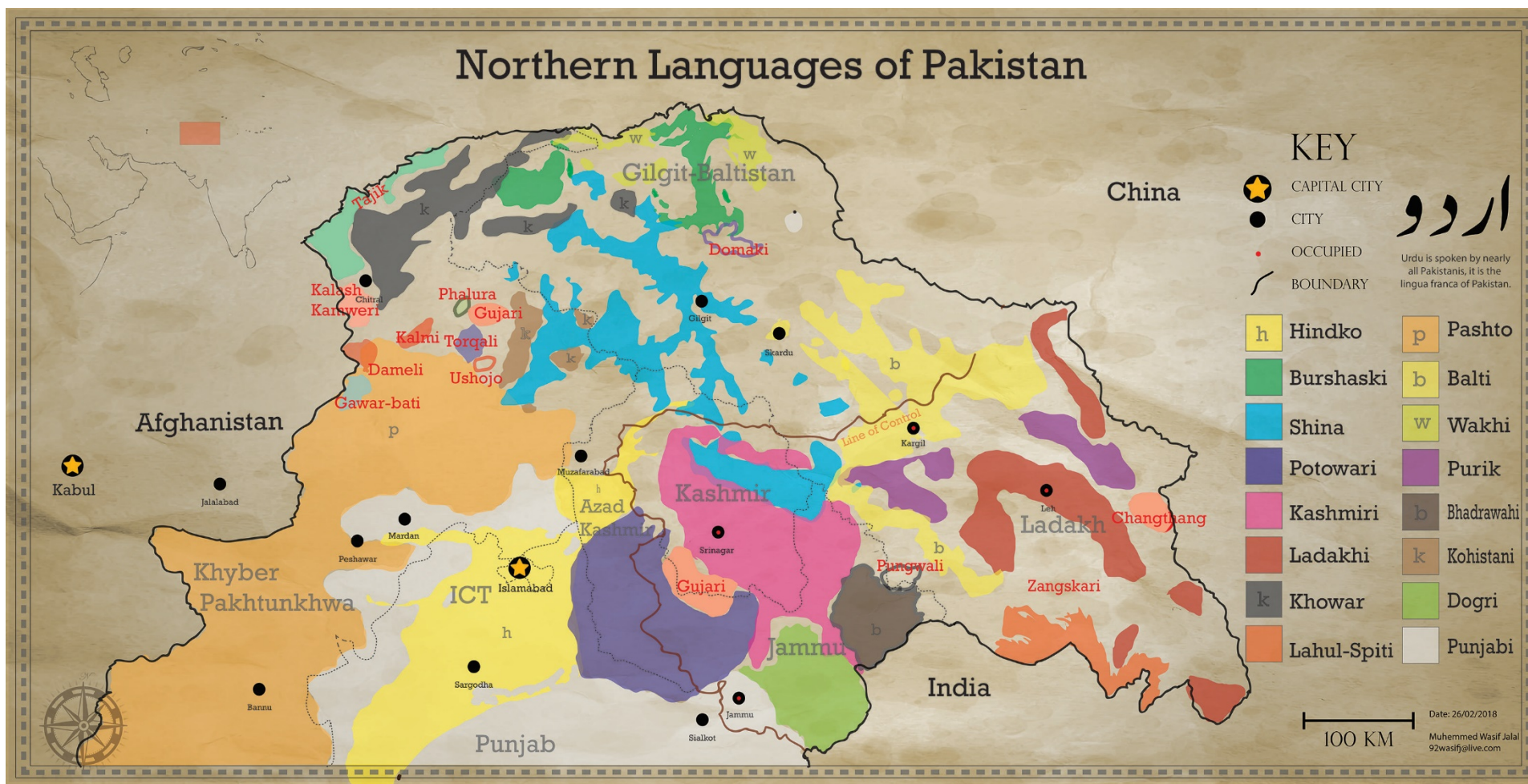University of **Reading**

CROSS LANGUAGE MEDIATION IN REFUGEE SETTINGS: TOWARDS A TRANSLANGUAGING PEDAGOGY FOR PSYCHO-SOCIAL SUPPORT

Dr Tony Capstick, University of Reading UK

LIMITLESS **POTENTIAL** ‖ LIMITLESS **OPPORTUNITIES** ‖ LIMITLESS **IMPACT**

WHY CROSS LANGUAGE?

Northern Languages of Pakistan

LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION IN PAKISTAN

Pakistan requires a multilingual education policy in which:

- The mother tongues are used as media of instruction for at least the first few years of education

- Every child has an equal opportunity to access good quality education (regardless of socio-economic status, gender or first language)

- The national language (Urdu) and an international language (probably English) are introduced at points when the child is ready for them

- All languages are taught well by teachers who have been adequately prepared

(Coleman and Capstick 2012)

WHY MEDIATION?

Written texts are detachable from the social situation that originally produced them or from the place where they were first used (Blommaert, 2008).

These texts can move vertically as well as horizontally across contexts of asymmetrical power relations (Kell 2009)

How are texts reused and recontextualised in this way as they move between physical and social spaces?

LITERACY MEDIATION

The literacy mediator translates between codes and modes when reading, writing and speaking on behalf of others.

People with low levels of formal education have been seen to draw from the resources of a literacy mediator in order to overcome difficulties with specific texts.

The reciprocity shown in Mirpuri kinship networks means that traditional boundaries between home and school are no longer helpful as literacy mediators help family, friends and clients across domains.

(Capstick 2016)

REPRESENTATION

How teams of researchers negotiate and come to (dis)agreements in the process of making 'meaning' out of 'data'.

(Creese and Blackledge 2012: 306)

WHY REFUGEE SETTINGS?

Resilience is 'the ability of individuals, households, communities and institutions to anticipate, withstand, recover and transform from shocks and crises.'
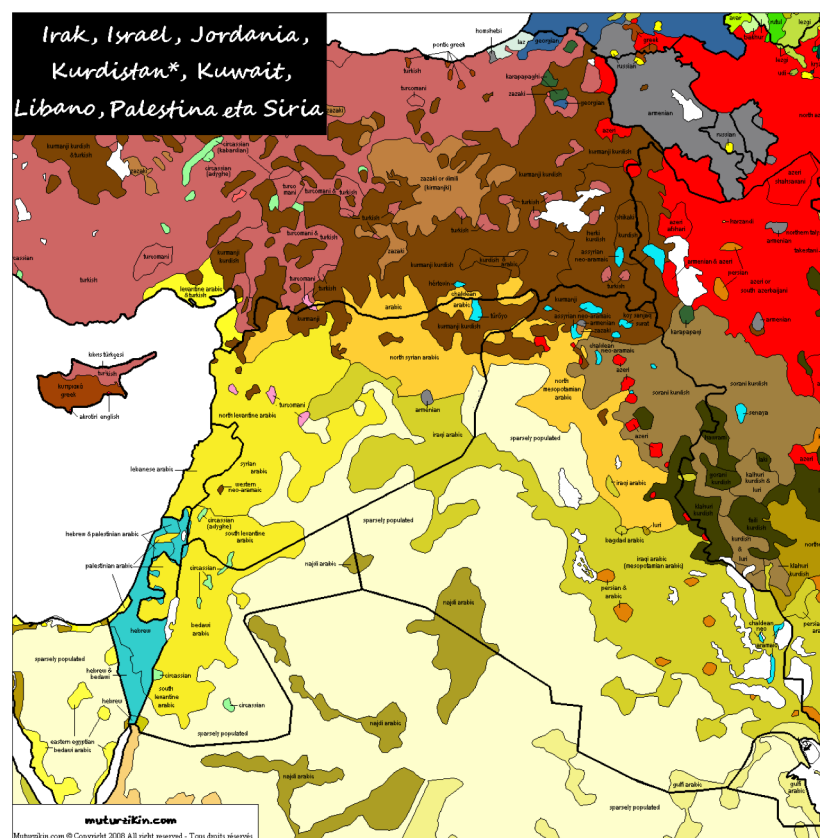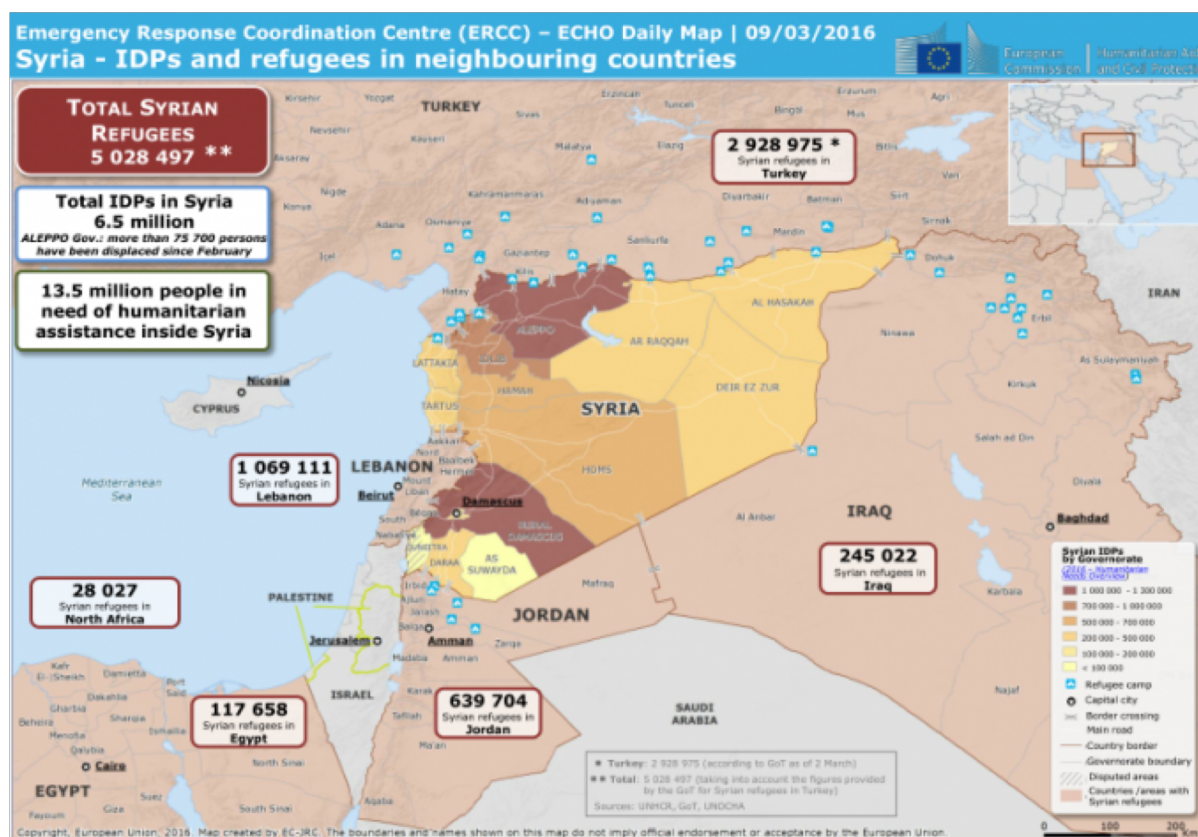
(UNICEF 2014)

LIMITLESS **POTENTIAL** | LIMITLESS **OPPORTUNITIES** | LIMITLESS **IMPACT**

RESILIENCE AND SOCIOLINGUISTICS

The key issue has been the shift in the level of analysis from research on students' competences and acquisition processes in linguistic programmes to concern over the effects of the social distribution of linguistic resources.

(Martin Rojo 2010)

LANGUAGE FOR RESILIENCE

1. Home language and literacy development: creating the foundations for shared identity, belonging and future study through home language use

2. Access to education, training and employment: Language competence provides access to, and engagement in, the world of education, training and employment

3. Learning together and social cohesion: Language learning activities as a basis for developing individual resilience, ensuring dignity, self-sufficiency and life skills

4. Addressing the effects of trauma on learning: Language programmes as a supportive intervention and a way to address the effects of loss, displacement and trauma on behaviour and learning

5. Building the capacity of teachers and strengthening educational systems to create inclusive classrooms: Professional training for language teachers to build institutional resilience

(Capstick and Delaney, 2016)

# *COLLEAGUES ACROSS BORDERS* 2016-18

KHABAT, ERBIL

SAFE SPACES

- Safe spaces for refugees to learn in and to create the conditions in which to deliver psycho-social support to the beneficiaries
- Language learning classes were increasingly seen by many of these agencies as a potential space in which to deliver this support alongside or embedded in formal language learning, whether in state sector schools in Lebanon which deliver the curriculum in English or French, or NGO classrooms in Erbil Kurdistan where English language lessons are seen as a vehicle for ' post stress attunement ' programmes in adolescent friendly spaces

- Mustafa's class VIDEO

LIMITLESS **POTENTIAL** | LIMITLESS **OPPORTUNITIES** | LIMITLESS **IMPACT**
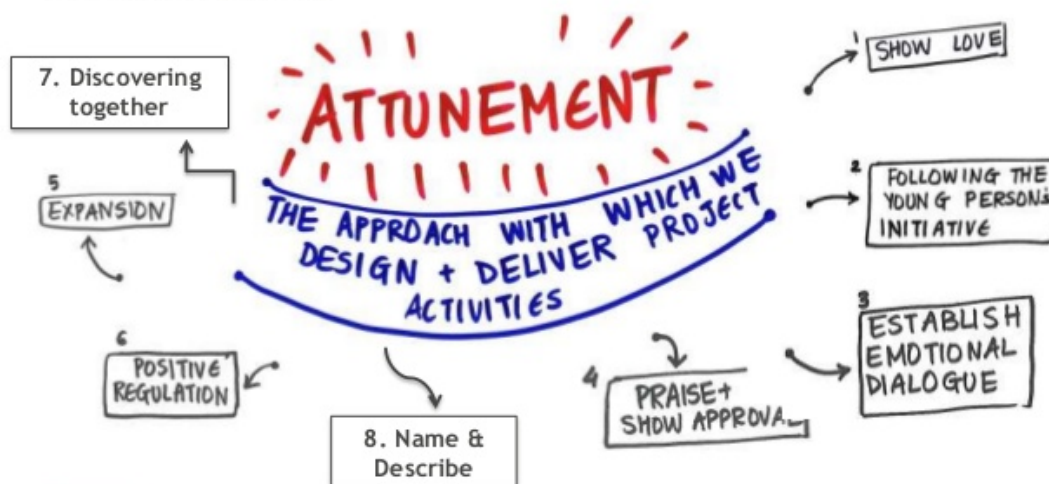
Research carried out by the NGO found that the impact
of this approach to psycho-social interventions focused on beneficiaries':

- increased levels of social trust

- diversity of social networks

- perceptions of security and safety

- confidence in the future

(Panter-Brick 2017).

'SAFE' SPACES AS TRANSLANGUAGING SPACES

Translanguaging spaces in which language users break down the ideologically bounded binaries between the societal and the individual, and the social and psychological, in their interactions are also spaces where previously separated language practices come together in superdiverse complex settings.

(Li Wei 2011)

COLLEAGUES ACROSS BORDERS ANALYSIS

'Discourse topic' as 'expressed by several sentences in discourse … by larger segments of the discourse or by the discourse as a whole'
(van Dijk 1984: 56).

A discourse topic is the salient theme that underlies a series of sentences in the interview data. The topics were addressed by the participants during the interviews, which were primarily framed by questions about language use in their classrooms. All the discourse topics relate to language use; this is the macro-topic. In this macro-discourse topic about language use there are various sub-topics
(see Reisigl and Wodak 2009).

SUB-TOPICS OF LANGUAGE USE

1. *'English first'*
2. *'She has to translate'*
3. *'Ok so there's no actual book they have to follow. We want to promote group work or leadership or identifying identity'*
4. *"Always movement, always gesture, not the 'don't do this, don't do that'"*

HOME LANGUAGE USE

Tony: In the training do they mention do they talk about using their home languages in the PSA do they explain how you could use Arabic or Sorani?

Zara: In the PSA?

Tony: Yeah.

<u>Zara: No. It's especially about emotion and body language, but about your mother tongue no</u>

Tony: So that's a little about todays lesson. Do the IDPs do they sit with the host community?

Zara: Yes, it doesn't matter some of them sit beside the host community and one of them here yes.

FINDINGS

- 'English first' strategy: all the teachers to varying degrees claimed that they tried to apply such a strategy though they acknowledged significant mixing of languages

- This strategy clashes with what learners report doing in actual practice: language mixing or translanguaging

- Teachers produced complicated explanations in order to account for both their declared 'official policy' and their actual practice.

- Outside the language classrooms language mixing did not seem problematic

- Many beneficiaries and teachers seemed to be able to engage in very complex interactions, making use of a large variety of resources

- What seemed to be problematic was the rationalising of these complex practices, of talking about them in a way that made sense, **which is where the 'English first' discourse comes into conflict with psycho-social support and cohesion**

COLLABORATING WITH NGOS TO CREATE SAFE SPACES FOR TRANSLANGUAGING PEDAGOGY

Translanguaging 'because it opens up new ways of looking at multilingual speakers and emergent multilinguals using a multilingual lens instead of [a] traditional monolingual perspective' (Cenoz and Gorter 2017: 910)

Fishman's work (1991) on breathing spaces for use in schools where 'the idea is that the minority language can be used freely and without threat to the majority language; it can 'breathe', in a space where only the minority is spoken' (ibid.).

Translanguaging pedagogy for psycho-social support in refugee classrooms in Jordan.

NEXT STEPS

https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/migrants-and-refugees-in-education

tony.capstick@reading.ac.uk

REFERENCES

Blommaert, J. and Rampton, B. 2011. Language and Superdiversity *Diversities* 13(2). 1—22

Capstick, T. and Delaney, M (2016) Language for Resilience. British Council: British Council London. Available at https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/language-for-resilience-report-en.pdf

Garc´ıa, O., Skutnabb-Kangas, T., & Torres-Guzman, M. E. (2006). Weaving spaces and (de)constructing ways for multilingual schools: The actual and the imagined. In O. Garc´ıa, T. Skutnabb-Kangas, & M. E. Torres-Guzman (Eds.), *Imagining multilingual schools: Languages in education and globalization* (pp. 3—50). Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Heller, M. (2007) Bilingualism as ideology and practice. In Heller (Ed), *Bilingualism: A Social Approach* (pp.1-24). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Li, W. 2011. Moment Analysis and translanguaging space: Discursive construction of identities by multilingual Chinese youth in Britain. *Journal of Pragmatics* 43(5). 1222—1235.

Masten, A. (1994) Resilience in individual development: Successful adaptation despite risk and adversity. In Wang, M., Gordon, E (Eds). *Educational resilience in inner-city America: Challenges and prospects*. Erlbaum: Hillside.

UNICEF (2014) The UNICEF Strategic Plan 2014-2017: Realizing the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged. Available at http://www.unicef.org/strategicplan/