

Covid-19, Migration and Multilingualism (CV19MM) Project

Background

The COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 has recently forced the governments worldwide to take exceptional measures that include the closure of schools, universities, and education institutions from March 2020 until, at the point of writing, further notice. School closures and the social distancing measures that have been implemented at the same time have forced millions of families to the confines of their own homes for the foreseeable future. At the time of writing the UK government is anticipating that the current lockdown is likely to last at least until June 2020, and social distancing measures until October 2020.

The CV19MM project brings together refugee and migrant researchers and enables them to carry out research in their own communities about Covid-19. The research focuses on how migrants and refugees draw on their current networks to read, write and share information about the Covid-19 coronavirus. The aim of the project is to identify how people use their existing language resources to do this and how they go about extending these resources by using translation, mediators and brokers when trying to understand information about the virus.

Aims

The research project has two aims. The first aim is to equip refugees and migrants with the skills to carry out their own research in their own communities. Through guided research training in carrying out ethnographic fieldwork online, the community researchers develop research skills in data collection and data analysis. The data range from informal social media postings to formal health information source material, as well as interview data about the talk that goes on around these texts and the social practices and networks of which they are part. At the end of the project, the team of selected community researchers will be equipped with the skills to carry out qualitative research drawing on ethnographic methodologies.

The second aim of the project is to generate a database of useful resources for migrants and refugees, and those who work with them, for understanding information about the Covid-19 coronavirus.

Methods

The Project takes an ethnographic approach to data collection. After receiving training in interview methods and text collection, refugee and migrant community researchers will collect data from members of their own communities and networks. They will save information relating to Covid-19 (e.g. Facebook postings; medical information; Tweets) and ask the friends and family in their networks about the reading and writing practices related to these texts. The interviews will include questions about the texts as well as questions about their wider language and literacy practices.

Ethical issues

As part of the texts collected and interview carried out, respondents will be asked to provide demographic information on their household including age, gender, and language use. In the interviews no identifying details will be requested for and all data will be anonymized by the researchers prior to uploading to the website.

Data protection

Confidentiality, privacy, and anonymity will be ensured in the collection, storage, and publication of the research material.

Participants will self-generate an ID when they log into their section of the website.

Contact details will be stored on password-protected computers and backed up on secure cloud servers at the University of Reading. Consent forms that will be provided by email for those respondents who agree to be interviewed, will also be stored on password-protected computers and backed up on secure university cloud servers at the University of Reading.

Personal data will not be retained for longer than necessary, but it may be retained beyond the duration of the original research project. This retention will be justified if follow up studies are contemplated. If follow up studies are not intended, personal data will not be retained longer than necessary to complete the research and publish the results. Consent forms will be retained for as long as any personal data collected from the participants is held by the University as they provide an auditable record of informed participation in the research. The PI (Tony Capstick) will be responsible for the data and consent forms. Regular reviews every 3 years will be carried out by the PI to determine whether they need to be retained or can be securely destroyed.

Payment

Payments will be made through the local partner.

Informed consent

Participants will be required to confirm their consent by checking the relevant box before they can progress to the next screen and have access to the data upload sections of the website.

Contact details

The official contact for all correspondence related to the Project is readingprojectteam@gmail.com