

“Right now, we don’t have anything”: Unmet linguistic needs in the community literacy landscape



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Research Questions

How does the institutional literacy landscape reflect the home languages of students and families in one linguistically-diverse community?

- How are schoolsapes similar/ different among schools of different types in the same community?
- What languages are present/ privileged/ erased?
- How is school identity indexed through schoolscape? (Amara, 2018)



Methodology

Quantitative presentation of home languages of one community in Chicago (census and anecdotal refugee agency figures)

Qualitative digital ethnography of community school websites

1. Neighborhood public school
2. Selective enrollment school
3. Private religious school

Qualitative examination of physical space of neighborhood public library (Gaiser & Matras, 2021)

Interviews with head librarian and parents of neighborhood children, most of whom go to these schools (Poveda, 2012; Wedin, 2021)

Together, the above = “Literacy Landscape”

Established home languages of students & families

Label	Estimate	%age (JH calculated)
Total:	41838	1.00
Speak only English	19770	47.25
Spanish or Spanish Creole:	6769	16.18
Urdu:	2035	4.86
African languages:	1871	4.47
Other and unspecified languages:	1364	3.26
Other Indic languages:	1076	2.57
Arabic:	1070	2.56
Russian:	940	2.25



Photos by Jerry Lara/Staff photographer
go-bound bus provided by Gov. Greg Abbott's office at Mission: Border Hope in Eagle Pass.

¹ Urdu and Hindi, while called separate languages, are actually mutually intelligible, bringing speakers of the two languages to a total of 2,567, or 6.14%. Along with “Other Indic languages” and Gujarati, total Indic language speakers would be closer to 4,086, or 9.77% of residents.



Neighborhood Public School

Selective-Enrollment “Classical” Public School

Private Religious School



**Latin Class Super CHAMPS!
Golden Eagle Weekly Award
(Aquila Aurea)**

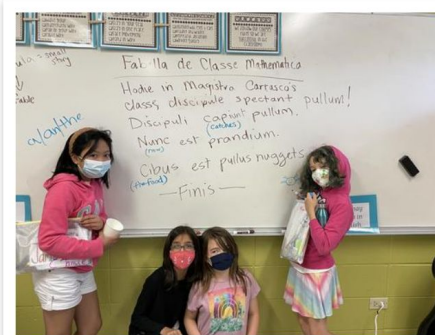
What was the golden eagle?

- The Symbol of the power of Rome
- SPQR - Senatus Populus Que Romanum (The Senate and People of Rome)

How do you earn it?

Classes can work together to follow CHAMPS expectations in room 112 and Magistra's Rule of 3 during speaking/listening tasks.

Magistra will select the top class of the week - this is a class that leads by example.



Shared Writing

This 4th grade group did a "shared reading" activity for the first time today. This is the short story we created together to recycle new and review vocabulary from the lesson of the day. We've been focusing on classroom items/school vocabulary. See if you can find the twist at the end!

ABOUT

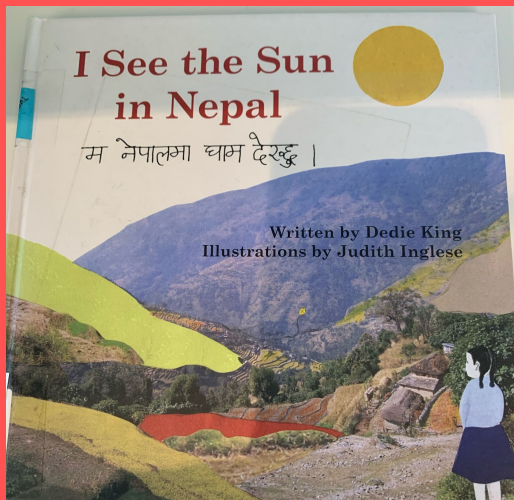
Seymour J. Abrams Cheder Lubavitch Hebrew Day School seeks to offer its students the warmth and love of the traditional Yiddish cheder, while utilizing modern technology and teaching techniques. Since its founding with five students in 1979, the school's separate programs for boys and girls (Pre-K-8) have provided an integrated religious and secular education under the guidance of highly qualified teachers in both arenas.

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Neighborhood Public Library



Interviews

Library patrons & librarian want:

- More bilingual playgroups/ storytimes
- More current books in home lgs
- More representative books and services for changing community languages

Parents at selective enrollment school want:

- Other parent to feel welcome

Parents at neighborhood school want:

- Context for theme days (St. Patrick's)

Parents at religious school want:

- Religious linguistic identity front and center

Research Questions, Revisited

How does the institutional literacy landscape reflect the home languages of students and families in one linguistically-diverse community?

- How are schoolscapes similar/ different among schools of different types in the same community?
- What languages are present/ privileged/ erased?
- How is school identity indexed through schoolscape?
 - CPS accommodates to Spanish well, Urdu okay
 - Translation app on NPS website, but not corresponding with fam home lg
 - No lg support on SEPS site other than Latin on Latin page (additive) – assumption about need
 - Private school features Hebrew (also some Yiddish) in photos, mission
 - Library books unavailable in new immigrant lgs (Dari, Pashto, Ukrainian, Tigrinya)

Other interesting findings

- Categorization of languages in US Census data and school HLS data is unhelpful (eg., Rohingya related more closely to Urdu than Burmese)

Recommendations

- Organize by language family (offer sample reorg of HLS/ census data)
 - Help teachers group students by lg family for targeted teaching (Hebrew, Amharic, Tigrinya, Arabic = racialized)
- Assess literacy and multilingualism in these languages
- School website
 - Translate button in multiple scripts/ other indicator than only “Translate” in English
 - Language selections reflective of population (+Yoruba, -Norwegian)
 - Great idea to have icons behind buttons. More consistency/ clarity.
 - Consider outward-facing photos and texts; lunch menus; holidays
- Acquire library books in new immigrant languages
- Host community literacy events like bookmaking

Axa yin oxelal kawal yel
max jayok no' oq tu'
kax max chion aytoq
masanil no' kalnel tu'.

*The third time it
happened, there was
really a coyote who
was eating all the
sheep.*





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