly during lessons. Participants even said that they would be fine if their children maintained only spoken Arabic and not become literate since that is more complex and they do not have the time to teach it in schools. Asmaa, Randa, and Matt said that they also do not push children to learn more than basic Arabic since they teach it in Saturday school at the local mosque, and children are tired of learning and deserve a break.

Randa, Asmaa, and Matt think that teaching more and demanding more from children when learning Arabic would infringe on their free time. Randa mentioned (with a tone of disappointment) when speaking about her experience sending her children to learn Arabic only once a week: "They would speak it even if it's not perfectly" (Randa). This expression shows that there is a notion or desire to speak a language perfectly, which indexes an ideology of language standardization that states language varieties (vernaculars) are undesirable if ungrammatical. Not speaking "perfectly" also alludes to the notion that children's Arabic is viewed as deficient. This idea may also index that an "imperfect" speaker of a heritage language is not a full member of a group (Christiansen, 2018). By claiming how difficult Arabic is, they are justifying this imperfect learning, assigning membership paradoxically to the group.

Syrian parents or older Syrian refugees such as Matt and John, for example, praise the fact that younger Syrians can master English without an Arabic accent, which suggests that being fluent (and accent-less) in English is a positive trait even despite losing Arabic language. Matt recounts a conversation at a mall where he heard his younger brother speak English and was surprised:

> He started talking to them in English, and I was like 'how did you learn that' [giggles], yeah, his accent is perfect like American people. You know, you can't recognize that he is not from here, yeah. He was about 15 years [old]. – Matt

Although Randa and Asmaa have mentioned that English is a difficult language to learn, they think Arabic is harder. Thus, they have decided not to push their children and the children of other Arabic-speaking people to learn it. They, and Matt, believe

that learning Arabic detracts from children's free time. They explain that children have little free time after school and homework. They feel bad because the children at the mosque are required to be at Saturday school for 5 h and then at Sunday school 3 h for religious practices. In order to alleviate some of this burden, they communicate in English with the children and teach Arabic and Islamic studies through English. However, they continue to speak Arabic to each other and to those children who are recent arrivals, which again shows the separation of identities that they make based on the ideology of complexity.

The belief that a language has to be spoken a specific way for a person to be considered from a country aligns with an ideology of authenticity (Yang, 2018). On the one hand, Matt's younger brother is an authentic speaker of American English because he has no foreign accent. However, the heritage language children at the mosque whose Arabic is accented or lacking in vocabulary makes them non-authentic speakers of the language and, thus, marginal members of their ethnic group (Christiansen, 2015a, b). Language ideologies of native-speakerism were only identified in the use of Arabic and English and in their relationship to one another.

In terms of Spanish, the data indicate that our participants preferred to speak broken English (although they seemed to have a problem with it) rather than trying harder to speak or learn Spanish. In fact, Mr. Modar relies on a Texano man to conduct his business with Spanish speakers, and if he is not there, he uses Google Translate for basic sentences and vocabulary items. Mr. Modar and Matt both have resorted to signs and hand gestures with co-workers. For Matt, especially during his time working at Walmart, he worked with non-English speaking Spanish speakers, and it was a challenge to translate from Spanish to English and vice versa. Matt resorts to using mock Spanish (Hill, 1998) because he has noticed the similarities between English and Spanish. However, participants rarely notice the linguistic similarities between Arabic and Spanish:

> Like when I go to get like parts for my car to junk yard or body shop, so all people just speak Spanish and we ended up me and my friend trying to convert some English language into Spanish by adding *-ito* to the end of words (laughs), like one time we are asking about an engine for maybe a Prius or whatever and he was just explaining things in Spanish and me and my friend we were looking at each other and he said "motorito?" is that (laughs), so it's just like that, and he understands, yeah, we just said "motorito" and car and eventually yeah… – Matt

In this excerpt, Matt explains his way of translating English into Spanish by adding the suffix *-ito* and not just the commonly added vowel *-o*, without recognizing that "motor" is cognate and there is no need to add the suffix for Spanish speakers to understand the word. However, he says he uses that almost all the time. Matt laughs twice when making these conversions, probably anticipating that this practice is not politically correct or checking his pronunciation with me (Christiansen) by asking "is that right?" This also demonstrates that while participants do not explicitly say that Spanish is easy, they indirectly signal that it is easy to communicate using mock language, signs and gestures, alluding indirectly to its simplicity and unimportance.

Rather than noticing the linguistic similarities between Arabic and Spanish, John has noted the similarities in culture. Mr. Modar, Matt, and John expressed feeling more affinity and belonging with their "Mexican" (a term used by all to refer to all Latinx acquaintances) friends or colleagues than with white or black Americans.

> Mexicans and Americans are not similar. No, no. If you go to work, you can see like Arabs and Mexican gathering around, talking about subjects related to family, food, going out, stuff like this, just partying. All kinds of stuff or crazy stories from home. So, it's a very nice experience actually. I like it… When we talk about something me and my friends from Mexico we say 'oh yeah, you do this back home. Oh yeah, we do this too. oh wow!' We are like 10,000 miles apart and we still share the same thing… at the end we are all the same, we all think the same way. We are [both] getting discriminated. – John

In this excerpt, John explains his surprise to learn that his culture has more in common with Mexican culture than with American culture. He also gives examples of the topics he and his friends from Mexico exchange and find similar. He did not elaborate, but he remarks directly after saying "we are all the same" that both groups experience discrimination, thus signaling another commonality they have in contrast to the dominant White American culture.

5 Conclusion

The language ideologies and experiences of the Syrian population in this Texas city mirror those widely documented in the literature. That is, English is seen as an important language needed for upward mobility, schooling and science, and for belonging in the host culture (Groff, 2018; Song, 2010). The data collected from the interviews and observations offer a glimpse of how pervasive the ideologies of complexity are among these Syrian participants. For those that hold ideologies of one nation-one language, they may risk speeding heritage language attrition or loss. They also prevent a positive ideology of multilingualism, and do not hold beliefs that adding Spanish to the repertoire is truly advantageous. The language ideology of standardization demonstrate that indirectly Syrian refugees construct their own hierarchies of belonging to a particular community (true Syrian or true American, for example). This hierarchy was even applied to Spanish speakers. This hierarchy was demonstrated in the excerpts where Syrian participants expressed their disdain in hearing Spanish spoken everywhere. Also, the hierarchy is demonstrated when they expressed that because they are all living in the U.S. (and Texas now belongs to the U.S and not Mexico), they should be speaking English (like they themselves are) and as John mentioned "whether he likes it or not" and as Matt said "they can't just ignore it [English]." Despite these classifications, Syrians know that they would have more advantages if they knew Spanish in this city, and they overcome that situation by befriending Spanish speakers, resorting to technology like Google Translate, using mock Spanish, or trying to take Duolingo lessons (as John was seen doing). However, they seem proud that the younger generation is learning it as they would benefit, primarily financially and secondarily, socially by speaking Spanish.

What is more, just as John explained, when it comes to finding affinity and belonging, at least in the workplace, they find that they fit better and can relate better to the Mexican culture than the Anglo-American culture. They see both communities as marginalized linguistically and socially.

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Writing the Story of Sabadullah: Transnational Literacies of Refugee-Background Parents

Fares J. Karam

Abstract Theoretically framed at the intersection of language, identity, and transnationalism, this chapter examines how two Syrian refugee-background parents negotiated narrating and writing a bilingual and multimodal fictional story commonly used in Syria by parents as a bedtime story. Primary data included two audio recorded interviews: an oral narration of the story and a collaborative writing session with the author. Secondary data included ethnographic fieldnotes to contextualize the participants' transnational experiences and relations. An interview-based case study design was adopted and data was analyzed in an iterative manner. Findings suggest that while the parents were both invested in writing a bilingual story, they had different views about its purpose. While the father was focused on maintaining the story's authenticity, the mother reinterpreted and rewrote the story through the lens of her current life and understanding of parental roles within the context of the United States. Implications are presented with respect to how the two participants negotiate the ambivalence of writing the story between two frames of reference: Syria and the United States.

Keywords Second language writing · Refugee · Transnationalism · Identity · Literacy · Refugee · Ambivalence

1 Introducing Sabadullah

> *On one of the nights, in my town in Syria, we sat in the dark because there was no power. We were little ones, and we were annoying our mother. We would not go to sleep, so she told us, "You'd better go to sleep before Sabadullah comes!"*
>
> *We asked her, "Who is Sabadullah?"* (Omar, interview, 8/26/19)

According to Maria and Omar (pseudonyms selected by the participants), Sabadullah is a terrifying mythical creature who can break through walls and take away

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children who stall and refuse to go to sleep at night. Maria and Omar are Syrian refugee-background parents to three elementary-aged children. They moved with their family into the United States (U.S.) in late 2016 after 3 years in Turkey – a temporary resettlement country that many Syrians had fled to in order to escape the ongoing civil war in Syria. A couple of months after their arrival into the U.S., I was introduced to the family through a local language learning agency, and I started visiting them for approximately 2 h each week (except summers and holidays) as a volunteer to assist with language matters and other issues concerning navigating life in a new country.

On one of my visits to the family, when we were reminiscing about our childhood in Syria and Lebanon (where I was raised) and the stories that our parents used to tell us, Omar remembered a recent phone conversation he had with his mother about the story of Sabadullah. I had not heard that name before, but upon a brief recount of that story, I soon realized that there was a Lebanese equivalent to the story of Sabadullah with some slight variations. I shared my realization with Omar and asked him if he would like to write the story down. He agreed and added that he would like to share it with his children so they could learn about one aspect of their heritage, a part of his childhood in Syria, and the stories that his mother used to tell him. Maria thought this was a good idea and also wanted to participate.

Omar and Maria are like many immigrants and refugee-background individuals who experience transnationalism (Vertovec, 2009) in the sense that they maintain ties to their home country as they negotiate their identities and lives in countries of permanent resettlement. One aspect of negotiating identities and resettlement experiences across space and over time is navigating a dualistic orientation of place by comparing various situations through the lens of the home country versus the new country of resettlement (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001) and the ambivalence that might accompany this process (Warriner, 2013). Tazreiter (2019) explained ambivalence as a "feeling, attenuation, or attitude—as a response to life's risks and uncertainties" (p. 5) that accompany migration from one's home country. Language and literacy practices are typically involved in maintaining connections to the home country, and with the recent advances in technology, these connections can often be multilingual and/or multimodal in nature (Lam & Warriner, 2012). Stories can also be a way for migrants to construct new identities and position themselves in new ways (de Fina, 2003). Because changes to one's identity is a significant challenge that refugee-background individuals face (Karam et al., 2020), it is important to learn more about the literacy practices and identities of refugee-background families as they negotiate resettlement. This challenge of (re)imagining the self in a new context is particularly accentuated in the case of Muslim refugees who often face Islamophobia and discriminatory practices (Duran, 2019). For Arabic speaking transnational parents, relatively little is known about the relationship between their bilingual literacy practices and immigration/resettlement experiences – especially at the intersection of digital technologies (Al-Salmi & Smith, 2015). Darvin and Norton (2014) maintain that digital storytelling, in particular, holds significant promise in bringing transnational literacies to life. This study examines the relationship between digital storytelling and transnational literacies

by analyzing how Maria and Omar worked collaboratively with the author to write the story of Sabadullah. Specifically, the study asks: How do two Syrian refugee-background parents negotiate writing a bilingual and multimodal fictional story (inspired by childhood memories in Syria) while living in another context and experiencing the promises and challenges of transnationalism?

2 Theoretical Framework: Language, Identity, and Transnationalism

Language, identity, and transnationalism are interconnected and interdependent on various levels (Lam & Warriner, 2012). Basch et al. (1994) first defined transnationalism as the "process by which immigrants forge and sustain multistranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement" (p. 6). These relations and connections are facilitated through various language and literacy practices that transcend borders and that are important in "how migrants navigate and position themselves in various social fields within and across national boundaries" (Lam & Warriner, 2012, p. 193). Duff (2015) emphasized this intersectionality among language, identity, and transnationalism, arguing that language itself is transnational in the sense that a certain language is used across different countries and borders and can put language users in connection with new linguistic communities that are both within and beyond state borders. With the increased mobility and interconnections of transnationals come important questions about "who they are, who they are seen to be, and which languages they are able to use" (Duff, 2015, p. 59). Norton (2013) asserted that when migrants speak a language, they do not do so with the sole purpose of communicating, but also for constructing identities that allow them to gain legitimacy within their new contexts. As such, Darvin and Norton (2014) framed language learning as an investment that allowed the acquisition of "a wider range of symbolic and material resources, and these social and economic gains in turn enhance the range of identities they can claim in a particular community" (p. 57). However, at the heart of such positionings and claimed identities are power relations and the extent to which learners can practice their right to speak (Norton, 2013). Multilingual and multimodal storytelling in particular, can provide language learners with the chance to practice this agentive right to speak as they use language in its various forms to craft stories that reflect their histories, identities, and traditions (Darvin & Norton, 2014). Thus, through language, transnationals negotiate their identities and positionalities – both of which are not static and transcend physical borders.

Such positionality can be increasingly complex as it involves "the tendency of migrants to compare life experiences and situations from different points of view of their native and adopted societies" (Lam & Warriner, 2012, p. 195), or what has been termed a dual frame of reference (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001). Negotiating multiple frames of reference can create a sense of double belonging and

ambivalence in how migrants negotiate space and time in their narratives (Warriner, 2013). Ochs and Capps (2001) elaborate on the elasticity of time and how "narratives ebb back and forth across different time zones, as narrators mine the significance of life events" (p. 200). More specifically, they explain that how narratives are told or co-told is directly related to how narrators weave memories of the past with their current lives in the present and their imagined lives in the future. In other words, narrators "[reinterpret] the meaning of past events in terms of later consequences, through which they redefine who they are and revise the plots of their life stories" (Mishler, 2006, p. 36). Although these interpretations were made with relevance to personal narratives, the same may be said of fictional narratives that migrants recollect and narrate while negotiating multiple frames of reference. As Omar and Maria narrate and write the story of Sabadullah, they negotiate different positionalities and the ambivalence of dualistic frames of reference.

3 Relevant Literature: Transnational Literacies, Narratives, and Identities

A comprehensive review of transnational literacies is beyond the scope of this study and has been covered in more detail elsewhere (see Lam & Warriner, 2012). This section focuses on studies that address transnational narratives in particular where participants use narrative to negotiate the ambivalence of dual frames of reference (O'Connor, 2018; Tazreiter, 2019; Warriner, 2013), (re)construct their identities and positionalities (Shapiro & MacDonald, 2017) – especially through engagement in producing bi/multilingual or multimodal narratives (Karam, 2018) – and various digital literacies that support children's bilingual development (Al-Salmi & Smith, 2015).

Recent research on migrant narratives frame the concept of ambivalence as explanatory of the many uncertainties that accompany the process of migration (Tazreiter, 2019). In her study of Indonesian temporary migrant workers in Australia, Tazreiter (2019) analyzed interview data to identify the struggles that this population faced in navigating life in a new society. Framing ambivalence as a feeling or response to migratory experiences, her findings revealed that participants faced a range of ambivalent feelings such as trusting the Australian people but viewing formal institutions such as migration authorities with increasing distrust. Tazreiter concluded that her participants' "actions and responses that appear ambivalent are far from irrational, hasty, or disloyal (p. 16)" and are more a product of adjusting to the demands of being in a new society. Along the same lines, Warriner (2013) examined how dimensions of space and time are intertwined in the personal narrative of a refugee-background woman from Bosnia who negotiated an "ambivalence of place" (p. 29). For example, the participant expressed ambivalence about life in the United States which she described in positive terms, albeit expressing her fear of the geographic distance that divided the United States from her home country. O'Connor's

(2018) study of the narrative of one border crossing university student in South Texas revealed how the participant was at first ambivalent about stereotypical representations of the borderlands in a news article she was reading with her cousins, but then took a more serious moral stance against it, based on what an imagined future reader might think of the borderlands. Thus, the participant's narrative helped shape her moral personhood and "her emergent, dialogic understanding of herself" (O'Connor, 2018, p. 155).

Apart from ambivalence, other studies addressed how immigrants or refugee-background populations used narrative as a means of resistance that allowed them to agentively challenge deficit-oriented representations and claim new identities. For example, Shapiro and MacDonald (2017) used narrative inquiry to document how a Somali Bantu refugee-background participant used narrative discourse to resist deficit-oriented perceptions of his home country and people through agentively presenting a counter story that highlighted the assets he brought to his new country of resettlement. Karam's (2018) case study documented how multilingual and multimodal narratives produced by the participant expressed humor and how a digital videogame helped him agentively reposition himself in class as a digital expert. Another study (Al-Salmi & Smith, 2015) highlighted the agency of a group of transnational Arabic speaking mothers in developing their Arabic and English languages through engagement in various bilingual digital literacy practices. Such literacy practices were the mothers' way of keeping up with the demands of raising bilingual children, assisting their education, and maintaining Arabic as a home language despite such challenges as having limited access to quality books and television shows in Arabic. Among other practices, the mothers involved children in digitally mediated conversations in Arabic with family members in home countries and guided children to watch Arabic videos on YouTube inspired by the mothers' memories of childhood TV shows. Thus, transnational literacy practices and narratives in particular can be a site of language maintenance, resistance, identity (re) construction, and ambivalence as a feeling that is explanatory of the challenges of negotiating dual frames of reference.

4 Methods

4.1 Setting and Participants

This interview-based case study (Duff, 2015) took place in a mid-sized city in the Western part of the United States that has only begun to resettle refugees from various countries. The study focused on Maria and Omar who were both born and raised in Syria. They fled with their family to Turkey in 2014 where they stayed until late 2016. During their stay, the children became conversant in Turkish – and Omar and Maria to a lesser extent. While Omar completed his elementary education in Syria with no formal schooling in English, Maria graduated her high school with limited

exposure to English through middle and high school. Maria recently gained a certificate as a pharmacy assistant, and she is currently working at a local pharmacy. Omar is currently working as a taxi driver. They are both motivated to learn more English and both have expressed their desire for their children to learn English and maintain their home language. Toward that end, they both speak Arabic to the children at home and send them to the mosque on a weekly basis in order to learn the Koran and Arabic. Maria reported that the children seemed to be having difficulty with these lessons and more specifically in pronouncing certain words in Arabic. Both Maria and Omar are active on social media, and they maintain connections with their families in Turkey, Egypt, and Syria via various social media sites.

4.2 Researcher Positionality

Research with Arabic speaking refugee-background populations can often be challenging when scholars engaged in this work do not share the research participants' cultural or linguistic backgrounds. I am fortunate to share Arabic as a common language with the research participants in this study. I was also raised in Lebanon (a country that shares a border with Syria and many cultural and social traditions) and worked with refugee-background populations from Iraq and Syria, both in Lebanon and the United States.

However, I should acknowledge that the refugee experience is far from monolithic and may vary according to numerous variables and positionings related to the context of reception. I would also be remiss to emphasize linguistic and cultural commonalities with Maria and Omar and ignore other differences. For example, I was raised Christian while Omar and Maria self-identify as Muslim. Even though we all speak Arabic, the Syrian dialect is different from the Lebanese dialect, and sometimes I had to clarify the meaning of certain words.

4.3 Data Collection and Analysis

Data included audio recordings of Omar's oral recount of the story (08/16/19) and the collaborative work of writing the story in a subsequent extended interview (12/28/19) – in addition to fieldnotes from a member checking interview (01/02/20). Other data included the final product of the story of Sabadullah, written in English and Arabic with illustrations (see Appendix). Secondary data included ethnographic fieldnotes and other interviews to contextualize the participants' experiences and provide relevant background information.

To write the story of Sabadullah, Omar and Maria decided to divide the work. Omar recounted the story orally (08/16/19), while Maria collaborated with me to write the story with input from Omar (12/28/19). I first audiotaped, transcribed, and

Table 1 Narrative summary of Sabadullah

Narrative Element	Sabadullah Story
Main character	Sabadullah, a terrifying creature who looks like a frilled lizard
Other characters	Parents, children
Setting	Cold, dark night (no electric power) in Syria
Problem	Children would not sleep
Events	Children giving their parents trouble and not going to sleep Mother telling children the story of Sabadullah Sabadullah roaming the streets looking for naughty children Sabadullah bursting through walls in order to catch the children who are still awake Children getting scared and hiding under the sheets
Resolution	Children going to sleep and not even daring to go to the kitchen or the bathroom

translated[1] Omar's oral recount of the story. Then, I prepared a narrative summary where I listed the story's setting, the problem, the events, and the resolution (Table 1) – all based on Omar's recount of the story.

With this narrative summary in hand, I met with the participants for about 2 h in order to write the story at a date and time of their convenience (12/28/19). While Maria took the lead throughout the writing process, I used the narrative summary shown in Table 1 to guide the collaborative effort. I emphasized that both participants should use whatever language or any version of events that they deemed appropriate and that my role was to support their writing efforts. In order to facilitate writing the story in a bilingual fashion, I shared with Maria the online application, Scrijab. Through that application, one could write in two languages on the same page and illustrate at the same time. I gave Maria a choice between using the app or paper and pen, and Maria preferred the app. Maria and I then collaboratively wrote the story guided by Omar's oral recount of the story and his input as he went along. Maria wrote all of the text in both Arabic and English, and my role was limited to translating a few Arabic words into English at Maria's request. Maria described in detail what illustrations she wanted to have in the story and even showed me examples on her phone and laptop. I used a computer program to insert similar pictures to what Maria described and showed me. The participants met with me at a later date (02/01/20) for member checking. They requested to change the illustration of Sabadullah. Their request was honored, and they both approved the amended version of the story and confirmed the findings.

Data was analyzed in an iterative and inductive manner. An initial round of coding produced such codes as language, investment, traditions, scary/not scary, weird/

[1] Because translation is not a neutral act, I frequently reflected on how meaning was conveyed and engaged participants in member checking and word choice. During the interviews and collaborative writing session of the story, Omar mostly used Arabic while Maria used both English and Arabic. As such, any direct quotes that the participants originally uttered in English were italicized.

normal, fiction/real events, American/Syrian Sabadullah, and guilt/victory. These initial codes were lumped together: the first three codes under the theme of negotiating language and traditions, and the remaining codes under the theme of negotiating two versions of Sabadullah.

5 Findings

In narrating and writing Sabadullah, Omar and Maria negotiated the ambivalence of dualistic orientations of reference in constructing their positionalities as parents using various tools and strategies. Findings suggest that while both parents were invested in writing a bilingual story, they had different views about the story's purpose and different visions of Sabadullah. These differences in framing the story relate to the different desired positionalities of the two parents. While Omar was more focused on maintaining the authenticity of the story, Maria was focused on distancing herself from being perceived as a "barbaric" parent who scared her children into sleep. This section first examines the parents' choice of writing in English and Arabic before exploring how they negotiated their different perceptions of the nature of the Sabadullah story and their positionalities as parents.

5.1 Negotiating Languages and Traditions: "I Wish They Would Learn Arabic and Maintain Certain Traditions"

Writing Sabadullah involved negotiating two languages and the role this choice played in trying to maintain the family's past traditions and memories. Omar's initial motivation to write Sabadullah was to pass down to his children the story that his mother used to tell him as a child in Syria. The motivation to write Sabadullah in English and Arabic was to try to engage his children using both their home language and their language of preference, English. He explained this choice by complaining that his efforts to engage the children in Arabic stories were futile. He tried to watch YouTube videos of traditional Arabic stories with his children in order to help them remember Arabic, but "they prefer English, because they tell me they do not understand Arabic" (08/16/19). In an earlier interview, Omar emphasized that

> I love English, and I want to learn English. I tell my children to forget Turkish and try to learn English. We do not have any benefit in learning Turkish […] but I want the children to maintain their Arabic language in addition to learning English. Arabic is our religion, our history, our traditions, and our memories" (Interview, 11/20/17).

Omar was obviously invested (Norton, 2013) in learning English and encouraging his children to learn the language, but he was also invested in maintaining the family's home language. While investment in learning Turkish may have made sense while the family was in Turkey, he did not see a return on investment in the children

maintaining Turkish as an additional language in the United States. According to Omar, investing in Arabic meant maintaining the family's religion, history, traditions and memories. For that reason, he hoped that the family would get the U.S. citizenship soon so they could start travelling and visiting family in Syria and other neighboring countries. He believed that spending time with family during the summer break would enable his children to learn Arabic, and he complained about the family's inability to get visas to visit family outside the United States, despite their recent attempts (Interview, 10/17/19).

When Maria talked with me about her reasons for wanting to write the story of Sabadullah, she shared Omar's wish for her children to learn Arabic and preserve certain traditions from Syria. In the following excerpt, she explained her decision of writing a bilingual story and linked stories to childhood memories shared with her family and siblings.

Researcher: Do you think writing the story in Arabic and English as Omar suggested is a good idea for your family?

Maria: Yes, of course. When I speak to my family, we remember so many things that I have forgotten about… Stories, words, fairytales… We have not been in touch with the family as often and there is a long distance between us. When we were kids, there was this show called "We Have a Story to Tell".

Researcher: Is this the guy with the magic bag?

Maria: Yes! Although it is pretty old, we keep watching it on YouTube.

Researcher: You took me back so many years now.

Maria: There are so many things that I don't want my children to forget. I wish they would learn to speak Arabic. They can understand it mostly, but pronunciation is difficult for them. I encourage them to view YouTube videos in Arabic and sometimes I have them watch them, but they get bored quickly. I wish they would learn Arabic and maintain certain traditions. For example, in our culture, when one's father comes home, they kiss his hand as a sign of respect. This has nothing to do with Islam. It is just a sign of respect. In this country, this tradition does not exist. […] Kissing the hand is different than kissing the cheek or the forehead. Kissing the hand shows appreciation for hard work. I decided to maintain this *culture*. I brought it with me from home, and I did not want to lose it. We brought this tradition with us from Syria, and I want us to cling on to it. […] My older daughter is used to this tradition from Turkey. When we first arrived here, she would kiss older people's hands, and it was awkward. So I told her not to do this with all the people here, but just with those who understand this tradition. (Interview, 12/28/19)

Just like Omar, Maria linked Arabic to the family's memories, stories, culture, and traditions that she would like to preserve. Maria also tried to watch YouTube videos in Arabic with the children, but they did not seem to be engaged. Another

issue which Omar mentioned earlier was the "distance" from the family that made it more challenging to maintain the language and certain traditions. Thus, while both Maria and Omar were invested (Norton, 2013) in the children maintaining their Arabic language and certain Syrian traditions, there were structural barriers that made achieving this goal more challenging. Their visa applications to visit family in two Arab countries were rejected, and they had to overcome several hurdles (e.g., acquiring original documents from Turkey and Egypt) just to apply for visas. In addition, Maria wanted the children to maintain the tradition of kissing older people's hands as a sign of appreciation and respect. However, even though she greatly valued this tradition, Maria also realized different practices were prevalent in different contexts and encouraged her daughter to adapt this practice while in the U.S. While in Turkey and Syria this practice was common, doing the same thing in the United States would be "awkward". Maria negotiated this sense of double belonging (Lam & Warriner, 2012) by instructing her daughter to kiss hands only in certain contexts like the mosque or with close family friends who understood the underlying significance of this practice. In the same manner, we see in the next section how Maria tried to adapt the Sabadullah story to fit the U.S. context, bringing to the front some tension with Omar's perception of the story. Despite Omar's and Maria's agreement on the importance of writing a bilingual story, they had differences of opinion in how they wanted to frame the purpose of the story and how they imagined Sabadullah himself.

5.2 Negotiating Two Sabadullahs: "This Is an American Sabadullah […] but the Syrian Sabadullah Is a Scary Monster"

In the following excerpt from the collaborative writing session with Maria (12/28/19), we negotiated the choice of a title to the story.

Maria:	Did you add a scary element to the title?
Researcher:	I did not add a picture.
Maria:	No, I meant the word "scary" to the title. What is scary in English? Not too scary, but just a little bit?
Researcher:	*Scary story*?
Maria:	I do not want them to think that we scare children. Or cause them horror.
Researcher:	*Bedtime story*?
Maria:	*A story for kids to make them sleep*. (see Appendix, page one of the story)
Researcher:	Great! (Interview, 12/28/19)

Right from the start, Maria's concern with what sense the children would make of the "scary" aspect of the story was explicitly revealed. In order to distance herself from being positioned as a parent who scared children, Maria sought my help to

identify a word in English that was *not* scary, "but just a little bit" scary. Ultimately, she chose to exclude the adjective "scary" from the title and frame Sabadullah as a "*story for kids to make them sleep"*. While both Omar and Maria acknowledged that the purpose of the story was to scare children into not leaving the bed, Maria tried to deemphasize the "scary" purpose of the story and frame it instead as a story to put children into bed. In contradiction to these efforts, Maria later suggested adding a scary picture to the first page of the story. As we could not add pictures from the Internet using the Scribjab application, Maria showed me on her phone a version of the Sabadullah story published on the web and a potential picture to add as Sabadullah. What she showed me was a picture of the Grim Reaper (see Appendix, page 3 of the story), and I added that picture to the first page of the first draft of the story. When Omar saw the Sabadullah story that Maria showed me on her phone, he objected to that version and emphasized that Sabadullah, as told by his mother, was "more authentic". He jokingly claimed that the author on the Internet copied the story from his mother.

Later on, during member checking (01/02/20), Omar objected to illustrating Sabadullah as a Grim Reaper, "This is an American Sabadullah. People here will recognize him from American movies, but the Syrian Sabadullah is a scary monster, a frilled lizard, not this person carrying the sickle!" Maria agreed with Omar, perhaps to appease him, and I suggested changing the illustration of Sabadullah to what is shown on page one of the story (see Appendix). Maria's choice of the "American" Grim Reaper as an initial illustration of Sabadullah and then her acquiescence to the frilled lizard illustration of the "Syrian" Sabadullah represented a sense of ambivalence of place (Ochs & Capps, 2001; Warriner, 2013) that is central to how a story is (re)told while negotiating two frames of reference. While Omar wanted to maintain an "authentic" Syrian Sabadullah, Maria's primary concern was to avoid being positioned as a parent who scared her children into sleep.

The tension between the two parents' perceptions of Sabadullah could also be observed in the following excerpt.

Maria:	Children are monkeys!
Omar:	Sabadullah bursts through walls! If they are not scared enough, I can send you the scary stories of exploding barrels in Syria. We had rockets and barrels dropped on the building next to us. They exploded and the walls were hanging.
Maria:	When [author] took you to the university,[2] did you not have enough time to say all of what was in your heart? You want to repeat the same stories about barrels and explosions?
Researcher:	He may have a point that Sabadullah is nothing compared to rockets. [extended silence of around 5 seconds]

[2] The participants visited the author's TESOL classroom in October of 2017 to share their stories with teacher education students. When Omar wanted to talk about the war experiences, Maria tried to convince him to avoid sharing any stories (including stories about exploding barrels) which may be viewed as a critique of the Syrian regime.

Maria:	No one else will have this interesting research.
Researcher:	(Laughs.)
Omar:	But you are going to tell them this story and they will have no point of reference to what having no power looks like. (Interview, 12/28/19)

In this excerpt, Omar emphasized the scary function of Sabadullah. While fear induced by Sabadullah may be imagined, the fear induced by exploding barrels during the civil war was real and even scarier, according to Omar. Maria, on the other hand, was not willing to talk about these war stories and the extended silence after this exchange is indicative of the tension between how each parent viewed the character of Sabadullah, the story of Sabadullah, and the place of that storytelling practice in the lives of Syrians. In addition, Omar compared the original setting of this storytelling practice in Syria (where blackouts were common) with the U.S. context where such blackouts are a rare occurrence. In his original narration of the story, he described how children in Syria usually "sat in the dark because there was no power" (Interview, 08/16/19) to listen to the Sabadullah story. The exploding barrels, blackouts, and shattered walls are very real to Omar. Those same shattered walls are scarier than Sabadullah bursting into the walls to take away children who refuse to sleep.

Omar's emphasis on this part of the story where Sabadullah burst through walls is significant. While this was a key event in Omar's oral narration of the story, Maria excluded this from the written English version of the story on page two (see Appendix) and maintained it in the Arabic version (see Table 2).

While the English version of the story mostly matched the Arabic version on all other pages, the discrepancy between the Arabic and English version on this page in particular is clear. More specifically, the Arabic version explicitly stated that the purpose of the story was to make the children scared and described how Sabadullah can burst into walls, and the English version did not include these details. While Maria's editorial omissions might have been inadvertent, it could also be one of her strategies to deemphasize the scary purpose of Sabadullah.

Another strategy that Maria used in order to achieve the same objective was to frame Sabadullah as fiction and set age limits to the story, as observed in the following excerpt.

Table 2 Comparing translations

Original Arabic text	Original English text	Direct translation of original Arabic text
عندما يأتي الليل ويحل الظلام نبدا برحلة ارسال الأطفال للنوم فنخبرهم عن قصة تجعلهن يخافون انه سبدلا سوف يشق الحيط ويتدلى	When it is dark and cold, and mothers start getting children ready for bed, they tell a story to hurry them into bed.	When night comes and it is dark, we start the journey of sending the children to sleep. We tell them a story that makes them scared. It is Sabadullah who bursts into walls and dangles from them.

Maria:	Yes, this story is not for the very little ones. It is for children 5 years and older. Those children whose parents want them to sleep, but they don't go to sleep. So parents in Syria use this mythical creature to scare the children. They do not scare children with a real person or a real description, but with a fictional recount of the Sabadullah story.
Researcher:	Did your parents used to tell you the same story?
Maria:	This story is widespread among all Syrian families.
Researcher:	It reminds me of the Abu Keess story from Lebanon.
Maria:	There is another one also called Sheikh El Farsheh [The Sheikh of the Mattress]. If children get out of bed, Sheikh El Farsheh would pull them back in!
Researcher:	This is another one!
Maria:	These are fictional stories that parents tell their children to go to sleep! So that they do not have to scare children with something real, where the child may get really scared, they use fiction. Children may pee their pants if they get scared because they would not get out of bed.
Researcher:	Is this why this story is for children 5 years and older?
Maria:	Yes, because these are scary stories. If the children think about it a lot, it is pretty scary, for real. Yes, 5 years and older so that children are more aware. When children are almost 8 years old, they are no longer scared of all these stories. They know this is fiction. The name alone is scary! If you do not go to bed, Sabadullah will come get you. […] In Syria, almost all mothers tell this story to their children. Some other mothers prefer to use cough syrup to make the children go to sleep. Is this real (sarcastically)? Sometimes the child is sick and he goes to sleep.
Researcher:	Yes, people have different ways of doing things.
Maria:	Yes, I do not think that scaring children is acceptable here in the United States. This may sound very weird here! (Interview, 12/28/19)

In the last two lines, Maria acknowledged two frames of reference: Syria and the United States. While Sabadullah is widespread among families in Syria, the story might be perceived as "weird" here in the United States, according to Maria. This sense of weirdness seemed to be related to Maria's belief that it was unacceptable to scare children in the United States. This concern was better understood after the member checking session I held with Maria when she admitted she was concerned about being perceived by an American audience as a "barbaric" or "backward thinking" parent who scared her children into sleep (01/02/20). To distance herself from such positioning and try to claim a *legitimate* identity (Norton, 2013) as a parent within the U.S. context, Maria continued her efforts to deemphasize the scary aspect of Sabadullah using additional strategies. She specified an age limit to the story and explained that children 5 years of age and older were the intended audience for this

story. Older children whom this story could be shared with are "more aware" and less scared of Sabadullah. Also notice her use of the pronoun "they" to distance herself from parents and mothers in Syria. "They" are there in Syria, but Maria is here in the United States where she seems aware that scaring children into sleep might be considered a "weird" act of parenting. In Syria, there was Sheikh El Farsheh as well as Sabadullah, and it was pretty common to tell these stories. But even in Syria, parents used *fiction* and not *real* events so that children were not "really scared". Thus, to de-emphasize the scary effect of the framing of Sabadullah, Maria compared it to fiction. Whereas children might be "really scared" from real events and stories (remember Omar's suggestion to tell *real* stories about exploding barrels – a practice that Maria did not approve of), older children would recognize that Sabadullah was a fictitious character and therefore might imagine him in different ways depending on their imagination. On page three of the story (see Appendix), Maria wrote that children "start to imagine about what Sabadullah is like." This is in contrast with the story's aim of scaring children into sleep as recounted by Omar. On the other hand, Omar did not mention any age restrictions regarding this story and told me that it was a substitute for corporal punishment. He explained, "My mother, instead of hitting us, she would tell us the story of Sabadullah in order to scare us and make us produce less noise and go to sleep" (08/16/19).

Maria remembers telling the story to her younger cousins to put them to sleep. At the age of 12, Maria recounted how she was often tasked with babysitting duties, and how she used Sheikh El Farsheh and Sabadullah to scare her cousins into sleep. Even back then, she remembers having ambivalent feelings about the tension between the triumph of having succeeded in putting the children to sleep and guilt resulting from scaring them. This ambivalence was evident in the current version of Sabadullah (see Appendix, page five of the story) where she wrote "And the mother will feel guilty" and asked me to insert an illustration of a victorious mother with the thumbs up meme. Thus, the new version of the story of Sabadullah that Maria created while living in the U.S. is not necessarily captured by the multimodal illustration she wanted to include. Maria's sense of guilt over the scary effect of the story was not shared by Omar who complained in an informal conversation (01/15/20) that sometimes he tried to tell his own children the Sabadullah story to put them into bed, but Maria would tell him to avoid scaring the children, particularly the youngest one. This ambivalence between framing Sabadullah as a bedtime story, a scary story, or both is typical of negotiating dual frames of reference (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001) and how the participants perceive their new roles as parents within the U.S.

6 Discussion and Implications

Key findings from an examination of two Syrian refugee-background parents' co-authorship of a bilingual and multimodal fictional story show how they negotiated their different individual priorities and dual frames of reference (e.g., past

experiences living in Syria vs recent experiences living in the U.S.), pushing the boundaries of what "counts" as writing and literacy. The analysis provided here illuminates the different ways that Omar and Maria negotiate languages, memories and values while re-writing a traditional story. The analysis demonstrates that they negotiated dual frames of reference and conflicting agendas throughout this process. Here, I will elaborate on the implications of this study and further theorize the ways in which ambivalence becomes an explanatory construct for transnational experiences.

Through a close analysis of the participants' retelling of the story of Sabadullah, we learn more about Maria and Omar – "who they are, who they are seen to be, and which languages they are able to use" (Duff, 2015, p. 59). We learn that both Maria and Omar are parents who are invested (Norton, 2013) in passing down this childhood story to their children in large part because they believe knowing the story will help their children maintain their Arabic language and connections to the practices of their homeland – similar to how other Arab parents engage in digital and bilingual literacies for the same purpose (Al-Salmi & Smith, 2015). According to Maria and Omar, maintaining the home language and preserving family memories were two important returns to their investment in writing Sabadullah.

In composing a digital bilingual story, they push the boundaries of what "counts" as writing and literacy, challenging deficit perspectives that ignore the rich cultural and linguistic repertoires of emergent multilinguals. Omar and Maria draw upon their rich life experiences prior to resettlement and their expanding knowledge of English to write Sabadullah and in a way (re)write their identities. Because Maria is concerned about how she is *seen to be* – as a "barbaric" parent who scares her children into sleep – she uses language as a means to resist that positioning and gain legitimacy within her new context (Norton, 2013) as a parent. As such, Maria does not merely write a story, but practices her right to speak (Norton, 2013) in order to position herself in new ways. She also seems to reinterpret "the meaning of past events in terms of later consequences" (Mishler, 2006, p. 36) of being in the United States. While scaring children into sleep may have been common in Syria and in Maria's past experiences with her cousins, it is "weird" in the current U.S. context. For that reason, Maria uses a range of remarkable strategies to deemphasize the scary aspect of the story. On the other hand, Omar wants to maintain the authenticity of the story and asserts Sabadullah's Syrian identity by his determination to replace the Grim Reaper with a frilled lizard. In short, Maria seems to view Sabadullah through a dual frame of reference (Lam & Warriner, 2012), reexamining "the significance of life events" (Ochs & Capps, 2001, p. 200) such as bed time routines and reinterpreting past experiences through her current understanding of her new country of resettlement (e.g., Warriner, 2013). On the other hand, Omar seems to still see Sabadullah primarily through the focal lens of Syria as a frame of reference.

Negotiating a dual frame of reference creates ambivalence (Warriner, 2013) which Maria has to contend with. Findings from this study affirm Tazreiter's (2019) conclusion that ambivalence can play an explanatory role of the ambiguities that accompany migration. After all, Maria's "actions and responses that appear ambivalent are far from irrational, hasty, or disloyal" (Tazreiter, 2019, p. 16), and can be

explained by her concern about potentially being considered a barbaric parent. But what else can be gleaned about ambivalence from Sabadullah's narrative besides its explanatory function? First, the "ambivalence of place" (Warriner, 2013, p. 29) that drove Maria to adapt and reinterpret the story of Sabadullah, has created tensions between Omar and Maria. On the surface, these tensions may appear to be related to different perceptions of Sabadullah; however, they can also be indicative of an ambivalence of parenting and negotiating dual frames of reference concerning raising children in a new country – a potential area for future studies. Second, ambivalence is not only an emergent feeling (Tazreiter, 2019) reported or narrated by participants as in previous studies (e.g., O'Connor, 2018). Because of the bilingual and multimodal nature of Sabadullah, ambivalence becomes more concrete and sedimented in bilingual and multimodal means within the narrative itself. For example, Maria omits the "scary" language from the English text on page three of the story and keeps it in the Arabic text of the same page. Thus, ambivalence became concrete through conflicting texts in different languages on the same page. In addition, the expression of a victorious mother with a thumbs up meme contradicts the text describing a "guilty" mother. In this case, ambivalence is concretely represented in the conflict between the traditional text ("mother will feel guilty") and the multimodal illustration (victorious mother). Thus, ambivalence can be a source of tension in weaving and reinterpreting transnational families' past experiences with their current lives, especially in the case of two parents with differing perspectives on whether to adapt or maintain certain parenting practices. In addition, ambivalence can be expressed in bi/multilingual or multimodal fashion, especially in digital narratives like Sabadullah.

Examining new manifestations of ambivalence in digital narratives is a topic of future research that can help shed more light on the nature of different kinds of transnational memories, practices and experiences and how that variation continues to shape current and future experiences of displacement as revealed in particular storytelling events. As shown through this case study of Omar and Maria, ambivalence of time and space can be particularly insightful if examined through the prism of multilingualism and multimodality. As a story takes shape across different languages and modalities, ambivalence can help explain the complex challenges of resettlement and render visible such nuanced and often conflicting negotiations of language ideologies, values, parenting styles, and identities that are often weaved across the various contexts of the refugee journey.

Appendix: The Story of Sabadullah

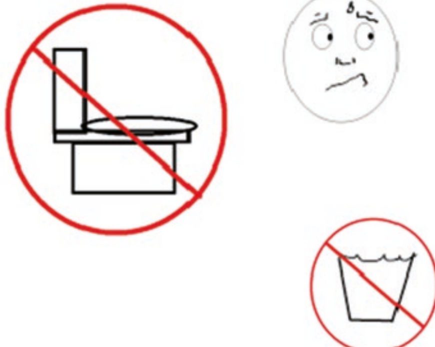
الأطفال يخافون ويظنون ان
سبدلا سوف يتدلى وتقوم القيامة
ويكون الخيال عند الأطفال قمة
في الخوف لدرجة كبيرة

At that time, kids will get afraid and they run to bed and start to imagine about what Sabadullah is like.

3

عندها الأطفال يجب ان تنام تحت
أي ظرف حتى ولو كانو
يشعرون بالعطش او بالحاجة
للحمام سينامون لاجل النسيان

Now kids will go to sleep under any circumstances even if they feel thirsty or they need to go to the bathroom or to forget about Sabadullah.



4

الأطفال ينامون وتتحقق الغاية
المطلوبة من الخرافة وعندها
الام تشعر بالذنب

Finally kids will go to sleep
and the purpose of
Sabadullah story will become
true. And the mother will feel
guilty.

5

النهاية

The End

6

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Identifying Language Needs in Community-Based Adult ELLs: Findings from an Ethnography of Four Salvadoran Immigrants in the Western United States

Kathryn Watkins, Gregory Thompson, Alessandro Rosborough, Grant Eckstein, and William Eggington

Abstract This chapter employs findings from 6 months of ethnographic observations with four Salvadoran first-generation immigrant women living in a suburban neighborhood in the western United States. We document these women's authentic experiences with navigating everyday linguistic interactions in Spanish and English, showing how the women's participation in Salvadoran and other Latinx communities curtails much of their need for daily English but that their desires to fulfil economic and other long-term goals motivate them to improve their English, even with few opportunities to do so. We document the assets, strategies, and skills the women use when the need for English does arise (usually in a small set of routine contexts), often with success despite their limited English proficiency, then close by proposing general recommendations to ESL programs based on these observations.

Keywords English as a second language · ESL · Latinx · Salvadoran women · Immigration · Refugee · Community-based learners · Latinx enclaves · Ethnography

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1 Introduction

I am standing with Mariela, a 35-year-old Salvadoran immigrant, in her kitchen as she cooks a giant pot of chicken to take to church to feed the homeless. As we talk about why learning English is important to her, she speaks of expanding her vocabulary and learning how "expresarse" (express herself). She says (in Spanish), "I'm trying to do this in the school I go to, to learn to speak and to really get involved, not just in– in restaurants, not just in Walmart, but with all types of people, with all types of conversation. This is what I'm trying to do but it's so hard." She laughs. Sometimes, she tells me, she repeats the words, "Yo puedo inglés" (I can speak English) over and over as a kind of mantra. She's even written it, in Spanish of course, on a piece of paper pinned to her kitchen wall.

The United States is home to hundreds of thousands of refugees and immigrants who, like Mariela, desire to learn English, both for practical purposes and to be able to fulfill larger goals and dreams. In contrast to traditional adult English language learners (ELLs), or international students, who are typically student visa holders whose primary goal is to attend an American university, adult refugee and immigrant ELLs are often fleeing detrimental circumstances in their home countries and dealing with poverty issues and/or a precarious immigration status as they try to build permanent lives in the US. Many have families, full-time jobs, and other responsibilities that do not allow them to pursue higher education or even to study English as a primary commitment. For refugees and immigrants, joining a new languaculture comes with complexities concerning their identities, emotions, and motives – characteristics that are often neglected in traditional approaches to language learning/instruction. Like Mariela, many have been attending ESL classes for years with little or no improvement in their actual English abilities.

The complex needs of adult immigrant and refugee ELLs (hereafter referred to as community-based learners, or CBLs) have largely been underserved in ESL programs. This is because ESL programs tend to rely on standardized curricula based on a cognitive perspective of language acquisition (Pennycook, 2000) rather than a socially- or culturally-based perspective (Firth & Wagner, 1997; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Lantolf & Johnson, 2007; van Lier, 2004). In this chapter, we argue that while some formal instruction is valuable (Douglas Fir Group, 2016), the current classroom-oriented approach may be inadequate. Because ESL instruction is necessarily a complex, context-driven endeavor (Warriner, 2007), and based on data collected by Watkins during 6 months of ethnographic field research with four female Salvadoran CBLs, we propose that an effective approach to learning and teaching in such contexts must "draw out and emphasize community- and home-based knowledge, culture, and language" in its programs, building on the complex assets learners bring to the table from their broader life contexts (MacSwan, 2020, p. 29).

In what follows, we document these women's authentic experiences with navigating everyday linguistic interactions in Spanish and English. We show how the

women's participation in Salvadoran and other Latinx[1]communities curtails much of their need for daily English but that their desires to fulfil economic and other long-term goals motivate them to improve their English, even with few opportunities to do so. We document the assets, strategies, and skills the women use when the need for English does arise (usually in a small set of routine contexts), often with success despite their limited English proficiency, then close by proposing general recommendations to ESL programs based on these observations.

2 Language Learning: From a Cognitivist to a Sociocultural Approach

ESL programs, conscientious as they may be, often struggle to be effective when helping CBLs. These difficulties often share one root problem: most ESL programs assume a cognitivist orientation to language learning which fails to adequately take into account the social, cultural, historical, or translanguaging dimensions of ELLs' complex realities (see Firth & Wagner, 1997; Pennycook, 2000; Otheguy et al., 2015). This orientation has limited most research on adult ELLs to classroom-based studies (see West, 1994; Khansir & Pakdel, 2014), creating an "educational context separated from society" (Pennycook, 2000, p. 89) that ignores the intersecting contexts, spheres, and realities of learners' lives. Cognitive approaches to ESL learning often prioritize task mastery over other forms or methods of learning (Pienemann, 1998; van Patten, 2004). Without additional insight into learners' needs beyond the assessment of the learners' decontextualized skills, programs are often too academically focused (Adult Education Interest Section, 2017), too rigidly practical and unstimulating (Auerbach, 1986), or centered around irrelevant content (Auerbach, 1992; van Lier, 2004).

In contrast, many researchers, coming especially from the theoretical frameworks of Activity Theory, Sociocultural Theory, and Language Ecology, have pointed out the problems with separating language learning from the cultural, social, and historic contexts in which it exists as part of an active process (Firth & Wagner, 1997; Kramsch, 1993; Lantolf & Poehner, 2014; van Lier, 2004). McCafferty (2008) addressed the mind-body dualisms of second language teaching, calling for curricula that relate better to learners' living and learning in the real world. Pennycook (2000) advanced that those responsible for ESL teaching must acknowledge "that classrooms… are complex social and cultural spaces… sociopolitical spaces that exist in a complex relationship to the world outside" (p. 89; see also Lewis et al., 2012; Pennycook, 2010; van Lier, 2004). Such research counters traditional

[1] Throughout the study, we refer to the participants and other members of their community using the term 'Latinx'. However, it is worth noting that the women themselves used the terms 'Latino' and 'Latina' to refer to themselves and others.

competence-based programs with a call for synchronous, personalized learning centered around learners' authentic contexts (as defined by van Lier, 2004).

To meet CBLs' needs, English programs must be situated in contexts that are genuine and meaningful to students, honoring first and second language use and the assets of all kinds that learners bring to the table. This includes learners' L1 and L2 linguistic repertoires as well as the collaborative dialogue abilities they have developed to meet their everyday L2 needs (Swain & Watanabe, 2012). Yet relatively few studies to date have employed the broad-reaching ethnographic research methods necessary to document and understand these factors in CBL populations.

This research thus fills an important gap between the many existing classroom-based studies on ELLs, including those that take a sociocultural approach (examples include Donato & MacCormick, 1994; Lantolf & Genung, 2002), and the many ethnographic studies that produce rich data on CBLs' authentic experiences, particularly those of Salvadoran immigrant women, but which do not attend specifically to their language experiences or formal needs (examples include Menjívar, 2006). This gap has been partially addressed by studies following the ethnography of communication (EOC) model (Gumperz & Hymes, 1986; Kvam, 2017), but even these studies have little to say about how ESL programs could put their findings to use in better meeting CBLs' needs.

3 Methods

3.1 Positionality

I[2] (Watkins) am a dominant English speaker with advanced second-language fluency in Spanish, although I am not a fully balanced bilingual. I completed a BA in Latin American Studies and have lived in Mexico and Peru. I also have approximately 5 years of experience teaching ESL to adult ELLs. My interest in this topic of study came primarily though my experiences as an ESL teacher witnessing first-hand the difficulties CBLs faced in programs that prioritized test-based outcomes and academics, especially college readiness/placement, above all else.

[2] Since much ethnographic writing relies on the narration of firsthand experiences (conducted, in this case, by Watkins only), we made the decision to use a first-person voice throughout sections of the paper that directly address the ethnographic findings.

3.2 Data Collection and Analysis

I recruited study participants primarily by contacting Latinx adults whose children had participated in a previous ethnographic study supervised by Thompson (one of this chapter's authors) and who had expressed a desire to participate in similar studies in the future. These potential participants then referred me to interested friends and family members. My original goal was simply to recruit Spanish-speaking adult CBLs to the study; however, for a variety of logistical and cultural reasons, all the respondents who followed through on becoming study participants were women. Using friend and family connections to recruit also led to a majority of participants in my larger study being Salvadoran (hence this chapter's focus).

I spent 3 hours per week on average with each of the participants, observing, writing field notes, and usually audio-recording each participant as she went about her daily routine (see Packer, 2018; Emerson et al., 1995). I focused specifically on English and Spanish language usage. Most of my observations occurred on weekdays in various settings the women frequented and at varied times in order to give a sense of the different parts of each woman's daily routines (a form of data source triangulation – see van Staa & Evers, 2010). I conducted 13 weeks of observations with Luciana, 10 weeks with Mariela, 7 weeks with Julissa, and 4 weeks with Carmen. As I grew to know the women and their families and participated with them in their normal, everyday contexts (e.g., linguistic, cultural, familial, etc.), my observations and insights into their lives became deep and multifaceted.

I also conducted one formal, unstructured 30 minute interview with each of the participants where I asked her questions related to her routines, language use, personal goals, language goals, and experiences of language learning (see Spradley, 1980). Finally, I conducted a formal ESL placement test with each woman to assess English ability.[3] All of this together generated 116 hours of data, approximately 86 hours of audio-recordings, and over 47,000 words of field notes.

During the analysis phase, I went through field notes and recordings to identify common themes across participants' language use (Campbell Galman, 2013, 2019). Additionally, I made an inventory of all data collected and documented my recordings, where and when each observation took place, and what notable events or interactions happened in each observation. I then inductively formed a set of codes and sub-codes based on patterns and themes that I had identified across this corpus of data. After going through the corpus, I isolated some of the most productive pieces of data and either transcribed them to apply discourse-level analysis (Gee, 2014) or used the detailed notes I had generated about them to analyze them closely.

[3] I used the Straightforward Quick Placement Test, a grammar- and vocabulary-based ESL placement test produced by a popular textbook company (Macmillan Publishers) and used in ESL programs to match students with the appropriate level of curriculum materials.

4 Research Context and Participants

The focal participants in this ethnography consisted of four Salvadoran immigrant women[4] with limited English proficiency who live in Thurston, a mid-sized city in the western United States with an estimated Latinx population of 16% (US Census Bureau, 2018). Like many other Salvadoran migrants, all of these women fled El Salvador after the conclusion of the country's horrific civil war (1979–1992) to escape economic devastation and give their children a future safe from violence. Salvadorans in the US inhabit an identity somewhere between that of immigrant and refugee (Hamilton & Chincilla, 2001; Menjívar, 2006), dealing with an unstable immigration situation that Bailey et al. labeled "permanent temporariness" (2002). They are currently at the center of a precarious political battle: most Salvadoran immigrants to the US were granted Temporary Protected Status (TPS), a legal status offered to certain types of refugees permitting them to live and work legally in the US. However, since 2017, the Trump administration has been attempting to remove El Salvador as a TPS-designated country. Current plans are to end Salvadorans' TPS status in January 2021 (US Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2019). If this goes into effect, 320,000 Salvadoran immigrants in the US will lose their legal status. The women in this study, as well as their communities, will be impacted in devastating ways. In this section, I introduce these women and give more context for their individual situations.

4.1 Luciana

In 2001, Luciana (now 48), walked on foot from El Salvador to the US (a 3700-mile journey), narrowly escaping a kidnapping attempt while on the journey. Years after safely completing the journey, she now dreams of a happy life and a college education for her two younger children, Kimberly (12) and Oscar (10), and her four grandchildren, the children of her older daughter Abigail (26). Luciana worries about the future, especially because of rampant gang violence in El Salvador should she have to return. She is also concerned about the challenges her children face in their low-income neighborhood and Title 1 school in Thurston.

Like all the women in the study, Luciana is very active in a local Latinx Pentacostal congregation called *La Iglesia Cristiana Pentecostal,* where she holds a leadership role. She occasionally helps her husband, Rodrigo, with his carpet-laying business. In El Salvador, she completed a few semesters of college and worked as a secretary. Someday she would like to have a professional job here but laments that language and other barriers hold her back from doing so.

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[4] All names that appear in the study, including those of all participants and the other people/places in their community, are pseudonyms except for the names of large chains like Sam's Club, McDonald's, or Walmart.

Luciana scored 20/50 on the MacMillan Straightforward Quick Placement Test, placing her in the second-to-lowest level (Elementary) of the MacMillan scale. She says she knows very little English and would self-asses to the lowest level.

4.2 Mariela

In 2009, Mariela (now 35) left her 3-year-old son, Eduardo, with her parents in El Salvador and flew to the US to join her husband, Paul, who had arrived 5 years earlier. In 2012, they were able to bring Eduardo (now 15) to join them. Today, Mariela and her family live in a modest home with a large yard and garden. They now have two more children, Christian (9) and Paulito (5), both born in the US.

Mariela cleans houses part time for Latinx clients. Paul, like Luciana's husband Rodrigo, has his own carpet-laying business. Mariela did not finish high school and is only semi-literate in Spanish. The only one of the participants currently enrolled in an ESL program, she attends beginning-level community English classes at a local library for a few hours per week and says she is determined to *"esforzarse" (exert herself)* in learning English even though, she says, her children and daily tasks make it hard for her to find time to study. Mariela is also very involved in *La Iglesia Cristiana Pentecostal* and cooks meals for the homeless each week as part of the church's ministry. She also goes out frequently with friends and loves traveling several times a year to relax and swim in Las Vegas or to visit family in nearby states.

Mariela scored 14/50 on the MacMillan Straightforward Quick Placement Test, placing her in the lowest level (Beginner) of the MacMillan scale. She describes herself as *"knowing 20% of English and missing the other 80%"*.

4.3 Julissa

In 2004, at the age of 14, Julissa (now 29) migrated to the US from El Salvador alone and on foot. She set out to join her mother and sister, who had migrated to Texas many years before. Like many Central Americans who, due to staggered migration, have grown up without their parents (Menjívar, 2006), Julissa clashed with her mother after reuniting with her in the US and acted out by engaging in risky behavior. She attended a US high school for approximately a year but dropped out at 15 when she became pregnant with her oldest son, David. Of this decision, she says, *"No me arrepiento de eso" (I don't regret it),* but she would like her children to get more education than she did. She says she would love to visit her many cousins in El Salvador but is afraid to go back for fear of gang violence. Today, Julissa lives in a small apartment in Thurston with her Salvadoran husband, Angel, and her children, David (13), Daniel (10), and Kevin (2). Angel works for a carpet-cleaning company owned by a Mexican immigrant, while Julissa works at a variety of

informal jobs: making and selling pupusas, reselling clothing through online marketplaces, and babysitting. She participates in *La Iglesia Cristiana Pentecostal*, loves reggaetón music and going out with friends, and attends a Zumba class at least once a week with other Spanish-speaking women at a local Catholic church.

Julissa scored 19/50 on the MacMillan Straightforward Quick Placement Test, placing her in the second-to-lowest level (Elementary) of the MacMillan scale. She says she can get by in many English situations but she struggles in longer conversations and avoids English when possible.

4.4 Carmen

In 1993, Carmen (now 49), Luciana's sister-in-law, migrated from El Salvador to California with her Salvadoran boyfriend. The couple broke up after arriving, but Carmen met and married another Salvadoran immigrant, Edgar. They now live in Thurston in a nice two-story home with their three American-born children: Aaron (23), Alexander (14), and Laura (11). Aaron works full time and attends the local public university. Both Carmen and her husband work long, arduous hours (including night shifts) at local factories. In her free time and on weekends, Carmen rests, does housework, and organizes parties and outings with Latinx friends. She, too, is very involved in *La Iglesia Cristiana Pentecostal*.

Carmen scored 8/50 on the MacMillan Straightforward Quick Placement Test, placing her in the lowest level (Beginner) of the MacMillan scale. She says, *"No puedo inglés, pero sí puedo defenderme" (I don't speak English, but I can get by)*.

5 Findings

5.1 Enclave Participation and the Dominance of Spanish

Most notable in my observations was the importance of the women's involvement in a Latinx community, or enclave, where only Spanish was spoken. Enclave is here considered a concentrated group of ethnically, culturally, and linguistically similar individuals (often first- and second-generation immigrants) who build and participate in "economies [of] communication, information, consumption, and the labor market" somewhat separately from the host nation's mainstream society and economies (Chiswick & Miller, 2005; p. 7). The Thurston area has a robust Latinx enclave, actively participated in by all the women in my study. The importance of this enclave was evident in the women's daily routines, social and religious activities, errand running, and maintaining their culture, providing them with the cultural and linguistic support they needed to "make it" in the US and build lives for themselves and their families.

Because of their enclave participation, nearly all of the women's daily interactions were in Spanish with only a handful of routine exceptions (described later). All the women other than Carmen spent most of their weekday daytime hours doing housework and attending to their children, all without much opportunity to interact with other adults – an arrangement typical of many Latinx immigrant women, whose roles often center on the direct care of their children (Abrego, 2014), who tend to be primarily responsible for errands and housework, and who, when they do work for pay, often have informal, part-time jobs with irregular hours (Menjívar, 1999b). During their long stretches of time at home, I witnessed the women engaging in Spanish-language media on television and the internet and occasionally talking in Spanish on the phone with friends. They also engaged me in long, complex conversations as they went about their work; all four women told me how much they enjoyed having someone around to keep them company.

When not at home, the women spent most of their time in the enclave. Three participants married Salvadoran husbands after arriving in the US whom they met through community connections (the fourth participant, Mariela, married before migrating). All the women and their husbands had jobs they had acquired through enclave connections and where they were therefore able to use mostly or entirely Spanish. Among other things, I observed the women participating regularly in Spanish-language Zumba classes, going out with or hosting parties for Spanish-speaking friends, fending off salespeople for Latinx pyramid schemes, and attending Latinx Christian rock concerts. As is typical for many Central American immigrants, the participants' shared church community, made up mostly of Salvadoran and Mexican immigrants, played a central role in their lives, giving them opportunities to interact in Spanish at worship services, gatherings, and events as well as to take on leadership roles (Menjívar, 1999a, b, 2006). Once, I witnessed Carmen distributing sack lunches to a group of mostly white homeless people gathered at the back of the church – a reversal of stereotypical roles in which white English speakers are in a position of power to "help" ELL refugees and immigrants.

The Latinx enclave also provided the women with opportunities to accomplish many of their regular errands, even without much knowledge of English. Several times per week, the women shopped at grocery stores and ordered from or dined at restaurants. Though some of these visits required minimal English, including regular trips to Sam's Club, Walmart, McDonald's, the dollar store, etc., the women often frequented establishments which were primarily Spanish-speaking, such as the Latin market and Mexican/Central American restaurants. Latinx businesses provided spaces for the women to navigate complex interactions entirely in Spanish. For example, I watched Mariela deftly navigate ordering the exact right type, cut, and amount of meat from a butcher at the Latin Market. Another time I watched her craft a complex food order at a Guatemalan restaurant consisting of items not on the menu. My observations suggest that had these been American businesses, she would not have been able to accomplish either of these tasks.

Finally, the enclave provided a space where the participants' children could learn about and maintain the culture and language of their parents, something all the participants told me was important to them. Importantly, while enclave participation

likely prevented the women themselves from developing better English skills, it did not limit their children's English abilities. Even though all four participants used only Spanish with their children and most of the children used only Spanish with their parents, all the children were entirely fluent in English and most were excelling in school and in other ways. For example, Aaron (Carmen's oldest son) was a university student with a high-paying job, and Eduardo (Mariela's son) was an honors-earning high schooler with interests in theater and film. In other words, for these focal families, participation in the Latinx enclave did NOT create cultural and linguistic isolation beyond the first generation.

These observations suggest an important finding about the women's ESL needs that is seldom considered in ESL program design: the women had very few opportunities in their daily lives to utilize or practice English. This was true even for Mariela, the one participant actively studying English. Still, the women's situations did generate a desire to improve their English skills, as I explore in the next section.

6 English Language Needs and the Participants' Stated Goals

While Spanish dominated most daily contexts and the women's had limited immediate need for more English, the women's desire to fulfill their long-term goals generated a strong motivation to improve their English skills. A common thread running through the participants' interview data was that a greater knowledge of English had the potential to increase their independence and to unlock long-term economic and social benefits that were presently out of their reach.

For example, during their interviews, all the women expressed that knowing more English would help them overcome many of their economic difficulties. They talked about being able to get better jobs in the short run: Carmen and her husband could be promoted at the factory; Mariela could gain English-speaking house-cleaning clients and grow her business; etc. They also told me that in the long run, English would help them pursue their long-term goals such as completing their GEDs (Julissa), obtaining training to work as medical technicians (Mariela and Julissa), working in the profession they were qualified for in their home country (Luciana), etc. The women also spoke of the ways increasing their own English proficiency would help their children, noting that if they had better jobs, they would be able to move to nicer neighborhoods and distance their children from the pervasive influence of bad friends, drugs, and gangs.

Finally, the women wanted the expanded social opportunities they could gain through a greater knowledge of English. Mariela and Carmen in particular spoke of being able to *"desenvolverse mas"* (get more involved) with the English-speaking community and to make more friends. The women discussed the importance of English to having a less burdensome life in the US.

While the women's desire to improve their English was strong, their lack of time and other resources made it difficult for them to actually move forward with this goal. However, as I outline in the next section, the women were able to draw off their existing communicative and translanguaging skills to get by in many situations despite this.

7 English Language Needs

Notwithstanding the ubiquity of Spanish-speaking contexts in the women's lives, some situations consistently arose where the women needed to use English to accomplish routine tasks. These included visits to mainstream American stores and restaurants (at least once per week), doctor or dentist's offices (every few months), banks (on occasion), and the children's schools (every month or two).

7.1 Strategies to Get By

The women managed in these situations by using minimal English and applying clever communication strategies, translanguaging, and other in-context resources. Often, the women minimized their need for English by using short, memorized formulas, referred to in the literature as prefabricated patterns (see Dornyei, 1995, 1998) or one-word responses. They also relied on deixis, gesture, and, in more complicated situations, help from their children or other translators, including me.

7.1.1 Prefabricated Patterns and Deixis/Gesture

According to my observational data, use of prefabricated patterns was the women's most ubiquitous, and generally successful, English strategy. The patterns tended to have no pauses between words and low articulation of syllable differences and were sometimes missing certain phonemes, suggesting they had been memorized as a single entity.

For example, during one of my visits with her, Luciana used prefabricated patterns to successfully pay for her husband's business insurance via phone, something she did regularly. She started out the call by saying, "I need to *maka* payment." After the woman on the other end of the line responded, Luciana said, "I *hava* new number" before reading off her credit card number to the woman. Luciana was very conscious of the strategies she had used to navigate the situation, describing to me how she had memorized the phrases beforehand and always used the same phrases to get by in this routine interaction. Similarly, Mariela told me that her main English strategy was to memorize phrases and formulas immediately before going to an event that she guessed she might need while there.

Sometimes, the women's use of prefabricated patterns was combined with strategies such as gesture and deixis. Mariela used both prefabricated patterns (bolded) and deixis (italics) to successfully navigate the following conversation with two Walmart employees:

(Mariela and I stand in a Walmart aisle looking at a display of soda cans. Mariela tells me she wants to confirm the price of the soda.)

1	M:	(taps employee on shoulder) **'scuse me,** lady… **hammash** is? (*deictic gesture to*
2		*soda display*)
3	E1:	uh uh ask-- she might know (deictic gesture to a different worker nearby, who is
4		helping another customer)
5	M:	uhh… (hesitates)
6	E1:	in the yellow vest
7	M:	**oh ok thank you** (turns to the busy yellow-vested worker nearby. We wait for a
8		long time.)
9		(to the worker helping the other customer) **escuseme I hava question.** sorry.
10		(other worker is still busy and doesn't respond. We continue to wait.)
11	M:	(turns again to the worker helping a customer) **hammash** is…is…*this…. (deictic*
12		*gesture again to soda display*)
13	E2:	that one? (deictic gesture to display)
14	M:	uh huh
15	E2:	$6.97.
16	M:	**oh ok thank you**
17	E2:	yeah you're welcome

In this conversation, Mariela's strategy use helped her succeed in the interaction even when it took unexpected turns. The use of deixis, in particular, helped her avoid having to put together longer sentences with more complex grammar and vocabulary: her gesture and use of *this* (line 11), for example, successfully replaced her having to generate a phrase like "a case of soda."

Prefabricated patterns did come with limitations, and occasionally, the women's pattern formation "went awry": For example, at the Latin market, Mariela introduced me to her (Latinx) friend, a teacher at her children's former preschool, "kiondemo." After listening to Mariela talk at length about how much "kiondemo" had helped her children, I was curious; an online search for preschool programs for low-income families revealed that she was referring to Kids on the Move. Interactions like this showed that unintelligible communication sometimes occurred when the women were unable to recognize the grammar and vocabulary components that made up the patterns they used.

Additionally, memorized phrases did not always apply if the interaction were too involved (as often happened during my observations of school, doctor, and bank interactions). Julissa and Luciana specifically mentioned to me that long and/or non-routine conversations were difficult for them and they couldn't always keep up.

Even with these limitations, however, the use of prefabricated patterns, as well as deixis, allowed the women to succeed in English situations that went beyond their usual speaking ability. Such strategies could be viewed as a crutch, hindering the

women from practicing their actual English skills; however, from a language ecology perspective, in which all forms of in-context communication are valid aspects of languaging, the women's strategies were a valuable linguistic asset.

7.1.2 Short Responses

In a related strategy, the women minimized their need for English by responding to English questions and comments with short, one-word responses like *yes, no, thank you*, and *hi*. One successful example occurred during an observation with Luciana at Sam's Club: While checking out with a cart full of groceries, the cashier asked Luciana if she would be paying for everything on one card. She replied, "**no**," but offered no further explanation. Thinking she had misunderstood the question, I told the cashier, *actually yes, this will all be on one card*. But Luciana then said to me, in Spanish, *no, it will be on two cards, not one, because the Iglesia is paying for the food for the fundraiser*. In this interaction, Luciana demonstrated a high level of comprehension, successfully navigating the situation even with my own confusion hindering her.

On the other hand, the participants sometimes used short responses, unsuccessfully, to mask their lack of comprehension – a survival strategy referred to in the literature as "gratuitous concurrence" (Liberman, 1980). I observed one example as Luciana checked her daughter Kimberly out from school. When the secretary asked if Kimberly would be gone the whole day, Luciana responded, **"yes."** A few minutes later, however, the secretary realized that Luciana was checking Kimberly out to take her to lunch and asked if Kimberly would be coming back to school after lunch. Again, Luciana said, **"yes"**, introducing two contradictory responses. I eventually had to clarify to the secretary that Kimberly would, in fact, be returning after lunch.

The efficacy of short responses seemed to break down most often when the women did not understand the broader pragmatic context of the conversation. In these cases, use of short responses was an ineffective strategy. However, in many cases, it was clear that the women did understand what was going on and were engaging appropriately, albeit concisely. In this way, the data point to how effective a few English words can be in some situations.

7.1.3 Translanguaging/Relying on Outside Resources

In more complex English situations, the women had to rely on resources outside themselves to get by, usually by utilizing a translator. In several settings, the women asked me to translate for them, sometimes in speaking but usually when they needed help understanding English in writing. For example, Mariela asked me to help her translate and compare the ingredients on two bottles of diet pills at Walmart, and Luciana asked me to translate the words "bone in" and "pork butt" on a package of meat and to help her decipher which almond milk at the supermarket was

unsweetened. I wondered what would have happened in each of these situations if the women had been alone at the store when the need for translation arose.

I also witnessed various instances of translanguaging by the participants using their children to translate for them (both in person and on the phone) while doing such tasks as making or going to dentist appointments and interacting with school officials. The participants told me that their children also translated for them in situations I did not personally observe such as while ordering with the family at American restaurants. In most of what I observed, utilizing children as translators worked fairly well. However, I witnessed one instance of a reluctant child (Oscar) refusing to translate for his mother (Luciana) when she asked for his help, and Luciana and Mariela both told me in interviews that some of their interactions were too personal or high stakes to be suitable for young translators.

Again, from a language ecology perspective, the women's use of outside resources like translators was a valid part of their (trans)languaging practice. Still, the women's reliance on translators hindered their ability to act more independently (as per Luciana's interview comments) and was limited to the translator's availability and reliability.

7.1.4 Improvised English

In less common cases, the women and their families engaged in unscripted, improvised English interactions without the aid of translators or memorized responses. These interactions sometimes went well, especially when they were concise, such as in an observation where Carmen asked the group of homeless people referenced earlier, "Hey, do you want lunch?" (this was the full extent of her speaking). But the interactions did not always go well, especially when they got longer or more complex. For example, I observed one situation in which an American contractor attempted to chat with Rodrigo (Luciana's husband) as he laid carpet. The interaction was strained as Rodrigo struggled to keep up. Such data show that, even though strategy use enabled the participants to succeed in many situations, their struggle to put together their own novel sentences held them back from greater flexibility and fluency – things essential to the fulfilment of their long-term goals.

8 Discussion & Recommendations for ESL Programs for CBLs

My observations of the women's authentic contexts led to a number of findings and insights. First, as mentioned above, because the women were able to use Spanish in most routine encounters, they had very few opportunities to utilize or practice English despite their stated desires to improve it. This lack of practice opportunities, as well as a lack of time, was a major factor keeping them from their language goals.

Still, even while the women remained at low levels of overall English proficiency, their effective, repeated use of communication strategies and translanguaging led them, in many instances, to positive (though localized) outcomes.

This variety of communicative strategies was sufficient to help the women succeed in most immediate contexts, especially since most of the English encounters I witnessed occurred in consistent and predictable ways and locations. However, while these strategies should be viewed as a valid part of their full linguistic repertoire, they were not always sufficient in situations where more flexible, improvised English was required. As noted above, the women's communication broke down when an interaction required them to move beyond memorized responses into natural, improvised speaking or to understand a semantic or pragmatic context outside their normal repertoire. This pointed to the need for the women to gain more flexible English skills, particularly the ability to form novel sentences and to better decode spoken (and written) English, in order to navigate the spontaneous conversations where more complex and/or academic English was needed. In addition to more effective formal instruction (leading to improved vocabulary and grammatical skills), addressing the needs of CBLs would require more synchronous learning experiences, which traditional ESL programs often fail to provide. In what follows, we provide some recommendations for how ESL programs can better address the language goals and needs of CBLs.

8.1 Programs Must Facilitate Opportunities for CBLs to Practice English

Many ESL programs assume that students have ample opportunities to be immersed in English outside of school, turning students loose after class to practice what they're learning without realizing that for CBLs like the women in this study, no such practice opportunities exist despite living within a larger English-speaking society. One simple way to address this discrepancy could be for ESL programs themselves to facilitate or create opportunities for learners to practice English outside of class (forming chat groups among students, facilitating lunch meetups, etc.). While this approach has been used to benefit groups of international students, CBLs like the women in the study may have limited time in their daily lives to dedicate to activities outside their normal responsibilities, so this plan would need to fit into their daily routines. A better solution could be to implement a flipped classroom model – something that has already been shown to improve learning outcomes for adult ELLs (Han, 2015; Webb & Doman, 2016). In this model, students spend their 'homework' time learning concepts at home through video or written text, then spend the majority of in-class time practicing in English with other students.

An even more holistic solution, however, must take the deeply contextualized nature of language learning into account (see Pennycook, 2010; van Lier, 2008, 2011). CBLs like those in this study could greatly benefit from situated learning

experiences (see Gee, 2004) that extend the boundaries of classroom walls and help them create meaning in authentic contexts and environments. One way to do this is by exploring learners' existing resources: for example, finding ways to utilize learners' English-speaking children to help teach their parents or utilizing existing social networks and community spaces like churches for meaningful English instruction and interactions.

8.2 Only a Finite Number of Immediate, Practical Situations Need to Be Addressed

The approach of many community-based ESL programs and texts, including the curriculum Mariela used in her class, is to give students tools for navigating a wide range of hypothetical, practical situations. As discussed above, however, the women in my study's daily lives included only a small number of consistent situations where the need for English arose. By identifying and honing in on the actual situations where a specific group of ELLs consistently need English, ESL programs can effectively target many practical needs while avoiding the teaching of unnecessary content. Of course, this suggestion only covers ELLs' practical, immediate needs, but programs could honor learner agency and avoid wasting time on a huge range of hypotheical situations by looking to learners' own experiences to see where immediate, practical needs lie and then designing learning experiences around these.

8.3 CBLs Bring Assets of Many Kinds to the Table (Including L1 Assets)

The women in the study already possessed many assets, including the various strategies they had mastered to navigate English situations as well as a rich repertoire of L1 skills. ESL programs can find ways to build up ELLs' existing skills, strategies, and resources, recognizing that even beginning ESL learners are not starting from square one and recognizing that all types of linguistic knowledge, preexisting strategies, and communication patterns are a part of "doing" language successfully. Programs can also bolster CBL's assets by building their literacy and other skills in their L1 (particularly for languages that use a Romanized script).

The participants' natural interests and conversation topics were diverse and complex when they spoke Spanish. Much of our conversation was rich in academic language features, including authoritative and persuasive voice, explicitness, decontextualization, abstraction and nominalization, etc. Recognizing CBLs' academic skills and interests, even among those who do not have academically-related goals, is important for ELL programs seeking to find balance between practical and academic foci in their curricula and approaches while also recognizing learners'

intelligence and capabilities in their first language and in the broader contexts of their experience. One way to do this would be to employ democratic classroom principles, allowing the learners themselves to determine what topics, content, and skills they want to cover in class (see Auerbach, 1992; van Lier, 2008). Through this perspective, courses will be able to meet the needs of students, like Mariela, who have a baseline desire to express themselves and their wills/voices in a variety of situations.

9 Limitations and Suggestions for Additional Studies

As Salvadoran immigrant women from the same community, the participants in my study shared many characteristics. While these participants were, in some ways, representative of Thurston's larger Latinx community, their experiences cannot be extrapolated to those of all CBLs. Future studies could possibly gain diverse results from studying other Latinx CBL populations, including men, LGBTQ+ individuals, immigrants from other Latin American countries, etc. The goal of this study is not to propose sweeping generalities about Latinx CBLs so much as to illustrate the lived language experiences and needs of one group of real-life CBLs.

Future ethnographic studies could also narrow in on aspects of participants' language experiences in ways I only broadly addressed here, such as focusing on their use of academic language, their experiences inside the ESL classroom, or their experiences doing homework outside the classroom.

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A System of Erasure: State and Federal Education Policies Surrounding Adult L2 Learners with Emergent Literacy in California

Lisa Gonzalves

1 Introduction

When an adult migrant begins to acquire a second language, it is often presumed that the learner is already equipped with first language literacy and can therefore transfer these same literacy skills during their acquisition of the new, second language. However, many adult second language (L2) learners lack the opportunity to develop first language (L1) literacy prior to migration. Currently, nearly 10% of the world population is unable to read and write in any language (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2017). Many of these individuals and their families may need to migrate at some point in their lives, thus needing to acquire new languages to function in their new settings. Such adults need to learn both an entirely new language and doubly first-time print literacy. Yet, unlike children who generally acquire initial literacy at a young age in their L1, these adults are acquiring literacy in adulthood, which is arguably more difficult due to differences in brain plasticity (Knowland & Thomas, 2014) as well as social and economic barriers which impact one's available time to devote to learning. Moreover, adult immigrants and refugees with emergent literacy may be acquiring this first-time ability to read and write in a new language they may have never previously been exposed to. Imaginably, their simultaneous process of acquiring an entirely new language along with the acquisition of first-time literacy (in the novel language) can be a remarkable undertaking.

In 2009 it was estimated that somewhere between 3% and 15% percent of incoming immigrants to the U.S. do not have print literacy in their first language (Tarone et al., 2009). Nonetheless, these adults may enter school on the first day and be expected to engage with text despite potentially having no prior experience with reading and writing (in any language). Classroom instruction of such students, then, includes teaching language and the fundamentals of print literacy simultaneously.

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However, while a research domain on *children* and their acquisition of L1 language and print literacy has been well established, there is very little research on *adult* emergent print literacy both in the L1 as well as the L2 context (Greenberg et al., 2017; Strube, 2009; van de Craats et al., 2006). This is of great concern, as prevailing research highly influences language education theories and practices, which in turn shape local, state, and federal education policies; consequently, language learners underrepresented in research may have their needs misrepresented in governing educational policies. For example, if adult L2 learners with emergent literacy learn and progress differently than literate adult L2 learners, standards and assessments which were created based on second language research conducted on literate learners may not then 'fit' adults new to reading and writing.

In California, a typical site for immigrant and refugee adults to enroll in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes is at one of hundreds of adult schools located throughout the state. Instructional course offerings generally begin at Level 1 or Beginning ESL Literacy level – an appropriate level for students new to both English and print literacy. California adult schools, like all publicly funded schools in the country, must abide by state and federal policies which govern their programs. Yet, there is currently little scholarship on the educational policies surrounding adult schools in the United States, much less with a focus on this beginning level of students. The purpose of this chapter, then, is to outline these mandated adult education policies and their relationship to one another, and to then analyze how well such policies support adult immigrant and refugee learners with emergent literacy.

2 Literature Review

In contrast to literate adult L2 learners largely represented in second language acquisition scholarship, L2 learners with emergent literacy face differentiated hurdles which have a great impact on their pedagogical needs. To begin, adults acquiring first-time alphabetic print literacy in their second language must first develop a systematic understanding of the basic parts of words (e.g., phonemes, syllables, consonant clusters, morphemes). However, given the L2 context, this development occurs in the target language as opposed to their L1. For example, while L2 adult learners who are literate in alphabetic languages already have a well-established understanding of morphology from their L1 (such as understanding plural and past tense markers), adults with emergent literacy will struggle with morphological awareness as they have not developed this knowledge in their L1, and therefore cannot map this knowledge to the L2 (MacWhinney, 2018). Similarly, adults new to literacy may need to acquire an entirely new phonological system which entails acquiring an understanding of what a phoneme is, what it represents, and, in the case of alphabetic languages, how to map individual or combined sounds onto a print letter, and how to combine phonemes in order to create a word. While L2 learners from other alphabetic languages will arrive to the classroom having this understanding, an adult developing first-time literacy may have difficulty

cognitively perceiving or distinguishing these phonemes, as they do not possess basic metalinguistic (here, metaphonological) knowledge in their L1 (Kurvers, 2015; Onderdelinden et al., 2009; Young-Scholten & Strom, 2006).

As with children, adult L2 learners acquiring first-time literacy must also be explicitly taught such concepts and allowed ample time to develop an understanding of their significance and use. However, unlike most children, this instruction will occur in the L2, which the learner may be completely unfamiliar with. Perfetti et al.'s (2002) lexical quality hypothesis suggests that, in order to fully understand text, one must have the full menu of orthographic knowledge – including phonology, morphology, written form, *and* lexical knowledge- to make complete connections. For this reason, oral language skills (for both L1 and L2 learners) are a critical piece in the word recognition and retrieval process (Nation & Snowling, 2004). When working with L2 learners with adult literacy, it is suggested by practitioners to teach oral skills first, so that the learner make lexical connections to print text they are attempting to engage with (Condelli et al., 2002; Tammelin-Laine & Martin, 2015).

Unsurprisingly, an adult acquiring first-time literacy faces an overwhelming perceptual load involved in their acquisition of first-time literacy. In addition to the structural features of language and new vocabulary, students must also learn how to interact with classroom semiotic structures such as diacritics, graphs and charts, icons, Scantron sheets, and other such visual symbols used in the classrooms (Altherr Flores, 2017; Larsen-Freeman, 2018; Song & Wiese, 2011). In some cases, these adults may also need to acquire the motor skills necessary to maneuver a writing device. Acquiring the skill to produce straight and rounded lines not only takes time to develop, but can also occupy cognitive resources as one is attuned to this physiological development (Wagner et al., 2011). In other words, when a student is struggling with handwriting and is therefore fully focused on emergent penmanship, they are not able to simultaneously attend to other elements of learning such as lexical meaning or phonics in that moment.

Given the wealth of novel skills an adult L2 learner new to literacy must acquire, it can take an incredibly long time to learn the basics of reading and writing (Wrigley, 2001). When compared with L2 adults with even a few years of formalized literacy development, L2 adults developing first-time literacy in the L2 classroom develop at a far slower rate (Kurvers et al., 2015; Onderdelinden et al., 2009). It has been suggested that it could take such beginning learners an average of 950 instructional hours to learn to decode simple, short text (Kurvers et al., 2015).

2.1 This Study

Given the nuanced pedagogical needs and learning trajectories of L2 adults with emergent literacy, it is critical that language education policies surrounding such learners speak to their differentiated needs. Given my history working in California's adult schools and the great number of L2 students with emergent literacy enrolled

in my classrooms, I have seen firsthand the mismatch between state and federal policies governing California's adult schools, and the pedagogical needs of L2 learners developing first-time literacy.

The field of language policy and planning has offered us a wealth of studies which complicate educational policies, showing the contention between such policies and the learning needs of vulnerable learners, and advocating for policy change in the name of equity and social justice (see Hornberger, 2011; Pease-Alvarez & Thompson, 2014; Wiley & Garcia, 2016). Inspired by this work, I here offer an in-depth exploration of educational policies surrounding adult L2 learners with emergent literacy. The aim of this chapter is twofold: (1) to describe the larger landscape of adult education policy as is situated in California's adult school system, and (2) to consider the impact of such policies on adult ESL learners developing first-time literacy in an L2 context.

3 Methodological Approach

The data in this chapter was extracted from a larger ethnographic study focused on a group of L2 learners at a Northern California adult school and their development of first-time literacy in an L2 context. Several scholars have advocated for an ethnographic approach to language planning and policy as it allows for a deeper analysis of policy beyond the text itself (Hornberger & Johnson, 2007; Johnson & Ricento, 2013; McCarty, 2015). Johnson (2011) further proposes leveraging a *critical discourse analysis* within an ethnographic approach, which allows the researcher to, "analyze the intertextual and interdiscursive connections between the various layers of policy texts and discourses" (p. 276). A critical lens provides us a tool to evaluate the scale of overarching policies, as well as look critically at the *ethics* of such policies as they play out in varying contexts – who benefits, and who suffers under such mandates (Ball, 1997; Prunty, 1985). Expanding the focus beyond a textual analysis, a critical policy analysis is often used to combat varying social injustices in educational settings, and imagine new educational possibilities (Diem et al., 2014; Ozga, 1999).

When delving into the educational policy landscape, it is essential to understand there is not just one policy to examine; rather, there is an expansive history of policies which are both interrelated and constantly in flux, motivated by political and corporate ideologies which shape the classroom landscape. Critically, an analysis of how these multiple state and federal policies intersect with and relate to one another (what Fairclough (2003) refers to as *intertextuality* of policy analysis) then allows us to problematize such policies as they collectively impact educational communities. This holistic approach allows for more comprehensive insight in exploring possible avenues for change, as opposed to tackling each policy as separate from one another.

3.1 Textual Collection and Analysis

Following Johnson (2011), I conducted a critical discourse analysis of the policies surrounding Beginning ESL Literacy learners enrolled in California's adult schools. This allowed me to showcase the individual policies, their interconnectedness, and the educational injustices embedded between them. These included federally produced documents surrounding ESL level descriptors, authorized assessment systems, and national ESL standards. As many adult education policies vary by state, I also included policies mandated by the California Department of Education (CDE) – Office of Adult Education, including assessment protocols and funding guidelines. For each, I extracted the portions which pertained to students with emergent literacy. I then proceeded to do the following: (1) attempted to align these policies, to showcase the systematic discrepancies between their structure; (2) noted empty areas, or areas where no policy exists which pertains to this level of student; (3) engaged in a critical analysis of the relevant portions of text to assess how well the existing policies pertain to students with emergent literacy. In this latter category, data was analyzed against what is known about emergent literacy development in (L2) adults, and was coded regarding the alignment of these descriptors to students' leveled abilities, feasibility of students to achieve the stated benchmarks, and the equity of the policy compared to other ESL levels.

4 Research Context

In the United States, the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) is the federal agency which governs adult education throughout the country. Many states also have their own state-level adult education unit, such as the California Department of Education – Office of Adult Education. States must not only adhere to federally mandated policies but may also choose to develop some of their own state guidelines under which all in-state adult schools must abide by. In some cases, the federal guidelines consist of a menu of options which individual states can choose from (such as standardized assessment tests).

As my research is positioned in a California context, in this chapter I will focus on adult education policies which pertain to California adult schools. In this way, I will present three types of policies: (1) federal level guidelines governing all state-level offices of adult education; (2) federal level guidelines which California has chosen to adopt; as well as (3) California-specific adult education policies. What follows is a critical explanation of such policies, specifically as they pertain to adult ESL students with emergent literacy.

5 Findings: State and Federal Policies Defining L2 Adults with Emergent Literacy

This section will begin by providing the background of adult education policy in California in order to situate the context; following, the language of federally mandated policies as well as federal policies which California has chosen to adopt will be presented. Throughout, there will remain a focus on L2 adults with emergent literacy.

5.1 Funding and Assessment

Most California adult schools primarily receive ESL funding from two sources – the California Adult Education Program (CAEP) and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

CAEP is a partnership between the California Community College Chancellor's Office and the California Department of Education (CDE) to streamline programmatic offerings among institutions serving adult learners and distribute state moneys to partners working within this initiative. With an annual budget of $539 million (California Department of Education and the Chancellors Office of the California Community Colleges, 2020), the California Adult Education Program has played a critical role in maintaining adult education throughout the state. Funds are distributed based on regional needs analyses conducted prior to 2015, and are distributed to agencies quarterly, in tandem with agencies submitting quarterly progress reports to the state. Notably, not all $500 million is allocated directly to adult schools, but is also shared with community college and corrections partners.

In addition to this consortia money, adult schools can also receive federal payment points for student progress; however, they must use assessment tests approved by National Reporting Services (NRS) to formally demonstrate student gain. There are three main standardized tests federally approved by the NRS for adult ESL reporting: CASAS, BEST Literacy and BEST Plus 2.0, and TABE Complete Language Assessment System–English (National Reporting System for Adult Education, 2021). The CDE, however, only accepts adult school assessment outcomes which are measured by CASAS tests. California maintains an awards-based system, meaning that instead of allocating a set amount of funds to each adult education facility each year, schools instead receive part of their funding through demonstrating gains in language skills. The source of such funds comes from the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy (California Department of Education, n.d.). The NRS (and subsequently, the CDE) have only accepted CASAS reading and listening assessments to measure English language development (Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems, n.d.-a).

In U.S. adult schools, ESL levels are determined by the National Reporting System for Adult Education (NRS)'s Educational Functioning Levels (EFLs). Currently, the NRS designates six different ESL levels, beginning with Beginning ESL Literacy and continuing through Advanced ESL. The 2016 descriptors for Beginning ESL Literacy describe a student who has little or minimal ability to speak and understand English and has little to no literacy skills in any language. The detailed descriptors are indicated in Table 1 below.

In late 2017, the NRS released the New Educational Functioning Level Descriptors for ESL (National Reporting System for Adult Education, 2021). These descriptors were meant to "address the most critical concepts for assessment and instruction for adult learners" (pp. B-19), and therefore constitute the exit-level descriptors for each level. The EFLs spell out three key areas of student performance: *interpretative* (what they understand), *performative* (what they can produce), and *interactive* (understanding and performing combined). Table 2 indicates the new EFLS for Beginning ESL Literacy.

Taken together, the combined 2016 and 2017 descriptors serve as the 'bookends' for each level, and which adult schools should adhere to accordingly. Importantly, the NRS level standards provide the base framework upon which national standards and assessments are built, and to which they refer. These are outlined, in turn, below.

5.2 *College and Career Readiness Standards*

In 2013 the U.S. Department of Education- Office of Vocational and Adult Education (now OCTAE) published the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education (CCRS), "to forge a stronger link among adult education, postsecondary

Table 1 NRS Educational Functioning Level Descriptors

Literacy level	Listening and speaking	Basic reading and writing	Functional and workplace skill
Beginning ESL Literacy	Individual cannot speak or understand English, or understands only isolated words and phrases.	Individual has no or minimal reading or writing skills in any language. May have little or no comprehension of how print corresponds to spoken language and may have difficulty using a writing instrument.	Individual functions minimally or not at all in English and can communicate only through gestures of a few isolated words, such as name and other personal information; may recognize only common signs or symbols (e.g., stop sign, product logos); can handle only very routine entry-level jobs that do not require oral or written communication in English. There is no knowledge or use of computers or technology.

Source: Office of Vocational and Adult Education (2016, p. 19)

Table 2 EFLs for Beginning ESL Literacy

Interpretive: ELLs ready to exit the Beginning ESL Literacy Level are able to, with prompting and support (including context, and visual aids), identify a few key words and phrases from read alouds, visual images, and oral presentations using a very limited set of strategies. ELLs ready to exit this level can, with prompting and support (including context and visual aids), recognize the meaning of a few frequently occurring words and phrases in simple oral presentations and read alouds about familiar topics, experiences, and events. They can recognize the meaning of some words learned through conversations, reading, and being read to.
Performative: ELLs ready to exit this level are able to, with prompting and support (including context and visual aids), communicate simple information or feelings about familiar topics, events, or experiences. They can express a preference or opinion about a familiar topic. ELLs ready to exit this level are able to show limited awareness of differences between informal and formal language use. With support (including context and visual aids), ELLs ready to exit this level are able to recognize and use a small number of frequently occurring nouns and verbs, use a narrow range of vocabulary and syntactically simple sentences, and understand and respond to simple questions.
Interactive: ELLs ready to exit this level are able to, with limited involvement, participate in short conversations and written exchanges about familiar topics and in familiar contexts. They can respond to simple yes/no questions and some wh- questions. ELLs ready to exit this level are able to, with prompting and support, participate in short, shared research projects, gather information from a few provided sources, and label some key information.

Source: National Reporting System for Adult Education (2021, pp. B20–21)

education, and the world of work'" (Pimentel, 2013, p. 2). The CCRS for English Language Arts and Literacy is divided into 5 strands: *Reading, Writing, Speaking & Listening* (combined), *Language* (i.e., grammar), and additionally *Reading: Foundational Skills*. Each of these contains up to 10 anchor-specific standards which are each divided into 5 levels, providing a level-specific standard for each anchor (Pimentel, 2013). These standards begin at Level A, which encompasses three distinct NRS levels: Beginning ESL Literacy through ESL Beginning High. Thereafter, the levels continue: Level B = Intermediate Low ESL, Level C = Intermediate High ESL, and so on. Within this framework, differentiated level objectives for Beginning ESL Literacy, ESL Beginning Low, and ESL Beginning High are not distinguished, as they are all combined into Level A. Moreover, as many of the CCR standards focus on high level academic skills, the anchors themselves lack content altogether for all of Level A. To illustrate, Table 3 provides a sampling of CCRS writing anchors for Level A.

The last CCR strand, namely Reading Standards: Foundational Skills, lists all of three standards which are relevant to students with emergent literacy. While there is no Anchor 1, Anchors 2 and 3 focus on phonemic awareness and segmenting abilities, and Anchor 4 is simply about the ability to read. However, there is no mention of emergent writing skills, such as the ability to copy, or the ability to spell.

Table 3 CCRS writing anchors & corresponding level A benchmarks (Pimentel, 2013)

CCR Writing Anchor	Topic	Level A Benchmarks
CCR Anchor 1	Argumentative writing	*(Blank)*
CCR Anchor 2	Informative/explanatory writing	Level A: "Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure."
CCR Anchor 3	Narrative writing	Level A: "Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure."
CCR Anchor 4	Writing development and organization.	*(Blank)*
CCR Anchor 5	Writing process:	Level A: "With guidance and support focus on a topic, respond to questions and suggestions from peers, and add details to strengthen writing as needed."
CCR Anchor 6	Use of technology in writing	Level A: "With guidance and support, use a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers."

5.3 English Language Proficiency Standards

After the CCRS emerged, many adult education practitioners around the country felt there needed to be more language provided to support the use and implementation of CCRS in actual ESL classrooms. Thus, the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) were born, providing the necessary language for students to access academic and career-based content standards (American Institutes for Research, 2016). There are 10 ELP standards in total and each standard is then divided into 5 level descriptors which provide language-level targets for each standard. In the field, these ELP Standards are meant to detail 'how' to enact CCRS. Noticeably, there is no correlation between ELPS and CCR Foundational Skills (phonics, basic reading, etc.) which would be appropriate for Beginning ESL Literacy students. Furthermore, shortly after publication the NRS borrowed the language of the ELPS, verbatim, to define the NRS Educational Functioning Levels. The language indicated in ELPS level 1 was used to define NRS level 2, the language from ELPS level 2 was (again, verbatim) used to define NRS level 3, and so on. As the NRS defined the lowest level of ELPS as starting at NRS Level 2, NRS Level 1, which would include students with emergent literacy, is noticeably absent from the ELPS.

5.4 Civics Curriculum and Assessments

In addition to gains demonstrated on (CASAS) assessments, U.S. adult schools can also collect WIOA Title II funds from student gains earned via English Literacy and Civics Education (EL Civics) – curriculum focusing on English literacy, language, and civic participation modules, as well as Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE), which may also include workforce training. Adult schools select from pre-made modules (or create their own), and via a variety of assessments show learner gains in real-life tasks related to a variety of civic/academic/workplace areas such as health, banking, worker safety, digital literacy, employability, etc. A student must demonstrate a CASAS score equivalent to EFL Level 2 (ESL Beginning Low) or higher to earn payment points for EL CIVICS/IELCE (Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems, 2018). As such, while Beginning ESL Literacy students can participate in EL Civics/IELCE modules and assessments, agencies will not be eligible to receive monetary awards for their school based on these students' successful completion of the stated objectives.

6 Discussion

The state and federal policies outlined in the preceding section firmly play a role in shaping the adult education landscape, and subsequently impacting L2 adults with emergent literacy in the classroom. As in many cases there is an intimate marriage between one policy and at least one other, this section will focus on how these policies speak to, relate to, and influence one another. Taken together there are two clear areas of concern: (1) misalignment of mandated policies, (2) unsupportive and/or non-existent policies as pertain to this population of learner.

6.1 (Mis)Alignment of Policies

As seen in the previous section, the major adult education policies each provide a separately defined framework regarding ESL student leveling. As it might be confusing for some to situate all these policies against one another, Table 4 showcases how the EFLs, ELPS, CCRS, and CASAS coordinate by language proficiency level. As is evident, these co-existing policies themselves are often misaligned. To illustrate, there are similar terms such as 'Level C' which correlate to different language proficiency levels depending on which system one is referring to: within the CCRS, Level C correlates to NRS EFL Level 5, and within the CASAS assessment system Level C refers to NRS EFL Level 6. As an additional example, ELPS Level 1 correlates to NRS Level 2, ELPS Level 2 correlates to NRS Level 3, and so on. Moreover, both CCRS and CASAS level A absorb two ELPS and three NRS

Table 4 EFLs, ELPS, CCRS, and CASAS correlation chart

<table>
<tr><th>National Reporting Service Educational Functioning Levels</th><th>English Language Proficiency Standards</th><th>College and Career Readiness Standards</th><th>CASAS Levels (Reading Scores)</th></tr>
<tr><td>EFL Level 1
Beginning ESL Literacy</td><td></td><td rowspan="3">Level A</td><td rowspan="3">Level A</td></tr>
<tr><td>EFL Level 2
Beginning Low ESL</td><td>ELP Level 1</td></tr>
<tr><td>EFL Level 3
Beginning High ESL</td><td>ELP Level 2</td></tr>
<tr><td>EFL Level 4
Intermediate Low ESL</td><td>ELP Level 3</td><td>Level B</td><td rowspan="2">Level B</td></tr>
<tr><td>EFL Level 5
Intermediate High ESL</td><td>ELP Level 4</td><td>Level C</td></tr>
<tr><td>EFL Level 6
Advanced ESL</td><td>ELP Level 5</td><td>Level D</td><td>Level C</td></tr>
</table>

language levels. Imaginably, this bizarre (mis)alignment can cause much confusion in the field.

Significantly, while the NRS has outlined 6 clear levels of language proficiency, the other three systems only represent five, four, or three. Interestingly, only NRS Level 6, the most advanced level, is represented by a distinct level in the other three systems: accordingly, NRS Level 6 = ELP level 5 = CCRS Level D = CASAS Level C. The levels then become increasingly more combined as one descends lower on the proficiency scale. This combining of language levels is concerning, as it subsequently erases differentiated student needs per level. For example, CCRS level A represents three distinct language levels (and arguably, NRS level 1 could indeed be separated even further – see next section). Yet, the standards provided are a blanket set of benchmarks representing all three levels. As a result, it is not clear to instructors how to differentiate the CCRS Level A content between the three language levels in their classrooms, as this detailed guidance is not provided within the standards. Moreover, without articulated standards per level, it becomes nearly impossible to demonstrate student growth, as there is no benchmark by which to show the progression from NRS Level 1 to Level 2, etc.

6.2 Unsupportive and/or Non-existent State and Federal Policies

The findings also demonstrate that there exists a great lack of policies which speak directly to L2 adult learners with emergent literacy and their pedagogical needs; moreover, those that do exist largely disserve the differentiated learning needs of these learners. Many of these policies are intimately connected and will be highlighted as such.

6.2.1 Policy Area: Language Level

To begin, the NRS English Language Functioning Levels is the only policy which details 6 differentiated levels of ESL, beginning at Level 1 – Beginning ESL Literacy. However, not all students at this first level are at the emergent stage of developmental literacy. Many which enter this level may enter this level having literacy in a non-Roman alphabetic language, such as Russian or Arabic, or a non-alphabetic language, such and Mandarin, and thus need to learn Roman alphabetic literacy for the first time in addition to spoken English. These students with L1 literacy, albeit in a different script, still possess many more advantages than those with emergent literacy, as they have already passed through a series of stages entailing initial literacy acquisition (and beyond). L2 students acquiring first-time literacy in the L2 classroom, then, face developmental hurdles which do not pertain to their literate counterparts; furthermore, adults with emergent literacy progress at a much slower rate than students with even a few years of literacy development (Kurvers et al., 2015; Onderdelinden et al., 2009). Consequently, benchmarks requiring literacy may take them an incredible amount of time to achieve – much longer than the literate students who are studying alongside them. Moreover, the teacher must utilize separate sets of pedagogical approaches to meet each of these students' distinct educational needs. Indeed, it would be of great benefit to both teachers and students if NRS level 1 were separated into at least two levels. Instead, as the NRS levels mandate adult school levels nationwide, and consequently inform standardized assessments (which in California determines WIOA funding), the lack of differentiation perpetuates a larger system whereby students with emergent literacy have needs which are not articulated, and are thereby erased.

6.2.2 Intersecting Policy Areas: Standards and Levels

The College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) begins at Level A and encompass three distinctive NRS levels – Beginning ESL Literacy, Beginning Low, and Beginning High – and provides blanket benchmarks for all three levels. Looking at the specific standards, there are many benchmarks which are clearly out of reach for students with emergent literacy. Level A writing benchmarks begin with writing explanatory texts, writing narratives, and using digital tools to publish one's work – all which are clearly far-fetched goals for a student who is still struggling to copy letters and make connections between letters and their sounds, in addition to acquiring basic vocabulary. For an adult ESL student with emergent literacy, there exist a plethora of steps and skills which they must acquire before being able to perform this Level A writing content. Even for an L1 child, it takes years between the initial development of emergent literacy in preschool/kindergarten and the ability to write a short narrative. As such, the CCRS framework implies that a student with emergent literacy will likely be at level A for quite some time, as not only do they need to gain basic literacy skills which already takes an incredible amount of time, but will then need to advance through 2 more additional levels (NRS level 2 and 3). As

a result, they will be operating under the same set of benchmarks for years. Indeed, the CCRS does not acknowledge the wealth of skills students with emergent literacy must acquire to meet Level A benchmarks. Additionally, in many cases the CCRS has no articulated benchmark for level A whatsoever, continuing its enactment of erasing this population of learner.

Finally, the CCRS Foundational Skills section, which indeed mentions some beginning reading skills, makes no mention of initial writing skills. Critically, literacy scholarship has indicated that passive reading skills are not the same as productive writing skills – in other words, the ability to decode text is not the same ability to write (Bradley & Bryant, 1979; McCutchen, 1988). As a result, level-appropriate productive skills related to emergent writing are absent within the CCRS.

In a similar vein, the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) also provide no articulated standards which correspond to students with emergent literacy (instead, Level 1 begins at NRS level 2 or Beginning Low ESL). Absences like these are of note, as the formal policies cannot be examined because they do not in fact exist. Given this erasure of NRS Level 1 developmental benchmarks within both the ELPS and CCRS, the result is *a complete lack of national content standards for all students within this first level, which includes students with emergent literacy*. A lack of clear standards can have dire consequences. First, instructors and institutions have no clear benchmarks from which to define their language levels, which then informs their intake and promotion system. From this lack of guidance and the subsequent adhockery, it would be no surprise that institutions lack leveled alignment from one school to the next, which in turn can then disrupt student transfer between institutions, as well as cross-institutional collaboration on leveled curriculum and teacher training.

As a result, educational institutions may have no choice but to interpret or create their own localized standards to differentiate all NRS level 1. To exemplify, the Florida Department of Education (2009) created their own list of differentiated ESL Literacy levels descriptors which describe not two, but three levels of literacy. The document outlines 6 content areas, each divided by three ascending levels, defined as Literacy Level A, Literacy Level B, and Literacy Level C. For Literacy Level A there is a strong focus on shape discrimination and copying upper case letters, and it is not until Literacy level B that students are tasked with copying lower case letters with tails, matching upper case to lower case letters, and reading basic sight words. While it is true that language learning is far from a linear process, recognizing these different stages provides a more robust list of benchmarks which assist teachers in differentiated instruction, and document student gains. The link to the full set of Florida descriptors is available in the References section of this chapter.

6.2.3 Intersecting Policy Areas: Leveled Assessments and (Subsequent) Funding

In California, the areas of assessment and subsequent funding also show a lack of support for L2 students with emergent literacy. There are only two assessment tests accepted by the CDE for purposes of measuring ESL student's learning gains: the CASAS Reading and Listening tests. Unfortunately, the reading test largely requires that a student be able to read basic print to answer the questions. Yet, students with emergent literacy can take an incredibly long time to learn basic letters, phonics, and sight words – skills necessary to take standardized tests which require students to select from a set of possible written answers (Wrigley, 2001). Students with emergent literacy could take the listening test after acquiring beginner-level aural/oral vocabulary, yet they would still have to learn how to interact with/log their answers onto a Scantron (requiring semiotic knowledge of correlating one's answer onto a bubble) or onto a computer device if engaging with e-testing (requiring some basic digital literacy). Crucially, CASAS tests are tied to California adult school WIOA funding; yet, a Beginning ESL Literacy student will not earn a payment point until they demonstrate, through the CASAS test, that they have made a measurable gain (which requires at minimum their ability to take the test).

Ideally, tests would exist which allow students to demonstrate learning gains appropriate for those new to both English and literacy. As acquiring the oral ability to engage with new words is a recommended best practice with this population (see Condelli et al., 2002; Tammelin-Laine & Martin, 2015), a more ideal example to showcase student growth would be via spoken interview assessments, where students are engaging in real conversation without having to log their answer in written or digital form; additionally, students should be able to demonstrate their emergent writing skills such as forming letters, numbers, and words. Yet, there are currently no CASAS writing or speaking assessments which have NRS (and subsequently, CDE) approval for ESL (Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems, n.d.-b). As such, approved assessments to demonstrate critical growth for students both new to English and new to literacy are non-existent. Consequently, local sites may choose to employ an alternative assessment system which exists simultaneously to the state-based system to demonstrate incremental student gains to students and administrators. Notably, the state does not accept data from these alternative assessments as an indicator of student performance.

An additional way for agencies to collect federal payment points is through the completion of an EL Civics module assessment. However, as such points are only able to be gained by students who are at NRS Level 2 and above (as determined by their CASAS assessment test), students with emergent literacy are thereby excluded from this assessment system, and subsequently cannot gain these additional dollars for their school. Thus, California adult schools that may already be stretched for funds may be less inclined to invest resources into their Beginning ESL literacy level classes, as they may not be able to receive much supplemental WIOA funding to compensate. While it is true these adult schools can use their flexible CAEP money to offset the lack of WIOA funding for such classes, we must recognize how

such financial disincentives are built into the system and may offer justification for an agency to provide few(er) resources to Beginning ESL Literacy students – a population that may in fact need extra resources to excel.

6.3 A Dominant Policy Framework of Erasure

In sum, we have seen how major policies governing adult education programs in California – federal leveling systems, content standards, standardized assessments, and subsequent funding policies – are largely unsupportive of L2 adults with emergent literacy. Furthermore, we have seen how these policies are intimately intertwined: (a) the NRS levels are (now) largely informed by the ELPS and themselves inform the assessment tests, and (b) the assessments (CASAS and EL Civics) determine the a portion of the funding. All these policies inform how schools enact their educational programs; yet, taken together, these policies perpetuate a dominant system whereby L2 adults with emergent literacy are largely unsupported, and in some cases completely absent, from the policy landscape. Table 5 below summarizes these polices and their relevancy to this population.

Table 5 L2 students with emergent literacy: Unsupportive and/or non-existent policies

Area	Policy	Relevancy to L2 students with emergent literacy
Levels	NRS	Level 1 includes both students with and without prior literacy, whereas these levels should be separated for pedagogical purposes. As all other policies refer to the NRS levels, these levels in turn impact all other policies, including standards, assessment, and funding.
Standards	CCRS	Beginning ESL Literacy level is housed within the larger Level A which encompasses 3 levels. Consequently, standards which highlight the differentiated benchmarks for Beginning ESL Literacy, which includes students with emergent literacy, are not articulated.
Standards	ELPS	ESL Beginning Literacy students (including students with emergent literacy) are not formally recognized within these standards (ELPS begins at NRS level 2).
Assessment and Funding	CASAS	CDE-aproved CASAS tests only include reading and listening assessments, and it may take those with emergent literacy and/or emergent oracy an incredibly long time to make a measurable gain. State approved measurements to track emergent speaking and writing, which could be more appropriate for emergent literacy, are non-existent/not approved.
Assessment and Funding	EL Civics/ IELCE	Beginning ESL Literacy students can participate in EL Civics modules or IELCE training but will not gain payment points for completion of assessments; Beginning ESL Literacy students are excluded from this opportunity.

7 Final Thoughts

Leveraging a critical policy analytic approach, this chapter highlights lack of support for adult ESL learners gaining first-time literacy within California's language education policy landscape. To use the words of Young-Scholten and Naeb (2010), there are a "constellation" of skills involved in acquiring first-time literacy in a second language; skills which are not adequately reflected in mandated level descriptors, standards, and assessments approved by the state. To advocate for these learners, it is essential that their language learning trajectories become more adequately reflected. Given the interrelatedness of these governing policies, an appropriate place to start would be with the creation of an additional NRS level honoring these students, from which standards and assessments could be developed to portray the actual learning needs and gains of this population. Making these informed modifications to state and federal policies with the intent of prioritizing and aligning students' needs would prove vitally important to include (and validate) these learners within the larger second language learning landscape. At minimum, we must continue to fight for their basic recognition within governing educational policies.

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Part III
Identifying Promising Practices, Policies and Pedagogies

Shifting the Interaction Order in a Kindergarten Classroom in a Somali-Centric Charter School

Leslie C. Moore and Sirad Shirdon

Abstract Classroom behavior management has been identified as an issue for some educators of refugee children who do not feel adequately prepared to support their students. While most of the research has been conducted on refugee-background students in secondary school settings, there is growing awareness that early childhood educators need support in identifying pedagogical and behavioral strategies which are supportive, inclusive, and effective for refugee children. In this chapter, we turn the language socialization lens on classroom behavior management in a kindergarten classroom in a Somali-centric charter school located in the American Midwest. We examine change over time with a focus on the teacher's practices for quieting students. In analyzing data collected over three school years, we found that the teacher expanded her repertoire of practices for restoring quiet and order and that this change over time may be characterized as a shift from a teacher-as-sole-authority orientation toward classroom behavior management to an orientation in which authority can be shared with students. In addition to contributing to the small body of research related to Somali refugee children, we hope to help shape a different narrative about young children of refugees and the teachers who work with them, as well as to encourage researchers and practitioners to consider what culturally responsive classroom management might be for this population.

Keywords Somali · Refugees · Children · Behavior · Immigrants · Teachers · Education · Early childhood · Kindergarten

1 Introduction

Research in schools serving students with refugee backgrounds in the Global North shows that classroom behavior management is a challenge for teachers, who do not feel adequately prepared or supported to meet these students' needs (e.g., Brewer & McCabe, 2014; Flaitz, 2006; Moinolnolki & Han, 2017). To date, most of the

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research has been conducted on refugee-background students in secondary school settings, with a particular focus on what might be required to identify, understand and meet the needs of students with limited or interrupted formal schooling (cf. Custodio & O'Loughlin, 2020; McBrien et al., 2017). There is growing awareness that early childhood educators also struggle to provide learning environments for children of refugee families that are inclusive, supportive, and effective (Dachyshyn & Kirova, 2011; Ogilvie et al., 2014; Hooper et al., 2016). Early childhood organizations have provided practitioners with information about and guidance for working with this diverse population (e.g. National Center on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness, 2013, 2020; Warsi, 2017). Many of the recommendations relate to the management of children's behavior and seem to be grounded in an underlying assumption that teachers will experience significant "guidance challenges" when working with children of refugees. When addressing disruptive behaviors, teachers are encouraged to take into account cultural and linguistic differences and the impact of the family's refugee experience on a child. Potential discontinuities between family practices and classroom principles are identified and interpreted, with suggestions for how to approach any resulting conflicts. Teachers are advised to use multiple strategies to familiarize children and their families with classroom routines and methods of guidance and discipline so that children recognize and adjust to them quickly and families learn how to reinforce them at home.

Using a language socialization lens, in this chapter we examine classroom behavior management of a single teacher, Ms. R., in a kindergarten class in a Somali-centric charter school located in a large city in the American Midwest. Rather than focus on home-school discontinuities or young children's apprenticeship into the interactional norms of the classroom, we examine change over time with a focus on Mrs. R's practices for quieting students. Language socialization research focuses on recurring patterns of communicative behavior because such routine, mundane practices "instantiate, in more or less explicit ways, important cultural categories, identities, ideologies, norms and values" (Howard, 2009, p. 342). Researchers look for change over time in the conduct of participants in such routine practices, tracking the trajectories of more and less experienced participants as they develop and display new social, cultural, and linguistic competencies. Here we examine what we call "quieting sequences", instances in which the teacher seeks to get children to cease talking and/or other student behaviors that she interprets as interfering with or indicating inattention to the on-going instructional activity. In focusing on reactive classroom management and the moment-by-moment unfolding of quieting sequences, we sought insights into Ms. R's growth as manager and member of her kindergarten classroom community within a Somali-centric school. In analyzing data collected in a kindergarten classroom over three school years, we found that the teacher gradually expanded her repertoire of practices for restoring quiet and order. We argue that this change over time can be characterized as a shift in the classroom interaction order from a teacher-as-sole-authority orientation toward classroom behavior management to an orientation in which authority can be shared with students.

This chapter helps to inform our understanding about how Somali refugee children co-construct and negotiate classroom rules around behavior management with their teachers. Why is this a topic of importance? With a backdrop of a disproportionate use of disciplinary actions against students of color in the United States (US) (Gopalan & Nelson, 2019), research on Somali refugee students has also highlighted challenges that educators have with problem behaviors in Somali refugee students (e.g., Ismail, 2018). When educators hyperfocus on behavioral management, this can reduce a child's learning opportunities and engagement in academically meaningful activities, which can negatively impact academic outcomes (Gopalan & Nelson, 2019). Perceived behavioral challenges may also highlight the importance of providing refugee children with culturally responsive educational programming. This chapter aims to encourage additional research into the development of culturally responsive and sustaining (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Paris, 2012) early childhood programs for young refugee children which will hopefully result in the development of educational programs where Somali refugee children are set up for success throughout their schooling years.

2 The Classroom Interaction Order and Disruptive Behavior

By classroom interaction order, we mean the system of rights, responsibilities, patterns and processes that constitute and organize face-to-face interaction in the classroom. Goffman (1983) coined the phrase interaction order and argued that everyday face-to-face interaction is the intricately structured foundation of human social life. In classrooms, the interaction order is framed by the organizational system of the school. That is, the actions of teachers and students are organized in part by the turn-taking practices of ordinary conversation and in part by the specific conditions of schooling, including "the asymmetrical structure of the classroom (one teacher, a number of students of about the same age), the hierarchical relationship between teacher and pupils" (Vanderstraeten, 2001, p. 272). The classroom interaction order has been studied by many scholars (e.g. Austin et al., 2002; Heap, 1985; Mehan, 1979), and this work has illuminated "how the teacher's authority resides in the unequal distribution of the participants' speaking rights" (Margutti & Piirainen-Marsh, 2011, p. 305). Scollon and Scollon (2004) use the phrase "panopticon classroom order" to refer to the organization of talk in the teacher-centered classroom, and LeMaster (2010) describes "teacher-gated" interaction in which teachers give "approval and permission for children's participation within group talk, providing moral socialization as they judge the children's behavior as 'right' or 'wrong'" (p. 167). Socialization into the management of classroom talk is central to a child becoming recognizable as a competent member of a classroom community (Austin et al., 2002). Children who attend preschool learn about what it means to be a student in an American classroom (LeMaster, 2019), but for most children in the US, kindergarten is their first experience of formal schooling, and adjustment to the

unfamiliar social and behavioral expectations of the classroom is an important part of their transition to kindergarten (Little et al., 2016).

For young children of Somali refugee families, adjustment to the interactional norms of the American kindergarten classroom may be impacted by several factors. Roughly a third of children of Somali refugees in the US attend preschool (compared to almost half of all children of the US born) (Hooper et al., 2016), which means that a large majority start school without prior classroom experience or much familiarity with the host culture that is reflected and privileged in school. Most children of Somali refugee families are in the early stages of learning English (as are their parents) (Hooper et al., 2016), so they are learning a new linguistic code at the same time they are learning a new code of conduct. Adjustment to classroom norms and expectations may be further complicated by children's direct and/or intergenerational experiences of trauma as a result of violence, flight, and resettlement, which can inform delays in socioemotional and cognitive development (Bokore, 2013). In addition, Somali-origin children's transition to kindergarten may be marred by encounters at school with racism, xenophobia, and Islamophobia (cf., Waters, 2013).

Research on the early childhood educational experiences of young children of Somali refugee families and their teachers is very limited, with most of the existing studies focusing on English language learning and autism. Recent ethnographic studies and interview-based studies document two inter-related patterns that speak to our focus on quieting sequences. First, non-Somali teachers have been found to perceive young children of Somali refugees as being frequently disruptive and difficult to manage in the classroom (Birman & Tran, 2015, 2017; Tadesse et al., 2009). Second, Somali refugee parents express the belief that non-Somali teachers frequently misinterpret their young children's behavior (Handulle & Vassenden, 2020; Fangen, 2006) and unfairly judge it as unacceptably loud and disorderly (Tadesse, 2014; Tadesse et al., 2009). In their two-year ethnographic study of the experiences of Somali Bantu students and their teachers in an elementary school, Birman and Tran (2015, 2017) found that teachers expressed and enacted care for these students, but they also spoke at length about the challenges of working with this population and saw them as "completely different" from other immigrant groups. The researchers identified as being highly salient for the teachers and for themselves "behavioral incidents", which they defined as instances when children's behavior presented a problem for school staff. The most high-frequency type of behavioral incident was "disruptive behaviors", which included (1) children speaking without first raising their hand and getting teacher permission to speak and (2) children interrupting the flow of classroom activities by talking to each other.

This preoccupation with the regulation of children's talk is not unique to schools serving children with Somali refugee backgrounds. Multiple studies have found talking out of turn to be the disruptive behavior that elementary school teachers report being of most concern and most frequently occurring (Clunies-Ross et al., 2008). Corrie (2003) describes talking out of turn as occurring "when children ignore the turn-taking rules that operate in the context" and as a "pervasive troublesome classroom behavior that disrupts teaching and learning and causes a great deal

of annoyance to teachers" (p. 156). That is to say, talking out of turn is a defined as a breach of the classroom interaction order that interferes with the business of school and irritates the teacher. Talking out of turn may be interpreted and responded to by the teacher as disrespect for the teacher's authority and a violation of the local moral order of the classroom (Evaldsson & Melander, 2017; Margutti & Piirainen-Marsh, 2011). Such response by the teacher is more likely when the child is from a culturally and linguistic minoritized community (Monroe, 2006).

3 Studying Language Socialization in a Somali-Centric School

The data discussed in this chapter come from a multi-year study of the educational experiences and second language and literacy development of young Somali refugee children attending a K-6 Somali-centric[1] charter school that was established by Somali community members in the mid 2000s in a high-poverty neighborhood in Central Ohio. The first author, a European-American woman, became familiar with school leaders through her participation at an annual event to celebrate graduating Somali students. After serving as a volunteer consultant to the school for a year, she began conducting research in the school and soon thereafter was joined by the second author, a Somali-American woman. Our data collection focused on the kindergarten classroom of Ms. R, a European-American woman who, at the time, had been teaching for 5 years, 1 year in that school. She had previously taught for 3 years at another charter school in the city that served many Somali refugee families and children of immigrants.

Somali refugees began resettling in Central Ohio in 1991 following the outbreak of war in their homeland. The community has grown rapidly since, becoming the second largest in the US behind Minnesota. The Somali population in Ohio is estimated to be around 45–50,000 (Somali Community Association of Ohio, n.d.). Somali refugees have thrived and contributed to Central Ohio's local economy and culture via the over 500 Somali-owned businesses in the area (Experience Columbus, 2018). Yet, Somali refugees face challenges in their adopted homeland, including poverty, racism and Islamophobia (Bigelow, 2008). Educators are increasingly voicing their concerns about their ability to meet the needs of Somali students (Abdi, 2015), and Somali families in the US are also concerned about the capacity of the public school system to provide educational services for their children, with many increasingly opting for charter schools (Courtney, 2015; Hussein, 2012). Somali-run charter schools have emerged as an attractive option for parents who fear that their children are losing their cultural identity in US schools and may be victimized due to their Islamic identity (Kapteijns & Arman, 2008). Hussein (2012)

[1] At the time of this study, at least 80% of the students were Somali, and key aspects of the curriculum were developed with Somali students in mind – e.g., Arabic was taught as a second language.

found that Somali parents in Minneapolis prioritized retention of culture over educational quality, and believed that charter schools were more culturally inclusive and better at accommodating and communicating with Somali families. Courtney (2015) found that Somali parents in San Diego experienced charter schools as safe spaces that were more disciplined and respectful of their religion.

We took a language socialization approach as our central theoretical and methodological orientation, using ethnographic and interactional discourse analytic methods to examine the social and cultural organization of learning (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2011). Over the past 25 years, language socialization research has made important contributions to our understanding of the interaction order in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms (Burdelski & Howard, 2020). Researcher have illuminated how children shape their own socialization into the interactional norms of the second language classroom (e.g. Cekaite, 2007, 2012), how they circumvent (LeMaster, 2019) or resist these norms (e.g., García Sánchez, 2014; Margutti & Piirainen-Marsh, 2011), and how resistance can lead to changes in the discursive practices of the classroom (e.g., Baquedano-López et al., 2005).

We began classroom participant observations in the fall of 2011, added audio recording of classroom interaction in the spring of 2012, and continued classroom data collection through the 2013–2014 academic year. We observed and audio-recorded a variety of instructional activities, including read alouds, teacher lecture, and independent work time. We also observed recess and lunchtime. In addition to participant observation and audio recording in Ms. R's class, we documented students' work, conducted informal interviews with Ms. R after classroom observations whenever she indicated interest, engaged in informal conversations with students and other teachers, and observed in other classrooms at the school. We did not use video because we anticipated that many parents would object to their child's image being recorded for research purposes, and this was confirmed by several parents during recruitment conversations. We compared transcripts based on audio recordings with field notes made at the time in order to integrate non-vocal features of the interaction. After initial analysis of classroom data to identify patterns in participants' behavior, we conducted audio playback and member-check sessions with Ms. R.

The seeds of this chapter were planted a few months into the third year of data collection, shortly after our research team expanded to include Katie, a European-American woman. After a month or so of being in the classroom, Katie spoke hesitantly about what she experienced as a somewhat chaotic classroom environment in which the teacher often did not intervene when children engaged in disruptive behaviors. We (the authors) both expressed the view that Ms. R had "lightened up" over the many months we had been observing in her classroom, becoming more selective about which behaviors she addressed and more strategic in how she addressed behaviors she deemed disruptive. Two years later we began assembling a collection of instances when Ms. R responded to disruptive behavior by students, and talking out of turn stood out. In the first year of our study we observed multiple instances in which Ms. R's moves to quiet children were not followed by student silence and the situation often escalated. We recorded fewer such instances in the

second year and none in the third year. Something had changed for the better in Ms. R's classroom management practice, and we took a longitudinal and microanalytic approach to understand the what and how of that change.

4 Quieting Practices

In this section we describe Ms. R's repertoire of quieting practices, that is, the forms of talk and other actions that she used for getting students to settle down – i.e., to be quiet, still, and with their bodies in a preferred posture – when she judged their talk and other behaviors to be interfering with the on-going instructional activity and/or signaling that the children are not paying (sufficient) attention to that activity. These practices initiate and advance quieting sequences, a particular kind of directive/response sequence, which is a course of action in which someone tries to effect change in the behavior of another and the other may respond with compliance, refusal, and/or negotiation (Goodwin, 2006). We used the tools of conversation analysis to examine the quieting sequences, analyzing the turn-by-turn organization of these sequences (Sacks et al., 1974) to identify different interactional practices that the teacher and the students used to accomplish the everyday classroom routine of restoring quiet and order. Here we discuss quieting practices used by the teacher, starting with those we observed in the first 2 years of the study. We then provide more detailed analysis of the practices that first appeared in the third-year data (presented in the order they appeared) in order to show how Ms. R expanded her repertoire of practices in ways that gave her students a more agentive role in the unfolding of quieting sequences.

During the first 2 years of our study, Ms. R's repertoire of practices for quieting children included classroom management strategies that are common and encouraged in early childhood education. She routinely addressed directives to the group to do something with their bodies that signaled attention to the teacher and/or impeded undesired behaviors such as talk or touching others, such as

"Eyes on me"
"Catch a bubble"
"Show me your bubble"
"Hands in your lap, bubble in your in mouth"

She also used the practice of directing the group to do something with their bodies that allowed them "to release some energy" and then return to a quiet, still state, as in Excerpt 1.

In casual conversations, Ms. R expressed the view that these strategies were effective and age-appropriate for two reasons. First, she saw these quieting practices as having an underlying playfulness that children responded to well, even when she was being stern. And second, she described these practices as well suited to children who were learning English as an additional language because these were "active strategies" that allowed children to "understand with their bodies and not just words".

Excerpt 1 (3.20.2012)

1	Ms. R:	>Wiggle [wiggle wiggle wiggle<
2	Students:	[((laugh, wiggle and shake their bodies))
3	Ms. R:	Freeze.
4	Students:	((stop moving, fall silent))

Ms. R also used bald imperatives to explicitly direct students to engage in a desired behavior or to stop engaging in an undesired behavior, such as

> "Sit down"
> "Be quiet"
> "Hodan, stop talking"

Imperatives were sometimes addressed to the group, sometimes to an individual child. When children did not comply quickly, Ms. R typically repeated and upgraded her imperatives, producing them with greater volume, tenseness, and/or other prosodic emphasis.

Ms. R often used shhhhh, her productions of which varied in terms of length, volume, and use of iconic co-speech gesture (holding a stretched index finger to her lips). She sometimes combined shhhhh with an explicit assertion of her speaker rights, as in

> "Shhhh shhh it's my turn"
> "Shhhh I'm talking shhhh"

As with the imperatives, Ms. R repeated and upgraded her shushes when children did not quickly become quiet. She also used non-linguistic signals to quiet children. Sometimes she whistled. Sometimes she clapped. Occasionally she used a conventional clearing throat sound.

Another practice Ms. R used was to fall silent and wait until children quieted down. She accompanied her silence with other actions that marked suspension of the on-going activity, such as closing the book she was reading or exaggeratedly putting her hands in her lap and sitting up very straight and stiff. Ms. R usually produced these silent suspension moves in a slow, calm manner, but on occasion she snapped the book closed and thumped it onto her lap. Sometimes she explained to the children that she had stopped because they could not hear what she is saying or reading because they were talking.

Ms. R sometimes used threats, typically when students did not comply after she had used one or more of the practices described above. Some threats were explicit, with Ms. R warning the group or individual children of the course of action she would take if talking continued, as in

> (to an individual child) "I am going to ask you to leave if you keep talking"
> (to group) "I am going to have to stop reading if people don't settle down"

Another threat format she used was the countdown, a widely used early childhood classroom management strategy. In the context of a quieting sequence, the countdown was an implicit threat that if the undesired behavior has not ceased by time the

countdown is complete, there will be an unpleasant consequence. Ms. R sometimes started her countdowns at ten, sometimes five, and she produced each number with a marked sound stretch and rising intonation, pausing before the next number:

> "Te:::n? (.) ni:::ne? (.) ei:::ght? (.)"

In our analysis of the classroom interaction data from third year of the study, we found several changes in Ms. R's practices for quieting students. She often appeared to be deliberately ignoring it when a student or students talked while she was talking or reading. We also observed longer wait times between the teacher's shushes and explicit directives than we had seen in the previous 2 years. Ms. R seemed to have become more tolerant of talk out of turn and other disorderly behaviors, willing to give her students more time to comply and/or manage themselves.

In December of the third year, we saw Ms. R use the first of four previously undocumented practices for quieting students: using Somali imperatives to tell students to be quiet or to sit down. In Excerpt 2, Ms. R issues a threat, then directs students to configure their faces and bodies in ways meant to make them quiet and still. When students continue to talk, Ms. R adds a specific rule (no talking), followed by the Somali imperative *aamus* ('be quiet'), and the children fall silent.

Excerpt 2 (12.18.2013)

1	Ms. R:	Why can't I remember certain things? Was it China that just sent a person to the moon?
2	Students:	Yes, yes
3	Ms. R:	[I think it was China.
4	Students:	[((talking))
5	Ms. R:	Okay. You know what? I'm not going to share my wonderful book on
6		moonwalking with people that don't want to listen.
7		If you would like to hear the rest of the book, criss cross apple sauce hands in
8		your lap and bubble in your mouth.
9	Students:	((continue talking))
10	Ms. R:	And no talking. Aamus
		Be quiet-IMP-SG
11	Students:	((silent))
12	Ms. R:	Thank you.

In Somali, unlike in English, imperative verbs are marked for addressee number. Ms. R consistently used singular imperative forms to address multiple children, and we have no evidence that she was aware of the singular-plural distinction in Somali imperative verb forms. Ms. R reported in informal interviews that she had "picked up some Somali" over the years, but we were not able to establish where and how she learned the Somali imperatives she used in class. We have no audio-recorded instances of children explicitly teaching her Somali expressions, but we do have field notes from recess about Ms. R asking individual children how to say various words and phrases in Somali. We have audio-recordings of children directing

singular imperatives to one another during independent table work time. It seems likely that Ms. R learned these Somali forms (in part) through overhearing their use by students.

Ms. R's use of Somali imperatives worked well. That is, students complied readily, and she resumed the interrupted instructional activity without any further moves to quiet students. In Excerpt 2, students fell silent immediately after Ms. R produced the Somali imperative. However, students often responded to her use of Somali imperatives by revoicing of her Somali utterance. Ms. R did not shut down these responses with another quieting practice, but instead seemed to enjoy them and treat them as aligned with her course of action, as shown in Excerpt 3. Ms. R directs students in Somali to sit down, and several children repeat the imperative after her.[2] In her next turn, Ms. R takes no issue with their talk and resumes the explanation she had broken off to get students to be quiet and seated.

Excerpt 3 (12.18.2013)

1	Ms. R:	Whenever something gets between the light and your hand. So that's
2		why the moon..the moon. Thank you. Um Go ahead and turn the light
3		back on. [That's why the um…
4	Students:	[((talking))
5	Ms. R:	Shhh. Fa(dh)iiso.
6		sit down-IMP-SG
7	Students:	Fariiso/Fadhiiso.
8	Ms. R:	That's why the moon we can only see part of it.

Together, these two practices created a kind of third space (Gutiérrez et al., 1999), a hybrid classroom management context in which Ms. R switched fleetingly from English, the "official" language of the classroom, to Somali, the children's home language and the code they often used when managing one another's behavior in class. In revoicing the teacher's Somali imperative, the children briefly shared with her the authority to manage classroom behavior. It is worth noting that imperative forms in Somali "do not have the same associations of power and impoliteness as in English and are consequently much more commonly used" (Saeed, 1993, p. 83). Productions like Ms. R's loud and emphatic 'Aamus' in Excerpt 2 indexed her power and authority as the teacher, but she also produced Somali imperatives in a prosodically unmarked way, as in Excerpt 3. These Somali imperatives may have been heard by students as indexing a smaller power difference between them and the teacher than did her use of English imperatives.

[2] The imperative 'sit down' is pronounced differently in different dialects of Somali. Multiple dialects were spoken by children in Ms. R's classes. The digraph dh represents a retroflex stop, which, to our hearing, Ms. R approximated in this recording.

In February of year 3, we first recorded Ms. R calling attention to students who were engaged in desired behaviors, which were always bodily displays of a quiet and attentive orientation toward the teacher. This practice included saying a student's name, describing some aspect(s) of their conduct, and making a positive assessment of what they were doing. Pointing out a student as a peer model is common practice in early childhood classrooms. The logic of the practice is that the teacher reinforces the model student's conduct as being appropriate and redirects other students from unacceptable behaviors to appropriate ones. Students responded well to this practice, if not always quickly. In Excerpt 4, Ms. R describes how Mariam has arranged her body in ways that signal attention and self-control. When students continue talking, Ms. R calls attention to another key feature of Mariam's embodied display of quiet attention, a "bi::g bubble". She then elicits from Mariam a sign that she is not only quiet and attentive, but also happy. The child smiles, and Ms. R produces a positive assessment. As this excerpt illustrates, students were not always quick to comply, but Ms. R could expand the sequence without disciplinary escalation by pointing out and/or eliciting additional displays of appropriate behavior by the peer model (see line 4).

Excerpt 4 (2.20.2014)

1	Students:	((talking))
2	Ms. R:	Mariam is sitting up straight and she has her hands in her lap,
3	Students:	((continue talking))
4	Ms. R:	and a bi::g bubble. The only thing I need from her now is a big smile.
5		Smile?
6	Mariam:	((smiles))
7	Ms. R:	I like it, I like it

In early March of year 3, we first observed Ms. R eliciting students' assistance in quieting sequences by identifying children who were engaged in an undesired behavior. Excerpt 5 occurred during circle time on the rug. By the time Ms. R completes a countdown, the children have fallen silent, but one child is not sitting as required and instead is crawling toward the outer edge of the rug. Ms. R asks who it is, and several of the other students provide his name.

Excerpt 5 (3.6.14)

1	Ms. R:	Fi::ve, (.) fou::r, (.) three::,
2	Students:	((talking))
3	Ms. R:	Two:::, (.) one.
4	Students:	((silent))
5	Ms. R:	Who's crawling over there?
6	Students:	Nasir.

Later that month, we began to see Ms. R allow students to speak in support of her moves to quiet the group, briefly sharing with them the role of director of classroom interaction and judge of student behavior. In Excerpt 6, Ms. R and two students work collaboratively to quiet the group after they had gotten particularly boisterous, calling out answers to the teacher's question or bidding for a turn to do so. Ms. R initiates the quieting sequence with a negative assessment of students' behavior. Sahra then displays her affiliation with the teacher's evaluative stance, producing a negative assessment of her own using the same syntactic and prosodic patterns as Ms. R and adding the intensifier 'too'. In her next turn, Ms. R uses those same structures again to produce a third negative assessment, which is affirmed by Mohamud. All the children fall silent, and Ms. R resumes the instructional activity.

Excerpt 6 (3.20.2014)

1	Ms. R:	Okay, that was not good.
2	Sahra:	That was too loud.
3	Ms. R:	That was out of control.
4	Mohamud:	Yeah!
5		(silence for 1.0)
6	Ms. R:	Okay. Raise your ha:nd (.) if you kno:w (.) >Don't call it out<

Tracing Ms. R's expansion of her repertoire of quieting practices, we see that the third year of the study was a period of small but meaningful changes in the classroom interaction order. In the first 2 years, the teacher was the sole authority in charge of classroom behavior management. In the third year, she began to allow children to co-manage with her, giving them more time and space to quiet themselves and allowing them to take on new roles and speaker rights within quieting sequences: being a peer model, revoicing the teacher's directives, identifying misbehaving students, and assessing the behavior of other students.

5 Reflecting on Quieting Practices

The results of our analysis of quieting sequences supported our view, first expressed in February of the third year, that Ms. R had "lightened up" with respect to how she responded to student behavior she considered disruptive. In the data from the first and second years of our study, all of the teacher's quieting directives were designed to make the relevant and preferred next action by the students be a display of immediate, embodied compliance without speech (cf. Kent, 2012). When children did not quickly respond as the teacher directed, she was quick to respond with a repeat and/or upgraded directive. In the data from the third year, we observed several changes in Ms. R's responses to children's talk out of turn and other disorderly conduct. Two of these changes – deliberate non-response and extended wait time between

quieting moves – gave children more space to manage themselves and suggest that the teacher had become more tolerant of behaviors that in the two previous years she had sought to control more strictly. Five previously undocumented quieting practices gave her students a more agentive role in restoring quiet and order in the classroom. These changes do not appear to be simply a function of the children learning the norms of classroom interaction over the course of a school year. Ms. R did not expand her repertoire of quieting practices over the course of the first or second years of the study, even as those two groups of students became more familiar and compliant with the classroom interaction order.

The third year was the first time the kindergarten cohort was split into two classes on the basis of English language proficiency assessments. Ms. R, who had no training to work with English language learners, taught the higher proficiency group. In an informal conversation, she said of the third-year group that she was "able to do more with these kids". She attributed this in large part to the group having a higher level of English language proficiency than her previous classes. In our year 3 recordings, much more student talk was produced in English than in the two previous years. Consequently, more student talk was intelligible for Ms. R., which may have allowed her to recognize that it was often aligned with the course of action she wanted students to pursue and that many of them were skilled in helping each other remain focused on the on-going activity and behave according to classroom norms. Across all 3 years of classroom observation field notes and audio-recorded interaction, we found instances in which children managed their peer interactions quite competently, restoring and maintaining order without teacher assistance. Children in all three classes used the same kinds of practices as we see in the excerpts above: revoicing the teacher's directives (in Somali and English), assessing the behavior of other students, affirming and aligning themselves with another student's assessment, identifying and reprimanding misbehavior, and identifying their own behavior as a model for others. Children also managed one another's behavior when they were assembled and seated on the rug for read alouds and other circle time activities.

In our interview and playback sessions, we asked Ms. R. if she had noticed in the third year that her students had skills that she could leverage in managing classroom behavior and if she had intentionally involved them as co-managers in the ways we had found. Her response to both questions, which we posed multiple times in different ways, was no. However, later in the session, she stated that "most of these children [in the third year] were <u>extremely</u> well behaved. They might have been chatty but uh I didn't have discipline problems for the most part". She noted that several students in that class did a good job of "managing themselves".

When we discussed our findings, Ms. R was gratified by our observations and noted that she had "mellowed out as a person" in recent years. However, she was clear that she had not been aware of the specific changes in practice that we were asking about. Deliberate non-response and giving students more time to comply with directives are both recommended in the literature on culturally responsive classroom management in diverse classrooms (Rothstein-Fisch & Trumbull, 2008), and we thought Ms. R might have learned about these practices through reading and/or formal professional development, but she said she had not been. When asked about using quieting practices that gave students a more active, vocal role in

managing themselves and their classmates, she said that she was unaware of having done so, but she received our findings as true:

Ms. R:	I didn't notice per se but I know what you're saying is true.
Sirad:	Mmhm,
Ms. R:	And I think it came from you know (1.0) just keep trying things until you find something that works and I'm still searching for ((laughing voice)) a lot of things that work

Ms. R was an eager and self-reflexive participant in the interview and playback sessions, and she spoke at length about the various classroom behavior management strategies she had tried over the years. She asserted that many "traditional" strategies (e.g. public behavior charts, reward systems) did not work with young Somali children. In contrast, she reported great success with some strategies she had invented herself. She spoke with much more ease and enthusiasm about large-grained, teacher-centered classroom management strategies than she did about the micro-practices we were bringing to her attention. Nevertheless, Ms. R's observations about children managing themselves show that she was aware and appreciative of such interactions among children in the third year of the study. Changes in her quieting practices may have reflected and reinforced her developing ability to recognize and leverage the competencies of her students, whether or not she realized it.

6 Conclusion

Taking a classroom discourse analytic approach, we sought to understand and make visible for readers and the teacher how, over time, she shifted and expanded her practices for restoring quiet and order when she perceived student behavior as disrupting teaching-learning activities. We focused on this for three reasons. The first reason was local: such incidents demonstrably mattered to the teacher and sometimes escalated in ways that negatively impacted children's participation in teaching-learning activities. Our second reason was that we wanted to examine an example of positive change in the classroom climate in a school serving primarily Somali-origin students and children of refugees, focusing on the teacher's growth as a manager of classroom interaction. Much of the research on Somali-origin students and children of refugees in general tends to emphasize the hardships they and their families have experienced and the challenges they face and pose in school settings (Pieloch et al., 2016), while teachers of these students are often depicted as overwhelmed by the needs of these students and hampered by discriminatory attitudes toward them and their families (e.g., McBrien et al., 2017; Roy & Roxas, 2011). One of our goals, then, is to help shape a different narrative about young children of refugees and the teachers who work with them.

Our third reason for focusing on change in the teacher's quieting practices is that we see reactive classroom management issues such as teacher responses to students

talking out of turn as connected to the racial discipline gap in American schools. Rules and norms governing linguistic and other behavior in the classroom are typically developed and dictated by those in power and often disadvantage children coming from refugee, immigrant, and other minoritized communities (Baquedano-López & Hernandez, 2011). A consequence of great concern is that young children from cultural and linguistic minority communities are being disciplined disproportionately as early as preschool (Neitzel, 2018; US Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, 2014). Most of the research on racial disparities in school discipline looks at the more severe forms of school punishment, such as office referrals, suspensions, and expulsions (e.g., Ladson-Billings, 2011; Skiba, 2014). Less severe and high frequency forms of school discipline have been examined in educational psychological research on classroom climate and classroom behavior management strategies. Some of this research examines issues of race and ethnicity, and studies have shown that European-American teachers interact with minoritized students with the intent of behavioral control and discipline to a greater degree than they do with children from their own racial or ethnic group (Downer et al., 2016). Given the existing research focus on problem behaviors in Somali refugee children, as well academic underachievement in this population, it is important that researchers consider what culturally responsive classroom management would be for this population.

Taking our time and a language socialization approach, we were able to document and explore the discursive processes through which teacher and students reshaped the local classroom interaction order in ways that allowed young children to take on classroom management roles that were more agentive and more aligned with their own practices. Micro-practices matter in the co-construction of an inclusive, supportive, and caring classroom environment for young children of refugees. Small shifts like those we documented in Ms. R's classroom can bring teacher and students into closer alignment as they construct and re-construct the classroom interaction order, moment by moment, day by day, month by month. Additional long-term ethnographic research and discourse analytic research can further our understanding about how educators can become more culturally responsive and effective in working with young children from refugee backgrounds during the formative early childhood years of schooling.

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"Nos Somos Emigrantes Non Defraudadores": Central American Immigrant Youth Exploring Linguistic and Political Borders in a U.S. High School Through Multimedia Narrativity

Theresa McGinnis

Abstract More than 100,000 Central American youth have migrated alone to the United States across the Mexico-U.S. border. Referred to as "unaccompanied minors," many of the youth are faced with boundary producing processes within the struggling U.S. school systems they attend, including linguistic and political boundaries. Part of a larger ethnographic case study of a North Eastern U.S High School serving approximately 400 Central American youth, this chapter discusses boundaries as encompassing more than geopolitical territorial borders, and considers the manifestations of social practice and discourse, such as, how boundaries manifest in educational institutions, through narratives, and through symbolic domains. More specifically, this chapter examines the role of digital narratives/testimonios the youth tell as a pedagogical space for the sharing of their common experiences, histories, and memories. More importantly the chapter considers how through multimedia narrativity the youth can come to understand their social worlds, and begin to construct identities and to contest political processes. Overall, this chapter explores how public education contributes to border producing practices, and how shifts in curricula can provide support for youth to negotiate transnational identities, explore new languages and knowledge, and to navigate their new schooling systems and communities.

Keywords Immigration · Youth · Unaccompanied · Multimedia · Narratives · Education

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1 Introduction

> My history in Honduras was very nice. School games and friends were very good, but today everything has changed. It is only memories. (Gabriel, 2/11/2016).

Gabriel, an unaccompanied immigrant youth from Honduras wrote about his feelings during a multimedia narrative/testimonio project developed in the Spring of 2016 by the author of this chapter. The goal of this writing project was to support newly arrived unaccompanied Central American youth who attend high school in a New York suburban community in English/Spanish writing practices and in the use of digital technologies for multimodal composition. Gabriel's brief narrative reveals his feelings of grief from losing familiar social and cultural pieces of his life. Later we will learn how his story also illustrates a life of decisions and of hopes, and a migration journey of traversing on foot up to three geopolitical borders, Honduras-Guatemala, Guatemala-Mexico, and Mexico-United States.

Gabriel is one of more than 100,000 Central American youth who have migrated alone to the United States between the years of 2014 and 2016. Referred to as "unaccompanied minors'" or "border children," some of the youth were coming to help their families with financial support, some were trying to reunite with family members who already live in the U.S., others were leaving because of violence from family members and gangs, including assault and/or death, with young women noting they are also fleeing fear of rape or sex trafficking (Gordon, 2014; Kennedy, 2014). Upon weighing the risks of staying in their communities fraught with violence or taking an incredibly dangerous journey, they note "the long-term safety in the U.S. was worth the short-term and high risk of migrating" (Kennedy, 2014, p. 3). Therefore, this was a refugee issue where the unaccompanied youth did have the hope of seeking asylum in the United States and improving their life possibilities by working half the day and attending public schools the other half. Post migration to the United States the unaccompanied youth face new challenges, including symbolic borders infused with ideological purpose and power.

While U.S. education policy requires a free public education for all minors regardless of immigration status, access to education is one significant challenge for unaccompanied youth. Overwhelmingly, public discursive practices label them as "a threat to U.S. well-being," "economic burdens," and "a strain on resources for public schools," casting the youth as "underserving of U.S. resources" (Pérez Huber, 2015, p. 27). Hence, strong narratives surround the youth as underserving of U.S. social support. Such discursive practices are considered boundary producing for immigrant youth, because they regulate notions of belonging and create distinctions between us versus them (Paasi, 2009). In addition, the youth's processes of self-identification are bounded by the ideologies and practices of the receiving national state and local communities (Warriner, 2009), which the discourses above reflect. I describe in more detail below that I take the idea of boundaries to encompass more than geopolitical territorial borders and consider the manifestations of social practice and discourse, such as, how boundaries manifest in institutions such as school, through narratives, and through symbolic domains.

Schools are central to the processes through which youth develop their sense of belonging, and in shaping the parameters of borders to social membership (Abu El Haj, 2011). The provision of schooling alone does not necessarily equate to quality or inclusive educational environments (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2011). Gabriel along with many of the unaccompanied Central American immigrant youth attend under-resourced schools with problematic learning environments and punitive accountability policies (Cuevas & Cheung, 2015). Therefore, the youth find themselves faced with learning how to negotiate a new system of schooling in a new language adding additional boundaries for them to traverse in educational institutions.

In this chapter, I examine how educators can produce educational practices to create or break down some of these boundaries, particularly within a struggling educational setting. I highlight the role of Bilingual (Spanish/English) multimedia narratives/testimonios produced by the youth as one type of pedagogical practice that can support students in navigating their new environments and languages. The testimonio as a social practice has deep roots in oral culture and in Latin American human rights struggles, and it is a genre that often incorporates the historical, political and social aspects of one's life experiences (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012). Different from autobiographical narrative, testimonios involve critical reflection of the persons' stories as a means for consciousness raising (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012). Here I examine how "digital" testimonios produced by high school students include a narrative telling that is achieved in a multimodal and multimedia platform including speaking and writing, providing additional expressive discourses for topics fraught with complexity and uncertainty (Benmayor, 2012; Cuevas & Cheung, 2015). Overall, this chapter discusses the discursive power of digital testimonios to create transnational spaces that enable the Central American youth to respond to political, economic, cultural and emotional boundaries, such as assumptions surrounding legal status, subtle language ideologies and the value placed on learning English, and the overall challenges they encounter in school and in their daily lives.

2 Central American Immigrants in the United States

The United States is home to many immigrants from the countries of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras (Obinna, 2019). Known as the Northern Triangle of Central America, the area has experienced civil wars, political conflicts and economic dislocations that have historically served as driving forces for emigration out of the region (Lesser & Batalova, 2017; Manjivar & Abrego, 2012; Obinna, 2019). Migration streams from this region began in the 1980's and continue causing dramatic anti-immigration policies from the former US president, and limiting entrance to the US for asylum seekers. The newly elected President, Joe Biden, is moving toward more humane immigration policies and treatment of unaccompanied minors providing more hope to many who are currently crossing the border.

In the previous years of 2014–2016, large numbers of unaccompanied youth also crossed the US border with Mexico in hopes of seeking asylum, with the most,

68,000 arriving at the border in 2014, and in 2016, 46,000 unaccompanied minors were intercepted by Border Protection (Kennedy, 2014; Lesser & Batalova, 2017; Obinna, 2019). The numbers of immigrant youth and their reasons for leaving are complex and due to more than one single factor. They note as their reasons that the region was dangerous and fraught with gang violence and poverty. For the young women femicide, or the fear of sexual abuse, was an additional factor. After their arrival at the U.S./Mexico border, the youth were either reunited with family members or provided shelter through the Office of Refugee Resettlement. U.S. law requires the government provide each minor with legal representation for their asylum claims, but due to the large numbers of unaccompanied youth, the wait time for court hearings was several years and the results were hard to document. Hence, the Central American immigrant youth carry with them into their U.S. classrooms the legacy of having experienced violence, trauma and a difficult migration process (Poteet & Simmons, 2016).

3 Boundaries as Relational

Defining and theorizing borders and boundaries has its challenges; therefore, I have proceeded cautiously in my use of such terms and theories, recognizing how contested and complex they can be. Paasi (2014) discusses new approaches to borders as "relational thinking" which challenges the idea of "bounded spaces" and forces researchers to "ponder on what boundedness in effect means in the contemporary globalizing world and, indeed, on where borders actually are located in the current complex world" (p. 2). Thus, he inspires me to re-examine the notion of boundary and to theorize both boundary producing and (re)producing practices (p. 24).

To add further complexity to the ideas of boundaries, Warriner (2009), reminds us that for many new immigrants, national affiliation(s) are typically about a place. When discussing their former homes, for example, the Central American youth refer to their home countries, as a place. Therefore, it can also be argued that transnational experiences are bounded "by the policies and practices of territorially-based sending and receiving local and national states and communities" (Guarnizo & Smith, 1998, p. 10), that territorial borders and the cultural practices associated with such territories do matter. As such, borders defined by citizenship, language, and belonging play a significant role in educational institutions and therefore in the construction of identities for new immigrant youth (Paasi, 2014). These identities can have complex relations to each other as they can be ascribed to the youth by others, contested, or be ones the youth inhabit as part of a larger community of Central American immigrants.

I consider these ideas and examine boundaries as situated in social practices influenced by local understandings and cultural norms and as a product of ideology and power involving the dynamics of place and space. Further, I examine the practices of belonging that create a distinction between us and them, in and how for the Central American youth borders are bound up with positionality, and yet through

their collective struggles and memories the youth begin to establish a place and space for their cultural, political and social ideologies and borders.

4 Narrativity as Space for Identity Construction

Paasi (1998) discusses the role of narratives, or the stories that "provide people with common experiences, history and memories and thereby bind these people together" (p. 10). He further notes how through narrativity people come to understand their social worlds and can begin to construct identities and to contest political processes. Rodriguez (2005) suggests that narrativity provides transnationals with an understanding of one's homeland from a physical distance. Testimonios are narratives bound in Latinx's historical and political struggles, used to reveal the sociopolitical forces unique to the Latinx community, including immigration status, language, ethnicity and culture.

Researchers argue for the use of testimonios as a pedagogical space to allow youth the power to cultivate persuasive boundary-breaking discursive practices by recognizing the youth as authorities and creators of knowledge (Cervantes-Soon, 2012; Cruz, 2012). Cervantes-Soon (2012) documents how the testimonios of young women living in ciudad Juarez Mexico (one of the most violent cities in the world) offered a window into their lives and helped the young women to break down borders produced within a strong patriarchal context. Further, their testimonios provided a way for the young women to reclaim their voice and their humanity (Cervantes-Soon, 2012). Cruz (2012) found through her work with LBGTQ youth in Los Angeles that testimonios served as a way for critical identity work and political action. Cervantes-Soon (2012) and Cruz (2012) point to the importance of creating spaces within schools to allow testimonios as an impetus for collective action and political agency among marginalized and traumatized youth. Their work also demonstrates what might happen when schools do not provide students spaces for narrative telling – e.g. they can experience a silencing and hence boundary creating and exclusionary practices.

Providing a digital or multimedia forum for the youth's testimonios enables the youth to draw upon the narrative power of digital composition while trying to mediate their experiences of the world in relation to broader sociopolitical contexts (Davis, 2009). Benmayor (2012) believes digital testimonios "give urgent and powerful voice to individual and collective Latina/o experiences and allows for broader more democratic authorship" (p. 505). He also emphasizes how digital testimonios include a social purpose of narrative telling, involving various dimensions of collectivity or collective struggles and action. Thus, viewed as political narratives from the margin or commentaries on political struggles, testimonio writing/producing can be a powerful way to engage youth in the work of critical digital literacies (Ávila & Pandya, 2013). Critical digital literacies build on the important use of language and technological tools to engage and create multimedia forms of literacies, to the creation of multimedia texts that interrogate the world (Ávila & Pandya,

2013). The engagement with such genres and media leads to youth sharing their experiences and questioning boundary producing practices of politics and citizenship (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012).

In this chapter I explore the digital testimonios of unaccompanied youth who were provided a space within their High School curriculum to develop their voice, and to create/perform/transform their life stories by creating digital multimedia narratives. I explore the youth's testimonios as collective narratives discussing as a whole how they reflect identities, and connect to larger struggles and migration experiences of unaccompanied immigrant Central American youth. I focus on points in time where their testimonios as collective memory, or collective narrativity, transcend boundary producing practices.

5 Participants and Context of the Study

The participants in this study are unaccompanied youth who migrated alone, fleeing areas of violence, gangs, and poverty in the countries of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. The youth live in a suburban community of New York State, with a long history of changing demographics. While the community has had a large Salvadoran population for 40 years, the community has recently experienced rapid growth in Guatemalan and Honduran immigrant families, whose children attend the local public schools. The community is in a lower-socioeconomic area, where one in five people live in poverty, and where local property taxes are not enough to support the local schools. Harper High School, the site for this research, is considered "persistently struggling," with a graduation rate of 40%. During the 2015–2016 school year, the High School was under receivership by the state causing it to be at risk of outside control.

Harper High School offers a unique opportunity for my research. Harper High School's growth in Latinx student population reflects the larger demographics of the United States; this population is the fastest growing nationally. In addition, Harper High School reflects the struggles and concerns facing many U.S. schools serving large numbers of newly arrived immigrant students. Faced with the arrival of 1200 unaccompanied youth during the Fall of 2014, the school district delayed enrollment of students. Eventually the school district created an annex, the Transition Bilingual High School, for about 127 of the unaccompanied youth, particularly students who have been labeled as having experienced interrupted formal education. Following an investigation by the state attorney general, and in response to criticism that the district was "warehousing" the youth, the unaccompanied youth were moved to a new International Learning Network at Harper High School, a small learning community within the high school serving 400 of the unaccompanied youth.

The project discussed in this article emerged from meetings with District and High School Administrators, and teachers who within the climate of receivership are caring educators who want to protect the students. The educators noted their concerns for the students as: academic achievement, English/Spanish literacy,

accommodating students’ work schedules, legal support for citizenship, and emotional support for youth who experienced trauma. In collaboration with the high school administrative team, a plan was made to engage students in Bilingual Spanish/English narrative writing and digital testimonio productions. The curriculum for the project also developed from my observations of the unaccompanied youth in this High School setting, and work I had done on digital composition with other youth in the community (i.e. McGinnis & Garcia, 2012). Thus, the curriculum involved the creation of digital composition by students which included personal narrative writing, storyboards, and the development of a digital testimonio/narrative using images and written or oral narration.

6 Research Design

Data presented in this chapter are part of a larger (February 2014–March 2017) ethnographic case study exploring the intersection of identity, literacy and language practices of unaccompanied youth as they navigate school. I adopt the ethnographic approach of the New Literacy Studies, which examine language as embedded within sociocultural practices (Street, 1995). Adding to this ethnographic approach, I collected and analyzed testimonios as a research epistemology that links “the spoken word to social action and privileges the oral narrative of personal experience as a source of knowledge” (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012, p. 364), reclaiming the youth’s authority to narrate their own stories. I take care in addressing representation and issues of voice particularly when youth share intimate or vulnerable parts of their histories.

My role was participant observer. I collaborated with teachers during two-block periods per week (75 min) over the course of the project January through June 2016. We explored multimedia productions with approximately 60 students enrolled in two class sections of English as a New Language (ENL). Participants included students across grades 9 through 12, students with differing levels of formal education and technological awareness, students who arrived daily, and students who had arrived in 2014. While all students participated in creating digital testimonios, a core group of 15 students emerged based on their personal consent/assent and permission for their stories to be shared. That is, they volunteered to share their stories with administrators, teachers and other students. Three of the students’ stories are highlighted in this chapter, Gabriel, a 16-year-old Honduran youth, Jorge, also a 16-year-old Honduran youth, and William, an 18-year-old Salvadoran youth. Due to the vulnerability of the participants, each student was assigned a pseudonym to protect their identity and to maintain confidentiality.

To get an in-depth picture and documentation of the nuances of the youth’s experiences several data collection methods were combined over the course of the spring semester - ethnographic fieldnotes, personal communication, and interviews with individual students. For this chapter, narratives and testimonios portrayed awareness of the youth’s histories and their personal and political struggles. The data is

Bilingual Spanish/English in nature because the youth were encouraged to use the language repertoires and translanguaging practices they felt best expressed their voice. Translanguaging practices were valued by the teacher and me because we believe they reflect the fluidity of bilingual language use, and narrators' ability to break down linguistic barriers often formed when language use is compartmentalized (i.e. when students are forced to choose one or the other). With the support of a native Spanish speaker familiar with Central American cultural practices, translations of data were carefully executed to reflect the voices of the participants. Spelling and grammar were not altered as the students are developing language practices in both Spanish and English That is careful attention was made to the youth's word choices so that the meaning did not get lost in the translation (Van Nes et al., 2010).

Fundamental to my analysis of fieldnotes, interview transcripts, and testimonio productions was an iterative and open coding of the data, followed by a focused coding of the data with attention to the range or representational modes, such as written text and images. While coding and re-coding, I drew out patterns, developed themes, and wrote analytic memos (Merrian, 2009). The use of Latinx critical race theory enabled themes to emerge during the analysis of data that drew attention to larger sociopolitical forces that shape the youth's experiences. I used Hymes (1996) idea of narrative as how one's personal experience, like a migration experience, can become "an event to be told, being told and being retold until it takes shape as a narrative" (p. 118). Additionally, using narrative and discourse analysis theory (Bauman & Briggs, 1990; Fairclough, 1992; Urciuoli, 1995) allowed for an examination of how the language use of the youth situate them within particular social groups and express particular political identities, and can also be applied to the multiple modalities of new media productions (Hull & Katz, 2006). In the sections that follow, I discuss the themes that surfaced as a result of this coding process and show that across the youth's narratives, emotionally and politically charged themes were prevalent – e.g. struggles related to migration and border crossings, negotiating language differences, immigrant identities, and hope for better futures.

7 Creating and Breaking Down Borders; Pedagogical Spaces

The creation of the International Learning Network specifically for Central American youth can be considered another segregating or exclusionary move, marginalizing the youth to the borders of the High School. The youth were segregated from the rest of the high school student population, because of their Spanish language dominance and having been labeled as students with interrupted formal education (SIFE). "SIFE" is a powerful institutional label indicating that students have had interrupted formal education due to political or social factors (Freeman et al., 2001). The SIFE label builds upon the negative discursive practices that the Central American students are a burden to the school and are viewed as having limited literacy skills in Spanish and English as well as limited exposure to academic content. However, due to the realities of the youth's interrupted educational experiences,

teachers at Harper High School struggle to meet the youth’s needs while at the same time find themselves under pressure to raise test scores due to state receivership. Therefore, a major focus of the International Learning Network was to help students and teachers respond to testing demands, preparing test prep curricula and skills development. In addition, students could only exit the International Learning Network when they were able to perform at a proficient English language level on a state exam.

Alternatively, however, it can be argued that the International Learning Network provided the unaccompanied youth a space where they could articulate without fear their emotional memories of their journeys, interact in the familiar language of Spanish with peers and with teachers, learn important content in Spanish, and find support through shared histories and struggles. I recognize the complexities of both views, however as a space to engage in digital testimonio work, the network allowed for a safe space with a respectful audience that enabled the youth to express their life histories and develop narratives, which in other contexts may have remained hidden. In addition, the project and network allowed for translanguaging practices so that there was not a particular linguistically dominant emphasis that creates an us versus them context, and instead there was a distinctive linguistic and sociocultural intersection (Dyson, 2010). The technological work of the project reinforced the translanguaging practices as students searched for images in Spanish and English, and chose the language, Spanish or English, they wanted to use for their productions and narratives. The students did have to learn the metalanguage of the digital platform, PowerPoint, in English. Such terms such as cut and paste were new to many of the students. Overall, the international learning network while bounded by ethnicity and language was a space where the youth could “communicate critically, aesthetically, lovingly and agentively” (Hull, 2003). As I describe below, the international learning network became a space where counter narratives were formed collectively that served to break down some of the discursive producing borders surrounding the images of the Central American youth.

8 Pivotal Decisions to Cross Borders

Before creating their multimedia narratives, the youth wrote three different narratives, and then chose one to develop into a multimedia production. In the opening of this chapter, Gabriel discussed fond memories of Honduras, but also feelings of sadness, because they are just memories for him now. He chose to further elaborate on this idea for his multimedia narrative/testimonio. In it he notes, “Pero bueno en mi puis Honduras er una gran alegrai, porque la pasave con mi familia, y mis amigos. Pero el peligro de Honduras era las maras.” (Gabriel, 4/29/16). “Honduras was great happiness, because I spent it with my family, and my friends. There was danger in Honduras, because of the gangs.” Here he is reflecting from the perspective of a Honduran living in New York, speaking with some nostalgia, but also speaking

about the harsh realities of his home and the factors that influenced his displacement.

Then Gabriel states, “Hubo una decision” (Gabriel, 4/29/16). (There was this decision). The decision Gabriel has to make, is whether to stay in Honduras (which has become more dangerous), or to set out on a treacherous long journey to the United States where he believes he will have more opportunities. Similar discussions of this adult-like decision are expressed across the narratives of other Central American youth. That is, the difficult choice of to stay or to go was part of several of the youths’ narratives. As they discussed this decision, each youth expressed both a regret and a hope. They are sad about leaving their friends and families, but hopeful for more opportunities and brighter futures. They feel free within the international learning network to reflect upon and remember their emotional decisions. Overwhelmingly, sharing how they decide the promises of safety and a better life in the United States outweighs the risks involved in the dangerous journey. Like Gabriel who says, “Mi camino fue muy peligroso, porque pose cinco dia cominando por el decierto. Pero al fin cuando llegue a este pais fue una alegrai, porque vi amia familia. Y tambien entrea la escuela. Mise amigos nuevos” (Gabriel, 4/29/16). (“The walk was very dangerous, because I walked for five days in the desert, but at the end when we came to this country, we were very happy, because I saw my family, I also entered school, and I made new friends.”)

As part of the multimedia productions, images were inserted to support, represent or reflect the youth’s narrative, creating a multimedia narrativity. For example, Gabriel chose to represent the decision he had to make by adding an image with a rural dirt road showing two options, a fork in the road. In this image, which he downloaded from a google search he completed in Spanish, a young girl stands at the top of the fork looking out into the landscape. Other images included pictures of the desert with nothing but cactus. Many students focused on the dangers of the desert, some using representation of an image of a skull and cross bone, while others wrote about how not everyone lives on this journey. This form of digital narrativity draws on a full range of representational modes, images, language, transitions to evoke the range of emotions embedded in the youths’ stories and to emphasize the collective sensations, the trauma, the exhaustion, and the grueling physical nature of the migration that could not be expressed through their language alone. The multimedia and transmedia nature of digital narrativity allowed the youth to create deeper and more critical expressions of their experiences. The collective experiences of the Central American immigrant youth reflected in Gabriel’s narrative, led to an acknowledgment of these experiences, including traumatic experiences and struggles, and also created a sense of pride among the youth in knowing they persisted and succeeded in this huge physical feat.

Gabriel holds on to his aspirations for a better education and the opportunities the education in the US will provide for him. Like many of the other Central American youth, he has an obligation to family members left behind and works to help with their needs. These responsibilities are seldom viewed as such within national discursive practices that position these youth as “burdens.” I argue that the youth serve as agents of change for their families and their communities – and use

testimonios/digital narratives to enact that change. The youth carry with them on their migration journeys an implicit promise to support members of their families, and to help them find their way to better possibilities. In many ways Gabriel and the other Central American youth are assets to their families. Gabriel and other Central American counter the discursive producing boundaries demonstrating they are more than unaccompanied immigrant youth who are a strain on resources. Instead, they are responsible, hard-working students and employees trying to make life better for themselves and their families. In telling about his work, Gabriel contributes knowledge to the national debate surrounding the youth as "burdens." Instead, he and the other youth remind us of their first-hand experiences with difficulty and persistence, the economic value of their labor, and their various contributions to the community (Orellana, 2001). The work of these youth can remain invisible, or it can become a counter-narrative to the national anti-immigrant discourse. Finally, the Central American immigrant youth participants in this study, through their digital narratives, engage in transnational practices, political processes, and cultural phenomena across geopolitical and symbolic borders.

9 Linguistic and Emotional Barriers

The ideology embedded in the use of translanguaging practices within the International Learning Network, and this digital project, supports the daily mixes of communicating through two languages. One might argue that in this digital culture, multimedia narrativity also added multiple ways of representation that are not limited to words, but include additional ways of expression, such as image, font, and color (Vélez-Ibåñezm, 2017). Translanguaging practices supported the linguistic richness that youth bring with them into the classroom, encouraging the use of both languages Spanish/English as needed or as expressions of their emotions. However, in part due to the fact that high levels of proficiency and literacy in English are needed to pass New York state exams, and in part because English is generally viewed as the language for opportunities and achievement, English is also afforded high status in this program. Moreover, Spanish is still often considered an underlying factor of failure among Spanish speaking immigrant youth in achievement tests, while translanguaging becomes a 'third-space" or "slanted" practice (Vélez-Ibåñezm, 2017). Students like Jorge are very aware of this factor.

Jorge had been in this New York suburban community for only 6 months when this project began. He did not write very much for the project, but did write about how difficult life is for him without the knowledge of English and without his family. He wrote, "Tengo 6 meses de estar en New York. Es difici estaren un pais no se entiende el idioms y no se encuentra tu familia" (Jorge, 5/4/16). (I have 6 months in New York. It is difficult to be in a country where you do not understand the idioms, and you cannot find your family.") Jorge reflects on the realities that are true for several of the Central American youth. When they arrive in the United States, many Central American youth, like Jorge, speak little to no English. Jorge recognized not

knowing English was a barrier for him not just in school but in everyday life. He discussed English as something he needed to be able to buy necessities at a store. He writes, “aqui por no sabes ingles fue que mi queris ii a comror y necesiI preguntar y no habia personas que pudieron espanol y fue dificil hacer la compes la compes pero asta al fin qua entendieron pudimos compror pero en verdad fue dificil y fue por no poder ingles” (Jorge, 5/4/16). (“I want to buy and need to ask and there were no people who could speak Spanish and it was difficult to make, but finally at last understood but in truth it was difficult and, it was because I could not speak English”).

At 16 years old, Jorge was placed in a ninth-grade classroom in the International Learning Network. Expected to not only learn English to pass required New York state exams, Jorge is navigating life without family in a new community. Like Gabriel, he must work. He must work to support himself and pay rent for a room he shares with other Central American youth. Jorge views learning English a priority to his future, noting, “Quiero lograr aprender inglés para poder tener un futuro mejor” (5/6/16). (“I want to achieve learning English so I could have a better future.”)

Linguistic boundaries were present in the community as youth engaged in daily practices outside of school. Linguistically, however, the school recognized the importance of providing content learning in Spanish, such as math, history and science. Such bilingual services and bilingual educators worked to break down linguistic boundaries to learning for the newly arrived Central American youth. However, the goal of the school was for students to transition into English only classes, and to pass the State’s English Regents Exam. The Bilingual program as part of the International Learning Network was not considered as normative but as a bridge to English only classes. Jorge was able to discuss his recognition of the importance of learning the English language, and the dominance English served in the United States. For him learning English was a major goal, and a path for higher educational attainments. Several other Central American students acknowledged this goal and their recognition of the English language as pivotal for them to acquire better opportunities, noting that they no longer wanted to be considered an English Language Learner (personal communication, 5/1/2016).

10 Political Identities – Counternarratives

In a report conducted by the Vera Institute of Justice (2015), researchers noted that unaccompanied Central American youth typically experience a range of emotions that are shaped by their separation from family members, and previous or current encounters with discrimination. The youth also face a climate of insecurity, especially when their countries of origin are linked with criminality and threats of deportation (Manjivar & Abrego, 2012). The youth, therefore, encounter political borders defined by citizenship, language and ethnicity (Paasi, 2014). These political

narratives are internalized by the youth and can have short-term and long-term consequences for their lives (Manjivar & Abrego, 2012).

William, a Salvadoran youth, was among the group of unaccompanied Central American youth to arrive in the fall of 2014. He chose to write his narrative in English and focused primarily on the lines of immigration, his experiences with border patrol, and his identity as an emigrant. These themes were also apparent in the images he selected to accompany his narrative.

> Two years ago when I decided to come to this country, it was very difficult because I do not want to leave my family and my girlfriend and then my mother called me to come here. That is why I am here. When I start the trip I want to go back home because I do not want to leave my family. In the border patrol is so very difficult because the all mans are very strong they don’t leave me go that is why is very difficult. All people are in line for the court for immigration (William, 5/4/16).

What William does not discuss in his narrative is the exhaustion many of the youth report feeling when they finally reach the Mexico-U.S. border. Having walked through the desert as noted by Gabriel, the youth are barely surviving. In fact, many report hardly being able to stand. Therefore, when William shares how the border agents are very strong, there is no ability for William to resist. Placed in a border patrol shelter, he waits to be processed by immigration. He points out in his narrative, the line for the court, so many people. The numbers of unaccompanied youth arriving at the border in 2014 caused the shelters to become overcrowded, and many of the youth were held for more than 72 h. William was able to reach and reunite with his mother who lives in the New York suburban community where Harper high school is located.

In his multimedia narrative/testimonio, William draws on images he downloaded from the Internet to clearly voice a political statement. The images he shares three times in his digital production state, “nos somos emigrantes non defraudadores.” (We are emigrants not frauds.”). William is not alone in describing his identity as an emigrant. Many of the youth refer to themselves in their narratives as emigrantes/emigrants. Their use of emigrante/emigrant, or one who feels forced to leave their home country for political and social reasons, reflects the difficult decisions they have made to leave their home countries of El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala. By claiming the identity of emigrante/emigrant, these narrators (re)position themselves and reframe their previous experiences in terms of their former identities as Honduran or Salvadoran youth. Now they have a new life as immigrants. These identities are produced out of transcultural and transnational social spaces. As a political identity, they inscribe themselves into a legal immigrant status, countering many national dominant myths surrounding their migrations across borders as illegal, or as criminals. Though they assert their sense of legality, “the subjective experience of belonging cannot be fully encapsulated or affected by a change in legal category alone” (Cuevas & Cheung, 2015). Therefore, while I would argue that seeking asylum is not an illegal act, and that the youth deserve to be granted a refugee status, this label of refugee while granting them the security of legal status would not necessarily grant the youth a sense of belonging as long as the national narrative continues with anti-immigrant ideologies.

Further, by integrating the statement "nos somos emigrantes non defraudadores" into his production, William reveals his understandings of current hegemonic forces, surrounding current national and discursive practices. He is aware of the border producing practices and ascribed identities produced by power and ideology. William, as a Salvadoran youth, explores his emigrant identity with notions of a Salvadoran national identity. William positions himself in dialogue with, and sometimes in struggle against wider, longer term social and political forces and sociopolitical boundaries. As a voice from the margin, he is beginning to break down these discursive boundaries and to create new narratives about unaccompanied youth. Both he and the other youth have entered into a collective history, a larger struggle facing many Latinx immigrants, to be perceived as belonging, and deserving to be here.

11 Discussion

The digital testimonios/narrative project concluded with a viewing celebrating the youth's work. While some of the youth did not feel comfortable presenting their stories, each watched quietly and respectfully the stories that were presented. Cruz (2012) explains that digital testimonios involve both the viewing and the listening. That is, listeners bring their own histories and experiences to the "hearing." Within their short digital productions revealing the conditions of the Central American youth's migration journeys across treacherous land and borders, they disclosed a collective and personal history(ies), strength, endurance and survival.

Overwhelmingly, the narratives disclose experiences of adversity and performances of persistence but also the youth's capacity for hope. Hope became a final thematic thread to many of the youth's narratives. They held on to hope for a better life, and for future opportunities as they walked through the desert, and as they currently engage with their new school. While testimonios serve to foster such hope through reclamation of a shared history and a shared optimism, this language of hope becomes an important call to educators and policy makers to develop a humanizing pedagogical practice that can be built upon. Education should be viewed as a humanitarian response to the needs of children and youth who are fleeing violence in their home countries stressing the importance of their human rights (Pérez Huber, 2015; Waters, 2015). A humanitarian approach to education can provide a much-needed counter-narrative to the lived realities of youth who have migrated alone. Humanitarian efforts can begin to break down boundary producing discursive practices of current U.S. political dialogues.

12 Conclusion

In this chapter I examined the complexities of boundary producing practices and the role they play in immigrant/refugee youth’s learning as they navigate complex social worlds, including struggling school systems. In order to show the relationship between such practices and how they influence narratives of lived experiences, I explored the youth’s own migration stories developed during a digital testimonios project. Their migration journeys and home country experiences profoundly shape their identities and positionalities, and they also contribute to the collective histories and experiences of thousands of unaccompanied Central American youth. We learn of their decision-making processes, their dangerous walk through the desert, their encounter at the US/Mexico border, and their feelings of not understanding the English language and its impact on feeling outside of a linguistic border. Situated in global, national, and local contexts, and bounded by discursive practices, such as discrimination, and unwelcoming environments, the youth respond with hope and gratitude.

Educational practices play an important and consequential role in creating or breaking down boundaries for immigrant/refugee youth. This project was situated in a liminal space within a struggling school but allowed for creative, critical work representative of the youth’s knowledge. Their testimonios are a contribution to the knowledge of those interested in borderland issues and border-crossing processes, and they provide important information to educators working in such contexts. There is a tension between the youth’s faith in education to support their goals of English language learning and their future opportunities they hope to accomplish, and the complex realities of the systemic struggling schools they attend. Increasing numbers of children and youth who migrate alone are entering our public schools each year.

Border and boundary studies can critically add to the existing theorizing of current social complexities. Researchers need to consider how public education contributes to border producing practices through language and literacy practices, through discursive practices, and curricular mandates. There is a need to shift from practices that create borders like narrowly defined test focused curricula, to providing support for youth to negotiate new identities, explore new languages and knowledge, and to navigate their new schooling systems and communities. Testimonio/narrative producing, or multimedia narrativity, can be a powerful way for youth who are seeking asylum to share their migration stories and call into question traditional understandings of linguistic and political boundaries and of citizenship (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012; Paasi, 2014).

Migration streams from the Northern Triangle of Central America continues. Legislation on immigrant and refugees policy in the US has become more punitive and unforgiving (Obinna, 2018). Barthes (1975) examined the ways narratives and mass media can naturalize perceptions of particular groups of people. Through collective narrativity, these youth constructed an identity of “deserving” and as “hard-working individuals.” These ideas need to be highlighted and become part of the

national narrative about unaccompanied immigrant youth so that the value they bring is recognized and the youth are treated as the national resources they are - that with these new perceptions the symbolic and real boundaries produced by the legislative polices the youth face can be broken down.

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Translanguaging as Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy: Transforming Traditional Practices in an ESOL Classroom for Older Adults from Refugee Backgrounds

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Abstract This chapter examines the equity aspects of implementing translanguaging as a form of culturally sustaining pedagogy to nurture linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism in an ESOL classroom for Nepali-speaking Bhutanese older adults resettled in the United States as refugees. Taking a teacher-action research approach, the authors collaborated to design and deliver lessons informed by translanguaging pedagogy. The study's findings show that implementing translanguaging pedagogy enabled the reimagination of students' and teachers' traditional power roles toward becoming co-teachers and co-learners and challenged the linguistic hierarchy that posits English speakers and their language practices as more powerful and prestigious than any others. Findings also showed that this pedagogy disrupted the assimilationist and monolingual practices often found in traditional ESOL programs while embracing and fostering the linguistic and cultural practices older students brought into the classroom. Implications for ESOL practitioners are discussed.

Keywords Culturally sustaining pedagogy · Translanguaging · Refugee education · ESOL · Older adults · Co-learning · Social justice

1 Introduction

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2018), older adults over 60 years of age of refugee-background make up approximately 8.5% of the overall refugee population. Many older adults of refugee backgrounds resettle in countries where languages, cultures, sociopolitical structures, and values are significantly different from their own. Further, educational and language learning

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opportunities are often limited for these older adults compared to children and young adults from refugee backgrounds. In the United States context, language learning opportunities for older adults from refugee backgrounds are limited. This is because adult education policies and programs strongly emphasize the career readiness goal,[1] irrelevant for most older adults from refugee backgrounds who are retired and do not seek employment.

Even when older adults enroll in adult education programs in resettlement contexts, they are often marginalized because of one-size-fits-all curriculums, content, and pedagogical approaches that overlook their unique characteristics. Older adults generally deal with stereotypes that depict them as less capable of learning a new language than younger people due to their diminishing health. Older adults themselves often hold deficit perceptions of themselves as learners. Grognet (1997) argued that such a stereotype could negatively impact their participation and learning. Older adults who come from refugee backgrounds face another level of prejudice – views of them as “illiterate” or “non-literate” due to their interrupted schooling prior to resettlement. Our previous work challenged and disrupted such ideologies by showcasing how Nepali-speaking Bhutanese older adults used translanguaging, the practice of drawing on their entire linguistic funds of knowledge, to learn in an ESOL classroom (Park & Valdez, 2018).

This chapter examines the cultural and equity aspects of translanguaging as a form of culturally sustaining pedagogy whose goal is to nurture linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism in an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) educational setting where Park, the second author, was the teacher. In other words, Park intentionally and strategically built a translanguaging space where students express themselves, interact with others, teach, and learn in ways that sustain their existing linguistic and cultural practices while challenging and transforming traditional classroom practices. Valdez and Park are individuals from culturally and linguistically diverse communities where respecting elders is valued (e.g., Sung & Kim, 2003; Woolley et al., 2009). They understand first-hand how important and consequential it is to interact with older adult learners in culturally relevant and sustaining ways that position them as sources of wisdom. In particular, the authors maintained a translanguaging stance built upon each of their cultural, educational, philosophical, and ideological backgrounds, informing their research and language teaching practices in general and especially when working with this particular group of older adults.

Using culturally sustaining pedagogy (Paris, 2012; Paris & Alim, 2014) and translanguaging (García, 2009; García & Li, 2014) as our theoretical framework and pedagogical approach, this study explores an ESOL classroom. Specifically, it examines how the teacher and older adult Nepali-speaking Bhutanese students from

[1] The federal government funds many ESOL programs under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) of the *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)* (Department of Workforce Services, n.d.). On Utah’s state website, it states, “The vision of WIOA is to achieve and maintain an integrated, job-driven workforce system that links our diverse, talented workforce to our nation’s businesses and improves the quality of life for our citizens” (n.d.).

refugee backgrounds used translanguaging to engage in culturally sustaining classroom practices. Revealed is how these practices allowed a reimagination of the traditional power roles between the teacher and learners, how they challenged the language hierarchy that posits English speakers and their language practices as more powerful and prestigious than any others, and how they disrupted assimilationist and monolingual practices. Such a pedagogical approach enabled all students to participate actively in building their English proficiency in class. The significance of the study is that it includes and highlights the voices of older adult students from refugee backgrounds silenced in most dominant English-only classrooms. It also illustrates how honoring and validating students' cultural and linguistic practices builds their positive view of themselves as capable co-learners and co-teachers.

2 Conceptual Framework

2.1 Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy

Deficit approaches to educating culturally and linguistically minoritized students in the United States posit students' language, literacy, and cultural practices as things that need to be overcome and replaced with those of the dominant culture (Paris & Alim, 2014). Asset pedagogies emerged in the 1990s and 2000s as a counter to such approaches. They recognize minoritized communities' linguistic, literate, and cultural practices "as resources and assets to honor, explore, and extend" (p. 87). Notably, Ladson-Billings' culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995) gained the attention of teachers and researchers and has been implemented in various educational settings. However, Paris (2012) and Paris and Alim (2014) criticized the limitations of the term "relevant" for not explicitly supporting students' maintenance and sustaining of their heritage cultures and languages; thus, not going far enough to actively promote the plural cultural and linguistic realities of communities of color. Rather, culturally relevant pedagogy is widely understood and practiced among educators in classrooms as a scaffolding method where teachers utilize students' languages and cultures as a temporary bridge to teaching the dominant language, culture, and understanding of the world.

To overcome the limitations of the term culturally relevant pedagogy, Paris (2012) coined and conceptualized culturally sustaining pedagogy. Paris and Alim (2014) articulated, "[culturally sustaining pedagogy] seeks to perpetuate and foster—to sustain—linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of the democratic project of schooling and as a needed response to demographic and social change" (p. 88). They further argued that culturally sustaining pedagogy is necessary to disrupt the assimilationist and antidemocratic educational practices and policies in the United States. Therefore, culturally sustaining pedagogy must advance pluralist approaches and outcomes that disrupt and decenter White, middle-class, monolingual, and monocultural norms.

Culturally sustaining pedagogy has significant implications for older adult students from refugee backgrounds because they are often situated in English-only classrooms where their linguistic practices are restricted and devalued (Park & Valdez, 2018). Such deficit practices are a severe form of social injustice because they create another level of distress for older adults from refugee backgrounds who have undergone extremely traumatic experiences prior to their resettlement. In this chapter, culturally sustaining pedagogy is used to describe and analyze cultural practices that the students and teacher cultivated in the classroom, informed by their own cultural and linguistic knowledge and understandings. They make sense of their relationship and roles in ways that disrupt the traditional view of the teacher as the knower and the authority and students as the receivers of knowledge.

2.2 Translanguaging Pedagogy as a Form of Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy

Translanguaging refers to the multiple and complex discursive practices bilinguals engage in by strategically selecting features from their one unitary linguistic repertoire to communicate and make sense of their worlds (García, 2009; García & Li, 2014). Translanguaging views language from the perspective of the speaker. It argues that bilinguals experience a unitary linguistic repertoire consisting of linguistic features that have been socially and politically constructed as two separately named (nation/state) languages (García et al., 2017; Otheguy et al., 2015). What makes translanguaging transformative is its ability to challenge and disrupt the hierarchy and deficit ideologies built around languaging practices and speakers of linguistically minoritized communities. For example, individuals from linguistically minoritized communities often deal with the stigma that their language practices are "impure" or "non-standard." However, translanguaging puts forward the language practices of bilinguals, not the languages themselves, and recognizes these practices as legitimate and valuable.

García and Li (2014) have built on the concept of translanguaging to articulate a translanguaging pedagogy defined as instruction that "build[s] on bilingual students' language practices flexibly in order to develop new understandings and new language practices, including those deemed 'academic standard' practices" (p. 92) while also endeavoring to find ways to welcome these practices into the classroom to advance educational equity for bilingual learners through the crucial functions of co-learning and co-teaching. Co-learning, according to Brantmeier (2013), "dismantles asymmetrical power relationships in the classroom…, [and] moves students and teachers toward dynamic and participatory engagement in creating a peaceful and sustainable world" (p. 97). He further argued that for teachers to position themselves as co-learners, they must first unlearn the cultural expectation that the teacher

is the knower of all. García and Li (2014) build on Brantmeier's work to emphasize the need for teachers to participate as learners while positioning students as teachers in order to afford opportunities to learn from their students. In the findings, we discuss how the teacher and students share roles as co-learners and co-teachers to learn from one another in ways that challenge the traditional role of the teacher as knower and authority holder and students as the receivers of knowledge.

Garcia and Li (2014) also argued that translanguaging pedagogy is a meaningful form of education, especially for linguistically minoritized students. This form of pedagogy builds on students' strengths and funds of knowledge, reduces socio-emotional issues, and helps sustain their dynamic language practices. By "liberating the voices of language minoritized students" often silenced in English-only classrooms (García & Leiva, 2014, p. 200), translanguaging pedagogy facilitates moments and spaces where "histories of subjugation are brought forth, building a future of equity and social justice" (García, 2012, p. 4). While the vast majority of research discusses translanguaging pedagogy as 'just' education for linguistically minoritized children, we suggest that this pedagogy also has significant implications for older adults from linguistically minoritized communities. Many older adults have experienced marginalization and subjugation from dominant society throughout their lifetime and often deeply internalize deficit ideologies that stigmatize their own ethnic and cultural identities and language practices. In this way, the implications of translanguaging pedagogy are even more impactful for older adults from refugee backgrounds who have dealt with immense traumatic experiences before their resettlement and continue to be ostracized by the dominant society.

Finally, García et al. (2017) emphasized that translanguaging pedagogy should be thoughtfully and strategically planned and enacted guided by three strands: (1) taking a teacher's translanguaging stance, (2) building a translanguaging design, and (3) making translanguaging shifts. According to García et al., a stance refers to the philosophical or ideological system that shapes and informs a teacher's pedagogical approaches. Taking a translanguaging stance means recognizing bilingualism as a resource and strength of students, prioritizing students and their language practices over standards or regulations, and having a firm belief that translanguaging can transform subject positionalities that enable students to perform based on their internal norms (García & Kleyn, 2016). Based on their translanguaging stance, teachers then design instruction that integrates the pedagogical practices of translanguaging and its resources with collaborative and student-centered approaches. Finally, teachers should be prepared to shift by changing their teaching to respond to students' dynamic and unpredictable translanguaging performance. In this study, the teacher's stance was an essential factor. It informed her pedagogical approaches and actions when working with older adults from refugee backgrounds, which will be discussed further in a later section.

3 Setting the Stage

3.1 The Nepali-Speaking Bhutanese Students

The ESOL class was offered by the local county's ESOL program for older adults (60 years old or older). The program was funded by the state board of education for adult education. The class occurred twice a week for 2 hours at a local senior center. The specific study population consisted of a large number of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese older adults. The center offered transportation for the students, making it easy for older adults to come to the center daily. The center functioned as a community where these older adults came to mingle, play games, exercise, and learn English. All classes were offered free of charge. Park was hired as a teacher when English classes for Nepali-speaking Bhutanese older adults were organized for the first time at the center. Although open to all older adults with ESOL needs, Nepali-speaking Bhutanese older adults were the primary attendees. There were two classes offered for the first 2 years. In the beginning, Park taught one class while a volunteer teacher who worked with her taught another. Later, when the volunteer resigned, the students from the other class merged into Park's class. The average number of students grew from around 10 to 15. The age of students who participated over the 3 years ranged from 60 to 86. Most of the students were in good health, while one student had somewhat limited function in his hand due to a stroke, and another had a more severe condition where half of his body was paralyzed due to a stroke. However, their physical conditions did not impede or hold them back from seeking and actively engaging in educational opportunities.

These older adults shared the transnational experience of being born in Bhutan, moving to refugee camps in Nepal to survive, and resettling in the United States. They were from the southern part of Bhutan, where their ancestors migrated from Nepal in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In both Nepal and Bhutan, Nepali-speaking Bhutanese people are largely marginalized. Particularly in Bhutan, the violence and discrimination against Nepali-speaking Bhutanese people led them to flee their homes to refugee camps in Nepal (Evans, 2010). Even in Nepal, they were restricted to live in camps where the Nepal government did not grant residency or citizenship (Human Rights Watch, 2007). Both in Bhutan and Nepal, most of the older adult students had no formal education experience. At the refugee camps, educational opportunities were only given to children or young adults, while the older adults had to work to feed the family (mainly farming). Many students previously participated in other ESOL programs offered in the community. However, they stopped going because they felt lost being in English-only classrooms.

3.2 *The Classroom Translanguaging Pravaha (Corriente)*

García et al. (2017) use the term translanguaging corriente to refer to "the current or flow of students' dynamic bilingualism that runs through our classrooms and schools" (p. 21). In our study, we are using the Nepali word pravaha to indicate the word corriente. The translanguaging pravaha of this classroom was characterized by the dynamic way that the students and teacher performed multilingual practices. Many of the older adults came from various ethnic groups that initially spoke languages other than Nepali. However, they used Nepali as a common language growing up in Bhutan and living in refugee camps in Nepal. Only a few students could speak their ethnic languages fluently, while others had lost it. Among the students, a few knew how to write the Nepali script, Devanagari. These students were also more proficient in English than others who had no opportunity to learn Devanagari.

The teacher, Park, was born and raised in South Korea and received a k-12 education there. She then moved to the United States to attend college and learned English as an ESL student. Being an English language learner herself and a speaker of a language that is very different from English, she could relate well to some aspects of her older students' learning experiences. Her educational background in critical language education also aided her in seeking ways to enable meaningful educational experiences for students from marginalized communities. The main translanguaging pravaha of this classroom consisted of Nepali and English features, while other languages such as Korean (the teacher's language) and other ethnic languages of Nepal[2] also existed. To more effectively communicate with the students and make their teaching and learning experiences more meaningful, Park endeavored to learn Nepali from the students at a beginner level and also to use other resources that she found on Korean websites. Being a Korean speaker benefited her during this process because there are many similarities between the Korean and Nepali languages, such as a canonical word order of SOV, honorifics, and similar consonant and vowel sounds. Such similarities in the languages also helped her better understand how the students may process learned content based on their language perspectives and identify components the students found challenging to comprehend.

4 Methodology

This three-year qualitative teacher action research study was conducted in an ESOL classroom where Park taught. This research initially started in summer 2014 and ended in summer 2017 when the state discontinued the ESOL program due to a lack of funding. Pine (2009) defines teacher action research as "a sustained, intentional,

[2] The specific names of languages and ethnic groups are omitted because many students' family names are identical to the associated names of ethnic groups.

recursive, and dynamic process of inquiry in which the teacher takes an action—purposefully and ethically in a specific classroom context—to improve teaching/learning" (p. 30) and "reform education from the inside" (p. 30). Such an aspect of teacher action research allows teachers to be the main actor in educational reform instead of positioning them as research subjects or variables of reform (p. 30). We also pay attention to the foundation and purpose of action research—social justice (Pine, 2009). Through teacher action research, Valdez and Park collaborated to disrupt deficit educational practices that negatively impact culturally and linguistically minoritized students in ESOL classrooms. They also worked to bridge the gap between educational research and practice by directly employing critical educational theories and approaches (e.g., culturally sustaining pedagogy and translanguaging) in the classroom setting.

As a teacher-researcher, Park conducted teacher action research in her classroom under the guidance of her advisor and co-researcher, Valdez, a critical language scholar in the field of education. This research began as a pilot study when Valdez asked Park to conduct teacher action research in her classroom for a course project on translanguaging. Later, they started a teacher-researcher collaboration (Cowie et al., 2010) where Valdez provided pedagogical assistance and guided the translanguaging research while Park taught/learned and collected data on-site. Park had opportunities to critically reflect on her positionality as a teacher-researcher, her pedagogical approaches, and her relationship with students. These ongoing reflections constantly influenced her actions in the classroom as a teacher as well as a researcher.

4.1 Data Sources and Analysis

Park, as a teacher-researcher, initiated data collection in 2014 in collaboration with Valdez. They continued to collaborate in planning lessons and conducting research for the class until summer 2017. As for data sources, Park captured classroom interactions through audio recordings two to three times a month, except for a few summer months. Over the 3 years, 78 classroom recordings, each averaging 30-min in length, were collected. The recordings consisted of lessons, interactions among students, interactions between the teacher and students, and informal class conversations/interviews about questions such as "Why are you learning English?" "What languages do you speak at home with your family?" and "How do you address your wife/husband?" Additional data sources included field notes describing lessons and teacher's class observations, digital copies of students' work (textbooks, notebooks, worksheets, whiteboards, etc.), and a researcher reflection journal where Park noted her reflections and insights as a teacher and researcher. These entries also served to capture Park-Valdez's planning and debriefing notes. All of the data were collected, transcribed, and analyzed with students' consent with the help of the Nepali-speaking secretary at the senior center, who served as translator and interpreter throughout the research.

To identify the data for this chapter, we used an a priori approach (Ryan & Bernard, 2003) where themes of the study are decided based on the characteristics of the research, theories and literature review, and researchers' theoretical orientations, positionality, and personal experiences. As part of our cyclical and in-depth analysis of the data, we developed a priori themes drawing from the critical goals of culturally sustaining pedagogy (Paris, 2012; Paris & Alim, 2014) and translanguaging (García, 2009; García & Li, 2014). These themes included *challenging monolingualism*, *linguistic hierarchies*, *cultural and linguistic assimilation*, and *authoritative roles of teachers in classrooms while sustaining minoritized linguistic and cultural practices of students (and the teacher)*. Thus, audio recordings, field notes, and journal entries were systematically analyzed to identify moments that highlighted issues of equity and students' cultural/linguistic identity and practices using translanguaging. Once themes were identified, they were categorized. Excerpts selected for analysis were transcribed first in Nepali (along with English translation) and then in English. For this chapter, we purposely analyze the excerpts that best illustrate classroom routines or patterns from the data pool.

5 Findings

5.1 Teacher Positioning Herself as a Co-learner and Students as Co-teachers

The teacher's stance, which had a significant influence on her pedagogical approaches, came from her background and educational philosophy. Park shared many connections with the students coming from similar racial, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. Such aspects made it easier to establish a stance that pursues and takes up critical and culturally sustaining educational approaches, such as translanguaging pedagogy. More than anything, she comes from a family who has lived through poverty, Japanese colonialism, and the Korean war, from which they had experienced trauma. Similar to many of her students, Park's grandparents had experienced interrupted schooling amid such political climates in Korea. Working with students who had gone through trauma in the past as refugees, Park felt deep empathy for the students. For her, the class meant more than just teaching English. It was also about building a genuine relationship, learning from the students with humility, and caring for their well-being. Early in her work with the students, Park started a graduate program that introduced her to critical, asset-based multicultural and multilingual pedagogies. After learning of deficit educational discourses and approaches and their negative impact on students from linguistically minoritized communities, Park actively sought ways for older adults from refugee backgrounds to have more meaningful and affirming educational experiences. In other words, the teacher's stance worked as a vehicle for empathy and reciprocity in the classroom.

For older adults, it could feel uncomfortable learning from a teacher who is a lot younger than them. This discomfort is even more evident in many Asian cultures because elders are recognized as teachers who hold wisdom and teach younger generations. The UNHCR (2000) stated, "older refugees often serve as formal and informal leaders of communities; they are valuable resources for guidance and advice, and transmitters of culture, skills and crafts that are important in preserving the traditions of the dispossessed and displaced" (para. 2). The students in this class also were respected elders in the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese community. At the same time, the students held a strong perception of the teacher as the authority and students as passive learners in classrooms. The teacher described this as follows:

> I remember the first day of class–it was very quiet. Many students have been in other English classes prior to mine, so they were already accustomed to it–the traditional classroom atmosphere where the teacher leads the class and holds the authoritative role, and they are passive spectators. This perspective took some time to break down. I approached the students with a sincere interest and desire to learn their languages, cultures, and experiences and created a translanguaging space where we can teach and learn from one another. This often put me in a position where I am the learner, and they are the teacher, respectively. I focused on valuing their knowledge and appropriating it in lessons. (Park Researcher Journal)

Such a stance enabled the teacher to take a learner's role, not only to conform to the cultural norm of viewing elders as teachers deserving her respect but also to disrupt traditional teacher and student roles. Using asset-based pedagogical approaches, Park honored and sustained students' cultural and linguistic practices. Next, we discuss how the teacher strived to disrupt the traditional authoritative role of the teacher and challenged the internalized linguistic hierarchy among students by positioning herself as a co-learner and the students as co-teachers.

5.1.1 Disrupting Traditional Power Relations Between Teacher and Students

Over time as the teacher continuously positioned herself as a co-learner, the students also became more comfortable taking on the role of co-teacher for their peers and the classroom teacher. The following example shows how the teacher took on the role of a co-learner to learn the keywords for the lesson in Nepali during a vocabulary building lesson. The following conversation between the students and the teacher took place while learning how to say yesterday, today, and tomorrow both in English (for the students) and Nepali (for the teacher).

Teacher:	In Nepali, 'tomorrow' keho [what is]?
Krishna hajurama:	Hijo. [Tomorrow.]
Teacher:	Hijo…hizu… (having difficulty with pronouncing the word).
Students:	(Hahaha! (laughing) Hijo! (correcting the pronunciation)
Teacher:	What? Ju or jo? Nepali is ubtharo [difficult].
Durba hajurba:	No, English ubtharo [difficult], Nepali easy!

Teacher:	Kina [why]?
Durba hajurba:	Mero naam [my name], one, two (counting with his fingers) Nepali. English, d-u-r-b-a. Five!
Teacher:	Oh, Durba has two letters in Nepali. (showing two fingers)
Durba hajurba:	Yes, two.
Teacher:	Tapaiko naam lekhnus [Please write your name] in Nepali. (handing him a marker and then pointing at the whiteboard).
Durba hajurba:	Okay. (writing his name on the board).
Teacher:	(Trying to copy what he wrote, but having difficulty copying his name in Devanagari) English and Nepali, both ubtharo [difficult] and sajilro [easy]!
Students:	Hahaha! (laughing)

By asking what "tomorrow" meant in the students' home language and putting herself in the role of a novice speaker of Nepali, the teacher took on a learner's role while positioning the students as the source of knowledge. When the teacher was having difficulty pronouncing the word hijo, it put the students at ease and led them to help the teacher say the word correctly. To learn how to write in Devanagari from her student, the teacher tried to write the student's name in Nepali by copying what her student wrote. The teacher made herself vulnerable by openly showing her lack of knowledge of the students' language. Such self-positioning of the teacher as a co-learner facilitated students to open up and engage–taking active roles as co-teachers.

Sharing the roles of teacher and learner is particularly important because many of the elders are rarely recognized as sources of knowledge in formal classroom settings and are often positioned as passive learners due to their interrupted formal education. Thus, the teacher creates opportunities for switching the roles of teacher and student to learn students' language from them, recognizes students as an essential source of knowledge, and helps them transform deficit self-perceptions. As time went by, students took a more active role as teachers. They translated words for the teacher before she asked and also taught other students to understand the instructional content better.

The teacher taking a co-learner's position also exemplified what it means to take risks to learn. The act of saving face is common in many Asian cultures where people are afraid of making mistakes and being seen as inferior. In most Asian cultures, students are expected to listen to the teacher and learn, not the other way around. In the beginning, the students were very quiet and often hesitant to actively participate and answer questions. For this reason, it was important for the teacher to model what it looks like to take risks to learn. While being fluent in students' home languages would be highly beneficial for translanguaging pedagogy, teachers who do not speak students' home language can still position themselves as co-learners to disrupt the traditional power relations between teachers and students.

Flores and García (2013) argued that what is required "is the teachers' willingness to engage in learning with their students, becoming an equal participant in the educational enterprise that should seek, above all else, to equalize power relations"

(p. 256). In this case, the teacher's willingness to position herself as a learner combined with her novice knowledge of students' language (and desire to learn it) afforded a natural way for the students to engage as teachers and ultimately contributed to disrupting the traditional teacher and student roles in this classroom.

5.1.2 Challenging the Linguistic Hierarchy Between Nepali and English

The Nepali-speaking Bhutanese older adults experienced multiple layers of linguistic discrimination during their lifetime. There is not enough space to provide a comprehensive account of the many different language(s) and varieties of language spoken by the Bhutanese or to analyze the various ideologies of language circulating among speakers of these different varieties. Instead, we provide a brief overview of key insights and observations of the historical dimensions of language and culture based on experiences working with and teaching Nepali-speaking Bhutanese. As ethnic minorities in Bhutan who have different cultures, speak different languages, and practice different religions from the majority of the Bhutanese, Nepali-speaking Bhutanese people were discriminated against and oppressed in society and eventually pushed out of the country. They also faced discrimination by Nepali people because they were of Nepali-descent from outside Nepal (diaspora). Their Nepali was also slightly different from the Nepali used in Nepal in word choice and pronunciation.

For this reason, their variety of Nepali was looked down upon for not being "standard". As discussed earlier, many had ethnic languages that were different from the Nepali language. Some of them were mutually unintelligible. However, they had to assimilate and ended up adopting the Nepali language as a lingua franca within the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese community. For this reason, only older students who were in their late 70s and 80s could still speak their ethnic languages fluently (but not regularly because their children shifted to Nepali). At the same time, the younger seniors had lost them.

After the elders moved to the United States, they faced other forms of marginalization. For most older adult students, being at the senior center was the only opportunity to be outside their homes and communities. Even at the center, White, English-speaking seniors hardly interacted with the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese seniors. Moreover, most students experienced difficulty navigating social institutions or shopping for basic needs due to the language barrier. They often expressed frustration because they could only rely on their children, who were always busy working and supporting the family. The older adults seemed to believe in the hegemony of English ideology—e.g., belief that English is a more prestigious and difficult language to learn than their language. In her journal, Park wrote, "Through numerous conversations and interactions with the students, I observed the underlying perceptions that they have of English. They believe English is more difficult, complex than their languages, and such belief somehow leads them to think that English is a better language than theirs." One of the main goals of translanguaging pedagogy is "[t]o interrogate linguistic inequality and disrupt linguistic hierarchies

and social structures" (García & Li, 2014, p. 121). Thus, the teacher committed to putting constant effort into challenging the linguistic hierarchy that had been internalized among students and equalizing the status of both languages, as depicted in the classroom conversation earlier.

By taking an active role in learning about her students and their lives and openly talking about the difficulties she experienced while learning the students' language, the teacher exemplified how learning Nepali was just as challenging for her as learning English was for the students. For instance, after having some difficulties pronouncing the Nepali word hijo and writing the student's name in Devanagari, the teacher reminded the students that Nepali is *ubtharo* [difficult]. Durba hajurba countered her argument stating, "No, English *ubtharo* [difficult], Nepali easy!" In the conversation, instead of acknowledging the student's opinion, the teacher then demonstrated how difficult it was to write in Devanagari. By doing so, she explained how the English and Nepali languages are both difficult and easy in different ways. All language practices are different and complex in their unique ways. The teacher then tried to send this message to the students, aiming to dismantle students' internalized linguistic hierarchy which perceived English as the difficult language that was more prestigious than Nepali. This effort demonstrates that translanguaging pedagogy can be transformative because it helps us question, challenge, and disrupt the inequalities embedded in our society.

5.2 Disrupting Assimilationist and Monolingual Practices in the ESOL Classroom

This class was unique due to the large age gap between the teacher and the students. The teacher was in her 20s, while the students were at least 35 years older than her, closer to the age of her parents or grandparents. From a culture where showing respect to older adults both in verbal and nonverbal languages is considered essential and realizing that the students shared similar cultural backgrounds, the teacher felt the need to incorporate translanguaging pedagogy. Moreover, students expressed to the teacher negative experiences in other English-only ESOL classroom settings where their linguistic practices were stigmatized, as described in Park and Valdez (2018). Thus, she worked actively to support and affirm pluralist and multilingual practices in her classroom. Such a stance by the teacher enabled the fostering of culturally sustaining and respectful practices in the classroom. Her mirroring of students' cultural and linguistic performances and also the adapting of her own cultural and linguistic practices created meaningful engagement with the students. As teachers are highly respected in Nepali culture (and in many other Asian cultures), the students found ways to show their respect to their teacher through their own cultural and linguistic practices despite her youth. In this classroom, translanguaging was employed by the teacher and her students to collaboratively build a multilingual classroom environment and perform culturally sustaining practices

that showed mutual respect to one another informed by their cultural and linguistic knowledge. All of this looks and sounds different from typical interactions between teachers and students in traditional U.S. classroom settings that reflect White middle-class, English-speaking classroom cultures. Next, we discuss how translanguaging was enacted to show respect and validate students' culture in greetings and salutations as well as to sustain student's multilingual practices as part of classroom routines.

5.2.1 Showing Respect and Validating Students' Culture

Teacher:	Namaskar (putting her hands together above her head)! [Hello!]
Ganga hajurama:	Namaskar (putting her hands together above her head), teacher! [Hello, teacher!]
Teacher:	Ganga hajurama, Ke cha? [Ganga Grandma, how are you?]
Ganga hajurama:	Thik Cha! [Good!]

In both the Nepali and Korean cultures, verbal and non-verbal languages are important when greeting, especially for the relationship between the teacher and students as well as younger and older people. The students would always put their hands together above their heads and say "Namaskar" when they greeted the teacher. In Park's Korean culture, people also bow their heads when greeting one another. Instead of overlooking the students' cultural and linguistic greeting practices, the teacher mirrored such practices to foster students' cultural values and set them as the norm of classroom practice. Prior to meeting the students, she only knew the word namaste and to put one's hands together in front of the chest. She learned from the students there was also a different way to greet by saying namaskar and putting one's hands together above the head as a more formal and respectful greeting. Cultural differences between dominant U.S. culture and Nepali culture were often discussed in the classroom. In other words, it was not a case where students did not know how to greet the teacher in English. In fact, the students differentiated their greeting when interacting with other non-Nepali-speaking Bhutanese seniors at the center by saying, "Hi, how are you?" While it is essential to learn about the new resettlement country's culture, the teacher strived to build a classroom environment where students felt they belonged and were comfortable. She accomplished this by sustaining cultural and linguistic practices that were significant in their personal and everyday lives. Encouraging students to uphold their cultural greetings by engaging in those practices was one way to respect their culture and validate their cultural identities instead of erasing them or having them assimilate to the dominant culture.

Translanguaging pedagogy's culturally sustaining elements were also evident when the teacher addressed students, and the students addressed the teacher. Salutations, or the system of addressing, are different across cultures. Even if we know the appropriate forms of address in a new culture, it may cause awkwardness

and discomfort to use or adapt to the addressing system. Although the teacher and students were aware that going by first names in the United States was common, they figured out a way to address each other in a culturally relevant way. As in the greeting example, the student (Ganga hajurama) addressed the teacher by saying the title "teacher," which is uncommon in most U.S. classrooms. In adult education classrooms, most teachers go by their first names or last names after honorific titles. In most Asian countries, it is considered extremely rude to call teachers by their first names or without the title "teacher" despite the age of the teachers. In both the Nepali and Korean cultures, students call their teachers by saying the title "teacher" or the title along with their first or last names. The students would either call the teacher by saying the word "teacher" or "Kona (nickname) teacher." Understanding the reason behind this practice based on her own cultural background, Park respected the students' choice to continue calling her by title. The teacher also sought out a culturally sustaining way to address her elderly students. In her own culture, addressing elders by their first names alone is also considered extremely rude. After she learned that the first name-based addressing system is also culturally inappropriate in Nepali culture, she called the students by their first names and the titles grandma (hajurama) or grandpa (hajurba) as she would in her own culture. In both cultures, people call elders by saying the kinship terms "grandmother" or "grandfather" even if they are not family members. Addressing elders by their first names is offensive in both cultures. The students also called each other by using kinship terms (e.g., sister, brother, uncle, or aunt). With the understanding of such cultural expectations, the teacher then purposefully appropriated the kinship terms for grandparents in Nepali for cultural validation and representation of students and her own to show respect towards the elders. Likewise, regardless of whether they were situated in an English classroom, the students and teacher treated each other based on their cultural values and understandings that emphasized the respectful addressing system within the relationship of the teacher and students as well as elders and youths.

5.2.2 Sustaining Students' Multilingual Practices Through Building Background Knowledge

As part of culturally sustaining pedagogy and translanguaging, the teacher learned simple words and phrases that could be regularly used during class to show her students that she valued and respected their language practices. In the beginning, the teacher had to use these words (e.g., read, write, listen, or speak) in Nepali to help students understand basic instructions. Even after the students learned the equivalent English words, the teacher continued to use the Nepali words instead of using the English words. By using the Nepali words, the teacher intended to make things sound more culturally appropriate and respectful when instructing the elders as a younger teacher. By modeling translanguaging, the teacher also built a multilingual classroom environment where students' linguistic practices and diversity were visible and affirmed.

However, using students' language practices to learn from them was not easy and, in the beginning, even inappropriate when she was trying to gain the Nepali language as part of her linguistic repertoire. One day, the teacher asked students to take turns reading words in the textbook. When it was Tara hajurba's turn, his wife, who was sitting next to him, pointed out the word with her finger in the textbook and asked him to say the word.

Vishnu hajurama:	(pointing at the word with her index finger) Bhanana! [Say it!]
Tara hajurba:	… (silence)
Teacher:	Bhanana, Tara hajurba. [Say it, Tara Grandpa.]
Vishnu hajurma:	(awkwardly smiling)
Teacher:	'Bhanana' ['Say it.'], no?
Ram hajurba:	No, no, no! 'Bhannus'! ['Please say it.']

Speakers of both the Nepali and Korean languages must differentiate their speech level based on the setting where they are situated (formal/informal) and the status or age of people to whom they speak. For example, honorific speech is used when talking to older people and/or in formal settings. When the teacher learned the language, she primarily relied on her students and learned from them by mirroring their language practices, as the example shows. The students would talk to each other using the honorific verb forms. The teacher then mirrored their language practices to learn Nepali with the proper honorific speech in most cases. However, in this example, Vishnu hajurma used low-level speech toward her husband (bhanana). Not knowing the difference between the words bhanana and bhannus at that moment in time, the teacher took a risk and said the same word that Vishnu hajurama used when speaking to her husband. When the teacher attempted to use translanguaging to have meaningful interaction with her students, she did the opposite of what she was trying to do by using an inappropriate speech level of the verb "say" in Nepali. When the teacher said "bhanana" to Tara hajurba, his wife smiled awkwardly in a way that made the teacher notice that something was not right. The teacher immediately asked the students if the word bhanana was the wrong word to say. Tara hajurba's friend intervened and stated bhannus as the correct form.

As the vignette illustrates, mirroring students to learn their language practices is not always successful, especially when the gap between language practices is large and teachers are not aware of the differences or similarities between those practices. Interestingly, the teacher comes from a linguistic background where people use honorific speech for elders; however, she did not make the cross-linguistic transfer from Korean to Nepali because she lacked the linguistic knowledge that honorific speech also existed in Nepali, where verbs are conjugated to indicate respectfulness. To avoid creating such culturally and linguistically inappropriate mistakes and widen her linguistic repertoire to engage in more meaningful educational opportunities, the teacher self-studied the language using online resources in addition to learning from students in class. This example shows the importance of building cultural and linguistic background knowledge prior to teachers' modeling of

translanguaging for students using their linguistic repertoires. It would be ideal if more teachers could enact practices such as these and build cultural and linguistic background knowledge by interacting with students to minimize culturally inappropriate practices. However, in this case, the teacher and students initially did not share much of their linguistic repertoires and could not easily understand each other. Not sharing a linguistic repertoire meant the teacher needed to seek outside sources to build cultural and linguistic knowledge.

6 Conclusions and Implications

This qualitative study examined how Nepali-speaking Bhutanese older adults from refugee backgrounds and their Korean teacher engaged in translanguaging moments that fostered culturally sustaining classroom practices. By taking a teacher action research approach, Valdez and Park collaborated to research the process of designing and delivering lessons informed by translanguaging pedagogy. More specifically, by allowing herself to be a co-learner and positioning the students as co-teachers, the teacher enabled opportunities for students to teach their linguistic and cultural knowledge and practices to her. Such efforts can disrupt traditional power relations between teachers and students where teachers are considered the knower and authoritative figure while the students are thought to be the opposite. For older adults whose culture respects elders and views them as a source of wisdom, equalizing power relations between the teacher and students influences what and how they learn a second language and what and how the teacher learns about teaching them.

Moreover, the teacher took a role as a co-learner to challenge the linguistic hierarchy between Nepali and English deeply internalized by students. She did this by positioning herself as a novice learner of Nepali and exemplifying that the Nepali language was as complex as English and that learning it was as difficult as English learning. It was also vital for the teacher-researcher to disrupt assimilationist and monolingual practices of traditional ESOL classrooms by validating students' culture and sustaining multilingual practices. The teacher and students purposefully appropriated their cultural and linguistic practices in greeting and addressing through translanguaging. They refused to assimilate traditional classroom practices that went against their cultural values and understandings. While learning a new culture was necessary, adopting it was left as a decision of the teacher and students. To make students' language practices more visible and support sustaining them, the teacher also learned and encouraged students to use Nepali words for classroom routine vocabulary. However, the findings also revealed that mirroring students' practices without building background knowledge of their language and culture could lead to an inappropriate adoption of those practices and create discomfort.

This chapter highlighted the educational equity and justice of translanguaging and culturally sustaining pedagogy by coining these theories to strengthen and consolidate our analyses and argument. Honoring and valuing minoritized students'

linguistic and cultural practices is a critical function of translanguaging and culturally sustaining pedagogy. However, Paris and Alim (2014) argue, "…it is also about appropriating and sustaining those practices and shifting the practices of traditional classrooms that are based only on English and linguistic and cultural practices of Whites" (p. 90). Translanguaging pedagogy also emphasizes creating a space for social justice where voices that have been marginalized, oppressed, and constrained can be liberated (García, 2009; García & Kleifgen, 2010). In the same vein, we also argue that implementing a critical form of translanguaging and culturally sustaining pedagogy must be purposeful and strategic in how it works to transform the traditional classroom practices that continuously silence and stigmatize students of color. This indicates teachers' and researchers' stances significantly influence how these pedagogical approaches are strategically designed and implemented in the classroom and how their research design and analyses are conducted. If not coupled with thoughtful planning and implementation, culturally sustaining pedagogy and translanguaging may end up merely appreciating the diversity that students bring into classrooms without sustaining the culturally and linguistically minoritized practices that could disrupt the traditional classroom practices that often reflect damaging dominant ideologies.

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Learning Together: How Ethnography and Discourse Analysis as Practice Influence Citizenship Classes with Nepali-Speaking Bhutanese Refugee Elders Living in Superdiverse Central Ohio

Brian Seilstad

Abstract Among the groups contributing to the "superdiversity" (Vertovec) of Central Ohio are Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugee elders. This chapter draws on empirical data from a year-long study of citizenship classes to demonstrate how ethnography and classroom discourse analysis are particularly useful approaches to educational linguistics to document micro-level social activities, analyze their structures, and then draw connections to meso or macro-levels. In addition, this chapter argues that culturally responsive pedagogies and translanguaging, while critical to valuing the languages and cultures of learners and essential for working with refugee communities, are insufficient if conceived of only as a narrow range of classroom practices. Thus, the chapter demonstrates the exponential power these pedagogies take on when paired with a broader ethnographic project designed to openly explore the histories, lives, languages, and cultures present within a certain group of people.

Keywords Ethnography · Discourse analysis · Culturally-sustaining pedagogy · Translanguaging · Bhutanese refugee elders

1 Introduction

Central Ohio, just as many regions throughout the world, has experienced rapid demographic change in the past 20 years. This "superdiverse" character (Vertovec, 2007) of central Ohio has elements of "mobility, complexity, and unpredictability" (Blommaert, 2013, p. 6) or "spread, speed, and scale" (Meissner & Vertovec, 2015, p. 546). These create challenges for "governmentality" (Budach & de Saint-Georges,

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2017) and public services, including education (e.g., King & Carson, 2016), the focus of this volume. The global movement of refugees plays a central role in creating superdiverse conditions and opportunities for extended inquiry into the conditions and character of the refugee experience.

Ethnography and classroom discourse analysis are particular approaches to educational linguistics designed to document micro-level social activities, analyze their structure, and then draw connections to meso or macro-levels (The Douglas Fir Group, 2016). In educational research, these methods demonstrate the complexities and affordances of various pedagogies and contexts and inform discussions regarding educational outcomes and equity (Bloome et al., 2005). Moreover, ethnography and discourse analysis are more than research methods but rather stances requiring humility, collaboration, and openness to arrive at mutually recognized and agreed-upon versions of knowledge that privilege the community's perspectives and values. Although educational actors, whether individuals or organizations, working with refugees may not directly perceive the impact that educational linguists have had on their work, most would take the stance that understanding and engaging with the languages and cultures refugees bring is central to ethical and equitable interactions. This stance is essential but runs directly into the reality that, for community outsiders, learning about a community's languages and cultures takes time and intense effort. In turn, the community's adaptation to the new context is equally if not more challenging as they confront not only new languages and cultures in their new environment but also ideologies that may support or hinder them as they seek lives of stability and dignity.

This chapter draws on data and insights gained from a larger, Ohio State University IRB-approved, study entitled Citizenship Instruction for Vulnerable Immigrant Seniors (CIVIS) focused on citizenship classes for Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugee elders in Central Ohio. The project's guiding research question explored connections between the elder's social, linguistic, and cultural experiences that could inform learning and teaching preparation for the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) citizenship exam The team deployed ethnography and discourse analysis as methods of inquiry into these questions, seeking to gather data and explore questions that arose that would, in turn, inform and direct classroom practices. The project team, composed of several White American teachers with advanced education degrees and several members of the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugee-background community, were all working together at a community-based refugee-support organization on a grant-funded project to support refugee-background elders[1] that, in part, provided home and community-center based citizenship classes to this community. The teachers all brought strong commitments to a "funds of knowledge" approach (Moll, 1992) that encouraged and required the teachers to learn actively about the focal community. Moreover, the teachers were guided by a translanguaging pedagogy (García et al., 2017) that supported engagement with the students' full linguistic repertoire to make meaning

[1] "Elders" for the grant funds were defined as individuals over 60 years old.

of the classroom activities and target knowledge. In the U.S. where English hegemony is particularly oppressive, teachers and researchers use translanguaging to engage learners' full linguistic repertoires while promoting practices of "difficult loving care" from "both sides of the line" that lead to educations and lives of dignity (García, 2020). This work is political; indeed, Flores (2014) reminds us that translanguaging is part of a broader historical struggle of minoritized peoples to have their languages and cultures valued by directly naming and challenging the historical and current practices that marginalize them. Translanguaging parallels many other frameworks such as culturally-responsive or culturally-sustaining pedagogies or raciolinguistics (Alim et al., 2016; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Paris, 2012).

In these citizenship classes, the target knowledge is the content of the USCIS citizenship test, and a significant part of the research project was devoted to discussions of effective classroom pedagogies to meet this goal of mastering specific questions about American history and culture in addition to essential English literacy tasks. Although this test is high stakes, hegemonic, and grounded in memorization of facts, the project also exposed some deeper challenges in aligning the classroom pedagogy with the learners' linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This chapter reports and reflects on these issues by drawing on the project's previously published work (Seilstad, 2017, 2018) as well as similar research (Park & Valdez, 2018) while drawing on interview and classroom recordings to display the affordances educational linguistics and ethnography and discourse analysis specifically brings to understanding contexts such as these where learners and teachers engage in collaborative and communicative learning activities that span significant linguistic, cultural, and social differences.

2 Relevant Prior Work and Theoretical Framings

The Bhutanese refugee community arose from the "One Nation, One People" policies that the Bhutanese state enacted in the 1980s, itself the result of many centuries of mild to significant tensions between the native-born Bhutanese and those considered migrants. As the Bhutanese state enacted more and more restrictions on the way of life of those considered non-Bhutanese, these tensions boiled over in the 1980s, leading to the expulsion of many of these groups. Among the largest were the Nepali-speaking Lhotshapas (Evans, 2010; Pulla, 2015) who ultimately migrated back to eastern Nepal where they lived in refugee camps for nearly 20 years before, after many years of failed negotiation with Nepali or Bhutanese states, third country resettlement began in 2008 (UNHCR, 2015). At a global level, resettlement is semi-random, placing refugees in areas based on criteria such as availability of housing or low-skilled labor rather than clear connections to the existing populations. In Central Ohio, the Bhutanese refugee community has struggled to find adequate support either within the mainstream environment or within spaces occupied by existing ethnic groups. For example, although one might assume that ethnic Nepali groups might be welcoming to the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugee groups, this

is not always the case, leading many Bhutanese refugees to create their own organizations and support structures. This study, conducted in collaboration with the aforementioned refugee-support agency, examined the teaching and learning practices of focal classes held at the local community organization for Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees.

Prior studies of this community have focused on health issues (Aoe et al., 2015; Shrestha et al., 1998), social status (Bennett et al., 2008; Evans, 2010), or even nationality (Kingston & Stam, 2015). These studies underline this group's historically marginalized status. In the political arena, although some members of this community such as Tek Rizal were highly regarded by the Bhutanese state, this was predicated on maintaining hierarchical and status-quo policies (Rizal, 2010). In terms of education and other measures of social advancement, this community lacked access to basic state services for most of its existence in Bhutan, only gaining the right and infrastructure to attend schools in the 1960–1980s. Finally, the sudden and unexpected expulsion from Bhutan in the 1980s was a serious trauma that created many mental health scars for members of the community. As a result, substance abuse and suicide are significant challenges for the community.

In terms of educational studies, few exist. However, similar community-based work with refugees outline many of the general challenges. A recent volume (Shapiro et al., 2018) demonstrates the many efforts of educational actors to learn about refugee communities and support their journeys towards lives of stability and dignity. One of the many challenges they face is that existing practices and policies can be traced to long-standing histories of racism in receiving countries and the persistent lack of adequate resources to address the range of challenges communities face. At the same time, existing research also demonstrates the often innovative and effective methods deployed by educational actors and community members to achieve their shared goal of creating stable lives of dignity for the community.

Studies of the practices and policies involved in education of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees living in the U.S. often focus on specific classroom contexts where target learning is happening. This chapter and its antecedents (Seilstad, 2017, 2018) as well as similar projects (Park & Valdez, 2018) draw on theoretical stances supportive of refugee communities and utilize ethnography and classroom discourse analysis to document micro-level social activities, analyze their structure, and then draw connections to meso or macro-levels (The Douglas Fir Group, 2016). In educational research, these methods demonstrate the complexities and affordances of various pedagogies and contexts and inform discussions regarding educational outcomes and equity (Bloome et al., 2005). Park and Valdez' work, for instance, shows how culturally-relevant pedagogies and translanguaging practices (e.g., the teachers' learning of Nepali and intentional deploying of that knowledge in the classroom created a "translanguaging space") supported the students as they endeavored to make meaning of the target knowledge.

Supporting but also perhaps complicating this view is our CIVIS team's work. Seilstad (2017) highlights the cultural complexity for an elder seeking to answer the seemingly simple question "What is your date of birth?" Although Seilstad had learned the Nepali words for this question with the help of a community member,

the article demonstrated how the historical construction of a birthdate is complicated due to poor recordkeeping in Bhutan, UNHCR incompetence, and the birth document called a *cheena*. Thus, the elder's long-term confusion with the appropriate response, while certainly having a cognitive dimension, has other complicating layers that need to be understood to avoid a deficit perspective. In a similar fashion, Seilstad (2018) explores a classroom moment where the lead teacher was teaching the concept of "Jury." Again, although she had developed translanguaging-style material with a translation "Nyapeeta," this was not sufficient to convey the concept to the group and masked many resonances for this term that would be necessary to unpack for deeper meaning. This, it would seem, held the possibility for a true rich point that would allow the class to reflect on their previous cultural experiences with organizations similar to juries and apply those to the U.S. context. However, in the CIVIS project meetings, researchers debated whether the insights generated could or should be brought back to the classroom for reflection. While some team members felt that this would be a rich opportunity to deepen engagement with the elders' backgrounds and knowledge about juries, others argued that this was too complicated and even tangential to the broader learning goals. Critically, these perspectives were not split along ethnic or linguistic lines, but rather more individualized. Indeed, when the author suggested (April, 2016) that the research group could create a classroom lesson or mini-curriculum to explore "jury" and related concepts more fully, a Bhutanese refugee team member said that, although the researcher team discussions increased awareness, bringing such a lesson to the class "would not solve any problems" and the proposed lesson(s) "would blur the objective of where we want to go with those classes." In general, this Bhutanese refugee team member argued that more focused methods such as the slow repetition of words may be more efficient for memorizing test material than discussions that, despite deepening the learning, also could be confusing or time-consuming. In the end, the research team agreed that they would use the learning emerging from the playback sessions for their own awareness and training of future teachers but not for creating specific lessons drawing on this knowledge.

Key insights from the scholarship reviewed here raise a number of significant questions about how to best support refugee education across the lifespan. For instance, although many educational actors bring important knowledge and commitments (e.g., towards social justice or culturally-sustaining pedagogies, an awareness of essential target information, and engaging techniques of teaching and learning), such priorities are not always aligned with the students' knowledge and expectations. Thus, teachers may seek to find various middle grounds or ad hoc opportunities to connect their commitments to their understanding of the students' background and goals. Sometimes these situations lead to demonstrable learning outcomes, sometimes not. Throughout, a critical contribution of this earlier work is that it demonstrates the value of promoting ethnographic closeness and attention to language practices in order to identify and/or overcome deficit perspectives towards individual elders and the Bhutanese refugee community in general.

3 Research Context and Methodology

The Bhutanese refugee community is relatively new in the U.S. and other refugee-receiving nations. Its contribution to the discussion of superdiversity is manifold. The community has been highly mobile, particularly within the U.S. where their initial sites of resettlement have been often left behind for various reasons, including to seek reunification with family, to find a better job, or even to enjoy more familiar weather. Although Central Ohio has become a large receiving area for primary resettlement and secondary migration, the immigrant community reflects a wide variety of internal complexity in terms of language and cultural background. To some extent, this is expected, but the strata of religious, educational, and social groups often confuse local service providers. Finally, unpredictability is manifest; for example, although the caste system does impact many aspects of the community, this is not deterministic. Indeed, many lower caste families bring significant cultural and social capital to the U.S.

Among the manifold challenges that this group faces is the issue of citizenship. Although the U.S. does offer a clear path to citizenship for refugees, it is not guaranteed. To pass the USCIS citizenship test, refugees must learn enough English and citizenship/historical knowledge. This test itself is not overwhelming in general, and the required knowledge has been highly circumscribed and published for the population with, for example, its target vocabulary and 100 citizenship questions. As I learned from my observations of classes and interviews with adult learners of English, learners can focus on acquiring the target knowledge and also develop strategies to pass the test, as explained by T (the same T who will appear later in the Findings section) and Y (another member of the community interviewed for the project).

T: the 100 questions that are asked in the interview they are most difficult because I don't understand English and so it's hard to speak in English. I find it also difficult to answer those yes/no questions. If I can have anything in written form, it's an easier way, so I can read it several times to answer the questions. I got some books from the library, and there are questions there that are not asked on the interview. On one page in this book there are exercises and on another page we have to answer them, but many people say that these questions are never asked in the interview, so you will not pass if you do these questions. This is what people are saying. I've read these questions, but people are saying that these are not the questions. (personal communication, December 2, 2015)

Y: So, like I was well prepared on that one. I was thorough on the 100 questions and answers. I was kind of confident. There was a tricky part, with the yes/no questions in the beginning, and you don't know, they don't ask them all, there are about 20 to 30 questions, so I had an idea about these, I knew all of the questions that needed "yes" and all the other ones needed no, so some of these were a little bit tricky, but I just focused on knowing the six or seven questions that required yes, and all the other ones I said no. So that part was a little

> tricky, people struggle on that part. For the no part, they asked me 13 question, and then on the yes part they asked me 3 questions. so yeah. (personal communication, February 8, 2016)[2]

In general, passing the test for the focal elders is very difficult. They have to not only memorize this vocabulary and citizenship questions but also be able to read and write several simple sentences in English. Many of the elders, however, are illiterate in Nepali, which makes this English task even more difficult, a point raised several times in interviews (P is the interviewee, B the author).

B: how did you like those classes?
P: it was difficult, I didn't understand, because I never learned to write even my ABCs, so it was difficult for me to understand
B: so now do you know how to write?
P: I don't know how to write
B: but you're learning I think.
P: Yes I'm learning, but I forget a lot. (personal communication, February 5, 2016)

Moreover, these classes are high-stakes; if they do not manage to pass the test and become citizens, they will eventually be barred from various types of social support essential to their day-to-day survival such as Social Security benefits. Thus, the local government opened a grant process to create citizenship classes for this and other similar populations, which is administered by the focal community-based refugee support agency that we worked with.

These classes wrestle with the challenge of the elders' perceived and often real cognitive decline over the lifespan by providing a regular environment for the teaching and learning of the knowledge required for passing the USCIS citizenship test. This project directly researched four contexts, three in-home and one at the community center, and while some students who were less than 60 years old attended, the majority were above this threshold. In the CIVIS project, from September 2015 to April 2016, a group of White American and Nepali-speaking Bhutantese refugee teachers and researchers, including the author of this paper and coordinator of the project, videotaped classes at a local community center and in individual homes, conducted interviews with students, had regular playback/discussion sessions, and maintained field notes in the qualitative, ethnographic, and discourse analytic traditions (Atkinson et al., 2011; Blommaert & Jie, 2010; Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Gee, 2014; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Wolcott, 2001; Wortham & Reyes, 2015). The data corpus includes approximately 80 hours of classroom video from three research sites, nine audio-recorded interviews, and five playback/discussion sessions. The videos and playback sessions were all indexed and interviews

[2] All interviews conducted in English by the author but with the support of a Nepali-speaking interpreter from the refugee support organization. Some of the responses were in Nepali and translated; others were in English depending on the interviewee's proficiency level. For ease of reading, all interview excerpts here are in English.

transcribed. Sections relevant to the research questions were excerpted from the video and transcribed, allowing for the microanalysis of classroom events (Bloome et al., 2005; Erickson, 2004; Moses, 2012). The playback sessions offered opportunities for the Americans to learn from the Bhutanese and vice versa, creating a community of practice informed by the funds of knowledge approach (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Gonzalez et al., 2005; Moll, 1992). This approach addresses the issue that teachers from majority languages and cultures, even those with many years of experience and commitments to culturally sustaining practices, require close connection and opportunities for inquiry to learn about new communities of learners. This is especially important for work with elder migrant communities that have not received as much scholarly attention as other age groups (Browne & Mokuau, 2008).

To illustrate these points, this chapter will identify, document, and analyze the complexity of a social arrangement where a White American citizen teacher draws on her available pedagogical and linguistic background in addition to knowledge gained from the ongoing research project to design instructional activities and approaches to develop the content and language knowledge required of the citizenship exam. In turn, the elders draw on their languacultural backgrounds to make meaning of the material together. A close reading of classroom talk reveals how interlocutors manage and negotiate some of the affordances and challenges that arise in this arrangement.

4 Findings

The classes for this project were held twice a week at a Bhutanese refugee support agency located in a part of the city where many from the community already lived. In addition to these classes, other teachers conducted lessons in individual homes throughout the city. Although a comprehensive study about the students' satisfaction about the classes has not been undertaken, during interviews for this project, all refugee-background participants expressed general satisfaction with the teaching. In addition, the caseworkers who were interviewed all said that the elder population they support are satisfied with the classes.

This section will present and discuss interactional data from one section of classroom video that occurred on January 25, 2016. This excerpt was selected by the research group for focused analysis of the language-in-use because the task was relatively complicated and provoked a range of group interactions that were perceived as positive and collaborative. The lead teacher, Sara, had been working on U.S. geography for several weeks, a set of knowledge key to answering the following questions on the citizenship test:

1. Name one of the two longest rivers in the United States.
2. What ocean is on the West Coast of the United States?
3. What ocean is on the East Coast of the United States?

4. Name one U.S. territory.
5. Name one state that borders Canada.
6. Name one state that borders Mexico.
7. What is the capital of the United States?
8. Where is the Statue of Liberty?

During prior sessions, Sara had been scaffolding the students' knowledge using maps, handouts, and discussions. In this session, Sara wanted to assess the students' knowledge using the game Bingo. The students were sitting around a number of tables with Sara teaching from one end with the assistance of a whiteboard. Figure 1 gives a partial view of the classroom. Unfortunately obscured are some students at the far right and also the whiteboard on the left.

Around the table are various key learners identified by letters in the transcript below. H in the lower left is a long-term attender of the class and, at the time of the class, was quite close to taking the citizenship test and would eventually pass early in 2017. Prior to the class below, he had stated in an interview that he was confident to pass the test even if some of the medication he takes makes his memory fuzzy. More importantly perhaps, he had been a regular community leader in Nepal, holding a number of administrative posts within the refugee camp organization. T at the upper left is another long-term attender who, in some contrast to H, struggled more with the content despite regular and diligent efforts. Nevertheless, she passed the test in 2018. The other identified members of the class were semi-regular attenders of the class.

Prior to the section of classroom discourse below, Sara introduced the idea of Bingo and how it focused on the target knowledge. She also explained how Bingo

Fig. 1 Image from class

is a competitive game in which the first person to get Bingo would traditionally get a prize. Critical to this activity and the paper's focus, she did not define the language or rules regarding collaborative meaning making. Then she began to explain the activity (Tables 1 and 2).

In this section, Sara starts to explain the activity at line 1 and how beans will be used as the Bingo markers. Almost immediately, a student expresses confusion at the task which Sara, whose Nepali is rudimentary, does not understand and thus continues. At line 7, her statement "don't eat them" provokes laughter from T, partially demonstrating her advancing understanding of English. As Sara continues, a key moment at line 14 occurs when H steps in to give his interpretation of the task. At lines 25 and 28, two women point out a confusing aspect of Bingo—some but not all items are on each Bingo sheet. Sara does not perceive this and continues with the game. At line 35, H demonstrates his knowledge of the content area and then at line 41 identifies the first Bingo, which Sara acknowledges with a louder voice. At line 49, Sara ends her demonstration and suggests starting an official game. However, at line 50, several students do not understand. Sara does not perceive this, but H intervenes and, from lines 53 to 60 explains the game in detail. Line 61 indicates that some students still don't understand whereas line 62 shows that another student has understood. The teaching assistant at 63 explains further, then H interweaves his explanation with the assistants from 68 to 78. Sara, throughout, has been monitoring and asks if the group is ready at 79, which H affirms at 80. After some brief clarification, Sara starts the first formal game, starting from line 87 below.

In this second section of discourse, Sara starts the formal game with a question about the Atlantic ocean. Throughout, the group generally displays understanding of the game structure by following along, repeating what Sara says, and putting beans on the game board. However, some modifications still occur; at line 94, a student next to H identifies the correct answer, and then H says the answer. Sara clarifies that, for those with Atlantic on their cards, they should put a bean, which some students do with support from Sara, H, and the TA. At line 110 and following, Sara continues conducting the game with several students, H especially, demonstrating their knowledge, clarifying the procedures, and supporting each others' progress. At line 141, B gets and says "Bingo" with the support of the teaching assistant, which Sara confirms and rewards by raising her voice and clapping at 158. H at line 160 points out that another student also has Bingo. Sara acknowledges this and punctuates her support with "Ramro" 'good' one of the several Nepali vocabulary items she knows and regularly deploys in the classroom.

Taken as a whole, this section displays how Sara, despite her relative lack of Nepali-language skills, creates a collaborative learning environment and is able to communicate the task structure well enough to be understood by several students in the class; moreover, the students' responses and subsequent "Bingos" provide partial confirmation that the target information has or is being learned. What emerges from the section is Sara's commitment to a socio-cultural learning environment in which the collective knowledge and experience of the group is privileged over individual achievement.

Table 1 Classroom discourse from Sara's class[a]

Message Unit	Speaker	Text
1	Sara	I'm gonna give you some beans
2		Ok
3	Unidentifiable Nepali Speaker at third from upper right of video	**Que vana khojeko?** **'What's she trying to say?'**
4		I'm gonna give you some beans
5		Don't eat the beans
6		Don't eat them
7	T ((Woman sitting in upper left of screen)) and H ((lower left of screen))	*Laughs*
8	Sara	Don't take it home.
9		K we're gonna play with the beans
10		Were gonna play
11	Two Nepali speakers in foreground	[Indiana *spoken to each other*
12	Sara	I'm gonna give a question
13		I might say this is one American territory
14	H ((Male student sitting in lower left of video))	**U le bhaneko ma rakhnu parne** **'We have to keep those beans where she tells us to'**
15	Sara	This is one
16		American territory a- *lifts up hand with bean, drops it*
17		Whoops *takes another bean from her hand. The other falls on T's paper and she looks briefly for it but it seems to have fallen on the floor.*
18		And you take your bean
19		And you take your bean
20		And if you have Guam
21		You put it on Guam
22		You put it on Guam
23	Sara	This is an American territory
24		Guam
25	Two women at the upper right	**Guam yaha chaina ta** **'Guam is not here'**
26		So you put your bean
27		On Guam
28	Two women at the upper right	[**Guam yaha chaina ta** **Guam is not here'**]
29	Woman second from top right	Guam
30	Sara	Ok I'll say another one
31		This country is north of the United States

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

Message Unit	Speaker	Text
32		This country is north of the United States
33		Country
34	H	Alaska
35	Sara	Ok, if you have Canada
36		You take your bean
37		And you put it there
38		And you want to get
39		Three across
40		Three beans
41	H	Bingo
42	Sara	BINGO
43		That would be bingo
44		Or three beans down
45	H	Bingo
46	Sara	Or three beans diagonal
47		Bingo
48		Ok?
49		Want to try it out?
50	Unidentifiable Nepali speakers	**[que garnu are** **k garnu are** **'What do we do?'**
51	Woman second from top left	*Makes gesture with hand up in the air that indicates lack of understanding according to Nepali research assistant*
52	Sara	Ok, so don't eat these
53	H	**U le bhaneko bujera rakhnu parcha** **'You have to understand what she is saying and place the beans'**
54	T	Laughs
55	Unidentifiable Nepali speakers	**Bodhi ka dana** **'Beans'**
56	H	**Bodhi ka dana lyeako rahecha** **'She has brought the beans'**
57	Unidentifiable Nepali speakers	*Laughing*
58	Unidentificable female voice ((off screen))	**Kalla jitcha us lai dina are** **'Whoever wins will get the beans'**
59	H	**U le bhaneko ma rakhnu paryo** **'We have to place the beans where she tells us to'**
60		**Ani matra bingo huncha** **'Then only you'll have a bingo'**
61	Other voices	**Kina khanu paryo** **'Why do you have to eat (the beans)?'**

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

Message Unit	Speaker	Text
62	Woman's voice off camera	**Yasari tin ta serially milyo bhane bingo huncha** **'You have to have three serially to have a bingo'**
63	Ta ((Female teaching assistant, off camera))	When she calls
64		When she says
65		When she says
66		Something on here
67		When she says
68	H	**Tala rakhnu** **'Place it down there'**
69		Pennslyvania
70		You take a
71	H *to woman across the table*	**Tala rakhnu** **'Place it down there'**
72	Other female speaker	**Yeha?** **'Here?'**
73		When she says ((unintelligible place))
74		You take the bean
75	H	**Tapai jaha rakhnu huncha rakhnu tara antim ma** **'Wherever you want to place it, but (do it) at the end'**
76	Ta	When she says ((unintelligible place))
77		You say <u>bingo</u>
78	H	**Masiam** **'Masiam' ((a type of lentil))**
79	Sara	Alright you ready
80	H	Yes
81	Sara	((responding to some request for a free space from nearby student)), no
82		No
83		There's no free space
84	H	Oh
85	Sara	No free space
86	T	*Laughs*

[a]Conventions: English in unmarked text. **Nepali transliteration in bold with English translation in quotes.** *Paralinguistic information in italics.* LOUDER SPEECH IN ALL CAPS. ((transcriber comments in double brackets)). Overlaps indicated by [. Nepali-speaking members of the research team assisted me with the Nepali language

A key point is the role of H, whose prior status as a community leader and long-term attender allows him to mediate the language and content for others in the group. As Sara starts to explain the game, H initially demonstrates partial understanding, but then this evolves to be more robust, which he then conveys clearly and

Table 2 Continued classroom discourse from Sara's class

87	Sara	Ok here we go
88		This is an ocean
89		Let me rephrase
90		This ocean is on the east coast
92		Of the United States
93		This ocean is on the east coast
94	Woman to right of H	Atlantic *places bean on her page*
95	Sara	East coast of the United States
96	H	Atlantic
97	Sara	Ok
98		If you have Atlantic
99		But you don't *gestures with and shakes left hand slightly with palm down to T*
100		If you have Atlantic
101		K does
102		You'll put a bean on it
103	K ((Man off camera left))	Oh
104		On Atlantic?
105	Sara	On Atlantic
106	Ta	Ocean
107		Atlantic ocean
108		Perfect
109		You have the Pacific Ocean
110	Sara	This is the capital of the United States
111	H	Washington
112	Sara	This is the capital of the United States
113	H	Washington DC
114	Other male voice	Right
115		Washington
116	Sara	Make sure it's DC
117		And not Washington state right?
118		Washington DC
119	Nepali voice	**[Topaili** **'You' ((voice giving help to another student))**
120	H	**Washington ma matrai rakhnu hos** **'Place only on Washington'**
121	Sara	Washington DC
122		Washington DC
123	Nepali voice	**DC chai yo** **'We need DC'**
124	Sara	Ok good *to T*
125		One more
126		And you got it

(continued)

Table 2 (continued)

127	Sara	Ok
128		This is one of the longest
129		Rivers in the United States
130	Various voice	Missouri
131		Mississippi
132	Woman to the right of H	*Puts bean on her board, has three in a row, but doesn't say anything*
133	Sara	Ok
134		So if you
135		You don't have either ((to T))
136		Ok
137		If you have Mississippi river
138		Or Missouri
139	H	Three
140	Ta	Say bingo
141	B ((Male off camera right))	BINGO
142	Sara	Bingo
143		ALREADY?
144		Ok B
145		Say what you have
146	B	Uh
147		Atlantic
148		Washington
149		And
150		Missouri
151	Sara	Now is it Washington DC?
152	B	Washington DC
153	Sara	Ok
154		Make sure you say
155		Washington DC
156		Good
157		Ok
158		He won the FIRST ONE *claps*
159	Woman to right of H	*Looks at her page, sees the three in a row, and gestures that she has bingo too* **Nepali**
160	H	She has a bingo
161	Sara	You do too
162		Ch ((woman to right of H))
163		Ok
164		Tell us what you have
165	Unidentified male voice on right side of video	**Bhannu are aba bhannu hos ta** **'She's asking you to say what you have ((in the bingo))'**

(continued)

Table 2 (continued)

166	C ((woman to right of H))	Missouri river
167		Washington DC
168		Atlantic Ocean
169	Sara	I think
170		It's the same one
171		Yeah
172		Same one
173		Good
174		**Ramro** **'Good'**

incrementally to the other members of the group. In addition, the task seems to be perceived as fun. T, for example, laughs several times throughout the activity, and the students joke with each other about the beans and celebrate each other when they get Bingo. Through their occasional and creative confusion, they discuss and, by the end of the task, most are playing the game confidently and, critically, demonstrate multiple times their acquisition of the target knowledge by achieving Bingo.

Although H's role is partially supported by his individual knowledge, there is also a cultural dimension to point out. In a later playback session on February 10, 2016, the research group discussed this video section, and the White American teachers asked about the culture of mutual help that H and others demonstrated in the group interactions. The Bhutanese research colleagues affirmed that this is a general cultural practice and added that a certain deference is given to older group members, further explaining why H was able to hold his leadership position in the group. In addition, Sara mentioned that H had frequently said things to her in class such as "I can't do X" but that reading the transcript of H's semi-formal interview gave her greater insight into his life and helped her counteract some of H's subtle personal deficit perspective. This resulted in her being confident in H's ability to act as an ad hoc classroom assistant.

5 Discussion

This section of classroom discourse opens a broader discussion about the state of the field in terms of the long-standing challenge in the U.S. or other contexts where teachers work with communities that are linguistically and culturally distinct from the dominant culture. The discourse section illustrates the type of sociocultural learning experiences that Sara and other TESOL-trained teachers are encouraged to deploy. Indeed, these shifts have redirected TESOL pedagogies from methods focusing on memorization and repetition to communicative and dialogic strategies that push learners to not only master vocabulary and grammar but to use the language to express themselves, reflect on the learning process, and engage in critical

debates. This shift is most recently exemplified by TESOL's new "Six Principles for Exemplary Teaching of English Learners" where the fundamental principle is "Know Your Learners" and the others focus on classroom learning and engagement with a professional community of practice (TESOL, 2018).

In turn, student interviews reveal a range of perspectives about teaching and learning with respect to the citizenship classes. H, in an interview, responded to a question about the general pedagogy and things he likes in Sara's or other teachers' practices.

H: Asking questions and making us tell the answer, and if we don't know the answer, giving the answers, getting the answers, and making us to write, what we need to write, and how to write it. When going to the yes/no questions, if we make a mistake once we do it, they point out the mistake, give the right one. Those are the things that I like most.

H's brief response typifies some of the traditional memorization learning techniques deployed in the classes to learn the target knowledge. However, H also points out a challenge with the learner's diversity.

H: There are different types of students. There are some students who are like, they know better than others, and some students who still cannot recognize even the alphabet. They have a lot of difficulty in learning what I have learned or others who are of my level are learning. So if there can be anything like a making of a group for the lower students to help them to learn better, that could be a good one to assist them to learn something for the citizenship (personal communication, December 7, 2015)

This statement underlines that a number of challenges remain. Sara's lack of Nepali language knowledge causes her to ignore several questions from the group. This issue is perhaps innocuous in the transcript but does arise as a broader challenge, which G (a student seated out of view to the left of H and another long-term attender) points out.

G: Sara teaches us very nicely, but we understand a good deal, but we don't understand many things of what she's telling us. We don't understand everything, but if there were somebody who can translate for us so that would be great (personal communication, December 9, 2015).

G's statement is commensurate with the classroom discourse in that multiple student statements show lack of understanding that could, potentially, be overcome by direct translation of the material. This raises the limits of monolingual English approaches in TESOL and perhaps favors more bi/multilingual strategies (Auerbach, 1993; Cummins, 2007). Clearly, the language of the classroom is an obstacle to the students which is, in the test context, perhaps amplified. The interview sections above already revealed how many students developed functional strategies such as simply identifying the "yes" answer questions rather than understanding the deeper knowledge underlying the question. Nevertheless, the techniques may be effective and even essential for many students.

P: So, before that, I noticed that most of the teachers started from an upper level. Like not teaching the alphabet, and since I was completely illiterate, this was quite difficult. So they taught in a different way. They were teaching the upper-level content, so it was hard for us to understand. But that teacher named Sam started from the ground level. He, after that, started with simple small words, showing pictures about the words, different presidents, adding content slowly, and then after that, I felt much more confident that I could go further, and after that I went to the library. So I just give a lot of credit to that teaching method, starting from the very basic, taking our time, with the pictures and so on, and then after that I was able to cope and do better at the library. (personal communication, January 26, 2016)

Although passing the test is certainly important and teachers and learners deploy a range of strategies to meet this goal, it is important to highlight that passing the test indexes something deeper for many learners—namely, a partial rectification for a lifetime of marginalization. T, in her interview from December 2, 2015 puts a clear voice to this issue.

T: it is my desire and interest to learn reading and writing. In Bhutan we didn't have the chance to do that, so when I'm here I don't have anything to do, so sitting idle is very difficult, so I want to read and learn writing so I can learn different things. Also while moving here and there it will be easier. That is why I'm going to these classes by walking along the street to attend those classes. But my son and daughter-in-law tell me to not go that long distance to these classes and say "You are old" and that might be a problem, walking long distances. And they also say that learning in old age can not be easy, so it's better to stay at home. But I have a great interest in learning, so I want to learn it anyway. It is right from my heart that this desire to learn comes. I need to learn. There is nothing, no external factor, that makes me learn. The people around us, our relatives and outsiders, tell us to not walk around and not study. But I don't agree with them and I am very interested in learning, so I want to learn these things…I find that there are two kinds of people who come. There are the younger ones who come and say that "it doesn't come to my mind and I can't catch it," and the older ones who say that "we are about to die so why should we learn? It is useless to learn." They even say to me "what is the use of learning, you are too old?"

B: So why are you doing it, why study for citizenship?

T: I don't know. I'm not sure what my encouragement is, but from my inner heart I feel that I should learn something and try to know everything that is necessary. And now I'm feeling sad because we're only have two classes so the Friday classes will be over after some time. So if there were classes every day, I would be able to learn more. I wish there were class every day for five days.

T's comments are a powerful reminder of how a specific learning context, particularly one that strives to be communicative, linguistically and culturally relevant,

and effective in meeting target language and content goals can address broader issues of equity. The elders' experiences in the courses was generally reported to be positive and especially powerful when the ultimate goal—passing the citizenship test—was achieved. Many learners and teachers in this project have touching memories of attending the citizenship ceremony together, a tangible step towards equal legal status in the United States.

6 Conclusion

In conclusion, this article makes several core arguments. First, culturally responsive pedagogies and translanguaging value the languages and cultures of learners and are essential for working with refugee communities. However, these are insufficient if conceived of only as a narrow range of classroom practices that, for example, draw on linguistic or cultural examples in a simplistic way to convey the target knowledge. On the other hand, the second point demonstrates the exponential power these pedagogies take on when paired with a broader ethnographic project designed to openly explore the histories, lives, languages, and cultures present within a certain group of people. The layering of classroom video, interviews, playback sessions, and the all-important engagement with friends and experts from the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugee community allowed for engagement and reflection on these critical questions about educational equity and effectiveness. Whether conducted in whole or in part by individual educators or larger inquiry groups, ethnography and discourse analysis as practice approaches hold promise for engaging and supporting new communities.

The CIVIS project has endeavored to navigate these frameworks in dialogue with the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese community in Central Ohio. Through the close attention to classroom events and direct engagement with the relevant actors, this project has contributed to unraveling a small thread in the complexity that is superdiverse Central Ohio. Similar projects are necessary and constantly underway with other communities, all with their ethnographic goals of humanizing and explaining the experiences of the world's peoples seeking equity and lives of dignity (Baker-Bell, 2020; García-Sánchez, 2014; Rosa, 2019).

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Partners in Resettlement and Adult Education: Former Refugees and Host Communities

Jenny Field and Celine Kearney

Abstract New Zealand has expanded its refugee resettlement programme. Government policy changes, announced in 2018, meant the refugee quota which has been 750 for about 30 years would increase to 1500 people (Immigration New Zealand, Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment, New Zealand immigration. Immigration Factsheets: Refugees and Asylum Seekers, 2018). This will present settlement and language support challenges and opportunities. Earlier experience seems to point the way to some successful strategies.

Our research, underpinned by Tarone et al. (Literacy and second language oracy. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2009) explored the challenges faced by refugee background adults with emergent print literacy. Between 2017 and 2019, the study explored the language learning experiences of 60 learners aged 18–64. It focused on affordances and constraints to learning, strategies employed in the learning process and implications for classroom pedagogy.

We highlight the importance of the partnerships developed over time between the host community and refugee background communities, particularly the welcome offered by Māori, the indigenous people of Aotearoa, initiatives of refugee background communities in one New Zealand city; and support for bilingual tutors to work beside learners in the early stages of their language learning.

This chapter explores the role of partnerships between the host community and refugee background communities, with a focus on teaching and learning experiences of adults in English Language programmes taught in a range of social and educational spaces in a city in Aotearoa New Zealand. We focus on the English language development needs of adult L2 learners with emergent print literacy in English.

We begin with a short narrative illustrating how one individual from a refugee background negotiated a challenge to his community through creative partnerships.

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This enabled a positive response to ensue which has had ongoing benefit to both the community and the wider host community.

> It was in 2008 and there were a few negative things in the media at the time about refugees and Somalis. I remember calling this radio talk-back to refute what they were saying…. And then I realised that sometimes the best form of defence is to come up with something positive. It's well and good to react to something, but I'm sure there are many things that are positive that are happening in the community and those often don't get highlighted because the media loves to talk about things that sell news… I thought if people read something they may as well read about something positive happening in the Somali community. I was in education and am passionate about education and thought maybe I will investigate Somalis who have been to university and who are doing their best.

As a response Abdi (2015) created a national data base of Somali students who had graduated from universities around the country. He profiled the 30 or 40 graduates at the time, which became the first edition of the Somali Graduate Journal.

> And that really galvanized the whole community. It showed a different side of the community for people outside the community… The journal has done wonders for the community. It's created talk and discussion in the community. And it's something they look forward to and like to read about. It creates a good role model for the community as well as fighting off stereo types and perceptions that are not so good for the community.

There have been seven editions of the journal, annual editions, but high rates of immigration to Australia in the Somali community mean the eighth edition may span more than 1 year. This initiative has contributed to strengthening the refugee-background community and educated the wider host community about talents, skills and academic achievements in that community. This partnership has helped to create an environment where members of that refugee background community can feel confidence and pride in their own achievements, particularly in the area of education. We argue through this chapter that partnerships such as the Somali Graduate Journal provide a context in which newer members of this refugee-background community, represented by participants in our research study (2017–2019) can move forward with confidence and wider support for their language development.

In this chapter we offer other examples of partnerships between refugee background communities and the host community: the welcome they are offered from Māori, the indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand; support for bilingual tutors or Community Language Assistants, to work beside learners in the early stages of their language learning, by English Language Partners New Zealand, a nationally organised, community based, government-funded organisation which provides English literacy support for people with refugee and migrant backgrounds.

Adult learners with refugee backgrounds face challenges settling into Aotearoa New Zealand including housing, language development, educational opportunities, and gaining employment or setting up a business (Watts et al., 2001a, b; Isshi, 2017). This group of learners in Aotearoa New Zealand have been offered a home in a society where Māori, the indigenous people, and communities who have come from other Pacific nations, struggle with social, cultural and educational performance inequities and disparities because of the consequences of colonial history (Walker, 2004). These disparities are echoed in the contexts McCarty has described

and analysed in the context of Language Gap in the United States (Avineri et al., 2015). In Aotearoa New Zealand adult learners with refugee backgrounds are often members of communities who face challenges related to structural racism and related social inequities (Thiruselvam, 2019; Chile, 2002).

For new arrivals to the country learning the dominant language English is an essential step to successful settlement (Watts et al., 2001a, b; Kaur, 2016). There are extra challenges however for language development for refugee background learners with minimal or interrupted education, who embark on acquiring print literacy in English, without being able to write in their other language or languages. Those with emergent literacy have language development needs which require responses at a community level, a government language policy level and at the level of the educational institution and organisation, as well as the individual English language classroom level through the pedagogy deployed there.

1 Rationale for the Study: Research Questions

Learners who need to acquire English print literacy, without having this in their first language or languages, face specific needs and challenges. Tarone et al. (2009) argued that learners with limited literacy have received little attention in the area of Second Language Acquisition research. We view our research as a contribution to increasing knowledge and understanding of the needs of this learner group and how their language development may be supported through attention to pedagogy.

This is pertinent to the Aotearoa New Zealand context because government policy changes, announced in 2018, meant the refugee quota which has been 750 for about 30 years would increase to 1000, then in July 2020 the quota would further increase to 1500 people (Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment (MBIE), 2018). The Covid 19 global pandemic meant borders were closed at that time, but new reception areas are already being set up around the country to receive this increased number of people (MBIE, 2018). Doubling the refugee quota, will mean double the numbers of refugee background learners needing English language development support, often with emerging print literacy.

As practitioners as well as researchers, we noted that completion tasks took longer for students with less formal education than others in the class who had had more years of schooling. We wanted to know if years of education in L1 made a difference. The classes involved were required to do a test developed by the government Tertiary Education Commission (TEC). All classes fully-funded by government complete this test at the start and end of each programme.

The research questions our study explored were:

1. What does the TEC online assessment tool reveal about learners' progress over 2 years?
2. What affordances and/or constraints are learners experiencing while learning their second or additional language?

3. What strategies are learners using to help them to learn well and gain confidence?

While focused initially on the development of literacy – from both learning and teaching perspectives – the study iteratively responded to considerations of learner strategies and processes of learning. Pedagogical implications developed through this process which will be explored in this chapter. The broader cultural and social issues illustrated in participants' responses also directed us to explore the influences of learners' complex lives on their language development and implications for teachers of this learner group.

2 Literature Review and Theoretical Framing

Key areas of literature which underpin our research are: literacy development with a focus on print literacy, influences of physical and mental health on language development; learning as identity work in a multi-lingual world.

3 Literacy Development

Firstly, in literacy development, Tarone et al. (2009, p. 21) stated that there were about 774 million adults worldwide who lacked minimum literacy skills. One in five of those adults was still not literate and two-thirds of these were women. In their research they defined alphabetic print literacy as 'the ability to encode and decode oral language units with an alphabetic script': and explain that individuals without this dominant social practice may become marginalised (p. 7). They observed that many of these illiterate individuals, who were L2 learners, may have already learned one or even two or more languages. In the context of the USA adolescent immigrant and refugee background English language learners with limited or interrupted formal schooling "have become a critical mass" (2009, p. 21). It is those learners who are more likely to have emerging print literacy, but there has been little SLA research about how these learners learn. They cite earlier research done by Jane Hill (1970) which urged SLA researchers to theorize L2 learning occurring among unschooled and illiterate learners in places where multilingualism is the norm. They point out that "we do not know how literacy level affects the acquisition of oral L2's" (p. 22). Amongst the SLA research done in Aotearoa New Zealand about literacy development is work done on understanding how members of the refugee background communities have worked to assist early literacy development. Research done (Benseman, 2014; Shamem et al., 2002; Watts et al., 2001a, b) has found that provision of language support by the refugee-background community is important and

that bilingual language assistants are integral to learners' language development alongside English speaking classroom teachers.

Watt's et al. (2001a, b) in a second piece of research focused on learner experience of ESOL provision in the initial period of settlement. It involved interviews with learners of migrant and refugee background, with over 300 questionnaires distributed to learners through the national ESOL home tutor scheme, and interviews with 45 ESOL home tutors. The report results showed that responsibility for promoting language proficiency lay with different groups including that the ethnic community, or more established members of their own community needed to take responsibility for providing ESOL classes for beginners, possibly with a bilingual tutor.

Shamem et al.'s (2002) pilot study with ESOL Literacy classes, done collaboratively with the National Association of ESOL Home Tutor Schemes and tertiary institutions aimed to determine literacy gains for low-level and pre-literate ESOL students on a one-semester literacy programme. It found that bilingual tuition was in demand for over two thirds of the participants at the start of the course and that achievement in reading classes was higher with bilingual tutor assistants. Their report recommended students have access to bilingual teaching particularly at the beginning stages when students' language needs require special scaffolding. They specified the need for bilingual assistants to meet the needs of learners who face insecurities with language learning, highlighting those with traumatic backgrounds.

4 Influences on Health

The effects of challenging backgrounds of people from refugee backgrounds have been well explored. George (2001, p. 383) cites early research by Handlin (1951) who states that many people of refugee background face losses of every description and may struggle in a new environment with a foreign language and customs. Consequently they may experience mental and emotional stresses. In the language classroom context the effects of mental and emotional stress were emphasized in a report on a 6-month literacy project with Sudanese former refugees in Australia. It found that one of the outcomes of the project for the tutors was an increase in their awareness about the mental health of their learners, "A family tragedy during the course raised the need for an introduction to a special mental health service" (Commonwealth of Australia, 2009, p. 11). The report noted that learners talked about their state of mind in casual conversation, particularly about sleep, most learners reporting that they have broken or minimal sleep. Learners also reported that their memory had been severely impaired by stress and that they continued to have a great deal of stress.

5 Learning as Identity Work

More recently Benseman (2014) conducted research with the New Zealand government-funded, community-based organisation called English Language Partners which is contracted to provide English language support to migrant and refugee background learners. This included learners, teachers and bi-lingual assistant tutors and explored how the assistants, or Bilingual Tutors understood their role. With the teaching agenda decided by the tutor, they explained their role as supporting and collaboratively assisting the class tutor through interpreting and explaining, facilitating communication, explaining cultural customs to the tutor, and working with individual learners on tasks set by the tutor. One said, "[It's about] filling the gap, working like a bridge, explaining when they don't understand either in English or [L1]" (p. 100). Reflecting on their experiences as bi-lingual tutors, assistants were all positive about the experience, however they clearly articulated challenges which included working with large, sometimes multi-level classes, clarifying instructions, supporting single learners whose L1 was different, and coping with different ethnic groups in the class and their accompanying values (p. 100).

The role of a bilingual tutor/community language assistant may be theorised through Vygotsky's concept of a Zone of Proximal Development which he defined as 'the distance between the actual level of development as determined by independent problem solving (without guided instruction), and the level of potential development by problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peer' (Daniels et al., 2007). In Vygotskian terms, the first language, the language of comfort and familiarity for the learner becomes the mediator to create meaning. We contend that this vehicle is their own language transmitted to them by a person from a similar cultural background.

Another key literature is from The Douglas Fir group (2016) who propose a transdisciplinary framework for Second Language Acquisition in a multilingual world. This requires analysis of a broad range of discrete disciplinary areas relating to language development. Following Tarone et al. (2009, cited p. 30), the Douglas Fir Group acknowledge that alphabetic print literacy shapes the way oral second languages are processed, and also highlight Bigelow and Tarone's assertion (2004, cited p. 31) that because almost all SLA research on language processing fails to include learners who are not alphabetically literate, therefore this is a major gap in SLA research and data.

The Douglas Fir Group speaks to our role as teachers of this learner group when it acknowledges that for many, though not all language learners, the learning is characterised by mediation of instruction and literacy, therefore "Both instruction and literacy need to be understood as sources of influence on L2 learning." They further suggest that "disciplinary knowledge about them has particular potential to improve the learning experience of … adults worldwide who, by choice or circumstance, embark on the journey of additional language learning in educational settings" (p. 30). The Group believes that language learning is multimodal, embodied and mediated they argue that our learners often live in multi-lingual worlds, as our research revealed.

We believe, as the Douglas Fir Group does that it is necessary to try to understand the wider social and local worlds of refugee background learners and how learners report that they function in these contexts. Our understanding of learner identity is informed by Norton (2000, 2013) who draws on feminist poststructuralist theory (citing Weedon 1987/97) to define identity as a way a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and place, and how the person understands possibilities for the future (2013, p. 4.). Taking this understanding of learner identity into account we are better able to identify, examine and theorise language and literacy issues for these learners and to illustrate influences on language development.

6 Research Context

6.1 Te Tiriti Partnership

Aotearoa New Zealand has been shaped by the Treaty of Waitangi (*Te Tiriti*) signed in 1840 by representatives of the British Queen Victoria and some of the indigenous Māori tribal representatives. *Te Tiriti* frames New Zealanders as *Tangata Whenua* or People of the Land, who are Māori, and all others are framed as *Tauiwi*, or People from Afar (Walker, 2004). More than 20,000 people designated as refugees have arrived into this colonial treaty context since 1944, joining earlier settler groups as *Tauiwi*. While the total number is low compared to the many millions of refugees and displaced people in the world, it is high in terms of the country's current population of approximately 5 million (Te Ara Online Encyclopaedia).

Most refugee resettlement activity in the 1980s and 1990's was carried out at a community level by individuals and small groups. In the early 2000s, as arrivals increased and willing volunteers were less available, the New Zealand government contracted out services to the New Zealand Red Cross to provide resettlement and employment services for new refugee families (New Zealand Red Cross, Migration programmes).

7 Hamilton Reception Centre

Hamilton is a regional city with a population of under 200,000 located about 2 h south of New Zealand's largest city, Auckland. It receives former refugee families and individuals every 2 months, who have already spent 6 weeks at the Reception Centre in Mangere, in Auckland, completing health checks and attending ESOL classes. The move to Hamilton depends on suitable accommodation being secured.

The city has welcomed new arrivals from refugee backgrounds since the 1970's. By the 1990's, discussion between the host community and leaders who emerged

from refugee communities, often with some communicative competence in English, enabled the needs of their groups to be expressed. The new communities' key requests were for interpreting services, driver licencing, English classes and employment.

The first major community move was to find a permanent place for migrants and refugee families to meet, and through a combination of community, city council and government funding a centre, now called the Settlement Centre, was opened in 2004 to support new residents arriving in the city (Settlement Centre Waikato). An official welcome was started for each new group who would be welcomed by representatives of Māori and city leaders. The city council also began an annual forum where members of former refugee communities were invited to share their stories and make their needs known, which could be taken to government level. The Waikato Refugee Forum evolved from this initiative and is now administered by former refugees and supports new arrivals (WaikatoRefugeeForum.co.nz). Other innovative programmes begun in Hamilton were a Driver Licencing programme where the candidate received practical driving lessons as well as assistance to pass a test on the rules for driving in New Zealand. Another programme initiated by the Ministry of Education, called "Computers in Homes" enabled new families to attend a training programme and then receive a computer and internet capabilities with support for 6 months.

8 Partnership and Language Education Context

Nationally language learning classes started independently in different towns and cities with volunteer tutors providing language learning opportunities and friendship. The National Association of ESOL Home Tutor Schemes was formed in 1992 and renamed English Language Partners New Zealand (ELPNZ) in 2009. Contracted by the government to provide English language development, in 2019, it had 22 centres, 7199 adult learners, and 1705 trained volunteers around the country (ELPNZ). Provision of language education in Hamilton for adults with a refugee background is provided in a number of venues. Government supports language provision at private, community and government tertiary institutional levels. Community classes and groups are situated in residential areas and may be found in school halls, primary schools, community centres, the mosque or in temples. English Language Partners Waikato has classes throughout the city. Refugee-background adults seeking further tertiary education can attend university or government-funded institutes of technology and polytechnics, where there are government grants to support their education.

Bilingual support for learners with limited first language literacy has been a feature of ESOL literacy classes in New Zealand for 18 years in classes run through ELPNZ. The bilingual tutors who are called Community Language Assistants (CLA's), undertake a 3-h preservice training with ELPNZ to raise awareness of the special nature of the programme and the communicative, learner-centred teaching

approach. CLAs are knowledgeable about the backgrounds and learning needs of the learners and are the "experts" in cultural and affective areas (ELPNZ). In Hamilton, ELP Waikato currently has Community Language Assistants in five classes to work with recent arrivals. New arrivals who enrol at the polytechnic or at a private language provider will find the only bilingual provision will be supplied by other students in the class with the same or a similar language.

9 Research Design: Methods and Methodology

Our study uses quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection, though there has been ongoing debate about whether these two methods can be combined at an epistemological level. In a more recent analysis of positions on the use of mixed methods Mirhosseni (2018) concludes 'perhaps away from the epistemological confusion, the claimed merits of mixed methods may be sought in constructivist and interpretive perspectives. Different methods of data collection and interpretation may be combined without the obligation to shift and confuse epistemological standpoint (p. 475). Likewise Flick writes that mixed method approaches are interested in' a pragmatic combination' of qualitative and quantitative research (2018, p. 29). The pragmatic approach informed our choice of these methods.

Quantitative data was collected from performance on compulsory tests designed for Intensive Numeracy and Literacy (ILN) classes. Constructed by the government Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), the Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Tool is administered around the country in ILN classes at the beginning and end of each teaching term. This online, adaptive listening assessment assesses a learner's ability to understand basic everyday words in spoken English. It is designed for "beginning English language learners (ESOL), particularly those new to Aotearoa New Zealand" (TEC Assessment tool). Learners hear an everyday word on audio and then match it to a picture of the item.

This study drew on results from three sets of tests which were held at 6-months intervals, over 18 months.

The qualitative methods were interviews and classroom observations. Two sets of interviews were held 2 years apart, at the start of the research period and at the end of the two- year period. The interview questions, in both cases elicited general background, length and type of formal schooling/education, what constrained and supported learning, and strategies used in the process of language development. The first interview involved 60 learners, but by the second interview only 25 of the original learners remained, while many of the others had moved to language classes at the government polytechnic or a private training provider. In many but not all cases, a trained interpreter was present to assist communication in the interviews with the researcher. Training is provided by the interpreting service, Decypher, which is organised by the Hamilton Multicultural Services Trust to provide interpreting services for the police and the public hospital (Decypher, 2020).

Classroom observations were carried out fortnightly over 6 weeks, in five different classes in two blocks. The observations lasted 40 min and focused on communications between teacher and learner, CLA and learner, and learner to learner. Permissions were given by learners for the observation although they asked that no video recordings be taken. In three of these classes, CLA's worked with the class teacher.

Participants were chosen because they were attending beginner ESOL-Literacy classes. Two groups were selected, those that had 0–2 years of prior education and those that had 8+ years. We hypothesised that the rates of progress between the two groups may be related to the years of prior learning. The first interviews were done at classes run through English Language Partners at four locations: a community centre, a mosque, a local-council- funded community centre and a local school. Two other classes were run at a government funded tertiary institute in the same city. These classes were chosen because they were beginner literacy level and therefore often have a large number of learners with emerging print literacy. The students in this study originated from Somalia, Cambodia, Colombia, Pakistan, Democratic Republic of Congo and Afghanistan.

We as researchers and writers are also, or have been, teachers of this learner group. One trained as a home tutor and later did post graduate work based at the Auckland-based refugee reception centre. The other has taught adult migrants and former refugees for 20 years in varying teaching spaces in the city and also undertaken post graduate study. Our experiences therefore influence every aspect of this research. Over time we have developed relationships with learners which span decades, so we do not feel separated in time and place from many of our learners. We are however separated from their experience of loss and often traumatic change. For analysis of the qualitative data we followed a process of Thematic Analysis (Patton, 2015; Flick, 2018), using 'inductive thematic analysis' (Flick, 2018, p. 474) in which we read and read responses to interviews which had been transcribed. Responses to the first interview were initially colour coded to identify categories: Constraints fell into broad areas of health, family and learning challenges. Further analysis led to development of themes:

- challenges related to learners' physical health and the health of family members;
- issues around responsibility for family members and dependence on children;
- challenges to mental health and peace of mind
- challenges for learning: time, concentration and remembering
- challenges related to classroom

Analysis of issues which supported learning were initially coded broadly as: independence as a key study goal; first language assistance and home tutors. Responses to the second interview contained fewer narratives about physical and stress related challenges to health. These were coded into categories about progress, learner report about reasons for progress and strategies used for language development. Themes that emerged during observations were around repetition, imitation and memory use as learning strategies as well as cooperative learning styles.

10 Findings and Discussion

In this section we briefly review the findings related to the tests but will focus in more detail on the interviews and observation data because they seemed to us to generate greater insight in relation to our research questions.

10.1 Learning Gains

The quantitative tests established that those with more formal schooling (8 years or more) learned at a slightly faster rate than those with minimal schooling (0–2 years) (Fig. 1).

Their learning gain was generally greater, the 8+ group had a mean average of 102.3 in their scale scores, and the 0–2 group had a mean average of 37.3. The key findings we present in the next section from interviews fall into two areas: firstly related to support for learning: learners valued assistance received from bilingual/ community language assistants and home tutors. Secondly, constraints on learning: issues related to health: physical, mental and emotional health and how these affected learning. Classroom observations and self -report offered insights into strategies deployed by learners which we will also briefly review.

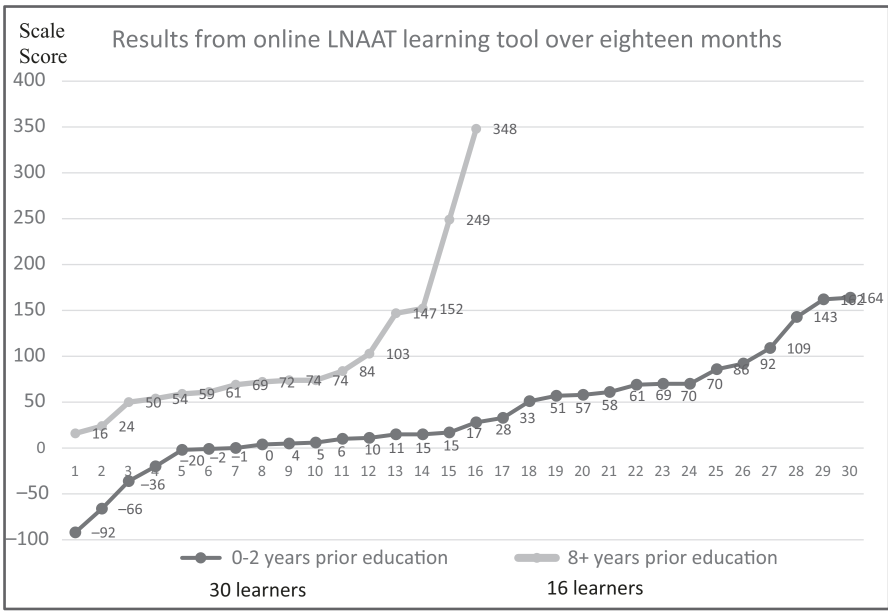

Fig. 1 Results from the online Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Tool over 18 months. The LNAAT test itself has a 0–1000 scale score. 16 learners had 8+ years of prior education and 30 learners had 0–2 years of education with scale scores ranging from −92 through 348. The learner gain was calculated by subtracting the first result from the fourth and final result. The four minus scores were from learners who had had periods of illness which resulted in absences from class

10.2 Support for Learning

In the first set of interviews 38 of 60 learners reported they had learning assistants in the class, variously described as ‘translators’, ‘interpreters’ or ‘assistants.’ All these students acknowledged their teachers were the main source of learning, though ten specifically mentioned their classroom assistant, referencing the positive support they offered.

The first group of excerpts below are from responses to the first interviews where the researcher was supported by a first language interpreter. The excerpt immediately below was chosen because the learner clearly expressed the value she experienced in having a CLA. All participants are identified by pseudonyms only to protect their privacy. In the excerpts below ‘L’ refers to learner and ‘R’ to researcher.

Toun is a 64-year-old learner, originally from Cambodia, who attended school for 4 years learning to read and write in Khmer.

L: I’m really happy. We used to go once a week to the temple to learn English with my Khmer tutor. I really enjoyed the classes. Two days every week we had an interpreter.
R: How did this help you to learn new words in English?
L: It just helped me to understand some new things. The two days that the assistants were there I understood a lot more.
R: How did they help you?
L: I just asked them when I didn’t understand.

Toun expresses her happiness, her enjoyment of class with ‘the interpreter’ and how valuable the assistant was. She clearly says she was able she understood much more of class when the ‘interpreter’ was there because, ‘I just asked them when I didn’t understand.’ Her learning was obviously restricted without the language assistant.

The following three excerpts are from three learners from Afghanistan, all Dari speakers, who spoke about assistance offered by Community Language Assistants: Abdul a 34 year old Pasto male with 8 years of education; Leena is a 46 year old Urdu speaker from Pakistan with 2–3 years prior education, and Zainab is a 34-year-old Dari speaking female also with no prior education.

Abdul: When I first arrived I needed an interpreter, but now I don’t. The interpreter helped us, but I helped myself as well. At my home at night I studied too. The teacher is not enough. We need to help ourselves.
Leena: I am not having any problems. If we have a problem they will explain. Debbie is my teacher and she’s very good. I can speak to most of the Afghan learners and they can understand my language.

Zainab: I want to learn fast.
R: How do you do that?
Zainab: A translator helps at this stage.

These learners felt that positive about their language progress. Abdul and Zainab referred directly to the CLA's and Leena referred indirectly using a plural pronoun "they" when referring to her teachers. Leena also indicated that she was able to communicate with Dari speakers who could understand her language, Urdu.

The following example is from a student who was interviewed in both the first and second interviews.

Mohammed: The reason that it was easy for us to learn well at our other class was Sabina, because she would help us when we didn't understand.
R. What would make it easier for you to learn in your new class?
Mohammed: The teachers are very helpful and trying hard to teach us in different ways. But the problem is when the teacher says something, and we don't understand. If there is no Dari speaker then we can't understand.

He references the first class and the CLA called Sabina. The excerpt may suggest that if assistance is withdrawn too early then students may not be able to understand the teacher. Two other learners who had attended a class with a CLA but then changed to a class without one, reported finding it very difficult to engage in the class without the mediation of the CLA.

10.3 Home Tutors as Assistants to Learning

Another source identified as enabling learning, referred to by 14 learners in the first set of interviews, was their home tutor: an example of partnership between the host community and refugee background community. ELPNZ trains volunteer tutors to visit the homes of former refugees or migrants for 1 h a week. Fartun is a 30-year-old Dari speaker, Tara is a 36-year-old Dari speaker and Sharifa is a 48-year-old Dari speaker. These three participants had no prior education.

Fartun: My home tutor is very kind and helps me with my work. My husband helps me too.
Tara: My home tutor is lovely She asks me what I want to learn and is very patient.

Sharifa: I am very happy because I can go to Work and Income now and can talk to them myself. Also, with my home tutor I speak to my home tutor for about one and a half hours.
Sharifa: My home tutor is like my sister. My speaking has got better in the last six months this has happened. For most of the two years before I couldn't do this. Also I had a problem with my son and now I feel better myself, my English is better.

From these reports the learners appreciated their 1 h a week with a volunteer tutor: the encouragement was valuable to all three. The help received from the home

tutor was appreciated as was the needs assessment approach by Tara's tutor. Sharifa appreciated that she was able to communicate more ably and links her improved self-confidence with her improved English.

10.4 Constraints on Learning: Issues of Health: Physical, Mental and Emotional

During the first interviews 45% of the 60 learners revealed that their physical and or emotional health had some impact on their learning. In the second interview 10% talked of emotional stress of being separated from family, no learners talked of physical disabilities holding them back, although one student attended class in a wheelchair. She self-reported that other students helped her to open the heavy classroom doors. The following short excerpts, from the first interviews, are divided into references to physical health, then to mental and emotional health.

Firstly, physical health: Haleema, a 57-year-old Dari speaker and Gabriela, a 45 year old Spanish speaker share the impact of physical constraints on their learning.

> If I am well, I am learning well. Sometimes I am not well. I was in a lot of pain. I had an X-ray for my stomach and my back (Haleema)
>
> I have a cyst which is painful and annoying me a lot (Gabriela)

These two learners suffer pain in their life. The first excerpt equates being well with being without pain and so with being able to learn. By implication that they cannot learn when they are not well, or suffering pain.

The following two illustrate experiences of mental and emotional stress. Both are Dari speakers. Saleema is 56, and Sara is 28.

Saleema: My mind is not settled. My mind is in Afghanistan. I think about my children and how they are doing. During the whole of my life I have been in war. I am thinking about my daughters. When they go out the door I don't know if they will come back. I think about my family who have been killed. My sister and my brother are lost. We don't know where he is. Until today I am still waiting.

Sara: At school we learn something but when we go home we forget. We are thinking of our families back home and so our memory is affected. We don't remember things we learned.

These excerpts echo Shamem et al.'s reference to the effects of learners' trauma in their 2001 study and the need for close assistance in the earlier literacy classes, equated in that study with having bilingual assistants available in the class. Learners' capacity to absorb and produce language will obviously be constrained by the stresses described above: 'My mind is not settled' 'Physically I am here, but mentally I am thinking about my family,' 'We are thinking of our families back home and so our memory is affected. We don't remember the things we learned.' From the

teaching point of view, as the Douglas Fir Group suggest if the teacher is able to be informed about the learner's history before arriving in Aotearoa New Zealand, – their wider cultural and social worlds – then they would be better able to adapt their pedagogy to make some allowances for mental stress. Acquiring print literacy is a challenge in itself to these learners, but to add mental stress and lack of memory is to put significant stress on the learner and as our results suggest to impede and slow their learning of print literacy.

Responses to interviews showed that learners sometimes attended class despite their experience of emotional stress. Fartun (30 years of age) and Sharifa (48) shared their determination to come to class. Two of these excerpts also illustrate the impact of responsibility for family on being able to attend class, and hence develop a greater degree of print literacy.

Fartun: I am sick but I still come, if I sit at home nothing will change.

Fartun: I come every day, but I have two children and if they are sick I can't come. The other time I get stressed is if I phone my parents and if they are not well, then I get stressed.

Sharifa: If I am stressed, I don't want to learn anything. I come every day. The only time I missed was when my grandchild was sick.

It seems that participants valued the class environments affirming the statement made in the Douglas Fir Group article (2016) that language learning is also an affectively driven process (p. 36.)

11 Learning as Identity Work

The following excerpts offer insight into the learners' social worlds and their learning experiences. They are from Halima, who came from Pakistan with her five children, having moved from Afghanistan in 2004. She describes episodes in her life and language learning experiences. Firstly, before resettlement in Aotearoa New Zealand

> I spoke in Dari, and a little bit of Urdu and a little bit of Pashto. I needed to buy vegetables so I used these languages.

Halima was fluent in one language and able to draw on two others, before she arrived in class to learn a fourth language, though this time she needed to learn to write. Secondly, Halima and her children spent 6 weeks at the Mangere Reception Centre, before arriving in Hamilton to their new home.

> Yes when I saw my house I was not well. Before I came to my house I felt a little bit crazy. I couldn't sleep and I took lots of pills. Three tablets a night. I wasn't well in Pakistan. I was very stressed at Mangere. I was happy when I saw my house… My volunteers left me some food. The volunteers said, "Have a sleep and we'll come back." But we didn't sleep, we

> danced, the children were dancing everywhere looking at the bedrooms. I cried again. I started to feel better then.

Halima had attended classes for 3 years and has made steady progress particularly in speaking and listening and is now casually employed cooking ethnic food for community groups as well as continuing English classes. She self-reported that arrival at this house was a turning point for her and her family. It may be that at this point Halima started to imagine her future identity, illustrating that learners' imagined identities, referencing Norton, can compel them to pursue L2 learning opportunities that might otherwise not be available to them.

12 Strategies for Learning

Strategies were identified through self-report in the interviews and through classroom observations. Among the self-reported strategies were talking outside the class with friends and classmates; regular attendance at class and accessing a home tutor. Less frequently mentioned were reading books from their children's schools with their children, and listening to YouTube after class. Some of the male students mentioned self-directed study at home, whereas many of the women students reported that they did not have time for homework due to family responsibilities.

Strategies observed in the classroom on multiple occasions included repetition and imitation of new words. Students seemed to repeat new words, often quietly subvocalizing them. They listened intently to both the teacher and the CLA, often seeking clarification from the assistant to understand task instruction or the meaning of words. In terms of print, learners were observed taking great care with printing and seemed satisfied when they completed a task. They were observed reading their class work to themselves and using their memory, as they were often observed looking back in their notebooks for a word they had already used. They also used their phones for listening to new words (pronunciation and meaning) and storing them.

Learners were also observed sharing and cooperating with each other. Notes from an observation in a reading group illustrates this.

> There was quite a long discussion about the meaning of the word 'partner'. The tutor explained in English that it is someone that you have a relationship with, or are married to, or have a business relationship with. The Khmer learner said that she didn't understand the whole concept of the word partner, so another Khmer speaker from another group came over and helped out. Marisa (Pashto speaker) also needed help with meaning so Bana (Pashto speaker) translated.

Learners would leave their own work to help another classmate. Students who were more able often helped other classmates so that they could complete a task. That students self-reported some strategies indicates that perhaps they have noticed that those strategies have been effective in their language learning. Students' reports that they enjoy reading their children's' books from school may stem from feelings of success and enjoyment of shared reading.

13 Implications

The implications from this study are noteworthy, particularly for those adults with no or minimal prior education in their first language. Having a first language assistant to mediate the language in the early stages of L2 language learning seems essential, especially in the early stages of L2 language learning. Recognizing that repetition, imitation and memory are strengths that these learners bring to the classroom alongside oral and aural abilities should encourage teachers to consider approaches that will engage these strengths. It is also worth noting that these students also take advantage of modern technology which can support their language development.

The first round of interviews which showed that new learners want to be able to communicate first and foremost is important, as learners want independence to conduct their lives. It is significant that almost half the participants in the first round mentioned physical, mental and emotional constraints as things that held them back from their learning.

Having reflected on learners' responses, and the resilience demonstrated by participants who sometimes attended school in spite of mental and physical stressors, we would encourage tutors to create stress-free inclusive learning spaces where everyone feels that they are learning. We have acknowledged the complexity of these learners' lives and we understand that language learning itself can be demanding, so a classroom with a balance of humor, acceptance, support and pedagogical skill can become a positive affective space for former refugee adult learners.

14 Conclusion

We have reflected on the challenges faced by language learners with emergent print literacy, and have illustrated how partnerships between refugee background communities and the wider community may create opportunities which enable new New Zealanders to achieve their settlement and language development goals. As government policy has increased the numbers of people from refugee backgrounds who will be offered a home in Aotearoa New Zealand, newer centres around the country will welcome former refugees into their communities, so continuing the threads of partnerships already formed with tangata whenua, individual volunteers, communities, local and central government, educators and health practitioners all play a role in that welcome.

Language teachers, whether from the first or second languages of the students, and though remaining outsiders to the social and emotional challenges faced by adult L2 learners, can provide cultural and linguistic support for learners, by building their own awareness around important features of learning for adult L2 learners with developing print literacy. Among these are: socio-historical background, utilisation of learners' oral and aural skills, the pace of L2 literacy development, their

cooperative learning styles and the value of using the L1 to support L2 language learning. These adult learners may then find a space to learn which is positive, inclusive and be supported to respond with resilience to the multiple challenges of life and language development. They may also find an environment that celebrates their achievements.

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"I feel like a human again:" Experiences of Kurdish Asylum Seekers Navigating the Legal and Education Systems in Canada

Zehra Melike Palta

Abstract The role of resettlement services, in particular language education programs, has become crucial in helping newcomers' transition to a new life in Canada. In the last 5 years, Canada experienced a high influx of asylum claimants arriving from Turkey. Despite of increasing numbers, there have been no studies that have explored their post-migration experiences in Canada. Through using an arts-informed approach, the post-migration experiences of Kurdish and Turkish asylum claimants, between the ages of 18–30, were explored. In focus groups, they presented and interpreted their experiences using different art forms. This paper focuses in-depth on the experiences of two asylum claimants as they sought educational opportunities and language learning spaces while navigating the legal system. It was found that due to their legal status as well as systemic barriers, they faced limited educational and language learning opportunities. A holistic approach to resettlement will be effective in addressing the educational needs of individuals from refugee backgrounds.

Keywords Legal status · Asylum seeker · Language education · Integration · Resettlement

1 Introduction

According to the Global Trends report by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, around 79.5 million individuals were forced to flee their countries at the end of 2019 (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2020). While policy documents highlight the importance of learning the host language for successful integration, there are various barriers to accessing language programs for newcomers to advance their language skills. In Canada, legal status determines the level of

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access to language and vocational programs supported by the federal government. This particularly becomes an issue for asylum claimants as they are not eligible to attend the federal resettlement programs until they become a Convention Refugee or Protected Person.

This chapter will focus on the post-migration experiences, from seeking asylum to permanent residency of Cansu and Amed, two young adult individuals from refugee backgrounds who have arrived from Turkey to Canada, highlighting their own representations and interpretations of their lived experiences. It argues that the prolonged process of acquiring a permanent status and systemic barriers, such access to information and financial difficulties, leaves individuals from refugee backgrounds in precarious situations with limited access to language learning spaces therefore hindering the process of transitioning to a new life in Canada. Nevertheless, as they navigate through the legal system, they challenge the stereotypical representations of individuals from refugee backgrounds as lacking agency (Olsen et al., 2014) through creating and seeking different opportunities to access educational and language learning spaces.

Refugees are subjected to various discourses in Canada portraying them as *Other,* vulnerable, and dependent (Olsen et al., 2014). I will refrain from referring to these individuals as *refugees* to move away from dehumanizing discourses as they are "people with an identity, a past, a history, a cultural heritage" (Lacroix, 2004, p.147). Therefore, I will refer to them as *individuals from refugee backgrounds* and only resort to using terminologies that state their legal status such as *asylum claimant* to refer to the period of time in their experiences as a newcomer to Canada. I will also argue for alternative ways of understanding the experiences of individuals from refugee backgrounds and addressing their resettlement needs using a holistic framework.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Canadian Refugee Resettlement: Eligibility and Access

The Canadian refugee system consists of two programs: The Refugee and Humanitarian Resettlement Program and In-Canada Asylum Program. These programs not only differ in terms of their admission process, but as well as in the types and amount of resettlement support that they provide to individuals from refugee backgrounds. As individuals abroad cannot apply directly to Canada for resettlement, they are identified by the UNHCR and their case is screened and processed for sponsorship through the Refugee and Humanitarian Resettlement Program. Individuals arriving through these programs land in Canada as Permanent Residents and are given support through the federal government or private sponsors, as well as federal resettlement assistance with access to language education and vocational programs to support their integration.

Individuals who have arrived at a Canadian port of entry are eligible to demand an asylum claim through In-Canada Asylum Program. If the claim is deemed as eligible by an official from Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) or from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), it is referred to the Refugee Protection Division of the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) where the claimant is required to present themselves at an oral hearing to defend their need of protection with evidence. As of January, 1, 2020, the estimated wait time for protection claim before the Refugee Protection Division was 22 months from the date of referral (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 2020a). Once the claim is accepted by the IRB, the individual becomes a Protected Person or Convention refugee and is eligible to apply for permanent residency to become a Permanent Resident of Canada. Convention refugee is an individual who is outside of their home country and have a "well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion" (United Nations General Assembly, 1951, p.14). According to Canada's Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, Protected Person is someone who is determined to be a Convention refugee or a person in need of protection as they may be subjected to a danger of torture, punishment and a risk to their life, upon return to their home country. As of March 10, 2020, the processing time for obtaining permanent resident status was 21 months (Government of Canada, 2020). Therefore, from the time of submitting an asylum claim to be obtaining permanent resident status in Canada was estimated to be at least 43 months. Given the current statistics by the IRB, there are 89,594 asylum claims pending a finalized decision with 70 claims having been referred before December 2012 (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 2020b).

Until their asylum claims are finalized and they are given the status of Protected Person or Convention Refugee, individuals are not entitled to federal income assistance and are not eligible to attend federal language programs such as Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC). Depending on the provincial regulations, they may have access to provincial social assistance. In Ontario, they are eligible to apply for social assistance if they are in need of financial assistance and are actively participating in activities to find work (given that they have a work permit). As they are not eligible to attend LINC classes, some community-based multicultural agencies provide basic English language classes and employment services to asylum claimants. Although the main focus in both of the language programs is to provide English language training, LINC also focuses on settlement themes to help newcomers adjust to their new lives in Canada. Colleges and universities also offer English language courses that provide intensive academic English targeted to provide a pathway for post-secondary education programs and are with tuition fees.

2.2 Asylum Claims from Turkey

Although Canada had been receiving asylum claimants from Turkey for many years, a significant influx of individuals began to arrive in 2016. When compared with the number of claims in 2015 (295 claims), the year of 2016 saw a significant increase to 1103 claims (and five times more than the year before). In the first 9 months of 2018, claims from Turkey composed 10% of all asylum claims made in Canada (Smith, 2019; Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 2019). The increase in claims can be explained by President Erdogan's increasing authoritarian regime as through using the penal code and anti-terrorism law (Gunter, 2016), all political opponents such as political party leaders and members, academics, journalists and society members are being silenced and or imprisoned. As of December 31, 2019, there are 1939 new referred claims, 2043 accepted claims and 1696 claims pending a final decision (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 2020b). Although claims were previously heard at an oral hearing at the IRB, since 2019, refugee claims from Turkey are being processed through an expedited process as Turkey is identified by IRB to be a country producing a significant number of asylum claims. If their claim is seen as a suitable *less complex claim*, they either go through a short-hearing process or the file-review process to receive a final decision. Despite this dramatic and sudden increase in the numbers of Kurdish and Turkish individuals from Turkey arriving to seek protection in Canada, there are no studies on their post-migration educational experiences in the Canadian context. As legal status limits access to resettlement services and language education programs, it becomes important to understand how they are navigating through multiple context of their lives while also applying for asylum and (simultaneously) trying to access language learning spaces within a limited context.

2.3 Integration: A Highly Debatable Topic

Despite of the term *integration* being predominantly used in the official documents as an expected outcome for newcomers to the country, there are different approaches to explaining what the process of integration entails of (Court, 2017; Flubacher &Yeung, 2016; Rytter, 2018). In Canadian policy documents (Research and Evaluation Branch, 2017, 2018), integration is perceived as a *two-way process* in which newcomers and the host society are both held responsible for mutual accommodation and adjustment. While the two-way approach to integration may seem inclusive as it "[cultivates], among immigrants, intercultural 'capacities,' aptitudes, and a sense of personal responsibility for social mobility" (Flubacher & Yeung, 2016, p. 600), some argue that it reflects the asymmetrical power relationship between the host society and newcomers as *integration* is a construct built on host society's image and idea about culture, race and belonging (Rytter, 2018). Because integration in Canada is measured according to this asymmetrical relationship,

migrants are held responsible for adapting to the society more than society is expected to take steps towards ensuring their participation and inclusion (Rudiger & Spencer, 2003). As a result, the nation state begins to validate the implementation of exclusionary practices, such as language proficiency requirement for citizenship and withdrawal of services, by holding the individual accountable for their failure to integrate (Love, 2015; Flubacher & Yeung, 2016).

2.4 Language and Integration

Language is often addressed in the discourses on integration as language proficiency of newcomers – in large part because it is seen as a way to achieve national unity, social cohesion and belonging (Love, 2015). In English-dominant countries such as Canada, newcomers must demonstrate cultural and language skills through testing in order to satisfy the requirement for citizenship (Flubacher & Yeung, 2016). Court (2017) notes that while the acquisition of English language is seen as a crucial part of integration, the relationship between "refugees' and migrants' experiences of language learning and its relationship to integration in the English context" (p. 402) is not well explored in research. Further studies are needed to understand how participants' integration and language learning experiences are affected by structural factors such as inequality, immigration status, gender and socio-economic class. Looking at the language learning experiences of women of refugee background in Canada, Adamuti-Trache et al. (2018) found that even though individuals from refugee backgrounds are actively pursuing strategies to improve their skills (similar to non-refugee immigrants), they were also found to be the ones who were less likely to access formal education, vocational training opportunities, or the ability to make use of informal learning tools. This is particularly problematic for asylum claimants as their legal status prevents them from accessing formal education institutions to seek education and training opportunities.

3 Conceptual Framework

As the study aims to understand how refugees experience integration while learning the language, a holistic conceptual framework that considers various aspects of the resettlement process is essential. I will be using Bridging Multiple Worlds Theory (BMWT) (Cooper, 2014), which originally conceptualized how culturally diverse youth students are navigating multiple contexts of their lives, also referred to as *worlds* in Cooper's (2014) theory, on pathways towards college. Like these students, individuals from refugee backgrounds navigate through multiple context of their lives while becoming exposed to various norms, behaviours and expectations which they will need to interpret and act upon (Cooper, 2014). As Cooper (2014) explains, each of these contexts can provide resources to support them on their pathway or

provide challenges. Cooper (2014) refers to individuals who create barriers in students' pathway as *gatekeepers* and those who help students bridge between their worlds as *brokers*. In the case of individuals from refugee backgrounds, there might be *brokers* that help facilitate their transition to new life in Canada, or *gatekeepers*, who cause challenges and prevent them from pursuing their pathways to post-secondary education or careers. I will be treating brokers and gatekeepers as not only individuals, but also institutions, ideologies, and legal status that either prevent or facilitate their pathway to their envisioned future. Lastly, similar to individuals from refugee backgrounds, Cooper (2014) explains that many adolescents face institutional barriers therefore support systems can be built across their multiple worlds on their pathways to their envisioned future. This conceptual framework will allow me to understand the experiences of newcomers in multiple contexts of their lives, how challenges and opportunities in these contexts influence their pathway in Canada, and the role of support systems in facilitating their transition to their post-migration life.

4 Methodology

This findings of this chapter are from the participatory arts-informed research in a multiple case study in which the participants were (a) Turkish or Kurdish, (b) between the ages of 18–30 years old and (c) asylum claimants, or Convention Refugee or Protected Person who have been accepted through the In-Canada Asylum Program or have become a Permanent Residents with the requirement that they have arrived in Canada in the last 5 years. Through participatory arts-informed methodology, I worked *with* participants to create a space for them to engage in critical dialogue using different art forms and narratives to communicate their perspectives on their strengths, needs and concerns related to their resettlement experiences. As the experiences of individuals from refugee backgrounds are often displayed in the media through stereotypical representations (Robertson et al., 2016), their *own* representation of their experiences is left unseen. Arts-informed research can "connect us with those who are similar and dissimilar, open up new ways of seeing and experiencing, and illuminate that which we otherwise remain in darkness" (Leavy, 2015, p. ix).

Due to the pandemic, 10 participants attended 7 focus group sessions over a virtual platform in which they shared or performed music, collages, photos, and sculpture that they have created to represent and interpret their experiences. Due to the participatory nature of the study, I acted as a facilitator in the focus groups and allowed participants to choose and create their art pieces based on pre-determined topics, such as social relationships, school, work and language learning experiences and future goals in Canada, share them with the group and shape the discussion through providing questions and comments to each other. Participants also participated in the one-on-one pre-focus group semi-structured interviews to gain an understanding of their personal backgrounds and post-focus group interviews to

understand their experiences and learning that have occurred through participation in the study. In this paper, through thematic analysis, I will provide an analysis of two cases, Cansu and Amed, through drawing on data from the semi-structured interviews that took place before the focus group sessions to provide an insight into how Cansu and Amed became an agent in reshaping their trajectories through creating and seeking opportunities notwithstanding of the limitations imposed by their legal status. As answers have been provided in Turkish, I have translated the quotes to English. First, I will provide brief biographical sketches of my two focal participants.

Case 1- Cansu

Cansu is a 21-year-old female who arrived in Canada, at the age of 19, in 2018. She was studying at university in Turkey before her arrival. Her English language skills were limited at the time of arrival. She has no family members in Canada. She received a positive decision 8 months after her asylum claim was submitted as she went through the expedited, file-review process. She is now a Protected Person and is waiting on her Permanent Resident status. She is also currently completing her language education program at a community college to apply to a University in Canada to continue her studies. She speaks, reads, and writes in Turkish and English.

Case 2- Amed

Amed is a 28-year-old male and finished his law degree in Turkey. He hopes to continue working in the legal field. He speaks, writes, and reads in Turkish, English, Zazaki, and Kurmanji Kurdish. He has no family members in Canada. He came to Canada in 2017 and attended an oral hearing for his asylum claim to be accepted 6 months after the date of his arrival. In spring 2019, he became a Permanent Resident of Canada. He is currently pursuing an undergraduate degree at a university.

All participants were fluent in Turkish while there was variance in language skill levels and dialects for Kurdish and English. Although Turkish was the dominant language in the group, participants were not restricted to the use of Turkish language but were also encouraged to use other languages in their linguistic repertoire. Participants decided to use Turkish the majority of the time but also used Kurdish or English expressions when they wanted to emphasize something that was not able to be translated to Turkish without the loss of intended meaning. Being fluent in Turkish language had advantages for me as I was able to comprehend expressions that contained cultural and social references as these expressions would lose meaning when translated to another language. Although this plurilingual approach to collecting data allowed participants to express themselves in the language that portrayed their experiences the best, it also had challenges for me. Despite of being raised in a Turkish-speaking home environment, I was not as fluent as the participants in Turkish and I did not speak Kurdish or had experiences in the Kurdish culture. As a result, I sometimes had to interrupt the discussion and ask for clarifications or interpretation. Thus, my participants became "language brokers…who [served] as linguistic, cultural and knowledge mediators (Duran, 2019, p. 15)".

5 Findings

5.1 Seeking Educational Spaces as an Asylum Claimant

As provided above, the timeframe from applying for asylum claim to be obtaining permanent residency is a lengthy process that individuals must go through to become eligible for various resettlement programs and assistance. To start this process, Amed and Cansu first had to submit asylum claims to IRCC and wait for their claims to be forwarded to the next step in the refugee determination process. When Cansu shared her memories about that time, her narrative was filled with powerful emotions:

> It was a depressive one year, or maybe more than one year.
> It was a very scary time for me.
> I was out of my mind.
> When I came here, I was only 19 years old and there was no one close to me who applied for asylum.
> I didn't know what to do.
> I didn't know where my life was leading to.
> I didn't know what the results were going to be.
> I went to apply for my claim by myself.
> I remember for two months I didn't see the sun.
> I was very depressed.
> When someone asked me 'how are you' I would start crying.
> I reply, 'I am well.'
> - Cansu [February 28, 2020]

As can be seen, the lack of information regarding the process of application for asylum as well as the uncertainty about the process pre-occupied Cansu and prevented her from being able to focus on other aspects of her life, leading to feelings of depression. The experiences of individuals from refugee backgrounds, though multifaceted, are often influenced by their feelings of extreme uncertainty and isolation (Stevenson & Willott, 2007; Gateley, 2015). While waiting for a decision, Cansu enrolled in the basic English language program at community agency as this was the only eligible program due to her status as an asylum claimant. She mentioned that the classroom environment was stressful as the majority of the students were asylum claimants:

> It wasn't a healthy classroom environment.
> Maybe it was my current psychological state at that time, or I don't know it…
> But all of the people that went there were people who applied for asylum.
> Everyone was like waiting for something and it was very stressful…
> I would go to school.
> School would be over, and I would just come back home.
> - Cansu [February 28, 2020]

When I asked Cansu to elaborate on her language learning experiences in the program, she expressed dissatisfaction in the education and questioned the approach of the resettlement system as well as the legal barriers to education:

> Do they really want us to learn English or do they want us to feel like 'do not forget where you came from and understand the value of where you are now.'
> Is this why they don't value the school environment?
> I felt that no Canadian would enter there.
> Why am I getting the right to attend community college only when I pass my hearing?
> Why can't I go where international students go?
> - Cansu [February 28, 2020]

Cansu's response highlights her feelings of exclusion from educational institutions and her frustration with what she considers the inequitable distribution of educational opportunities and resources due to her legal status. She questions the intention of the language programs and observes that these programs may not be intended to teach the language but rather are intended to make the students be appreciative of the resources that are available given their legal status. On the other hand, refugee determination process completely hindered Amed from establishing a life and attending the basic English language program as it left him with uncertainty about his future:

> At those stages, I didn't feel ready to learn the language or become involved in life here because it wasn't even certain if I was going to stay here or not.
> - Amed [March 4, 2020]

Although Amed did not attend basic English language classes while waiting for a decision, he attended the LINC program once he obtained a positive decision from the IRB. He expressed dissatisfaction in the education provided and questioned the intention of this language program by indicating that it was only to prepare them for low-wage jobs in the hospitality sector:

> The level of English that they want to teach you is only to prepare you for the low-wage jobs in the hospitality sector.
> To be able to just serve coffee, to walk the dog, to understand what they are saying when you are painting their walls.
> - Amed [March 4, 2020]

Amed's own observation of the language program is supported by the studies of various scholars (Warriner, 2015; Phillimore, 2011; Wilbur, 2016). In Wilbur (2016) study, LINC teachers exclaimed that the program has adapted a business-centered approach in which teachers feel the need to meet government's expectation for "economic productivity" of the students rather than the needs of the students in their classrooms. It is assumed that the acquisition of host society's language will allow immigrants to become self-sufficient as they will achieve communicative competence that is required to obtain a low-wage job (Warriner, 2015). Warriner (2015) indicates that this neoliberal expectation does not reflect the realities and the lived experiences of immigrants as they are faced with structural barriers (Allan, 2016).

After having attended for couple of days, Amed and Cansu dropped out from their language classes as they believed that they were not contributing to the development of marketable English skills. While Amed started to work in various part-time jobs, Cansu became involved various workshops and programs at a

Fig. 1 Cansu's certificate of achievement from the community-based organization

community-based organization. She shared a photo of the certificate with me that she received upon completing Youth Ambassador Leadership Training.

She explained that she made a presentation on the topic of murdered women in Turkey, which is a topic that she is highly engaged in as an activist, at the organization. When I asked about her experiences with presenting at the organization, she expressed feelings of proudness:

> I was very proud of myself because even with my limited English, I was able to make a presentation on this topic.
> - Cansu [February 28, 2020]

For Cansu, this certificate (see Fig. 1) represents a sense of achievement while also giving "symbolic meaning to [her] own, personal development" (Gateley, 2015, p. 37). Although she quit her language class, she sought and created opportunities, such as becoming involved in leadership and mentorship programs, for personal and social development. By her active involvement at the organization, she created a space to establish social networks and to continued learning the English language through her participation while waiting for her legal status to be determined.

5.2 *"I really felt like a beggar:" Seeking Support from Institutions While Transitioning from Asylum Claimant to Protected Person*

After having received a positive decision from the IRB, Cansu decided to pursue language education at a college that offered an academic English program with tuition. Amed also pursued this option after dropping out from the LINC program.

This program was eligible for Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) which provides loans and grants to students in post-secondary institutions, including those with Protected Person status. Although Cansu was planning to start the college program immediately in fall, she was placed on the waitlist and was able to enroll in the winter term of the following year. During this time, she was receiving social assistance from Ontario Works and waiting to hear back from OSAP that had required documentation from her case worker. Although individuals cannot receive OSAP assistance and social assistance at the same time, individuals can receive social assistance while pending OSAP payment and repay once they receive it (Government of Ontario, 2018). Below, she explains her encounter with the case worker:

> The second she came beside me she just told me 'you only have five minutes, just to let you know...'
> I explained to her that I applied for OSAP and the deadline was approaching...
> She told me to leave the documents at the desk...
> Then she called me and told me 'you don't have to come to the meeting…I cancelled it because when OSAP gives you the money, they will give you the money for February.'
> I told her that I do not know when OSAP will give me the money and that I will refund her the welfare money when I receive the OSAP.
> I know my responsibility, but she cancelled it. How would you be happy leaving people in this bad situation?
> I am not receiving that money for pleasure…
> I am not a beggar...
> I really felt like a beggar.
> She made me really feel like that…
> When I receive that money, I feel more responsible towards the government, the people who are helping me receive that money.
> - Cansu [February 28, 2020]

Cansu's expresses discontent with the treatment that she has received from her case worker as she was not provided with the opportunity to communicate her needs and was placed in hardship due to lack of financial assistance. The Turkish phrase of "Ben dilenci degilim" which translates to "I am not a beggar" has the connotation in Turkish of a person who has a strong sense of pride that prevents them from asking for assistance unless they are without more options. By saying this phrase, the person wants to emphasize that they should not be considered as *"dilenci"* meaning "beggar" who is a person who consistently asks for help, but rather that they are overriding their sense of pride to seek assistance. By using this phrase, Cansu expresses her feelings of offense and emphasizes that contrary to being positioned as a *"dilenci,"* by her case worker, she is "responsible" and knows to fulfill her duties and responsibilities to the government and to the Canadian society. The emphasis on "responsibility" and portraying herself as "responsible" complies with Heinemann (2017)'s explanation that newcomers want to be "good" members of the society and try to avoid instances that would get negative attention in the society.

In Amed's case, a similar situation was seen as his social assistance was cancelled before he was able to receive OSAP benefits:

> When I applied to the college, I told my case worker that I want to pursue full-time education.

They thanked me for letting them know.
I told them that 'once I receive OSAP assistance, I will let you know.'
Maybe because I didn't know the language that I missed some documents.
I didn't receive OSAP on time.
I called my case worker and told that I was not able to pay my rent if I don't receive assistance.
They told me to send in my bank statements to see if there were any transactions.
I sent it…I had like ten dollars in the bank.
They didn't respond to me.
I couldn't pay my rent.
I was facing the risk of being kicked out of my house.
I kept calling them but there was no answer at all.
Then, at the end they told me 'we can't cover it.'
I told them again that I didn't receive my OSAP and I told them that I will refund them once I receive OSAP.
They didn't accept it.
I remember telling them 'do you expect us to steal?'
I think this was the first example of how Canadian system approaches us...
I was going to be homeless…
I got loan from my friends because it is impossible to live on social assistance and because I do not know the language; I do not get hired.
I was lucky to have friends to help me out at that time.
- Amed [March 4, 2020]

Although Amed now had more access to language education since he had obtained the status of Protected Person, his financial situation highlights that legal status is not the only major factor in not being able to access educational spaces but is part of the systemic barriers that individuals from refugee backgrounds encounter. Similar to Cansu, social assistance is also crucial for Amed to meet his basic needs of food and rent as he faces exclusion from the job market due to his English language skills. Likewise, he was not given the opportunity to communicate his needs to his case worker and was not provided with social assistance.

Considering the above examples, individuals from refugee backgrounds find themselves in a paradoxical situation. In the two-way integration process, Canadian policies emphasize the participation of newcomers in economic, social and politics aspects of society (Research and Evaluation Branch, 2017). As a result, they encourage newcomers to attend language training programs to acquire language proficiency for full participation. However, as these testimonies reveal, even though Cansu and Amed followed the expectations of the government for newcomers and willingly enrolled in a college program to learn the English language, they were subsequently left in a difficult financial situation during their transition. Although they take steps towards fully participating in the society, they encounter systemic barriers that leads them to be in a precarious situation.

5.3 *"I feel like a human again:" Educational Experiences After Becoming a Protected Person*

Within a few months of receiving their status as Protected Person, Amed and Cansu started their academic English program at a college. Although Amed is now completing an undergraduate degree, Cansu is still working to complete her language program at the college. Cansu expressed improvements in her mental health as a result of attending her language education program at the college:

> I've been going for two months...
> I feel like a human again…
> My mental state was much better too so I would speak with people, I went to be the old positive me.
> They told us about the volunteering program and I immediately wanted to do it because I lost one and half years.
> In my eyes, that was a loss and I needed to make up for it.
> - Cansu [February 28, 2020]

As seen in Cansu's words, legal status can be an immense *gatekeeper* that prevents individuals from progressing on their pathway to their envisioned goal. As expressed by Cansu "*I feel like a human again…I went to being the old positive me,*" the uncertainty of their future in Canada has deprived them of their social identity (Lacroix, 2004). Now given the *right* to remain in Canada and attend college to "*make up*" for the "*lost*" time, both Cansu and Amed became involved in various activities both in and outside of college. Cansu shared a photo of her certificate (see Fig. 2) that she received by volunteering as a Class Representative:

She expressed that the extra-curricular activities have driven her to continue pursuing more personal development activities:

> They told us about the programs that were offered that we can benefit from.
> I went there.
> Since I volunteered there, every Tuesday I made a presentation on the rights that they had in the school.
> I received my certificate.
> I am going to take online Psychology and Criminology certificates and that takes two months too.
> Every two months, I want to do something new.
> But there are a lot of things that I can benefit from here.
> You just have to want it.
> That is my stance now.
> From now on, it depends on me.
> - Cansu [February 28, 2020]

As can be seen, Cansu takes an active role not only in the school community but as well as to develop herself in different areas through certificate programs. Lacroix (2004) explains that for asylum claimants, the lengthy refugee determination process is a "disempowering process" (p. 161) it strips individuals from their social identity as now they are a "file…in the eyes of the bureaucracy…[and]…their file becomes who they are while they define themselves as otherwise" (p. 161). By

Fig. 2 Cansu's photograph of her certificate that she received in her college program for her participation

saying "*from now on, it depends on me*" she illustrates her (re)gained sense of agency as she wants to take control of her own pathway and work towards her envisioned future of completing her interrupted undergraduate studies.

While Amed did not participate in the extracurricular activities in college, he was volunteering as a translator on a research project. Once he finished the college language program in the summer of 2018, he took up on a full-time position in a company and at the same time prepared for English language proficiency examination in order to apply to university. In spring of 2019, he was able to have his courses counted as credits from his previous degree in law and start his undergraduate program. He received a loan from his friend to cover the cost of tuition fees and enrolled in courses for the spring term. From his first year, he became involved in a research project as a research assistant. When asked to describe his experiences in the university context, Amed shared the following description of the photograph (see Fig. 3) that he took at his university classroom:

> Of course; I am trying to understand the complex power relations, the legal community relations, as seen in the photograph in a language I do not understand even two words.
> One of the topics in the left corner is discourse; like how I tried to explain in the interview, when we are commenting on sensitive topic, the words that we chose are very important.
> Because of this, I am still anxious when I am making a comment because my language is not enough.
> But I try to overcome this by writing, reading, asking.
> This photograph is important for me because it shows that it is not very easy to overcome the language barrier.
> - Amed [March 8, 2020]

Like in the description of the photograph that he provided, during the interview, he elaborated on the challenges that he faced in the university due to the level of his

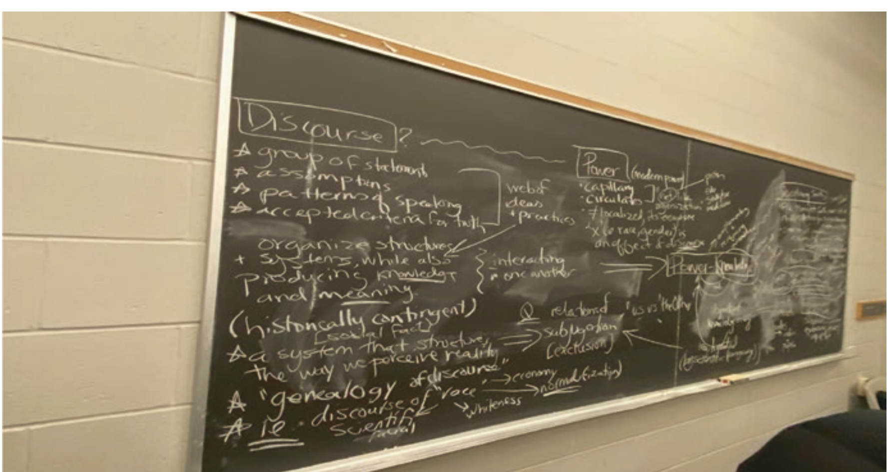

Fig. 3 Photograph that Amed took at his university classroom

English skills. He expressed that he would often focus on constructing his sentences correctly before asking to share his opinions in class discussions:

> I would think let me fix my sentence and then ask to speak…
> I don't want to speak like a five-year-old because I have a lot of experience with the topic being discussed.
> - Amed [March 4, 2020]

He explained that by the time he was able to construct his thoughts in English, the topic would be changed therefore he would not able to have the *opportunity* to be *listened to*. Despite of having an extensive knowledge and practice in the legal field, Amed positioned himself as a "refugee" therefore an "illegitimate" speaker (Bourdieu, 2003). Costa (2015) defines legitimacy as "the ability to utter the right linguistic forms at the right linguistic moments in the right situations, and to comply with the type of discourse that society expects one to produce" (p. 129). His comment on the photograph "*the words that we chose are very important. Because of this, I am still anxious when I am making a comment because my language is not enough"* demonstrates that he is trying to seek position as a "legitimate speaker" in the social interactions to be *listened to*. Similar findings were seen in various studies as newcomers refrained from speaking as they feared being positioned as "other" therefore limiting their opportunities to interact in the host language (Mogli & Papadopoulu 2018; Roberts & Cooke, 2009; Court, 2017).

6 Discussion and Conclusion

Although Canada continues to receive a significant influx of asylum claimants from Turkey, their post-migration experiences, in particular their educational experiences, have been unexplored. The findings from this study provides new insights into not only the experiences of individuals arriving from Turkey, but it also contributes to the growing literature on the educational experiences of refugee youth in Canada. The paper focused on how the two individuals from refugee backgrounds were trying to access educational spaces to learn the English language while trying to *integrate* into the Canadian society. I have italicized *integrate* to emphasize that this term is not neutral (Rytter, 2018), but rather emphasizes an *action* on the part of the newcomers in order to adapt to the norms and expectations as a requirement to become a member of the host society.

Despite of policies emphasizing that integration is a *two-way process* therefore placing responsibility to the host society and the newcomer, the findings highlight that the obligation to become an *integrated* member of the society is solely placed on the newcomers as the barriers in the system itself prevents access to opportunities and resources to be able to fulfill this responsibility.

The foremost barrier was their legal status which played a crucial role in determining the extent of their action as it established an inequality of educational opportunities. They were excluded from accessing educational opportunities and resources that were provided to other members in the Canadian society as well as international students. In order to access a language program at a college, both Amed and Cansu had to wait the results of a prolonged refugee determination process to gain the right to apply to college and apply for financial assistance to fund their education. Although it seemed as a straightforward process, with the lack of guidance and institutional support and linguistic barriers, they encountered information barriers therefore had difficulty navigating the refugee determination system and the education system. Similar findings were found in the study of Shakya et al. (2010) hence emphasizing that even though many years have passed after their study, these barriers continue to hinder individuals from refugee backgrounds from pursuing their envisioned educational goals. While policies outline the role of government to "[provide] support and services to newcomers…[as]…the goal of integration is to encourage newcomers to be fully engaged in the economic, social, political, and cultural life of Canada" (Research and Evaluation Branch, 2017, p. 1), the realities of the individuals from refugee backgrounds highlight that the policies need to be revisited to address the needs of these individuals.

Furthermore, while there still continues to be inadequate services for refugee claimants (Romero, 2019), the provision of standardized programs that has a "one-size-fits-all" approach often leads to insufficient support with language learning (Wrigley, 2008) and resettlement needs. This allows us to question whether the approach of the system of "one-size-fits-all" works efficiently in helping these individuals transition to a new life in Canada. Rather than considering these individuals as a homogenous group with the same needs, their valuable skills sets, and

educational and professional backgrounds should be recognized and considered in the design of the programs. As seen in Cansu and Amed's case, this approach does not fit with the expectations and the needs of the asylum claimants. Although they tried exploring alternative pathways to break through this approach as they expressed that these language programs do not go beyond only addressing daily communicative needs, they encountered systemic barriers which constrained the amount of action that they can take to create different conditions than the one they are positioned in. By starting with the elimination of restrictions based on legal status, more educational opportunities can be created. Furthermore, as Crea (2016) explains, educational interventions tend to take the form of stand-alone program that "operates independently of other services and needs within the local context" (p. 13). Therefore, the design of educational and social interventions should not disregard the complexity of asylum claimants' lives, but it should take on a holistic approach through implementing partnerships with organizations that can provide administrative, psychological and financial support while attending to their educational needs. Further studies should be carried out to understand the prolonged impact of the length of refugee determination system on accessing diverse educational opportunities by including the perspectives of refugees on their educational needs.

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“Es porque tienen ganas de aprender”: How a Non-profit Teacher Creates a Learning Environment to Help College-Aged Syrian Displaced Students Adapt and Learn Spanish in México

Brenda Sarmiento-Quezada

Abstract This chapter draws from an ethnographic study of Syrian displaced young adults living in México, who are commencing their university studies. Since the beginning of the Syrian conflict in 2011, many of these young adults spent several years in refugee camps or in cities under siege before arriving in México through special arrangements made by a non-governmental organization (NGO). Using an ethnographic and discourse analytic approach (Rymes B, Classroom discourse analysis: a tool for critical reflection. Routledge, 2016; Wortham S, Reyes A, Discourse analysis beyond the speech event. Routledge, 2015), this chapter looks at how a Spanish language arts teacher is able to foster a learning environment where Syrian displaced students are engaged and willing to participate in their new educational environment. Although today many language education programs for migrants are dominated by monolingual ideologies and practices, there is a growing concern among educators and administrators about how to best promote academic success among the refugee and transnational student population (Cummins J, Can J Appl Linguist 10:221–240, 2007; García O, Kleyn T, Translanguaging with multilingual students: learning from classroom moments. Routledge, New York, 2016; Naidoo L, Int Educ 26:210–217, https://doi.org/10.1080/14675986.2015.1048079, 2015; Warriner D, Curric Inq 47:50–61, https://doi.org/10.1080/03626784.2016.1254501, 2017). This chapter argues that understanding the pedagogical practices enacted by language instructors can give educators and administrators an insight into advancing the language goals of displaced students.

Keywords Multilingual education · Displaced students · Discourse analysis · Spanish language learning · Language ideologies

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1 Introduction

In countries across the world, linguistic competence tends to be equated with the successful integration of immigrants and refugees. However, when it comes to refugee education and language practices, most of the research has been conducted predominantly within the United States and European context (Baquedano-López & Janetti, 2017; Kalocsányiová, 2017; Mallinson & Childs, 2007). In nations that are not seen as countries of immigrants, however, this type of literature is scarce. For instance, in México, a country with a rich history of migration, few studies on refugee education have been conducted. Consequently, NGOs operating within developing countries like México interested in supporting the education of immigrants have few models to follow for helping displaced youth.

This chapter discusses the pedagogical practices of a non-profit language instructor in México and how the instructor creates a language learning environment that helps two displaced Syrian displaced students adapt and learn academic Spanish as they draw from their previous schooling experiences and by means of their home language and their use of English. The present chapter employs an Ethnography of Communication framework (Hymes, 1974; Saville-Troike, 2003) in order to analyze data and obtain a comprehensive idea of pedagogical practices enacted by this teacher and how they affect the linguistic practices employed by his Syrian students. Within the ethnographic framework, the study used participant-observations to examine induction and transitional activities led by a non-profit civilian-led organization in central México. Observations of language classrooms were performed and recorded, as well as natural occurring conversations. Individual interviews of the Syrian displaced students and the instructor were conducted. A discourse analytic approach was used to analyze field notes, audio recording, and participant interviews (Rymes, 2016; Wortham & Reyes, 2015).

This chapter aims to give instructors an insight into how displaced students who do not share the same linguistic practices and beliefs about language learning advance their second language learning goals. My analysis of observations and interviews indicates the use of three particular types of pedagogical practices by the focal language instructor that help him create a collective experience with his students, elicit knowledge from them, and promote their metalinguistic awareness. The findings shared in this chapter suggest that understanding the classroom ideologies and language practices of language instructors and students may allow the creation of an environment that can help displaced students adapt and learn, in this case Spanish, by drawing from their communicative and social repertoire.

2 Relevant Literature

Although much of the current research regarding refugee education is centered around the United States and European contexts, this literature still looks at language ideologies and language practices inside and outside the educational setting (Cummins, 2007; Baquedano-López & Janetti, 2017; Kalocsányiová, 2017; Mallinson & Childs, 2007; Park & Bae, 2009). When it comes to ideologies, it is important to look at the languages involved as they define spaces and index different geographical locations, national, and social contexts through the variation of language use. In the last several decades, there has been an increased awareness of the relationship between language, politics, and identity, underscoring how linguistic patterns are tied to broader political and economic processes (Kroskrity, 2000; Park & Bae, 2009). Moreover, as social contexts change with changes in language, understanding the language learning processes allows us to understand the different social contexts in which they occur (Woolard, 1998).

Therefore, looking at language ideologies provides researchers with a way to analyze the models and practices shared by members of a speech community and influenced by their political and economic interests and position (Kroskrity, 2000; McGroarty, 2001; Park & Bae, 2009; Woolard, 1998). Here, when I refer to language ideologies, I mean the set of beliefs and attitudes that speakers use to engage in conversations within their social worlds. Using language ideology as a lens to examine instructor pedagogies and speaker practices in second-language settings allows us to view the way speakers move in and out of boundaries as they mix and show multiple identities, attitudes, and affiliations through language (McGroarty, 2001).

Although much of the research regarding education and second-language acquisition happens within classrooms and other institutional contexts, language ideologies extend beyond these settings. For example, researchers such as Park and Bae (2009), Farr and Song (2011), and Kalocsányiová (2018) examine how migration intersects with language ideologies and practices in second-language learning contexts. These studies look at how top-down policies and outside language ideologies shape the way speakers are taught and learn language extending within and beyond educational settings.

In the case of refugee and migrant students, they are constantly trying to make meaning of their new societal contexts. Thus, students have to make sense of their new transnational education in new socio-linguistically complex spaces that shows how language ideologies are constantly reinterpreted and reinforced depending on the place and social space (Park & Bae, 2009; Farr & Song, 2011). It is within this migrant context that second-language pedagogies can be better contextualized, especially due to the diversity of language contexts and goals of instructors and students. Instructors, for instance, become language policy enactors when they allow, or not, the use of one language variety or structure over another or when they show lack of knowledge regarding certain languages varieties (Farr & Song, 2011; McGroarty, 2001). Examining the linguistic practices of instructors, then, allows to

better understand any ideologies or beliefs they hold and reinforce in the classroom with their students. Sometimes, however, instructors are unaware about their use of certain linguistic practices, therefore, this paper examines the linguistic and guidance practices that a language instructor uses with displaced students and how he uses them to direct their learning.

3 Methodology

This paper is part of a larger research project that looks at how displaced Syrian students are navigating linguistically and socially their new lives in México. This analysis focuses on the preparations they undergo to learn Spanish just before they begin their university studies. The participants in this case study are in their early twenties, and prior to their arrival in the country, they lived and worked in refugee camps providing humanitarian aid for some international organizations. Upon arriving to México, these focal university students began a nine-month intensive Spanish language program before embarking in their university studies. At the time of this data collection, these Syrian students had been living in central México for about 8 months and were in the final weeks of their Spanish program when I began my observations. Participation in this intensive Spanish language program allows them to obtain a comprehensive idea of language practices and ideology relationships among other Syrian displaced students and their instructors in central México. This paper focuses on the linguistic and guidance practices that one language instructor uses in order to direct his Syrian students' language learning.

The present study employs a language in use ethnographic approach, which means I examine linguistic repertoires by taking into account the socio-cultural practices and beliefs behind the members of a speech community (Gumperz & Hymes, 1972; Saville-Troike, 2003). In other words, this framework pays attention at the way speakers communicate by closely attending to the ways they use language. Ethnographic methods are appropriate because they allow the researcher to pay attention to detail and describe individuals' and social groups' languages and practices in ways that other large-scale quantitative methods do not allow. For the larger study, I conducted daily audio and video participant observations and 13 individual interviews during a six-week period in central México. Observations of language classrooms were conducted and written up in fieldnotes, and a handful of natural occurring conversations in those classrooms were also video recorded. Language classes often took place at a cultural center or in the students' home. For this paper, I focus on the two Syrian participants who were in the last stages of their Spanish intensive program. I used and examined 18 h of their Spanish Language Arts class which took place at the cultural center and was part of the core-courses these two students were undertaking. I also selected and analyzed two of the one-on-one interviews conducted at the end of the data collection period; one with the Spanish Language Arts instructor and one of the Syrian students about to complete

the Spanish program. The one-on-one interviews were done in an informal setting, the questions asked emerged from the conversation, but I had pre-established goals based on my prior classroom observations and interactions. In order to allow for richer and more in-depth information, my participants were able to select the language of their choice for this interview and were encouraged to translanguage or code-switch as they deemed appropriate (Glesne, 2016; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011; Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Prior to the data collection period, consent forms were handed out to participants and they were informed of the use of pseudonyms to protect their identity.

Since the purpose of this paper is to continue expanding the examination of language ideologies and language practices internationally, one way to do so is by using discourse analytic tools to analyze evaluative indexicals and communicative repertoires. For my analysis, I use Wortham and Reyes (2015) three-phase narrative framework. This framework begins by mapping narrated events and is followed by selecting, construing, and configuring indexicals to then interpret their social action. Accordingly, to map narrated events, one must first use knowledge of “semantic, pragmatic and grammatical regularities to describe the narrated content” (Wortham & Reyes, 2015, p. 40). The next phase in this framework deals with indexicals, which are the linguistic expressions whose reference can shift from context to context (Braun, 2017).

In addition to construing indexicals, Rymes (2016) demonstrates a way to analyze how discourse and context affect each other in the classroom. This is important since my focal case study students and teacher tend to bring new ways of speaking to the classroom context and change how classroom discourse occurs (Rymes, 2016). To do so, Rymes (2016) recommends the “communicative repertoire approach” that looks at the unique communicative habits and expectations in the classroom. She defines communicative repertoire as “an accumulation of habits and norms for communication acquired over a lifetime” (Rymes, 2016, p. 8). This means that a speaker’s repertoire is shaped by the entire history of interactions outside a classroom and is contingent on three dimensions: the social context, the interactional context of a single speech event, and individual agency (Rymes, 2016).

When working with language learners, the practice of analyzing indexicals and examining their communicative repertoire is important to better understand how they learn language and communicate. This analysis, however, will not only focus on the language learners, but also on how the instructor uses language to guide their learning and how the students respond to it. This “guided construction of knowledge” (Mercer, 1995) becomes important in language learning environments since there is a very complex relationships regarding power and the construction of knowledge. For example, when it comes to the role of a teacher, it is the teacher who controls access to the “right answers” and evaluates students. However, just being a teacher does not automatically confer power and respect in the classroom, and teachers may lose control of events. Indeed, because teachers are responsible and accountable for teaching a curriculum that is often imposed upon them, teachers are themselves also the subject to the power coming from outside their classrooms (Mercer, 1995).

3.1 Focal Participants

The participants in this analysis include the language teacher instructor Mr. Manrique and two Syrian students, Layla and Lavend living in central México. Mr. Manrique is from an urban city in central México and specializes in editing and text analysis. He began volunteering as a Spanish instructor in 2017 with this non-profit that gives Syrian students the opportunity to carry out their university studies in México. Although he had taught high school Spanish Language Arts, this was his first time teaching Spanish Language Learners and displaced students. As a volunteer language instructor for this non-profit, he committed to teaching displaced students three times a week.

Layla is a 22-year old Kurdish woman born in Aleppo. She lived in what she describes as a beautiful city with beautiful houses and lots of people. However, when she was 14 years old, civil war destroyed her community and was forced to move with her family to Damascus, where she lived for 2 years. After Damascus, Layla moved to Kobani, a small city with a small Kurdish population where she finished high school. After high school, she lived in Turkey and then Iraq for some years before arriving to México. She arrived in México in 2017 and had been in the country for 8 months when I first met her.

Lavend is a 23-years old man born in the northeastern part of Syria. When he was 14 years old, he moved to Damascus where he finished middle school. In 2011, when the civil war in Syria broke out, he and his family fled to Kurdistan. In Kurdistan, Lavend worked as part of an international NGO for 5 years in order to support his family, and always searched for scholarship opportunities to continue his studies. He arrived in México at the end of 2017.

4 Findings and Discussion

In this analysis, I first look at a classroom interaction during a Spanish grammar lesson and then I look at the interviews of two participants, Layla and Mr. Manrique. For the first portion of this analysis, I look at the grammar classes that took place three times a week at a cultural center in central México in the summer of 2018. This chapter is part of a sustained engagement in the field studying the transition of these focal students in the college context over the last 2 years. At the time of these observations, this grammar class was the only class happening in a regular classroom. All the other classes the focal students received took place at their home. As noted, this class happened in a traditional classroom setting, with one blackboard at the front, a teacher's desk to the left of it and even though there were only two students in this particular class, there were 17 student desks. Here I share excerpts that demonstrate that pedagogical practices play an important part in the motivation of students and the instructor.

Using a language-in-use ethnographic approach, I analyze the communicative repertoire of my focal participants to better understand any linguistic practices they use in the classroom. In addition, I focus on how Mr. Manrique uses language to guide his students’ learning. By doing so, I hope to give an insight into how displaced students who do not share the same linguistic practices and beliefs about language learning are able to advance their language learning goals.

Here I share excerpts that demonstrate that pedagogical practices play an important part in the motivation of students and the instructor. As I transcribed and listened to the audio and video of 18 h of classroom interactions in the Spanish intensive program, I realize Mr. Manrique is one of the few instructors, sometimes unknowingly, who continuously used guidance strategies to help him direct his students’ learning. Sometimes instructors are not aware of the techniques or the language they use in order to reach their lesson goals, however, his instructional actions and the way he talks during lessons create a collaborative environment in his classroom. Following tenets of sociocultural theory such as Mercer’s *guidance strategies* (1995) there are particular classroom discourse patterns that instructors use. More dialogic approaches by instructors tend to use three main strategies: create collective experiences, elicit relevant knowledge from students, and in the case of language instructors, promote metalinguistic awareness. My analysis, then, looks at how the focal language teacher, Mr. Manrique, used some of these guiding principles in his Spanish language arts class as a first-time language arts teacher to Spanish Language Learners.

In the following excerpts Mr. Manrique introduces the *Condicional* form in Spanish to his students Layla and Lavend. It is important to recall that even though Mr. Manrique is a Spanish language arts instructor, this is his first experience teaching Spanish language learners. As evidenced in his explanation of the use of the *Condicional,* Mr. Manrique frequently embeds guiding strategies to make sure his students are not only understanding to concept, but that they are able to also practice the language.

4.1 Practices That Create Collective Experiences

In my analysis of Mr. Manrique’s classroom, I noticed the use of more inclusive language in which he positioned himself as part of the class when talking to his students. In his instruction to students he would say things such as “*vamos a escribir*” and “*vamos a ver*” (“we will write,” “we will look at”) as opposed to “*escriban*” or “*vean*” (“you write”, “look at”) commonly heard from other instructors. This type of language and verb conjugations is equivalent to *“we” statements* in English. Although, it is not uncommon to find instructors who use *“we” statements* to refer to the class, Mr. Manrique was the only one out of five other observed instructors in this Spanish-intensive program that used *“we” statements* during his instruction. *“We” statements* position the instructors as part of a collective and as part of the

class and so it allows to see his or her instruction as a collaborative experience in which students and instructor are part of a shared learning process.

In this following interaction (Excerpt 1.A), Mr. Manrique is introducing for the first time the *Condicional.* To do so, he first explains to his students this is a tense "*que no hemos visto*" (Line 2). By using this form of a *'we' statement* (*hemos*), he is attempting to show how they have "a significant past experience in common, and so have gained shared knowledge and collective understanding which can be drawn upon to progress further" (Mercer, 1995, p. 33).

Excerpt 1. A		
Line	Speaker	Speech
1		((Mr Manrique writes on the left side of board the Personal Pronouns in Spanish))(22s)
2	Mr. Manrique:	Muy bien, **tenemos** aquí ésto *Very well, we have this here* ((points to Personal Pronouns on board))
3		ES un tiempo verbal que **no hemos visto**… *IS a verb tense we have not yet seen…*
4		Pero es un tiempo verbal, que se utiliza ((looks up))… *But it is a verb tense, that is used ((looks up))…*
5		Pues sí bastante, parecería que no…pero… SÍ *very often, it would seem like it's not…but…YES*
6	Layla:	Es como 'presidente'(sic) y…presente y futuro, ¿no? *Is like 'president'(sic) and…present and future, right?*

Layla, then, is able to recall these past classroom experiences and compares this new verb tense with the ones she has already learned, "Presente y Futuro" (Line 6). Mr. Manrique's use of *"we" statements* allow him to represent and frame past experiences as relevant to the present one (Mercer, 1995). During his instruction, then, Mr. Manrique understands that he is part of the developmental process of his students. Being intentional with this language, Mr. Manrique provides his students a way to make sense of their new experiences in the classroom. Mr. Manrique knows that as a Spanish language arts teacher he is tasked not only with teaching the curriculum, but he knows he needs to make sure his students understand how the activities they are learning in the classroom ultimately contribute to their development and understanding of the Spanish-language outside the classroom environment.

4.2 Practices to Elicit Knowledge

In the following excerpt (1.B) Mr. Manrique is teaching his students how to conjugate in the *Condicional*. Similar as in Excerpt 1.A, Mr. Manrique uses inclusive language to create a collective learning experience with his students (Line 1). In this excerpt, Mr. Manrique attempts to conjugate a verb himself, and as he begins, he realizes this is a learning opportunity for his students (Line 2) and decides to call on Layla (Line 3) to participate in the activity instead.

Excerpt 1. B		
Line	Speaker	Speech
1	Mr. Manrique:	Es muy sencillo…o eso parece, vamos a ver por qué… YO *It’s very simple…or appears to be, let’s see why…I* ((starts writing on board then stops, turns around and **faces Layla**))
2		Bueno más bien, mejor ustedes díganme un verbo… *Well, actually, you (plural) tell me a verb instead…*
3		Layla dime un verbo *Layla tell me a verb*
4	Layla:	Eh…yo…comer *Eh…I…eat*
5	Mr. Manrique:	Comer *To Eat*
6	Layla:	Yo como *I Eat*
7	Mr. Manrique:	Yo comería, Tú comerías ((writes on board)) *I would eat, You would eat*

Here, Mr. Manrique’s actions suggest he is aware that language is still a barrier for his students, therefore in order to teach the content, in order to elicit knowledge from Layla, he asks her a simple question that he knows she will be able to answer. He uses “cued elicitations” (Mercer, 1995) to draw the information he is seeking, in this case, asking the question to the class in general (Line 2) and then narrowing it down to just one student in a simple way (Line 3). This is a popular strategy used among educators who try to teach using a learner-centered approach. Seeing Mr. Manrique quickly decide that instead of answering himself he should rather have a student participate (Line 2) allows him to enact a more interactive instruction. By using this approach, Mr. Manrique is inviting his students to take an active part in the classroom dialogue.

Another way in which Mr. Manrique elicits knowledge from his students is by using conversational strategies. One of the ways instructors do this, for example is by offering their own reflective observations in order to encourage students to do the same and generate better responses (Mercer, 1995).

Excerpt 1. C		
Line	Speaker	Speech
1	Mr. Manrique:	((points to Layla)) ¿Por qué es como futuro? Es como futuro por que se repiten en todos. *Why is this like the future tense? Is like future tense because they all repeat.*
2		Quiero que aquí observen algo muy importante. *I want you to observe here something very important.*
3		Fíjense como aquí está el verbo “comer” complete. ((points to verb on the board)) *Look how here the verb “to eat” is complete*
4	Layla	Mhm…Es como el futuro verbo…los verbos en futuro, todo el infinitivo *Mhm… Is like the future verb…the verbs in future, all of the infinitive*

Excerpt 1. C		
Line	Speaker	Speech
5	Mr. Manrique:	Infinitivo más, prácticamente, "e" *The infinitive plus, practically, "e"*
6		yo comeré, tu comerás, él comerá, nosotros comeremos, ustedes comerán *I will eat, you will eat, he will eat, we will eat, you will eat*
7	Layla	¿"e" o "a"? *"e" or "a"?*
8	Mr. Manrique:	"e" y "a" ((laughs)), es que por lo general lo asocio siempre con el "Yo"… yo comeré *"e" and "a" ((laughs)), it's because in general I associate it always with the "I"… I will eat*
9		pero sí es como el futuro en ese sentido, tenemos todo el infinitivo y le agregamos la terminación *but yes it is like the future in that sense, we have the whole infinitive and then we add the ending*

In Excerpt 1.C, Mr. Manrique poses the question "*¿Por qué es como futuro*?" (Line 1) and answers it himself. Immediately, he directs the attention of his students to the board by telling them he wants them to look at something important (Line 2) and shows them how the verb is formed by pointing to the board. Doing this allows Layla to make a connection with the way the future tense is formed in Spanish and she shares how verbs in the future tense are formed with the infinitive form (Line 4). At this point, Mr. Manrique recognizes Layla's knowledge of the future tense and furthers her comment by acknowledging that indeed the future tense is comprised of the infinitive form plus the ending "e" and proceeds to conjugate the verb "to eat." While Mr. Manrique is conjugating, Layla notices (Line 7) and points out it is not just the ending "e" (such as in the form "*comerán*") and asks him for clarification. It is during this point in the interaction that Mr. Manrique realizes he unwillingly generalized a rule and then proceeds to *correct* himself (Line 8). As he acknowledges his mistake, he reinstates and validates Layla's observation on how this new form is like the future tense (Line 9), where the infinitive form is used plus an added ending.

Trying to elicit knowledge using conversational strategies is difficult to balance, particularly as teachers are constrained by a set curriculum. In addition, this type of strategy becomes more challenging when instructing language learners since language can become a conversational constraint. However, in this excerpt, Mr. Manrique begins a short, but lively conversation with his student that allows him not only to continue teaching how the *Condicional* is conjugated but also allows him to see that Layla understands and is comfortable with other verb tenses and she is starting to make connections across the curriculum.

Within these practices to elicit student knowledge, another strategy observed during Mr. Manrique's instruction is that of direct questioning. In this following excerpt (Excerpt 1.D), after explaining that "*pospretérito*" is the same as

"*Condicional*," Mr. Manrique asks his students what it means for a verb to be conditional. Through a series of questions and repetition, both Lavend and Mr. Manrique begin an interaction to help each other make meaning of what the other is saying. Mr. Manrique starts by asking what he believes is a simple question (Line 1). Lavend, however, asks for clarification and reiterates the question *"¿Condicional?"* (Line 2). Mr. Manrique realizes at this point his original question might not have been clear enough for Lavend, so he rephrases the original question he posed (Line 3). Lavend then, attempts to answer by indicating it means "*Tiempo, estado*," (Line 4) and Mr. Manrique repeats Lavend's answer in the form of a question as a way to indicate he needs clarification (Line 5), without really stating it. This whole interaction is a subtle but recognizable *Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF)* exchange.

Excerpt 1. D		
Line	Speaker	Speech
1	Mr. Manrique:	¿Qué significa que sea condicional? *What does it mean to be conditional?*
2	Lavend:	¿Condicional? *Conditional?*
3	Mr. Manrique:	Condicional, ¿qué crees que signifique que el pospretérito sea condicional? *Conditional, what do you think it means that the "pospreterit" is conditional?*
4	Lavend:	Tiempo, estado *Time, state*
5	Mr. Manrique:	¿Tiempo o estado? *Time or state?*
6	Lavend:	Tiempo y estado *Time and state*
7	Mr. Manrique:	¿Tiempo y estado? *Time and state?*
8	Lavend:	Sí, por que es tiempo pospretérito *Yes, because is it the conditional tense*
9	Mr. Manrique:	Por que es pospretérito…¿Pero porqué es tiempo pospretérito? *Because it is conditional…but why is it the conditional time?*
10		Es como pasado y futuro a la vez…piensen… *Is like past and future at the same time…think…*
11	Lavend:	Es como estar en espacio y tiempo *Is like being in space and time* ((laughs)) ((moves both hands from left to right))
12	Layla:	Es como Ramadán *Is like Ramadan*
13	Mr. Manrique:	¿Es cómo qué? *Like what?*
14	Layla:	Es como Ramadán…es pasado pero futuro también *It is like Ramadan...is past but it is future also*

In educational research, there is some controversy regarding the use of questions as an actual guiding strategy. The debate surrounding direct questioning during instruction argues that it constrains the direction of classroom discussion (Alexander, 2004; Mercer, 1995; Myhill & Dunkin, 2005); however, in language learning environments direct questioning may become an important strategy (Boyd, 2016; Myhill & Dunkin, 2005) that allows students to participate in small, but meaningful interactions.

In this interaction, when Mr. Manrique sees that Lavend is not understanding the question, he rephrases his question once again and attempts to direct Lavend's response by reminding him that "*es como pasado y futuro a la vez*" (Line 10). In this case Mr. Manrique is not explicitly *evaluating* Lavend's response by telling him he is "right" or "wrong." However, by providing him an opportunity to try again by rephrasing the question, Mr. Manrique is still offering Lavend some *feedback* on his response. This time, Lavend rephrases his same answer and adds hand gestures to indicate movement through time and space (Line 11). Layla seems to understand what Lavend means, so she chimes in by saying that it is like Ramadan (Line 12). Mr. Manrique prompts her to be more specific by asking her directly "*¿Es cómo qué*?" (Line 13), to what she explains that it is like Ramadan, which is in the past, but also in the future (Line 14). It is important to signal that this interaction took place during the month of Ramadan. Layla, by using this as an example, is able to explain how the *pospretérito* is conditional because it helps express a future action from the past.

Excerpt 1.D, then, looks at how the language Mr. Manrique uses to ask questions guides his students' process of knowledge production. As seen in the excerpt, when teaching language learners, it takes repetition and multiple rephrasing to guide students to understand the question. When it comes to using questions as a guiding strategy, we must always remember that language is situated, so even when instructors use the same kind of questions or words, they may have a very different effect on different occasions and on different speakers. In this case, Mr. Manrique had to rephrase his question several times, but it allowed time for Layla to connect the ideas and provide him with an example that described and helped with what Lavend was trying to explain in his response.

4.3 Practices to Promote Metalinguistic Awareness

In this section, I examine how the language used by Mr. Manrique while responding to a student is used as a strategy to continue guiding their language knowledge. Within language learning contexts, paraphrasing or *reformulation* (Cazden, 2001; Mercer, 1995; Rymes 2016), is a common strategy used by instructors that provides students with a revised version of what was said.

Excerpt 1. E		
Line	Speaker	Speech
1	Mr. Manrique:	Este tiempo verbal se llama… Pospretérito ((writes on board)), pospretérito, mhm *This verb tense is called… Pospretérito ((writes on board)), pospretérito, mhm*
2	Lavend:	¿'Pretérito' es pasado? *'Preterit' is past?*
3	Layla:	Pretérito es pasado… ¿Pero '*pos*'? *Preterit is past…but 'pos'?*
4	Mr. Manrique:	Pretérito es pasado y pos es "después" *Preterit is past and pos is "after"*
5	Lavend:	¿Después pasado? *After past?*
6	Mr. Manrique:	Después *del* pasado…((smiles)) pero *no* es Presente *After **the** past…((smiles)) But it is **not** Present*
7	Lavend:	Como el tiempo en "*as*" *Like the tense with "as"* ((puts hand in mouth, muffles words))
8	Mr. Manrique:	Ah! Ahorita vamos a ver, por eso les digo que es *como* un pasado-futuro… Pero vamos a ver cómo *Ah! Right now we are going to see, that is why I tell you it is like past-future… But we will see how*

In this excerpt (1.E), Mr. Manrique is explaining the *Pospretérito*. Just like language learners, Lavend and Layla break apart the word and recognize that "*pretérito*" means "past" (Line 2–3), however they are unable to retrieve the meaning of "pos" (Line 3). Mr. Manrique confirms their answer and gives them the meaning of "*pos"* (Line 4). This response allows Lavend to make a connection with what he already learned in class, stating that "*pospretérito*" then *must* mean "después pasado" (Line 5). However, the way Lavend constructed his sentence is not considered standard Spanish. In Spanish, the grammatical contraction "del" is used when the preposition *de* is followed by the article *el* in order to connect two ideas. Lavend omits this contraction and Mr. Manrique, instead of telling Lavend about his grammatical mistake, reformulates it in the correct way "*después **del** pasado*" while also cueing him that it is *not* in the Present tense (Line 6). With this new paraphrasing and clue, Lavend infers that "after the past" *must* mean "future." However, instead of calling it "future (tense)," Lavend describes the tense as "*como el tiempo en 'as'*" (Line 7). In Spanish, normally the future tense is formed by adding the suffix "-as" to the infinitive form of the verb. Thus, even though Lavend does not say the word "future," he refers to the way the tense is formed. This response allows Mr. Manrique to see that Lavend is aware of how the future tense is constructed and understands what he is trying to tell him. As a response, and in order to give Lavend the vocabulary he seems to be missing without putting him on the spot, Mr. Manrique chooses to reformulate Lavend's statement by indicating that "this is the reason why I am telling you this tense is like a past-*future*" (Line 8).

In language learning settings, sometimes teachers choose to ignore wrong answers in order to reject them (Mercer, 1995). In other of my classroom observations during this time, some instructors moved onto other students to get their desired answer or they targeted a specific student that would yield them the correct response. However, in this case, Mr. Manrique understands that language may sometimes be a barrier in his classroom. So, rather than ignoring the answer or directing his attention onto another student, Mr. Manrique chooses to *reformulate* this student's response in order to correct and guide Lavend's answer. Simple strategies such as paraphrasing student responses are integral in instructional settings, particularly when trying to build student confidence. Throughout my observation period, Mr. Manrique *reformulates* his students' response in very subtle ways, sometimes even he seems unaware on how this strategy actually strengthens his own Spanish language arts instruction by reinforcing past topics and enhancing his students' confidence and participation using Spanish. Even though this was his first experience with Spanish Language Learners, like many second language instructors, Mr. Manrique successfully uses this as a strategy to guide not only his content but to reinforce the language learning of his students.

4.4 Ideologies in the Language Classroom

For this chapter, I recorded and transcribed 18 h of audio and video interactions of Mr. Manrique's Spanish language arts classroom. In addition, I conducted and analyzed two 1-h interviews, Mr. Manrique and Layla. It was important for me to conduct these interviews since it allowed me to get clarification about some of the classroom interactions I previously observed. When interviewing Layla, I focused on her experiences before coming to México and how, if anything, had changed as she participated in her Spanish language courses. In the case of Mr. Manrique, the purpose of the interview was to learn about his pedagogy, classroom preparation, and his thoughts about teaching Spanish Language Learners.

4.4.1 Interview with Layla

At the time of this interview, Layla had been in México for 9 months and was preparing to begin her university studies in a few weeks. Getting her to talk about her experiences since her arrival was important in order to understand if any ideologies or beliefs had changed as a result of her class interactions.

During my interview analysis, I paid particular attention to Layla's communicative repertoire. Using the framework put forward by Rymes (2016), I look at Layla's communicative repertoire as the accumulation of any habits and norms she acquired over her lifetime and that she now uses to communicate. In other words, Layla, just like all individuals, has a unique and wide-ranging set of communicative resources. These communicative resources are shaped by her entire history of interactions,

those that happened before coming to México and during her 9 months in the country. Rymes (2016) explains that communicative repertoires are contingent on three dimensions: (1) social context, (2) interactional context of a single speech event, (3) individual agency. Although I was able to analyze the three communicative dimensions in Layla's interview, in the following excerpt, I focus only in Layla's social context. When looking at the social context surrounding Layla, her entire biographical history and experiences before and after coming to México shaped this repertoire. One interesting thing that came out from performing naturalistic observations and having informal conversations with my participants was their notion about how language instruction should look like. At the beginning of this analysis I mentioned that Mr. Manrique's class was the only one taking place in a traditional classroom setting. Thus, this contributed to Layla's accumulation of social history regarding instructors throughout her life as a student. In other words, having her Spanish language arts class in a traditional setting, fit Layla's previous schooling experiences.

Excerpt 2. A		
Line	Speaker	Speech
1	Layla:	Si eh a mi Profesor Manriquez, Juan Manriquez, ¿tú conoces? *Yes, my profesor Mr. Manriquez, Juan, do you know him?*
2	Interviewer:	Mhm *Mhm*
3	Layla:	Si era *professional* y el también entiendo más y aprende más de él [sic]… y Sandra *[He] was professional and I understood more and learn more from him… and Sandra*
4		como había muchas clases en esos…en…ese semestre y era muy bien con ella también [sic] *there were many classes in those…in.. that semester and was good with her too*
5		y Alex, yo, su estilo es muy diferente para…enseñar y para mi era como no entiendo *and Alex, I, his style is very different for…teach and for me I was like I don't understand*
6		y no como no entiendo, como NO importante [sic] ¿sabes? *and not like I don't understand, like not important, you know?*

In the above excerpt (Excerpt 2.A), Layla claims that Mr. Manrique was a *professional* teacher (Line 10) and not only that, but she expresses that he understood him the most and learned the most from him (Line 11–12). The role of Mr. Manrique's "*professionalism*" and the message this word communicates about his identity is contingent on Layla's larger social context. In this case, Layla associates *professional* with Mr. Manrique, who as discussed in the above sections, was one of the few instructors in the program that employed teaching strategies found in traditional instruction. Since these strategies, or "way of teaching," matched Layla's previous learning experiences she believes she is able to "understand more and learn more from him" (line 3). Layla extends this notion of "professionalism" to Sandra, another instructor that even though was not in a traditional classroom setting,

arranged her teaching space in a way that allowed her to stand in front of her students and write using a full wall mirror, similar to a classroom. However, Layla does not extend this same "professionalism" to Alex – whose "teaching style is different" (Line 5), meaning that his teaching style did not match her previous schooling experiences, therefore she was unable to understand him.

The pedagogical strategies used by Mr. Manrique then coupled with the fact that his class was the only one taking place in a traditional classroom setting, fit with Layla's perception of what language teachers should be like and sound like. Because of this perception, Layla not only is seen participating and very engaged in Mr. Manrique's class, but my field notes and recordings show that she also took this class seriously by always completing her assignments, arriving on time every day, and striving to receive good scores in tasks and exams.

4.4.2 Interview with Mr. Manrique

After observing his classroom for 6 weeks, I interviewed Mr. Manrique to find out more about his pedagogy, classroom preparation, and his thoughts about teaching Spanish Language Learners. I asked Mr. Manrique about his routine to prepare for class and asked him what he considered was the easiest and best way to have his students understand the curriculum. Even when Mr. Manrique was unaware of using any particular pedagogical practices, his teaching ideology was evident as playing an important role in his planning. For instance, during his interview, Mr. Manrique mentioned in passing that he does not see his students as starting from "zero" but at about "0.5." Even though his students are native Kurdish and Arabic speakers and never had any prior Spanish-language exposure, Mr. Manrique acknowledged and valued that they already possessed letter recognition and alphabet knowledge thanks to speaking English. To him, this was important when planning, since he felt it gave him more flexibility to teach more advanced topics versus just letter recognition. Thus, in his interview, Mr. Manrique comes through as an instructor that acknowledges, values, and uses his students' prior knowledge to plan his own lessons. In addition, even though this is his first-time teaching language learners, he sees his students' ability to speak English as an asset and as something he can use to communicate and use to their advantage as he teaches them Spanish.

Later in the interview, based on my classroom field note observations, I asked Mr. Manrique about some of his preferred teaching and guiding strategies. I had written about asking his students direct questions, letting them participate and collaborate with each other, and rephrasing student responses as some of the strategies I observed and analyzed above. At the moment he could not recall any specific ones he used in class, however he mentioned that during his planning time, he asked himself questions that students might ask in class and tried to anticipate any potential problems that may arise during instruction. He emphasized that he focused on giving his students practical examples rather than just theory, something I did not pay attention to during my initial observations. Nevertheless, after re-watching his audio and video recordings, this last point came through when listening to some of

the classroom interactions, particularly in his collectivistic approach during instruction and in how he constantly encouraged student participation and allowed for collaboration amongst them.

Lastly, I asked Mr. Manrique about any feedback he might have received from students regarding his teaching and if he considered himself to be *professional*. At that point in time, he had received student feedback, but believed that regardless of the instructor, any learning his students achieved was because of their own motivation, not his.

As Mr. Manrique noted,

> Si el alumno quiere aprender, lo va a hacer. Aunque se quejen de los maestros, si aprendieron es porque tienen ganas de aprender.
>
> (*If the student wants to learn, they will. Even when they complain about the instructors, if they learned is because they had the will)*

This became an interesting response since he shifts the attention back to the student. Mr. Manrique, just like many other instructors, believe that student motivation is crucial in learning. He believes that regardless of the instructor, the social context surrounding the student or any preconceived notion they bring into the classroom, motivation is ultimately what allows language learners reach their educational goals.

5 Conclusion

Beliefs and attitudes of teachers and students play an important role in the pedagogical practices created and practiced within this educational environment involving language learners and language instructors. Thus, understanding the pedagogical and language practices in a language classroom can aid instructors in creating an environment that helps their students better adapt and learn a language.

This analysis shows how language teachers like Mr. Manrique use teaching strategies to guide their students' learning even if it is their first-time instructing language learners. In this chapter, it becomes evident that using these strategies allow Mr. Manrique to be perceived as a "*professional*" instructor by one of his students. Nevertheless, these strategies did not come across as obvious during my initial observation and could only be understood and evaluated in context. Thus, it is important to remember that teaching and learning are shaped by cultural traditions (Gee, 2008; Mercer, 1995; Rymes, 2016). People responsible for the construction of knowledge do it by using certain guiding strategies and language techniques. In the case of Mr. Manrique, using these strategies allowed for active student participation in class and created an environment of trust between students and their teacher inside and outside the classroom.

Looking at some of the pedagogical practices that language teachers use during instruction and seeing the way students respond to them can shed some light on how relationships are built in the classroom. Instructor-student relationships are important, yet establishing a good relationship takes time. However, when instructors

such as Mr. Manrique are able to successfully guide their students' knowledge, students are more prone to participate in class, even in foreign language learning environments. Over time, these types of guided interactions create the type of relationships that students often associate with professional or "good teachers." Therefore, understanding the pedagogical practices of language instructors gives us insight as to how individuals who perhaps do not share the same cultural backgrounds are still able to teach and advance the language goals of their students in countries where the research regarding refugee education, language ideologies, and language practices is limited in scope.

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Speaking Rights: Translanguaging and Integration in a Language Course for Adult Refugees in Uganda

Jonathan Marino and Chris Dolan

Abstract For decades, many countries have kept refugees in settlements separated from local populations, making 'integration' a chimera. More recently, however, governments and international organizations have advocated for greater refugee integration and framed education as key to this process. For adult refugees, education in the place of asylum often focuses most heavily on language learning. This chapter explores the Refugee Law Project's (RLP) English for Adults (EFA) program – the largest language education program for adult refugees residing in Uganda. This chapter describes how educators in the program enact a translanguaging pedagogy and explores what educators and students think about these non-traditional teaching practices. The chapter shows how educators take on the role of detective, co-learner, builder and transformer (Garcia O, The linguistic integration of adult migrants. Degruyter, 2017) to help students develop language skills and a sense of empowerment and belonging during their stay in Uganda. This chapter represents an initial effort – the first case study of one of the few adult refugee language courses in one of the world's largest refugee hosting countries. Future studies should build on these findings with more learner perspectives and quantitative data to trace how the EFA program impacts its learners.

Keywords Translanguaging · Forced migration · Refugees · Adult education · Language education · African studies

For decades, many countries have kept refugees in settlements separated from local populations, making 'integration' a chimera. More recently, however, governments and international organizations have advocated for greater integration. The 2016 New York Declaration on Refugees passed by the United Nations General Assembly

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states: "We recognize that refugee camps should be the exception and, to the extent possible, a temporary measure in response to an emergency." The Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) that supports implementation of the New York Declaration "promotes the inclusion of refugees in host communities" and aims to "enhance refugee self-reliance" in host communities. These global pronouncements frame education as key to the local integration of refugees. The CRRF argues: "When refugees gain access to education and labour markets, they can build their skills and become self-reliant, contributing to local economies and fueling the development of the communities hosting them." For adult refugees, education in the place of asylum often focuses most heavily on language learning. Host countries encourage – and increasingly compel – adult refugees to learn local languages to facilitate their integration and self-reliance.[1]

This chapter explores the Refugee Law Project's (RLP) English for Adults (EFA) program – the largest language education program for adult refugees residing in Uganda. The chapter describes how the teaching practices of facilitators[2] in the program align with the vision outlined by Ofelia Garcia in her 2017 article, *"Problematizing linguistic integration of migrants: the role of translanguaging and language teachers."* Garcia critiques adult migrant language education programs that seek merely to "ensure migrants speak the language of the political state into which they come" (p. 12). Instead, Garcia encourages programs to "give agency to minoritized speakers, decolonize linguistic knowledge, and engage all of us in the social transformations that the world so sorely needs today" (p. 24). She outlines four roles educators can take on to achieve this vision: detective, co-learner, builder and transformer.

This study finds that RLP EFA facilitators embody these four roles through a variety of creative practices as they engender a sense of confidence and belonging amongst their learners. RLP EFA facilitators illustrate how education programs for adult migrants, and more specifically to this study, adult *forced* migrants, can adopt critical and empowering pedagogies.[3] These findings build on previous studies, such as Park and Valdez (2008) who found that teachers in an English language course for Nepali refugee adults resettled in the United States used translanguaging pedagogy to increase learners' linguistic competence and enhance their sense of

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[1] For example, a recent Council of Europe study found "a growing tendency for member States to attach language requirements to the granting of citizenship, the right to residence, and sometimes the right to enter the country in the first place" (Thalgott, 2017, p. V).

[2] As discussed in the Findings section, RLP makes a point of referring to EFA educators as 'facilitators'. As such, the article uses this terminology as well.

[3] We adopt the term '*forced* migrant' to more accurately locate our discussion. Whereas 'migrant' is widely deployed to cover all forms of movement – and in the process erases specific conditions under which refugees, for example, move – *forced migrant* draws attention to some of the specific scenarios and conditions that may themselves have specific impact on how people do their translanguaging. Perhaps most importantly, forced migrants generally have far less control than migrants in general over when and where they move, as well as far less choice about if or when to return to their place of origin. This in turn influences perceptions about the value of language learning.

belonging and voice within the community. The present study, therefore, extends our understanding of translanguaging pedagogies in adult refugee language learning settings to a country of first arrival, Uganda, rather than a third party permanent settlement setting like the United States. Since only 0.3% of refugees are ever permanently resettled to a third country, this study offers insights for educators working in host countries where the majority of refugees reside (UNHCR, 2018).

1 Theoretical Framework

Garcia's vision for an educator of adult migrants arises out of translanguaging theory, which makes two fundamental changes to conventional theories of language learning. First, the verb form *languaging* shifts the emphasis from language as a distinct object that exists separately from its use, to languaging as "a social process constantly reconstructed in sensitivity to environmental factors" (Canagarajah, 2007, p. 94). Second, the prefix *trans* suggests a move beyond conventional notions of bilingualism that assume speakers possess bounded language systems that they draw on separately as they communicate. *Trans*-languaging instead views people as possessing a single linguistic repertoire that they draw on "without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named (and usually national and state) languages" (Otheguy, 2015, p. 626).

Translanguaging theory contrasts with 'additive' approaches to language education in which teaching a new language is seen as a linear process that begins from foundational grammar and vocabulary and builds in complexity. In an additive model, bilingual learners are thought to be more like two monolingual persons in one (Grosjean, 1982). Language learners can be discouraged from drawing upon and integrating their existing language capacities for fear that doing so will slow down the process of learning the new language. In translanguaging theory, by contrast, learners are seen as possessing a unitary linguistic repertoire that *already* mixes dialects, accents, and registers. While translanguaging theorists recognize the value of additive models in certain contexts, such as with young children who have yet to acquire significant prior vocabulary, they suggest that an additive model alone is often "inadequate to describe the linguistic complexity of the 21st century," particularly in areas with high degrees of language variation[4] (Garcia, 2009, p. 142).

Translanguaging theorists redirect attention towards language as it is practiced. They emphasize how speakers in an increasingly multilingual world commonly express themselves in multiple named languages and deploy diverse variants and registers within single named languages. "We are all translinguals," Canagarajah observes, "not native speakers of a single language in homogeneous environments" (Canagarajah, 2011: 8). A translanguaging pedagogy thus inverts power hierarchies in the language classroom. Instead of centering language as it is defined by a certain

[4] Uganda, for example, is home to over 65 spoken languages.

set of orthographic rules and calling upon learners to assimilate to these rules, translanguaging pedagogy calls upon the teacher to meet learners where they are and expand their linguistic repertoire in ways that also expand their practical freedom to communicate. "Because it gives agency to speakers," Garcia writes, "translanguaging is the most promising theory for the language education of adult migrants" (Garcia, 2017, p. 17).

Drawing on translanguaging theory, Garcia identifies five principles for a translanguaging pedagogy designed for adult migrant language learners (Garcia, 2017, p. 21). These are:

1. *Give migrants "voice" and help them to develop it.*
2. *Build on their strengths and interests.*
3. *Make sure that students are "doing" language, performing genuine and authentic tasks, not just that they "have" language structures.*
4. *Recognize the entanglements of migrants' worlds and words and use them in the process of finalizing the product that you intend.*
5. *Ensure that learners appropriate new features into an expanded repertoire that is their own, and not just that of a nation state or specific national group.*

Garcia uses these principles to develop the four aforementioned roles for a language teacher of adult migrants: the detective, co-learner, builder and transformer. As *detectives,* language educators are asked to discover who their adult learners are and how the learning process can meet their needs and capacities. No two adult learners can be subjected to an identical learning process since their linguistic repertoires, motivations for learning language, and contextual challenges will be unique. Garcia emphasizes that teachers' detective work "needs to happen in collaboration with others – other speakers in the class, other teachers, outside agencies, the community of speakers; and with other resources" (Garcia, 2017, p. 22). A detective can never succeed alone. Second, as *co-learners*, language educators of adult migrants surrender their authority as the only conduits to the correct form of language use. They learn from their adult learners and from the learning process as it evolves in response to the new knowledge generated in the classroom. Third, as *builders* language educators manifest what they learn into physical learning spaces, curricula, and experiences that bridge differences amongst learners and capture their interests and potential. Finally, as *transformers,* educators invite adult learners to connect their expanding linguistic competence to a critical engagement with the world, questioning existing discourses and inserting their own voice "to make meaning, free of constraint" (Garcia, 2017, p. 24).

Students of critical pedagogies will see overlap between Garcia's articulation of these four roles for educators of adult migrants and a Freirean critical pedagogy (1970, 1987, 1992). Freire critiqued what he called "banking" pedagogies that seek to transfer or 'deposit' knowledge into the student's mind. He advocated instead a "problem-posing" approach in which, through ongoing dialogue and investigation, the student and teacher collaboratively generate knowledge and meaning. In Freire's model, concerned primarily with print literacy, the educator is likewise called upon to be detective, co-learner, builder and transformer. One way to think about the

translanguaging pedagogy outlined by Garcia is as a variant of Freirean critical literacy pedagogy focused more squarely on processes of foreign language acquisition as opposed to print literacy.

Translanguaging theory and Garcia's model invite several lines of critique. One concern is the assumption that students want their knowledge of other languages to be visible in the classroom. A study by Charalambous et al. (2018) found that a teacher's effort to build on students' prior knowledge of Turkish in a primary school class in Greek Cyprus was met with resistance, since students did not want their minoritized identities emphasized in school. The authors conclude that in some societies "discourses of conflict create unfavorable ecologies" for translanguaging pedagogies (2016, p. 327). Jaspers (2018) questions translanguaging theorists' claims to 'transformation' and takes issue with the idea that any educational initiative on its own can "have an automatic effect on social inequality" (2018, p. 7). He notes that even translanguaging theorists admit it is still important for students to acquire language in the traditional additive sense that is usually reflected in school exams, thus potentially limiting the transformative potential that translanguaging theorists claim. Recognizing these critiques, it is important to ensure that translanguaging pedagogies are adopted in spaces with learners' assent, and that claims of impact are subjected to critical scrutiny.

2 Data and Methods

This study utilized multiple qualitative data collection methods to understand how RLP EFA facilitators conceptualize their teaching practice. Six semi-structured interviews were conducted – three with EFA facilitators and three with other RLP staff working in related RLP program areas (such as attorneys in the Access to Justice program and counselors in the Mental Health and Psychological Wellbeing program). Video interviews used Zoom or Jitsi due to the social distance limitations associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.[5] A survey instrument asking the same questions as the semi-structured interviews, as well as basic demographic questions, was distributed to 32 EFA facilitators working at 15 EFA teaching sites across seven districts in Uganda. The survey ensured that a diverse sample of EFA facilitators, crossing rural/urban, regional, and gender lines, could share their perspectives. The survey, disseminated using a Google Form, garnered 21 responses. After completing interviews and surveys, one Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was held over Zoom with ten current and former EFA refugee learners to understand how learners experience the EFA program. Finally, a range of documents and video materials produced by RLP about its English for Adults program were analyzed for themes related to EFA teaching practices and perceptions of the EFA program's impact on

[5] This study was originally scheduled to take place from March – July 2020 using in-person interviews and participant observation. COVID-19 lockdowns prevented in-person data collection. Thus, remote data collection strategies were adopted, including video interviews and a survey.

learners.[6] Data were collected from March to July 2020. All survey responses, interviews, Focus Group Discussions and documents included in the study were conducted in English and transcribed with the assistance of Otter.ai software. NVIVO X8 data analysis software was used to support an open-coding of key themes. Once it was observed that themes overlapped closely to the four roles for teachers of adult migrants as outlined by Garcia (2017), a second close-coding was conducted with codes oriented around Garcia's framework. Table 1 provides summary statistics on participants in the study.[7]

The authors' knowledge about the history, purpose and implementation of the EFA program influences data analysis. The lead author served as a volunteer EFA facilitator for 1 year in 2010 and is now a doctoral student. The second author directs the Refugee Law Project and was instrumental in starting the EFA program in 2007 and developing the program's 'Speak Your Rights' curriculum. While introducing bias, these positionalities also strengthen the researchers' access to and rapport with respondents. The goal of this particular study, therefore, is not to offer an objective evaluation of the EFA program's impact, but to understand how EFA facilitators and RLP staff conceptualize the program's purpose and design. The authors encourage future independent research that more directly assesses EFA's impact on learners.

3 EFA Program Background

The Refugee Law Project (RLP) is a project of the Makerere University School of Law in Kampala, Uganda. Established in 1999 to provide legal aid to refugees and asylum seekers, RLP now works with refugees and other forced migrants on a range of issues, including psycho-social support and counselling, English language lessons, help accessing medical care, housing, and education, skill-building in use of media, and spaces to organize advocacy and mutual support initiatives.

RLP pursues this work in Uganda, which currently hosts 1.4 million refugees, more than any other African country. Uganda is often lauded for its progressive refugee policies. Its 2006 Refugee Act and 2010 Refugee Regulations give refugees the freedom of movement and the right to employment, education and health, and to start a business (UNDP, 2017). Despite their well-deserved global praise, however, Uganda's refugee policies have not escaped scrutiny. Hovil notes that Ugandan "refugees in urban areas continue to be largely excluded from any support beyond a legal status, and sometimes cannot access even that" (2018, p. 13). The Ugandan government emphasizes refugee resettlement to third party countries or voluntary repatriation back to home countries, leaving "the idea of local integration and access

[6] Materials reviewed included RLP's annual reports from 2008 to 2019, and Maganya (2016), Mulondo (2018, 2020), and Waddimba (2016).

[7] Note – some genders of quoted respondents in the Findings section have been altered to protect participant identity. However, gender summary statistics in Table 1 are accurate.

Table 1 Demographics of facilitator survey sample

	# of respondents	% of total
Survey Sample		
Gender		
Male	13	61.9%
Female	8	38.1%
Non-conforming	0	0.0%
Role		
Facilitator	17	81%
EFA Team Leader	4	19%
Primary Office Location		
Kampala	6	28.6%
Nakivale	2	9.5%
Lamwo	4	19.1%
Kiryandongo	4	19.1%
Adjumani	1	4.8%
Kyangwali	4	19.1%
Immigration Status		
Ugandan National	13	61.9%
Refugee	7	33.3%
Ugandan National (former IDP)	1	4.8%
Country of Origin		
Uganda	14	66.7%
South Sudan	3	14.3%
Rwanda	1	4.8%
DR Congo	2	9.6%
Burundi	1	4.8%
Total	21	
Interview Sample		
Gender		
Male	3	50%
Female	3	50%
Role		
Facilitator	3	50%
Program Staff	3	50%
Office Location		
Kampala	6	100%
Immigration Status		
Ugandan National	6	100%
Country of Origin		
Uganda	6	100%
Total	6	

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

	# of respondents	% of total
Focus Group Discussion Sample		
Gender		
Male	5	45%
Female	5	55%
Role		
EFA Learner	10	100
Immigration Status		
Refugee	10	100%
Country of Origin		
Burundi	1	10%
D.R. Congo	4	40%
Eritrea	1	10%
Rwanda	1	10%
Somalia	2	20%
South Sudan	1	10%
Total	10	

to citizenship as a durable solution to the condition of forced displacement virtually abandoned" (Hovil, 2018, p. 13). Support for the linguistic integration of refugees in Uganda is scant. UNHCR Uganda makes no allocation for adult language or literacy courses in its education budget, and the Government of Uganda has allocated no funds for adult literacy for the last 5 years (Lanciotti, 2019, p. 31). According to Lanciotti, the Finnish Refugee Council (FRC) and UN Women are the only non-governmental organizations currently running adult literacy or language courses in Ugandan refugee settlements besides RLP (Lanciotti, 2019). RLP's EFA program, therefore, stands out as perhaps the only language course in Uganda that is offered to adult refugees in both settlements and urban areas.

RLP's EFA program launched in 2007 with the explicit remit to help refugee clients *speak and defend their rights* when interacting with immigration officers, landlords, medical professionals, employers, and other stakeholders with the power to violate one's rights. The program grew out of RLP's Access to Justice legal aid program and has intentionally remained there, rather than being separated into a stand-alone education program, so as to maintain the program's core focus on human rights protection. In the last 13 years the program has seen sustained growth. In 2012, EFA registered 828 learners and operated in Kampala only. By 2019 the program enrolled 5959 learners – 2618 male, 3330 female and 11 gender non-conforming –in 15 sites across seven districts in Uganda – Kampala, Isingiro, Kikuube, Kiryandongo, Lamwo, Adjumani and Yumbe. In total, the EFA program has, since 2007, enrolled over 20,000 refugees from a diverse array of countries, most notably (in terms of numbers) South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) but also including Rwanda, Burundi, Somalia, Eritrea, and Ethiopia. The preponderance of Congolese and South Sudanese learners adds complexity to

the task of language education, given that English is not an official or taught language in DRC and South Sudan has one of the lowest literacy rates in the world (around 35%), due to decades of civil conflict that have devastated formal education systems.[8]

As the EFA program has grown, RLP has continuously refined a custom-built 'Speak Your Rights' curriculum. In its present form, the curriculum comprises five leveled courses, each designed to take 15 weeks; completing all five levels takes 18 months.[9] Classes take place 3 days per week for 150 min each. According to the curriculum, "The study time or schedule is determined through a dialogue between the learners and the facilitators depending on different key factors that may support or affect the learning process."[10] In total the course involves 187.5 classroom hours. To proceed from one level to the next, learners are assessed on their class attendance, performance in debates and other performance-based activities, and a final exam. A learner is expected to achieve a 50% pass mark in order to proceed to the next level, although the program is flexible in this expectation. The curriculum states, "Anyone below the pass mark is advised to repeat that same level. However, this also depends on the learners' learning needs. This is because adult learners come to a learning environment with different learning interests and needs." Refugee adults over the age of 15 are invited to sign up for the course during three-day open enrollment periods held twice per year.[11]

4 Findings

This section draws from survey responses, interviews, a Focus Group Discussion and related documents and videos to analyze how RLP EFA facilitators enact roles associated with a translanguaging pedagogy during their teaching practice.

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[8] UNESCO reports the literacy rate for adults 15 years or older is 77.04% for the DRC (2016) and 34.52% for South Sudan (2018), although these statistics should be taken with caution given the difficulty of data collection in conflict-affected areas. See http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/cd and http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/ss

[9] As of 2021 a 'Level 6' is being piloted in collaboration with Edinburgh University and American University in Beirut. This serves as a bridging program for learners who have completed level 5 and are interested in pursuing (re)entry into tertiary education, whether in Uganda or elsewhere.

[10] These quite long class durations are in response to the logistics of travel in many locations, not least in Kampala, which make shorter classes not cost-effective for many learners.

[11] EFA demand regularly exceeds supply. For example, during both enrollment periods in Kampala in 2019, enrollment reached capacity by the end of the first day of the three-day sign-up period. Demand is also expressed by other stakeholders; lawyers engaged in detention monitoring visits, for example, report being asked by prison authorities whether EFA can be brought to prison inmates.

4.1 How Facilitators Act as Detectives

While facilitators emphasized that instruction in EFA is heavily guided by the 'Speak Your Rights' curriculum, they also described how they continuously adapt this curriculum to the particular needs and capabilities of learners. Communication between EFA facilitators and staff from RLP's varied program areas is key to this adaptation process. EFA facilitators play a connective role within RLP, inviting staff across the legal, mental health services, and advocacy teams to inform what topics are addressed in the EFA curriculum. As RLP attorneys, mental health counselors and gender-based violence and protection officers work with their refugee clients, they learn about specific issues their clients face and make recommendations to EFA facilitators for what to address in class. One facilitator described:

> We see new things coming down, and you're seeing refugees affected by that, we realize that oh, I think we need to address this issue in class. So we keep amending the curriculum to suit the current context.

As an example of this process, several facilitators described how an environmental unit was added to the EFA curriculum after attorneys saw an increase in refugees being arrested for trespassing onto private land to cut firewood. This collaboration embodies Garcia's observation that "teachers' detective work needs to happen in collaboration with others – other speakers in the class, other teachers, outside agencies, the community of speakers; and with other resources" (Garcia, 2017, p. 22).

RLP also periodically hosts structured venues in which EFA facilitators and other RLP staff talk directly with learners about their needs and interests. For example, at the outset of each 15-week course cycle, RLP dedicates one EFA class session as an Orientation. During Orientation, a staff member from each of RLP's program areas explains to learners the services that are available at RLP and takes questions. Facilitators also lead class discussions to better understand the learning needs and priorities of that particular class so they can design tailored lessons accordingly. In 2018 RLP hosted a day-long event in its Kampala office to recognize International Literacy Day. Refugee learners and RLP staff engaged in a series of open dialogues about ways to make the EFA program more attuned to learners' needs. Out of that event RLP produced a report entitled "After the English for Adults Course, What Next?" that listed recommendations for RLP, such as developing an EFA alumni database to facilitate networking, and forging closer links to vocational and higher education programs for EFA graduates.[12]

Facilitators also emphasized how they engage in detective work to understand psycho-social wellbeing and life challenges that pose barriers to learner success. They described how all EFA facilitators undertake basic training in mental health screening and make referrals to the RLP Mental Health and Psychological Wellbeing Programme. As one facilitator stated:

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[12] This report on RLP's 2018 International Literacy Day event is available here: https://www.refugeelawproject.org/index.php/blog-menu/a2j-blog/literacy-and-skills-development-on-a-continuum-the-english-for-adults-learners-point-of-view

> As a facilitator I am able to identify a learner with a problem and schedule a meeting with them individually to talk about what is disturbing them. We provide first aid counselling to them and refer them according to the problem. I have referred a number of them to be screened by the screening team of RLP.

Another facilitator described how RLP's Kampala office opened a childcare service after discovering that childcare support was causing learner absences and failures to progress. In one refugee settlement, EFA facilitators engaged in detective work to understand why a course was filled only with women. Rather than try to engineer a certain level of gender parity, facilitators first sought to understand the cause of the disparity from the learners' perspective. They found that it was not the norm of the people residing in the refugee settlement to have men and women sitting together in a public space. So, EFA facilitators decided to offer a separate Level 1 course for men in that settlement, keeping higher level courses open to all genders. The men's course soon filled. Interestingly, men started attending the mixed gender Level 1 course as well.[13]

4.2 How Facilitators Engage in Co-learning

A clear illustration of EFA facilitators' co-learning alongside refugee learners is their commitment to referring to themselves as 'facilitators' rather than more common terms like 'teacher' or 'instructor'. The EFA 'Speak Your Rights' curriculum describes the reasoning behind this decision:

> A learning facilitator is a helper, guide, moderator, reference collaborator, learning partner and assistant. The choice of this term reflects an assumption that the facilitator has a lot to learn from his/her 'learners' and that the relationship between facilitator and learner is one of mutual learning…. The facilitator should be ready or able to learn from the learners too and all the learners should be taken to be equal to each other.

This description makes plain that EFA facilitators view themselves as co-learners who "have a lot to learn from" those in the class.

Garcia suggests that teachers who consider themselves co-learners "engage their adult students in representing and producing their worlds…Some of the ways in which this might be achieved are: interviewing each other; asking students to share and write their life stories; and producing video-documentaries with the students" (2017, p. 23). EFA facilitators described many instances in which they use this type of life storytelling as a pedagogical tool. One facilitator described:

> We have a day when we share testimonies as part of our public speaking practice. The facilitator shares his testimony growing up during the Kony insurgency and they feel free to talk. We avoid talking about gruesome murders and bad images like blood and panga[14] attacks.

[13] When asked why men also started to attend the mixed gender class, respondents weren't yet clear why this was and were exploring ways to better understand this phenomenon.

[14] Machete

> We stick to the healing side of storytelling in English as all learners have a story to tell and they trust us with it.

This quotation demonstrates how facilitators are able to offer deep empathy to their students since, in many cases, RLP EFA facilitators are themselves refugees or Uganda nationals who have experienced internal displacement. The "Kony insurgency" in the quotation above refers to the civil war between the Ugandan government and Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) that lasted more than 20 years and displaced over two million Ugandans residing in the northern part of the country.[15] Co-learning in EFA is evident, as facilitators continue to develop their own skills and work through their own trauma, even as they support their learners to do the same. As one facilitator described:

> Without going far, I am one of the EFA learners who struggled with English till I got all the four English skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and graduated from EFA in mid 2011. From there, I regained confidence and started looking for a job. In the process, I got this offer of an EFA Facilitator since I had a passion for teaching even back in my country. After a short time, I was able to go for an Undergraduate degree and now I am doing my master's degree just because of EFA. Examples like this are many.

One facilitator admitted being surprised at how many EFA learners have been able to become facilitators themselves: "You find someone who's later able to come up and also facilitate…They say, 'I'm a learner, but I'm now able to also teach.'"

4.3 How Facilitators Act as Builders

Garcia's translanguaging pedagogy calls for educators of adult migrants to go beyond understanding their students' lives as detectives and co-learners. The educator must draw on their understanding and proactively *build* curricula, spaces and experiences that enable learners "to participate in various ways according to their interests and abilities" (2017, p. 23). The EFA curriculum calls for learning environments that align with Garcia's vision. It states:

> The learning environment should be one that empowers and allows every adult learner to freely participate in the learning…this means that the learners in the learning environment should be able to feel respected, empowered and involved.

Garcia recommends that teachers build Home Language Groups in which "students are grouped according to home languages or languages that they understand, to ensure they understand the language class" (2017, p. 18). Such home language grouping is common practice in EFA classrooms. As one EFA facilitator described:

> We try to do a mix. We facilitate in English but we also make sure for those who have not understood, we use those EFA learners who know a little…for example I can ask someone who knows French to translate or Arabic or Kirundi, like that. So you find the process can

[15] For more information on the legacy of the LRA in Uganda, see Christopher Dolan's *Social Torture: The Case of Northern Uganda, 1986–2006*: Berghahn Books.

> go slowly by slowly. It reduces the speed at which we deliver classes. We try to make sure we bring them on board.

This statement demonstrates facilitators' openness to change and ability to adapt instruction. Another facilitator described a similar language-grouping approach, but also emphasized the importance of building friendships amongst learners in the home-language groups. The facilitator stated:

> I identify potential learners that can help me teach others. In a class like Level 1 where I facilitate, there are learners that know a bit of English, some that are so active in class. I use them to help out those that are a bit weak and find it hard to understand English. I help them befriend one another most especially those from the same country of origin.

EFA facilitators aim to build an English learning experience aimed not at getting refugees to learn 'proper' English, but at enabling them to engage in the aspects of English that serve their immediate purposes in a setting where English, along with Swahili, is an official language. Immediate purposes identified by facilitators include using English at the police station, in a courtroom, at the market, and at the doctor's office. Facilitators were cognizant of English as a colonial language in Uganda and of the complexities associated with teaching English rather than one of the more than 65 other languages spoken in Uganda. Facilitators described that their decision to teach English is rooted in their primary mission – to enable refugees to 'speak their rights' in the spaces where they are most likely to have their rights denied or ignored.

One example of this practical focus is the EFA curriculum guidance for Week 8 of the Level 2 course. Figure 1 indicates the topic for this lesson: Question Forms ("Wh" words). The lesson then presents examples of "Wh" question forms that focus on refugee documentation issues. The Learning Outcomes for the lesson combine English language content knowledge with awareness of the identification documents that a refugee is entitled to in Uganda, and how one can secure these documents. The lesson recommends that facilitators involve learners in the lesson through dialogue or a class brainstorming activity.

In the Focus Group Discussion, one EFA learner highlighted this particular lesson as his favorite, since it helped him understand exactly what identification he was entitled to as a refugee and to dispel rumors he had heard from people trying to sell him refugee documentation. "This one opened my eyes and helped me to navigate well, helping me know where to go and what to do and what am I entitled to and what are my obligations," he stated.

EFA facilitators' efforts to build empowering learning spaces is evident not only in the elements of English language they emphasize, but also in the space they give learners to express themselves and bridge differences in age, race, gender and experiences with classmates. EFA facilitators regularly host class discussions and debates on topics of interest to learners. For example, the curriculum's Level 1, Week 6 lesson calls for a classroom debate around the issue of freedom of speech and association. In the Focus Group Discussion, when asked to recount their most memorable experience in EFA, learners named classroom debates most frequently. One FGD participant stated: "The enjoyable moment was when we learned how to

WEEK 8

Topic: QUESTION FORMS ("Wh" words)

Sub Topics: with focus on refugee documentation and Identifications

- What: are the different documents refugees need

- Where: do you get them from or Which: office is responsible
- When: do you get them
- How: do you get the different documents?
- Who: is responsible at different offices
-
-

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the topic, learners must be able to;

- Understand and know how to ask questions in English
- Know when to use a particular question form
- Read and write simple question sentences related to the "wh" words.
- Generally know which identification documents they need and how to get them

Methodology: Dialogues, Brain storming, lectures, group work, notes taking, demonstration, Etc.

Facilitator's roles

1. Facilitate learners' ability to read, write and speak through the different introductory question forms
2. Give learners exercise of reading and writing related to question forms
3. Help learners to learn reading, writing and listening to dialogues or conversations concerning the topic and its vocabulary
4. Organize dialogues like on officer-client transactions basing on tenses
5. Assess learners' comprehension of the topic

Key learning Aids: demonstration or illustration charts

Fig. 1 Refugee Law Project EFA Curriculum Guidance for Level 2, Week 8

speak without fear and to be confident during the debate." Another reflected on how debates helped her bring her speaking on par with her ability to write. "You know that you know how to write. But when it comes to debate, it is that time that would be a good occasion for those who don't know how to speak. You have to start speaking, learning how you can learn from different stories and to listen and speak." Another recalled a debate organized between EFA learners and RLP staff. "It was so interesting to see how learners can discuss and debate, opposing the EFA staff. And it was very good because we had to be confident of what we stated and showed them that we can beat them or that what they stated has a good fruit." A fourth FGD participant recalled a debate organized between EFA learners and staff at another Ugandan NGO. "In that debate I also got to know many friends and up to now, the friendship continues." These reflections illustrate how debates build social relationships and self-confidence amongst EFA learners even as they improve learners' speaking skills.

4.4 How Facilitators Support Transformation

Finally, the role of transformer, Garcia argues, "is the role that makes teachers who take up translanguaging most effective in teaching adult migrants" (2017, p. 23). The transforming educator helps learners develop not only the technical skills of communication (e.g. speaking, listening, reading and writing) but also the critical awareness to understand how words relate to the larger society, and particularly, to entrenched structures of power – what Paulo Freire called 'reading the word and the world' (Freire & Macedo, 1987). EFA facilitators made clear that they strive to cultivate critical awareness amongst learners even as they teach practical language skills. One facilitator summarized the EFA program this way:

> The EFA program gives the tools for refugees, asylum seekers, deportees, and all the people we work with to get to a place of expressing themselves and having their own voice and having agency on the issues that concern them. And Uganda being a country that has English as the primary language of conducting business, it is helpful for them to be able to express themselves in the official language.

Facilitators provided numerous examples of classroom pedagogy that aims to cultivate English language skills while also creating space for learners to take social action, using their voice to make change. The aforementioned environmental component added to the curriculum is one such example. This initiative grew out of detective work by the RLP legal team that refugees faced increasing discrimination from local populations and arrest by police for cutting firewood illegally. Working with the legal team, EFA facilitators built lessons that incorporated Ugandan laws and norms on environmental issues and created space for refugees to share their own experiences and challenges. Facilitators then went beyond the classroom to engage learners in planting over 100,000 trees across three districts of Uganda. As one facilitator described, "We decide with the learners which trees shall we plant.

Then we work together, prepare the land, plant the trees, take care them, water them, all as part of the English language learning."

RLP also involves EFA learners in its Media for Social Change program area that, according to its stated mission, "strives to amplify the voices of forced migrants by including them in conversations and debates on issues affecting their lives, and empowering them to become effective advocates for their own rights and wellbeing." In a blog post, RLP staff member Dieudonné Maganya recounted a video advocacy training held for EFA learners:

> In March 2016, announcements were made targeting graduates from our English for Adults unit…By engaging the EFA graduates, we wanted to build a linkage between the Media for Social Change program and EFA…The ultimate purpose was to impart refugees with a 'strategic skill' and tools they could use to speak and communicate their rights (Maganya, 2016).

Two of the documentaries produced by the Media for Social Change program – *The New Me* and *We Shall Rise Again* – focus on EFA learners sharing their stories.[16] In *We Shall Rise Again*, for example, Maniriho Ignatiana, now an EFA facilitator herself, explains how she was turned away at police stations multiple times when trying to report a case because she could not speak English: "I wanted to ask them why I was rejected…the officer said 'that is enough' because I'm wasting his time."

Both facilitators and learners described how the social action and advocacy work conducted within the EFA curriculum lead learners to continue such work outside the classroom. One facilitator described how EFA learners advocate for themselves in court, thereby increasing their chances of being granted asylum:

> We were facing so many cases of rejection of asylum seekers because at times the interpreter will interpret the way he or she has understood. So we were seeing very many cases rejected on grounds of wrong interpretation. Around such people enrolled for the EFA course, they would speak for themselves and explain the circumstances that caused their flight. And some of them have been granted status because of their communication.

An example of this emerged during the Focus Group Discussion when one EFA learner described how his ability to achieve formal refugee status in Uganda was delayed by 4 years after an interpreter made a mistake in translating his story in an asylum application. "That's why I'm saying the English is very important," he stated.

EFA learners have also gone on to play leading roles within their communities and families, helping resolve disputes and raise issues with RLP staff or with duty bearers such the Police, UNHCR or the Office of the Prime Minister.[17] In the Focus Group Discussion, one EFA learner who is now an interpreter at RLP described how she is able to use her position to advocate for refugee rights. "It's because of the language that we can now advocate for people, raise their voices and also tell them what is their rights…We can transmit the right information to them so they can live

[16] To view *The New Me* or *We Shall Rise Again*, visit https://www.refugeelawproject.org/index.php/media-center/video-advocacy-documentaries

[17] In Uganda, the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) has jurisdiction over refugee issues in Uganda and responsibility for implementing the Refugees Act.

well and upgrade their integration level," she stated. Another EFA learner in the Focus Group Discussion described how he was able to use his English to defend his uncle's right to medical treatment after he experienced a severe accident. The film *The New Me* describes how Mugaruka David, a Congolese refugee who earned a Master's in Human Rights from Makerere University after completing the EFA course, founded a community-based organized called Human Rights Defender Solidarity Network to train human rights defenders in the community.

EFA's transformative role is also apparent in the sense of belonging and healing that learners describe the program providing them. In the Focus Group Discussion, one EFA learner recounted how his fellow EFA learners and facilitators supported him after he suffered an accident. "EFA is like a family. My friends from EFA collected money. They came to visit me [in the hospital]. They helped me so much." Later in the Focus Group Discussion the same learner described how he had previously felt isolated in Uganda but, "today I can be free when I am going out to speak and talk about everything." In a recent article, EFA facilitator Apollo Mulondo argued that EFA should be seen as a form of psychosocial therapy for forced migrants. He writes, "I have realized that…learners have benefited with enormous, though intangible, mental and psychosocial benefits" (Mulondo, 2020). Mulondo quotes one of his former EFA learners telling a similar story as described above:

> I went for counseling somewhere but little changed and later [I] joined EFA. I got a new family since the classes have different people…I know they cannot fully replace the family I lost, but I find myself pushed to come to school so that I meet and interact with them. I now feel I am safe with my classmates and I have a family (father, mother, siblings and others) again. I have even regained my identity, all the energy and I am now working to at least meet my basic needs because of EFA.

Mulondo concludes that "more efforts should be put in place to ensure in-depth research is done to have more concrete and scientifically proven findings" about the role of the EFA model of language learning and mental health outcomes. Indeed, this link between language learning and mental health seems a promising area of future research.

As EFA facilitators strive to transform their learners' lives, they also help to transform RLP as an organization. Facilitators and staff members repeatedly observed how EFA, one of the smallest and least funded program areas within RLP, has a ripple affect across the organization. It sparks collaboration across program areas as staff work to inform the EFA curriculum; it reinforces the work of the Mental Health and Psychosocial Wellbeing program; it helps attorneys in the Access to Justice program work more closely with their refugee clients; and, it gives the Media for Social Change advocacy team an engaged group of refugee leaders to work alongside. One RLP staff member described the EFA program's effect on RLP as "alchemy" in the way a comparatively low investment of resources catalyzes so many mutually reinforcing transformations across the organization.

5 Conclusion

This chapter described how educators in a language education program for refugee adults enact a translanguaging pedagogy and explored what these educators and their students think about the impact of these non-traditional teaching practices. Through multiple forms of qualitative data collection, the study found that facilitators in the RLP's EFA program take on the role of detective, co-learner, builder and transformer as outlined by Garcia (2017) in diverse and creative ways. The study also found that facilitators and learners alike feel the program has significant impacts, not only on processes of language acquisition, but also on learners' sense of empowerment and belonging during their stay in Uganda. This study represents an initial effort – the first case study to document the pedagogical approach of one of the few adult refugee language courses in one of the world's largest refugee hosting countries. Future studies should build on these findings with more learner perspectives, participant observation in EFA classrooms, and quantitative data to trace how the EFA program impacts its learners.

Despite these limitations, this study offers an important window into a language program for adult refugees in a country of first arrival – the setting where the vast majority of the world's refugees reside. The approach of the Refugee Law Project English for Adults program stands in stark contrast to what Doris Warriner has called "Band-Aid" approaches to refugee education and integration that "assimilate recently arrived refugees in as short a time as possible and often provide few of the skills, resources and connections that refugees and immigrants need to become active, contributing members of local communities" (Warriner, 2007, p. 356). RLP's EFA program seeks, as the definition of the word 'integration' implies, to render its learners *whole*. By employing a translanguaging pedagogy in which facilitators engage in detective, co-learning, building and transformational work, and by enmeshing language instruction within a larger array of legal aid, advocacy, mental health counseling and social networking supports, the RLP EFA program shows what is possible when the Band-Aid approach to refugee integration is ripped away and a robust healing process is allowed to take its place.

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