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REFUGEE EDUCATION AND MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

Tensions in Theory, Policy, and Practice

ABSTRACT

This chapter analyzes the under-explored issue of medium of instruction for refugees, focusing on South Sudanese refugees in Uganda and Burundian refugees in Tanzania as illustrative cases through which to explore language dynamics. Our review reveals a key tension in refugee education between the importance of home language instruction for literacy and learning and the inclusion of refugee learners in national school systems in host countries to facilitate school access and persistence. We argue that policies and practices reflecting these two divergent bodies of research have implications for refugees' learning, identity development, and sense of belonging. We offer a framework for conceptualizing socially just policies and practices for refugees in national school systems, taking into account the benefits of both home language instruction and inclusion in national systems and considering political and financial feasibility. Our review has implications for policy, practice, and future research related to medium of instruction and refugee education.

Sura hii inachambua suala la lugha ya maelekezo, lisilozingatiwa vizuri kati ya wakimbizi, likilenga wakimbizi wa South Sudan nchini Uganda na wakimbizi wa Burundi nchini Tanzania kama mifano itakayoonyesha uchunguzi wa mienendo ya lugha katika elimu ya watoto wakimbizi. Kazi yetu inaonyesha changamoto kubwa katika elimu ya wakimbizi kati ya umuhimu wa mfumo wa lugha ya nyumbani kwa ujuzi wa kusoma na kuandika na ujifunzaji na ujumuishaji wa wanafunzi wa wakimbizi katika mifumo ya shule ya kitaifa katika nchi za wenyeji ili kuwezesha ufikiaji wa shule kwa urahisi. Tunajadili kuwa sera za lugha katika mifumo hii miwili huleta mvutano kwa ufunzaji wa lugha kwa wakimbizi, utambulishajo na hisia ya kukubaliwa katika sehemu. Tunapendekeza sera zinazokubalika kwa wakimbizi walio katika mifumo ya shule za kitaifa, kuzingatia faida za mafundisho ya lugha ya nyumbani na ujumishaji katikia mfumo wa kitaifa na pia kuzingatia uwezekano wa kisiasa na kifedha utakaoruhusu ufundishaji wa mifumo hii miwili. Kazi yetu ina changamoto katika sera na utafiti ujao unaohusiana na mfumo wa lugha ya ufundishaji na elimu ya wakimbizi.

INTRODUCTION

Jean Claude[1] is a refugee from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) who fled with his family to Uganda when he was six years old. He describes the linguistic challenges he faced as a child in Uganda and that he faces today as an adult as he seeks to contribute to education work in DRC. In an interview conducted in December 2017, Jean Claude explained,

> we had a lot of dropout of school children. Most of the time we think it's because of the poverty…but of course we cannot undermine the fact that even that medium of instruction may have played a big role for the children to drop out of school.

In Jean Claude's case, he managed to learn enough English in the refugee camp in Uganda where his family first settled to progress through school, and he describes his persistence as a "narrow escape" from the path that so many of his classmates followed. Today, as one of few secondary school-educated Congolese refugees in Uganda, he wishes he could return to DRC to support education development there. However, that return is currently closed to him because he has lost his skills in the international (French) and home languages (Kinyabwisha and Kiswahili) that would make it possible. The French skills he developed through his early schooling in DRC have been replaced by English and in his original home languages, he sometimes finds himself at a loss for words. Although he would like to live and work in DRC, which he still refers to as "home," having lived for so many years in Uganda, he doubts whether he belongs in DRC now because, "you can't say they are your people if you don't speak their language."

Jean Claude's example sheds light on the experiences of millions of young people who pursue education in settings of conflict, and whose learning, identity development, and sense of belonging are influenced by the constellation of languages they encounter in exile, including the language(s) of instruction in school (Dryden-Peterson, 2006; Reddick & Dryden-Peterson, 2018; see also, UNHCR, 2019).

Based on our review of the literature, we have identified a key tension in medium of instruction (MOI) policies and practices related to refugees. On the one hand, research in the field of *language-in-education* policy and practice supports mother tongue-based multilingual education (MTB MLE). In this model, schools use home languages that students understand best in the early years of schooling, and continue doing so alongside a structured introduction of international languages like French or English thereafter if required by the school system. MTB MLE supports interlinguistic transfer between the language(s) students are most comfortable with and a foreign language so that reading skills are taught once in the home language and can be transferred to the foreign language (Benson, 2016; Heugh, 2011; UNESCO, 2013). Language-in-education research also demonstrates the negative outcomes for learning and school persistence, as well as for socioemotional wellbeing, for students who are "submerged" at school in languages they do not understand (Benson, 2002).

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[1] Jean Claude is a pseudonym. We have used names that are commonly used by refugee students in schools, which are the names our refugee research participants generally present themselves with when interacting with us in school settings. We recognize and point out that these names are European-origin names that students use to represent themselves in school while usually disconnected from the names they use in home and community spaces.

On the other hand, research and policy work in the fields of *international education* and *refugee studies* highlight benefits to refugee learners of being included in national school systems in the host country and the related long-term barriers that learners face if segregated into refugee-only schools. For refugees, inclusion in national schools can increase educational access and persistence, and allow refugees to obtain formal certification of school completion (UNESCO, UNHCR, & Global Monitoring Report, 2016). Yet including refugees in national schools usually means that refugees are submerged in unfamiliar languages of the host country (Dryden-Peterson, 2016).

In this chapter, we explore this tension in the literature, building on our review to develop a framework that can inform language planning within educational settings serving refugees. We review literature related to the relationship between medium of instruction and key outcomes for children, including learning, identity development, and sense of belonging, with implications for children's futures, as illustrated by Jean Claude. We also review literature from international education and refugee studies about the increasingly favored approach of including refugee learners in national school systems, and the implications this may have for the MOI in schools attended by refugees. Finally, we supplement this review with six semi-structured interviews conducted with key informants in December 2017, all of whom work with refugees, and some of whom are former refugees themselves. Thereafter, we consider the illustrative cases of refugee learners who flee South Sudan and Burundi, their countries of origin, for Uganda and Tanzania, respectively, two host countries. These illustrative cases allow us to apply our review of the literature to contextual examples where decisions about education and language policy and practice for refugees are made. Finally, we propose a conceptual framework to illuminate key issues related to MOI policies, practices, and research connected to refugee students, a framework that can support the development of socially just language-in-education policies and practices for refugee and national students alike.

Table 1. Key terms related to medium of instruction in refugee contexts

Home language(s) (country of origin): These are one or more languages spoken at home and/or in the community in the country of origin (home and community languages are not always the same).	Among South Sudanese refugee students in Uganda, the primary home languages are Kakwa, Pojulu, Madi and Lotuku (Save the Children, 2017a (Save the Children, 2017). Among Burundian refugee students in Tanzania, the home language (country of origin) is Kirundi.
Dominant language (country of origin): This is usually a single official language used as MOI in upper primary school, secondary school, and university. This language is usually foreign for children: they rarely interact with it in their everyday, non-school environments and it tends to be linguistically distinct from the home language(s).	In South Sudan, the official MOI is English. Arabic may also be used in schools that used Arabic before independence and to which Arabic-speaking migrants and refugees may return. It is thus difficult to predict what percentage of South Sudanese refugees of school-going age in Uganda would have previously been exposed to English or Arabic as dominant languages taught at school in the country of origin (UNICEF, 2016a). For refugees from Burundi, the dominant language (country of origin) is French.
Home language (host country) *[national students], which is also a* ***foreign language (host country)*** *for refugee students.* This is the language spoken at home and in the community in the host country, where refugees live after having been displaced. In some cases, the early years of school also take place in this language. For refugee students, this language tends to be unfamiliar and must be learned for early primary school and social integration, as must the dominant language, discussed below.	In Uganda, the host country home language(s) to which South Sudanese refugee children are exposed in the regions where they reside (which for them are *foreign languages)* include Ma'di and Nyoro, among others. Ugandan education policy requires host country home language instruction in the first three years of primary school, with transition to dominant language instruction (English) in grade four, meaning that refugee students in national schools must learn an unfamiliar home language and then a dominant language to participate in class. In Tanzania, Burundian refugees live in refugee camps, which they are not permitted to leave. Were they to leave, the language that they would encounter in the community would be Swahili, a regional language spoken in Tanzania and much of East Africa and a foreign language for them.
Dominant language (host country): This is the language that is used during at least part of schooling in the host country, often also a national or official language. Children rarely interact with this language in their everyday, non-school environments and this language tends to be linguistically distinct from the home language(s).	In Uganda, the host country dominant language that South Sudanese refugee children and Ugandan national children are exposed to in school is English. In Tanzania, refugee children do not yet attend Tanzanian national schools; if they were to, the host country dominant language they would be exposed to in school would be English, which Tanzanian students also learn in in the later years of primary school and early secondary school.

METHODOLOGY

We address the question: What are the implications of MOI policies and practices for refugee learners attending school in host countries? We identified academic and grey literature using search terms "medium of instruction" "language of instruction" "mother tongue instruction" "teacher training" "refugee education" "refugee

teachers" and "refugee integration." We integrated literature from a variety of fields including literacy and early childhood development; refugee studies; and socio-, applied, and educational linguistics. We limited our literature search to publications between Cummins' (1981) seminal work in language and learning and the present. Our analysis includes inferences drawn from over 200 individual documents and online sources. This review of literature was supplemented by six semi-structured interviews conducted in December 2017 with key informants, all of whom work with refugees on language-related issues with United Nations agencies and with NGOs, and some of whom are former refugees themselves. From our review and interviews, we identify three dimensions of implications for MOI policies and practices for refugee learners: learning, identity development, and sense of belonging.

We chose to include illustrative examples from Uganda and Tanzania, two countries in East Africa, in order to apply our review of the literature to contexts where decisions about education and language policy and practice for refugees are made. We identified these countries for a variety of reasons. First, there are currently 22.5 million refugees in the world, and 84% live in developing countries like Uganda and Tanzania that are proximate to their countries of origin (UNHCR, 2017b). Sub-Saharan Africa alone is host to 26% of the world's refugees (UNHCR, n.d.).

Furthermore, there is substantial linguistic diversity within contemporary nation-states across Africa, making issues of language and education particularly relevant in these contexts. Uganda and Tanzania share linguistic diversity but implement divergent MOI policies and practices. In Uganda, Ethnologue lists 43 languages spoken in Uganda ("Uganda," 2019) and 21 of these are used as MOIs for lower primary in rural public schools as of 2006 (Ward, et al., 2006). In practice, as is the case elsewhere, Ugandan national teachers often struggle to implement home language instruction, resorting to English as MOI instead (Piper & Miksic, 2011; Tembe & Norton, 2008). English is generally used as MOI at all levels in urban and linguistically heterogeneous areas (Altinyelken, Moorcroft, & van Der Draai, 2014; UNICEF, 2016; Ward, Penny, & Read, 2006), although this policy appears to be implemented inconsistently as well, with teachers using various Ugandan home languages for instruction as well (Altinyelken et al., 2014).

In Tanzania, there are an estimated 125 home languages in use (Ethnologue, 2019), as well as Kiswahili, a widely spoken lingua franca which was instituted as the national language during post-independence, socialist development program (Vavrus, 2002). Officially, Kiswahili is the official MOI in primary and the first four years of secondary school, although this policy is inconsistently implemented, with documented examples of primary schools that use English as the MOI in an effort to prepare learners for secondary school (UNICEF, 2016). Unlike in Uganda, non-dominant home languages are not used as the MOI in Tanzania, leaving an estimated 15% of the population underserved by the education system (Rubagumya, 2011; Wedin, 2005).

We also chose Uganda and Tanzania as illustrative examples because of their different approaches to refugee education. At the time of this research, there were 1.3 million refugees from South Sudan and over 230,000 refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) living in Uganda, making it the third largest refugee-hosting country in the world (UNHCR, 2017a, 2017b). The country adopted the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) (Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, 2017), which articulates refugees' freedom

of movement and legal permission to work and attend national schools, freedoms which have been permitted under Ugandan law since 2006. While there have been documented cases of discrimination against refugees in Ugandan schools and workplaces (Hovil, 2016), Uganda stands out for its commitment to the inclusion of refugees into its national education system.

Tanzania has also seen large increases in the number of refugees living in the country. Between April 2015 and September 2017, 258,291 refugees from Burundi and DRC entered the country, joining the 105,985 already there. Tanzania has withdrawn from the CRRF and continues to implement an encampment policy for refugees, who are permitted to attend school only in camps (ECHO, 2018). Refugees in Tanzania follow the MOI and curriculum of their countries of origin and are not permitted to move freely outside the camps in ways that would allow them to interact with Tanzanians (Interview, December 2017).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Medium of instruction:
Implications for children's learning, identity development, and sense of belonging

The languages used in school have significant implications for children's wellbeing. These implications range from students' academic performance and learning to identity formation and sense of belonging within families and communities (Benson, 2012; García, 2012; Shin, 2013).

In terms of academic performance and persistence, the negative effects of using unfamiliar language(s) as the MOI in primary schools have been well-documented. Children struggle to develop basic literacy skills necessary for learning academic content (Trudell, 2016), and instruction in a language children do not speak well inhibits their ability to ask questions or engage actively in learning, which hinders their cognitive development (Cummins, 1978; Hornberger & Chick, 2001; Qorro, 2009). The instructional challenges students face can limit academic persistence and increase school drop-out rates (Benson, 2012; Kabay, 2016), and parents who may already feel marginalized are less likely to engage with schools that instruct in languages they do not understand (Hammond, 2013).

In contrast, there is robust data to support the role that early instruction in home languages can play in supporting students' academic achievement and literacy development in both home and foreign languages (Cummins, 2000; Kerwin & Thornton, 2015). Early literacy skills are best taught in the home language, with children later transferring those skills to other languages. According to the Common Underlying Proficiency Model, a theoretical proposal about the ways that languages are learned, early instruction in the home language can promote better linguistic and academic outcomes later on, as it supports "the deeper cognitive and academic skills that underlie the development of literacy in *both* the bilingual's languages" (Cummins, 1981, p. 23). Instruction in the home language in the early years can support students' learning and cognition in the present and their future academic progress in an additional language in later years—especially if the home language continues to be developed and supported at school—in ways that instruction in unfamiliar languages in the early years does not (Benson, 2012; Cummins, 1981).

García & Wei (2014) offer a related but distinct theory about bilinguals' use of language, which they call translanguaging, which also has implications for

classroom communication. "Translanguaging," they write, "not only allows for shuttling between acts of language that are socially and educationally constructed as separate, but integrates bilingual acts in ways that reflect the unified constitution of the learning" (p. 80). Within this conceptualization, languages do not exist as separate units, between which linguistic skills transfer. Instead, translanguaging focuses on the "*integration* of language practices in *the person of the learner*" (p. 80, italics in original), so that learners develop and employ various language acts or practices that make up one language unit. Learners use these various language practices in different settings to communicate, interact, and co-construct meaning.

García & Wei (2014) contend that bilingual students engage in "natural translanguaging" to communicate with each other and learn, and that teachers can also integrate "official translanguaging" into classrooms to support students' learning and engagement (p. 91). This official—or pedagogical—translanguaging can take the form of lessons that use a text written in an international language, for example, while the teacher prompts student engagement in the home language, or encourages students to work together in groups using home languages to decipher course material in an international language. Research indicates that intentional and systematic translanguaging in classrooms "builds deeper thinking, provides students with more rigorous content, builds multiple subjectivities, and at the same time develops language and literacy practices that are adequate for specific academic tasks" (p. 89), meeting many objectives of language classrooms.

Although translanguaging practices have long been used by teachers around the world to support students in multilingual instructional environments, they tend to take place without formal recognition (García & Wei, 2014), and in many cases are even prohibited (Benson, 2012). For those who are expected to instruct in a dominant language that is foreign to learners, doing so often comes with significant challenges, some of which could be alleviated with formalized, systematic translanguaging practices in schools. Drawing on research from contexts including Mozambique, South Africa, and Swaziland, Benson (2012) highlights the hurdles that teachers face when instructing in a language that students do not speak and understand well and that teachers may also struggle with. As Benson (2012) explains, "teachers worldwide who are charged with using a foreign language to teach curricular content lack strategies other than 'talking at' students and eliciting rote responses" (p. 202). In contrast, in Tanzania, teachers often engage in translanguaging in the classroom. Webb and Mkongo (2013) found that Tanzanian teachers in English-medium schools often code-switch, or translanguage, between English and Swahili in order to transmit key content or otherwise communicate with students.

Despite the benefits attributed to integrating home languages into classroom learning, a variety of contextual factors such as resource and training constraints, standardized examinations that orient education systems toward dominant languages, placement of teachers who speak languages different from the local community, and community resistance to home language instruction may threaten the efficacy of home language instructional policies (Piper, Zuilkowski, & Ong'ele, 2016; Trudell & Piper, 2013). These contingencies mean that high quality home language instructional practices may not be possible in many contexts, particularly those serving marginalized students, which refugee students often are. Instead, well-designed and supported instructional programs in languages other than the home language may be better for children's learning than home language

instructional programs that are resisted or insufficiently resourced (Piper et al, 2016; Piper & Miksic, 2011).

That said, there are productive home language instructional practices for multilingual schooling environments, like those that refugee students often attend, that have been theorized in the literature. Key strategies include organizing classrooms by language rather than by grade, enabling teachers to map the languages represented in the classroom and differentiate instruction for students, and ensuring access to classroom materials that affirm students' diverse linguistic backgrounds and support language development (Benson & Young, 2016).

In addition to supporting learning, well-resourced and carefully implemented instructional policies and practices that affirm home languages also have implications for children's identity development and sense of belonging. In her discussion of the relationship between language and identity, Norton (1997) defines identity as "how people understand their relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how people understand their possibilities for the future" (p. 408). Individuals use different languages to engage in relationships and interactions, asserting or diminishing different aspects of ever-evolving and socially-mediated identities through language choices (Anzaldúa, 2007). Drawing on Bourdieu (1977), Norton (1997) highlights the connections between language, identity, and power, including the ways that "the right to speak intersects in important ways with a language learner's identity" (p. 411). Ideas about who holds sufficient power to speak or be heard are mediated by language background, as well as by other aspects of identity, including ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and gender (Norton, 1997; Shin, 2013).

Considering power at the center of an ever-evolving relationship between identity, language, and education is particularly important for research related to refugees. Refugees experience shifting and often marginal social positions, and often face an "unknowable future" that calls key aspects of identity and belonging into question (Dryden-Peterson, 2017). Furthermore, for refugees, identity intersects with legal status in the host country, so that issues of rights and citizenship also likely shape what languages are deemed "worthy" of use by refugees and national communities, and similarly how "worthy" the speakers of diverse languages are perceived to be within a given social and national context (Norton, 1997, p. 411).

Governments have long used language planning to delineate the status of languages within nation-states (Ferguson, 2006; Hornberger, 2002). Across Africa, colonial powers insisted on the use of languages such as English, Portuguese, and French in government and commerce, and thus required that an elite minority learn these languages through schooling, with schooling for "the masses" tending to take place in home languages (Albaugh, 2014, p. 35). Language policies in schools continue to enact hierarchies of languages today. In Botswana, for example, official language policy legislates the use of English and Setswana as the only languages of instruction in schools, conceptualizing language as a tool for national unity and ignoring the considerable linguistic diversity in the country (Mulimbi & Dryden-Peterson, 2017).

Research related to refugee families' language preferences is not yet available. However, we do know that non-refugee parents struggle with what language means for their children's futures—including their identity development and sense of belonging—and this research may be instructive in the case of refugee learners as well. Some teachers and families in Uganda, Kenya, and throughout

Eastern and Southern Africa expressed a preference for international languages in the classroom rather than home languages, perceiving them as the languages of power, supporting children's economic opportunity and social mobility (Piper, Schroeder, & Trudell, 2016; Tembe & Norton, 2008; Trudell, 2007). As Trudell (2007) explains,

> Parents and teachers demonstrate keen awareness of the potential for enhanced learning which use of the home language offers; nevertheless, that advantage is often outweighed by the prestige and perceived value of the international language as used in the classroom (p. 553).

While for some parents persistent inequalities based on language result in increased demand for international languages in schools, others fear "the divide in language and culture that grows between educated children and their communities of origin" (Trudell, 2007, p. 555) as a result of MOI policies and assessment systems that privilege international languages. Thus, some parents remain concerned about what international language use in schools might mean for their children's ongoing relationships with family and community.

We know that children who are not permitted to use their home languages in school can experience a variety of negative outcomes. Children from non-dominant linguistic and/or immigrant backgrounds whose languages are not represented in schools and who are not supported in bridging from home language to the language of school, can face challenges for their identity development. These include language loss, the development of a negative self-image, and a diminished connection to both the community of origin and the host community (Hornberger, 2001; Qorro, 2009; Tse, 2001; Anzaldúa, 2007). In some schools in Botswana, language "assimilationist policies" (Mulimbi & Dryden-Peterson, 2017, p. 1) have meant that students who speak non-dominant languages experience "a sense of inferiority compared to their peers" (p. 14). Cummins (2000) describes newcomer children to Canada who, after only two years there, "want to anglicize their names in order to belong to the culture and peer group." He observed that students' "identities became infested with shame" (p. 13) as a result of broader messages about the status of their home languages in relation to English.

Negative perceptions of the home language at school can also have important implications for children's sense of belonging within their families. Cummins (2000) explains that in addition to wanting to change their names in response to implicit and explicit messages about language status, newcomer children to Canada also "refuse[d] to use the first language in the home" (p. 13). Many non-dominant language speakers around the world face language shift as younger generations slowly lose the language skills necessary to communicate with older family members, largely as a result of language policies and practices in school and the perceived status of the home language in the broader society (Tse, 2001). Language loss also has implications for children's sense of belonging within the larger community. As we see in the case of Jean Claude, like so many children in instructional environments that privilege a dominant language at the expense of the home language and identity (Valenzuela, 1999), Jean Claude questioned whether he shared an identity with those living in DRC, having experienced moderate loss of his home language and complete loss of French as a result of language instructional policies in Uganda that privileged English.

In contrast, literature suggests that instructional practices that do not enact an either/or but instead help students maintain home languages *and* proficiency in an international language, in cases where these are distinct, are conducive to academic success and students' wellbeing (Bartlett & García, 2011; Lee & Suarez, 2009). Bartlett & García (2011) describe a bilingual instructional program in New York City that encouraged teachers to integrate Spanish and English in the classroom through formal translanguaging practices that "normalize[d] bilingualism without strict functional separation" (p. 242). In a school where many authority figures were themselves bilingual and spoke Spanish as their first language, there was "no threat to the students' Spanish-language identity" (p. 239). Instead, the school supported "students' development of a bilingual identity" (p. 239) that balanced both their Spanish and English language skills.

Medium of instruction and refugee education

The current global approach to refugee education centers on the inclusion of refugee learners in national systems (Dryden-Peterson, 2016). The push for inclusion comes as a response to dismal educational access, quality, and outcomes for refugee learners who have traditionally been segregated in parallel education systems: barely 50% of refugee children access primary school compared to 90% globally, and only 22% access secondary school compared to 84% globally (Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, 2017). Refugee children who do access schooling in parallel systems face class sizes as large as 130 students with one teacher, teachers with little formal training who tend to rely on rote memorization and call-and-response teaching, and discrimination from national peers and adults at school (Dryden-Peterson, 2016; UNHCR, 2016). Parallel education systems for refugees are less sustainable, often of lesser quality, less accountable to families and children and have fewer mechanisms built in for students' formal completion or certification than do national schools in host countries (UNHCR & Global Monitoring Report, 2016; Dryden-Peterson, Adelman, Bellino & Chopra, 2019). In contrast, including refugee students in national schools is likely to increase educational access, quality, persistence, and sustainability of educational opportunities for refugees. National students may also benefit as inclusion can spur increased donor investments in national education systems (UNCHR, 2016).

Despite the benefits of including refugees in national schools, refugee students are likely to be "submerged" in languages they do not understand when they enter national systems of education (Benson, 2002; Dryden-Peterson, 2006; Dryden-Peterson, 2016). As the literature above highlights, this linguistic submersion of refugee students is likely to adversely affect quality of instruction and learning. Students who are not given formal opportunities to develop academic language and literacy skills in the home language are likely to struggle in developing these skills in a foreign language. They may also experience language shift or a loss of the home language, which is necessary to communicate with family members and central to both identity development and a sense of belonging. Finally, a mismatch between community and home languages likely has implications for refugee students' ability to build relationships with their national classmates and neighbors and to function in the host country, shaping their sense of belonging in this new context.

Figures 1 and 2 present the linguistic contexts that illustrative primary school-aged refugee students from South Sudan and Burundi might face if displaced

to Uganda and Tanzania, respectively. To create these illustrative cases, we draw on literature that documents refugees' experiences with education and language in host countries. As discussed above, the language practices that occur in classrooms often differ from those stipulated in official MOI policies. The figure below represents the linguistic contexts which refugee children from South Sudan and Burundi would face if policies were implemented exactly as written.
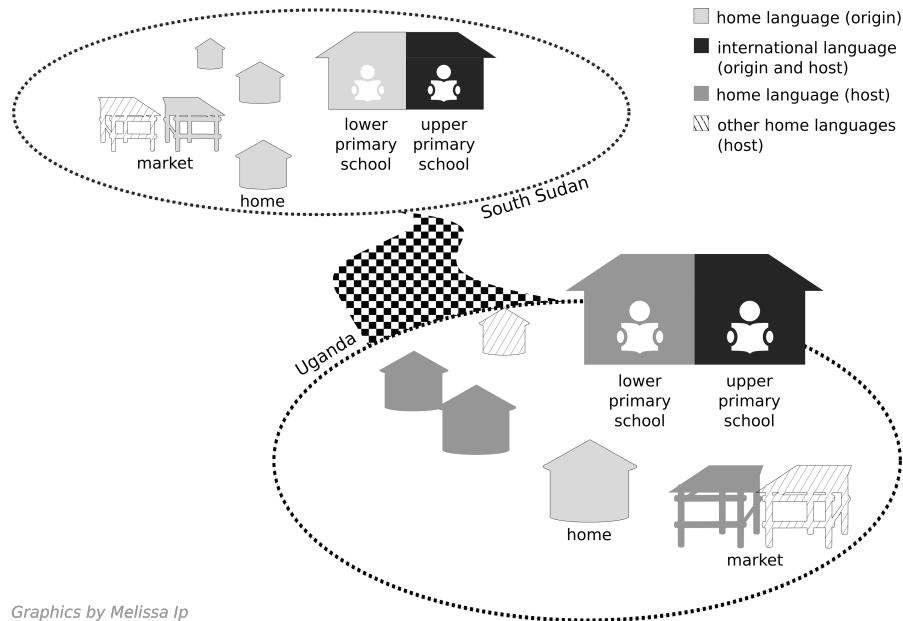

Graphics by Melissa Ip

Figure 1. Language environments in South Sudan and Uganda experienced by South Sudanese children in grades 3 and 6

In Figure 1, a student in grade 6 whom we call John speaks Pojulu, his home language, at home and in the market in South Sudan. Unlike most children his age, John is able to attend school, and instruction takes place in English. His younger sister, whom we call Milly, speaks the home language Pojulu at home and in the market, and, according to South Sudan's national policy, also in her Primary 3 classroom.
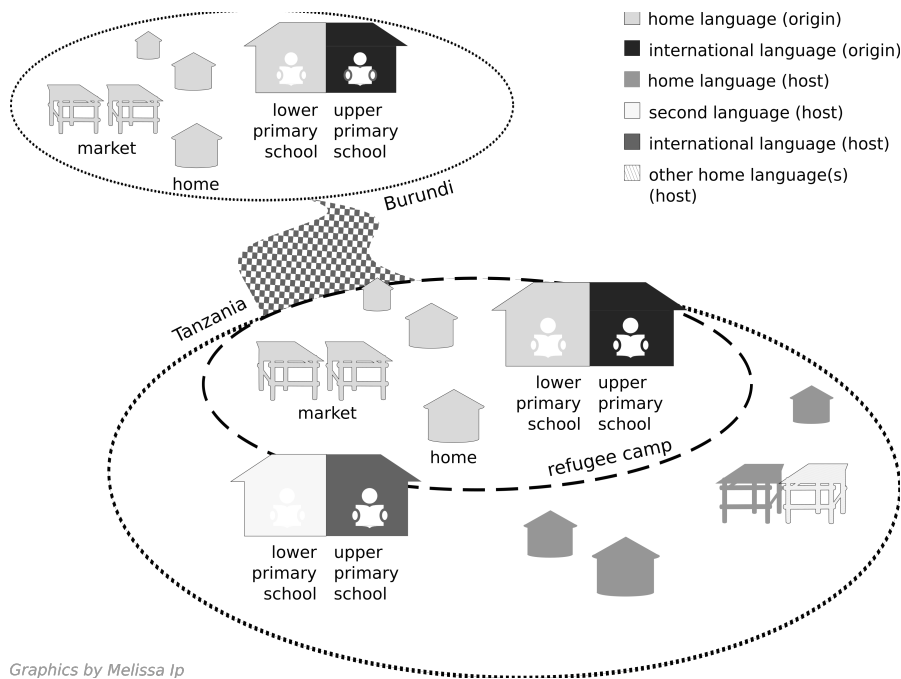
When John and Milly are displaced from South Sudan by conflict and flee with their family members to Uganda, their linguistic context changes considerably. At home, they continue to speak Pojulu, their home language from South Sudan, but in the broader community they are exposed to Aringa and other Ugandan home languages as well as to other South Sudanese languages.

In Uganda, John enters a Ugandan school where English is the official MOI, but many of his classmates and teachers are South Sudanese and so they informally use Pojulu and other South Sudanese languages in the classroom as well as English. John's Ugandan classmates are more familiar with English than he is because their primary school teachers have had a stronger command of English than his did in South Sudan. Nevertheless, his Ugandan peers still often struggle to

understand the teachers, and because of this, Ugandan teachers sometimes use multiple languages in the classroom as well, supporting students' understanding by using Ugandan home languages in the classroom as well as English (see, for example, Dryden-Peterson, 2004).

Milly attends a Ugandan school where the official MOI in the early years is Aringa, a home language of northern Uganda. Because many of the students have recently arrived from South Sudan, the teachers sometimes speak in home languages from South Sudan. Milly has trouble understanding Aringa and many of the other languages that teachers use.

If John and Milly were to progress through primary school and attend secondary school in a nearby Ugandan town, if they received a scholarship for secondary school or tertiary education elsewhere in Uganda, or if they returned to South Sudan and could access secondary school there, in all three cases instruction would take place in English.

Legend:
- home language (origin)
- international language (origin)
- home language (host)
- second language (host)
- international language (host)
- other home language(s) (host)

Graphics by Melissa Ip

Figure 2. Language environments in Burundi and Tanzania experienced by Burundian children in grades 3 and 6

In Figure 2, a student in grade 6 whom we call Nicholas speaks his home language, Kirundi, at home and in the market in Burundi. For him, school takes place in the international language, French. His younger sister, whom we call Juliet, speaks her home language, Kirundi, at home and in the market, and also in school.

When Nicholas and Juliet flee conflict in Burundi and arrive in Tanzania, very little changes for them linguistically. They live within a refugee-only settlement, and they continue to speak Kirundi, their home language from Burundi at home and, because the market is within the refugee settlement, they speak Kirundi

there as well. While language policies and practices have changed over time (Chopra & Dryden-Peterson, 2015), at the time of writing, in Tanzania, refugees attended refugee-only schools and learned in the languages of their countries of origin. Thus, when Nicholas enters school, he will be taught in French, and Juliet attends school in Kirundi. In the area around the camps, Tanzanians speak Kiswahili, English, and other Tanzanian home languages. If Nicholas and Juliet were to attend secondary school in the camps, they would be taught in French; if they received permission and a scholarship for secondary school or tertiary education outside the camp but within Tanzania, instruction would take place in English, a new language for them.

While it is possible to imagine the languages that John, Milly, Nicholas, and Juliet might use in various circumstances in the present, what is less possible is to know their paths in the future and what languages would be most useful for further learning and wellbeing. Refugee children are caught in an "unknowable future," not knowing whether the future will involve remaining in the host country, returning to the country of origin, entering a third country through continued migration or formal resettlement, on-going transnationalism, or some combination of these trajectories (Dryden-Peterson, 2017). The languages that refugee children and families might need in these settings are difficult to predict, making it challenging for children, families, and teachers, as well as education policymakers and other stakeholders to know which linguistic trajectory is most appropriate, if a choice is available at all (Chopra & Dryden-Peterson, 2015; Dryden-Peterson, 2006).

Despite challenges in predicting the most appropriate linguistic choices for languages that are needed in the present or may be needed in the future, language choices within a constrained and unknowable future do have implications for refugees' lives during and after schooling. Refugee youth in Kenya who sought educational opportunities outside of Kakuma refugee camp, in Kenyan national schools with other Kenyans, could often only do so by privileging certain languages over others. To avoid discrimination, they described using the Kiswahili they learned in camp schools, which allowed them to pass as Kenyan, and limiting use of their home languages, which marked them as refugees (Bellino & Dryden-Peterson, 2019). Post-school work opportunities for refugees also intersect with language. In Uganda, for example, refugees have the legal right to work (even if they face discrimination when seeking employment) (Montieth, 2017), which may provide an additional incentive to learn the language(s) of the host country. This is not the case in all settings where refugees attend national schools, however. In Kenya and other places, for example, refugees may struggle in schools, learning in national languages, only to be barred from employment where they might use these languages as adults (Mendenhall et al., 2015). For refugees, post-school paths can be unpredictable, mediated by policies related to employment and complicating decisions about what languages might facilitate a future where they can experience a sense of belonging, no matter the future.

FRAMEWORK FOR CONSIDERING MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION IN REFUGEE EDUCATION

Fraser defines justice as "parity of participation" (2007, p. 255), with a just society a place that "permit[s] all to participate as peers in social life" (p. 255). For Fraser, policies and practices that promote social justice must support (1) parity of economic participation, often facilitated through the *redistribution* of resources; (2) parity of cultural participation, facilitated through policies that promote the official *recognition* of differences, including, for example, linguistic or religious

differences; and (3) parity of political participation and decision-making through equal *representation*, both in official governmental capacities as well as less formal leadership and decision-making roles.

Medium of instruction policies for all students, including for refugees, have implications for social justice, as Fraser's (2007) definition highlights. First, MOI policies and practices that allow refugees to participate in school contribute to a *redistribution* of educational resources, including the resources of learning, school access, and matriculation. MOI policies that do not support all students' access to learning and school persistence also have implications for later resource distribution, including for the skills that can be used in the workplace, leading to socioeconomic stratification and differences in employment opportunities (King, 2013; Vavrus, 2002). Additionally, as we see in the case of Jean Claude's experience and the literature more broadly, MOI policies and practices that contribute to the loss of languages can close later professional and economic opportunities. MOI for refugees are thus likely to have implications for the redistribution of economic resources to refugee communities in the host country or country of origin, and for parity of economic participation between refugee and national communities.

As discussed above, the languages used in school can also have implications for what Fraser (2007) calls *recognition,* or an acknowledgment of differences that allows individuals and groups to maintain particular aspects of their identities even while participating in the broader social or national community. MOI policies and practices are one way that different groups, including refugees, can officially be given access to—or be excluded from—a sense of belonging in the host country. Jean Claude did not experience formal recognition of his linguistic and cultural differences; rather, he achieved a certain level of integration in Uganda, facilitated in part by his English skills, but lost the linguistic skills that were central to a sense of belonging in DRC.

Finally, MOI has implications for *representation,* or who is represented by or within the governance structure and who contributes to decision-making. In education, representation can relate to whether and how educational policies and reforms are participatory, who manages and makes decisions about education, and "the extent to which education systems support fundamental freedoms" for diverse populations (Novelli, Cardoza, & Smith, 2015, p. 16). MOI affects issues of representation, including which families participate in Parent Teacher Associations and other leadership structures (Hammond, 2013). It also has implications for individuals' sense of belonging, signalling who has a right to express opinions or participate and who does not. As Jean Claude's example reveals, his ability to learn English allowed him to complete school in Uganda and become decision-maker for his community in exile. On the other hand, his loss of French and his home languages limited his ability to participate meaningfully or to contribute to decision-making related to education in DRC, his country of origin.

Language as resource

MOI policies that facilitate redistribution, recognition, and representation for refugees—some of the most marginalized members in diverse, multilingual, and often transnational contexts—may be immediately beneficial for national students and teachers. Ruíz (1984) highlights three orientations toward language planning that illuminate the ways that MOI policies can connect with Fraser's (2007)

framework for social justice for all students, both refugee and national. According to Ruíz (1984), the first and most common orientation to language planning is the "language-as-problem" orientation, in which using multiple languages within the nation-state is seen as a barrier to national development rather than as a resource for individuals and communities. In this framework, languages exist within a strict hierarchy, and non-Western languages are best forgotten by their speakers in favor of Western languages. In contrast, the "language-as-right" orientation uses the legal system to protect and elevate diverse languages and language communities within national contexts, with particular emphasis on the ways language background affects differential access to services and resources, such as education. The "language-as-right" conceptualization tends to focus in particular on non-dominant language groups and the protection of their personal rights, often in opposition to the dominant group.

The third orientation toward language diversity within a nation-state is the "language-as-resource" orientation. A language planning orientation that considers language as a resource recognizes the many values of multilingualism, including for economic development in an ever-shrinking, globalized world. In this orientation, "language-minority communities [are seen] as important sources of expertise," and embrace of many languages in multilingual, diverse communities "can only contribute to a greater social cohesion and cooperation" (Ruíz, 1984, p. 28). Within this orientation, governments and other stakeholders do not try to erase linguistic differences, but rather to embrace these differences as assets for individuals, communities, and the nation-state. According to Ruíz, this orientation can also elevate the status of non-dominant languages, ease tensions between linguistic groups, and facilitate "cooperative language planning" (p. 25) that embraces linguistic diversity within communities.

As Table 2 illustrates, a language-as-resource orientation to language planning can support parity of participation for refugee and national students along Fraser's (2007) axes of redistribution of resources, recognition of difference, and representation in decision-making. Uganda's current language-in-education policies strive toward a language-as-resource orientation for national students, but the benefits of such an orientation likely do not extend to refugee students in practice. In Tanzania, the language planning approach in many respects takes a language-as-problem perspective, given that the home languages of refugee and many national students are excluded from school. Additionally, refugee students are not exposed to the linguistic diversity of Tanzania, but instead attend school in refugee-only settings. Both refugee and national students may experience schooling challenges due to a language-as-problem orientation to the nation's linguistic diversity.

Table 2. Framework: Language-as-resource approach to language planning to support social justice for refugee and national students.

MOI policy that takes a ***language-as-resource*** approach	- All refugee and national students develop literacy in their home languages. - All refugee and national students receive intentional and systematic instruction to help them learn international languages (if required by the curriculum). - No students are submerged in languages they do not understand; rather they receive support needed to be successful in the MOIs, such as pedagogical translanguaging.

supports *parity of participation* for refugee and national students	**Parity of redistribution**	Refugee and national students access comparable post-school opportunities.
	Parity of recognition	The unique linguistic and cultural characteristics of all students, refugee and national, are recognized by official school practices, supporting health identity development and a sense of belonging in the nation-state.
	Parity of representation	Both refugee and national students grow up to become decision-makers in their communities at similar rates, facilitated by the inclusion of home languages at school and systematic instruction of dominant languages (if required by curriculum).

As with all MOI policies and practices globally, there are limitations related to political acceptability and financial possibility of a language-as-resource approach, requiring trade-offs in decision-making. Yet our review of the literature, placed within the framework of social justice and a language-as-resource orientation, points to the need to embrace the many languages that are spoken in schools and communities hosting refugees in order to meet global commitments to their quality education. This entails conducting language mapping to determine the home languages that are represented within the school, as well as a planning grid to determine what linguistic skills and resources might be represented among teachers, parents, and school leaders that could support learning within a multilingual educational environment (Benson & Young, 2016; Kosonen, 2017). Once language resources and needs are identified, the speakers of various home languages—including parents, community members, and older students—can be integrated into classrooms as teachers and facilitators, as can multilingual teachers (Benson & Young, 2016). Refugees bring their experiences with home and international languages from schools and communities in their countries of origin and enter schools where different home and international languages are used. These students need opportunities to maintain their home languages from the country of origin in order to develop and hone their literacy skills, and so as not to lose their connections to family or community or their identity. At the same time, refugee students also need to be able to integrate socially and academically into host country schools and communities. They need to develop skills in the home languages of the host country community, as well as in the international language used in the upper levels of school, both important for future opportunities.

National students can also benefit from the increased linguistic diversity that refugees bring, themselves developing proficiency in languages introduced by their refugee peers and experiencing new learning, professional, and social opportunities as a result of living in increasingly multilingual environments. With trends toward increased migration, it is important to consider ways that multilingual learning environments can be considered a resource rather than a problem for all learners.

CONCLUSION

Research in *language-in-education* policy and practice demonstrates the importance of home language instruction for children's learning, identity development, and sense of belonging. Research in *international education* and *refugee studies* indicates the importance for refugee children of inclusion in national schools, as it supports school access, persistence, quality, and sustainability. At the intersection of these two bodies of literature is a critical dilemma for policy, practice, and further research. Accessing national schools—likely important for increasing access and quality—often means that refugee children attend schools that are conducted in languages they do not understand—with likely negative consequences for learning, identity development, and belonging. As countries around the world move toward the inclusion of refugees into national systems, we propose a conceptual framework for approaching language-in-education in refugee settings that seeks to achieve socially just language policies for all learners. This framework approaches the linguistic diversity that national and refugee students bring to classrooms as a resource rather than a problem. This framework seeks to embrace the use of refugee and national home languages alongside international languages for all students through creative educational approaches appropriate for multilingual learning environments, allowing refugee young people to achieve parity of economic, social, and political participation with national students in the present and in an as yet unknowable future.

A key research focus, which is central to further understanding the tension highlighted in this piece, evaluating the proposed conceptual framework, and deriving concrete ways forward for research, policy, and practice, relates to refugee children's and families' own experiences of language use in exile. There is currently only nascent literature on refugees' experiences of languages in exile (Chopra & Dryden-Peterson, 2015; Dryden-Peterson, 2006), research that is valuable for developing policies and practices that respond to the linguistic and educational needs of refugees and national communities alike. Future research should explore teachers' language skills and pedagogical practices in multilingual environments serving refugee and national students, and implications of language policies and practices for refugees' current and future opportunities. Finally, it is important to consider how MOI policies and practices may be able to support parity of participation for refugee and national children and families simultaneously given the increasing integration of refugee and national students in schools together.

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