Context:

Newcomers in California's classrooms
Volume 21, No. 143, October/November, 2000

Refugee Students Find Their Voices in Two Midwestern Communities

by Mary M. Harrison

[Editor's Note: Refugee children form a special subgroup of immigrant students. They are children from families that have experienced some form of oppression of basic human rights previous to arrival in the United States. While facing the obstacles encountered by most other immigrants—learning English, adapting to a new culture, surviving economic hardships, and dealing with racism and other forms of prejudice—-refugees, unlike other immigrants, must also deal with the effects of the traumatic events that stimulated their exodus from their home countries. This article provides some insights into and examples of the experiences of refugee children in U.S. schools.]

"I remember running through the streets that were once so shiny and so beautiful, now turning into bloody mess," Zoka Mujkanovic, 13, wrote in a poem for his language arts class last fall. "I saw people on the ground yelling, 'Please help me.' That is the worst feeling of all, watching people die and there is nothing you can do about it.

"I watched in horror, praying to God that I'm just dreaming and for him to get me out of this nightmare. But no, the smell of burning buildings and the noise of tanks rushing down the streets and the blood of the wounded soldiers made it too real. From that day and now, nothing will ever be the same."

Refugee children from Bosnia-Herzegovina in a mosque in Zagreb, Croatia. UNHCR.

Daily life in Fargo, N.D., where Zoka and his family were resettled as refugees in 1997 and where he is now an 8th grade student at Agassiz Middle School, is a world away from war-torn Bosnia. Most of the other 631 students in the district's burgeoning ESL program, who represent 58 cultures and speak 33 languages, are also refugees.

Stories like Zoka's, recounting violence and loss, surface often in Fargo's ESL classrooms, and sometimes in mainstream classes, as refugee students begin to feel safe and to build trusting relationships.

"Almost all of them have experienced death, dying, hurt and loss," says Vonnie Sanders, Zoka's ESL teacher at Agassiz. "They want to talk about what's happened, and if you give them ample opportunity for conversation in the classroom, it comes out."

A veteran elementary teacher, Sanders felt apprehensive when she began teaching refugee students ESL five years ago. She soon realized that her most important responsibilities included recognizing when a refugee student needed to share a story, giving the child the opportunity to do so, and modeling acceptance and respect for the children, their cul-

ture and their stories. "If I don't listen," she says, "they won't be free to learn."

Sanders notes that ordinary classroom situations may stir the memory of a traumatic experience. As a student learns English vocabulary for family relationships, for example, he may want to describe how his father or grandmother was killed in the war. Sanders makes clear to her students that they, too, must always listen to one another respectfully. "That way, they know this is a safe place," she says.

Woman in war-damaged building in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina. UNHCR.

A Community-Wide Embrace

As defined by the United Nations, refugees are persons living outside their native country "owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion." In recent years, the largest groups in the U.S. have come from African, Middle Eastern and Eastern European countries. However, for many years after the Vietnam War, Southeast Asians comprised the largest group of refugees in Fargo and other cities across the country.

Thanks to the efforts of many ESL and mainstream teachers, counselors and administrators, Fargo is particularly attuned to the needs of refugee students and is committed to meeting them. This commitment can be attributed in part to the enthusiasm and experience of two individuals: Michele Vannote and Verlene Dvorachek. Vannote, a kindergarten principal, has directed the ESL program since the first few refugee students, who were Vietnamese, arrived in the mid-1970s; Verlene Dvorachek has been ESL curriculum manager 14 years and taught adult ESL for 15.

Over the years, Vannote has obtained federal and state grants, as well as local funding, to help pay for teacher training and educational and social projects to help refugee children succeed. She and Dvorachek regularly recruit volunteers for ESL classrooms from local colleges and universities. They invite refugee parents to talk to teachers about their cultures and their war experiences.

The two educators have encouraged a district-wide joining of forces with the parks and recreation department, public libraries, YMCA and nearby children's museum, establishing or promoting programs that will appeal to refugee families. They work closely with the well-staffed resettlement agency, Lutheran Social Services, which recently opened the Center for New Americans and hired a counselor to work with refugee students and their teachers.

"You can't leave one stone unturned," says Vannote. "You've got to use every resource available."

Fargo's outreach to its refugee families, Vannote believes, began in 1994 with the Cultural Diversity Project, created with a grant from the Pew Charitable Trust. Over a four-year period, the project brought together mayors and other community leaders in Fargo and West Fargo on the North Dakota side, and Moorhead and Dilworth in nearby Minnesota, to plan positive responses to the area's rapidly changing population in the fields of education, business, housing and the arts.

Like Fargo, many schools across the country have enrolled large numbers of refugee students in recent years. Unlike Fargo, however, most have not identified local resources to help them work with the new students. Teachers, feeling unprepared to meet the needs of children whose education has been interrupted by war, who speak little or no English, and who may have experienced unimaginable trauma, have been begging for help.

In 1997 the Minnesota legislature responded to this void by funding the Minnesota School Project. The unique project draws upon the resources of the Center for Victims of Torture (CVT) that opened in Min-

[Editor's note: This article was reprinted from *Teaching Tolerance* (N.18, Fall 2000), the magazine produced by the Southern Poverty Law Center, with permission.]

neapolis in 1985—another first-of-its-kind in the U.S. The Minnesota School Project provides training for teachers and school staff regarding refugee children, telephone consultation on individual cases, and presentations for students.

Mirjana Bijelic, a social worker at CVT and a Croatian immigrant, is project coordinator. This year she will train about 50 groups of teachers—from individual schools or whole districts—in 90-minute to half-day sessions designed to sensitize participants to the experiences and needs of their refugee students. She notes that the strategies she teaches work well with students who have endured other kinds of trauma as well, such as family violence or a constant struggle for survival.

"Trauma response is not necessarily just war-related," Bijelic says. "The emotional difficulties, such as nightmares and difficulties with memory, are similar for all traumatic experiences. The sense of deprivation, sadness and anger is also similar."

Typically Bijelic begins training sessions with videos that give teachers an idea of how war may have affected their students and their families (see *Resources*). "An average teacher has seen some war scenes on TV, read a book and seen movies about armies or war heroes," she notes. "But these don't look at everyday life—people being physically affected by lack of food and shelter, and psychologically affected."

From there, Bijelic points out signs of distress for which teachers should watch. Fears, exaggerated worries about things like finding the next classroom, frequent stomach aches or headaches, under- or overeating, sleep problems, memory problems, inability to concentrate, sadness and depression can all signal lasting effects of war trauma, or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Messages of Reassurance

Not every refugee child who exhibits a symptom needs special help, Bijelic points out. On the other hand, students can appear to be fine when they do need help. When teachers and counselors believe students need therapy they cannot provide, she recommends guiding their families to mental health services available through resettlement and social service agencies, local or county mental health facilities, universities and grief support groups.

Some cultures discourage talking about personal problems, and those parents may reject community mental health services for their children. However, the parents may be willing to meet with counselors from their own culture or religion.

All children who have experienced trauma, even those who seem to be managing well, need messages of reassurance from adults, expressed through words or actions, and teachers are in an excellent position to offer that support. "School is for kids a significant place," Bijelic says. "It can certainly be as healing as a therapist's office."

Reassuring messages should be simple and realistic, she suggests: This is a safe place; you are likable, capable and needed; you can have a good future; you can influence what happens to you; you can contribute to our school and community.

In addition to giving refugee students opportunities to talk, draw or write about their war experiences if they wish to do so, Bijelic encourages teachers to help them prosper by building on small successes. For example, rather than ignoring or criticizing low scores on a vocabulary test, a teacher might congratulate a student for getting 3 of 10 questions correct and ask, "What helped you to learn this?"

"Expectations may have to be adjusted for a student who has missed three years of school and has seen people killed and bombs exploded," she adds.

Involvement in sports and other extracurricular activities can also help children feel successful. The Fargo school district recently solicited a grant from the Department of Health and Human Services to set up after-school programs that draw second-language students into extracurriculars quickly, thus establishing a sense of belonging in their new culture.

Vietnamese refugee at Ba Thad camp in Thailand. UNHCR.

Recognizing that many second-language learners at Agassiz Middle School did not participate in intramural sports until two or three years after they arrived because they didn't know game or social rules, the school introduced a biweekly "Rules of the Game" class. From there, students move right into the intramural program.

Other schools are offering different programs to bring ESL students and native Fargo students together for fun activities such as chess lessons and tournaments, computer classes and an international club.

Bearing Witness

A group of nine students at Sullivan Middle School in Minneapolis, including two immigrants and one refugee, are discussing a video that Mirjana Bejilic had shown earlier in homeroom. The video featured a Cambodian boy their age, who lost his leg when he stepped on a land mine.

The students first share ideas about how they would reach out to the Cambodian boy if he came to their school. After one student points out that not all refugee students respond when other students reach out to them, they consider the reasons candidly.

The biggest problem, they say, is rumors. When students do not speak the same language, "each culture thinks the other is talking about them," one student explains. As the discussion continues, the students suggest solutions. Several note that they forget that anyone is different from them when they play sports. "If you're playing soccer or basketball, you have to work together," one explains.

Bosnian refugee camp in Gasinci, Slavonia. UNHCR.

Another student suggests asking Somali paraprofessionals and students if they will teach a Somali language class after school. That would help them talk to one another more and worry less about rumors, the students agree.

Barbara Brenner, the students' homeroom teacher, is not surprised by their insight into social relationships at school, which she calls middle-schoolers' biggest concern, and their ability to suggest good solutions to problems. "The kids are used to being called upon as peacemakers," she says. "And this age is very keen about fairness and justice."

At another Minneapolis school, Roosevelt High, English teacher Tracey Pyscher started a project last year that focused students in a different direction—toward the personal experiences that have shaped their lives. Although not a refugee, Pyscher identifies with students who are.

She describes herself in adolescence as "a young person at risk." At 15 she ran away from home. Earlier, as a means of coping with an alcoholic father who abused her mother, Pyscher says she shut off all her emotions.

In recent years, large groups of refugee students, most of them Somali, have enrolled at Roosevelt. Pyscher has heard some students talk in a detached manner about a rape or death they witnessed and recognized the same symptoms of withdrawal.

Last year, Pyscher was asked to teach two transitional classes for ESL students who would be mainstreamed the following year. She had noticed that although her mainstream refugee students never talked about their war experiences in class, they poured the stories out in journal assignments. She was also aware that many of their classmates and some staff knew little about the culture of the international students or the Muslim faith that was, in many cases, central to their lives.

Writing about their experiences could be therapeutic for her students, Pyscher realized. Publishing the stories could also help the whole school community to understand them.

Pyscher introduced her idea for an anthology of student voices by sharing writing about some of her own painful adolescent experiences. "I shared how you deal with pain," she says. "I wanted them to trust me." She encouraged students to write about things that were important to them but gave them free-

dom to choose their topics.

Her students responded by writing about the beautiful haven that Somalia was before the civil war broke out, the deaths and destruction they witnessed after that, and the difficulties of starting over in a new country. One girl wrote about missing her happy childhood home in Laos, another about the civil war in Liberia that claimed the lives of her family, friends and neighbors.

A First Step

Students chose the title *Unforgettable Stories,* posed for pictures, contributed artwork and helped Pyscher edit the stories. Working after school, they typed pages and ran off 200 copies of each, using the school's only copy machine and paper donated by the English department. They stapled the 67-page booklets and distributed them to every teacher and staff member.

Maryan Kalif, a Somali junior whose story described a young mother dying as her twin babies nursed, says that publishing the book was her first step in being able to talk about the terrible things that happened. "It was hard for me but now I can open up," she says.

Sophomore Amina Mohamed wrote about the frustration of being stared at and stereotyped simply because she dressed like a Somali-Muslim girl. "It was good to get it out of my heart and let other people know how I feel," she says. As a result of her story, she hears fewer stereotypical comments like "All Somali men abuse women" and "The women cover their bodies because of weight or because they don't have hair."

Back in Vonnie Sanders' ESL classroom at Agassiz Middle School in Fargo, Zoka Mujkanovic seems pleased by compliments for the haunting poem he wrote about Bosnia. For now, though, he brushes off questions about the experience. "I got over that," he says.

He is not convinced that writing about that terrible day helped him. "It kinda brings bad memories," he says. "It gets you back a little bit." Hastily he adds, "Not like you're going to cry."

Sanders predicts that Zoka and other students will talk and write about their war experiences frequently in the months ahead. At those times, she'll continue to encourage them to do so. Sometimes she may cry with her students; she thinks it's OK for them to see tears in her eyes. But afterwards, she'll help them get back to work.

"I have to provide normalcy for them,"

Somali refugees at Hartisheik B camp, Hararghe region, Ethiopia.

Sanders says. "Sometimes I say, 'You have homework. We'll keep on with life, and things will get better.' It's my job to balance listening and caring and providing a place where we'll all move on."

Mary Harrison is a freelance writer based in St. Louis, Mo. This article was reprinted with permission from **Teaching Tolerance Magazine** , (N. 18, Fall 2000, pp. 39-44) produced by the Southern Poverty Law Center, Montgomery, Alabama.

REFUGEE RESOURCES

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) provides comprehensive teaching units designed to teach students both the history of refugee groups and the importance of nonviolent conflict resolution throughout the world. Arranged in subject categories (history, geography, civic education, language/literature and art) and prepared for age groups 9-11, 12-14 and 15-18, the units are available on the UNHCR Web site.

UNHCR, 1775 K St., Suite 300, Washington, DC 20006. (202) 785-2440. www.unhcr.ch

Transitions: Stories of Our Journeys

($10 donation requested) is a collection of first-person accounts by refugee children from around the world. Compiled by the Georgia Mutual Assistance Association Consortium (GMAAC), the book provides a other perspectives on the refugee experience.

GMAAC, 901 Rowland St., Clarkston, GA 30021. (404) 299-6646

The U.S. Committee for Refugees

a private humanitarian organization founded in 1958, works for refugee protection and assistance in all regions of the world. Its website includes updates on refugee news, audios of refugee voices, and ordering information for two booklets for teachers, *Encouraging Refugee Awareness in the Classroom and Teaching About Immigrants and Refugees* ($5 each).

U.S. Committee for Refugees, 1717 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20036. (202) 347-3507. www.refugees.org

Children of the Earth

Two videos from Maryknoll's *Children of the Earth* series, *Asia Close-Up* and *Central America Close-Up* ($16.95 each), depict students who have been traumatized but are doing well and have a sense of optimism. These titles are excellent for introducing students to the experiences of refugees and initiating classroom discussion.

Maryknoll World Productions, P.O. Box 308, Maryknoll, NY 10545-0308, (800) 227-8523, www.maryknoll.org

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ACTIVITY

The Concept of Refuge

In response to increasing resettlement of international refugees in New York state, the Roberson Museum and Science Center in Binghamton mounted an exhibition entitled *Refuge: The Newest New Yorkers.* The show of documentary photographs by Mel Rosenthal featured recent refugee immigrants from Bosnia, Somalia, Cuba, Tibet and other countries. To help student visitors see beyond the "otherness" of the images to universal human experience, the museum's education staff designed a gallery walk on the theme of forced change. Education director Peg Nocciolino offers the following suggestions for classroom teachers who want to broaden the context for addressing refugee issues.

All of us, at one time or another, experience some kind of forced change in our lives: illness, death of a loved one, relocation, divorce, blended families, physical disability, aging, poverty and natural disasters, to name a few examples. By drawing upon their own encounters with forced change, students can begin to recognize themselves and their own stories in the refugee experience.

Teachers can design classroom experiences that expose students to relatively brief forced change. Using such activities as an emotional impetus and a study of human rights documents as a conceptual framework, teachers and students together can create human rights communities in their classrooms and schools.

- Invite a guest to teach in a different language for a whole period.
- Rearrange the furniture.
- Change classroom rules without notice.
- Separate students into arbitrary groups and give one group more power and privilege.
- Have everyone write with their nondominant hand all afternoon.
- Arrange for older elementary classes to switch rooms without warning.

Near the end of the day, have students explore and discuss—and then write about—the experience and its implications.

- How did they react at first?
- What mental and physical adjustments did they have to make?
- How did their feelings change?
- What did they come to understand?
- How did they seek "refuge"?
- Discuss people's willingness or unwillingness to act when someone was being treated unfairly.
- What kinds of forced change might a refugee experience?
- How could the students, as individuals, make a difference for anyone experiencing forced change?

As an extension, have students interview family members about their own personal experiences of forced change. If your school does not have meaningful ways of welcoming new students and visitors, have students develop "welcome centers," tours, handbooks and audiotapes in various languages.

Making meaning out of past and present experiences or "stories" of forced change and refuge, no matter where, can help children imagine future stories—their own and those of others—that answer fear with compassion.

Linguistic Olympics!

Thomas E. Payne and Russian and American Linguistic Olympics Committees, Department of Linguistics, University of Oregon

http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~tpayne/lingolym/

Many teachers have found these materials to be useful in their classrooms as homework assignment or as the focus for special events. The Linguistic Olympic Organizing Committee can provide answer keys, additional puzzles and consulting help, as resources permit. So far this is a free service to educators. Contact Thomas Payne at tpayne@oregon.uoregon.edu

Begun in Russia in the mid-1960s, the Linguistic Olympics has come to the US. The University of Oregon, Eugene, has sponsored a competition for the past three years, and puzzles from those competitions are on the website. These puzzles illustrate the processes that underlie language acquisition, and can be useful for helping monolingual teachers understand the value of various types of classroom activities.

Designed for students 11 to 18 years of age, the puzzles are based on real languages. The puzzles are of varying degrees of difficulty, but all are solvable using ordinary reasoning and analytic skills possessed by secondary school students. No special knowledge or resources are needed. In order to solve the puzzles, the student must apply hypothesis generation, and analytic reasoning common to all kinds of intellectual tasks, as well as ordinary common sense. In the real Linguistic Olympics, teams are given one to two hours to solve the puzzle.

Students learn about the richness, diversity and systematicity of language. Many of the puzzles highlight cultural features expressed by the languages represented. Students are amazed when they discover the different ways that languages can express ideas. In the process, students overcome natural anxiety toward other languages and writing systems. The most successful students are those who are able to extend themselves beyond their usual thought patterns to discover ways in which speakers of different languages approach reality.

Puzzles from the 1998 Olympics

- Ancient Inscriptions. Unlock the secrets of mysterious inscriptions on five Bronze-age gravestones.
- Babylonian. Decipher an educational document in the cuneiform writing system.
- Chickasaw, an American Indian language of the Southeastern United States.
- Endo, a Nilo-Saharan language of Kenya.
- Hausa, a major trade language of West Africa.
- Hawaiian, the Polynesian language spoken by native Hawaiians.
- Luvian, an ancient language of the Middle East written in a hieroglyphic script.
- Orkhono-Yeniseyan, an ancient language of Western Asia.
- Quechua, the language of the ancient Inca Empire, and one of the national languages of Modern Peru.
- Sanskrit, an ancient language of Northern India and the sacred language of the Hindu Vedas.
- Swahili, the major trade language of East Africa.
- Turkish, the national language of Modern Turkey.
- Verlan, a secret language used by teenagers in France.

Puzzles from the 1999 Olympics

- Amharic, the national language of Ethiopia.
- Classical Nahuatl, the language of the Aztec Empire, 1325-1522.
- Czech. Czech the time in the language of the Czech republic!
- Samoan, the Polynesian language spoken in Western Samoa and American Samoa.
- Swahili of Eastern Congo, another puzzle in the major trade language of East Africa.
- Welsh, a modern Celtic language of the British Isles.
- Yaqui, a Uto-Aztecan language of Arizona and Northern Mexico.

Puzzles from the 2000 Olympics

- Archi, an endangered minority language of Daghestan, Russia.
- Georgian, a modern language that uses

an ancient script.

- Old Persian. Learn how the oldest known true writing system works.
- Shugnan, an Indo-Iranian language of Tajikistan and Afghanistan.
- Tajik, the national language of Tajikistan.
- Tocharian, an ancient language of China.

Professional Development Activity

Divide teachers into groups of 2 or 3. Distribute one of the puzzles (all groups get the same puzzle). Give about a half hour for the groups to fill in the missing words or phrases. Ask each group to give their answers, along with the generalization that governs their new production. Give the groups another 15 minutes to do more work on their puzzles (if needed). Then regroup teachers into groups of 4 or 5. Have them develop 3-5 recommendations for teachers who have English learners in their classrooms: "How can teachers modify regular instruction so that English learners acquire the language?"

Two samples follow: Classical Nahuatl (easy) and Hausa (medium difficult).

Example #1: Classical Nahuatl

In many languages of the world, whole sentences can be expressed with a single word. This is true in Classical Nahuatl, the language of the Aztec Empire that flourished in what is now Mexico between 1325 and 1522 CE. In the following puzzle, try to divide each Nahuatl word into its various parts, and then fill in the translations at the end.

	Nahuatl word	*English Translation*
1.	nicho:ka	"I cry."
2.	nicho:kani	"I am crying."
3.	ankochinih	"Y'all are sleeping."
4.	tikochih	"We sleep."
5.	kochiya	"He was sleeping."
6.	kwi:kas	"He will sing."
7.	ankochiyah	"Y'all were sleeping."
8.	nicho:kas	"I will cry."
9.	cho:kayah	"They were crying."
10.	tikochi	"You sleep."
11.	ancho:kah	"Y'all cry."
12.	tikochis	"You will sleep."
13.	ticho:kayah	"We were crying."
14.	cho:ka	"He cries."
15.	kochini	"He is sleeping."
16.	ancho:kayah	"Y'all were crying."
17.	ticho:kanih	"We are crying."
18.	kwi:kah	"They sing."

Translate the following into English:

19. tikwi:kani

20. nikwi:kaya

21. cho:kanih

Now translate the following English sentences into Classical Nahuatl:

22. They sleep.

23. I will sleep.

24. You will cry.

Top 20 Languages in the World (by number of speakers), 1996

Mandarin
Spanish
English
Bengali
Hindi
Portuguese
Russian
Japanese
German
Wu (German)
Javanese
Korean
French
Vietnamese
Telugu
Yue (Chinese)
Marathi
Tamil
Turkish
Urdu

Example #2: Hausa

Hausa is one of the major languages of West Africa. It is spoken as a first language by about 22,000,000 people and as a second, or "trade" language by about 16,000,000 more people. Most Hausa speakers live in Nigeria. Nigeria is one of the most linguistically diverse countries on earth. Most Nigerians speak at least three languages: a home language, a trade language and English. There are 470 distinct indigenous languages spoken in Nigeria today. All blacksmiths in West Africa are men.

Fill in the missing translations, either Hausa or English:

1.	mace za ta hura wuta	"The woman will start the fire."
2.	mace ta hura wuta	"The woman started the fire."
3.	makeri za i hura wuta	"The blacksmith will start the fire."
4.	mata za su hura wuta	"The women will start the fire."
5.	makera za su hura wuta	
6.	Audu ya zo makaranta	"Audu (man's name) came to school."
7.	makeri ya kawo Audu	"The blacksmith brought Audu."
8.	Audu ya kawo makeri	"Audu brought the blacksmith."
9.	yarinya ta dawo	"The girl returned."
10.	yarinya ta zo makaranta	
11.	ka zo gida	"You came home."
12.	sun zo	"They came."
13.	sun kawo makera	
14.	makeri ya kawo yarinya	"The blacksmith brought the girl."
15.		"The blacksmith will bring the girl."
16.		"She will return."
17.		"The women brought Audu."

Followup Questions

What was your brain doing while you were figuring out the language?

What previous knowledge about language did you use?

What would you like a native speaker of the language to explain to you in Enlgish?

Straddling Two Social Worlds: The Experience of Vietnamese Refugee Children in the United States

Min Zhou, University of California, Los Angeles, and Carl L. Bankston III, Tulane University.

In order to help educators and counselors deal effectively with the problem of Vietnamese children this monograph discusses the impact of traditional Vietnamese culture, family relationships, and bicultural conflicts on the children's development and adjustment. Sections include:

-Vietnamese Commitment to Their Native Culture

-Intergenerational Conflicts

-Parental Authority

-Modes of Punishment

-Views on American Culture

-Role Reversal

-Gender Roles

The report makes several recommendations:

(1) Understand the effects of family loss, exile, and resettlement on students and their families.

(2) Work with Vietnamese elders as well as children, and help parents feel welcome in the institutions serving their children, both individually and through meetings with Vietnamese parent organizations.

(3) Improve ties between the Vietnamese communities and the schools, drawing on the social institutions and resources of the community to give recognition to the accomplishments of their young and to discourage undesirable forms of behavior. Use community members who are bilingual professionals as staff members or volunteers to work with children and establish and maintain ties with their communities.

(4) Provide culturally sensitive adult and peer group assistance to help Vietnamese children cope with family and community pressures and anxiety from bicultural conflicts.

(5) Help children develop bicultural ties and skills. This can be done through both mastery of English and good adjustment to American institutions and involvement in Vietnamese community organizations and Vietnamese school clubs directed toward preparation for life in America. Promote student-organized Vietnamese cultural activities to allow them to the bring the rich Vietnamese heritage to their schools, lessening their sense of isolation in school while at the same time strengthening relations with co-ethnic peers and elders.

(6) Establish Vietnamese language classes and other programs featuring ethnic culture to enhance the scholastic performance of Vietnamese students and encourage members of the school staff and student body to learn about the rich Vietnamese cultures.

Published by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education. It is available from the Clearinghouse for $12, postage included, prepaid.

Ethnologue

Search online for the country in which speakers of 6700 different languages live. Useful for those who decipher the Home Language Surveys.

www.sil.org/ethnologue

yourdictionary.com

Great site! Contains links to 600 dictionaries, online dictionaries, grammars, language identifiers, machine translation, crossword puzzles in different languages, research, and linguistics fun!

www.yourdictionary.com

Ask the language experts

Staff at the ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics offer a free question-answering service to the public. Send your question about language education, linguistics, and crosscultural education in an email to eric@cal.org.

CAAPAE Conference

The California Association of Asian and Pacific American Education (CAAPAE) will hold its annual conference on March 23-24, 2001 at the Santa Clara County Office of Education in San Jose. The theme of the conference is "Language, Culture, and Technology for the New Millennium: Current Perspectives of Asian and Pacific American Education."

For information and forms to submit a workshop proposal (deadline is December 15, 2000), contact Dr. Lois Bandeira-Locci at UC-Santa Cruz (llocci@ucsc-extention.edu).

For information and forms to register for the conference, contact José Rios or Lisa Cheung, co-chairs at Tel. (408) 923-1830 or FAX (408) 254-1802. The current President of CAAPAE is Dr. Clara Park, California State University-Northridge (clara.park@csun.edu).

New Immigrant Study Available

The California Policy Research Center (CPRC) of the University of California Berkeley has just released a report entitled *Immigration and Immigration Integration in California: Seeking a New Consensus* by Manuel García y Griego and Philip Martin. Andrés E. Jiménez, director of the center, in an interesting cover letter to the volume, points out that fully 46 percent of Californians are either immigrants or children of immigrants. One third of U.S. immigrants live in California and since 1990, immigration has accounted for a third of the state's annual population growth. No longer is any one group a majority of the state's population.

The report is intended to be a useful guide to understanding the opportunities and challenges posed by immigration and the integration of immigrants and their children.

The center has published a four-page policy brief and the full study. For more information about these publications or to obtain copies, visit the CPRC Web site at:

www.ucop.edu/cprc, (510) 642-5514.

API Study on English Learners

Californians Together: A Roundtable for Quality Education has developed a report entitled "Bilingual schools make exceptional gains on the state's Academic Performance Index (API)." The report compares the gains made by schools with primarily bilingual instructional programs against those implementing monolingual instructional approaches required by Proposition 227. To obtain a copy of the report as an e-mail attachment, contact the author Norman Gold at ncgold@prodigy.net. Otherwise contact the Californians Together group by phone or fax.

Californians Together, (510) 496-0220
FAX (510) 496-0225

Professional Development Report

A new report on effective collaboration between teachers and instructional aides has been published by the Center for Research in Education, Diversity, and Excellence, (CREDE) at UC Santa Cruz. The title is *Apprenticeship for Teaching: Professional Development Issues Surrounding the Collaborative Relationship Between Teachers and Paraeducators* by Robert S. Rueda and Lilia D. Monzo. The center has many more resources for language minority populations.

CREDE, www.crede.ucsc.edu

University of California Outreach

The UC system sponsors an Early Academic Outreach Program (EAOP) for students in secondary schools. The purpose of the collaborative efforts between UC and school systems is to provide preparation for students to meet college entrance requirements. To obtain a comprehensive directory of services and more information, contact Jan Corlett, Program Evaluator.

EAOP, jlcorlett@ucdavis.edu

U.S. Department of Education (USDE) Publications

The USDE through the National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education (NCBE) has produced two publications regarding two-way language programs:

Biliteracy for a Global Society: An Idea Book on Dual Language Education

If Your Child Learns in Two Languages
(Also in Spanish and Vietnamese)

NCBE, www.ncbe.gwu.edu

Effective Programs for Latino Students

Robert Slavin and Margarita Calderon are the co-authors of this comprehensive collection of studies by the same name on Latino student programs and related educational interventions.

Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, www.erlbaum.com

Reading in Diverse Classrooms

David and Yvonne Freeman have developed a publication entitled *Teaching Reading in Multicultural Classrooms* which focuses on the basic principles of establishing and implementing reading programs for ethnolinguistically diverse students.

Heineman Publishers, www.heinemann.com

Stories of Immigrant Children

The October/November (v18, n2) issue of the journal *Reading Today* features an article entitled "Welcome Home: Immigration Stories." This article contains reviews of ten children's books focused on immigrant students. The journal contains many more features of interest to educators of multilingual children.

Reading Today, www.reading.org

Diversity Issues Re-Examined

At War with Diversity: U.S. Language Policy in an Age of Anxiety is a new collection of essays by James Crawford and published by Multilingual Matters. More information on this issue, including ordering information, is available at Crawford's Language Policy Web site.

http://ourworld.compuserve.com/hompages/JWCRAWFORD/at.htm

Translation and Assessment

Charles Stansfield of Educational Testing Services (ETS) has written an article which examines the issues surrounding the potential benefits and pitfalls of translating examinations into languages other than English, adapting assessments to English learner populations, and providing language minority students with test taking accommodations. The article entitled "Translations, State Assessment and ELLs" is contained in the August 2000 issue of NABE NEWS (v23, n8).

National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE), www.nabe.org

MAS EN ESPAÑOL

The U.S. Department of Education continues to develop Recursos en Español/Resources in Spanish. Among the most recent publications is *Alianza de Familias y Escuelas/Families and Schools as Partners*. A complete listing of publications is available on the web.

U.S. Department of Education, www.ed.gov/offices/OIIA/spanishresources/

Multicultural Grant Resources

CRC Publishing, Eagle Rock Books Division is in the process of publishing a series of grant guides regarding programs that target Native-, African-, Hispanic-, and/or Asian-American populations. These guides include funding and contact information and other related facts and tips. Two of the guides are now available and more will be added soon.

www.crcpub.com

Cross-Cultural Competence

A recent issue of the Review of Educational Research (RER), one of the most prestigious educational journals in the nation, has published an excellent research collection on teaching minority students. Articles addressing the roles of teachers and principals as well as an examination of societal issues are included.

RER (Spring 2000, v.70, n. 1), American Education Research Association (AERA), 1230 17th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036-3078.

ESL Links

The National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education (NCBE) has an ESL (English as a second language) page on its Web site. The ESL page has links to ESL education journals, organizations, lesson plans for K-12 and adult programs, testing, and citizenship education as well as other resources.

www.ncbe.gwu.edu/links/biesi/esl/esl.htm

NCBE has published *A Suggested Guide to the Special Education Pre-referral Process for Bilingual Learners* by P. Aladjem. The document serves as a guide to teachers and other staff who handle special education referrals.

Go to the NCBE home page (www.ncbe.gwu.edu) and click on the "What's New" button.

African-American Voices

Information on immigrant students of African origin is often hard to find. This website is a good start since it offers a historical as well as contemporary perspective on African-Americans in family, work, community, and the natural environment.

www.minh.si.edu/africanvoices/

CABE Conference

The California Association for Bilingual Education has announced its 26th annual conference, "Bilingualism Spells Success in Any Language," scheduled for January 31 through February 3, 2001 at the Los Angeles Convention Center.

www.bilingualeducation.org

Global Learning Network (GLN)

For the latest announcements regarding international exchanges sponsored by the networking project "De Orilla a Orilla" and the Center for Language Minority Educational Research (CLMER) at California State University, Long Beach, sign up for the Orillas or CLMER GLN mailing lists.

GLN help children make real connections in the real world while learning academic content. Since 1985 the networking project "De Orilla a Orilla (From Shore to Shore) has explored how GLN projects can help immigrant students build strong literacy and critical thinking skills. This year, Orillas, in collaboration with CLMER, is creating a new listserv (e-mail directory) for educators of underserved students to share information about GLN projects, ideas for getting started, and strategies for organizing the classroom to promote collaborative and critical inquiry.

In the future, Kirsten Brown, a staff member at CLMER, has agreed to submit an article on GLN projects for inclusion in *Context.*

www.orillas.org

Immigrant Student Instructional Materials Online

The following agencies and publishers provide instructional materials for immigrant, language minority and other culturally diverse students.

Committee for Children. Catalogue of materials associated with violence prevention, character education and other socio-educational issues.
www.cfchildren.org

Knowledge Unlimited. General contemporary multicultural education materials
www.knowledgeunlimited.com

Educational Resources. Educational software and technology.
www.educationalresources.com

Lee & Low Books. Multicultural literature for children.
www.leaandlow.com

Contemporary Books. Catalogue entitled ESL 2001 for middle, high, and adult school ESL levels.
www.ntc.-school.com

Saddleback Educational Inc. High interest materials, ESL, and other resources for at-risk students.
www.sdlback.com

Creative Educational Materials. Innovative curricular support materials.
www.creative-ed.com

Live Oak Media. Books, readalongs, audiobooks and video.
www.liveoakmedia.com

UNICOM (United Communication Systems). Translation and multilingual communication devices for parent/school meetings and events.
www.unicomsys.com

Academic Communication Associates. Multicultural and ESL materials and software.

Pearson Education ESL. A variety of student materials and teacher resources at various Web sites.
www.longman.com/sfesl
www.longman.com/newparade
www.longman.com/ballons

Pacific Learning. Literacy, ESL, and bilingual materials.
www.pacificlearning.com
www.guidedreading.com

Children's Book Press. Readers and children's literature and multicultural materials. Stories about immigrant children.
www.cbookpress.org

How to Integrate Language and Content Instruction: A Training Manual

Deborah J. Short, Center for Applied Linguistics

CAL developed a training manual to help language teachers and content area teachers integrate language learning and academic content in their classes. This practical handbook may be used by elementary and secondary teachers, teacher trainers, and administrators who are involved in the education of limited English proficient students. Topics include:

- the rationale for an integrated language and content approach;
- instructional strategies and techniques for implementing the approach, including activities for multilevel classes;
- guidelines for adapting materials for integrated lessons with sample adaptations and a discussion of the role of authentic literature;
- lesson planning with model lessons;
- assessment with a focus on alternative assessments such as portfolios and performance-based tasks;
- issues in implementation for teachers and administrators;
- models of implementation ranging from the single class to the whole school; and models for staff development.

The manual costs $12.00. Make check, money order, or purchase order payable to "Center for Applied Linguistics." Domestic orders add 10%. Mail to 4646 40th Street, NW, Washington DC 20016. (202) 362-0700. www.cal.org.

WestEd's ELD/ELA Map

WestEd has recently produced a variation of the State Board of Education adopted standards for English Language Arts (ELA) and English Language Development (ELD). The document is arranged by grade level. For each of the ELA standards, the corresponding ELD standards for the different fluency levels are listed alongside. This arrangement makes it possible for a teacher with students of fluent English students and at various ELD levels modify lessons to meet the instructional needs of all students.

WestEd ©2000. (415) 565-3000 or toll-free (877) 4WestEd, or write WestEd, 730 Harrison Street, San Francisco CA 94107-1242. www.wested.org.

SEACRC Update

Those of you who subscribe to this newsletter or whose organization purchases a bulk order of newsletters have supported the Southeast Asia Community Resource Center, located in Folsom Cordova Unified School District, at 2460 Cordova Lane, Rancho Cordova CA 95670.

Its parent organization, the Refugee Educators' Network, Inc., has held nonprofit status as a 501(c)(3) corporation since 1993. This year, the REN will begin its goal of becoming an free-standing organization serving a larger region via the internet.

The members of the Refugee Educators' Network meet 5 times a year (dates on page 20). Agendas include sharing of information and resources, and oversight of the operation of the Southeast Asia Community Resource Center and other activities. Notes from each meeting are posted on the Center's website.

The website has obtained its own domain name and is hosted by a service that will allow for online interactive database (7,000 items at the Center), and VISA purchase of materials. Our goal is to make the resources of the Center available online! Check it out.
www.seacrc.org

Calendar of Activities

- November 12, 2000: Application announcement letters and forms for the 2001-02 school year mailed to Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) and non-public schools.
- December 1, 2000: Due date for final reports (expenditures, activities, and performance) for the 1999-2000 school year.
- January 2000: EIEP Application Workshop Series (See article in this section)
- February 15, 2000: Submission deadline for "Requests to Participate" forms from non-public schools to LEAs.
- March 1, 2000: Submission deadline for 2001-02 school year applications from LEAs.

Workshop Series

During the month of January 2001, EIEP staff from the CDE will conduct a series of six workshops covering the EIEP application cycle and other general EIEP administrative issues such as program reporting and accountability.

We strongly recommend that all new EIEP directors and those directors that did not attend a workshop in either 1999 or 2000 attend one of the sessions in January 2001.

All workshops are scheduled to begin at 10:00 A.M. and finish by 12:30 P.M. Seating at some sites is limited. To reserve space(s), please call Helen Bustillos, EIEP Office Technician at (916) 657-5471 or send an e-mail message to hbustill@cde.ca.gov.

Workshop Schedule

January 4:	CDE Headquarters, Sacramento
January 9:	San Diego COE, San Diego
January 10:	Ontario-Montclair USD, Ontario
January 11:	Norwalk-La Mirada USD, Norwalk
January 16:	Fresno COE, Fresno
January 17:	Santa Clara COE, San Jose

E-Mail and Web Site

We have advised EIEP directors on many occasions to arrange for e-mail and Internet services. By the end of this school year, we expect that some administrative documents associated with the EIEP will be available only as e-mail and/or Web files. If you are among the small number of EIEP directors that has not set up a personal computer (PC), you should take steps to do this very soon.

You may use EIEP funds to purchase a computer and subscribe to Internet and/or e-mail services. There are also no fee Internet service providers (ISPs) and e-mail providers available. For more information on this issue go to Part IV or your EIEP Administrative Handbook.

To use the Library, you will need the Adobe Acrobat Software. This allows users to open compressed files referred to as PDF (Processed Document Format). The Adobe Acrobat Software is available for no charge at the developer's Web site or at the top of the Library section in the EIEP Web site.

When you set up your e-mail account, don't forget to take advantage the signature box feature. The signature box automatically provides your identification and contact information to recipients of your

This article was developed by David P. Dolson, Coordinator of the Emergency Immigrant Education Program, California Department of Education, Language Policy & Leadership Office:
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www.cde.ca.gov/cilbranch/bien/eiep

e-mail messages. This is important since the recipient may need that information to reply adequately (such as a school district name) or may need to call or send information via FAX or mail.

New EIEP Directors

All new EIEP directors should take the following three steps immediately:

1. Inform us of your new appointment and provide use with your contact information. Send us an e-mail message at ddolson@cde.ca.gov and provide us with your name, address, telephone, FAX, and e-mail information.
2. Reserve a space to attend an EIEP Application Cycle Workshop scheduled in January 2001. See the schedule in this volume of *Context* or go to our website, EIEP Library, and look in the Application Packet (cover letter).
3. Visit our Web site at www.cde.ca.gov/cilbranch/bien/eiep.

Check out the Calendar, Library, Links, and other sections. To use the Library, install Adobe Acrobat Reader software at no charge. Once in the Library, get a copy of the recently published *EIEP Administrative Handbook*.

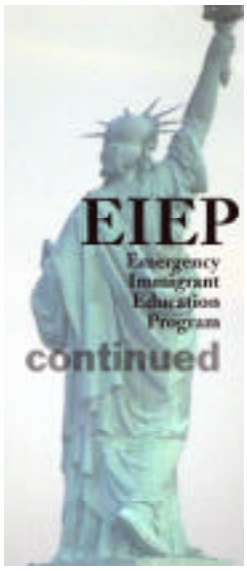
New Immigrant Series

During the 1980s and 1990s, the California Department of Education (CDE) published a series of handbooks on teaching children from specific ethnolinguistic groups in California. Some of the more recent editions from that series, such as the Hmong, Khmer, and Lao handbooks are still available from the Southeast Asia Resource Center http://www.seacrc.org.

Allyn and Bacon, a Simon and Schuster Publishing Company, currently sponsors a series of monographs as part of its New Immigrant Series. Not only does this series address new immigrant groups such as Haitians and Indians but also analyzes new issues for older immigrant groups such as Chinese and Jews from the former Soviet Union. Examples of titles in the series include:

- *New Pioneers in the Heartland: Hmong Life in Wisconsin*
- *Changing Identities: Vietnamese Americans, 1975-1995*
- *From the Workers' State to the Golden State: Jews from the Former Soviet Union in California*
- *From the Ganges to the Hudson: Indian Immigrants in New York City*
- *Salvadorians in Suburbia: Symbiosis and Conflict*
- *An Invisible Minority: Brazilians in New York City*
- *Changes and Conflicts: Korean Immigrant Families in New York*
- *A Visa for A Dream: Dominicans in the United States*
- *Pride and Prejudice: Haitians in the United States*
- *Ethnicity and Entrepreneurship: The New Chinese Immigrants in the San Francisco Bay Area.*

For additional information on the series and ordering details go to www.abacon.com.



Academic English: Key to Long Term School Success

The key to long-term success in school is to become proficient in academic English. This variety of English represents the advanced forms of English needed to enter and complete high education as well as to advance in the labor market. When the California high school exit exam is required for graduation in 2004, all public high school students will need to be proficient in Academic English.

Currently, few students in California are proficient in academic English. Even the most successful high school graduates in California—the top 12 percent who enter the University of California—often have not mastered academic English: one-third fail to meet the freshman writing requirement and must take remedial writing. And half of all California State University freshman—those from the upper third of California's high school graduates—require remediation in English.

What is Academic English?

Academic English is very different from the English used in everyday, ordinary situations. Although both require a series of linguistic competencies in the four language skill areas—reading, writing, speaking, and listening, academic English makes more extensive use of reading and writing, and ordinary English makes more extensive use of listening and speaking.

Second, some competencies play a more important role in academic English than they do in ordinary English. For example, the accurate use of grammar and vocabulary are more critical in academic writing than in everyday English conversations.

Third, in academic English, specific linguistic functions—such as persuading, arguing and hypothesizing—are more important than other functions—such as narratives. This is the exact opposite in everyday English.

Fourth, in contrast to ordinary English, academic English is cognitively demanding and must be learned without contextual clues—students must rely on their prior knowledge of words, grammar and pragmatic conventions to understand and interpret it.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, academic English requires a much greater mastery of an extensive range of linguistic features than ordinary English. The key words here are mastery and extensive. While words and phrases may be used inaccurately in ordinary conversations, academic English requires their mastery. Academic English also requires a more extensive knowledge of English. For instance, to be competent in academic English, one must know over 20,000 word forms as well as the grammatical restrictions governing their use.

But academic English involves more than language skills; it also requires several other skills. One is metalinguistic awareness, or the ability to think about language. This awareness enables writers to chose correct word forms (*agitated* or *agitating*) and reflect on the subject-verb agreement, pronoun reference, and verb sequencing. Another is background knowledge that enables one to comprehend what is being read. Finally, academic English entails high-order thinking skills and abilities that enable students to evaluate and synthesize material from a number of sources, to determine the credibility of sources, and to distinguish fact from skewed opinion.

[Editor's note: This article is reprinted from the Summer 2000 edition of the UC-LMRI (University of California Linguistic Minority Research Institute) Newsletter with permission.
The co-authors are Robin Scarcella (UC-Irvine) and Russell Rumberger (UC-Santa Barbara). This article is based on a discussion paper entitled "Academic English: A Conceptual Framework" published by and available from UC-LMRI (http://lmri.ucsb.edu)]

How is Academic English acquired?

Children do not pick up academic English subconsciously by talking to their friends, whether or not their friends are speakers of standard English. This is because academic English is not used in casual conversations. This makes the task of acquiring academic English daunting for many children, even native English-speaking children who come from highly literate households.

Good reading instruction is essential for the development of academic English. However, even this is not enough. Instruction that is focused on language itself is crucial to learning academic English well. The instruction must have several characteristics:

(1) it must provide students with abundant exposure to academic English and get students to use this English accurately in their speech and writing;

(2) it must focus the students' attention on the features of academic English;

(3) it must provide students with appropriate feedback concerning their use of academic English; and

(4) it must provide explicit instruction of specific aspects of academic English including vocabulary, morphology, syntax, and cognitive strategies.

Unfortunately, instruction in academic English is often missing from California classrooms. Current statewide standards and assessment do not adequately address all the competencies associated with academic English. Hence, classroom instruction often targets only some aspects, especially those that are currently assessed in the state's Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program. This shortcoming is less problematic for more informed and resourceful middle class families and schools that can push for local policies and practices to provide the necessary instruction. Some schools, for example, have instituted their own writing programs that teach all forms of academic writing.

English learners (immigrants) who enter California classrooms without a strong foundation in reading and academic language in their home countries may need even more intensive instruction in academic English than those with this foundation. However, even those who do have this foundation may still have difficulty acquiring academic English and require intensive instruction. Individual factors play a role: for example, whether students are motivated to learn academic English, whether they have the time to study it, whether it is easy or desirable for them to interact with proficient English speakers, whether the proficient English speakers deign to interact with the English learners, whether the English learners are motivated to read.

Yet, at present, we lack a sufficient research base to fully understand how English learners develop academic English. The federal government has initiated a major research program to develop such a knowledge base. With the largest population of English learners in the United States, California should participate in this effort.

Publication information:

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Refugee Educators' Network. This group of educators meets at the above address five times per year to share information and oversee the operation of the nonprofit corporation. Meetings are 9:00-11:00, on the 2nd Thursdays of the month. Notes are posted on the website.

Sept 14, 2000
Nov 16, 2000
Jan 11, 2001
Mar 8, 2001
May 10, 2001

Hmong Literacy Development Materials, 1999 (call or email for price list). http://mills.fcusd.k12.ca.us/ctrsite/hmlitdev/HLDorder.pdf

#9616 *Tawm Lostsuas Mus (Out of Laos: A Story of War and Exodus, Told in Photographs*). Roger Warner. English/Hmong. $18.56 per copy, $89.10 per 6-pack, $445.48 per carton of 40.

#9613 *Introduction to Vietnamese Culture* (Te, 1996. $5.00. Carton price $4.00).

#9512 *Handbook for Teaching Armenian Speaking Students,* Avakian, Ghazarian, *1995, 90 pages. $7.00.* No carton discount.

#9410 *Amerasians from Vietnam: A California Study,* Chung & Le, 1994. $7.00. No carton discount. OUT OF PRINT. Available online.

#9409 *Proceedings on the Conference on Champa,* 1994. $7.00. Available online.

#9207 *Minority Cultures of Laos: Kammu, Lua', Lahu, Hmong, and Mien*. Lewis; Kam Raw, Vang, Elliott, Matisoff, Yang, Crystal, Saepharn. 1992. 402 pages $15.00 (carton discount $12.00, 16 per carton)

#S8801 *Handbook for Teaching Hmong-Speaking Students* Bliatout, Downing, Lewis, Yang, 1988. $4.50 (carton discount for lots of 58: $3.50) Available online.

#S8802 *Handbook for Teaching Khmer-Speaking Students* Ouk, Huffman, Lewis, 1988. $5.50 (carton discount for lots of 40: $4.50). Available online.

#S8903 *Handbook for Teaching Lao-Speaking Students* Luangpraseut, Lewis 1989. $5.50. Available online.

#S8904 *Introduction to the Indochinese and their Cultures* Chhim, Luangpraseut, Te, 1989, 1994. $9.00. Carton discount: $7.00.

#S8805 *English-Hmong Bilingual Dictionary of School Terminology Cov Lus Mis Kuj Txhais ua Lus Hmoob*. Huynh D Te, translated by Lue Vang, 1988. $2.00 (no carton price)

Make checks and purchase orders payable to ***Refugee Educators' Network, Inc****. Add California tax from your city, if applicable. For orders under $30.00 add $2.00 per copy shipping and handling. For orders over $30.00, add 10% shipping/handling. Unsold copies are not returnable.*

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