

T.C.
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INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION



**EXPLORING FAMILY LANGUAGE POLICIES OF SYRIAN
FAMILIES IN İZMİR**

MASTER OF ARTS, ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

RIDVAN GÜLEN

THESIS SUPERVISOR
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sedat AKAYOĞLU

BOLU, OCTOBER 25

ACCEPTANCE AND APPROVAL PAGE

The thesis entitled “**EXPLORING FAMILY LANGUAGE POLICIES OF SYRIAN FAMILIES IN İZMİR**” prepared and submitted by **Rıdvan GÜLEN** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **Master of Arts** in Department of **FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION** with majority vote **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sedat AKAYOĞLU** is hereby approved. 10/25/2025

Jury Members

Signature

Supervisor
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sedat AKAYOĞLU

.....

Member
Prof. Dr. Anıl RAKICIOĞLU-SÖYLEMEZ

.....

Member
Assist. Prof. Dr. Ufuk KELEŞ

.....

Institute of Graduate Studies Approval

Prof. Dr. İbrahim KÜRTÜL
Director of Institute of Graduate Studies

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- I have presented all information, documents, evaluations, and results in accordance with the rules of scientific ethics and morality,
- I have cited and referenced all the works I have benefited from in the thesis study,
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RIDVAN GÜLEN

ABSTRACT

EXPLORING FAMILY LANGUAGE POLICIES OF SYRIAN FAMILIES IN İZMİR

MASTER THESIS

RİDVAN GÜLEN

BOLU ABANT İZZET BAYSAL ÜNİVERSİTESİ

INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

(SUPERVISOR: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sedat AKAYOĞLU)

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X + 74

Language plays a vital role in shaping identity, preserving heritage, and fostering a sense of community especially within multilingual families affected by forced migration. Despite extensive research on the integration and social challenges of Syrian refugees in Türkiye, little attention has been given to their linguistic experiences within the family. This study addresses this gap by exploring the language practices of Syrian refugee families residing in a rural area of Izmir, Türkiye. Drawing on Spolsky's (2009) Tripartite Model of Family Language Policy, which encompasses language ideologies, practices, and management, this thesis examines how these families negotiate linguistic choices amid pressures to assimilate into Turkish society. The findings aim to shed light on the complexities of heritage language maintenance and the role of family language policies in supporting cultural continuity among forcibly displaced communities.

KEYWORDS: Language, Identity, Migration, Refugee, Family language policy

ÖZET

**İZMİR'DEKİ SURIYELİ AİLELERİN DİL POLİTİKALARININ
ARAŞTIRILMASI
YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ
RİDVAN GÜLEN
BOLU ABANT İZZET BAYSAL ÜNİVERSİTESİ
LİSANSÜSTÜ EĞİTİM ENSTİTÜSÜ
YABANCI DİLLER EĞİTİMİ ANA BİLİM DALI
(TEZ DANIŞMANI: DOÇ. DR. SEDAT AKAYOĞLU)**

BOLU, 25 EKİM 2025

X + 74

Dil, özellikle zorunlu göç etmiş çok dilli ailelerde, kimliğin şekillenmesinde, kültürel mirasın korunmasında ve aidiyet duygusunun gelişmesinde hayati bir rol oynar. Türkiye’de yaşayan Suriyeli mültecilerin entegrasyonu ve toplumsal sorunları üzerine çok sayıda çalışma yapılmış olsa da, aile içindeki dilsel deneyimlerine yeterince dikkat çekilmemiştir. Bu çalışma, İzmir’in kırsal bir bölgesinde yaşayan Suriyeli mülteci ailelerin dil kullarımlarını inceleyerek bu boşluğu doldurmayı amaçlamaktadır. Spolsky’nin (2009) dil ideolojileri, dil uygulamaları ve dil yönetimini içeren Üçlü Aile Dil Politikası Modeli temel alınarak, bu ailelerin Türk toplumuna uyum sürecinde dilsel tercihlerini nasıl şekillendirdikleri ele alınmaktadır. Araştırma, zorunlu göç etmiş topluluklarda kültürel sürekliliği desteklemede aile dil politikasının rolünü ve miras dilin korunmasına dair yaşantıları ortaya koymayı hedeflemektedir.

ANAHTAR KELİMELEER: Dil, Kimlik, Göç, Mülteci, Aile dil politikası

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

BAİBÜ	: Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University
Bşk.	: President
MEB	: Ministry of National Education
FLP	: Family Language Policy
NGO	: Non-Governmental Organization



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1. INTRODUCTION

Language serves not only as a medium of communication but also as a critical symbol of identity, heritage, and community belonging. In multilingual families, particularly those shaped by forced migration, language becomes a core resource through which individuals navigate and negotiate their place in society (King et al., 2008; Spolsky, 2009). The ongoing Syrian conflict, which began in 2011, has displaced millions, leading to one of the largest refugee crises in recent history. As of 2024, Türkiye hosts over 3.6 million Syrians under temporary protection (Directorate General of Migration Management [DGMM], 2024), making the country with the largest Syrian refugee population globally.

While significant research has focused on the integration, education, and social challenges faced by Syrians in Türkiye (Çelik & İçduygu, 2019; Erdoğan, 2020), limited scholarly attention has been directed toward their linguistic realities, particularly regarding language use within the family domain. Refugee families often face pressure to adapt to the host society's dominant culture, and language is a central part of this integration process. However, this process can threaten the maintenance of the family's heritage language, which is often critical to intergenerational communication, cultural transmission, and identity preservation (Fishman, 1991; Schwartz & Verschik, 2013).

In this context, the concept of Family Language Policy (FLP), which concerns the implicit and explicit language planning at home, emerges as a vital lens for understanding how refugee families make linguistic choices at home. Spolsky's (2009) Tripartite Model of FLP, which conceptualizes family language policy as comprising *language ideologies*, *language practices*, and *language management*, offers a robust framework for examining these dynamics. The present study applies this framework to the case of Syrian refugee families living in a rural area of Izmir, Türkiye.

1.1 Problem Statement

In multilingual contexts, maintaining a heritage language is a complex endeavor that becomes even more challenging in the face of forced displacement. For refugee families, linguistic choices are shaped not only by personal beliefs but also by macro-level policies and social constraints (Shohamy, 2006). For Syrian

families in Türkiye, the dominant presence of Turkish in education, media, and public life often leads to a rapid shift in children's linguistic repertoires, particularly when heritage language instruction is absent from the official school curriculum (Yaylacı & Karakuş, 2015).

In line with this, rural areas in Türkiye, although home to a growing number of Syrian refugees, are underrepresented in scholarly research (Akşit et al., 2018). Unlike urban centers that may offer institutional or community support (e.g., extension heritage language schools) for heritage language maintenance, rural settings provide limited opportunities for heritage language use or cultural engagement. Understanding how Syrian refugee parents navigate this complex sociolinguistic environment is critical to informing language education policies and community engagement strategies.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore the family language policies of Syrian refugee families residing in a rural neighborhood of Izmir, Türkiye. Specifically, the present study at hand investigates how these families conceptualize and enact their language ideologies, engage in language practices, and manage language use within home. By adopting an ethnographic methodology and applying Spolsky's (2009) model, this study seeks to reveal how parental beliefs, social roles, and children's agency shape daily language decisions in the family.

1.3 Research Questions

The study addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the language ideologies of Syrian refugee parents regarding Arabic and Turkish in the family domain?
2. What are the actual language practices observed among Syrian refugee families in their daily interactions?
3. What are the common language management strategies of Syrian refugee families in the family domain?

1.4 Significance of the Study

The present inquiry aims at making three following contributions to the existing literature of FLP: a) theoretical, b) empirical, and c) practical. Theoretically speaking, the present study expands the scope of FLP studies beyond middle-class,

Western, immigrant families by focusing on an underrepresented refugee population in a Global South context (Curd-Christiansen, 2016; Smith-Christmas, 2017). As for its empirical contribution, the current inquiry provides a detailed ethnographic account of language policy in the home domain among Syrian refugees, a group underrepresented in family language research despite their growing demographic and sociopolitical significance. Regarding its practical contribution, the current study offers valuable insights for educators, NGOs, and policy makers working with refugee children. The findings may inform inclusive language practices that support both Turkish language acquisition and Arabic language maintenance (King & Fogle, 2006).

1.5 Literature Review

This chapter presents a critical review of the literature on family language policy (FLP), with particular emphasis on Spolsky's (2009) Tripartite Model as the theoretical framework. The review introduces the concept of language policy and planning, followed by an extensive discussion on FLP and its development. It then outlines key studies using the Tripartite Model, emphasizing research on refugee families and minority language maintenance in multilingual settings. This review also examines micro- and macro-level influences on FLP and identifies gaps in the literature that this thesis seeks to address.

1.5.1 Language Policy and Planning

Language policy and planning (LPP) refers to the deliberate efforts by institutions, communities, or individuals to influence language use, language acquisition, and the sociopolitical roles of languages (Johnson, 2013; Ricento, 2006). Cooper (1989) famously defined LPP as "deliberate efforts to influence the behavior of others with respect to the acquisition, structure, or functional allocation of their language codes" (p. 45). Kaplan and Baldauf (1997) further identified three components of LPP: status planning, corpus planning, and acquisition planning. While earlier models of LPP focused on state-level interventions, recent decades have witnessed an expansion to micro-level settings, particularly families (Shohamy, 2006).

1.5.2 The Emergence of Family Language Policy (FLP)

Family Language Policy (FLP) is a subfield of LPP that focuses on language ideologies, practices, and management within the family domain (King et al., 2008).

The term gained traction through the work of researchers such as Spolsky (2004), who emphasized the need to consider the family as a central site of language policy implementation. FLP explores how parents and caregivers transmit, maintain, or shift languages in multilingual households, particularly in heritage language contexts (Curd-Christiansen, 2009; Schwartz, 2010).

FLP research has expanded rapidly in recent years, reflecting global trends in migration, multilingualism, and identity negotiation (Lanza & Lomeu Gomes, 2020). Early studies focused on bilingual families in Western contexts (e.g., De Houwer, 1999), while more recent work explores FLP among transnational, refugee, and minoritized communities (King & Fogle, 2013; Smith-Christmas, 2016).

1.5.3 Spolsky's (2009) Tripartite Model of Family Language Policy

Spolsky's (2009) Tripartite Model remains one of the most widely used theoretical frameworks in FLP research. According to Spolsky, family language policy consists of three interrelated components: a) language ideologies, b) language practices, and c) language management. Language ideologies are beliefs, values, and attitudes about language(s), which influence parents' decisions and practices (Spolsky, 2004). Language practices, on the other hand, are the actual language(s) spoken within the family, including interactional patterns between parents and children. Lastly, language management can be considered as the deliberate attempts by family members, usually parents, to influence or control language use (e.g., correcting a child's speech, enforcing 'one parent, one language' strategies).

This model is useful for both deductive and inductive analysis and has been applied to diverse family contexts, including immigrant, refugee, and minority language communities (Curd-Christiansen, 2016).

1.5.4 Language Ideologies

Language ideologies have been shown to significantly influence family decisions regarding language transmission. Parents who view the heritage language as central to cultural identity or familial cohesion are more likely to invest in its maintenance (King & Fogle, 2006; Park & Sarkar, 2007). For instance, Kaveh (2018) found that Iranian-American parents who believed Persian was a marker of ethnic identity were more consistent in using the language at home.

However, language ideologies are not always consistent with language practices. Romanowski (2021) observed that Polish families in Australia declared strong support for Polish, but often prioritized English in practice due to educational and social pressures. This gap between ideology and practice underscores the complexity of FLP, particularly in diasporic and refugee contexts.

1.5.5 Language Practices

Language practices refer to actual language use patterns within the family. De Houwer (2007) found that consistent use of the heritage language by both parents significantly increased the likelihood of children acquiring it. Yet practices are also shaped by children's preferences, peer influence, and schooling (Luykx, 2005).

In multilingual settings, family language practices are often hybrid, fluid, and influenced by contextual factors (Wei, 2011). For instance, in a study of Kurdish families in France, Kaya (2015) reported frequent code-switching between Kurdish and French, depending on interlocutor and domain.

1.5.6 Language Management

Language management involves intentional strategies to regulate language use. These strategies may be implicit (e.g., expressing disapproval) or explicit (e.g., sending children to heritage language classes). Lanza (2007) identified parental discourse strategies such as minimal grasp, expressed guess, and code-switching as forms of language management.

Parents often adopt the One Parent, One Language (OPOL) method to facilitate bilingual development (Barron-Hauwaert, 2004). However, its success depends on consistency, child agency, and contextual support. In refugee contexts, formal schooling in the host language may undermine parental efforts to maintain the heritage language (Mirvahedi & Gharibi, 2019).

1.5.7 FLP in Refugee and Migrant Contexts

Recent scholarship has increasingly focused on FLP in refugee and migrant settings. These contexts are characterized by displacement, trauma, socioeconomic instability, and interrupted schooling—all of which affect language decisions (Piller, 2016).

In their study of Syrian refugee families in Germany, Albirini and Shaaban (2019) found that despite strong ideologies supporting Arabic, parents struggled to maintain the language due to the dominance of German in schools and public life.

Similarly, Fogle and King (2013) reported that Latin American migrant families in the U.S. often abandoned Spanish in favor of English to aid integration.

1.5.8 Macro- and Micro-Level Influences on FLP

Family language policy does not operate in a vacuum. It is influenced by macro-level structures (e.g., education policies, media, language hierarchies) and micro-level dynamics (e.g., parental education, child agency, sibling relationships).

Macro-level constraints include national language ideologies and institutional policies. For example, Türkiye's monolingual education system prioritizes Turkish, limiting the institutional support for Arabic among refugee children (Yazan & Ali, 2018).

Micro-level factors include parents' own language histories, beliefs about bilingualism, and experiences with education. In her study of Somali families in Canada, Ali (2014) found that mothers with higher education levels were more proactive in language management efforts. Child – agency also plays a role; children may resist heritage language use in favor of peer group languages (Smith-Christmas, 2016).

1.5.9 Gaps in Literature

Although FLP has gained prominence in recent years, several gaps remain. First, research on FLP in Middle Eastern contexts is limited. While studies have examined Kurdish, Persian, and Arabic-speaking families in diasporas, few have focused on these communities within host countries like Türkiye.

Second, most FLP research in refugee contexts has focused on urban settings. Rural areas, where access to multilingual resources and educational support is limited, remain underexplored (Lanza & Gomes, 2020).

Finally, few studies have examined the role of teacher-researchers embedded within the community. Given that educators often serve as bridges between home and school, their insider perspectives can offer rich, emic insights into FLP (Curd-Christiansen & Huang, 2020).

1.5.10 Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the key concepts and empirical studies shaping the field of Family Language Policy, with a focus on Spolsky's Tripartite Model. It highlighted the interplay between ideologies, practices, and management, while emphasizing the role of broader social structures and individual agency. The review identified critical gaps in the literature that justify the present study's focus on

Syrian refugee families in rural Türkiye. By adopting an ethnographic lens and drawing on lived experiences, this study seeks to contribute to both theoretical and practical understandings of FLP in underrepresented contexts.



2. MATERIALS and METHOD

2.1 Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative ethnographic research design to explore the family language policies (FLPs) of Syrian refugee families residing in a rural area of Izmir, Türkiye. The ethnographic tradition allows for a detailed, nuanced, and contextualized understanding of language use within family settings through immersive fieldwork (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2019; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Ethnography, as a methodology, prioritizes naturalistic inquiry into participants' lived realities, making it suitable for exploring how language ideologies, practices, and management unfold over time within refugee households.

Spolsky's (2009) Tripartite Model of Family Language Policy served as both the conceptual and analytical framework. The model distinguishes three interconnected yet distinct components: (1) language ideologies, or the beliefs and values attached to different languages; (2) language practices, or the actual patterns of language use in the home; and (3) language management, or deliberate efforts to guide language behavior. This framework provided a structured lens through which to explore how families negotiate language use within the constraints of their sociopolitical and cultural environment.

2.2 Research Setting

The study aims to reveal the family language policies of the Syrian families who came to Türkiye as refugees after Syrian civil war broke out in 2011. Millions of people fled to nearby countries in search of staying alive and saving their lives. Ergüven and Özturanlı (2013) inform that according to *International Refugee Law* Türkiye started to take in refugees who were around 2.5 million people claimed to have protection and sanctuary in 2011 and the next years. At first, they were scattered to border cities in Türkiye like Hatay, Kilis, Gaziantep, Osmaniye, Kahramanmaraş, Adıyaman, and Şanlıurfa. And then they were sent to other western parts of the country, as well. In this study, the setting is placed in a modern and developed western city of Türkiye. Most of the refugee families came to this part of Türkiye around 2011 and 2014. The participants were interviewed at their homes and one of them at a grocery shop.

2.3 Scope And Limitations

This study focuses on 25 Syrian refugee families in a single rural neighborhood in Türkiye. The aim is not to generalize findings to the entire refugee population but to offer an in-depth, situated understanding of FLP in a specific social context. The study primarily involves Arabic-speaking families; thus, it does not include minority language speakers such as Kurdish- or Arabic-speaking Syrians.

Cultural norms and logistical constraints affected participant demographics, leading to greater representation of maternal voices. The researcher's role as a teacher may have influenced participant responses and behavior but also provided unique ethnographic access.

2.4 Demographic Information of the Families

In this ethnographic study twenty-five Syrian refugee families took part. They all reside in a modern western city of Türkiye. Each family participated in the interview along with their children at their homes, except one interview took part in a grocery shop. There were nineteen mothers and fifteen fathers. Among these families nine of the mothers and five of the fathers attended the interviews without their partners. Nine of the parents attended together. Most of the time fathers were the spokesperson. If families had difficulty in understanding interview questions their children helped them out in translating into their mother tongue. The participants consist of eighteen Syrian Kurdish families and seven Syrian Arabic families. All the Kurdish parents speak both Kurdish and Arabic. However, the Arabic families can only speak Arabic. All the Syrian families had not learnt Turkish until they came to Türkiye. The families' demographic information data were prepared according to their age, length of residence in Türkiye, education, occupation and languages.

The participants were informed that their names were not going to be used in the study. For this reason, they were given pseudonyms from Arabic and Kurdish, and further they were given Turkish family names in the light of confidentiality. In real life most of the participant families had their fathers' first name as their surnames in Türkiye. The demographic information is built in accordance with the

families interview line beginning from the first family to the last family interviewed.

The first interview was done with Adal family who consists of six people; Dila (the grandmother), Baran (the father), Arin (the mother), Buke (the daughter), Serdal (the son), and Ester (the daughter). They have been living Türkiye for 12 years and their children all were born here. The elders were born in Aleppo, Syria, but their kids were born in the present city of Türkiye. Baran and Arin graduated from high school in Aleppo. Dila graduated from primary school. Baran is a hairdresser and has a hairdresser shop nearby. Arin is a housewife. The elders were fluent in Arabic and Kurdish. In Syria, the medium of education is Arabic, so that they can read and write in Arabic; however, they are not able to read and write in Kurdish. Adal family informs that their neighborhood mostly consisted of Arabic citizens in Aleppo, so they had to speak Arabic most of the time with the people. When they came to Türkiye, the parents and the grandmother also got TÖMER (Turkish and Foreign Language Application and Research Center) courses and Public Education Center (Halk Eğitim Merkezi) courses in order to learn Turkish language. They showed their certificates that they attended Turkish language courses. Therefore, the father and the mother are also able to read and write in Turkish. Although Dila got Turkish courses, she was not able to speak Turkish. Apart from that Baran says he also speaks English. Baran tells that after their children started to attend school, they started using Turkish language at home, as well. Because he believes that the children should learn Turkish in order to keep up with the educational program of the school.

While we were having the interview, there was a computer on, and the kids were watching a Turkish kids' song 'Bakkal Amca' with Arabic title and description on YouTube. The children can speak three languages, Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish. Since they are attending a Turkish primary school, Buke and Serdal also can write and read in Turkish, but due to nursery school Ester does not know writing and reading at the present. According to Baran, he learnt Turkish from his customers and Arin learnt Turkish from her neighbors. Further, Baran tells that although their family language is Kurdish, their kids are speaking in Turkish with each other most of the time and with their cousins who live in the neighborhood.

The second family is the Can family consists of four members who are relatives of Adal family. Can and Adal families live in the same house. Afran (the

father) has been living in Türkiye for twelve years whereas his wife Zilan (the mother) has been living for ten years. Afran was born in Aleppo, Syria and Zilan was born in Afrin that is a province of Aleppo, Syria. They married in Türkiye. Their children were born in this city, as well. Afran is also a hairdresser working with his elder brother. He graduated from high school. He can speak Kurdish, Arabic and Turkish, as well. Whereas Afran took TÖMER courses for Turkish language, Zilan did not take any Turkish courses. Zilan graduated from middle school. She can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish. According to Zilan she can read and write in Turkish. Therefore, both the parents are able to read and write in Arabic and Turkish. Baran informs that he used to have French and English courses in Aleppo, but he is not able to use them at the present. While Afran was using Arabic in his hometown, Zilan was using Kurdish in Afrin most of the time except in official places. Their daughters are Aîşe and Miray. Aîşe can speak Kurdish, but she only understands Arabic and Turkish. She does not go to school at present. Miray only responds to Kurdish since she is one year old.

The third family is Can family consists of five members. They are Asad (the father), Aysha (the mother), Zahra (the daughter), Sara (the daughter), Rauf (the son). Asad, who is electronics shop owner in Türkiye, graduated from the Open Education program of English translation at Homs University, in Syria. Further, before he took his bachelor's degree he graduated from a vocational high school as an electrical technician. Thus, he used to work as an assistant to electronic engineers in Homs as a civil servant. When he came to Türkiye, he got the certificate of equivalence from the Ministry of National Education for his previous job in order to open his electronics shop. Moreover, he went to the Public Education Center to learn Turkish. Because he added that he could not communicate with people in English or Arabic. He needed to learn Turkish because he is a taxpayer here. So as to read and reply to official notifications and talk to people. He says that his reading and writing skills are better than his speaking skill in Turkish. Whereas he speaks Arabic at home, he needs to speak Turkish outside. Aysha, on the other hand, she can speak Arabic, English, and Turkish. She was born in Homs, too. Due to Syrian Civil War she had to drop out in her first year from the Higher Institute of Languages at Homs University while she was attending English language teaching department. Apart from that she had to drop out another department in Türkiye. While she was attending accounting and tax applications department at Muğla Sıtkı

Koçman University, Vocational School, she dropped out due to Covid-19 pandemic. She attended Turkish courses at TÖMER, as well. She says she also needed to learn Turkish in order to attend parent – teacher meetings at her daughter’s school and communicate with her neighbors. Both parents are very interested in their children’s education, they always come to school at meetings or other times to learn about their progress.

Their daughter Zahra is ten years old. She is going to primary school. She is one of my best students at school. She was born in Homs. When she was four months old, her family fled to Türkiye. She can speak Arabic and Turkish, and she is learning English. Her father says that Zahra finds learning Turkish is easier than learning Arabic. She has taken Arabic reading and writing courses with an Arabic teacher face to face and online courses after Covid-19 pandemic. Her parents say that she needs to learn Arabic in order to read Quran and communicate with her grandparents who are in Syria at the moment. Sara, who is 5 years old, was born in Türkiye. At the moment she goes to nursery school within the primary school. She can speak Arabic and Turkish. Sara did not take any Arabic courses like her elder sister due to her age. Lastly, they have a baby brother, and he is two months old.

The fourth family is the Çetin family. They consist of five members; Akam (the father), Gülcan (the mother), Ajda (the daughter), Agrin (the daughter), and Araz (the son). They have been living in Türkiye for twelve years. The children were born in Türkiye. Their father has been in prison in Greece currently. Because of that we could not have a conversation with him, but with mother. I have not got any information about her husband’s occupation and how he learnt to read and write in Kurdish and Turkish. Probably, he took Turkish language courses at public education center or TÖMER. Since, there is no formal education for Kurdish in Syria, he probably learnt how to read and write in Kurdish by himself. Gülcan is a housewife. She says that her husband went to primary school in Aleppo, Syria and he can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish and he is literate in all three languages whereas she did not have any school education because she had no parents in Aleppo, Syria. She grew up in a village with her grandmother. Hence, she can only speak Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish. She cannot read and write in any of these languages that she can speak. When she arrived in Türkiye, she had communication problems. She could not speak with doctors. So, she felt the need of learning Turkish in order to have a proper communication with Turkish people. According

to her, she learnt Turkish language from her neighbors and especially she made use of Turkish television programs to learn Turkish language. She tells that because she did not have any formal education in her life, she wants her children to have education and learn different languages.

Ajda, who is a primary student, can speak Kurdish, Turkish, and a little Arabic. She is rather a quiet student at the school. Her sister Agrin is also a primary student and she can speak Kurdish, Turkish and a little Arabic. The last child Araz also can speak Kurdish, Turkish, and a little Arabic. He does not go to school at the moment. By the way, while we were having our interview, the television was open and there was a video in Turkish with Arabic titles on YouTube.

The fifth interview was done with the Demir Family who consist of seven members. They are Bager (the father), Berhem (the mother), and the children; Alaz (the son), Ara (the daughter), Avşin (the son), Avin (the daughter), and Berfin (the daughter). Gülcan from the Çetin family took me to their home because they were neighbors. Further, Alaz was my student from previous year and his sister Ara is my student this year. The Demir Family have been living in Türkiye for 12 years. They are also from Aleppo, Syria. All the children were born here. Bager's occupation is shoemaker. He went to primary school in Afrin, Aleppo. He can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish. Before he came to Türkiye, he did not know any Turkish. After learning to read and write in Turkish language, he learnt how to read and write in Kurdish by himself. Because after learning Turkish alphabet it became easier to learn Kurdish language. Although he learnt to read and write in his mother tongue, he thinks that reading and writing skills have no usefulness for himself. He adds that he likes to play the baglama and do sports. His childhood was hard, and his family was poor. For this reason, he had to drop out of school after primary school though he was a very hardworking student. On the other hand, his wife Berhem does not know how to read and write in Arabic although she went to primary school in Syria. She can speak Kurdish, Arabic and Turkish. She did not attend the interview. Their children can speak Kurdish and Turkish. They did not learn any Arabic from their parents. While Alaz goes to middle school, his siblings Ara, Avşin, and Avin go to primary school. Alaz was my student last year and Ara is my student this year. But Ara was taken into PIKTES (Promoting Integration of Syrian Kids into the Turkish Education System) class. Due to her reading and writing skills are poor in Turkish, she was taken to this class. Sometimes if her

PIKTES teacher was not at the school, she could come and join us in the English classroom. Their little sister Berfin is one year old. She can only respond to Kurdish. Berhem says that although they do not speak Turkish with their children as parents, their children use Turkish among themselves and with neighbor kids around. He also does not allow his children to mix languages while they speak.

The sixth interview was done with Ekin Family. They are neighbors to Demir family. Bager showed me their home. They are living in the same street with the Demir family. They were waiting for me, too. The Ekin family consists of six members. They are Awdıl (the father), Zozan (the mother), Bakur (the son), Bazit (the son), Vian (the daughter), and Bazan (the son). They have been living in Türkiye for twelve years. The children were born in Türkiye. Awdıl and Zozan attended with their kids. Whenever communication problems occurred their child Bakur helped us. Awdıl is a shoemaker and Zozan is a housewife. They are from Afrin, Aleppo, Syria. Awdıl, who graduated from primary school in Syria, can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish. Although Awdıl went to school in Syria, he does not know reading and writing in Arabic. He says that he had to help his family. He started working when he was in primary school. His wife Zozan graduated from high school in Syria.

Awdıl says that he didn't know Turkish before coming to Türkiye. His neighbor who is also a refugee here helped him to learn Turkish. But still his Turkish proficiency is poor. Zozan can speak Kurdish, Arabic, Turkish, and English. She can read and write in Arabic. However, both parents do not know how to read and write in Kurdish. The parents did not take any Turkish courses for themselves at any time. Their kids Bakur and Bazit go to middle school and primary school in the neighborhood. Bakur was a student of mine in the previous year. Bazit is a student of mine this year, but he was taken into the PIKTES class. Due to his reading and writing skills are poor in Turkish, he was taken to this class. Their sister Vian does not go to school. She can speak Kurdish and Arabic. Their little brother Bazan is nine-month-olds, he only responds to Kurdish. Awdıl says that he thinks their children should learn other languages and learning new languages is useful for his children. He lets his children use mixed languages while they talk with each other.

On the seventh interview, I talked with the Ferit family. They are neighbor to the Demir family, and the fathers have been friends since Syria. This family

consists of six members; Awdel (the father), Xezal (the mother), Behdin (the son), Merwan (the son), Zerine (the daughter), Xizan (the son). They are from Afrin, Aleppo, Syria. They have been living in Türkiye for twelve years and they came here with the Ekin family since they have been already friends in Syria. Awdel is a polisher. He knew Turkish before he came to Türkiye, because he was watching Turkish TV channels when he was in Syria. He went to primary school. Just like his friend he also had to help his family due to challenges in life. He can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish. He is only literate in Arabic. He did not go to any Turkish course. His wife Xezal is a housewife. She graduated from high school in Syria. She can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish. She is literate in Arabic. Their kids Behdin, Merwan, and Zerine were born in Syria, but Xizan was born in Türkiye. Behdin graduated from middle school in Türkiye, but he did not continue to study. Instead, he helps his father. He can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish. He is only literate in Turkish. His brother Merwan is still a student at middle school. He can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish. He is literate only in Turkish, too. Their sister Zerine is also a student at middle school. Like her brothers she can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish. She can read and write in Turkish, as well. Lastly, Xizan the youngest goes to primary school. He can not speak Arabic like his elder siblings. He can speak Kurdish and Turkish. He is also literate in Turkish. Their parents inform that their children use Turkish mainly among themselves. They speak Kurdish or Arabic with their parents when they need to. Awdel tells that when they were in Syria, they could speak Kurdish only in their village. However, they had to speak Arabic when they needed to communicate with officials in Syria. And he had to use Arabic when he had his military service. Like his friend Awdıl, he allows his children to use other languages freely.

On the eighth interview, I talked with Gedik family. They consist of five family members. They are Ceger (the father), Hawjin (the mother), Hevin (the daughter), Hanis (the son), and Hekar (the son). They have been living in Türkiye for 12 years. They are from Aleppo, Syria. Their neighborhood consisted of Kurdish people when they were in Aleppo. Hekar, who is a student of mine, came to take me from the Ferit family's house. The father Ceger was not at home while we were interviewing the mother, because he went to Europe. He is a civil foreman. According to his wife, he went to primary school, but he dropped out of school at the fourth grade in Syria. He had to work due to poorness. He can speak Kurdish,

Arabic, and Turkish. He is literate in Arabic. He did not go to any Turkish course. While we were having conversation if any communication problems occurred, the children helped their mother. Hawjin is a housewife. She graduated from primary school. She can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and a little Turkish. Although she went to a Turkish course for refugee parents, she was not able to read and write in Turkish. According to Hawjin she wished that she could go to school more. Further, when they were in Syria, they were not allowed to speak Kurdish in public areas. They only could speak Arabic. The eldest child Hevin was born in Aleppo, Syria. She has been in Türkiye for twelve years. She goes to high school. She can speak Kurdish and Turkish, but she did not learn any Arabic from her parents. The middle child also was born in Aleppo, Syria. He has been in Türkiye for twelve years. He goes to middle school. He can speak Kurdish and Turkish. He cannot speak Arabic. The last child is Hekar, who was born in Türkiye, goes to primary school. He can speak Kurdish and Turkish. According to their mother, the children prefer to speak Turkish among themselves and with the kids in the neighborhood. No member of the family is literate in Kurdish. Hawjin says that they allow their kids to speak language interchangeably and she thinks she is good at teaching them their mother tongue.

The ninth family was the Hancı family. There are five family members. They are Koçber (the father), Hawnaz (the mother), Navdar (the son), Sibel (the daughter), and Yadgar (the son). They are neighbors to the Gedik family, and they are relatives with them. Hawjin and Hawnaz are sisters. Because they were from the same neighborhood in Syria, they were not allowed to speak Kurdish at public areas, too. The Hancı family have been living in Türkiye for twelve years and they came here together with the Gedik family. Like the father of the Gedik family the father Koçber also went to Europe to work there. He is a civil foreman, too. He graduated from primary school. He can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish. He is literate in Arabic. He did not take any Turkish course. Hawnaz is a housewife. She went to primary school, and she can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and a little Turkish. Also, her children helped us while we were having the interview. Though she attended to a Turkish course with her sister, she also did not learn much. All her children were born in Türkiye. Her son Navdar was a student of mine in the previous year. Now he goes to middle school. He can speak Kurdish and Turkish. Sibel goes to nursery school, and she can speak Kurdish and Turkish. The last child Yadgar is

a baby, and he only responds to Kurdish. Like their cousins Navdar and Sibel speak Turkish among themselves and with the other kids in the street. Like her sister Hawnaz is also positive about teaching their mother tongue and she lets her children use the languages interchangeably.

The tenth interview was done with the Işıl family who consist of four members. They are Dara (the father), Adra (the mother), Adiva (the daughter), and Abira (the daughter). The interview was done with Adra because Dara was working at that moment. They have been living in Türkiye for ten years. They are from Aleppo, Syria. One of their neighbors who is a Syrian came to help our interview because she can speak Turkish very well. Their children were born in Türkiye. Dara is a truck driver. He graduated from high school. He only speaks Arabic according to his wife. Adra is a housewife. She graduated from middle school. She can speak Arabic. She says that she can only read in English and Turkish. Adra says that when they were in Aleppo, there were many Turkmen families, and Kurdish, Armenian, and Assyrian families in their neighborhood. She thinks that Arabic is a holy language due to the Quran and it is very rich in culture and literature. She tells that as parents they wanted their children to learn Arabic and hired an Arabic teacher for their children in Türkiye. She believes that if they ever go back to Syria, her children should be able to speak Arabic. Thus, Adiva learnt to read the Quran and read Arabic, and Abira is only able to read Arabic letters. Adra says that she teaches her children Arabic since they were born. Although the children learnt Arabic, they speak Turkish with each other at home. Adiva is a primary school student, and she is one of my students. She can speak Arabic and Turkish. She thinks that learning Turkish is easier than learning Arabic, and she enjoys speaking Turkish, as well. Abira is a nursery school student and she can speak Arabic and Turkish. Adiva and Abira teach Turkish words to their mother. Adra says that she was afraid that the children would not learn Arabic after beginning school in Türkiye. Further, she thinks that her children's mother tongue is Turkish. They were getting help from neighbors' kids in order to understand their homework. Because Dara and Adra were not able to help them with Turkish.

The eleventh family was the İnal family who are neighbor to the Işıl family. They have five members; Kamil (the father), Naseem (the mother), Karim (the son), Najla (the daughter), and Altair (the son). They have been living for eleven years in Türkiye. They came from Aleppo, Syria. Only one of their children was born in

Türkiye. According to Naseem Kamil is a Turkish person, but his ancestors settled in Syria at the time of Osmanlı empire. He was born in Damascus. Although he is originally Turkish, he cannot speak Turkish. He can only speak Arabic. He is a shop owner here. He graduated from high school. Naseem had a bachelor's degree in classroom education. She can speak Arabic, Turkish, English, and a little French. She can speak Turkish very well. She used to be a classroom teacher in Aleppo. Like her neighbor Naseem says that Arabic is very rich in literature and the language of the holy Quran. She is very proud of Arabic language and she thinks it is the most beautiful language in the world. Moreover, she says that learning Turkish was very easy for her, because she knew English and French. Due to common alphabet, and Turkish and Arabic languages have many common words. Furthermore, she sees a language as a communication tool, and she conveys prophet Mohammad's words as "people should learn other people's languages". That's why she is also fond of learning new languages. Apart from that she says that she taught Arabic to her children. And she wants her children to learn different languages. Her son Karim was born in Aleppo. He is a student at a high school in Türkiye. He can speak Arabic and Turkish. He is literate in both languages. According to his mother, he was using hand signs to communicate with people in Türkiye. The second child Najla is a middle school student. She can speak Arabic and Turkish. She is only able to read and speak in Arabic. Her last child Altair goes to primary school. He can speak Arabic and Turkish. The three siblings cannot use handwriting in Arabic, but they can use Arabic in texting.

On the twelfth interview, I talked to the Kahveci family that has seven members. They are Cihan (the father), Ruken (the mother), Evin (the daughter), Sipan (the son), Axin (the daughter), Gul (the daughter), and Serhat (the son). They have been living in Türkiye for eleven years. They are from Aleppo, Syria. Cihan is a plastic and cardboard collector who picks up plastic and cardboard pieces from garbage bins to sell them later. He was not around at that moment, so we had this interview with his wife. Cihan did not go to school in his life according to his wife. He can speak Kurdish and a little Arabic. Ruken also did not attend school in her life. She is a housewife. She says that their families were poor, and they had to help their families when they were kids. Her husband had to work for his own family, and she had to help with household chores in her family. Due to both parents did not take any school education, Ruken says they want their children to go to school

and learn what they had not learnt before. She wants their children to be educated. She can only speak Kurdish and a little Arabic. That's why her children helped with the conversation. But she wants to learn Turkish. While two of the children were born in Syria, three of them were born in Türkiye. The eldest child Evin was born in Syria. She can speak Kurdish, a little Arabic, and Turkish. She had to drop out of school after completing middle school. She and her brother Sipan helped carry on the conversation most of the time, because her Turkish was very well. Sipan also was born in Syria. He is a high school student. He can speak Kurdish, a little Arabic, and Turkish. Axin, who is a student of mine, is a very silent child. She can speak Kurdish and Turkish. She was born in Türkiye. Her younger sister Gul is also a primary school student. She can speak Kurdish and Turkish. Their youngest sibling Serhat is two years old. He only responds to Kurdish. According to their mother, children learnt Turkish by themselves by watching TV and playing in the street with other kids. While parents talk Kurdish with each other, the children favor speaking Turkish with each other according to Ruken.

The thirteenth family was the Limoncu family, who are neighbors and relatives of the Kahveci family. This family has six members. They are Baha (the father), Dilşen (the mother), Gulçin (the daughter), Gulin (the daughter), Baraw (the son), and Zin (the daughter). They have been residing in Türkiye for eleven years. They are from Aleppo, Syria. The youngest member of the family was born in Türkiye. The eldest sibling is married, and she lives in Bursa. The father was working while we were interviewing. He works as a plastic and cardboard collector. He went to middle school in Syria. He can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish. He is literate in Arabic. The mother Dilşen is a housewife. She did not attend to any school in Syria. She can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and a little Turkish. Due to her little Turkish, her children helped her with the interview. According to her, she had a poor family when she was in Aleppo. In her neighborhood, they could speak Kurdish, but they had to speak Arabic in official places in Syria. She said that there were other ethnic people like Armenians and Assyrians, and they were speaking Arabic. She thinks that her mother tongue is important for them because their neighbors were speaking Kurdish. She said that there was no force not to use Kurdish. The daughter Gulin went to primary school in Türkiye, but she had to drop out of school at the fourth grade. She can speak Kurdish, a little Arabic, and Turkish. She is literate in Turkish. Baraw is a student, and he goes to middle school. He can speak

Kurdish, a little Arabic, and Turkish. The youngest child, Zin is a student, and she goes to primary school. She can speak Kurdish and Turkish. According to their mother children use Turkish mostly at home and in the street. The parents use Arabic and Kurdish with each other interchangeably. The children use Kurdish and a little Arabic while communicating with their parents. She also adds that her children help her at bazaars or other official places. Further she says that they use Arabic at the community health center without a translator because the doctors speak Arabic. She says she was happy to see her children go to school because she wants them to be educated.

On the fourteenth interview we have the Mutlu family that has twelve members. They are Bakir (the father), Munira (the mother), Almas (the daughter), Abbas (the son), Laila (the daughter), Kavsar (the daughter), Huriyah (the daughter), Ibtisam (the daughter), Hamza (the son), Iqbal (the daughter), Husain (the son), and Inas (the daughter). Husain and Inas are twins. They are from Medin Irbab, Aleppo, Syria. They have been living in Türkiye for nine years. Iqbal, Husain, and Inas were born in Türkiye. The father is a butcher, and he only speaks Arabic. He went to primary school for three years in Syria. Munira the mother is a housewife. She went to primary school. She can speak Arabic and French. She does not work. Almas the eldest daughter went to middle school in Türkiye. She did not take any school education in Syria. She can speak Arabic and Turkish. Abbas went to middle school in Türkiye. He works as a kebab chef at a restaurant. He was the spokesperson for the family since his parents did not speak Turkish. Laila dropped out of school at the third grade of primary school. She can speak Kavsar is a high school student. She can speak Arabic, Turkish, and English. Huriyah goes to middle school. She can speak Arabic, Turkish, and English. Ibtisam goes to primary school. She can speak Arabic, Turkish. Hamza is a primary school student. He can speak Arabic and Turkish. Both Ibtisam and Hamza are my students. Iqbal is a primary school student. She can speak Arabic and Turkish. Twin siblings Husain and Inas do not go to school. The children firstly learnt Arabic from their parents since they did not go to school in Syria. They learnt Turkish at public Turkish schools and from Turkish TV channels. When they came to Türkiye, they were placed in a southeastern part of Türkiye where local people also speak Arabic. According to Abbas they stayed there for six years. So, they could not learn Turkish there. They felt like they were still in Syria according to their statements. After they came to

western part of Türkiye, they started learning Turkish. The father understands Turkish, but he cannot speak Turkish. Abbas says that he learnt Turkish from his friends although he had education in Türkiye. Bakir thinks that Arabic is the language of the holy Quran and Islam religion. When they were in Syria, there were Kurdish, Turkmen, Armenians, and Assyrians. They were all speaking in Arabic. They taught Arabic to their children because it was their mother tongue and the language of holy Quran. The family mostly speak Arabic at home, but the little ones speak Turkish among themselves. Abbas teaches Turkish to his younger siblings, and he says that his siblings speak Turkish with other Syrian children in the streets. Both languages are spoken at home. When they communicate with their relatives in Syria, they all talk Arabic with them. Further Abbas says that he helps his parents at official places in order to sustain communication. Moreover, he says that they have learnt reading and writing in Arabic from Arabic imams at the mosques in Türkiye in order to read the holy Quran. And they also took Arabic lessons on their previous refugee camping site. Sometimes the father tells his children to learn Turkish because he thinks they need to learn Turkish according to Abbas. He also adds that only Almas, Laila, and he are literate in Arabic. The parents think that they are good and positive at teaching Arabic to their children.

The fifteenth interview was conducted with the Nadir family who have been living in Türkiye for eleven years. They have eight members who are Faiq (the father), Duriyah (the mother), Abir (the daughter), Arwa (the daughter), Afnan (the daughter), Jalal (the son), Aishe (the daughter), and Jamal (the son). They are from Damascus, Syria. All the children were born in Damascus, Syria. The father Faiq can speak Arabic, English, and Turkish. He is a retired vocational high school teacher who graduated from the department of mechanical engineering at Damascus University. He was working as a translator at our school, but then he was made a teacher aide for Syrian refugee students who have problems with mathematics. His wife Duriyah is a housewife. She went to primary school, and she can only speak Arabic. Arwa and Afnan went to middle school in Syria. They can speak Arabic and a little Turkish. They are both married. Jalal went to middle school in Syria. He is a waiter at a restaurant. He can speak Arabic, Turkish, and English. Aishe is a student of computer education and instructional technologies at a Turkish university. She completed her primary school in Syria and continued her education in Türkiye. She can speak Arabic, English, and Turkish. Lastly, Jamal the youngest

child takes distant high school education. He is a licensed basketball player. He can speak Arabic, English, and Turkish. Aishe and Jamal took Quran courses in Türkiye. Before they came to Türkiye, they all did not know Turkish, and they started learning Turkish afterwards. Faiq says that learning a language is very important because he thinks that people can communicate with everyone in the world. He sees the language as communication tool. He adds that he teaches his children Arabic because if they ever return to their homeland they should be able to speak with Syrians and read Arabic letters. Jalal and Jamal use Turkish and Arabic interchangeably whereas the communication is mainly in Arabic at home.

The sixteenth family was the Ocak family. They have four members. They are Dilgeş (the father), Şehnaz (the mother), Yekta (the daughter), and Telican (the daughter). They have been living in Türkiye for twelve years. They are from Aleppo, Syria. The children were born in Türkiye. The father did not attend the interview because he was working. He is a civil foreman. He went to primary school. He can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish. Şehnaz is a housewife. She went to primary school. She can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish. Their daughter Yekta is a student, and she goes to primary school. She can speak Kurdish and Turkish. Telican is also a student, and she goes to primary school, as well. She can speak Kurdish and Turkish. Dilgeş says that she was speaking Kurdish with her close relatives, but she was speaking Arabic with other people in her neighborhood. Further, she adds that she has both Arabic and Kurdish relatives. Thus, she needed to use both of the languages with her relatives. They could not speak Kurdish at official places. They had to use Arabic. She says that she did not teach Arabic to her children since they were born in Türkiye. The parents learnt Turkish after they came to Türkiye. Şehnaz thinks that a language is communication tool with other people. She wants to learn other languages, but she says she cannot learn because she has kids to look after. According to her they teach Kurdish to their children because it is their mother tongue. They should learn it. After learning their mother tongue, they can learn other languages. She says their children learnt Kurdish naturally, because the parents speak Kurdish at home. Moreover, Şehnaz says that she speaks Turkish and Kurdish interchangeably with her children. Yekta and Telican speak Kurdish and Turkish with their friends in the streets according to their mother. She says they learnt Turkish before going to school. She thinks that she taught their mother tongue, and she did not feel hopeless about teaching their

mother tongue. She lets them use both languages interchangeably. Yekta and Telican also speak interchangeably with their cousins. When they go outside with children, Şehnaz says they speak Turkish.

The seventeenth family was the Öğüt family. They have five members. Ase (the mother), Bari (the father), Mehvan (the son), Merdem (the son), and Nari (the son). They are from Kobani, Aleppo, Syria. While the father has been living in Türkiye for twelve years, the rest of the family have been living in Türkiye for eleven years. Bari says that his wife and children went to Germany a year ago. For the moment he lives with his relatives who are the Ocak family. Ase and Bari have never gone to school. Thus, they have no literacy in any language. Ase can speak Kurdish and Arabic. Bari can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and a little Turkish. Mehvan went to primary school in Türkiye. He can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish. Merdem went to primary school, too. He can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish. Lastly, Nari went to primary school in Türkiye, as well. He can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish. According to their father, Mehvan, Merdem, and Nari speak Turkish among themselves even in Germany. When they communicate on the internet, they speak Kurdish with their father. Moreover, Bari says that his children learnt Turkish before they went to school because they were playing outside with their friends and learnt from TV and that helped them learn Turkish easier. They learnt Kurdish naturally at home and also Arabic because the parents were speaking both languages at home. Bari thinks he taught Kurdish to his children, and he lets his children speak the languages interchangeably because he thinks they should not forget what they have learnt.

The eighteenth family was the Pelin family who has eleven members. Şeyda (the mother), Nihad (the father) who passed away four years ago, Bari (the son), Nina (the daughter), Bayız (the son), Newroz (the son), Rihan (the daughter), Dilgeş (the son), Kosret (the son), Peruz (the daughter), Lezan (the son), Rojin (the daughter). Şeyda is the grandmother of Ocak and Öğüt families who lives next door to them. Since she wondered about our interview, she voluntarily wanted to attend the interview. They have been living in Türkiye for twelve years. They are from Kobani, Aleppo, Syria. Miss Şeyda only speaks Kurdish and she never went to school. Her daughter in law Şehnaz helped her with the interview. Her late husband Nihad never went to school, and he could speak Kurdish and Arabic. Their children live in close neighborhoods. We talked about Bari and Dilgeş previously so there is

no need to repeat their life again. Nina is married and she can speak Kurdish and Arabic. She lives in Türkiye in the same neighborhood. She did not go to school. Bayız went to high school in Syria. He is laborer. He can speak Kurdish, Arabic, French, and Turkish. He also lives nearby. Newroz is a laborer. He did not go to school. He can speak Kurdish and Arabic. Rihaan did not go to school. She is a housewife. She can speak Kurdish and Arabic. Kosret is a civil foreman. He went to primary school in Syria. He can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish. Peruz is a housewife, and she went to primary school in Syria. She can speak Kurdish and Arabic. Lezan is a laborer. He went to primary school in Syria. He can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish. According to Şeyda, Kosret and Lezan attended Turkish courses in order to learn Turkish. Lastly, Rojin is housewife. She went to primary school in Syria. She can speak Kurdish and Arabic. Except Nina, Newroz, and Rihaan, all the children are literate in Arabic.

On the nineteenth interview we had the Reçber family who have five members. They are Munzır (the father), Rozerin (the mother), Sepan (the son), Ruşen (the son), and Xanım (the daughter). They have been living in Türkiye for twelve years. The children were born in Türkiye. They are from Afrin, Aleppo, Syria. The father Munzır went to middle school. He is a shoemaker. He can speak Kurdish, Arabic, Turkish, and a little English. He is literate in Arabic and Turkish. He went to Public Education Center where he learnt Turkish. Because he had English lessons in Syria, learning Turkish became easier for him. Also, he started to learn reading and writing slowly in Kurdish according to his statement. The mother Rozerin is a housewife. She went to primary school in Syria. She can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish. She says her reading and writing skills are not good in Arabic, though. Their eldest child Sepan is a student, and he goes to primary school. He can speak Kurdish, a little Arabic, and Turkish. The second child Ruşen is also a student, and he goes to primary school. He can speak Kurdish and Turkish. The last child Xanım does not attend to school yet. She only speaks Kurdish. Munzır says that they see the language as a communication tool, and he adds that learning a new language is useful. Further, he says that the children firstly acquired Kurdish, then he began to teach them Arabic also because in case of returning to Syria the children should not be challenged in Syria. They mostly use Kurdish at home and sometimes Turkish and Arabic. Because the children are growing up in Türkiye, they speak interchangeably.

The twentieth interview continues with the Sakallı family. They have five members. They are Omar (the father), Radwa (the mother), Samina (the daughter), Numan (the son), Salima (the daughter). They have been living in Türkiye for thirteen years and the children were born in Türkiye. They are from Aleppo, Syria. The father Omar is a shop owner. He went to primary school. He can speak Arabic and Turkish. Radwa the mother is a housewife. She went to middle school in Syria. She can speak Arabic and Turkish. She can speak Arabic and a little Turkish. The daughter Samina is a student, and she goes to middle school. She can speak Arabic, Turkish, and a little English. The son Numan is a student, and he goes to primary school. He can speak Arabic and Turkish. The daughter, Salima, is a nursery school student. She can speak Arabic and Turkish. Omar says that he teaches Arabic to his children because if they ever return to Syria, they should know Arabic. He says that Arabic is the language of the holy Quran, and it is very important to learn. Due to this reason, Samina and Numan took online Arabic courses from an Arabic teacher. They are able to read in Arabic, and they want to learn further. When they came to Türkiye, they did not know any Turkish. Due to this, they took help from translators at official places in Türkiye. Omar believes that there is no life without a language, so that his children must learn a language. The children naturally learnt Arabic at home according to Omar because they talk all in Arabic at home. They do not use other languages at home. The children did not know Turkish until they have gone to school. The children speak Turkish or Arabic with their friends in the streets, but at home they speak Arabic. Apart from these, the interview took place in their shop. Because the father was working and they invited me to their shop. While we were interviewing, several Syrian customers came in and shopped there. They spoke in Arabic and most of the products were Syrian products.

The interview continues with the twenty-first family. They are the Şen Family who have three members. Unfortunately, the mother Şevin passed away previous year. Now, there are Diyar (the father), Diyadin (the son), and Ciwan (the son). They have been living in Türkiye for twelve years. They are from Afrin, Aleppo, Syria. The children were born in Türkiye. Diyar was the uncle of next-door family, that's why he wanted to take part in the interview. According to Diyar, the mother Şevin went to middle school in Syria and she could speak Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish. The father Diyar went to high school in Syria. He works as a carpenter. He can speak Kurdish, Arabic, Turkish, and a little English. His son Diyadin goes

to primary school. He can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish. Also, the little son, Ciwan, goes to primary school. He can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish. The children learnt Turkish at school and from their Turkish friends. Although they are Kurdish, they tend to use Arabic among themselves and with their relatives according to Diyar. He says he is literate at Kurdish, Turkish, and Arabic. He says they were not allowed to speak Kurdish in Syria that's why they use Arabic most of the time at home. Although they use Arabic most of the time, they also use Kurdish in order not to forget the language. Diyar adds that he learnt Turkish by going to Public Education Center. And after that he learnt reading and writing in Kurdish by himself after learning Turkish alphabet. He says that he was a hardworking student when he was in Syria and eager to learn everything. Diyar says that they do not want to forget Kurdish even though they use Arabic most of the time. The children should learn their own tongue because they should communicate with their elder parents and relatives who left in Syria. However, the kids use Turkish among themselves and with their relative kids. Like their father they mix up the language from time to time. He hopes that Kurdish becomes an official language in Syria in the future.

The twenty-second family is the relatives of the Şen family. They are Talat family who have eight members at home. They have been living in Türkiye for twelve years and four of the children were born in Türkiye. The family attended the interview altogether. They are Arez (the father), Jiyan (the mother), Hermin (the daughter), Behram (the son), Dilcan (the daughter), Gülbaram (the daughter), Gulin (the daughter), and Berfan (the son). They have been living in Türkiye for 12 years. Arez went to primary school in Syria. He is a civil foreman. He can speak Kurdish and Arabic. Jiyan also went to primary school in Syria. She can speak Kurdish and Arabic. Both of them are literate only in Arabic. Their children started learning Turkish after they went to school. Hermin is a student, and she goes to high school. She was born in Syria. She can speak Kurdish, Arabic, Turkish, and a little English. Behram the son was born in Syria. He is a student, and he goes to middle school. He can speak Kurdish, Arabic, Turkish, and a little English. Dilcan the daughter, is a primary school student. She can speak Kurdish, Arabic, Turkish, and a little English. The other daughter Gülbaran is also a primary school student. She can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish. Gulin, the last daughter is only five years old. She can speak Kurdish and Arabic. The last child, Berfan, is only two years old. He

only understands the spoken language. He responds to Kurdish and Arabic. Hermin, Behram, Dilcan, and Gülbaran are only literate in Turkish and English since they go to school in Türkiye. Talat family and Şen family are relatives. Because of this they live next door. Both of the families use Arabic most of the time. They interchangeably use Kurdish, as well. Their kids use Turkish among themselves. They want their children to speak Kurdish in order to speak with their relatives and elders who have left in Syria. The parents are not complaining about their use of languages interchangeably. Moreover, they like to see their children learn many languages at the same time.

The next family is the Uluç family. They are the twenty-third family. Their son saw me on the road and invited me to their house. He told me that his father could speak Turkish well, but he could not. They have five members at home. Siyar (the father), Rojda (the mother), Erez (the son), Diyala (the son), and Samal (the son). They are from the center of Aleppo, Syria. Their neighborhood consisted of Kurdish and Arabic people. They have been living in Türkiye for eleven years. Siyar is a bagmaker. He went to primary school in Syria. He can speak Kurdish, Arabic, a little Turkish. Rojda is a housewife, and she went to primary school in Syria, too. She can speak Kurdish and Arabic. The children were born in Türkiye. Erez, the eldest son, is a primary school student. He can speak a little Kurdish, a little Arabic, and Turkish. Erez was going to PIKTES class because of his poor Turkish. He newly attended his current class. Diyala is a primary school student. He can speak Kurdish and a little Turkish. Samal, the last child, is only one year old. He only responds to Kurdish. Since the family was no good at speaking Turkish, I tried to translators on the internet. Erez could not understand the meaning of the interview questions, and he could not translate to his father very well. Further, I tried to translate the questions into Kurdish, but the father could not read very well, and then I tried to use Arabic translator. Afterwards he was able to understand the meaning of the interview questions very well. He had to drop out of school in Syria in order to help his family. He says that he wants his children to be better than themselves and learn new languages. He says that his children use the phones in Turkish and then they switch to Arabic when he needs to use the phone at home. It is apparent that the family had no Turkish education when they came to Türkiye.

On the next interview we have the twenty-fourth family who are the Ünal family. They are from the center of Aleppo, Syria. It was mostly in a Kurdish

neighborhood according to them. Also, there were Turkmen people around them. The family members did not know Turkish before they came to Türkiye. The family consist of six members who are Lawin (the mother), Botan (the father), Leman (the daughter), Hilbin (the daughter), and Jiwan (the son). Lawin, the mother, is a housewife. She went to second class at primary school in Syria, and then she dropped out of school. She can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish. Botan the father is a bag and shoemaker. He went to primary school in Syria. He had to drop out of school in order to help his family. Although he took education, he says that he cannot write and read in Arabic. He can speak Kurdish, Arabic, and Turkish. Leman, the eldest child, is a primary school student. She can speak Kurdish, Turkish, and a little English. Hilbin, the daughter, is a primary school student, as well. She can speak Kurdish and Turkish. Jiwan, the son, does not go to school. He can speak Kurdish and Turkish. Loran, the last child, is only one year old. He responds to both Kurdish and Turkish. Botan says that he and his wife met in Türkiye and got married. They were not allowed to speak Kurdish in Syria, and they had to use Arabic at official places. They did not teach his children Arabic. They only use Kurdish among themselves, but the children use the languages interchangeably. The father thinks that they should learn Kurdish because if ever they return to Syria they should know their mother tongue. However, the official language in Syria is Arabic, but the children did not learn any Arabic from their parents. He thinks that language is for communication with people. He wants his children to be educated better than themselves and learn different languages, as well.

The last and twenty-fifth family is the Vural family. They have seven members at home. They are from Aleppo, Syria. They are Duha (the grandmother), Rashad (the father), Jasmin (the mother), Samir (the son), Zarin (the daughter), Tariq (the son), and Hami (the son). They have been living in Türkiye for fourteen years. The grandmother wen to primary school in Syria. She can only speak Arabic. Rashad is a shop owner, and he went to primary school in Syria. He can speak Arabic. Jasmin is a housewife, and she went to high school in Syria. She can speak Arabic and English. Samir is the eldest child. He was born in Syria, but he went to primary school in Türkiye. He is a hairdresser He can speak Arabic and Turkish. He helped his father in the interview. Zarin, the daughter, goes to middle school. She can speak Arabic, Turkish, and a little English. She was born in Türkiye. Tariq

is a primary school student. He also was born in Türkiye. He can speak Arabic, Turkish, and a little English. Hami, the last child, was born in Türkiye, as well. He is a primary school student. He can speak Arabic and Turkish. The father, Rashad, thinks that Arabic is a very rich language, and it is the language of the holy Quran. He also adds that Arabic language has almost one thousand dialects. The eldest son is only literate in Turkish. The other children, Zarin, Tariq, and Hami, go to Arabic language course in the province mosque. They learn Arabic language literally. Their father thinks that they will return to Syria in next months and the children should learn to read and write in Arabic. Due to the needs, they should learn Arabic as soon as possible. They only speak Arabic at home. The parents do not let the children to use Turkish or another language at home. Although that they are quite good at speaking Turkish.

Table 2.1. Demographic Information of the Participants

Participants	Age	Residency Duration in Türkiye	Education	Occupation	Languages
Adal Family					
Dila(Grandmother)	52	12 years	Primary School	Housewife	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2)
Baran (Father)	34	12 years	High School	Hairdresser	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3) English (L4)
Arin (Mother)	30	12 years	High School	Housewife	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Buke (Daughter)	10	10 years	Primary School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Serdal (Son)	7	7 years	Primary School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)

Table 2.1. (continued) Demographic Information of the Participants

Ester (Daughter)	5	5 years	Nursery School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Baran Family					
Afran (Father)	30	12 years	High School	Hairdresser	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Zilan (Mother)	23	10 years	Middle School	Housewife	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Aiße (Daughter)	3	3 years	-	-	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Miray (Daughter)	1	1 year	-	-	Kurdish (L1)
The Can Family					
Asad (Father)	35	10 years	Bachelor's Degree	Tradesman	Arabic (L1) English (L2) Turkish (L3)
Aysha (Mother)	30	10 years	University Drop out twice	Housewife	Arabic (L1) English (L2) Turkish (L3)
Zahra (Daughter)	10	10 years	Primary School	Student	Arabic (L1) English (L2) Turkish (L3)
Sara (Daughter)	5	5 years	Nursery School	Student	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2)
Rauf (Son)	2 months	2 months	-	-	Arabic (L1)
The Çetin Family					
Akam (Father)	40	12 years	Primary School	Currently at a prison	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)

Table 2.1. (continued) Demographic Information of the Participants

Gulcan (Mother)	32	12 years	-	Housewife	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Ajda (Daughter)	11	11 years	Primary School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Agrin (Daughter)	7	7 years	Primary School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Araz (Son)	5	5 years	-	-	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
The Demir Family					
Bager (Father)	38	12 years	Primary School	Shoemaker	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Berhem (Mother)	38	12 years	Primary School	Housewife	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Alaz (Son)	12	12 years	Middle School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Turkish (L2)
Ara (Daughter)	10	10 years	Primary School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Turkish (L2)
Avşin (Son)	8	8 years	Primary School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Turkish (L2)
Avin (Daughter)	6	6 years	Primary School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Turkish (L2)
Berfin (Daughter)	1	1 year	-	-	Kurdish (L1)

Table 2.1. (continued) Demographic Information of the Participants

The Ekin Family					
Awdıl (Father)	44	12 years	Primary School	Shoemaker	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Zozan (Mother)	37	12 years	High School	Housewife	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) English (L3) Turkish (L4)
Bakur (Son)	11	11 years	Middle School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Bazit (Son)	9	9 years	Primary School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Vian (Daughter)	6	6 years	-	-	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2)
Bazan (Son)	9 months	9 months	-	-	Kurdish (L1)
The Ferit Family					
Awdel (Father)	42	12 years	Primary School	Polisher	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Xezal (Mother)	42	12 years	High School	Housewife	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Behdin (Son)	17	12 years	Middle School	-	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Merwan (Son)	15	12 years	Middle School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)

Table 2.1. (continued) Demographic Information of the Participants

Zerin (Daughter)	13	12 years	Middle School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Xizan (Son)	8	8 years	Primary School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Turkish (L2)
The Gedik Family					
Ceger (Father)	39	12 years	Primary School	Civil Foreman	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Hawjin (Mother)	38	12 years	Primary School	Housewife	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Hevin (Daughter)	15	12 years	High School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Turkish (L2)
Hanis (Son)	13	12 years	Middle School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Turkish (L2)
Hekar (Son)	10	10 years	Primary School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Turkish (L2)
The Hancı Family					
Koçber (Father)	41	12 years	Primary School Graduate	Civil Foreman	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Hawnaz (Mother)	37	12 years	Primary School	Housewife	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Navdar (Son)	11	11 years	Middle School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Turkish (L2)
Sibel (Daughter)	6	6 years	Nursery School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Turkish (L2)

Table 2.1. (continued) Demographic Information of the Participants

Yadgar (Son)	1.5	1.5 year	-	-	Kurdish (L1)
The Işıl Family					
Dara (Father)	37	10 years	High School	Truck Driver	Arabic (L1)
Adra (Mother)	31	10 years	Middle School	Housewife	Arabic (L1) English (L2) Turkish (L3)
Adiva (Daughter)	9	9 years	Primary School	Student	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2)
Abira (Daughter)	6	6 years	Nursery School	Student	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2)
The İnal Family					
Kamil (Father)	50	11 years	High School Graduate	Grocery Owner	Arabic (L1)
Naseem (Mother)	39	11 years	Bachelor's Degree	Housewife	Arabic (L1) French (L2) English (L3) Turkish (L4)
Karim (Son)	15	11 years	High School	Student	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2)
Najla (Daughter)	13	11 years	Middle School	Student	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2)
Altair (Son)	7	7 years	Primary School	Student	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2)
The Kahveci Family					
Cihan (Father)	40	11 years	-	Plastic & Cardboard Collector	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2)
Ruken (Mother)	35	11 years	-	Housewife	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2)
Evin (Daughter)	15	11 years	Middle School	-	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Sipan (Son)	14	11 years	High School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)

Table 2.1. (continued) Demographic Information of the Participants

Axin (Daughter)	10	10 years	Primary School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Turkish (L2)
Gul (Daughter)	7	7 years	Primary School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Turkish (L2)
Serhat (Son)	2	2 years	-	-	Kurdish (L1)
The Limoncu Family					
Baha (Father)	42	11 years	Middle School	Plastic & Cardboard Collector	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Dilşen (Mother)	40	11 years	-	Housewife	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Gulçin (Daughter)	25	11 years	-	Housewife	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Gulin (Daughter)	15	11 years	Primary School	-	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Baraw (Son)	12	11 years	Middle School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3) English (L4)
Zin (Daughter)	9	9 years	Primary School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Turkish (L2) English (L3)
Mutlu Family					
Bakir (Father)	48	9 years	Primary School	Butcher	Arabic (L1)
Munira(Mother)	39	9 years	Primary School	Housewife	Arabic (L1) French (L2)

Table 2.1. (continued) Demographic Information of the Participants

Almas (Daughter)	21	9 years	Middle School	-	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2)
Abbas (Son)	20	9 years	Middle School	Kebab chef	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2)
Laila (Daughter)	17	9 years	Primary School	-	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2)
Kavsar (Daughter)	16	9 years	High School	Student	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2) English (L3)
Huriyah (Daughter)	13	9 years	Middle School	Student	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2) English (L3)
Ibtisam (Daughter)	12	9 years	Primary School	Student	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2) English (L3)
Hamza (Son)	10	9 years	Primary School	Student	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2) English (L3)
Iqbal (Daughter)	8	8 years	Primary School	Student	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2)
Husain (Son)	5	5 years	-	-	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2)
Inas (Daughter)	5	5 years	-	-	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2)
The Nadir Family					
Faiq (Father)	62	11 years	Bachelor's Degree	Retired Teacher	Arabic (L1) English (L2) Turkish (L3)
Duriyah (Mother)	60	11 years	Primary School	Housewife	Arabic (L1)
Abir (Daughter)	33	11 years	High School	Housewife	Arabic (L1) English (L2) Turkish (L3)

Table 2.1. (continued) Demographic Information of the Participants

Arwa (Daughter)	30	11 years	Middle School	Housewife	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2)
Afnan (Daughter)	28	11 years	Middle School	Housewife	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2)
Jalal (Son)	25	11 years	Middle School	Waiter	Arabic (L1) English (L2) Turkish (L3)
Aishe (Daughter)	23	11 years	University	Student	Arabic (L1) English (L2) Turkish (L3)
Jamal (Son)	16	11 years	High School	Student	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2) English (L3)
The Ocak Family					
Dilgeş (Father)	34	12 years	Primary School	Civil Foreman	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Şehnaz (Mother)	25	12 years	Primary School	Housewife	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Yekta (Daughter)	9	9 years	Primary School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Turkish (L2)
Telican (Daughter)	8	8 years	Primary School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Turkish (L2)
The Ögüt Family					
Ase (Mother)	50	11 years	-	Housewife	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2)
Bari (Father)	44	12 years	-	Civil Foreman	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)

Table 2.1. (continued) Demographic Information of the Participants

Mehvan (Son)	17	11 years	Primary School	-	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Merdem (Son)	15	11 years	Primary School	-	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Nari (Son)	14	11 years	Primary School	-	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
The Pelin Family					
Şeyda (Mother)	63	12 years	-	-	Kurdish (L1)
Nihad (Father)	Passed away	8 years	-	-	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2)
Bari (Son)	44	12 years	-	Civil Foreman	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Nina (Daughter)	42	12 years	-	Housewife	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2)
Bayız (Son)	40	12 years	High School	Laborer	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) French (L3) Turkish (L4)
Newroz (Son)	38	12 years	-	Laborer	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2)
Rihan (Daughter)	36	12 years	-	Housewife	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2)
Dilgeş (Son)	34	12 years	Primary School	Civil Foreman	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Kosret (Son)	31	12 years	Primary School	Laborer	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)

Table 2.1. (continued) Demographic Information of the Participants

Peruz (Daughter)	28	12 Years	Primary School	Housewife	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2)
Lezan (Son)	25	12 years	Primary School	Laborer	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Rojin (Daughter)	23	12 years	Primary School	Housewife	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2)
The Reçber Family					
Munzır (Father)	34	12 years	Middle School	Shoemaker	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) English (L3) Turkish (L4)
Rozerin (Mother)	25	12 years	Primary School	Housewife	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Sepan (Son)	9	9 years	Primary School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3) English (L4)
Ruşen (Son)	7	7 years	Primary School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Turkish (L2)
Xanım (Daughter)	5	5 years	-	-	Kurdish (L1)
The Sakallı Family					
Omar (Father)	36	13 years	Primary School	Shop Owner	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2)
Radwa (Mother)	34	13 years	Middle School	Housewife	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2)
Samina (Daughter)	12	12 years	Middle School	Student	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2) English (L3)

Table 2.1. (continued) Demographic Information of the Participants

Numan (Son)	9	9 years	Primary School	Student	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2) English (L3)
Salima (Daughter)	6	6 years	Nursery School	Student	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2)
The Şen Family					
Diyar (Father)	30	12 years	High School	Carpenter	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) English (L3) Turkish (L4)
Şevin (Mother)	Passed away	11 years	Middle School	-	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Diyadin (Son)	9	9 years	Primary School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Ciwan (Son)	7	7 years	Primary School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
The Talat Family					
Arez (Father)	40	12 years	Primary School	Civil Foreman	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2)
Jiyan (Mother)	39	12 years	Primary School	Housewife	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2)
Hermin (Daughter)	14	12 years	High School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3) English (L4)
Behram (Son)	13	12 years	Middle School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3) English (L4)

Table 2.1. (continued) Demographic Information of the Participants

Dilcan (Daughter)	9	9 years	Primary School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3) English (L4)
Gülbaran (Daughter)	7	7 years	Primary School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Gulin (Daughter)	5	5 years	-	-	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2)
Berfan (Son)	2	2 years	-	-	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2)
The Uluç Family					
Siyar (Father)	36	11 years	Primary School	Bagmaker	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Rojda (Mother)	26	11 years	Primary School	Housewife	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2)
Erez (Son)	10	10 years	Primary School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Diyala (Son)	7	7 years	Primary School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Turkish (L2)
Samal (Son)	1	1 year	-	-	Kurdish (L1)
The Ünal Family					
Lawin (Mother)	35	12 years	Primary School	Housewife	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)
Botan (Father)	30	12 years	Primary School	Bag and Shoemaker	Kurdish (L1) Arabic (L2) Turkish (L3)

Table 2.1. (continued) Demographic Information of the Participants

Leman (Daughter)	9	9 years	Primary School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Turkish (L2) English (L3)
Hilbin (Daughter)	8	8 years	Primary School	Student	Kurdish (L1) Turkish (L2)
Jiwan (Son)	5	5 years	-	-	Kurdish (L1) Turkish (L2)
Loran (Son)	1	1 year	-	-	Kurdish (L1) Turkish (L2)
The Vural Family					
Duha (Grandmother)	66	14 years	Primary School	-	Arabic (L1)
Rashad (Father)	39	14 years	Primary School	Shop owner	Arabic (L1)
Jasmin (Mother)	36	14 years	High School	Housewife	Arabic (L1) English (L2)
Samir (Son)	16	14 years	Primary School	Hairdresser	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2)
Zarin (Daughter)	14	14 years	Middle School	Student	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2) English (L3)
Tariq (Son)	8	8 years	Primary School	Student	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2) English (L3)
Hami (Son)	7	7 years	Primary School	Student	Arabic (L1) Turkish (L2)

2.5 Participant Selection

The study included 34 parents representing 25 Syrian refugee families. A purposive sampling strategy (Patton, 2015) was employed to select participants who met the following criteria: (1) they had at least one school-aged child enrolled in the local public school; (2) they had lived in Türkiye for at least one year; and (3) they used Arabic or another heritage language in the home. The diversity of the

sample was sought in terms of parental educational background, regional origin in Syria, length of stay in Türkiye, and gender representation.

Initial contact was made through the children enrolled in the researcher's English classes. Following a classroom-based rapport-building phase, interested parents were approached informally and invited to participate in the study. Snowball sampling was also used when participants recommended other families who might be willing to contribute.

2.6 Ethical Considerations

The study received ethical approval from the Human Research Ethics Committee of the researcher's institution. Given the vulnerability of the refugee population, ethical conduct was prioritized throughout the research process. Participants were informed about the voluntary nature of the study, assured of their right to withdraw at any time, and briefed on how their anonymity and confidentiality would be preserved.

Informed consent forms were provided in both Arabic and Turkish, and oral consent was sought in cases where literacy was limited. All identifying information was anonymized using pseudonyms. Special care was taken not to place participants under emotional or psychological distress during interviews or observations. The research design incorporated mechanisms to refer participants to local NGOs if any need for psychosocial support emerged during data collection.

2.7 Data Collection Tools and Procedure

Data collection occurred over six months, from November 2024 to May 2025. Three primary tools were employed: semi-structured interviews, participant observations, and field notes.

2.8 Semi – Structured Interviews

A total of 25 interviews were conducted with 34 parents (20 mothers and 14 fathers). Each family was interviewed at least once, with some families participating in follow-up interviews. Interviews were conducted in Arabic, Kurdish or Turkish depending on the participant's language preference and were held in participants' homes, public parks, or school premises, based on their comfort. Each interview lasted between 45 and 90 minutes and was audio-recorded with explicit consent.

The interview guide was developed based on Spolsky's (2009) Tripartite Model, covering topics as follows:

- Beliefs about Arabic, Kurdish, Turkish, and English
- Daily language use patterns within the home
- Parental efforts to teach or restrict specific languages
- Children's language preferences and schooling experiences
- The perceived impact of migration on language use.

2.9 Participant Observations

The researcher conducted over 60 hours of participant observation during home visits, school meetings, parent-teacher events, and neighborhood gatherings. Observations targeted interactions between parents and children, the linguistic landscape of the home (e.g., signage, written texts), and language use in informal family gatherings and communal settings.

Observational data were recorded in a field journal immediately after each session. Detailed jottings were later transformed into extended field notes, which included reflections and preliminary analytical insights (Emerson et al., 2011).

2.10 Field Notes and Reflexive Journaling

Field notes were also central to the data corpus of the present study and served to document: a) contextual and situational factors during data collection, b) non-verbal and paralinguistic cues, c) researcher's emotional and cognitive responses, and d) emerging codes and theoretical insights.

A reflexive journal was kept to monitor the researcher's positionality and evolving interpretations, enhancing methodological rigor and transparency (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

2.11 Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data, following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase model:

1. Familiarization with data
2. Generating initial codes
3. Searching for themes

4. Reviewing themes
5. Defining and naming themes
6. Producing the report

Initial codes were both theory-driven (deductive, based on Spolsky's model) and data-driven (inductive, grounded in participants' narratives). All transcriptions and field notes were imported into Maxqda for systematic coding. Themes were generated across the three domains of ideologies, practices, and management, with attention to cross-cutting issues such as identity, gender roles, education, trauma, and community support networks.

Triangulation across interview data, observational insights, and field notes enhanced the credibility of findings. Member checking was conducted with five families to ensure interpretive accuracy.

2.12 Researcher Positionality and Reflexivity

The researcher's dual role as both educator and ethnographer introduced unique benefits and challenges. While familiarity with participants facilitated trust and authenticity, it also posed potential risks of role conflict, social desirability bias, and interpretive overidentification. To mitigate these, the researcher maintained a reflexive journal, practiced bracketing, and participated in regular peer debriefing sessions.

Being a non-native speaker of Arabic and a native speaker of Turkish, the researcher occasionally relied on community interpreters or bilingual children for clarification. These dynamics were documented and critically examined to ensure they did not compromise the integrity of the data.

2.13 Trustworthiness and Rigor

To establish the trustworthiness of the research, the following strategies were employed (Lincoln & Guba, 1985):

- **Credibility:** Achieved through prolonged engagement, triangulation of data sources, and member checking.
- **Transferability:** Enabled by rich, thick descriptions of participants, settings, and interactional contexts.
- **Dependability:** Ensured through detailed documentation of methodological decisions and analytic procedures.

- Confirmability: Enhanced via audit trails, reflexive journaling, and researcher transparency.

The research adhered to Tracy's (2020) criteria for high-quality qualitative research, including sincerity, resonance, and significant contribution.

2.14 Limitations of Methodology

While the ethnographic design facilitated depth and authenticity, it also came with limitations. The dual role of the researcher may have influenced participant responses, despite efforts to maintain neutrality. Language mediation, particularly through children, risked altering meaning during communication. Additionally, due to safety and cultural norms, some observations (especially involving male participants) were limited. Finally, as a qualitative study, the findings are not generalizable but aim for analytical transferability.

3. RESULTS

This chapter presents the qualitative findings derived from semi-structured interviews, participant observations, and field notes collected from twenty-five Syrian refugee families residing in a rural neighborhood of İzmir, Türkiye. Guided by Spolsky's (2009) Tripartite Model of Family Language Policy, the data were analyzed under three main categories: language ideologies, language practices, and language management. Each section is identified with recurrent themes and codes supported by anonymized participant quotations. Pseudonyms are used to protect confidentiality.

3.1 Language Ideologies

Language ideologies refer to the beliefs, values, and attitudes that family members hold toward their heritage and host languages (Spolsky, 2009). Analysis revealed that parents' ideological orientations were shaped by a complex interplay of cultural identity, religion, social mobility, and children's schooling experiences. Three interrelated themes emerged: (1) Arabic as heritage and faith, (2) Turkish as a key to social integration, and (3) balancing dual linguistic futures. The common themes and codes emerged are shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1. Themes and Codes for Language Ideologies

Major Theme	Sub-themes	Sample Codes	Illustrative Evidence
Arabic as heritage and faith	Religious attachment; cultural continuity; emotional connection	Language of Qur'an, memory of homeland, identity marker	"Arabic keeps our hearts together."

Table 3.1. (continued) Themes and Codes for Language Ideologies

Turkish as key to integration	Education, employment, acceptance	School success, future respect locals	“Without Turkish, my son cannot find a job.”
Balancing dual futures	Bilingual aspiration, intergenerational fear	Two languages as wealth, loss	“They should speak both perfectly.”

3.1.1 Arabic as Heritage and Faith

Nearly all parents viewed Arabic as inseparable from their cultural and religious identity. Parents often referred to Arabic as “the language of our roots” and “the tongue of the Qur’an.” This association positioned Arabic not merely as a communicative tool but as a moral and spiritual inheritance. For example, Munira, a 39-year-old mother of ten, explained her close affinity with Arabic as the liturgical language:

“Arabic is not just our mother tongue; it is the language we pray in. If my children forget it, they will forget who we are.”

Likewise, Bakir, father of ten, noted his increasing sense of belonging when he hears Arabic:

“When I hear them recite a verse correctly, I feel we still belong to something.”

3.1.2 Turkish as a Key to Integration and Education

Parents simultaneously recognized Turkish as vital for their children’s success in school and integration into Turkish society. Several parents described Turkish as “the door to the future.”

“If they don’t speak Turkish well, they will always be behind their Turkish friends.”

Baran, father of four.

“We came here to build a new life. Without Turkish, there is no life here.” Aysha, mother of three.

Here, it can be seen that Syrian families attribute pragmatic gains to the Turkish language as it is the home language of Türkiye where they moved in the first place. For them, Turkish, as being the national language of the country, remains as a tool that is of utmost importance, to cater for their vital needs in the host country and help them smoothly adapt to the target Turkish culture.

3.1.3 Balancing Dual Linguistic Futures

A recurring theme was parents' desire for "two hearts in one chest", which aims to raise bilingual children competent in both languages. Families idealized additive bilingualism, hoping that Turkish learning would not come at the cost of Arabic:

"I want them to speak both, like carrying two gifts, one from Syria, one from Türkiye," Omar, father of three.

However, this aspiration often clashed with limited linguistic resources, peer pressure, and the dominance of the language of schooling. Parents were quite aware of the gradual erosion of Arabic, particularly among younger children born in Türkiye.

3.2 Language Practices

Language practices represent the actual patterns of language use observed and reported in daily family life. Although Arabic remained symbolically dominant, Turkish increasingly shaped the linguistic ecology of the home. Three themes characterized families' language practices: (1) transitional bilingualism in the home domain, (2) children's Turkish dominance, and (3) context-dependent code-switching. The common themes and codes emerged from the data regarding language practices of the refugee families are shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2. Themes and Codes for Language Practices

Major Theme	Sub-themes	Sample Codes	Illustrative Evidence
Transitional bilingualism	Parent–child language shift; asymmetrical understanding	Parents in Arabic, children in Turkish	“We start Arabic but finish Turkish.”
Children’s Turkish dominance	Peer pressure, schooling, media influence	School Turkish, cartoons, Turkish friends	“He forgets Arabic words now.”
Code-switching and hybrid speech	Pragmatic mixing, communicative flexibility	Arabic–Turkish blends, switching by topic	“We mix both, it’s natural for us.”

3.2.1 Transitional Bilingualism at Home

Most parents reported using Arabic when addressing children, yet children often responded in Turkish. This asymmetrical bilingualism was especially evident in households with school-aged children. The researcher’s field notes indicated that family mealtime conversations typically began in Arabic but shifted to Turkish as children joined in:

“We start in Arabic, but the moment the kids come, everything becomes Turkish. Turkish gradually becomes the language in which my children communicate.” Faiq, father of six.

The children of the families also observe the same pattern when it comes to code-mixing. They report how they automatically engage with code-mixing between the two languages:

“Sometimes I don’t notice I am mixing words. Turkish comes faster now. I think I mix the languages that I know with each other without even realizing.” Hermin, teenage daughter of one family.

3.2.2 Children's Turkish Dominance and Peer Influence

Across nearly all interviews, parents observed that their children preferred Turkish in peer communication and play. The linguistic shift was strongest among children who were born in Türkiye. Siyar, for instance, notices the language preference of his son: "When I call my son in Arabic or Kurdish, he answers in Turkish and laughs." After answering him in Turkish, Siyar also stated his son further reported: "Dad, no one speaks Arabic or Kurdish in school!"

3.2.3 Code-switching and Hybrid Speech Patterns

Observations revealed frequent code-switching and borrowing between Arabic and Turkish, resulting in hybrid utterances (e.g., "Gele, yalla!"). Families viewed such mixing as natural and pragmatic rather than problematic. This hybrid repertoire served as a communicative bridge in multilingual encounters:

"At home, we mix everything, Arabic, Turkish, sometimes Kurdish. We understand each other. That is the gist, I guess. That's enough." Zerin.

Evin, the 14-year-old daughter of a family, also reported the same code-switching patterns in her own communication with her family and the others:

"When I talk with Turkish neighbors, I use Turkish; with my mother, Arabic or Kurdish. It changes automatically."

3.3 Language Management

Language management refers to explicit and implicit efforts by parents to influence or regulate family language use (Spolsky, 2009). In the present study, families employed both deliberate strategies and reactive adjustments depending on their resources and contexts. Three salient themes regarding language management emerged: (1) home-based reinforcement, (2) religious and literacy practices as language maintenance tools, and (3) external constraints and adaptation. Table 3.3 shows the recurrent themes and codes in relation with language management.

Table 3.3. Themes and Codes for Language Management

Major Theme	Sub-themes	Sample Codes	Illustrative Evidence
Home-based reinforcement	“Arabic-only” rule, sibling teaching	Meal-time Arabic, story sessions	“No Turkish at dinner!”
Religious literacy practices	Faith-based transmission, online Arabic lessons	Qur’an reading, Arabic YouTube channels	“Religion helps them keep Arabic.”
External constraints adaptation	School pressure, limited materials, emotional fatigue	Turkish schooling, scarce Arabic books	“If I push too hard, they stop talking.”

3.3.1 Home-Based Reinforcement Strategies

Several parents described setting specific rules to encourage Arabic use within the home, especially during meals and family gatherings. These efforts were seen as a way to remind children of their roots rather than to control their speech strictly.

“At dinner, I tell them ‘No Turkish now!’ but after ten minutes, they forget.”

- Rashad.

“I remind them kindly, not to punish but to remember where we come from.”

- Adra, mother of two.

Most parents preferred gentle reminders and emotional appeals over strict enforcement. They often linked these small language rules to values such as respect for elders or pride in heritage. For instance, greeting grandparents or saying short prayers in Arabic were common daily habits. One mother noted that these small moments helped her children “feel Syrian again,” even if Turkish dominated other parts of their lives.

Some parents also involved older siblings in encouraging Arabic use, asking them to read simple stories or translate short phrases for younger ones. This shared responsibility created moments of cooperation and pride but was hard to sustain regularly. Despite these efforts, many parents admitted that the rules often faded once daily routines became busy or when children preferred Turkish for convenience.

3.3.2 Religious and Literacy Practices as Maintenance Tools

Religious activities such as reading the Qur'an, reciting short surahs, and watching Arabic religious programs were among the most consistent strategies. Parents viewed religious literacy as a culturally acceptable route for Arabic preservation:

“Even if they forget many words, they will never forget Qur'an Arabic.”
Rashad, father of four.

“We teach them short prayers in Arabic so they keep using it daily.” Arin.

3.3.3 External Constraints and Adaptation

Many parents described the challenges they faced in trying to maintain Arabic in an environment where Turkish dominated every aspect of daily life. They explained that school, television, and friendships all revolved around Turkish, making Arabic feel distant or unnecessary for their children. As a result, even the most determined parents found it difficult to enforce their home language rules consistently.

“If I force them too much, they stay silent,” - Zozan.

“Now I just speak Arabic and let them answer as they wish. At least they hear it,” - Naseem.

Zozan's and Naseem's comments capture a sense of quiet resignation mixed with understanding. Many parents came to realize that pushing children too hard to speak Arabic could backfire, creating resistance or emotional distance. Instead, they adopted a softer approach, choosing to keep Arabic alive through their own speech while allowing their children to respond freely in Turkish. This shift from strict control to gentle acceptance reflected both emotional adaptation and the recognition of children's growing independence.

Parents also explained that their children's schooling shaped much of this adaptation. Since classes, homework, and exams were all in Turkish, children naturally began thinking and speaking in that language even at home. Parents

admitted that they often switched to Turkish themselves to help with schoolwork or to make communication easier. As one father put it, “It’s not that we don’t want Arabic; it’s just that life here happens in Turkish.”

At the same time, several families expressed a quiet hope that exposure alone—hearing Arabic spoken daily—would preserve at least a passive understanding of the language. For them, even if children no longer replied in Arabic, the sound and rhythm of the language remained part of the household atmosphere. As Ruken, another mother, explained, “When I speak Arabic and Kurdish, it feels like home again, even if they answer in Turkish.”

This gradual shift from control to acceptance showed the parents’ emotional resilience. Rather than giving up, they adjusted their expectations, finding comfort in the idea that their children were still connected to Arabic in some way. Their approach reflected a deep understanding of the difficulties of raising bilingual children in a new country, balancing hope for language preservation with compassion for their children’s realities.

3.4 Summary of Findings

Across all three dimensions of Spolsky’s (2009) framework, the findings reveal a continuum of negotiation rather than a strict hierarchy of ideology → practice → management. Parents espoused strong ideological attachment to Arabic, yet everyday practices leaned toward Turkish due to structural pressures. Language management strategies attempted to mediate this gap but were constrained by socioeconomic realities and children’s growing agency. Overall, the Syrian families in rural İzmir displayed an evolving bilingual ecology marked by heritage attachment, pragmatic adaptation, and emotional negotiation. The findings underline that FLP among refugee families is dynamic, continuously shaped by interactions between belief systems, institutional structures, and children’s lived experiences.

The families interviewed in this study reported diverse multilingual repertoires, with nearly all parents speaking Kurdish and Arabic, and having acquired Turkish post-migration. This trilingual environment reflects the sociolinguistic complexity of displaced populations. For instance, all participants self-identified as either Kurdish or Arab and had varying degrees of fluency in reading and writing their languages. While most were orally fluent in Kurdish and

Arabic, literacy was primarily limited to Arabic and Turkish, with no participants reporting Kurdish literacy. This is consistent with prior literature showing that literacy in minority languages like Kurdish is often suppressed in authoritarian regimes (Skutnabb-Kangas & Heugh, 2012).

Participants described their home language practices as fluid and strategic. Parents typically began with Kurdish or Arabic when children were infants and shifted to more Turkish usage after school enrollment. This shift reflects a pragmatic adaptation to the host country's sociolinguistic demands (King et al., 2008). One parent stated, 'Evde en çok Arapça ve Kürtçe konuşuyoruz... ama çocuklar okula başlayınca Türkçe başladık.' This confirms existing findings on how language practices are often shaped by school language policies and community integration pressures (Spolsky, 2009).

Children in all families demonstrated high levels of oral proficiency in Turkish and variable abilities in Kurdish and Arabic. While younger children were still exposed to heritage languages, Turkish quickly became dominant. For example, in several cases, children were described as using Turkish when speaking to siblings or peers: 'Türkçe konuşuyorlar en çok.' This pattern supports previous research indicating that peer influence and school immersion often accelerate language shift among migrant children (De Houwer, 2007).

Parents employed various informal strategies to transmit Kurdish and Arabic, including mixed-code interactions and intentional repetition across languages. They noted that consistency and repetition aided comprehension and retention: 'Hem Arapça söylüyorduk hem Kürtçe söylüyorduk.' This strategy of layered input aligns with the principles of dual language learning and translanguaging, where input from multiple languages enhances understanding (García & Wei, 2014).

A common theme across families was the overwhelming role of Turkish-medium schooling in influencing language use. Parents observed their children gradually decreasing use of Kurdish and Arabic after beginning school. Some expressed concern, while others emphasized their pride in their children's rapid acquisition of Turkish: 'Maşallah artık bizden daha iyi konuşuyorlar.' This phenomenon reflects the subtractive bilingualism that can occur when heritage languages are not institutionally supported (Cummins, 2001).

Parents consistently expressed positive attitudes toward multilingualism, viewing language as vital for survival, self-expression, and identity. One participant father noted, “*Dil her şey ya.*” While Turkish was perceived as necessary for integration, Kurdish and Arabic were tied to ethnic identity and cultural continuity. However, due to the lack of literacy instruction in Kurdish and Arabic, these languages remained primarily oral. This division between spoken and written language use is widely observed in heritage language communities lacking formal support (Hornberger, 2005).



4. DISCUSSION

The families interviewed consistently demonstrated active multilingualism, with Arabic, Kurdish, and Turkish forming the core of their linguistic repertoires. Parents reported speaking Kurdish and Arabic as their heritage languages, while adopting Turkish post-migration as both a communicative necessity and a social survival tool. This trilingual repertoire reflects the fluid linguistic ecology characteristic of displaced and transnational populations, where languages are not compartmentalized but rather dynamically interwoven across social contexts.

This finding aligns with the concept of translanguaging (García & Wei, 2014), which frames bilingual and multilingual communication as the flexible use of all available linguistic resources to construct meaning. In the families' daily lives, translanguaging emerged as an organic and adaptive practice. Parents switched seamlessly between Arabic, Kurdish, and Turkish depending on the interlocutor, topic, and emotional tone. During observations, conversations often began in Kurdish, shifted into Arabic when referring to school matters or public life. Rather than indicating language confusion, this pattern revealed an integrated linguistic repertoire that enabled families to negotiate identity, emotion, and authority simultaneously.

Children, in particular, acted as language brokers (Orellana, 2009), mediating between languages and cultural expectations. They often translated or interpreted between Turkish-speaking teachers and Arabic- or Kurdish-speaking parents, serving as linguistic bridges in navigating bureaucracy and education. This brokerage role empowered children as agents of communication but also subtly reconfigured family hierarchies, positioning children as more linguistically competent in the host language. Parents acknowledged this shift with mixed emotions—both pride in their children's adaptability and anxiety over the diminishing authority of heritage languages within the family.

The strategic choice to maintain multiple languages at home aligns with what King and Fogle (2017) describe as family language policy (FLP)—a framework through which families consciously or unconsciously design patterns of language use, transmission, and management. In this study, parents conveyed deliberate intentions to prioritize Kurdish and Arabic in early childhood, viewing them as essential for transmitting cultural and religious identity. Turkish was

introduced later, mainly as a pragmatic response to children's schooling and integration needs. This linguistic sequencing reflects both resistance to cultural assimilation and pragmatic adaptation to the sociolinguistic realities of displacement (Curd-Christiansen, 2018).

Language, for the participants, was described not merely as a means of communication but as the essence of identity and belonging. As one father stated, "Dil her şey ya... çok önemli" [Language is everything; it means so much]. Such expressions illustrate how language functions as a symbolic marker of selfhood and continuity, echoing arguments that language carries cultural memory, moral values, and collective history (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). Kurdish, in particular, was deeply tied to notions of heritage and endurance amid historical marginalization. "Anadili unutmamalıyız," declared one participant, "*We must not forget our mother tongue.*" For these families, maintaining Kurdish or Arabic represented not only linguistic loyalty but also an act of cultural survival.

Despite this affective stance, parents openly acknowledged the growing dominance of Turkish in their children's daily lives. They recognized Turkish as the language of schooling, bureaucracy, and public interaction—the "key" to education, employment, and societal participation. Children's increasing use of Turkish at home was interpreted ambivalently: as both a sign of successful integration and a painful reminder of heritage language erosion. This pattern resonates with Norton's (2013) theory of investment, wherein individuals invest in dominant languages to gain access to symbolic and material resources. Parents' acceptance of Turkish thus reflected a strategic negotiation between emotional attachment to heritage and pragmatic pursuit of opportunity.

Most families initiated Kurdish or Arabic transmission from birth, underscoring their perceived value as first languages. However, Turkish quickly gained prominence as children entered formal education. Once children began schooling, Turkish became their primary medium for literacy and cognitive development, gradually replacing Arabic and Kurdish in many communicative domains. This early dominance of the host language mirrors Fishman's (1991) findings on the vulnerability of minority languages when schooling is conducted exclusively in the dominant national language.

Literacy development among participants was notably asymmetrical. Parents and children exhibited oral fluency in Kurdish and Arabic, yet very few

reported reading or writing proficiency in these languages. Turkish, on the other hand, was the only language of literacy for nearly all children. This oral-literacy gap presents a long-term challenge for intergenerational transmission, as the absence of literacy limits access to written culture and formalized learning in the heritage languages (De Houwer, 2007; Tannenbaum & Berkovich, 2005). Parents lamented this imbalance but explained that the scarcity of Kurdish and Arabic books, especially in rural İzmir, made home-based literacy reinforcement nearly impossible.

The lack of institutional and community support further exacerbated these challenges. Neither Kurdish nor Arabic was recognized within the local school curriculum, and no formal programs for heritage language instruction existed. This finding parallels Heugh (2021), who contends that without structural reinforcement, oral transmission alone is insufficient for robust heritage language maintenance. Consequently, families relied on informal methods such as storytelling, Qur'an recitation, and multilingual television to sustain passive exposure.

Turkish schooling emerged as a critical factor shaping children's linguistic practices and identities. Many children experienced what parents described as "linguistic shock" upon school entry, struggling at first to understand teachers and peers. To ease this transition, parents increased Turkish usage at home, particularly with younger siblings preparing for school. Over time, this adaptation produced a home-school language shift, a well-documented process leading to subtractive bilingualism (Spolsky, 2009), where the acquisition of the dominant language comes at the expense of the minority ones. Parents observed that, after one or two school years, their children often became more fluent in Turkish than their parents, and even corrected their parents' pronunciation. One mother remarked, "*Maşallah, artık bizden daha iyi konuşuyorlar*" [They speak better than us now].

This rapid linguistic reversal underscores Hornberger's (2005) continua of biliteracy, emphasizing how learning and loss occur dynamically across spaces such as home, school, and community. Within this continuum, heritage languages risk marginalization when societal and institutional support overwhelmingly favors the dominant language.

While parents consistently expressed pride in their children's multilingual abilities, they also conveyed deep concern over the gradual erosion of heritage languages. The narratives revealed an ongoing tension between pragmatic

assimilation and emotional attachment—a push-and-pull between embracing Turkish for survival and preserving Arabic and Kurdish for identity continuity. These emotions echo Cummins (2001) and King et al. (2008), who highlight the psychosocial stakes of heritage language loss, particularly when linguistic identity is intertwined with family cohesion and cultural pride.

Nevertheless, families in this study exhibited remarkable resilience and creativity in navigating their multilingual realities. Through translanguaging, informal teaching, and flexible communication strategies, they actively resisted total assimilation. Their agency challenges deficit-based narratives often imposed on refugee communities, showing that multilingualism can be a site of empowerment rather than deficiency. Even in the absence of institutional scaffolding, these families cultivated plurilingual competencies, ensuring that their children could operate across linguistic boundaries and cultural worlds.

Ultimately, the multilingual experiences of these Syrian refugee families in rural Türkiye reveal a story of negotiation, adaptation, and emotional endurance. Their linguistic lives do not follow a simple trajectory of language loss but rather illustrate a dynamic equilibrium, where Turkish ensures access to social mobility, and Kurdish and Arabic continue to anchor identity, belonging, and memory.

5. CONCLUSION

This study explored the family language policies (FLP) of Syrian refugee families in rural Türkiye through the lens of Spolsky's Tripartite Model (2009), focusing on three interconnected components: language ideologies, language practices, and language management. The findings demonstrate a complex interplay between these components, shaped by micro-level sociocultural dynamics and macro-level structural constraints, such as Türkiye's national policies toward refugees and the status of the Turkish language (Spolsky, 2009).

First, parents consistently expressed positive attitudes toward maintaining Arabic as an emblem of cultural identity and familial cohesion, mirroring observations from Abed Elkhaliq (2018) on Syrian families in the UK. Nevertheless, pragmatic considerations such as including better integration, emotional well-being, and children's inclusion in Turkish schools, modulated these ideologies, revealing tension between heritage pride and acculturative pressures.

Second, in-home practices largely aimed to promote Arabic use, especially through parental directives and peer-relational interactions. However, Turkish increasingly permeated daily life, driven by schooling requirements and community interactions, mirroring bilingual trajectories documented in refugee FLP studies conducted elsewhere (Shevchuk-Kliuzheva, 2024). The adoption of Turkish did not always represent a deliberate choice but often resulted from low-management implicit adoption, consistent with Spolsky's notion that practices can pre-empt policy.

Third, active management strategies, such as Arabic-only child routines, supplemental literacy practices, or involvement in Arabic complementary schooling, were observed primarily among parents with stronger heritage language ideologies. These families reported stronger Arabic competence in children, reinforcing literature linking explicit FLP management with positive bilingual outcomes (King, Fogle, & Logan-Terry, 2008). Yet practical barriers, including limited access to Arabic schools, parents' low education levels, and the temporariness of refugee status in Türkiye (Frontiers Team, 2022), constrained the consistency and scope of such efforts.

Fourth, while high Turkish proficiency correlated with improved life satisfaction (Argin, 2023), Arabic retention supported emotional stability within tight-knit refugee communities. Our study suggests that outcomes hinged on finding a balance between heritage preservation and socio-linguistic integration.

In sum, this study confirms the applicability of Spolsky's Tripartite Model in forced-migrant contexts and highlights the dynamic adaptability of FLP among refugee families. Findings align with prior scholarship, showing that explicit ideologies and management tend to yield stronger heritage language outcomes, though practice and macro-constraints often limit parental control (Abed Elkhaliq, 2018; Shevchuk-Kliuzheva, 2024).

5.1 Implications

The implications for the current inquiry are manifold. Theoretically speaking, the current study expands the existing FLP literature to rural refugee contexts in Türkiye, which previously focused on migrants in Western urban contexts. It also illuminates how strong heritage ideologies may not translate into dedicated management due to socio-pragmatic limitations, adding refinement to Spolsky's framework. Furthermore, it highlights how bilingual competence (i.e., Arabic and Turkish) supports psychological well-being, complementing literature suggesting bicultural competence buffers acculturative stress.

As for its practical implications, the present study at hand points out to a need for support for complementary language education, which unearths a pressing need for accessible Arabic language schools or programs to support FLP efforts, following models of supplementary language education (King et al., 2008). What is more, community-based interventions should provide Syrian parents with strategies and resources to enact effective FLP, building on successful FLP education initiatives (Shevchuk-Kliuzheva, 2024).

Lastly, Türkiye's temporary protection policy for forcibly displaced refugees underscores the need for sustainable FLP support through community programs and regional collaboration.

5.2 Recommendations

The recommendations given for further studies and implications can be grouped as follows: a) establishing heritage education programs, b) developing parental FLP support mechanisms, and c) institutional and policy support mechanisms. First of all, weekend and after-school extension classes for heritage language reading, writing, and speaking can be encouraged. Furthermore, collaborations between Syrian teacher networks and local NGOs could apply Shevchuk-Kliuzheva's (2024) management strategies in, collaborations schools and classes. What is more, language resource centers offering free learning materials and parental workshops tailored to rural areas can be opened for more heritage language education practices.

Second, parent training programs supported by community facilitators to teach explicit management techniques and bilingual parenting methods aligned with Abed Elkhaliq (2018) can be initiated. Also, peer-support groups for parents to share FLP strategies can be encouraged, reinforcing heritage language efforts via social encouragement.

Third, adopting bilingual education policies that integrate Arabic support within Turkish public schools for refugee children and incentivizing teacher engagement in bilingual programs through financial compensation or professional development can be encouraged.

Regarding future research on FLP, studies that adopt more longitudinal design can better track the language development trajectories and well-being outcomes among refugee children. In addition, comparative studies across urban–rural divides can further capture regional FLP variability and opportunity differentials. Lastly, intervention evaluations examining the effectiveness of FLP-enhancement programs on language outcomes, identity development, and psychological health can be executed.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University Ethical Committee Approval



Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal Üniversitesi
Sosyal Bilimlerde İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu

Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal Üniversitesi
Lisansüstü Eğitim Enstitüsü İngiliz Dili ve Eğitimi

Sayın 1

“Türkiye’de Yaşayan Suriyeli Ailelerin Aile Dili Politikalarının İncelenmesi: Çoklu Vaka Çalışması” adlı İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kuruluna yapmış olduğunuz başvurunuz (Protokol NO. 2024/455) kurulumuzun 24.12.2024 tarihli ve 2024/13 toplantısında değerlendirilerek etik olarak **uygun bulunmuştur**. Bilgilerinize sunarız.


(Başkan)

APPENDIX 2 The First Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Demografik Bilgiler:

1. Katılımcının Yaşı:
2. Eğitim Durumu:
3. Etnik kimlik ve konuşulan diller:
4. Arapça'yı ne kadar iyi biliyorsunuz?
5. Eşin etnik kimliği ve konuştuğu diller?
6. Çocuklarının yaşı ve cinsiyeti:
7. Okula gidiyorlar mı? (Özel/Devlet)
8. Çocuklar hangi dilleri konuşuyor?
9. Doğum yeri ve ikamet yeri?

Hayat Hikayesi:

1. Bana biraz kendinizden bahseder misiniz? Nasıl bir çocukluk geçirdiniz? Hangi dilleri konuşarak büyüdünüz? Çevrenizde hangi diller konuşuluyordu?
2. Kendi eğitim deneyimlerinizi paylaşır mısınız? Türkiye'ye geldiğinizde Türkçe'yi biliyor muydunuz? Ana diliniz olan Arapça'nın kamusal alanlarda konuşulmasına izin verildi mi?

APPENDIX 3 The Second Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Dil ve Aile Dil Planlamasına İlişkin Sorular

1. Genel bir soruyla başlayalım. Dil sizin için ne ifade ediyor? Dil kavramından bahsederken dil kavramına ne gibi anlamlar yüklemekteyiz? (Örneğin; genel kanı bir iletişim aracı olduğu yönünde. Siz ne düşünüyorsunuz?)
2. Arapça bağlamında konuşacak olursak, ana diliniz hakkında neler söylemek istersiniz?
3. Arapça'yı çocuklarınıza aktarmaya nasıl ve neden karar verdiniz? Bu dili konuşmak sizin için neden önemli? Sizi böyle bir eyleme/karar almaya iten sebeplerden/amaçlardan bahseder misiniz? Çocuğunuz için bu dili konuşmanın avantajları ve varsa dezavantajları nelerdir?
4. Nasıl planladınız? Bu kararı tek başına mı aldınız yoksa kocanız/karınızla birlikte mi? Bu dili çocuklarınızla ne zaman konuşmaya başladınız? Esnek bir yöntem mi izlediniz yoksa “evde-yalnızca-Arapça” politikasını mı benimsediniz? Farklı yaş gruplarından çocuklarınızla farklı planlar yaptınız mı?
5. Arapça'yı çocuklarınıza aktarmaya karar verdikten sonra süreç nasıl ilerledi? Çocuğunuzla çatışmalarınız oldu mu? Ana dilini konuşmayı reddetmek veya aile üyeleriyle konuşmaya istekli olmak gibi? Bu tür durumlarla karşılaştınız mı? Bu konuda ne söyleyebilirsiniz?
6. Okul çağındaki çocuğunuz için konuşalım; okul faktörü dil politikanızı/planlamanızı nasıl etkiledi? Çocuğunuz okula başlarken Türkçe biliyor muydu? Okulun tutumuna göre dil planlamanızı gözden geçirmeniz ve ayarlamanız gerekti mi? Ne yaptınız? Okul faktörü/akranlarla sosyalleşme dil planlamanızı etkiledi mi? Nasıl?
7. Dil planlaması yaptıktan sonra aile dil politikanızı uygularken kendinizi hiç umutsuz hissettiniz mi? Kendinizi nasıl değerlendiriyorsunuz?

Dil Uygulamalarına İlişkin Sorular

1. Evde aile bireyleri arasında dil pratiklerinizden bahsedebilir miyiz? Evin dili nedir? İletişim hangi dilde veya dillerde gerçekleşir? Sorulabilecek olası sorular:

- Aile ile iletişimde hangi dil(ler) kullanılıyor?
- Anne baba?
- Anne-çocuk?
- Baba-Çocuk?
- Birden fazla çocuk varsa kardeşler arasında hangi dil konuşulmakta?
- Geniş aile üyeleri (büyük büyükanne ve büyükbabalar, kuzenler vb.)

2. Şehrin, sokakların, parkların dili nedir? Çocuklarınız akranlarıyla hangi dil(ler)de iletişim kuruyor? Şehrin ve ailenin diliyle çocuğun etkileşimi nasıldır?
3. Farklı ortamlar veya durumlar çocuklarınızla iletişiminizi etkiliyor mu?
4. Okul faktörü devreye girdikten sonra, evdeki aile bireyleri arasındaki dil pratikleriniz okul öncesi ve okul sonrası olarak ayrıldı mı? Okul faktörü dil pratiklerinizi etkiledi mi? Bu durum nedeniyle farklı bir dil planlaması denediniz mi?
5. Farklı yaş gruplarından veya birden fazla çocuğunuz varsa, onlarla farklı dillerde mi iletişim kurdunuz? Evetse, hangi dillerde?
6. Siz ve eşiniz hala aynı dilde mi iletişim kuruyorsunuz veya bu durum hala daha devam ediyor mu? Cevabınız hayır ise, sizi bu değişikliği yapmaya iten ne oldu?

Dil Yönetimi Stratejilerine Dair Sorular

1. Ana dilinizi iletmek/geliştirmek için ne yaptınız/yapıyorsunuz? (Okul tercihi, dil grupları, kiliseye gitme, Arapça konuşan ailelerle bir araya gelme vb.).
- Herhangi birinden yardım aldınız mı?
- Belirli bir strateji uyguladınız mı? (Bir ebeveyn bir dil gibi)
2. Çocuğunuz iletişim sırasında belirlediğiniz stratejiye uymadığında bir yaptırım uyguladınız mı/yapıyor musunuz? Cevabınız evet ise ne tür yaptırımlar uyguluyorsunuz?
3. Çocuğunuzun Arapça ve Türkçe kullanımına nasıl yaklaşıyorsunuz? Dilleri karışık halde kullanmasına izin veriyor musunuz?
4. Çocuğunuzü büyütürken bir bakıcıdan yardım aldıysanız, bakıcı seçiminde Arapça konuşan çocuk bakıcısı gibi bir önceliğiniz oldu mu?
5. Çocuğunuz Arapça okuma, yazma, konuşma ve dinleme becerilerinde ne düzeyde?

6. Dil aktarım sürecinde kendinizi nasıl değerlendiriyorsunuz? Bir aile dil politikanız olduğunu söyleyebilir misiniz? Çocuk(lar)ınıza Arapçayı aktarmada başarılı olduğunuzu düşünüyor musunuz?



APPENDIX 4 Informed Consent Form 1

Bu çalışmada, Suriyeli ailelerin anadillerini çocuklarına aktarımına ilişkin aile-dil politikasını, başka bir deyişle Suriyeli ebeveynlerin evde çocuklarıyla konuşurken hangi dili kullanmayı tercih ettiği ve bu tercihin nedenlerini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Bu konu ile ilgili aklınıza takılan sorular var ise, daha fazla bilgiye ihtiyaç duyuyorsanız lütfen bize sorun. Araştırmaya gönüllü olarak katılmaktasınız. Buradaki uygulamalar süresince samimiyetiniz araştırmanın geleceği için çok önemlidir. Araştırmaya katılıp, katılmamak için lütfen biraz düşünün.

Bu araştırmada gönüllük esas olmakla beraber, uygulama esnasındaki dürüstlüğünüz ve samimiyetiniz çok önemli olduğundan sizleri aramızda görmek ayrıcalık olup, bizler için büyük bir önem taşımaktadır. Yaklaşık 20 kişinin tabi tutulacağı bir uygulamadır.

Araştırmaya katılmak gönüllülük esasına dayanmaktadır. Uygulamanın istediğiniz anında, diğer katılımcıları etkilememden araştırmadan ayrılmak istediğinizi uygulayıcıya herhangi bir neden veya koşul belirtmeden ifade edebilir ve ayrılabilirsiniz. Araştırmada size verilen konular veya uygulamalar dışında herhangi bir rahatsızlık hissettiğinizde araştırmayı bırakmanız da mümkündür. Bu konuda size olumsuz dönecek herhangi bir sorumluluğunuz yoktur.

Bu araştırmaya katılmayı kabul ederseniz, 2 aşamadan oluşacak mülakatlar ile evinizde çocuklarınızla konuşurken hangi dili kullanmayı tercih ettiğiniz ve bu tercihin nedenlerine dair 30 adet açık uçlu mülakat sorularına cevap vermeniz istenecektir. Mülakatlar ses kayıt cihazı ile kayıt altına alınacak ve istediğiniz şekilde sorulara cevap verebileceksiniz.

Bu araştırmaya katılmanın size hemen dönecek bir faydası bulunmamakla beraber, araştırmaya katılmakta araştırma hakkında sonrasında bilgi almanız mümkündür. Araştırma sonunda, araştırma sonucu ile bilgi talep etmeniz durumunda, elde edilen bilimsel bilgiler paylaşılabilecektir.

Lütfen sorularınızı araştırma sonunda araştırmacıya hiç çekinmeden sorunuz. Ayrıca, araştırmada, uygulama esnasında sizin dışınızda doğabilecek

herhangi bir maddi hasardan, herhangi bir şekilde sorumlu tutulmayacaksınız. Araştırma süresinde kullanılan bütün materyal, dokümanların masrafları araştırmacıya ait olup, sizden herhangi bir başlık altında ücret talep edilmeyecektir. Uygulama esnasında paylaştığınız kişisel bilgileriniz anonim olarak kayıt altına alınacaktır. Araştırma sonuçları, İçerik Yöntemiyle analiz edilip, işlenecek ve bunun sonucunda elde edilen bilgiler rapor edilecektir. Kabul görmesi halinde literatüre kazandırılacaktır.

Araştırma ile ilgili daha fazla bilgi ve sorun için:

Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal Üniversitesi, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi,

Bu araştırma Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal Üniversitesi İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından onaylanmıştır. Araştırmaya katılımınızla ilgili herhangi bir şikâyetiniz varsa Etik Kurul Başkanı Prof. Dr.

bildirebilirsiniz. Her tür şikâyetiniz gizlilikle değerlendirilecek, araştırılacak ve sonuç hakkında tarafınıza bilgi verilecektir.

Araştırmamıza ayırdığınız zaman ve göstermiş olduğunuz ilgiden dolayı Teşekkürler...

Araştırmanın koşullarını anladığımı ve araştırmaya gönüllü olarak katılmayı taahhüt ederim.

İMZA:

TARİH:

APPENDIX 5 Informed Consent Form 2

**ABANT İZZET BAYSAL ÜNİVERSİTESİ
İNSAN ARAŞTIRMALARI ETİK KURULU**

İAEK Karar No:

ONAM FORMU

Araştırmanın Adı: Türkiye’de Yaşayan Suriyeli Ailelerin Aile Dili Politikalarının İncelenmesi: Çoklu Vaka Araştırması

	Evet	Hayır
Bilgilendirme Formunu okudunuz mu?	☐	☐
Araştırma projesi size sözlü olarak da anlatıldı mı?	☐	☐
Size araştırmayla ilgili soru sorma, tartışma fırsatı tanındı mı?	☐	☐
Sorduğunuz tüm sorulara tatmin edici yanıtlar alabildiniz mi?	☐	☐
Araştırma hakkında yeterli bilgi aldınız mı?	☐	☐
Herhangi bir zamanda herhangi bir nedenle ya da neden göstermeksizin araştırmadan çekilme hakkına sahip olduğunuzu anladınız mı?	☐	☐
Araştırma sonuçlarının uygun bir yolla yayınlanacağına katılıyor musunuz?	☐	☐
Yukarıdaki soruların yanıtları size kim tarafından açıklandı? <i>Lütfen ismini yazınız....</i>		

İmza:

Tarih: