Languages, Literacies, and Resources of Refugee Communities in the Changing World

Editors
Bee Chamcharatsri
Aijuan Cun
University of New Mexico
Chatwara Suwannamai Duran
University of Houston

Refugee families brought various linguistic, literacy, social, and cultural capitals to their new home environments; these assets are often invisible in public discourse, primarily due to differences between their homelands and the host countries. Very often, the stories of the communities are represented based on only parts of their life experiences or even misrepresented in mainstream discourses. The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in additional deficit-based storylines related to the communities. For example, many refugee organizations reported that refugee children were not able to attend schools due to the school closure (Clayton, 2020) As the UN refugee agency (2022) reports, most of the refugee individuals and families were not able to address basic needs during the pandemic. In this changing time, we ask the questions: What kind of languages and literacy practices work and what doesn't? Whose languages are valued or marginalized?

This edited volume seeks to present stories, practices, and research focusing on the literacies and language learning practices, which can be represented in multiple modalities, in refugee communities worldwide. This work draws upon the sociocultural perspectives on *literacies*, which emphasize the wide range and multiple kinds of literacy that bilinguals or multilinguals used in their real-life contexts. It aims to extend what is known in the field of literacy and language learning in traditional K-12 grade school settings by inviting multimodal literacies and language practices of young children to adults in various circumstances.

Some guiding questions but not limited to include:

- How can researchers ethically engage refugee communities in research projects?
- How do teachers teach refugee students the target language and maintain their home languages in the classrooms?
- How can refugee students' languages be assessed in authentic ways in a formal schooling context?
- In what ways are refugee individuals or families engaging in literacies and language learning practices in their communities?
- How can we incorporate refugee students' home language and cultures into our classrooms?
- How can we invite refugee students to share their stories related to their linguistic, literacy, and cultural capitals in a host country?

- How do they maintain their heritage languages and literacies while living in a host country?

For the narrative/creative works chapters, we are looking for personal or anecdotal stories of refugee students and/or adults regarding their language learning within everyday life experiences. This submission to this section does not have to follow academic genre traditions. We are looking for stories written by members in the refugee communities, researchers, scholars, practitioners, social workers, and community organizations who are working with refugee families and making efforts to advocate their voices in a host country. The narrative/creative works chapters can include narratives, photographs, verbatim, drawings, recipes, or other pictorial mediums that represent literacy practices in home and community contexts in different languages. The narrative/creative works chapters will honor/credit the names of both story owner and submitter (Story by… Submitted by …). Some guiding questions for the narratives/creative works are:

- What language learning strategies have you found helpful in helping you navigate the new host countries?
- How do you keep the traditions of your home country in the new environment?
- What advice would you want people in the new host countries to know about?
- How can people in the new host countries help you adjust in the new environment?

The proposed book will potentially include two major parts: (1) full-length research-based chapters (4,500-7,000 words per article) including references in APA format, tables, and figures and (2) narrative/story-based chapters (1,500-2,000 words or 1-5 pages). The editors encourage contributors to include home languages and English in their chapters. There is no specific geographic region required for this volume. We are hoping to explore cultural and linguistic possibilities for empowering refugee communities to express their languages, literacies, identities, and cultures that are often invisible in public discourses in the global context.

Submission Procedure
To submit a proposal, please submit your abstract of a full-length article or creative works (up to 500-word) and author information (i.e., name, institution, title, contact information) via Google form (link).

Please contact us if you have any questions: Bee Chamcharatsri (bee@unm.edu), Aijuan Cun (aijuancun@unm.edu), and/or Chatwara Suwannamai Duran (cduran4@uh.edu).

The Proposed Timeline
March 12th, 2023: Submission of Abstract for full length articles/creative works
March 15th, 2023: Chapter/creative works invitation
~~April 15th~~ June 15th, 2023: Chapter/creative works drafts due

Spring 2024: Expected publication