Multilingualism or Marginalization? Syrian Refugees and Layers of Language-in-Education Policies and Practices in Lebanon

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This paper explores supranational, national, and local layers of language policy and planning (LPP) that affect education for Syrian refugees in Lebanon. By applying Hornberger and Johnson's (2007) concept of approaching multilingual LPP as a multi-layered onion, disconnects among supranational, national, and local layers of LPP are critically examined using Tollefson's (1991) historical-structural approach and Dryden-Peterson's (2017, 2019) framework of possible futures. In this case study, I conclude that multilingual language-in-education policies in Lebanon often create structural barriers for refugee learners to access and persist in the national education system. The potential benefits of multilingualism often are not realized in implementation and multilingual policies exacerbate educational inequalities and fail to prepare refugees for a variety of possible futures.

Globally, conflict and climate have caused rising levels of human displacement. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that 68.5 million people across the globe are currently forcibly displaced—40 million people are internally displaced, 25.4 million are refugees, and 3.1 million are asylum seekers (UNHCR, 2018). This paper will focus on refugees, defined by the 1951 Refugee Convention as a person who has fled their country due to violence or persecution (UNHCR, n.d.). Discourses in the media around refugee displacement have focused primarily on the refugee crisis in Europe and refugee policy in the United States, but more than 85% of refugees are actually hosted in neighboring countries (UNHCR, 2017).

Since the start of the Syrian Civil War in 2011, at least 50% of the pre-war population of 22 million Syrians has been displaced (Al Hessan, 2016). Almost 5.7 million Syrian refugees currently live in neighboring countries—3.5 million in Turkey, 950,000 in Lebanon, 660,000 in Jordan, 254,000 in Iraq, and 132,000 in Egypt, in addition to the 6.6 million Syrians that are internally displaced (UNHCR, 2019). In Lebanon, Syrian refugees do not live in refugee camps, but in Lebanese communities or informal settlements, mostly in the Bekaa Valley, in and around Beirut, and North and South Lebanon. With a population of 6 million, 1 in 4 people in Lebanon is a Syrian or Palestinian refugee, which creates significant challenges for social services, such as education systems, in accommodating large inflows of students. This language policy and planning (LPP) case study will focus on Syrian refugees in Lebanon and how language-

in-education (LiE) and medium of instruction (MOI) policies are navigated by refugee students, parents, and educators.[1]

My interests in this topic come out of spending eight months as a fellow with the education team of an international non-governmental organization that works in Syrian refugee camps in Jordan. I primarily supported English teachers (Syrian and Jordanian) in a non-formal education (NFE) program who were navigating differences between Syrian and Jordanian English curricula. The English language demands of the Jordanian curriculum (grades 1-12) and the secondary school leaving exam (Tawjihi) created significant challenges for Syrian students due to both missed years of schooling and the greater language proficiency demands of the Jordanian national curriculum, as compared with the level of English acquired in Syria with government English curricula and teaching (for a fuller discussion of the Syrian education system and language teaching see Al Hessan, 2016). When refugees struggle to navigate an existing host country language policy landscape, especially as it impacts obtaining educational credentials, this can have ripple effects on higher education, employment opportunities, socioeconomic prospects, and even migration opportunities.

Teachers and students navigated and spoke about these LiE policy shifts between Syria and Jordan in many ways—English as an impossible obstacle or opportunity? LiE policies fostering a loss of Arabic and Syrian identity or English as instrumental for possible futures? This led me to want to learn more about the language policies and planning impacting refugee education in the region, and reconsider discourses of foreign languages, literacy, and English language learning. I hope to illuminate related LPP challenges and discourses as they play out in Lebanon in this case study, but as someone who is an outsider to the complex linguistic, socio-cultural, and historical milieu in Lebanon, I have, in this paper, relied on library research to understand and interpret the specific LPP history of Lebanon and the ways in which Syrian teachers, students, parents, and community-based organizations navigate LPP.

LPP Landscape in Lebanon

Before diving into educational policies and provisions for Syrian students, it is necessary to understand the broader language ecology in Lebanon. It is outside of the scope of this case study to provide a "thorough description of the relationships among languages and their environment in [Lebanon], reflecting an ecological perspective" (Groff, 2018, p. 1), but many scholars have contributed to a robust understanding of LPP and linguistic landscapes in Lebanon (see Bahous, Bacha, & Nabhani, 2011; Ghait & Shabaan, 1996; Zakharia, 2010). This case study will briefly outline, in broad strokes, the LPP landscape and some of the key dynamics at play in Lebanon.

Lebanon's Constitution dates to 1926, when Lebanon was a French Mandate, and is still in effect today. Article 11 of the Lebanese Constitution explains that, "the Arabic language is the official national language. The conditions under which the French language is to be used are determined by

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[1] Language-in-education (LiE) refers to all policies around language in schools, and medium of instruction is a subset of LiE policies, indicating the language used for instruction.

law" (Government of Lebanon, 1926). As in other Arabic-speaking countries, Lebanon has a diglossic situation where Modern Standard Arabic is the official language, taught in schools, used in writing and for government functions while, Lebanese Arabic is the primarily spoken, mother tongue language, used for daily communication and popular media (Esseili, 2017). Armenian, Kurdish, and Domari are minority languages in Lebanon, spoken within smaller communities. French and English are prominent languages in education and serve broad functions in daily interactions, many sectors of the labor market, within different sectarian communities, and in online media (Esseili, 2017).

As Zakharia (2010) explains, "scholarship on the Arab world points to language as a site of ideological contestation for colonial, sectarian, national, and pan-Arab sociopolitical struggles" (p. 158). In Lebanon, historical legacies of colonization, Lebanon's role in the Middle East North Africa region, missionary and public education, sectarianism and sectarian conflict, economic shifts, and globalization all combine in a complicated and multilingual LPP landscape. Through ethnographic work on youth language ideologies, specifically in education, Zakharia further highlights one of the key tensions in LPP in present-day Lebanon:

> The identification with Arabic among secondary school youths is mul-
> tifaceted and complex. Students articulate their connections to Ara-
> bic in religious, secular, national, and transnational terms, based on
> different conceptions of the Arab nature of Lebanon. Language cre-
> ates access to social networks and avenues for the cultivation of eco-
> nomic, social, and cultural capital, whether symbolic or instrumental.
> A strong multilingual ideology emerged both in relation to identity
> discourses—related to a 'modern,' 'educated,' and 'cultured' person
> and nation—as well as instrumentality for communicative purposes
> and future prospects. (p. 180)

The tensions among Arabic, multilingualism, identity, and globalization can also be found in everyday life. At a market in downtown Beirut, different language attitudes and conflicting ideologies are also present, even as vendors and customers use a mixture of Arabic, French, and English to buy and sell fruit and sandwiches. A 2015 Public Radio International news segment on multilingualism quotes a Lebanese woman, Pia Khater, shopping, who says, "she's not crazy about the idea that people should be expected to know English or French. 'What if you don't know the other two extra languages that come in the country? It's like linguistic racism,' [she says]" (Mortada, 2015). In the same article, Lebanese linguist, Loubna Dimachki, explains that for her, "this mishmash of languages is the 'Lebanese mother tongue.' When you have 'Lebanese mother tongue,' it's part of your identity in a way" (Mortada, 2015). Multilingual attitudes and ideologies in Lebanon reflect varied and nuanced preferences for, attachment to, and perceived utility across different contexts for Arabic, French, and English. Given the national language policy and language dynamics presented, I now turn to a discussion of the current LiE and medium-of-instruction (MOI) policy landscape in Lebanon, and how it has been shaped over time.

LiE and MOI Policies in Lebanon

Lebanon today has a highly centralized education system, but highly decentralized implementation, as around 70% of students in Lebanon attend private schools and only 30% attend government schools (Orr & Annous, 2018). For primary and secondary education, Lebanon uses a 6:3:3 system that includes 6 years of primary school and 3 years of lower secondary school, followed by a grade 9 exam (the Brevet). The grade 9 exam is required for admittance to higher secondary education (general or technical tracks), which consists of 3 years of schooling followed by a grade 12 exam (the Baccalaureate). Baccalaureate exam results determine university admissions (Vlaardingerbroek, Jaber, Rizk, & Bayoud, 2009). In 2017, Lebanon had a primary and secondary school-age population of more than 1.1 million children (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2017). This case study will focus on primary and secondary education LiE and MOI policies, but there are additional dimensions to LiE policies for early childhood education and higher education that are beyond the scope of this paper. A brief overview of the historical evolution of primary and secondary LiE policies in Lebanon is useful to situate current policy within a broader socio-political context.

Under the Ottoman Empire, Lebanon's education system in the 1800s and early 1900s was composed primarily of Western missionary schools, mostly divided along sectarian lines, and in addition to Arabic, languages taught included Turkish, French, German, and English (Esseili, 2017). At the end of the 19th century, the Syrian Protestant College (now the American University of Beirut) switched the primary language of instruction from Arabic to English, which had lasting effects on the primacy of foreign languages in primary and secondary education, as necessary preparation for higher education MOI policies. This also linked higher education (and its associated economic mobility) to foreign language learning in Lebanon (Zakharia, 2010; Esseili, 2017).

After World War I and the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, Lebanon (and Syria) were administered as a French mandate from 1920 to 1943. During this time, French was required to be taught in schools alongside Arabic (Decree no. 2079, June 1924) and the Mandate government focused on increasing the importance, status, and utility of French in their education policy (Bahous et al., 2011; Bacha & Bahous, 2011).

After Lebanese independence in 1943, government rhetoric and policy focused on a rejection of colonial languages and identity, and Arabic was reinstated as the mandatory MOI for all subjects in primary schools. Lebanese citizens in private schools were required to study Arabic, and Arabic was the sole language for government exams (Zakharia, 2010). At the same time, there was an investment in public education by the government and a focus on Arabic language and national identity, even as French remained a core part of Lebanese identity, especially for certain religious and ethnic groups such as the Lebanese Christian elites (Esseili, 2017).

In 1946, English became an approved foreign language alternative to French, private missionary schools and French lycées were exempted from teaching Arabic, and it became possible for students to sit government exams in Arabic, French, or English (Zakharia, 2010, 2015). Then, during the Lebanese Civil War (1975–1990), the public education system collapsed. Private schools expanded

to provide educational services, leading to the increase of French and English instruction, relative to Arabic (Zakharia, 2010).

The 1989 Taif Accords, which ended the Lebanese Civil War, called for education reform in the post-conflict country to focus on standardizing curricula, protecting private education, and expanding the provision of public education (Zakharia, 2010). This led to a new National Language Curriculum and textbook reforms during 1994-97 that required trilingual education policies in all schools. In addition to Arabic, schools had to teach English or French at primary levels, introduce a second foreign language at the secondary level, and use English or French as the MOI for science and math (Bacha & Bahous, 2011; Esseili, 2017). As Zakharia (2010) explains, "the tripartite language-in-education policy…promotes at least individual bilingualism in Arabic and one foreign language (French or English). It also promotes the working knowledge of a second foreign language. The intended consequence is societal trilingualism" (p. 162).

These trilingual LiE policies are still evident today, with primary schools teaching in Arabic but introducing a second foreign language in the early grades as a foreign language and also MOI for certain subjects. In secondary grades, one half of the curriculum [humanities and social sciences] is taught in Arabic, and the other half [sciences and math] in the first foreign language (Zakharia, 2015). In 2006, about 56% of schools used French as the first foreign language (FFL), 22% used English as the FFL, and 22% offered programs with either French or English (Zakharia, 2015). However, more recent data from the 2014-15 school year shows that 40% of schools use French as an FFL [a 15% decrease from 2006], 23% use English as an FFL [a 1% increase from 2006], and 38% [a 16% increase from 2006] offer either French or English programs (Esseili, 2017). Overall, the growth of schools that offer both programs seems to suggest that schools are reluctant to subtract, so instead, they add languages, perhaps to meet student needs, compete for students in the private school landscape, or out of attachment to trilingual multiculturalism. These are just a few of the trends and events that have shaped the current landscape of LiE policies and practices in Lebanon.

Effects of the LiE and MOI Policies on Lebanese and Palestinian Students

Before turning to Syrian refugee students and teachers in Lebanon and how they have navigated the educational policy landscape in Lebanon, it is important to examine how these multilingual LiE policies have affected Lebanese students and other learners in Lebanon, prior to the influx of almost one million Syrians, including 490,000 children, ages 3-18 (Cherri & Hariri, 2018). Orr and Annous (2018) found that, in papers written by Lebanese university students, the majority of students approved of the multilingual policy for pragmatic reasons "based on recognition of the utility of English in the global world of work" (p. 85). However, just as this group of students finds benefits from the multilingual LiE policies, there are others who have a different perspective on multilingual education policies. Researchers such as Orr and Annous (2018) have shown how mandatory multilingual policies have actually exacerbated existing regional, economic, and educational inequalities in Lebanon.

As secondary education is taught half in a language other than students' mother tongue, this policy is founded on the assumption that by grade 6 students

already possess or will rapidly develop a level of French or English through which they can study science and math without a language barrier (Orr & Annous, 2018). Orr and Annous challenge this assumption, explaining that "it seems reasonable to question these assumptions given that most Lebanese have Arabic as their mother tongue and pupils outside the capital do not live in communities where either English or French are widely spoken in everyday life" (p. 83). The emphasis on French and English disadvantages students based on where they live, due to limited opportunities compared to their peers in Beirut to use, practice, and interact with French and English outside of the classroom. Furthermore, poverty rates in Lebanon tend to be higher in rural and more peripheral areas and correlated with educational attainment (United Nations Development Programme, 2008).

Multilingual language policies also have effects on student drop-out rates, students' scores on exams, and the necessity for supplementary language programs. Shuayb (2016) explains that the multilingual nature of the 1994–1997 reforms came out of a compromise between those who wanted to focus on Arabic and Arab identity, and those who wanted to highlight the multicultural history of Lebanon and the instrumental value of foreign languages. Examining the data, school drop-out in Lebanon is highest in grades 6 and 7, and net enrollment drops from 92.7% in primary school to 68.5% in secondary schools, which is when foreign languages take over as the MOI in many subjects. This trilingual policy "has exacerbated education inequalities in Lebanon and has doomed the education attainment of many children from disadvantaged backgrounds" (p. 237).

Additionally, the Brevet (grade 9) exams in math, three sciences (physics, biology, and chemistry), and the first foreign language are conducted in English or French. Researchers studying the Brevet note that, "the importance of passing the Brevet to a young Lebanese person is difficult to overstate. Students who fail it must choose between repeating year 9 and reattempting the exams, transferring to the parallel technical vocational education system or simply dropping out of school" (Vlaardingerbroek et al., 2009, p. 1229). By using foreign languages as the language of testing, especially for non-language subjects, the LiE policies add a layer of complexity to accessing secondary education that may further disadvantage students based on regional or educational disparities. Orr and Annous (2018) also note that most higher education in Lebanon is in French or English, but universities often have to run pre-session language programs for many students to enable them to access university coursework. This indicates that language policies may create additional hurdles for disadvantaged students in accessing higher education.

While the influx of Syrian refugees to Lebanon has taken place in the last eight years, around 500,000 Palestinian refugees have lived in Lebanon since 1948, and most attend schools run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). UNRWA schools in Lebanon have to use the national curricula and follow national language policies, and Orr and Annous further note that, "teachers struggle with the same problems as their colleagues outside the camps, exacerbated by the pressures of refugee life" (p. 82). Regional, economic, and educational disparities in education are linked in Lebanon, and even prior to the arrival of Syrian refugees, researchers argue that while some may agree with and see the benefits of multilingual LiE policies, they may, in fact, contribute to inequities in the Lebanese educational system.

These are important to keep in mind as we turn to the influx of 500,000 Syrian students who have mostly had a much more monolingual education in Syria (Al Hessan, 2016).

Syrian Refugee Education in Lebanon

With the arrival of almost 500,000 school age Syrians, most of whom did not have the resources to immediately enroll children in private schools, the public education system in Lebanon has experienced significant pressures. As a result of this, in the 2012-13 school year, UN agencies agreed to pay Syrian students' registration and tuition fees, which allowed Syrian students' inclusion in public schools (Crul et al., 2019). Since 2015, the Lebanese government has addressed capacity issues by instituting a second-shift system, whereby the morning shift is for Lebanese students, and the afternoon shift is exclusively for Syrian students (Buckner, Spencer, & Cha, 2017). Lebanese teachers (many of whom are new contract teachers) teach the ministry-certified national curriculum to the afternoon shift students (Adelman, 2019).

A variety of non-formal schools have also sprung up to meet the needs of Syrian students. Typically, non-formal schools are only for Syrians, have Syrian refugee teachers, do not provide any sort of formal education certificate to students, and utilize a variety of curricula (Adelman, 2019). Non-formal schools are supposed to be bridge programs for Syrian students to transition into Lebanese public schools. In 2016, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) in Lebanon developed a framework for Non-Formal Education (NFE) with UN partners to regulate and provide quality control (Crul et al., 2019).

According to the 2018 United Nations Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR), around 51% of Syrian children age 3–17 (32% of primary school-age children and 77% of secondary-age youth) are out of school (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, & World Food Programme, 2018). There are many challenges that contribute to refugee children and youth being out-of-school in Lebanon, including the availability of second-shift or NFE programs, indirect costs of schooling (e.g., transportation), the need for children to work to contribute to family income, and language policies (Human Rights Watch, 2016).

This case study will explore the LPP dimensions of global refugee education policies, language policies for Syrian refugees in Lebanon, how global and national policies are both aligned and disconnected, and how teachers and students navigate multilingual LiE policies. By applying the theoretical frameworks described below to global, national, and local LiE and MOI policies for Syrian refugees in Lebanon, it will address the following research questions:

1. What are the layers of LiE policies affecting Syrian refugees (teachers and learners) in Lebanon?

2. How do the layers of LPP interact, and how do refugee teachers, students, and families navigate these dynamics?

Theoretical Framework

In order to explore the above research questions, I draw on several frameworks from LPP theorists and education scholars working on issues of schooling and education policies for displaced learners and educators. First, Hornberger and Johnson (2007) note that when educational policy research focuses just on the policies and texts, there is often "an over(emphasis) on the hegemonic power of policies [that] obfuscates the potentially agentive role of local educators as they interpret and implement the policies" (p. 510). By approaching LPP as a multi-layered onion, a researcher can address the question: "How [does] microlevel interaction relate to the macrolevels of social organization?" (Hornberger & Johnson 2007, p. 510). Additionally, bringing in ethnographic perspectives to a discussion of LPP, can uncover actors and voices that might be left out of policy discussions, and also explore unintended consequences of LPP. Moreover, LiE policies for refugees layer onto and interact in complex ways with existing LiE policies, especially as governments increasingly seek to accommodate refugee learners through existing national education systems. This case study will explore supranational refugee education and language policies, national language policies and how they apply to refugees in Lebanon, and also examine ethnographic and interview-based work done by other scholars to explore how educators and students navigate LPP.

LPP and Inequality

Tollefson explains in his 1991 book *Planning Language, Planning Inequality* that much research in language planning and second language acquisition locates the key variables that affect language learning at the individual level. Tollefson highlights the idea of learner motivation, and how past research identifies learners as having two types of motivation for language learning—instrumental (degree requirement or employment), or integrative (personal identity and ties to a language community). He problematizes this approach by explaining that "this distinction fails to explain the reasons why particular groups are required to learn new languages, the historical development of instrumental or integrative motivation within specific groups, or the impact of historical and structural factors upon individual language learning" (Tollefson, 1991, p. 30).

Tollefson's (1991) response to this individual, intrinsic, and neoclassical model is what he calls the historical-structural approach that refocuses language policy research to "examine the historical basis of policies and to make explicit the mechanisms by which policy decisions serve or undermine particular political and economic interests" (p. 32). In educational and school settings during refugee responses, it is also important to consider what opportunities and incentives students, teachers, and families have in enacting and navigating both existing language policies and refugee-specific language planning. Structural factors, such as access to quality education, socially-situated attitudes towards different languages and groups of people, and political and economic issues of emigration and work permits all affect language learning and education in Lebanon. Tollefson (1991) calls for the "evaluation of the effects of [language] plans and policies on the distribution of economic resources and political power"

(p. 35). Attention to structural factors, incentives and opportunities for language learning, and the broader societal context are all important in understanding LPP for refugee learners in Lebanon.

Unknowable Futures

Dryden-Peterson (2017; 2019) theorizes that the nature of refugee education has not, but urgently should, shift to a model that prepares students for 'unknowable futures.' One of the key reasons for this shift in the conceptualization of refugee education is that the amount of time that refugees are displaced for is "nearly three times as long [currently] as it was in the early 1990s" (Dryden-Peterson, 2017, p. 15). Refugees are on average, across conflicts, displaced for 25 years, which could be the entire educational lifespan of an individual (Dryden-Peterson, 2017). Dryden-Peterson (2019) argues that refugees now have at least four 'potential futures': return to home countries, integration in countries of first asylum, resettlement in a third country, or some transnational combination of the above. As such, "refugee trajectories . . . are non-linear and complex permutations of migration, exile, and consistently re-imagined futures" (Dryden-Peterson, 2017, p. 21).

Since education and the resulting skills and knowledge are transferable, most refugees hope for education to play a role in their futures, even though policies related to cross-context credential transfer or unaccredited schooling can limit educational mobility. Therefore, refugees seek to learn and build skills they can take with them into unknowable futures (Dryden-Peterson, 2019). This is highly applicable to Syrian refugees in Lebanon, many of whom do not know if or when they will be able to return to Syria. Freedom of movement and labor market access are also constrained in Lebanon, and refugees often do not have access to many educational options and have to make educational choices without knowing which credentials and language skills might be most useful in the future.

LPP Levels

The first research question of this case study is: What are the layers of LiE policies affecting Syrian refugees (teachers and learners) in Lebanon? To explore this question, I first provide an analysis of key LiE policy documents that guide refugee-specific LPP in supranational arenas and Lebanon's refugee response plan. Then, I synthesize several ethnographic studies and qualitative data points to examine how schools, NGOs, teachers, and students implement and experience LiE policies and programs in Lebanon.

All of the theoretical frameworks discussed above highlight the roles for supranational and international actors in shaping national and local policies. Especially given that Syrian refugees in Lebanon fall under the mandate of UNHCR, the national policy agenda for refugees is influenced by global agendas. Article 22 of the 1951 Refugee Convention, (which Lebanon has not actually signed) accords refugees the same treatment as citizens in access to primary education, and asks governments to treat them as favorably as other non-citizens in access to post-primary education, scholarship and schooling fees, and recognition of foreign credentials (United Nations General Assembly, 1951).

While the 1951 Convention created policy for refugee education, to specifically pinpoint the global policies around LPP in education for refugees, I turn to UNHCR's 2012–2016 Education Strategy. The strategy notes that the "general approach is integration of refugee learners within national systems where possible and appropriate and as guided by on-going consultation with refugees" (UNHCR, 2012, p. 8). This is a shift from previous UNHCR education policies, stemming from an earlier period when refugees typically lived in camps, away from urban centers, and spent shorter amounts of time in countries of first asylum (Dryden-Peterson, 2016). In the early 2010s, the majority of refugees world-wide lived in urban areas due to protracted conflict, refugee children were increasingly likely to spend their school-age years in host countries, and it became increasingly difficult to secure funding for parallel educations systems (Dryden-Peterson, 2016). In terms of LiE policies, the UNHCR 2012–2016 Education Strategy called for key activities in two cases:

> [In reference to primary school] Provision of intensive language training where necessary to enable children (and teachers) to adapt to an environment where the prevailing language is not their mother tongue. For the early years in primary school, education in the mother tongue has great advantages. (p. 12)

> [In reference to secondary school] Supporting intensive language training where needed to facilitate refugees' access to host country institutions and/or to maintain home country languages. (p. 20)

UNHCR acknowledges that language barriers exist for refugee children in attempting to integrate into national education systems. There are key LPP actions that UNHCR's supranational policy documents ask governments to take in order to support refugee primary and secondary school learners and teachers with intensive language training when needed to access schooling, adapt and transition to learning environments where the MOI is not their mother tongue, and maintain home country languages.

Given the multilingual LiE policies in Lebanon's national system, using the UNHCR recommendations, it seems that Syrian refugee primary students, teachers, and secondary students would need access to significant language support with French and English, especially for students in upper primary and secondary grades where the MOI is unfamiliar, and testing policies require examination in French and English for certain subjects. These recommendations also highlight the importance of Arabic as the MOI in early grades and options for Arabic maintenance and study in upper grades. Poliymakers would need to consider the potential support that some educators may need if the MOI for their subjects has switched from Arabic to French or English.[2] We now turn to examine the national level of LPP for refugees in Lebanon to see if and how national policies are connected to supranational recommendations.

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[2] Although educator work permits and teacher workforce issues are outside the scope of this paper, there are also many barriers for refugee educators who are frequently not permitted to teach in host country education systems.

National LPP for Syrians in Lebanon

Drawing on the current LiE policies in Lebanon, we turn now to specific educational policies for Syrian refugees in Lebanon. As a coalition member of the Regional Refugee Response for Syrian refugees across the Middle East, Lebanon has a country-specific Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP), 2017–2020 (Government of Lebanon & the United Nations, 2019). The plan notes that as of late 2018, almost half of school-age Syrians were not in any education program in Lebanon, and the drop-out rate increases significantly at lower secondary grade levels. The key policy and planning actions include enhancing access to education and improving the quality of education and learning environments. The LCRP focuses mostly on Syrians, but also vulnerable Lebanese and Palestinian students. There is no mention in the document of language as a challenge for students, or of language support as a key educational policy or activity (Government of Lebanon & the United Nations, 2019).

As part of the LCRP, Lebanon has implemented a five-year education strategy for Syrian refugees called Reaching All Children with Education II (RACE II), 2017-2021. RACE II, however, does acknowledge that language is one of the key barriers for refugees in accessing education:

> Refugee communities' lack of functional literacy, numeracy, and comprehension in French or English weighs significantly against them. French-language schools have been reported especially problematic because parents do not speak, understand, or use the language in their communities and therefore cannot offer their children support. (Ministry of Education and Higher Education, 2016, p. 7)

RACE II is organized into key actions, the first goal being equitable access and states that:

> Bridging supply and demand activities will be undertaken in support of non-formal education. Some children, particularly those who have been out of school for a year or more, may lack the academic and/or language skills to enroll in formal education (World Bank, 2016)

This creates a significant role for non-formal education (NFE) programs in providing support to refugee language learners as they prepare to transition to the Lebanese education system.

The second goal of RACE II focuses on enhanced quality of education, and LiE policies include a revised national learning framework with formative assessments for use at the school level in grades 3 and 6. The grade 6 assessments will be designed to detect learning challenges in key subjects, including languages (Ministry of Education and Higher Education, 2016; World Bank, 2016). At the national policy level, these are the two key pieces of refugee-specific LiE policies, in addition to the pre-existing national LiE and MOI policies described in previous sections.

RACE II acknowledges the language challenges for Syrian refugees accessing the Lebanese education system, and creates space for a non-formal education sector to provide language support bridging programs. In theory, this aligns with the supranational goal of language support to promote refugee integration

into national systems. However, questions remain about refugee stakeholder consultation in developing NFE programs as the main mechanism for language support. For example, are NFE language support programs thoughtfully designed and funded in ways that lead to refugees accessing and receiving a quality education within the Lebanese national system?

With the development of formative language assessments as an action item of RACE II, this policy attempts to support grade 6 students who need additional language support as part of UNHCR's recommended intensive language training. However, under this policy, students' will need to access math and science content in French or English just one year after they are identified as needing additional intensive language support; given that the students' language training would only have been for such a short time between the grade 6 testing and the grade 7 foreign language MOI, this might be unrealistic. Furthermore, in terms of language issues, Syrian teachers are not mentioned at all within RACE II. Supranational recommendations and national LPP for refugees in Lebanon are thus not aligned enough, especially considering how national level RACE II recommendations, existing national LiE policies in Lebanon, and the foreign language demands for students at different grades within Lebanon's education system are misaligned and would interact.

Local, Implementational LPP for Syrians in Lebanon

In light of the supranational and national LiE policies described above, what actually happens with LPP in classrooms with refugee students and teachers? As Buckner et al. (2017) point out, "it is at the local level, in schools, classrooms and communities, that the right to education is actually realized" (p. 455). Drawing on ethnographic, interview or survey-based data, and media I will explore examples of how community-based organizations (CBOs), NFE programs, teachers and school administrators, and students negotiate LiE policies for refugees in Lebanon. Table 1 below describes the sources drawn on, organized by type of participants in the studies discussed. As this paper was done using library research, these local level LPP sources come from online library catalog and journal database searches for qualitative or mixed methods research that offers insight from school-level, NGO or civil society organization actors, parents, and students' perspectives into how LPP is enacted (or reacted to) in community and school settings.

I have drawn the studies above together and into conversation with each other by looking for themes in how the participants in the research characterized their experiences with LiE policies in Lebanon. Refugee students, parents, teachers, NGO staff, and school administrators have a variety of experiences with language in diverse educational settings and three themes have become salient: 1) multilingual policies remain a significant barrier and challenge for students in accessing and succeeding in formal education; 2) successful navigation of Lebanon's multilingual educational policies tend to take place in non-formal settings; and 3) refugee teachers, families, and students place a high value on education, but attitudes towards Lebanon's multilingual LiE policies vary.

In applying Hornberger and Johnson's (2007) layers of the LPP onion, all of the examples of local actors engaging with and shaping LPP are constrained or empowered by the supranational and national layers. As local stakeholders act

to influence French and English acquisition by Syrian students and/or Arabic maintenance) in different ways, with different means, there are different effects. Grouping the following examples by their effect on language acquisition and/ or maintenance of Arabic, shows how local actors navigate policy, and perhaps how supranational and national LiE policies have unintended consequences at the local level.

Table 1
Local Level LPP Sources

Research Participants	Author(s), Year
Lebanese and Syrian teachers working specifically with Syrian refugee students	Adelman, 2019 Karam et al., 2017
Stakeholders in Syrian refugee education in Lebanon (donor, international and local NGOs, CBOs, government, teachers, parents)	Buckner et al., 2017 Human Rights Watch, 2016 Khaled, 2012 Shuayb et al., 2016
Palestinian (UNRWA) school stakeholders – teachers, students, parents, administrators	Al Hroub, 2014
Lebanese and Syrian refugee middle school youth	Bahou, 2017

LiE policy implementation often fails to support refugee students in acquiring multilingualism

At the implementation level, multilingual policies are implemented unevenly, and remain a significant barrier for students in accessing and succeeding in formal education. As Esseili (2017) found:

> Public teachers in Lebanon believe that their students are not well prepared for official examinations due to lack of proficiency in foreign languages. Teachers follow one of two extremes: they either conduct 'more than half of class time' in Arabic or they conduct the class solely in a foreign language without explaining concepts in the students' native language. Students end up failing because they find it difficult to express themselves in a foreign language or because they do not understand the concepts. (p. 690)

Teachers in formal schools appeared uncertain about how to address language challenges in their classrooms. Additionally, Human Rights Watch (2016) conducted interviews with refugee parents and students about their experiences accessing education in Lebanon, and several parents expressed the difficulty in navigating language issues. One parent explained:

> After arriving in Lebanon, she immediately enrolled her 14-year-old son in school. He had received top marks in Syria, but stopped attending classes in Lebanon after two years. She said: 'He's smart but it was too hard . . . It was the foreign languages that were too hard for him . . . There was no special help for languages, and no special teachers were affordable for us. Now he's sitting at home.' (Human Rights Watch, 2016)

Bahou (2017) conducted focus group discussions (FGDs) with grade 7 and 8 Lebanese and refugee public school students in the Beirut area to learn about student engagement in school. Students in FGDs emphasized their own, and their teachers', lack of foreign language skills. For example, "Elio-H-8 described: You saw her [the teacher]; she gives us a passage in French and asks us if we understood. How can we understand when our French is so weak? We tell her 'no' and then she doesn't explain. So you stop caring any more" (Bahou, 2017, p. 502). Al Hroub (2014), similarly found in his research with Palestinian students at UNRWA schools in Lebanon, that several students felt, "that the use of the English language is their main academic obstacle at school" (p. 61). In their comparative analysis of Syrian refugee education in Germany and Lebanon, Shuayb et al. (2016) also found that:

> [T]he language barrier for Syrian refugees in Lebanon continues to be the primary challenge, even among high achievers . . . Many Syrian refugee children have lost several years of schooling . . . As a result, many Syrian students struggle with basic literacy in both Arabic and foreign language. (p. 12)

Overall, teachers and students expressed uncertainty and frustration about how to navigate LiE issues in the Lebanese education system and that often, multilingual LPP presented barriers to education, instead of benefits.

LiE policies support refugee students in acquiring multilingualism in NFE settings

Karam, Kibler, and Yoder (2017) interviewed Syrian refugee educators working with Syrian students in NFE settings in Lebanon and found that most teachers supported English learning for its value as a global language, a pre-requisite for student success in Lebanese schools, an equalizer between refugees and Lebanese, and a useful skill for future employment. Karam et al. (2017) found that "teachers expressed a feeling of injustice that had been done to them in how they learned foreign languages in Syria. They did not want the same injustice to happen to their students in Lebanon" (p. 175), and they wanted students in Lebanon to acquire higher levels of proficiency in foreign languages.

Additionally, teachers in NFE programs, when the provided English textbooks lacked relevance and were not engaging, reported, "us[ing] songs, videos and realia to break down 'this wall of ice, of fear, where students are afraid of the language and they do not want to learn it. That barrier prevents them from learning it'" (Karam et al., 2017, p. 176). Buckner et al. (2017) also found in their interviews of stakeholders in Syrian refugee education that NFE and community-run schools were seen as better meeting the needs of refugee students as a result of their ability to provide language support and catch students up with English or French before entering formal schooling (p. 458). Khaled (2012) discussed with an NGO staffer in Lebanon how the NGO worked with UNICEF to launch a summer school program for Syrian refugees, focusing on language skills in English and French, so students were prepared to enroll in Lebanese schools in the fall. There are many examples in the NFE sector, of NGOs and Syrian teachers working to support students in acquiring foreign language skills, and highlighting the benefits and opportunities afforded by speaking multiple languages, especially English.

Refugee students, teachers, and families view multilingual LiE policies both positively and negatively

As described above, many refugee students saw MOI policies as insurmountable obstacles that affected their learning, engagement in school, and ability to access the social and economic benefits that education can provide, especially in formal schools with murky guidance for teachers on how to navigate language challenges. At the same time, students and teachers in NFE settings worked to cultivate multilingual skills, which clearly also has implications for the futures of Syrian refugees as related to educational attainment, integration in Lebanon, and possibilities for resettlement.

Karam et al. (2017) found that some teachers expressed doubts about English, as it might erode Arab or Syrian identity, or even be detrimental to students to study content areas like math or science in English as opposed to Arabic if students are to return to Syria. "Sana [a teacher] argued, 'If we go back to Syria…they will have to study math in Arabic, so the child[ren] will be lost'" (Karam et al., 2017, p. 174). In her work with Syrian and Lebanese teachers working with refugee students in Lebanon, Adelman (2019) found that Syrian teachers in NFE settings tended to focus on the future, and talked to students about education as related to the rebuilding of Syria. She quotes a Syrian teacher, Aabira, saying to her students, "I am sure that one day you will have a house, so keep this goal within you . . . to achieve it you must be educated . . . . [Y]our education is your weapon" ("Adelman"). Based on the evidence from ethnographies, interviews, and surveys, it appears that refugee teachers and students are thinking about multilingual educational policies as both obstacles and opportunities, connecting language learning to different potential futures for students.

Discussion

I now turn to a discussion that brings together the theoretical frameworks with the layers of policy in order to address the second case study research question: How do the layers of LPP interact, and how do refugee teachers, students, and families navigate these dynamics? By approaching supranational, national, and local LPP with Hornberger and Johnson's (2007) lens of a multi-layered onion, micro and macrolevel interactions are more clearly visible. Supranational educational policy for refugees recommends that they are included in national education systems. The incentives that led Lebanon to include refugees in the national system and provide some provisions for language support come out of international discourses, UNHCR priorities, and UN funding to support education system strengthening. In examining local perspectives, the push for inclusion in national systems may further marginalize students who are included in classrooms, but cannot access the teaching and learning due to language policies and a lack of support at the classroom level for how teachers and schools can navigate multilingual policies.

Non-formal education actors have developed and implemented bridging programs to support students with English and French; however, teachers and students often characterized language as a barrier to access, achievement, and

advancement in formal schooling, which leads me to question the premise that NFE programs and grade 6 language assessments are sufficient to enable all students to acquire the multilingual skills needed for success in formal school.

The LPP policies in RACE II do not fully address the challenges discussed above, including student drop-out rates at lower secondary school—the level at which English and French become the MOI for science and math—limited numbers (only about 4%) of Syrian students accessing upper secondary education, and an unrealistic timeline for grade 6 language assessments and intensive support, when proficiency in English or French is required starting in grade 7 (World Bank, 2016). Supranational policies repeatedly highlight the need for language support for refugees as they transition to public schools. However, based on student and teacher experiences, we can conclude that there are limited policies and practices at the national level that support Syrian students in the language acquisition required by the Lebanese system. It seems that the national LPP policies for refugees have been insufficient to provide the level of support needed for students to transition to formal education with the language skills demanded by the education system.

As Hornberger and Johnson (2007) explain, by including ethnographic and interview-based research when examining policy, the unintended consequences of marginalization in formal education come to light, even when supranational and national policies acknowledge and make some provisions to account for language acquisition challenges. These disconnects among the policy and practice layers for refugee education create implementation tensions for any policymaker. Should governments make adjustments to LiE policies (or other policies, such as those around assessments) or should they put policies, programs, and resources in place for language acquisition? How can these priorities both be addressed?

These disconnects have unintended consequences that are seen more clearly by examining the layers of LPP. Implementation appears to be a key issue when comparing national policies to refugee teacher and student experiences. Students, teachers, and NGOs describe how LiE policies actually create barriers for students to access and achieve in formal school. Language support provided through NFE programs and grade 6 assessments alone is not sufficient. However, national policies that highlight the value of non-formal education programs for refugees have also empowered organizations, teachers, and families to pursue and continue in language education. Microlevel experiences with LPP illuminate the gaps and successes among the layers of policy.

Implications for Inequality and Possible Futures

In thinking about refugee LPP in Lebanon using Tollefson's (1991) historical-structural approach, there is a complex milieu of LPP that has been translated into LiE policies that reflect a desire for at least individual bilingualism and societal trilingualism (Zakharia, 2010, p. 162). Even before the arrival of Syrian refugee populations, researchers have discussed how multilingual policies marginalize lower socioeconomic status students—those who live in areas with limited opportunities to use foreign languages, rural, and Palestinian students (Orr & Annous, 2018; Shuayb, 2016; UNDP, 2008). Tollefson (1991) has us ask whose political or economic interests are served by multilingual LiE policies. As with many policies, implemented perfectly, additive trilingual policies could benefit all learners, but

implementation and opportunity are often the challenges. What opportunities do refugee students, teachers, and families have to enact additive trilingualism when language support is channeled mostly through NFE programs and assessment policies have not made accommodations for learners who have missed years of schooling and studied content area subjects in other languages? Structural factors such as access to quality, trilingual education, attitudes towards learners and families, and opportunities for work, higher education, and emigration impact refugee language learning. Supranational and national LiE policies and the ways that local actors negotiate and create LPP all have an impact on the distribution of economic and political power, especially when we consider how tightly language policy is tied to assessment, access to upper secondary and higher education, and economic and emigration possibilities.

This also leads directly to Dryden-Peterson's (2017, 2019) focus on the importance of education that prepares refugee learners for a variety of possible futures. The UNHCR push for refugee learners to be included in national education systems is related to the fact that the amount of time that refugees are displaced has become protracted, and inclusion in national systems, in theory, provides greater opportunities for social inclusion, access to more educational pathways, and expanded economic opportunities due to language skills and credentials that facilitate inclusion. However, insufficient policies and planning to support language acquisition creates barriers for refugees to enter and succeed in Lebanon's national system. Language support as an NFE sector activity absolves the formal school system of responsibility to some degree and ensures that even as refugee learners succeed in NFE settings, but issues of credentials and educational inclusion persist. Without greater attention to LPP issues in education, the theorized benefits of economic and social inclusion in Lebanon facilitated by participation in national education systems cannot be realized. At the local level, refugee teachers, students, families, and NGOs have the concept of futures in mind as they navigate LiE policies in Lebanon, but policies have mixed effects that often marginalize students. Without expanded, thoughtful implementation of multilingual policies, alongside education that values students' Arabic skills, and Arab, Syrian, and transnational identities, LiE policies will remain a significant barrier to Syrian refugees accessing and succeeding in education in Lebanon. LiE policies for refugees in Lebanon show unrealized potential in preparing students for a range of possible futures.

Conclusion

There are many layers of LiE policy at play that affect Syrian refugee teachers and learners. At the supranational level, there is a push for inclusion in national educations systems with language support structures. At the national level, this is insufficiently translated into a focus on language support through NFE and developing assessments to detect language difficulties in grade 6. On the local level, there are many NFE organizations, teachers, and students working to support students in foreign language acquisition. At the same time, teachers and students often experience MOI policies as a barrier to education. Local actors speak about how teachers both successfully and unsuccessfully adapted instruction to meet LiE policy demands, students dropped out of school or engaged in enrichment

language programs, and teachers and students (re)conceptualized the importance of Arabic, English, and French in relation to imagined futures.

These policy layers have become disconnected, as the unintended consequences of directly including refugees in Lebanon's national system with its existing multilingual LiE policies have caused language to become a structural barrier to education for many refugees. However, as seen in the NFE programs, there is potential for multilingual education to support students, which is especially important for potential integration in Lebanon, emigration, or transnational futures. If Syrian refugee students, alongside marginalized Lebanese and Palestinian students, are systematically supported with LiE policies that truly foster additive multilingual education, there would be benefits in terms of preparing refugees for unknowable futures and mitigating social and economic inequalities.

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