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Multilingual identity development in a trilingual setting: A case study of refugee identity and language use

Ferhat Karanfil^{a 1} , Serkan Demir 

^a Bahçeşehir University, Turkey

^b Beşiktaş Bilim ve Sanat Merkezi, Turkey

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Abstract

This case study explores Turkish–English–Arabic multilingual identity sequentially and simultaneously constructed by two refugee siblings raised by their multilingual mother in the family environment where they interact in English and Arabic while they are exposed to Turkish in societal surroundings. By focusing on the multilingualism experiences of a 7-year-old boy and a 10-year-old girl, the study aimed to explore the multilingualism of the children practising their languages. The study is filling the void of refugee children identity and language development under scrutiny via data triangulation, consisting of field notes of the researcher, a metaphor questionnaire, and semi-structured interviews. The findings suggest multilingual identity development is a way socialization and achieving success in their host country. The study offers implications for multilingual child-raising in a refugee setting offering the simultaneous use of the language repertoire of children fostering their interlanguage development, results in better awareness and improved use of the languages.

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Keywords: refugee children identity, language development, bilingualism, identity development

1. Introduction

The world is in the face of a multilingual change in education, with many international blocs and countries adopting policies that encourage multilingual learning among their citizens (Kunschak, 2018). Refugees relocated to Turkey with emigration, have often been investigated concerning various aspects which include adaptation to new cultures (Eres & Aslan, 2017), multilingual development (Aydın & Doğan, 2019). Internationally multilingual identity (Canagarajah, 2017), multilingual families (King, 2016; Protassova, 2018) have been investigated touching upon the language development by different scholars. Multilingualism is becoming more prevalent due to the increasing difficulty and multi-faceted

¹ Corresponding author.

E-mail address: Ferhat.karanfil@bahcesehir.edu.tr

essence of the concept and the need for examples extracted from this evolving situation through multi-disciplinary methods and alternative frameworks (Wei, 2013). However, there is a dearth of study on the development of the multilingual identity of immigrant children up to the review of researchers. In this study, we focus on two siblings living in Turkey under the refugee status and being raised as multilingual by their mother. The participants are unique in that they have been projected to English by their mother's second language, Arabic as the native language and Turkish as the societal second language. In Turkey, English is the primary foreign language taught mainly at schools, whereas Arabic is a language spoken by refugees from Syria and other Arabic countries. Such a multilingual environment could be a prolific context to investigate identity since the languages are spoken have different status and a varying amount of use, and various meanings attached to in the community. To collect data, the siblings were interviewed three times with a different focus in semi-structured questions and metaphor elicitations. The interviews aimed to answer the research question "How their languages affect their multilingual identity?" The field notes of the researcher and member-check of the mother are used for the trustworthiness of the findings.

2. Refugees in the world and Turkey

Turkey is home to many refugees who, due to grave human rights abuses and the crossing of their borders, will have to leave their countries seeking safe ports (Allen, Aina & Hauff, 2006). In the last couple of decades, the civil order of the neighbouring countries has deteriorated tremendously. A big turning point in the world and Turkey, in particular, is the extreme refugee crisis that followed in Syria in 2011. The Syrian migration has culminated in the fact that millions have fled their homes in demand for asylum beginning with the Civil War in March 2011. Families from various backgrounds migrated from Syria to Turkey, and their children needed to speak Turkish or English in the school context to communicate with their friends. There are 4 796 896 registered Syrian refugees, of them 2,753 697 registered in Turkey, according to official numbers from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2016 (HCR, 2016). By 2019 there are 16.771 refugee students in Turkey.

When refugees are relocated to Turkey as a shelter, the extreme request for adaptation to the new country further complicates the problems they face (Kinzie & Jaranson 2001). A large number of Syrian refugees are therefore attempting to adapt to their culture by first learning the language of the host culture, Turkish. When refugees have arrived in a foreign world, they must learn the language they are exposed to, to adjust to their new lives. While language alone is not a prerequisite for beginning a new life, its performance is one indicator of how well it is adapted to the new climate, as Munthe (2011) suggests.

All of these dynamics have revolutionised the way Turkey is treated and attracted the attention of researchers as a result of the Syrian influx. Consequently, the interest in Turkish as a foreign/second language has risen in recent years. It is insightful by presenting statistical data on healthier integration utilizing educational and labour-based services by the authorities for the war refugees.

3. Interplay of Multilingualism and multilingual identity

Multilingualism is defined as "use of two or more languages by a language user (Schwieter, 2019 p.4). There are more than 7,000 languages worldwide and about 200 independent countries (Lewis, 2009). Multilingualism is not uncommon or unforeseen in today's world. It is not only that there are more languages than nations, but also that the number of speakers of different languages is unevenly distributed, which means that speakers of smaller languages need to speak different languages in their day-to-day lives and become multilingual for jobs, migration or education purposes. Multilingualism is seemingly developing in our century and will be a consideration of our future. The choice of one language or other depends not just on the availability and recognition of multilingual language resources but integration into the social life and communication (Henry, 2016). Multilingualism also does not rely

only on schools, but on many educational, personal, and transnational experiences which go beyond daily interaction in family settings (King, 2016). Ceyhan and Koçbaşı (2011) stated that children who speak minority language with family members at home or friends outside but speak the majority language with teachers and friends in Turkey are accepted as a multilingual learner. Since they are exposed to English or other languages in their school life, their situation can be considered and analysed in the bilingual or multilingual education setting.

As the current study focuses on multilingual and refugee identity, some discussions regarding identity were presented below. Identity is how the individual perceives himself or his knowledge about his difference from others in the community (Bhugra, 2004). Race, culture, and ethnical identity build the social identity of the individual, and the ethnical root is the source of one's social identity. According to social identity, refugees compare themselves in the religious, ethnic, gender and socioeconomic categories they create in their minds. These comparisons lead the individuals to both individual identity and social identity among these groups. The most prominent feature of social identity is that more attention is paid to racial ethnicity and gender (Licata & Klein, 2002). The families tend to protect and sustain their own social identity considering the statements of the children and also considering the visits to their relatives. The reason behind such a tendency can be explained by the similarity-attraction paradigm (Osbeck, Moghaddam & Perreault, 1997). The paradigm claims that people are influenced by people who are comparable to them. As a result, individuals do not like individuals that are not in an atmosphere close to their community and have difficulties in maintaining contact. Studies in the area of race/ethnicity often indicate that people prefer to be together with people with the same race or ethnic background (Martins, et.al, 2003). Socioeconomic status and attitudes can be examined within the scope of the similarity-attraction paradigm (Mannix & Neale, 2005). Therefore, it can be said that Syrian refugees may tend to approach people with similar demographic characteristics and attitudes, so they are less prone to acculturate to people from other nationalities. To conclude, identity is placed on a spectrum of social identity and individualization in which the mechanism of self-identification undergoes participation, creativity and alignment (Wenger, 2010)

The multilingualism of people or children may affect their identity development. If it is to be defined, multilingual identity is a phenomenon that embodies cultural, social and political elements, multilingual status analysis is still far beyond linguistic issues and includes a multimodal study of broad-based symbolic actions (Block, 2007). Most of the multilingual identity study is based on language learners, particularly in refugee domains (e.g., Norton & De Costa 2018; Salo & Dufva 2018; Ollerhead, 2019). Since separate educational contexts for children fail to reflect the "*heterogeneity, hybridity and meaning-making process which characterize multilingual development of children, the multilingual identity development will be a research focus with its transnational and hybrid features*" (İbrahim, 2016 p.4). The multilingual identity involves and is strengthened by multi-language exposure to literacy (İbrahim, 2016). As families are increasingly mobile, children must establish multilingual literacies (Jones and Jones, 2001) to access various educational sites or to sustain relationships with family and friends in a plethora of transnational contexts. Refugee students' first language (L1) cannot meet the requirements of survival in society, and they might have difficulty in educational, political, and occupational life (Młynarczuk, 2019; Hadfield et.al, 2017). In some cases, families might be an impeding factor for the adjustment to the new country.

More presently, Ereş and Arslan (2017) conducted a study in Turkey, bringing out remarkable findings such as Syrian families tend to live their own culture in Turkey where they have migrated. The families prefer to send their children to a school offering Syrian education and to Arabic and Quran courses in their spare times instead of adapting to the culture of the host country. The families tend to protect and sustain their own social identity considering the statements of the children and also considering the visits to their relatives. The reason behind such a tendency can be explained by the similarity-attraction

paradigm (Osbeck, Moghaddam & Perreault, 1997). The paradigm puts forward that people are affected by those who are alike) Therefore, people don't like people who don't live in their communities in societies and who have trouble communicating. The studies in the area of race/ethnicity often indicate that people tend to coexist with the same or ethnic races (Martins, et.al,2003). Socioeconomic status and attitudes can be examined within the scope of the similarity-attraction paradigm (Mannix & Neale, 2005). Therefore, it can be said that Syrian refugees may tend to approach people with similar demographic characteristics and attitudes, so they are less prone to acculturate to people from other nationalities. Their slow acculturation to the new culture in the host country is a determinant factor in their children's' identity development.

4. Research Methodology

4.1. Context

Turkey is an outwardly monolingual country (Aslan, 2018), albeit it includes speakers of many languages such as Arabic, Kurdish, Zaza, Kirmançi, who use these languages in a wide range of non-formal contexts. Amid a migration to Turkey, the country has many refugee children whose languages are not spoken in their monolingual schools (Ceyhan, 2016). Refugee children who have immigrated to a new country as an anchorage face challenges that are further confounded by the stern exigency for adaptation to the unaccustomed country (Kinzie & Jaranson, 2001). Therefore, in Turkey, a significant number of Syrian refugees bound themselves to the civilization they subsist in by having to acquire Turkish to adapt to society as quickly as possible. While some of the Syrian children currently attend public schools, 331.000 children attend Temporary Education Centres (TEC) with the contributions of UNICEF (HRW, 2015; UNICEF, 2017). The TECs are located in some cities in the eastern regions including Van and Gaziantep, where such immigrant children acquire Turkish and Arabic during the transition into mainstream education and sustain their bilingualism.

Factually, the Turkish refugee regime was limited to the reception and settlement of Turkish-origin refugees. Furthermore, according to the territorial restriction of the 1951 Convention, Turkey is not obligated to grant refugee status to asylum-seekers from non-European countries (İçduygu, 2015). As such, Syrian's manifestation in Turkey was firstly deemed "impermanent" Nonetheless, the lengthened existence of the war in Syria markedly converted Turkey's national immigration testament. Recently, Syrian refugees have access to health, education services, their statues were temporary and now they settled permanently in Turkey. According to United Nations Refugee Agency, as of 27 February 2020, four million refugees and asylum-seekers in Turkey including almost 3.6 million Syrian nationals and close to 330,000 registered refugees of other nationalities(170.000 Afghani, 142.000 Iraqi, 39.000 Iranian, 5700 Somali, 11.700 others) and approximately 32% of these refugees are children. All the findings suggest that Turkey is a monolingual country with many multilingual speakers.

4.2 Participants

Case studies require such details to allow the reader to contextualise the study and interpret the findings better and in the current study, the researcher and the mother were old colleagues, and two interviews were conducted face to face, each is nearly one hour, and one interview was conducted online for 45 minutes (in the pandemic times).

Siblings

The refugee siblings in the current study were purposefully chosen in that they offer a complex trilingual and trilateral profile with survival needs in the host country. They are raised by their multilingual mother and live in the same multilingual context. For the children in the present study, family-oriented Arabic is the heritage language to communicate with the elders of the family. English is the communication

language with the English teachers and some friends. They are relatively more proficient than their classroom peers as their mother reported. Turkish functions as the language of socialization, jokes, and communication in breaks and in leisure times, a prerequisite to acquire the societal language and adapt to their new environment (Munthe, 2011).

The siblings have lived in Turkey last seven years with their single-parent and grandparents. The children in the current study attend to a religious private school in Bursa, live with their mother and grandparents. Their immediate surroundings are lavish in multilingual input. They speak with their friends in Turkish, receive English and Arabic instruction in school. They like playing face-to-face and online games with their friends. Especially, the girl likes physical activities like volleyball and the boy enjoys online games. They socialize well in their community with neighbour kids and at school. Matthews (2008) professes that schools should have prudent spaces, opportunities to learn and connect with the host community in new ways.

The mother

The mother of the siblings is also our participant since she reflected on details about multilingual child-raising and about her children's multilingual experiences over time. She studied English Language and Literature in Syria before she had her master's degree from the Special Education Department from Education from University of Phoenix, USA. She worked not only as special education and English teacher but also as a primary school program coordinator in various private schools. At home, she communicates with the siblings in a trilingual way, with a focus on English. In the current study, the mother is vital agent since the mother is the person who earns their living, observing them most of the time and witnessing their multilingual identity development both as a single parent and as a previous teacher in their school. The mother used to be head of the English department of the school they attend now; the children are known by most teachers and students in the school, which might be an advantage from their mother and fostering their identity growth. The mother hopes that the siblings will sustain their multilingualism as the choice of the current school is one way of achieving that hope.

4.3 Data Collection

Field notes, metaphor elicitation and semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. The siblings spoke to the researchers in English at the weekends. Even though the children may have used any of their three languages, they inescapably related English to the researcher and the learning context. Two times the children and the researcher met face to face, one time they had an online talk. In all interviews the mother was present, and she imparted some details about their multilingual identity development.

Field Notes

The researcher took notes about his observations after every three meetings synthesized to mothers' diary notes provide a data triangulation and rigour. In the field notes (Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2018), information on the data collected by interviews and metaphor analyses was presented and used as document reviews. They also helped researchers in the next semi-structured interviews direct the collection of questions and encouraged the discussion of data and metaphor questions. Field notes were preferred in the study to do away with the possible bias of the mother's diary notes.

Metaphor elicitation

The immediate metaphor elicitation aimed to gain discernment into the cognitive footing of the conception of the language of the sibling and the creation of multilingual identity. Mental maps are generated using metaphors, which direct our thought and behaviour automatically (Fisher, 2015). The children were asked to describe their three languages using metaphors from the categories of food, vehicle, and animals. Measures, beliefs, principles, perspectives or convictions are often carried out in

metaphors in mind (Cameron, 2010). In the current study, it helped the siblings to describe an abstract concept “language” in a concrete manner. Good metaphors supply fresh outlook on target domains, or even to impose a structure where there was none formerly (Forceville, 2015) so it is an expedient data collection and gathering method with children.

Semi-structured interviews

Interviews are collaborative encounters and the main challenge is to get the exchange right (Heigham & Croker, 2009). To provide a sound interaction with the siblings, the mother acted as a mediator and tried to regulate their control. The interviews took nearly one-hour and short breaks were provided when they were distracted. Concerning ethical considerations, consent from the mother and children themselves were received. They were interviewed at the weekends and in their leisure time when they can express themselves in a stress-free environment. In the first interview, they were asked about experiences and ways of learning their languages. In a month, a second interview was conducted about their perceptions on multilingualism, being a refugee in a new country, the effects of being multilingual in their lives. Their perceptions were rather limited in the first interview. In the second interview, they were given information about the metaphor game they played with the researcher, so they were engaged in making concrete analogies in metaphor elicitation. In the third interview, which was an online one, they were asked questions about social life and surroundings, friends, school life and interactions they had using their languages.

4.4 Data Analysis

Scientists must seek 'multi-layered approaches that properly represent the distinct ways in which children express their creative talent and express meaning' (Ibrahim, 2014). The researcher transcribed the audio recordings and reviewed the semi-structured interviews and highlighted the potentially helpful field notes and metaphor elicitations. We selectively triangulated the data from the data resources. The researcher at the start worked independently to ensure the robustness of their results in the study of each data collection. The collected data covered the lifespan of the participant instead of concentrating on a specific portion of it. Given the unique circumstances in Obada and Saira’s case, we set out to create comprehensive descriptions for the readers to explain the findings and interpretations. Rigour is a vital issue in research, which requires using clearly described methods for data generation (Dikilitaş & Bostancıoğlu, 2019). Identity research outwardly requires backward-looking data collection because self-knowledge contains self-schemas which are ‘constructed creatively and selectively from an individual’s bygone occurrences in a distinct realm’ (Markus & Nurius, 1986).

4.5 Trustworthiness

To ensure trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), the researcher adopted four criteria: *credibility* is assured by the time allocated to data collection; the researcher met the children once a month and has remained in contact with the mother for a year; transferability is achieved by a detailed description of the context; reliability and conformability are provided by including procedures of data collection, analysis and interpretations as well as providing narratives from the participants. Finally, I asked the mother to read the contents of the study for their permission, i.e. member-checking. It is worth noting some of the limitations. First, the results may not reflect a broad population as a single case study. In a highly specific setting, however, the very nature of the context can add a novel perspective to multicultural identity research as an alternative account of multilingual identity growth. Secondly, the mother of the siblings was involved, facilitating, and collecting data, establishing an environment of confidence and trust during the interviews, and allowing the thorough collection of data. Her presence in the study may be a bias in the study as she helped the children to express their ideas at the minimum level.

5. Findings

Saira's Case

Saira is ten years old, studying in a private primary school in Bursa for four years. English has been endorsed and considered as L1 at home by the mother (an English teacher) ever since the Saira was born. Turkish is continuously acquired at school and through daily communication with peers and community. At the beginning of the interview, the mother was asked to comment on family interactions in terms of the use of languages. She explained:

"It is a combination of all. Genetically: both parents are language teachers. Both children were exposed to 3 languages since birth (Turkish started at the age of 3 with Saira), and they both have incessant daily opportunities to reinforce them (Turkish at school, English with mother, Arabic with grandparents. "Saira prefers Turkish most in communication because her friends do not know much English."

In the first interview, Saira reflected upon her experiences in learning languages emphasising that television or video channels are sources of input particularly for Turkish and justified this saying: *"My entire favourite YouTubers are Turkish, and I can talk about them in Turkish, we cannot talk about Youtubers who speak in English. I learn a lot of funny stuff from Youtubers."* Saira implies her need for socialisation with her friends as part of her identity, which is "upshot of social interface expedited and pipelined by language" (Riley 2007). She offered, *"watching YouTubers, makes me gain the Turkish my friends speak"*. This may strengthen her multilingual identity trying to acquire the colloquial Turkish. As I wrote among my field notes, she wants to have a strong relationship with Turkish as it is the new home to her.

In the first interview, she also talked about the role of English in her daily life. She feels proud of her markedly advanced English compared to her friends with whom she compares her Turkish, the language she invests a great deal to integrate into the social interaction. She said: *"My friends are always impressed with my English level, they ask me to help and clarify things for them, and my grades are always good in English"*

It seems that Saira implies her superiority in English as compensation for the weak Turkish where she might be feeling inferior. Being multilingual, as it seems, offers some social advantages that keep her connected to her friends and increases affiliation and authentication. Her success in English exams is also a matter of prestige, which facilitates her integration into the community. She says *'English exams are always easy and I'm the first one to finish. It may be difficult for others'*. Here she might be implying her Turkish friends have language challenges in English just as she does in Turkish and expresses a sense of equality in weakness, which is an advantage of refugee identity.

During the interview, she at the *metaphoric analysis stage*, the Saira asked to make associations of languages and foods. However, she also expresses an affinity for her friends in this sense in her *'chilly pepper'* metaphor that describes her conceptualisation of English since she observed her Turkish friends experiencing immense difficulty in reading in English. She likes helping others in languages. In a similar vein, Şenaydın and Dikilitaş (2019) conducted a study with a bilingual kid. That kid was favoured by her friends and called *"google translator"* because of her success in English. She also metaphorizes her favourite animal in English as rabbit, as she also expressed, and finds a delightful experience, while she describes Arabic, heritage languages as her second beautiful animal, a dog, which could also be linked to *aggression and laughter*. As stated above, her conceptualization of Turkish is also interesting and have effects of empowerment of Turkish since

she described her pleasure in learning and speaking the language as a traditional Turkish dessert i.e. kunefe (angel's hair, oven shredded pastry with soft cheese filling with thick syrup). In the third interview, Saira was asked regarding the societal attributions of her languages. Regarding social life, Saira reported she could easily mingle with her mother's foreign friends and their families and takes pride in helping her grandparents' shopping using in Turkish. She enjoys correcting grandpa's Turkish pronunciation errors. Saira: *"I help with my grandma and grandpa while shopping..... Always it is funny.....It is hilarious when they try to speak in English and Turkish, and I try to correct their mistakes."* *"I also use English as a backup when Turkish does not work."* The extracts above exhibit some traces of identity of helping others or elderly people, also code-switching when one language does not work. The selection of being an assist to elderly people and code-switching is an investment to their refugee identity.

Saira also reports: *"My best friends are refugee girls, who can speak Arabic and Turkish"*. The reason behind Saira's best friend choice tendency can be explained by the *similarity-attraction paradigm* (Osbeck, Moghaddam & Perreault, 1997). The paradigm argues that people are affected and liked by those similar to them. Their choice of attending a private primary school where they can still learn Arabic and Quran may be explained via the theory. Intriguingly, she describes the school experiences, visits, meals in Turkish. However, she prefers to talk about lessons in English. In the third interview, describing the social life, she talked about a visit to the holy tomb area: *"Girls went into a building to tomb area, boys went to a mosque, we found a big sleeping cat on the floor."* My field notes and interview findings of her codeswitching yielded that she talks about the events in the language they happened, she has procedural knowledge on her languages as well as the declarative knowledge as she can use the three languages in contexts the events take place.

The Case of Obada

Obada is seven years old boy with notably mixed vocabulary from English and Turkish in his speech. Obada often uses Arabic wherever he is angry/super excited, and Turkish whenever he is talking about school matters like his daughter. He attributes to the emotional connections established with each language. Obada favours English since he has just started his school and thus, he is continuously exposed to Turkish. He is emotionally attached to English because it is his mother's projected communication language and all his favourite cartoon is in English. He says: *"I always watch the cartoon T-rex in English."* Obada often switched to Arabic when he suffers from lack of attention and being shy near the researcher. He wanted to spoke about Turkish more, he used the metaphorical language of identity to define their intimate relationship to a point where they became part of their world. Obada thinks the Turkish language is *"cotton candy"* as it is the way to express the positive emotions in Turkey, and it has many layers, so it takes time to learn Turkish. For Obada, Turkish is *a dump truck* as it is such a powerful vehicle and Turkey might be powerful for him as they moved to Turkey and might perceive the language or the country effectual as well. Obada: *"It's big and could hold a lot of heavy things."* *"Besides, Turkish is a T-rex dinosaur for him as this animal scares others with the sound he creates; this may be due to the aforementioned causes above. Obada: "Turkish is big and strong like a T-REX which is the strongest animal with the loudest roar."* *"Mum reports: "On the other hand, Obada resorts to English to express his resentment, disgust and Turkish to report school-related matters"*. The statements above imply some choice and tendency among the languages. Obada has less exposure to Arabic, so he hardly uses it. He uses Arabic when he is overly excited or out of patience because, in Arabic, the verbs are at the very initial position. Obada uses translanguaging between Turkish and English most of the time without hesitation and as the sister, he chose metaphors to intensify the power of Turkish.

Emerging findings of refugee identity in siblings

In multiple language communication circumstances, in binational families and multilingual societies, children are born. As literacy in their languages grows, children establish identities in both culturally specific and culturally hybrid spaces and learn to live between their multiple and concurrent environments as part of the current research. . Parents play a significant role in the initiation, maintenance, and encouragement of many literacy journeys for children. For instance, Obada used positive metaphors about Turkish in the same vein her sisters. In their integration mechanisms, refugees and immigrants invest more when they see the reception context as welcomed (Portes and Rumbaut, 2006). He has a positive attitude to Turkish with associations. As the siblings preferred different languages to express emotions Alqarni & Dewaele (2018) researched emotions such as anger, fear, disgust, sadness, surprise, and happiness of Arabic and English speaker kids which were portrayed in audio-visual videos clips. They found out that speaking two or more languages is an emotional advantage. Recently the siblings seem to be struggling with complicated Arabic structures and vocabulary most probably due to lack of exposure the mother reports. Another noteworthy finding is Saira seems to position Turkish as the language for socialisation and affiliation with language by receiving authentication to be part of the social interaction and identity as argued by Block (2007). Saira and Obada’s multilingual identity development cannot be thought of as independent of social settings (Peirce,1995). They lived in multiple contexts and countries; they find it quite normal to speak the language of the country they live in as multilingual refugee children. Today people live in hyper-diverse spaces and the schools and the classrooms have become hyper-diverse contexts (Sierens & Van Avermaet, 2014). We need to move beyond the binaries between the two extremes on the continuum, of advocating for a monolingual policy on the one hand versus a traditional bilingual policy on the other. Current research advocates for a model of ‘functional multilingual learning’ (FML) (Sierens & Van Avermaet, 2014). Like other models of multilingualism such as *The Complementary Principle of Grosjean*, FML it a multilingual social interaction model for learning. The siblings dwelled a multitude of linguistic, sociocultural, and instructive gaps that constantly intersected and displaced expected ethnic-national peripheries (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004). Saira’s narratives in the interviews are in line with Grosjean Complementary Principle that the different languages are preferred on different occasions. Saira has acquired multilingual frameworks, consisting of language-specific and non-language-specific skills and language learning, management and safeguarding competences that moulded her multilingual and refugee identity.

Obada’s positive attitudes to Turkish and his associations of powerful animals and vehicles correlates with the findings of Ertaşoğlu and Gürsoy (2019) as they also found out for Syrian people in their study speaking Turkish a is power in Turkey. Obada’s statement of Turkish being a *T-rex dinosaur* might exhibit the power of the new country for him. He used the metaphor *dump truck* which might be associated as related to the power of the language. “Power and positionality are intrinsic in linguistic interchanges, and language learners deploy conversations to create a face, their image within a precise conversational interaction” (Siegal, 1994, p.358). The metaphors they used to describe their languages exemplify their interchanges and interaction. Our mentality is metaphorical, the metaphor form is a thought and an awareness of the person and shows a deeper understanding of values, emotions and emotion (Turner and Lakoff,1989).

Saira uses some translanguaging strategies while communicating with Turkish friends and in shopping or when facing difficulties in other languages, she uses it to convey its meaning, suggesting that she uses translanguaging, drawing on her full variety of language communication resources (García & Wei,2014). The strong evidence for Saira's greater self-esteem, multi-skills and flexibility as a bilingual communication is consistent with Seçer's (2016) study results. She views this language

as a functional item, as ‘English in the pocket’, which she can readily use when needed. The important role played by language in emotion building arises from the various emotional words and concepts which are accessible in all languages (Pavlenko,2005). Another finding stipulates an advantage for multilinguals is the improved learning strategies they employ; Saira can tell fables in three languages, and she takes notes on fables in an assorted way. By the same token, learners knowing more languages (up to 12) uses a great number of learning strategies and use them more frequently (Kemp,2007) Parents play a significant role in the initiation, maintenance, and encouragement of many literacy journeys for children. The mother projects three languages at the same time with some success expectations. Multilingual identity has been linked with increased open-mindedness and tolerance (Dewaele & van Oudenhoven, 2009). Therefore, the siblings exhibited tolerance to their friends whose English is not as competent as them.

As pedagogical implications, we should be aware of the importance, and cognitive gains of multilingualism (Hirosh & Degani,2018). For instance, teachers not subscribing to, or aspiring to, a multilingual identity cannot promote the creation of this identity by their students (Haukås, 2016). I can offer that; courses on how to teach multilingual or refugee students should be offered at the undergraduate level. Captivating on concepts of investment in identity, imagined communities and multiliteracies (Cope and Kalantzis,2009), they depict identity tasks as 'products of the creative work or performance of students in the pedagogical sphere organized by the teaching staff, which represents an overwhelming teaching instrument to promote equity for students with marginalized societies. As the teachers of the 21st century, we should appreciate, celebrate the diversity in our students in today’s interwoven society. Scholars describe multilingualism as *super-diversity* Vertovec (2007), despite the vast array of research in multi-lingual site literacy and identity-literacy tandem growth, bilingual and multi-lingual pedagogies (García,2009) are still somewhat absent from the mainstream classrooms in which refugee learners attend. Monolingualism is described as illiteracy of the 21st century (Roberts et al,2018). In the same strain, (Cummins,2005) warns us that via bizarre scenarios of schools, the conversant speakers of multiple languages have been successfully converted into monolingual speakers. Monolingualism is also described from a biological perspective by Rothmann and Nino-Murcia (2008) waste of our biological linguistic potential and a threat to refugee identity.

6. Discussion

Having moved to the target country, the Turkish language was/is learned at school. Both children have no problem with Turkish and English; however, Arabic writing is challenging due to lack of ongoing practice and a different script. In terms of the order, they learned these languages, English and Arabic were acquired simultaneously following the approach of one person-one language. In other words, Saira spoke in English with her mother, Arabic with her grandparents as a requirement of her refugee identity. Dekeyser(2018) suggested that children could learn many languages at the same time, their cognition is disposed to achieve multilingualism and refugee children are advantageous from this stance.

There are benefits of being multilingual. Adults or children who speak more than one language are more likely to have an increased number of emotional concepts, an indicator for their well-being and emotional intelligence, through their languages (Barrett, 2017). Therefore, it is not unrealistic to consider a broader and more diverse set of emotional concepts for multilingual people to be a multilingual benefit. It has also been found that multi-lingual experience little contact anxiety in their different languages (Deawele, 2013), likely because they have been improved and secure in their multilingualism. Saira engaged herself in the Turkish-speaking target community, using her imagination to describe the experiences in their day to day living. She aligns herself to the

community using her languages when they are required to use. Inclusive multicultural schools primarily foster a feeling of belonging to refugee students and their pro-school identity (Çelik, 2017) but unlike Saira, many refugees children study in monolingual state schools in Turkey without chances of using their repertoires. Although they are siblings, as Jarvis (2015) offered, not all learners share the same combination of languages and not all who do exhibit the same patterns and preferences when embarking on another language. Thus, the repertoires were developed across 'local' and 'translocal' intervals (Blommaert 2010) at a local level as refugees, they used their languages with intrinsic motivation to be part of their new country.

7. Conclusions

Children are affected by adults around them. The children in the present study could speak the three languages with ease with the people around them. They code-switch when necessary and they can adjust their languages depending on where they are and whom they are. The findings of the current study are in line with The Complementary Principle of Grosjean (2010), multilinguals usually acquire and use their languages for different purposes, in different domains of life, with different people. These deliberate linguistic choices are also made by multi-lingual to 'realize their communicative intentions'. Children in multilingual classes can also learn many languages simultaneously and gain a multilingual identity which will foster their refugee identity. As the educators of the 21-st century, our mission should be valuing their multilingualism. Since teacher education programs often do not appear to include a component at present that seeks to raise teachers' awareness of multilingualism or promote multilingual pedagogies in the classroom (Schissel et al., 2018) multilingualism should be included in all teacher education programmes. Teacher training programs are currently often dominated by a monolingual teaching approach, with little focus on language repertoire for teachers, particularly their multi-lingual skills (Otwinowska, 2017). Besides, refugee children need to be given special education because the children in the study do not live with their father, and other refugee children may lose both of their parents, and they need experts to help learn the language of their new country. The help of parents may help children to acquire a bilingual or multilingual identity. The strength of the study is, we focused on the experiences of the children so that they have a holistic view on their real multilingual existence and their understanding of multilingualism, literacy, personality, and value. The multi-modal tools extend children's speech and narration connections and enable us to discover their widely varied, complicated lives and identity.

Last but not least, the European school claims to foster a distinctly European, multilingual, and multicultural identity and endorse the national identity (Hoffmann, 1998). As noted by Cummins and Schecter (2003), bilingual training in America has three approaches to students' multi-lingual backgrounds: (1), the language-as-a-problem, (2), language-as-a-right, and (3) the resource language approach. This latter is the most popular, mixing standards for both the main language of school and the home language, using a rich child repertoire. Language as a resource attribution is hoped to be valuable inset for the future of siblings and multilingual development is hoped to be explored thoroughly in our ever-evolving multilingual landscape and refugee identity.

8. Ethics Committee Approval

The author(s) confirm(s) that the study does not need ethics committee approval according to the research integrity rules in their country (Date of Confirmation: 21.10.2020).

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Üç dilli bir ortamda çok dilli kimlik gelişimi: Mülteci kimliği ve dil kullanımı üzerine bir vaka çalışması

Öz

Bu vaka çalışması, Türkçe-İngilizce-Arapça çok dilli kimliği, çok dilli anneleri tarafından büyütülen iki mülteci kardeşin, sosyal ortamda Türkçe ile karşılaştıkları sırada İngilizce ve Arapça etkileşime girdikleri aile ortamında sırayla ve eş zamanlı olarak araştırmaktadır. 7 yaşındaki bir erkek ve 10 yaşındaki bir kızın çok dillilik deneyimlerine odaklanılarak, çocukların çok dilliliğini ve mülteci kimliği keşfetmeleri araştırılmıştır. Çalışma, araştırmacının alan notları, bir metafor anketi ve yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelerden oluşan veri üçlemesi yoluyla inceleme altındaki mülteci çocukların kimliği ve dil gelişimi hakkında alana katkı sağlaması amaçlanmıştır. Bulgular, çok dilli kimlik gelişiminin, ev sahibi ülkede sosyalleşmenin ve başarıya ulaşmanın bir yolu olduğunu göstermektedir. Çalışma, bir mülteci ortamında çok dilli çocuk yetiştirme konusunda, çocukların diller arası gelişimlerini teşvik eden dil repertuarının eşzamanlı kullanımını sunan, daha iyi farkındalık ve daha iyi dil kullanımı ile sonuçlanan çıkarımlar sunuyor.

Anahtar sözcükler: mülteci çocuk kimliği, dil gelişimi, iki dillilik, kimlik gelişimi

AUTHOR BIODATA

Ferhat Karanfil has been teaching for 12 years. He has delivered workshops and talks in many conferences and trained teachers in different contexts. He has a BA and MA in ELT. He joined CELTA in IH İzmir in 2012. He gave webinars for IATEFL SIG groups before. He has vast experience in primary, secondary education and at tertiary level. He worked as an educational consultant for a publishing company and started training teachers and fell in love with it. He has been training teachers since 2011. He is an examiner for international speaking tests and the newly released OET for medical professionals. He joined teacher training courses from Cambridge and Oxford University, British Council and Arizona State University. Currently, he is a PhD candidate in ELT at İstanbul Bahçeşehir University