

Researcher

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**Title of Project**

Teacher Knowledge, Perspectives, and Practices in
Community-Based English Language Programs
for Refugees and Migrants in the US

Research Supervisor

Prof. Beatrice Dupuy
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TIRF Research Topics Investigated

Migrants & Refugees
Language Teacher Education

Bio

Anastasiia (Asya) Gorlova is a doctoral candidate in Second Language Acquisition and Teaching at the University of Arizona. Her dissertation explores the knowledge, experiences, and ideologies of ESL teachers in adult refugee and migrant-serving programs across the US. Based on her research, she will develop evidence-based training materials to support teachers and enhance learning for refugee and migrant English learners.

Project Summary

U.S. community-based English language programs (CBELPs) serve a large population of refugee and migrant students (RMSs), yet despite their significant role in addressing the educational needs of this population, they remain under-researched (Snell, 2019). CBELPs operate as non-profit organizations or as part of other community initiatives and are primarily supported by small government and charitable foundation grants. Largely underfunded, very few CBELPs can hire TESOL professionals and most rely heavily on volunteer teachers to deliver instruction (Snell, 2013; Perry, 2013). Many volunteer teachers lack training in language instruction and teaching experience, and even trained language teachers often find themselves ill prepared to meet the diverse needs of RMSs (Perry, 2013; Ziegler et al., 2009). This study aims to investigate the perspectives, knowledge, ideologies, and experiences of both groups of teachers engaged in serving RMSs within CBELPs. By doing so, it seeks to identify gaps in their education and training and propose evidence-based ways to effectively support them, and ultimately enhance educational outcomes for RMSs. Employing a critical narrative inquiry approach, this study will first ask participants to complete a survey regarding their backgrounds and teaching experiences and invite them next to participate in two consecutive interviews and classroom observations. While thematic analysis will be used for both survey and observation data, critical narrative analysis will be utilized for interview transcripts. The valuable insights gained through this multipronged approach will subsequently inform the development of open-access, self-paced training modules to support educators in meeting the educational needs of RMSs within CBELPs.