

Institution: University of Reading		
Unit of Assessment: 26 Modern Languages & Linguistics		
Title of case study: Language for Resilience: A global programme of language learning for refugees and migrants.		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2016 - 2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Dr Tony Capstick	Lecturer in Applied Linguistics	21 March 2016 - present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2016 - 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Language teachers in the majority of refugee settings use a teacher-fronted, target-language immersion approach to language learning which means they actively prevent learners from using their home languages. Not only does this hinder the learners' ability to learn the new language but for refugee learners it also prevents them from being able to talk about their trauma. Tony Capstick's research has led to a global programme of language learning initiatives which connect language learning to the resilience of displaced learners in multilingual refugee settings. As a result, humanitarian organisations are now developing global education programmes which value multilingual pedagogies and embed psycho-social support in their language classrooms.</p>		
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>Capstick is a world expert in understanding how language learning supports resilience-building in programmes of psycho-social support and how people's wider language practices influence the identities of learners in conflict settings. The underpinning research builds on Capstick's co-authored report, <i>Language for Resilience</i> (L4R), which was published in 2016 (output 1). Capstick and his co-author, the educational psycho-therapist Marie Delaney, examined the relationship between language learning and resilience in refugee settings across Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Turkey.</p> <p>A fundamental aspect of Capstick's approach is to shift the humanitarian discourse on language learning from a proficiency-oriented view to a trauma-sensitive view that is based on current sociolinguistic evidence that home languages are vital for enhancing the resilience of refugees as well as for affirming the social identities of learners (output 2). To achieve this Capstick has applied current sociolinguistic theories to addressing the practical challenges of language policy and planning by humanitarian and development organisations.</p> <p>To extend the research-practice nexus underpinning this impact, Capstick established "Colleagues Across Borders" – a team of language teachers who acted as mentors to teachers of English in Iraq. From 2016–17 the mentors developed online sessions and pooled resources. Based on this collaborative project, Capstick was invited to write an article on resilience and language learning for <i>ELT Journal</i>, as part of a series outlining key concepts in language acquisition (output 3). Capstick then went on to design and run teacher development workshops about multilingual pedagogies at Mercy Corps in Iraq. Applying the research in this practical</p>		

setting also provided opportunities to gather additional data to refine the “language for resilience” model. This classroom-based research enabled Capstick to identify the “translanguaging” strategies that teachers use in these settings, the findings of which were published in 2019 in the *Applied Linguistics Review* (output 4). In parallel, research continued in collaboration with the British Council who were using the original L4R report to design a Research Hub. The research team was led by Capstick but made up of cross-disciplinary experts who met remotely on a monthly basis to produce a research report which provided practical ways forward for the five principles first identified in the L4R report.

Commenting on the Hub, the Principal Consultant at the British Council said: “In fact, the five key themes identified by Tony as key to working with refugees in the field of language ... still [continue] to underpin our work with refugees across the globe. These themes and principles have been iteratively tested through robust monitoring and evaluation systems and improved including through further interdisciplinary research led by Tony. The British Council has set up a ‘Language for Resilience research hub’ based in Jordan which collects, collates and expands on global research into the area of teaching languages to refugees and their host communities.”

3. References to the research

Capstick's research has introduced the concept of language for resilience and changed how language teachers in refugee settings understand the role of language learning. The research meets or exceeds the threshold for 2*: it has been published in peer-reviewed journals and commissioned policy documents. It is a recognised point of reference for language education for refugees and migrants, influencing practices for the design and implementation of international language programmes.

1. Capstick, T. (2016) Multilingual literacies, identities and ideologies: Exploring chain migration from Pakistan to the UK. Basingstoke: Palgrave. ISBN 9781137569776
2. Capstick, T., & Delaney, M. (2016). Language for resilience: The role of language in enhancing the resilience of Syrian refugees and host communities. *The British Council*. CentAUR link: <http://centaur.reading.ac.uk/88407/> DOI: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/education/schools/support-for-languages/thought-leadership/research-report/language-resilience>
3. Capstick, T. (2018). Key Concepts in ELT: Resilience. *ELT Journal*, 72(2), 210-213. ISSN: 1477-4526, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccx068>
4. Capstick, T. (2018) Language for Resilience: Cross-disciplinary perspectives on the role of language in enhancing the resilience of refugees and host communities. *The British Council*. CentAUR link: <http://centaur.reading.ac.uk/88391/> DOI: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/education/schools/support-for-languages/thought-leadership/research-report/language-resilience-cross>
5. Capstick, T. (2019) Language learning as psycho-social support: translanguaging space as safe space in superdiverse refugee settings. *Applied Linguistics Review*. ISSN 1868-6311, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2018-0036>

4. Details of the impact

Capstick's research has generated a global programme of language learning initiatives supported by the British Council which have been delivered in collaboration with partners across the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America. The teaching strategies of educators in refugee classrooms in Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Turkey were the first to change and now the British Council's programme has been implemented in nine countries in two other continents (Africa and South America). Capstick's “Language for Resilience” has become a “core plank” of

the British Council's global education work and scholarship schemes, influencing teachers and learners in classrooms across the world.

A. Impact on language teaching policy

Capstick's research has led to changes in educational policy regarding attitudes towards language teaching for refugees and migrants; "language for resilience" has become a widely recognised theme and approach in language education (E1). The British Council's global programme which incorporates Capstick's over-arching theory for language teaching fills a "much-needed skills gap in the non-formal education sector" and means language teacher training can be offered to marginalised communities (E2). The principles outlined by Capstick and Delaney in the LR4 report are now used by the British Council to design their language teaching programmes for government and NGOs in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. A Senior Advisor at the British Council commented that Capstick's work has "profoundly and positively impacted on the way the British Council thinks about our work with multiple refugee and host communities." It has also helped the British Council to forge key partnerships in the area, including with the former education director for UNHCR in Middle East and North Africa. These relationships have "helped provide [us with] the access to key refugee communities" (E3).

Through a series of engaging policy briefings Capstick has convinced key stakeholders that trauma-sensitive methods of language learning can build resilience in refugee settings. This has changed the way major funding organisations, such as the British Council, as well as smaller NGOs, including Mercy Corps, view teaching practices in conflict and post-conflict settings. At a policy event in Brussels, Capstick presented his research to 36 participants (including from the European Parliament, Kiron, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and Education Community Hope Opportunity (ECHO). He also met with stakeholders from the international language teaching community at research and training launch events to gain their feedback on his research and used this feedback to create content for the British Council Language for Resilience Exhibition which was first held in the British Council Headquarters, Spring Gardens London, from March to July 2018, and is still free to view online. Approximately 70,000 visitors accessed the exhibition tour (E1).

B. Pedagogic impact on language teachers in Iraq:

Capstick has created a wealth of classroom material over the past five years which has enabled teachers to change their classroom teaching methods. Working with Mercy Corps Iraq staff Capstick co-created the "Colleagues Across Borders" project which involves online remote mentoring between staff at the University of Reading and teachers of English at Mercy Corps in the Kurdistan region of Iraq. Between September 2016 and September 2017, 12 University of Reading teachers (supported by Capstick) coached 12 Iraqi teachers. Capstick was then invited to run face-to-face workshops in the NGO's Iraq offices to develop the teachers' classroom practices further. The teachers wanted to know more about how to use multilingual pedagogies to affirm the identities of their Arabic-speaking learners displaced from the South of Iraq, the Kurdish-speaking refugee learners from Syria and the Kurdish-speaking host community students from Kurdistan. Focus group discussions with these three groups enabled Capstick to build the knowledge within the NGO community of identity-affirming language programmes. This cooperation between academics, language teachers and NGO staff enabled this transnational team to design materials that were based on the cultural practices of language teachers in Iraq. The teaching materials are still in use today as part of Mercy Corps programmes in Iraq and Jordan (E4). One of the Syrian refugee teachers commented that "before I didn't know how to use Badini or Sorani [Kurdish languages] in my teaching, it was illegal inside Syria... but now the Reading mentors show us how to do these, how to link to identity' (E5).

Capstick's research has enabled English classes to become a vehicle for discussion about identity and discrimination and this is having a direct impact on how teachers' classroom language teaching is moving towards a trauma-sensitive approach to psycho-social support. Teachers and programme staff in Iraq have commented on how their practice has changed as a result on Capstick's work, especially in relation to working with adolescents who may have experienced trauma (E6). Capstick took the issues raised by teachers in Iraq, to the British Council who invited him and Marie Delaney to write a FutureLearn Massive Open Online Course: *Migrants and Refugees in Education: A Toolkit for Teachers*. The MOOC reached 7,411 learners in over 130 countries in the first two runs. (E6). Participants commented on the principles explained by Capstick in the MOOC and how they would use them in their own teaching practice. It also encouraged many participants to do their own research and pursue further study in the field of language for resilience. (E6).

C. Pedagogic impact on the British Council and transformation of its teaching materials

As a direct result of Capstick's work, the British Council became more proactive in providing trauma-sensitive materials for free. Capstick was asked to develop a framework of professional practices for all teachers of refugees and migrants across the world. Capstick's review of the literature from Development Education and Language Education helped him develop the framework (E7). He redrafted the core professional practices and guidance, providing the British Council with a set of teacher and manager practises. Capstick worked as Global Materials Development Consultant with the British Council and a large UK AID budget from the FCO to develop a set of free Open Educational Resources (OERs) for classroom teachers and learning centre managers, including modules on multilingualism, discrimination and intercultural learning which are available world-wide for free via the British Council website. The Trauma in the Classroom course ran with 220 participants from 67 countries enrolled in the first course. One participant from Yemen said: "This course introduces areas of crucial importance such as dealing with learners with learning difficulties due to traumatic experiences, exploring inclusion, considering integration and supporting learners to overcome challenges. I started reconsidering my thoughts on many of my learners' behaviours which were unperceivable to me before I took the course" (E8). Three Facebook live sessions with Capstick as Lead Educator ran during the course – the first had 23,402 views across the world and was followed by two additional live events in June 2020 (E9).

Capstick's research has led to a re-assessment of the way English is used as a language in multilingual refugee settings and influenced the way non-language subjects are taught in migrant and refugee settings. Language teachers now know how to use student-centred multilingual approaches to teach a new language in the classroom; they also know how to use these new teaching strategies to provide psycho-social support for refugee learners.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- [E1] Language for Resilience Exhibition at the British Council
<https://www.britishcouncil.org/language-for-resilience> (also supplied as a PDF).
- [E2] Testimonial from the Head of EES Levant at the British Council.
- [E3] Testimonial from a Senior Advisor at the British Council.
- [E4] Testimonial from an English Teacher working with the British Council.
- [E5] Interviews from the teachers of English at Mercy Corps in Iraq.
- [E6] FutureLearn MOOC report and learner comments.

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| [E7] | Framework Diagram and associated materials. |
| [E8] | 'Trauma in the Classroom' report and learner comments. |
| [E9] | Facebook live event
https://www.facebook.com/TeachingEnglish.BritishCouncil/videos/286327939077912/ (also supplied as a PDF). |