A CASE STUDY ON SYRIAN FORCED MIGRANT ADOLESCENTS'
ACCULTURATION STRATEGIES AND IDENTITY PERCEPTIONS IN A
TURKISH EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

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ABSTRACT

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The number of people transcending national borders has increased due to manifold factors. The global movements have become a matter of deep concern as they have multifaceted results. This study thus primarily aimed to explore the acculturation practices of Syrian forced migrant adolescents together with how they construct their identities as a learner and present the language preferences of these adolescents. The current thesis embraced the tenets of Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and the Acculturation Framework (Berry, 1997). By employing the principles of qualitative case study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a total of 15 participants, 11 Syrian students and four teachers of them to triangulate the data. The age of the student participants ranged between 13 and 17 years old. They were studying at School A in Ankara, and the teacher participants were teaching at the same school. The thematic data analysis unveiled that most of the forced migrant adolescents showed integration into the host society. The participants' acculturative practices are affected positively by parental factors, length of residence in Turkey, helpful peers and other Turkish people, and absence of war in Turkey. Also, stereotypes about

Syrian people, discrimination, social exclusion, financial difficulties, and paucity of interaction with Turkish people were repeatedly accentuated as integration-impeding factors. As the themes revealed, hybrid identity, Syrian identity, and in-betweenness reflected the participants' identity perceptions. The students' language practices at home were largely conducted in their native language, whereas they mostly preferred Turkish in other contexts. Lastly, some applicable implications are presented in order to support multicultural classrooms.

Keywords: acculturation, forced migration, identity, language preference

ÖZ

SURİYELİ ERGENLİK ÇAĞINDAKİ MÜLTECİ ÖĞRENCİLERİN KÜLTÜRLENME SÜRECİ VE KİMLİK ALGILARININ TÜRK EĞİTİM ORTAMINDA İNCELENMESİ

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Ulusal sınırları aşan insan sayısı, çeşitli faktörler nedeniyle artmıştır. Küresel hareketler, çok yönlü sonuçları olduğu için bir endişe konusu haline gelmiştir. Dolayısıyla bu çalışma, öncelikle Suriyeli zorunlu göçmen ergenlerin kültürleşme pratiklerini, öğrenci olarak kimliklerini nasıl oluşturduklarını ve bu ergenlerin dil tercihlerini ortaya koymayı amaçlamıştır. Bu tez, Sosyal Kimlik Teorisi'nin (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) ve Kültürleşme Çerçevesi'nin (Berry, 1997) ilkelerini benimsemiştir. Nitel durum çalışması ilkelerinden yararlanılarak, 11 Suriyeli öğrenci ve 4 öğretmen olmak üzere toplam 15 katılımcı ile yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Öğrenci katılımcıların yaşları 13 ile 17 arasında değişmektedir. Öğrenciler Ankara'da A Okulu'nda okumaktaydı ve öğretmen katılımcılar da aynı okulda öğretmenlik yapmaktaydı. Tematik veri analizi, zorunlu göçmen ergenlerin çoğunun ev sahibi topluma entegre olduğunu ortaya çıkardı. Katılımcıların kültürleşme uygulamaları, ebeveyn faktörleri, Türkiye'de kalma süresi, yardımsever akranlar ve Türkiye'de savaşın olmamasından olumlu yönde etkilenmektedir. Ayrıca, Suriyeliler, ayrımcılık, sosyal dışlanma, finansal zorluklar ve Türk halkıyla etkileşimin yetersizliği,

Suriyeli insanlar hakkındaki negatif düşünceler entegrasyonu engelleyen faktörler olarak defalarca vurgulandı. Temaların ortaya koyduğu üzere, hibrit kimlik, Suriyeli kimliği ve arada kalmışlık, katılımcıların kimlik algılarını yansıtmaktadır. Öğrencilerin evdeki dil uygulamaları büyük ölçüde ana dillerinde yürütülürken, diğer bağlamlarda daha çok Türkçeyi tercih etmişlerdir. Son olarak, çok kültürlü sınıfları desteklemek için bazı uygulanabilir öneriler sunulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: kültürleşme, zorunlu göç, kimlik algısı, dil tercihi

To all refugee children in the world

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

UNHCR   : United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNICEF   : the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

MoNE   : Ministry of National Education

AFAD   : Prime Ministry Disaster and Emergency Management

TEC   : Temporary Education Center

ALP   : Accelerated Learning Programme

IOM   : The International Organization for Migration

SIT   : Social Identity Theory

SP   : Student Participant

TP   : Teacher Participant

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the outline of the thesis to acquaint the readers with the study. It starts with the background of the study, the purpose of the inquiry, and research questions. Then, it is followed by the significance of the study. In addition, key terms in this field are explicated in detail. Lastly, some limitations of the research are introduced in this section.

1.1. Background of the Study

Migration has been a fact of life for centuries. People have been migrating for several reasons. As stated in the International Organization for Migration's report (2021) by McAuliffe and Triandafyllidou, work, education, and family are major motives for displacement, as well as persecution, conflict, and disasters. There has been an immense amount of migration flow globally. According to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (2021a) records, there were 82.4 million forcibly displaced people, including refugees, asylum seekers, and internally displaced people, due to violence, persecution, and human rights violence at the end of 2020, and the existing data show that 1 in 95 people is forcibly displaced (UNHCR, 2021a). The number of displaced people has been increasing each year (see Figure 1.1).
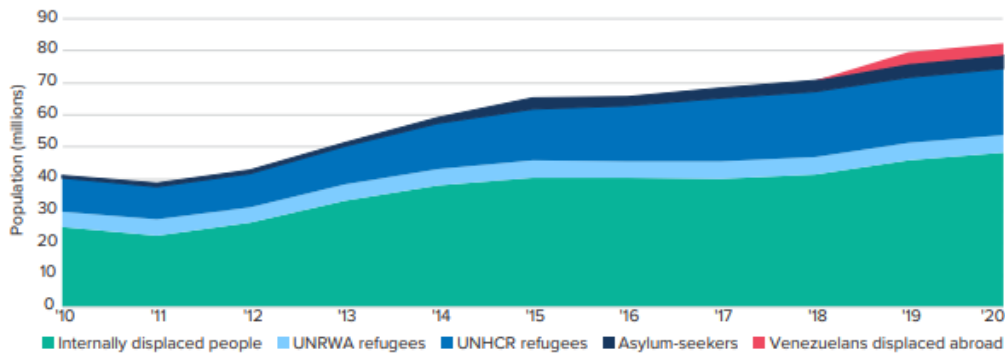
Figure 1. 1

Global Forced Displacement (UNHCR, 2021a, p.6)

According to UNHCR (2021a), 73% of displaced people are hosted in neighboring countries, whereas 27% of them are hosted in other countries. Turkey, Colombia, Germany, Pakistan, and Uganda are the leading migrant-receiving countries. Turkey houses the highest number of refugees, which is nearly 4 million, while Colombia has the second-largest refugee population with 1.7 million. These countries are followed by Germany, with around 1.5 million refugees. Pakistan and Uganda both host approximately 1.4 million refugees. Among these numbers, people from Syria, Venezuela, Afghanistan, South Sudan, and Myanmar form the majority of the forced migration population, respectively. A considerable number of them are children (42%) among all forcibly displaced people. Among all the forcibly displaced people worldwide today (82.4 million), there are 26.4 million refugees worldwide, and nearly half of them are under the age of 18, as reported by UNHCR (2021a). The number of forcibly displaced children worldwide has been growing steadily every year (see Figure 1.2).
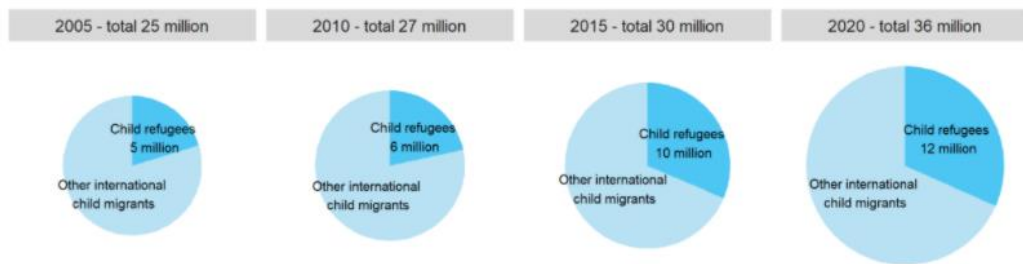
Figure 1. 2

Distribution of international migrants under 18 years of age by status, 2005, 2010, 2015, and 2020 in millions (UNICEF, 2021a)

As the primary inquiry of the study concerns the forced displacement experiences of Syrian adolescents, the case in Syria is of paramount significance. The uprisings and protests that began in Egypt and Tunisia at the end of 2010 soon influenced the Syrian Arab Republic as well as other Arab countries. The turmoil that is known as the Arab Spring resulted in hundreds of people's deaths and millions of people's displacement. The violently repressed protests later resulted in many people's departure from their countries. Thousands of people were injured or killed during the civil war. Therefore, people started to flee to neighboring countries in search of safety and other basic needs. Turkey is remarkably preferred by Syrians. Due primarily to having a prolonged land border with Syria, a myriad of Syrians fled to Turkey. Moreover, a report by the Republic of Turkey's Prime Ministry Disaster and Emergency Management (AFAD) (2017) revealed that their prime reasons for choosing Turkey as the host country were religious similarity between the two communities, better life conditions in Turkey compared to other countries, refugees' trust in Turkey, and accessibility due to the geographical location of Turkey. Turkey has applied an open door policy to them so they could resettle in this country. At the beginning of their arrivals, with the Temporary Protection Regulation issued by the Council of Ministers in 2014, placement was provided for those who sought asylum (Akar & Erdoğdu, 2019). With the Law on Foreigners and International Protection (LFIP), displaced persons had some rights regarding their entry to

Turkey, residence, and deportation (Kibar, 2013) to facilitate mutual harmony in society.

Today, Turkey hosts over 3.7 million displaced people, most of whom are under 18 (1.6 million), as stated in UNICEF's (2021b) situation report about Turkey. Although the number is relatively high, refugees' participation in education is not as high as their numbers. There are 532.469 Syrian children at Turkish schools, and not all of them are enrolled in school, as the rate of enrolment is 54.55% (Gürel & Büyükşahin, 2020). The Ministry of National Education founded Temporary Education Centers (TECs) that aim to provide education for those who had to leave their countries without giving a break from their school life (MoNE, 2014). TECs provide education in which a modified Syrian curriculum is followed with the classes held in Arabic, ranging from vocational training to learning Turkish for Syrian students (İçduygu & Şimşek, 2016). Largely consisting of Arabic teachers, refugee children's attachment levels to TECs were expected to increase as they felt included in the system there. However, TECs also failed to respond to students' integration into Turkish society, as reported by Çelik and İçduygu (2019). Another attempt to keep refugee-background students in the education system was that the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) and UNICEF launched a project, namely the Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP), to provide specialized support for students aged 10-18 (UNICEF, 2019). Students who missed a few years of school and were unable to take part in formal education with their peers were welcomed into this program. ALP was utilized by 5,616 children (2,613 girls and 3,003 boys) by the end of December 2018 (UNICEF, 2019).

It is indisputable that education is an investment with extensive results for both the community and refugees, as it provides refugees an environment where they can reach their full potential and contribute to the host society (Akar & Erdoğdu, 2019). Yet, the education system for refugees still lacks basic regulations on language barriers and space in classrooms, as reported by İçduygu and Şimşek (2016).

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Large-scale global movements of people, commodities, capital, and ideas are matters of the 21st century. Therefore, migration as a phenomenon cannot be discussed in isolation from these issues (Castles et al., 2014). In this vein, societies are not monolithic but instead chiefly defined through trans- and multi-prefixes. Considering the large numbers of migrants presented above, it is undeniable that diversity, plurality, and multiplicity have also become an everyday reality for people in these societies. Nevertheless, minorities are not always smoothly integrated into the host community. In the case of Turkey, as mentioned above, the number of refugee children is substantial. Due to the growing number of children who have been displaced, child migration, or youth migration, has been notably drawing attention. Although there have been many attempts to ameliorate their living conditions in this country, as aforementioned, some problems concerning their adaptation and inclusion in the host society are not yet considerably avoided. The significance of the integration of refugees has been accentuated in politics and academic fields; however, little attention has been paid to the diverse settlement experiences of individuals with factors behind them (Phillimore, 2011). As there is a paucity of voluntary engagement in forced migration, the process of adapting to the new environment becomes even more daunting. Since migrant children follow their parents or caregivers and migrate to another country, their adjustment might be complex by nature. Along with the acculturative problems, the forced migrant children deal with psychological problems as well. Witnessing violence and death and fleeing from their homes are traumatic incidents. Thus, war-affected children are psychologically impacted by this predicament (Hart, 2009). Therefore, there is a need for proper recognition of the underlying impacts and the dimensions of forced migration in all social and cultural milieus. Reformative practices and long-term remedial policies will pave the way for long-lasting and co-constructed cultural settings for adolescents.

Adolescence is often described as the duration that starts with puberty and ends with "the achievement of relative self-sufficiency", and, thus it begins biologically and finishes socially (Blakemore & Mills, 2014, p.188). At this

point, the social contextual variables are prominent since they directly affect an adolescent's behaviors, as reported by Blakemore and Mills (2014). The nature of pubertal transition involves biological issues along with social ones. This process is already daunting for adolescents. In addition to these hardships, a refugee adolescent copes with the problems concomitant with forced migration. It is thus necessary to provide shared environments in which refugee children feel accepted to mitigate the adverse impacts of forced migration.

1.2. Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

This study primarily aims to explore the experiences of Syrian forced migrant adolescents in terms of their acculturation process along with how they construct their identities as a student in Turkey. Another purpose of this research is to present the language preferences of Syrian forced migrant adolescents.

Considering the abovementioned aims, this thesis attempts to shed light on the following research questions:

1) What are the experiences of Syrian forced migrant adolescents regarding their acculturation to the host society?

1a) What kind of acculturation strategies do they apply to?

1b) Which factors affect the acculturation process of them?

2) How do Syrian forced migrant adolescents identify their identity as a student?

2a) What kind of relationship is there between identity choice and the adopted acculturation strategy?

3) What are the language choice patterns of Syrian forced migrant adolescents in their daily lives as well as in the school environment?

3a) What kind of relationship is there between the language choices and their adaptation to the host society?

1.3. Significance of the Study

Taking the number of forced migrants across the globe and Turkey into consideration, it can be asserted that the proliferation of these global movements has multifaceted results. Culture is regarded as a dynamic and transcendent phenomenon. It is assumed that creating shared cultural settings is cardinal for societies where everyone is embraced. Considering the overarching impacts of migration worldwide, it can be claimed that it results in global and social transformations. Societies go under interchange as the mobility of people and goods escalates. Despite the growing number of migration flows across the globe, there is still a need for studies on migrants' social practices and how they identify themselves. Although a number of studies focus on the psychological well-being of forced migrants and there has been increasing scholarly attention in the field of forced migration, the literature lacks a detailed picture of their identity perceptions and acculturation process in the education context. Moreover, there are even fewer inquiries regarding adolescents' experiences. As each minority group has divergent linguistic and historical backgrounds and each context is unique, more studies are in need to comprehensively understand those practices. Turkey, as a country having the largest refugee population in the world, is a fruitful field of study. As Turkey has a substantive number of refugees, it celebrates diversity and hybridity together with its already existing multicultural environment. This being the case, the integration of refugees into Turkey has become crucial in providing shared cultural settings and the well-being of the populace. Past studies have presented some issues in relation to the forced migrant adolescents' problems. Post-traumatic disorders, communicative problems, and adaptation problems are reported to be significant issues in Turkish public schools (Tösten et al., 2017). There are also curriculum-related problems, as there is a lack of a graduation system for Syrian students (Gokce & Acar, 2018). Additionally, their sense of belonging and acculturation paths are not fully investigated. Their experiences in Turkey need to be listened to as they are the subjects of forced displacement.

Exploring the world of young adults is crucial as they have been seen as vulnerable or at risk after forced displacement (Hassan et al., 2015); they might also face some psychological problems. So as to diminish these problems, exploring their acculturation and identity path is the initial step. This is of paramount importance in order to provide better social opportunities such as schooling and adaptation, in which inclusivity is the main pillar. The results of this study will be of help in terms of providing insights on refugee acculturation and integration for authorities.

Although there are quantitative studies germane to acculturative practices of immigrants and forced migrants (Berry et al., 2006; Tartakovsky, 2012; Unger et al., 2002), the in-depth implications of qualitative research design for forced migration remain undiscovered. The present inquiry also hopes to contribute to the relevant literature by filling this gap. By employing the tenets of qualitative inquiry, the personal experiences of Syrian adolescents will be examined in-depth. This study also holds significance since there is not enough body of research pertaining to Syrian adolescents' personal experiences in another country within the scope of qualitative research design in educational settings. Thus, this research is significant as it helps researchers gain better insights into the Syrian migrant adolescents' experiences after being forcibly displaced.

1.4. Definition of Key Terms

In this part, the key terms regarding forced migration and acculturation are described.

Refugee: By international law in the 1951 Refugee Convention, refugees were defined as people who are unable to return to their country of origin because they are afraid of violence or persecution due to their political opinions, race, or membership in a particular group. In this study, Syrian people fleeing from the war in Syria are referred to as refugees (IOM, Key Migration Terms, 2011).

Stateless Person: A stateless person is someone who does not have a legal affiliation with any country or is seen as a foreigner (UNHCR, 2006).

Internally Displaced Person (IDP): An IDP is an individual who is forced to flee their homes, not across internationally known borders but within the borders of their nation, and their safety should be assured by governments as they are accountable for their welfare (Hampton, 2014).

Asylum Seeker: An asylum seeker is a person who is in search of international protection whose claims have not been decided yet. Although every refugee is an asylum seeker at the beginning, not every asylum seeker is recognized as a refugee later on (UNHCR, 2006).

Inclusion: Inclusion refers to the philosophy of having equality, justice, and equity for children, especially for students who have been largely marginalized from mainstream society due to their gender, ethnicity, disabilities, or other features (Marin, 2014).

Temporary Protection: Temporary protection refers to an arrangement by states that attempts to provide safety for those who face conflict or violence after arriving in the host country (UNHCR, 2006).

Acculturation: The process in which groups of people or individual members from different cultural backgrounds enter into contact and/or psychologically and culturally change is called acculturation (Berry, 2008).

Reintegration: The process in which people establish a new social, psychosocial and economic life successfully, such as having access to public services, support networks, and participation in the economic life is called reintegration (IOM, Key Migration Terms, 2011).

1.5. Limitations of the Study

There were some notable limitations of this research. First of all, language was a significant barrier in terms of communicating with the students. As some of the participants' knowledge of Turkish is not as good as their native tongues, the informants might not have expressed themselves superbly. In a parallel sense, I could not interact with the parents of the informants due to language constraints. Since their competencies in Turkish was not adequate to conduct interviews, they were excluded from the study. Thus, semi-structured interviews could only be conducted with students and their teachers.

Another limitation can be the non-generalizable research findings. Due to the nature of the case study, the results conscientiously describe the experiences of participants in a particular setting. In this case, the Syrian refugees living in Ankara and going to School A unveiled their practices in a receiving country. With this in mind, it can be asserted that the results might not be the ultimate representative of all the refugee students inhabiting Turkey. Here, the main aim is to draw a vivid picture of students' acculturation and identities and provide pertinent implications.

A further limitation is with regard to the COVID-19 pandemic. The data could have been collected through different means, like observations. However, due to pandemic restrictions and quarantine regulations at schools, such data collection tools could not have been utilized. Additionally, the clash of my working hours and the participants' class hours impeded me from observing the participants at their school. Hence, time was a constraint, too. All aspects of limitations should be taken into account.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents a review of the literature with the theories employed in this study. The present thesis embraces the tenets of Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and the Acculturation Framework (Berry, 1997) and adopts them as the theoretical frameworks of the study. After providing a detailed picture of the theories, the preliminary studies pertaining to identity formation and acculturation, particularly in forced migrant adolescents, are discussed.

2.1. Social Identity Theory

To better comprehend the origin and principles of Social Identity Theory, it is fundamental to refer to the minimal group paradigm initially. According to the kin selection hypothesis, members of a group are predisposed to favor their in-group members while marginalizing the other groups. However, it is apparent that societal and cultural circumstances are of paramount importance, specifically when performing intergroup behavior (Diehl, 1990). In order to shed light on the role of social categorization in intergroup dynamics, Tajfel and his associates conducted a series of experiments (Tajfel et al., 1971), whose results predominantly shaped Social Identity Theory.

The aim of the experiments was to manifest the role of social categorization, which is postulated to be adequate to reveal intergroup discrimination. There were some predetermined criteria, such as having no face-to-face interaction and full anonymity of the group members (Tajfel et al., 1971). The participants were randomly assigned to the groups. The anonymity of the participants was assured through code numbers. They were asked to distribute the money among the other participants, both in and out of their groups. Despite the arbitrary categorization

of the informants, the findings revealed that the participants robustly favored people from their own group. The results were surprising as the participants did not know each other beforehand or would presumably not have future interactions. Based on that social categorization, they still showed substantive "ingroup bias in the minimal intergroup situation" (Billig & Tajfel, 1973, p. 48).

The findings attracted scholarly attention and led to many inquiries pertaining to the minimal group paradigm later on. Indeed, hundreds of minimal group experiments have been administered globally with diverse participant populations since then (Hogg, 2016), and the common result is that people display competitive and ethnocentric behaviors on account of their social categorization. All these findings later resulted in the formulation of Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

Social Identity Theory (SIT) is one of the most prominent theories in the social sciences and has been largely used in understanding intergroup relations and conflicts. It is a social-psychological theory that seeks to describe human cognitions and behaviors through group dynamics by focusing on group processes, intergroup contact, and the social self (Hogg et al., 1995; Trepte, 2006). Tajfel (1972) defines social identity, which is one of the main conceptual pillars of the theory, as an "individual's knowledge that he belongs to certain social groups together with some emotional and value significance to him of this group membership" (p. 292). Social groups assign predetermined shared identities to their members, and those values are assented to and internalized by the members. They evaluate themselves and others through the lens of their membership in a group, as social identities accentuate how the in-group is discrete from the out-groups in certain social milieus (Hogg, 2016). In other words, SIT postulates that people compare "in-groups favorably with out-groups" in order to construct positive identities (Turner & Oakes, 1986, p. 240). However, these comparisons are thought to be ethnocentric by their in-group-favoring nature. In a stratified system, groups with higher status insist on their power and try to maintain their superiority, while those with lower ones try to

disengage themselves from stigmatization and promote their positive self (Hogg, 2016). According to SIT, creating a positive self is of paramount importance since there is a correlation between positive self-esteem and positive identity. The theory thus places considerable emphasis on the concepts of social/self-categorization, social comparison, self-esteem, intergroup bias, and conflict, which will be discussed in the rest of this chapter.

2.1.1. Social Categorization

Social Identity Theory posits that "self" is reflexive, and it 'can categorize, classify, or name itself" (Stets & Burke, 2000, p.224) with distinctive placement. Therefore, categorization holds a significant place, particularly in the identity construction process. Social categorization signifies that people are defined both by their individual characteristics and by social categories that broadly define them according to age, cultural or economic classes. As a result, they continually refine their categories during their social interactions with people who have been categorized differently. Here, it is noteworthy to state that categorization can operate in various forms and degrees. People may categorize themselves as being a part of a sports team, university, or fans of a celebrity, but what is meant by social categorization here is the 'salience' of membership that presumably leads to a change in behavior (Tajfel, 1979).

SIT predicates that people are predisposed to highlight the perceived similarities within their in-groups while amplifying the dissimilarities with the outer groups (Diehl, 1990; Hogg et al., 1995; Smith & Hogg, 2008). It is basically asserted that people mostly neglect the commonalities shared with out-groups and view those groups as homogenous. This situation culminates in rigid and sharp intergroup boundaries since groups do not approve of multiplicity. Indeed, this being the case profoundly affects intergroup dynamics by intensifying discriminatory practices between groups. It may even lead to ethnocentrism, both at discursive and physical levels. It is because, through depersonalization, people regard themselves as ultimate exemplars of their in-group prototypes, whereas

viewing others as the "embodiment of the out-group prototypes" (Stets & Burke, 2000, p. 231), and behave in a normative, stereotype-oriented way. In the depersonalization process, the basic premise is to define people through their group prototypes instead of personal idiosyncrasy (Hogg, 2001). It thus becomes salient that when we categorize people, we also attribute them some prototypical roles and expect their conformity to those attributions.

The categorization process is twofold. When categorizing people and assigning stereotypical attributes to them, in a parallel sense, people concurrently classify themselves as well, which is called self-categorization. It is a socio-cognitive process whereby people internalize group norms and fit themselves into previously determined categories. While doing this, people assimilate their 'self' to the group norms and prototypes (Smith & Hogg, 2008). Following this, their actions, value systems, behaviors, and many other properties are guided and furnished by their membership and categorization in a group.

2.1.2. Social Comparison

Social comparison and social categorization occur together (Padilla, 2008). As a result of categorization, people socially compare themselves with relevant out-groups. SIT suggests that, in addition to categorization, we also evaluate other groups. Individuals can negotiate their own identity and realize their own value through these evaluative practices. The primordial assumption here is that individuals strive to cultivate their self-esteem and positive identity (Nezlek & Smith, 2005). Categories are interlinked with some negative or positive value implications. To put it differently, these value-laden attributions have a significant role in constituting positive social identities. Tajfel and Turner (1979) present three theoretical principles regarding forming positive social identities. As they suggest, besides the desire to maintain a positive self, individuals make favorable comparisons in which in-groups are positively differentiated compared to out-groups. Additionally, if identification is formed unsatisfactorily, members of groups either disassociate themselves from their existing groups and seek

more positively distinct groups or try to render their available group into a more positive one. For instance, people who have been minoritized or have a lower status in society usually experience negative comparisons, and these comparisons may culminate in their unsatisfactory social identity (Akbaş, 2010).

2.1.3. Positive Distinctiveness

The predisposition to favor one's own social group is one of the central motivations of human beings. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, people are inclined to make favorable comparisons within their in-groups, which is also called positive distinctiveness. The literature provides a number of studies pertaining to positive distinctiveness. In the study of Trepte, Schmitt, and Dienlin (2018), people's positive distinctiveness tendencies were investigated. They hypothesized that when people read international news that favors their in-groups (their country), they come to evaluate their own country positively as well. Based on the data gathered from 364 students from Germany and the United States, the researchers found out that after reading positively valenced news articles, the participants believed that their country was better at those specific topics stated in the articles (such as the education system of their country). Actually, German participants also displayed better knowledge of the articles, which can be interpreted as evidence of positive distinctiveness. Similarly, a study conducted by Huddy and Virtanen (1995) with Cubans, Mexicans, and Puerto Ricans reveals that subgroup differentiation is linked to the desire for positive distinctiveness rather than familiarity with different subgroups.

2.1.4. Intergroup Behavior and Intergroup Bias

The rise in global interdependence since World War II has dramatically intensified the diversification and complexity of intergroup relations (Turner, 1982). When it is the case, centering intergroup behavior and intergroup bias as

the main concepts of the social identity formation process has become substantive.

One of the main foci of SIT, intergroup bias, can be defined as members' inclination to favor their own group and evaluate it more positively than out-groups, as Tajfel (1982) claims, and he further explains that they do not need competition or conflict to engage in those kinds of discriminatory practices, as people perform in-group favoring attitudes even when there is no institutionalized or overt conflict between groups. Likewise, a number of studies have suggested that mere awareness of different out-groups is enough to produce biased attitudes and behaviors (Sherif et al., 1961; Tajfel et al., 1971). For instance, one of the early studies on intergroup relationships by Sherif et al. (1961) shows that two groups joining holiday camps exhibited competitive behaviors the moment they learned about the other group's existence, even before the competition was started by authorities.

On the other hand, some studies have shown that in-group positivity does not necessarily correlate with out-group derogation. In a 10-year study by Brewer and Campbell (1976) (as cited by Brewer, 1999) with 30 ethnically diverse groups in East Africa, it was indicated that almost all informants judged their in-groups approvingly over out-groups in terms of honesty, friendliness, obedience, and trustworthiness. Actually, the degree of positive in-group evaluations and out-group social distance correlation was found to be .00 between 30 ethnic groups. In a similar vein, Otten, Mummendey, and Blanz's (1996) study on the determination of social discrimination by stimuli valence concludes that members of a group do not discriminate against the other group when given negative stimulus, while positive stimuli trigger in-group bias. Another finding is that relatively inferiorized groups show in-group-favoring practices when allocated both positive and negative stimuli (see also Wenzel et al., 2003). Hence, based on dichotomous studies, it can be stated that the question of mere categorization salience is satisfactory to demonstrate divergent attitudes towards out-groups still remains unanswered.

It can be claimed that intergroup bias can manifest itself in various forms and degrees. As people perceive themselves and others in quite distinctive ways rather than appreciating the similarities they share, this bias may transform into out-group derogation, which may subsequently spawn ethnocentrism. According to Tajfel (1979), the purpose of differentiation towards others is to perpetuate the supremacy of dominant groups. At this point, the level of positive identification is crucial as minority groups have been faced with discrimination by socially prioritized groups.

2.1.5. Power and Othering

In social sciences, identity is regarded as a social term, which means minority groups' identities are also placed in social contexts and framed by them (Jensen, 2011). Dominant groups segregate minority groups so as to maintain and/or affirm their positive identity. Concomitant with this segregation, members of non-dominant groups are positioned as inferiors, and the discourses are shaped in line with these positionings. In other words, the majority others the minority. Othering can be defined as "the creation in discourse of in-groups and out-groups" ('we' and 'they') (Cooke & Simpson, 2012, p.122). The majority holds stereotypically constituted values and beliefs about others.

The demarcation between 'we' and 'they' leads to stratified value systems based on identities. When talking about identities and the stratification of them, power has always been the locus of negotiation, and it intersects with hegemonic discourses and segregation. As dominant groups exercise power over less favored groups, minorities try to attain a positive social identity using varying means (Simon & Brown, 1987). Since non-dominant groups feel more uncertain than dominant ones, they try to better the position of their group and construct positive identities by discriminating against relatively powerful groups (Akbaş, 2010). As a result, minority groups have more robust in-group identification compared to majority groups, as well as perceive more in-group homogeneity (Simon, 1992). A study conducted by Erdoğan-Öztürk and Işık-Güler (2020)

investigated the hashtag *#idontwantsyriansinmycountry* and revealed considerable discrimination toward Syrians in Turkey.

On the other hand, research has revealed that non-dominant groups are more likely to perceive themselves as being discriminated against. In the studies conducted in varying settings, Rodin et al. (1990) affirmed that the discriminatory practices toward disadvantaged groups performed by the majority are more seen as signs of bias than the same practices done by the disadvantaged towards the advantaged. In a similar sense, minority groups' perceptions of group-level discrimination were found to be higher compared to their perceptions of personal discrimination (Taylor et al., 1996).

2.1.6. Identity Formation and Sense of Belonging among Minority Groups

The current thesis espouses that individuals do not carry a singular identity but rather plural, in other words, hybrid identities with them. The term has been extensively used in the context of the identities of minority groups (Asher, 2008; Irizarry, 2007; Mishra & Shirazi, 2010). Bhabha (2004), whose works on hybrid identities illuminated the complex nature of this process, signifies the dynamic nature of diasporic identities and defines hybridity as "neither the one thing nor the other" (p.49). Identity formation is thus considered to be a constant process. Here, hybrid identities are entertained as including "differences without an assumed or imposed hierarchy" (Bhabha, 2004, p.5). Plural identities are thus celebrated without any type of ranking.

As they hold a different cultural and linguistic background from the host country, minority groups vary in terms of their choices of identity. Even a group sharing the same ethnic background might show dissimilar identity patterns. In the study with 98 first generation, 80 second generation, and 77 newly arrived Turkish immigrants in New York, Arslan (2016) indicated that there is a considerable difference between the first and second generation immigrants' sense of belongingness. The first-generation immigrants showed a higher level of

belonging to their Turkish identity, while the second-generation immigrants reported stronger belonging to their American identity but also showed attachment to the Turkish identity. These results elucidate the role of different perspectives on the sense of belonging due to generational differences. However, the factors impacting identity formation are not only circumscribed by age or generations. The positioning of immigrants by the host country and its policies have overarching influences. Yağmur and van de Vijyer (2012) also accentuated the significance of immigration policies in the countries. Their research, conducted with 1085 Turkish immigrants living in Australia, Germany, France, and the Netherlands, disclosed that in Australia, where multiculturalism was celebrated, the Turkish identity appeared to be weaker, and they felt minimal desire to preserve their identity. Hatoss' (2012) study with Sudanese forced migrant residents in Australia explored their collective identification and self-categorization of them. The data gathered through participants' narratives demonstrated that Sudanese refugees have a robust ethnic self-concept and motivation to attain an Australian identity. However, it was reported that they are seen as outsiders by mainstream society.

Preceding literature furnishes us with the examples of minority groups transcending the binary classifications and challenging rigid boundaries between identities. Mishra and Shirazi (2010) focus on young American Muslim women's experiences in performing their identities in daily negotiations. The findings of this qualitative study with 26 respondents indicated that women with immigrant backgrounds show selective integration with mainstream American culture. That is, they do not show absolute adherence to the newly adapted society but rather display partial participation in American culture. It can be predicated that their identities shift as they encounter multiple Muslim or American settings. Hence, monolithic, homogeneous, and uninterrupted identity contentions have lost their importance. In this vein, Chao's (2019) two-year ethnographic research sheds light on the multi-layered nature of refugee identities and regards identities as multi-faceted, socially constructed, and power-driven. The results collected through interviews with six recently resettled Bhutanese refugees and close

observation showed that participants adopted multiple identities, and their identities hinged on their experiences and the situated contexts. Additionally, the poststructuralist analysis unveiled that language ideologies and heightened social contact culminate in their native language reduction; hence, "their bilingual identity is subtractive" (p.822).

Another study by Phinney et al. (2001) underscored the role of migrant-receiving societies. If multiplicity is welcomed in a society, the immigrants' ethnic identity perceptions become robust. On the contrary, if there is pressure to become assimilated by the host society, national identity becomes dominant, based on their work conducted in four immigrant-receiving countries. Asher's (2008) study provides valuable insights into the hyphenated Asian American immigrants' hybrid identities. The researcher highlights the interstices where the participants found themselves and claims that social forces coerce people on the margins into accepting stereotypical portraits of them. The stories of 10 Indian American immigrant students revealed that their positionalities in the identity spectrum changed hinging on their contexts. It was found that they struggled to conform to their Indian selves at school, whereas they struggled to assent to their American selves at home. Asher (2008) thus recommends that curriculums should take the fluidity of cultures and identities into consideration and deconstruct the stereotypes attached to minority peoples. The role of pedagogy is also accentuated by Irizarry (2007). As it was claimed, in order to construct a classroom setting where everyone is accepted and valued, culturally responsive pedagogy should be adopted. The emergence of hybridized identities in multi-ethnic classrooms in which the fluidity of culture is re-negotiated can be supported through "culturally connected teacher identity" (p.27). The current thesis also adopts the same approach toward plural identities and the liquidity of them.

Considering all the aforementioned tenets of SIT and its relations to hybrid identities, it is applicable in exploring the Syrian refugees' identity construction process as a linguistically and ethnically minoritized group in the context of

Turkish education system. In this thesis, Syrians and Turks are thought to have salient categories as they have historically and culturally distinctive practices. Hence, it is expected that they perform forms of intergroup bias toward each other. Moreover, SIT is of help in investigating the intricate relationship between the Syrian and Turkish people. Since Turks are the majority and Syrians are the minority numerically, identity percepitons can be investigated through SIT with its central assumptions like in-group and out-group relations by taking power concerns into consideration. The current inquiry also explores the role of discrimination in composing identity in minoritized groups by means of Social Identity Theory's main suppositions. The findings are analyzed through and linked to these assumptions to better draw a comprehensive picture of this complex process.

2.2. Acculturation

Across the globe, cultural diversity has increasingly been embraced. As humans globalize and come into contact with people from diverse backgrounds, the term 'diversity' has intensified. Even though the diversification of cultures and transnational mobility is celebrated in many quarters, this is itself not adequate to surmount the ethnically-constructed barriers or obstructions humankind has been facing. Although mobility transcending national borders has facilitated the formation of culturally plural societies, it is apparent that existing in such a milieu does not necessarily imply adapting to the society, notably amid holding a refugee background. After being forcibly displaced, unfortunately, people had to move to neighboring countries to continue their living. However, in addition to all the concomitant hardships of being a refugee, they have also been struggling with acclimatizing to the culture of receiving country. Besides all these, it is cardinal to find ways of co-constructing shared cultural settings. This thesis thus also adopts the principles of Berry's (1997) acculturation to comprehensively explicate the acculturation strategies embraced by forcibly displaced Syrian adolescents. It is thought that the legal status of the minority groups oftentimes "complicates their acculturation process" (Ellis & Chen, 2013, p.251). A large

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body of research has extensively investigated acculturative practices manifested by adults (Unger et al., 2002); nevertheless, the literature still lacks studies focusing on the acculturation process of refugee adolescents intensively.

As humankind has been in contact with each other, 'acculturation' is not a recent phenomenon. However, it has started to attract scholarly attention for a few decades. One of the earlier definitions of acculturation proposed by Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits (1936) is "acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups" (p. 149). That is to say, acculturation culminates in a change in one's cultural behaviors or perceptions. Different frameworks regarding acculturation were posited by different scholars. For example, Schumann's (1986) acculturation framework postulates that people's degree of language acquisition parallels with their degree of interaction with target group. He also lists the taxonomy of factors impacting second-language acquisition. Also, Berry (2001) asserted that the acculturation process involves both dominant and non-dominant groups; however, the interaction experiences have more effects on the members of non-dominant groups. When interacting with people of other cultures, the urge to coexist in a setting drives people to revise their previously held beliefs, attitudes, and even certain customs, as well as develop new coping mechanisms to function in various environments (Unger et al., 2002). Notwithstanding, this intercultural contact may result in some identity-related conflicts on account of its complex nature, particularly since adolescence is a complex process of life in which young adults try to compose an identity as well.

2.2.1. Plural Societies

Myriad cultural groups coexist and constitute plural societies. One of the main reasons for this multiplicity is migration flows all around the world (Berry, 1997), and the distribution of power in terms of numbers, politics, and

economics is not uneven or equal. Berry (1997) uses the term 'cultural groups' to indicate all the groups, both more powerful and less powerful ones.

Berry and Sam (1997) present three factors for varying voluntariness, mobility, and permanence. Firstly, some groups, such as refugees and immigrants, enter into this process as they move to another setting. Secondly, they choose this path voluntarily, like immigrants. Thirdly, the permanence of settlement is another factor (like temporary settlement as sojourners or guest workers do). As reported by Berry and Sam (1997), the following groups (see Figure 2.1) cannot be listed together as they differ in terms of power, number, resources, and rights, impacting their acculturation as well as motives, values, and abilities.

Mobility	Voluntariness of contact	
	Voluntary	Involuntary
Sedentary	Ethnocultural groups	Indigenous peoples
Migrant Permanent Temporary	Immigrants Sojourners	Refugees Asylum seekers

Figure 2. 1

Types of Acculturation Groups (Berry & Sam, 1997, p.295)

Berry (2006a) also contends that there are six dimensions of plural societies pertaining to cultural variations: diversity, equality, conformity, wealth, space, and time. Diversity concerns how divergently people view themselves in society and how homogeneous the groups are. The equality dimension deals with how egalitarian societies are and if there is a strict hierarchy. The conformity dimension offers that some societies face social constraints while others are free in their practices, which presumably generates conflict among the members of groups. Wealth, as the name suggests, is linked to the possessions cherished by particular groups, such as money, properties, learning, communication, etc. Space is pertinent to the areas used by the groups such as public places or

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accommodation. The last dimension, time, concerns the time-related intercultural difficulties such as individual engagement or punctuality.

On the other hand, there are still other variables as well. In their study, Georgas, van de Vijver, and Berry (2004) address the interrelationship between ecological indices and psychological variants by employing Berry's Ecocultural Framework, and they also added 'affluence' and 'religion' as the other dimensions. As they report, for instance, Muslim societies are less likely to have autonomy and individualism but high on power distance, whereas Roman Catholicism is less likely to have hierarchy and secular authority but high uncertainty avoidance. All the above-mentioned dimensions are found to be influential regarding the acculturative practices of individuals in their daily lives.

2.2.2. Adaptation

As Berry (1997) puts it, adaptation is the change in individuals with regard to the milieu's demands. Adaptation may take place in the short-term or the long-term. Even though it may occur psychologically and socioculturally, which are also intertwined, a distinction should be made between them (Searle & Ward, 1990). Psychological adaptation pertains to mental, cultural identity, and sense of belonging-related adaptation, whereas sociocultural adaptation concerns extrinsic factors such as adapting to the environment at school or work. For some people, this process is relatively smoother but more painful for others. Adaptation might or might not develop the "fit" between an acculturating person and the society; the "fit" may not be accomplished, and resistance and attempts are possible, too (Berry, 2006b, p.52).

2.2.3. Berry's Acculturation Strategies

The issue of how to adapt and acculturate to a plural society is a fact of life in many quarters where multiplicity is celebrated. This being the case, people acclimatize to the new environment by means of manifold strategies. Thus,

acculturation strategies are attributed to "the how of acculturation" (Berry, 2019, p.16). They are aimed at defining and exploring the process of acculturation. Berry (1997) suggests four strategies used by non-dominant groups during the acculturation process: assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization. In the assimilation strategy, non-dominant groups disidentify themselves from the culture of origin and interact with other cultures on a daily basis. However, contrary to assimilation, when non-dominant groups attach a great deal of significance to their own groups and prefer not to interplay with other cultures, separation occurs. The following strategy, integration, is observable when people cherish both their home culture and the dominant culture. In other words, while keeping the formerly attached values, people still come into contact with available cultures. On the other hand, non-dominant groups may also not be interested in maintaining their own culture, often on account of "enforced cultural loss" (Berry, 1997, p.9). Likewise, they may also reject engaging in the dominant culture due to discrimination. This strategy is defined as marginalization.

Berry (1997) highlights that these acculturation strategies assume persons belonging to non-dominant groups freely choose their path of acculturation. However, freedom of choice is only accessible in integration. In multicultural social contexts, there are some essential preconditions for integration to take place (Berry & Kalin, 1995). First of all, acceptance of the policies and values of multiculturalism and cultural variety is necessary. Second, there needs to be a minimum level of prejudice toward others in society. Third, positive reciprocal approaches should be adopted by all members of the community. Lastly, widespread attachment to the larger social network by each group is fundamental to being able to co-construct a plural and multidimensional society.

On the other hand, some choice-diminishing factors have been seen as influential in the course of acculturation among minority groups. The dominant group may coerce non-dominant groups into definite acculturation forms (Berry, 1997). To give an example, marginalization is not widely and voluntarily accepted by the

outnumbered groups, as they may face out-group derogation. In a similar vein, minoritized members are often suppressed to forcibly acquire the values of the outweighing group (LaFromboise, Coleman & Gerton, 1993). Notably, within the scope of forced migration, members are thought to have a paucity of choice as they end up in a predicament and find themselves in a forced acculturation process.

2.2.4. Acculturation in the Time of Conflict

The globe has been witnessing immense migration flows, especially in the last couple of years. The emergence of super-diversity societies has been accelerated due to these migration flows (see Vertovec, 2007). As a ubiquitous phenomenon, migratory practices have become a fruitful field of study. Considering the diversification across the globe, it can be predicted that the acculturation of immigrant groups follows varying paths as well. Due to the multidimensional social and historical circumstances of their migration, each ethnic group might display divergent acculturation strategies (Luque et al., 2006), and this situation calls for robust cooperation between immigrant-receiving countries and immigrants.

Past research has underscored the role of group relations in perceived discrimination among immigrants (Sabatier & Berry, 2008; Tartakovsky, 2012). In the study by Tartakovsky (2012), the data collected from 151 immigrant adolescents from Russia and Ukraine in Israel revealed that attitudes towards the mainstream society and the country of origin, as well as perceived discrimination and social support from peers, teachers, and parents, impacted the acculturation orientations of the high school students. Perceived discrimination has been ascribed to unfavorable approaches toward the host culture (Padilla, 2008). Although acculturation in the voluntary migration context has its difficulties, acculturation in the involuntary migration context is even more challenging. As war-affected people try to establish a new life in a new setting and adapt to that environment, they go through a delicate period. Past research has also revealed

that the mental health of refugees is firmly connected to their interaction with the host country and its culture (Breyer, 1988). If successful communication is not established between forced migrants and the host country, it might cause depression and acculturation strategies like marginalization and segregation later on. It is thus crucial to explore their path of settlement to better apprehend the process they have gone through and provide services to alleviate certain hardships.

Based on the literature, it can be said that forced migrants may experience greater identity challenges like identity distress and crisis compared to dominant groups (Erdogan, 2012). With the aim of exploring the impacts of identity affairs on the acculturation process, Erdogan (2012) conducted a study with 54 Karen refugees in the context of Canada through identity and acculturation scales. Following Erikson's (1968) conceptualization, the inquiry explored past, present, and predicted future identity concerns in domains like ego, social, and personal identity. The results showed that two-thirds of the participants employed assimilation or integration strategies. However, they were predisposed to preserving their ethnic values in their personal lives, such as when they were raising their children or interacting with their families. On the other hand, they conform to the host culture in public settings like their workplace.

2.2.5. Acculturation and Forced Migrant Adolescents

Considerable emphasis has been placed on the post- (re)settlement process of people coercively dislocated, although the sphere of adolescents' dynamics during and post-resettlement to the new environment has not been comprehensively studied. Young adults encounter a number of challenges in their education and social life after displacement. Dryden-Peterson (2016) asserts that common post-settlement obstacles for adolescents in the schooling system are "language barriers, teacher-centered pedagogy, and discrimination" (p.131). The importance of schooling and a sociopolitical approach to post-displacement

has been highlighted as the "issues of racialisation, acculturation, and resilience" are substantive components of this intricate process (Matthews, 2008, p.32).

Previous research has shown that there are considerable differences between adults' and adolescents' acculturation strategies. That is, their process also shows fluctuation and might change more expeditiously compared to that of adults (Birman, 2006). They perform higher scores in dimensions like language, identity, and behavior than adults (see Birman & Trickett, 2001). Unger et al. (2002) postulate that even the acculturation scales for young adults do not thoroughly address the needs of the young because they are often too long or unsuitable for some ethnic groups. Therefore, their study, conducted with 317 sixth grade students from varying cultural backgrounds in Los Angeles, utilizes The Acculturation, Habits, and Interests Multicultural Scale for Adolescents (AHIMSA) scale. The scale consists of questions generally regarding best friends, music, TV shows, food, and holidays. The frequency of the strategies was calculated by forming categories as follows: assimilation scores were interpreted as 'United States' answers; 'other country' answers were counted as separation, or the response 'both' for integration. If the response was 'neither,' it was interpreted as marginalization. The findings revealed that young immigrants predominantly choose assimilation and integration strategies (39% and 32%, respectively). As they assert, these two strategies are common among adolescents, whereas separation and marginalization are typical among adults. Thus, it can be contended that the age of the immigrants is crucial when negotiating the acculturation practices of them, as it heavily depends on the age of arrival, as the literature also provided.

Faragallah et al. (1997) also placed emphasis on the different acculturation orientations of the young and adults. They explored the acculturative practices of Arab-American immigrants, and they put forward that acculturation is highly correlated with the younger age of migration. In addition, the longer residence was also found to be a determinant in terms of acclimating to the new environment.

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Other studies have also suggested the length of residence as a crucial factor when adapting to a newly arrived country. As people stay longer in a place, they will get better used to that milieu. Likewise, Pham and Harris (2001) carried out a study with 64 male and 73 female Vietnamese-American participants by employing Berry's acculturation model. The tools utilized to describe the predominant acculturation orientations of them showed that integration, separation, and marginalization appeared as mediators. The research revealed that participants with a short period of living in the U.S. and who have a lower level of education restricted their participation in American culture whereas they joined in Vietnamese settings. Thus, education level emerged as another factor impacting the adopted acculturation strategy. Age and educational level have also appeared in other studies as significant factors for acculturation (Dow, 2011).

Perceived discrimination from mainstream society leads to less successful functions in both school and social settings for minority groups (Vega et al., 1995). Another study by Birman et al. (2002) exploring the relationship between adaptation and acculturation among 162 Soviet Jewish refugee adolescents in the U.S. presented that acculturation highly depends on adaptation in different life domains. The researchers adopted a multidimensional model in which language competence, behavioral participation, and identification were examined. Applying both qualitative and quantitative research methods, they claim that adopting both Russian and American acculturation helps informants to reduce loneliness and escalate support from their parents. By acculturating in this way, access to support can be available "from the widest range of members in adolescents' social networks" (p.599). Endorsement from both parents and peers is eminently significant for this age group, particularly for those with minority status.

In a similar vein, the research carried out by Sabatier and Berry (2008) with adolescents, their fathers, and mothers inhabiting in Canada and France underscored the role of discrimination in terms of self-esteem. The findings of

the study unveiled that French adolescents perceive more discrimination and have lower self-esteem compared to Canadian participants. It was also highlighted that the French family climate was found to be more distant, and adolescents received less support from their families. The research concluded that parental support has a crucial role in the adaptation of adolescents.

In a parallel sense, Berry, Phinney, Sam, and Vedder (2006) report the findings of an internationally conducted study on the acculturation and adaptation patterns of 5366 immigrant youth and 2631 national youth. By means of various scales on acculturation, family relationships, perceived discrimination, acculturation behavior, and sociocultural adaptation, cluster analysis found four acculturation profiles: ethnic, national, diffuse, and integration; factor analysis revealed two forms of adaptation, which are psychological and sociocultural. They found a robust connection between acculturation and adaptation, similar to past research. To illustrate, immigrants showing an integration profile also displayed good psychological and sociocultural adaptation results, whereas those with a diffuse profile demonstrated poor adaptation outcomes. Therefore, they suggest that discrimination and poor adaptation are interrelated. Additionally, immigrant youth should be encouraged to maintain their culture of origin as well as build connections with the host society.

Intergroup relations carry paramount importance when negotiating the acculturation process. Horenczyk et al. (2013) accentuated the mutuality of acculturation by the bidimentionality and bidirectionality of the process itself. They supported the idea that both minority and majority groups influence each other and go through change during this process. A recent work by Lutterbach and Beelmann (2021) similarly approved this idea. They explored the dimension of cultural maintenance and adaptation of refugees living in Germany. Their research, conducted with 783 refugee participants in Germany, revealed that discrimination leads to a maladaptive impact on integration as it decreases the motivation for adapting to the new society and creates a sense of sharedness. According to their findings, the increased negative incidents and discrimination

are predisposed to culminate in separation for those who would normally integrate into German society.

Previous exposure to war and conflict has been seen as one of the prominent factors affecting the identity construction process (Gibson, 2002; Dubow et al., 2009). In her thesis, Güler (2014) investigated the correlation between exposure to conflict, acculturation, and identity development. The quantitatively analyzed data from 33 adolescent refugees aged 11-17 holding various linguistic and national backgrounds from Cuba, Iraq, Jordan, Haiti, Venezuela, Colombia, and living in the U.S.A showed that there is a positive correlation between previous exposure to conflict and identity distress. Moreover, it was found that the more attached they become to their native culture, the less identity distress they go through. Accordingly, Güler (2014) highlights the importance of adherence to the native culture in that it may act as a guarding factor against identity distress betwixt young forced migrants. Therefore, the maintenance of the home culture should be facilitated by the social service providers. Another dynamic affecting adolescent immigrants' acculturation and identity was unemployment and poverty. Their sense of self and adaptation to the new environment was mainly shaped by their financial positions; therefore, it was found necessary to make amendments to ameliorate their financial status.

Past research has demonstrated the importance of language acquisition when negotiating acculturation (Lybeck, 2002). Graham and Brown (1996) carried out a study with native speakers of Spanish inhabiting Mexico and learning English as a second language. The results showed that their level of acquisition corresponded with native speakers of English with whom they had close relationships. Lybeck (2002) also identified similar relationships between acculturation and language by utilizing Schumann's acculturation theory. The study was conducted with native English speakers who acquired Norwegian as a second language. The results showed that the participants with positive networks in Norwegian society also performed native-like Norwegian pronunciation, whereas the ones having difficulty in establishing such connections poorly

performed in terms of pronunciation. On the other hand, a study by Jiang et al. (2009) evidenced that acculturation pertains to speaking proficiency but not pronunciation. The data collected from 49 Chinese international students in the U.S.A. unveiled that these participants were closely connected to their culture of origin in terms of food, socialization of Chinese people, and speaking Chinese when English was not necessary. The researchers supposed that oral proficiency in English could be achieved through immersion within mainstream society, which was the U.S.A. in this research.

2.2.5.1. Forcibly Displaced Syrian Adolescents in the Turkish Context

Since the outbreak of war in Syria, Turkey, as a neighboring country, has been welcoming people from Syria. Turkey's refugee reaction hinges on legal frames, namely the Law on Foreigners and International Protection (2013) and the Temporary Protection Regulation (2014) (UNHCR, 2020). Thus, as the UNHCR report (2021b) demonstrates, today, Turkey houses over 3.6 million Syrian refugees who are under temporary protection and another 320.000 refugees from other nations and asylum seekers, which is the largest refugee population in the world. There are 768,839 Syrian and other forced migrants enrolled in formal education and 7000 students registered in the Accelerated Learning Programme, according to the UNICEF's (2021b) situation report.

This being the case, the existing multiplicity is intensifying with the diverse populaces in Turkey. On the other hand, surviving in such a milieu might be troublesome, particularly for adolescents, due primarily to the changes they go through and the complex nature of finding and creating a self in this period of life. Jusufbašić (2019) sheds light on the social inclusion of Syrian refugee students in the Turkish context. By using qualitative research methods with 20 teachers, nine school counselors, and 54 Syrian and 53 Turkish children, the researcher presents six significant hardships: divergent cultural norms, paucity of prior schooling, parents' attitudes towards the process, language barriers, manner problems, and socioeconomic factors. The results are associated with

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological System Theory to draw a comprehensive picture of the interaction between individuals and multiple environmental settings. The inquiry revealed that the social inclusion of refugee-background children eminently depends on their micro- (parents, school, home, and peers) and macro- (society and culture) level interactions. The role of teachers in micro settings is found to be cardinal as the enrichment of refugee students' unique cultural, linguistic, and social repertoires is primarily facilitated by multiculturally sensitive and competent teachers.

The issue of the well-being of forcibly displaced students has been attracting scholarly attention. Serim (2019) focuses on the well-being of Syrian forced migrant children in Turkish public schools, and the data from 12 Turkish-speaking Syrian refugee students demonstrated that their well-being is negatively affected by the factors around them. Being socially disadvantaged on account of the language barrier, discriminatory practices at school, unfair measurement and evaluation practices, and concerns about lack of fluency in their native language are the recurrent themes based on the interviews. The language barrier is one of the most reported challenges in forced displacement studies (see Kanno & Varghese, 2010). In her research aiming to explore the experiences of educational stakeholders on refugee inclusion in a public middle school in Turkey, Erçakır-Kozan (2019) also indicates that the language barrier is a difficulty between educators, refugee students and their parents. Additionally, educational stakeholders assert that the crowded classrooms and paucity of prior training for teachers can be the reasons for the lack of refugee inclusion in the classroom.

Besides the studies on the hardships of war-affected students in their social and educational lives, some inquiries on the identity formation and acculturation of forced migrants are also conducted. In this vein, how the identity and sense of belonging of Syrian refugees are shaped is examined in the thesis of Çelik (2019). The in-depth interviews with 19 refugee students demonstrated that adolescents with a positive socialization process experience a positive identity

construction process, too. Moreover, successful socialization culminates in commitment to both the culture of origin and the host culture. In a similar sense, Keleş's (2020) study with 282 refugee respondents in Turkey shows that as their collective self-perceptions increase, the acculturation strategy of assimilation decreases. It can thus be claimed that the less they attach to their culture of origin, the more assimilated they become. Furthermore, the length of stay in Turkey plays a significant role in perceived acculturation stress. The length of residence in the receiving country was found to be effective by other studies as well (Pham & Harris, 2001; Torun & Bozkurt, 2019).

All these studies show that acculturation might take place in different forms and degrees. The literature has presented a wide range of factors affecting the acculturation patterns of minority groups. The following section describes the theoretical framework for the present thesis.

2.2.6. Acculturation and Identity Formation: Theoretical Framework for the Present Thesis

Although identity development is complex for adults, it is even more tortuous for adolescents (Spencer & Markstrom-Adams, 1990). Considering the racial and ethnic minority young adults who have faced coerced displacement, the (re)formation of identity and socializing has become rather arduous. While trying to establish a new life in new surroundings, they often confront varied problems, as shown in the preceding literature. Since the current thesis attempts to find out how adolescent Syrian forced migrants construct their identities in the educational context and how they acculturate to the new milieu, SIT by Tajfel and Turner (1979) and the Acculturation Framework by Berry (1997) were adopted as the main conceptual pillars of this study. As a minority group in Turkey, adolescent Syrian refugees are assumed to shape their identities through their interactions with their home culture (Syrian) and host culture (Turkish) and construct hybrid identities. The tenets of SIT are applicable to the findings of the study. The role of these tenets like social comparison, social and self-

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categorization, positive distinctiveness, and intergroup relations in constructing identities in ethnic minorities is crucial due to their positioning in the host society. SIT's bedrock is congruent with the principles of Berry's (1997) acculturation framework, as successful acculturation contributes to the positive identity formation process. It is assumed that the mixture of robust national and ethnic identity furthers the best adaptation (Phinney et al., 2001). As a preeminent life-changing matter, acculturation in times of conflict necessitates regulations culminating in ineradicable effects on identity (Espin et al., 1990; Goodenow & Espin, 1993). The present inquiry is thus built upon the aforementioned theories, and the findings are scrutinized in light of these theoretical underpinnings.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research design of the thesis together with the characteristics of qualitative research, the rationale for choosing a case study, research site, participants, data instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis. Trustworthiness, ethical considerations, and researcher bias are also explicated in this part of the thesis.

3.1. Research Design

The present thesis embraces the fundamentals of qualitative research as the design of the inquiry. Qualitative research provides insights into a social problem with aptly addressed research questions and duly chosen participants who are ascribed to the matter (Creswell, 2013). When an issue needs rigorous exploration, qualitative methods are of help as they assist researchers in gaining a deeper understanding of the problem through face-to-face interactions with participants, observing them in their daily lives, and listening to their unique experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Methodologically, the research questions should be in accordance with the inductive research design for "generating meaning and producing rich, descriptive data" (Leavy, 2017, p.124).

As Bloomberg and Volpe (2019) contend, an in-depth understanding of a problem viewed through participants' lens is presented in qualitative research, and "exploration, discovery, and description" are highlighted; however, quantitative research methods pertain to "describe current conditions, investigate relationships, and study cause-effect phenomena" (p.93). In this study, the aim is to investigate the practices of Syrian adolescents in Turkey after forced migration. Thus, 'what' they experience and 'how' they deal with this situation

can be explored by means of qualitative research methods. The complexities of forced migration and the subjective enclosed practices of these people can be unveiled by virtue of qualitative research design. In interpretative research, reality is perceived as a social construct, and researchers thus seek multiple realities instead of a single reality (Merriam, 2009). This being the case, quantitative research methods are not sufficient by themselves in order to discover the embedded thought systems and multiple realities of displaced people. With the help of qualitatively gathered data and analysis, the researchers are able to come up with themes built upon cases. The case study is the most appropriate method in this study because the case is the acculturative and identificatory experiences of forced migrant students within the context of school A. The details of the methodology, such as sampling, data collection, and data analysis are presented in the rest of this chapter.

3.1.1. Characteristics of Qualitative Research

Although the definition and characteristics of qualitative research have altered over time, there are certain sets of overlapped components of qualitative research. In qualitative research, the researcher is concerned with people's meaning-making; that is, how they make sense of the sphere they live in (Merriam, 2009). The following figure illustrates when a qualitative study is required.
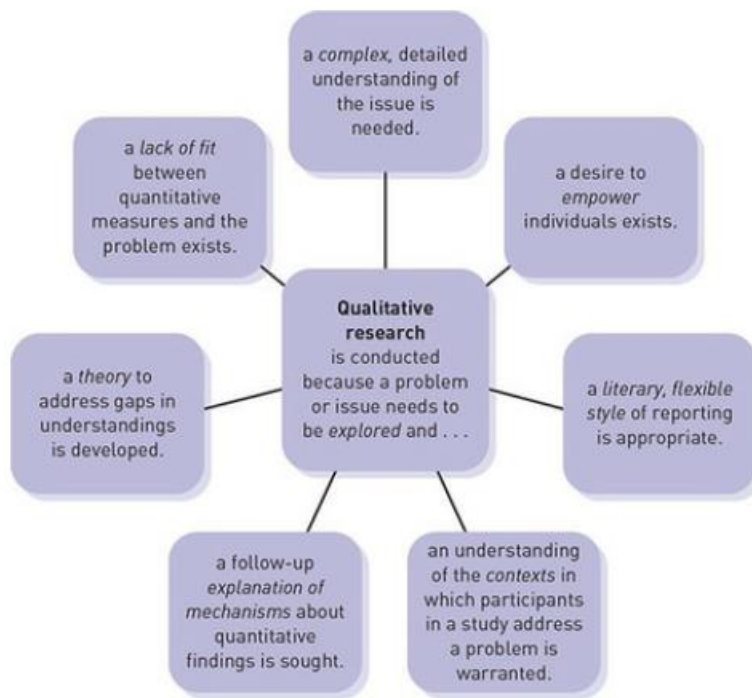
Figure 3. 1

When to Use Qualitative Research (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p.85)

While conducting research with a qualitative design, there are some predetermined characteristics that need to be ruminated on. The natural setting is one of the primary constituents of qualitative study as the research problem should be examined in the context it is happening (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The interaction with the participants and observing them when necessary should occur naturally. Another important component is the researchers' role as a key instrument for data collection. Describing, interpreting, communicating and understanding are the major aims during this process; hence, the researcher is seen as an instrument for being adaptive and responsive promptly (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019; Merriam, 2009). One of the characteristics of qualitative research is reflexivity. The positionality of the researcher is of great importance since researchers mirror many things about themselves, such as their point of view or backgrounds, in the sections of their study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In addition to the researcher, research site, participants, methods, and findings should be conscientiously described in qualitative research, which is also called *thick*

description. As Ravitch and Carl (2016) claim, a thick description "allows readers to have enough information and a depth of context so that they can picture the setting in their minds and form their own opinions about the quality of your research and your interpretations" (p.196). Additionally, the forms of data are desired to be multiple, such as "interview transcripts, field notes, photographs, audio recordings, videotapes, diaries, personal comments, memos, official records, textbook passages" (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2005, p.431). The manifold data collection instruments increase the trustworthiness of the research findings, and thus data triangulation can be achieved. Triangulation is a crucial element of the data analysis process as it escalates the validity of the study (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Contrary to quantitative inquiries, the data analysis is done inductively by following a bottom-up theme formation process (Creswell, 2009). The data are gathered to construct themes and concepts without a prior hypothesis to be tested, as opposed to quantitative research with a deductive data analysis process. To bring a qualitative understanding to a study, it is necessary to adopt a holistic perspective in which a variety of perspectives are reported to compose an extensive picture of the problem.

3.1.2. Characteristics of Case Study

A case study can be defined as an "intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single, bounded unit" (Merriam, 2009, p.203). In this sense, it is significant to provide a detailed description of a bounded system or systems. Real-life case or cases in an existing setting (Yin, 2014) are delved into through multiple data collection tools.

There are specific characteristics of a good case study. In the case study, the emphasis is placed chiefly on "the edges you put around the case" (Thomas, 2021, p.19) instead of the methodology being used. In a parallel sense, there have to be some parameters that frame the case, such as certain people, time, or place. This thesis is bound by time and place. Since Syrian adolescent forced migrants' experiences in a public school in Polatlı constitute the case here, they

constitute the parameters for the bounding of the case study. The period starting with their arrival in Ankara and studying at this public school is the time parameter, and the school they attend establishes the place parameter in the present inquiry.

In a case study research, 'how' and 'why' questions are substantively crucial. With the help of these questions, the subject of an investigation can be examined from a variety of angles. This also encourages researchers to collect varying forms of data, such as observations, interviews, or diaries, instead of relying on one source, which is one of the critical features of the case study. Creswell and Poth (2018) advocate that another defining characteristic is identifying case themes. Therefore, the description of the case and disclosed themes should be presented chronologically.

Stake (1995) suggests three types of case study: intrinsic, instrumental, and collective case study. The intrinsic case study is mainly used when there is an intrinsic interest in a particular case. Here, the emphasis is placed on the case itself. Stake (1995) asserts that, however, there is "a need for general understanding, and feel that we may get insight into the question" in the instrumental case study (p.3). On the other hand, a collective case study refers to demonstrating multiple cases on a single site or multiple cases in multiple places. Considering these dimensions of the case study, the current thesis is an example of an instrumental case study because it deals with a group of people and their behaviors to get insights into their lives.

3.2. Participant Selection

In this study, while selecting the participants, purposeful sampling was preferred. In order to gather valuable information, the selection of participants cannot be randomly made. In general, purposive sampling is the primary strategy used in qualitative inquiry because the participants purposefully inform the researcher in accordance with the research questions, and the researcher can access rich

information (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In purposeful sampling, the researcher has pre-specified criteria in mind. To be able to extensively understand the cases under investigation, the researcher should purposefully choose participants as "each research setting is unique in its own mix of people and contextual factors" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019, p.309). It is thus crucial to set some criteria in order to have rich and meaningful data matching the purpose of the research.

In this thesis, there were some predetermined criteria. The first criterion appertains to the age of the participants, which was 13-17, as the adolescents' practices were investigated. Also, the informants were competent in both Turkish and Arabic or Kurdish since the language used during the interviews was Turkish. Another criterion was being a student at School A in Polatlı, Ankara, on the grounds that it was the bounded context of this research. Polatlı was chosen as the research site because it was easier to access participants there, and because it is my hometown. Therefore, the case was the Syrian adolescents studying at a public school in Polatlı.

Triangulation is one of the key components of the qualitative study. Using multiple data forms is helpful in attaining data triangulation (Merriam, 2009). Thus, to achieve data triangulation, teachers in School A are included in the study as well. By collecting data from another unit, corroborating evidence and validity can be provided (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The criterion for the selection of teachers is having at least one refugee student in the classroom with whom I interviewed.

3.2.1. Description of the Setting

In this part of the study, the detailed description of the research setting is explained to provide a comprehensive picture of the case setting.

This school is the middle school with one of the highest refugee populations in Polatlı. Therefore, it was chosen as the research site. Henceforth, the school is

referred to as School A. School A is a public middle school with fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth graders and is located in Polatlı, Ankara. The neighborhood's population consists largely of Syrian forced migrants. During the time of data collection, there were 487 enrolled students; 88 of them had refugee backgrounds. They were mostly from Syria, two of them were from Afghanistan, and one of them was from Kyrgyzstan. Among 487 students, the number of students with special needs was 11.

33 teachers work at School A, and two of them are contract teachers. The classes start at 9.00 and finish at 15.40. There are 17 classes in total. The number of students in classes is around 26-27, with a maximum of 30. There are a variety of classes offered by the Ministry of National Education for secondary school students. There are some mandatory courses such as Turkish, mathematics, science, foreign language, and so on. Also, the students choose some elective courses, ranging from art to social studies.

3.2.2. Demographic Information about Student Participants

In this section, the adolescent informants' demographic information is described. There were a total of 11 student participants in this study. Pseudonyms are used to protect the confidentiality of them, and they are referred to as SP1, SP2, and so on. The numbers were given in line with the order of data collection.

The first interviewee, who is also called SP1 here, is 17 years old. She has been living in Turkey for almost 10 years. She is living with her mother and two sisters in Polatlı. She started primary school in Syria; however, she could not continue her education because of the outbreak of the war. At the beginning of their arrival in Turkey in 2012, they stayed in Mersin, which is close to the border between Syria and Turkey. After two months in Mersin, they moved to Polatlı and found a house to stay in with the help of a Turkish friend of his father. Her first encounter with the Turkish language was in her neighborhood. As she stated, she learned how to speak Turkish while playing with her friends in

her neighborhood. She has been carrying on her education in Turkey for seven years. She started primary school in Turkey as a first grader again. During the data collection time, she was an eighth-grader. She can speak Kurdish, which is her native language, and Turkish fluently.

The second interviewee is 14 years old. She has been living in Turkey for five years. She has seven siblings, and she is living with her parents. When they first arrived in Turkey, they stayed in Gaziantep for two months. In order to start her educational life in Polatlı, she had to wait for an identity card. Later, she started the first grade but could not complete it as she was older than her peers. Likewise, she did not finish the second grade. Indeed, she skipped the third grade and completed half of the fourth grade. After that, she carried on with her school life at her normal pace. During her first year in primary school, she attended extra Turkish lessons provided for Syrian students, which helped her learn Turkish. Her native language is Arabic. She is an eighth-grader.

The third participant is 14 years old. He has been living in Turkey for seven years. He is living with his mother, father, and three siblings. He started first grade in Syria but could not finish it. He re-started a primary school in Turkey. He did not finish second grade because he was older than his classmates and skipped third grade like other participants. After learning how to read and write in Turkish, he started fourth grade and continued his education at a normal pace. He learned Turkish during his interactions with people here before starting school.

The fourth participant is 14 years old, and it has been almost 10 years since she moved to Turkey. She is living with her mother, father, seven siblings, her brother's wife, and their three children. After a horrible journey full of hardships, as she reported, they made it to Polatlı. She started her education in Turkey in 2017. She completed half of third grade and skipped fourth grade. She did not receive any education in Syria. Her native language is Arabic.

The next informant is a 16-year-old girl. In a few months, it will be her 10th year in Turkey. When she came to Turkey with her family, she had to stay in Mersin for a while. She has been living with her mother and siblings. At the time of data collection, it was her eighth year in a Turkish school. Her education started in Turkey because she was only six years old when they came to Turkey. She finished the first semester of third grade and the second semester of fourth grade; she did not complete them in the normal order. Her native tongue is Kurdish.

The sixth participant is a girl, and she is 14. She has been living with her family, consisting of her mother, father, and seven siblings, for six years. She started kindergarten in Syria; however, she had to drop out of school because of the war. She said she learned Turkish through her interaction with the Turkish kids in the neighborhood and improved it by watching Turkish TV series. Similar to the other participants, she started the first grade in Turkey so as to learn how to read and write in Turkish, but then skipped the second and third grades. Her native tongue is Arabic.

The seventh respondent is a girl who is 15. That was her eighth year in this country during the time of data collection. She has eight siblings. Her education started in Turkey. Although she finished first and second grade, she skipped the second half of third grade and continued with the fourth grade. Her Arabic is not as good as her Turkish, as she stated.

The next interviewee is a 14-year-old girl. It was her seventh year in Turkey when the data was obtained. She is living with her mother and two other siblings. She was older than her peers in the first grade; she thus skipped second grade and the fall semester of third grade. She continued with the spring semester of fourth grade instead. She said she learned Turkish through her interaction with her classmates at school. She did not start primary school in Syria. Her native tongue is Kurdish, in which she is also fluent.

The ninth student participant is 13, and she has been inhabiting Turkey for seven years. She has four siblings. She also skipped grades two and three. Like her peers, she learned Turkish at school. Although she can read in Arabic, she cannot write it. Her father and mother do not know Turkish well, whereas her siblings do.

The tenth interviewee is a 14-year-old girl, and this year is her eighth year in Turkey. There are 11 people living in her family, including herself. When they first arrived here, they did not come to Polatlı; they had to stay in a village for a while. She started kindergarten in Turkey and carried on her education at the normal pace. Her Arabic is not as good as her Turkish.

The last informant is a 13-year-old boy. He has been living in Turkey for almost eight years. He is living with his father, mother, and six siblings. He was five when they first arrived in Turkey. He did not start school in Syria. He began primary school in Polatlı and did not skip any grade. He cannot read and write in Arabic, but he can speak it fluently. The following table illustrates the demographic information of the student participants.

Table 3. 1

Demographic Information of the Student Participants

Student Participants	Age	Length of residence in Turkey	Grade	Origin
Participant 1	17	10	8	Kurdish
Participant 2	14	5	8	Arabic
Participant 3	14	7	8	Arabic
Participant 4	14	10	8	Arabic
Participant 5	16	10	8	Kurdish
Participant 6	14	6	8	Arabic
Participant 7	15	8	8	Arabic
Participant 8	14	7	7	Kurdish
Participant 9	13	7	7	Arabic
Participant 10	14	8	6	Arabic
Participant 11	13	8	7	Arabic

3.2.3. Demographic Information about Teacher Participants

In total, four teacher participants were interviewed to triangulate the students' claims. According to the order of conducting interviews, they were given numbers similar to the student participants. Teacher participants are also referred to as TP1, TP2, TP3, and TP4.

The first teacher participant is the counselor of the school. She is a 30-year-old woman, and she holds a bachelor's degree in guidance and psychological counseling. She has been a counselor for eight years, and during the data collection time, that was her fourth year at this school. She did not have previous experience with refugee students before working at this school, and she has been interacting with refugee students for four years.

The second teacher interviewee is 40 years old. He is the physical education teacher at the school, and at the same time, he is a doctoral student in this field. He has a tenure of 16 years, and this is his seventh year at this school. He has been working with refugee students since they started their educational journey in Turkey. Because of the demographic characteristics of the densely migrant-populated neighborhood, the school has been welcoming refugee students; he has been in communication with refugee students.

The next teacher participant is one of the teachers of refugee students. He is 38 years old and has his bachelor's degree in Turkish language teaching. He has been teaching for 16 years, and this is his seventh year at this school. He worked in many other schools and provinces around Turkey; nevertheless, he did not have any refugee students before.

The last teacher informant is a 44-year-old female. She is one of the social studies teachers at School A. She has a tenure of 20 years, and this is her fifth year at this school. She did not receive any special training prior to her interaction with refugee students. She started teaching refugee students at this

school. Before this school, she did not teach any refugee students. Table 3.2 demonstrates the relevant information about the teacher participants.

Table 3. 2

Demographic Information of the Teacher Participants

Teacher Participants	Age	Years of Experience in Teaching	Branch
Participant 1	30	8	Guidance and Psychological Counseling
Participant 2	40	16	Physical Education
Participant 3	38	16	Turkish Language
Participant 4	44	20	Social Studies

3.3. Data Collection

In this case study, semi-structured face-to-face interviews are the main data collection method. To elicit rich information and provide a thick description, utilizing interviews is the primary research method in qualitative inquiries (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019). The mainstay aims of interviews are "to gain focused insight into individuals' lived experiences; understand how participants make sense of and construct reality in relation to the phenomenon, events, engagement, or experience in focus; and explore how individuals' experiences and perspectives relate to other study participants", as Ravitch and Carl (2016, p.152) contend. Therefore, a researcher can gain deeper insights into the questions being investigated.

Semi-structured face-to-face interviews are preferred in the present thesis. While structured interviews limit the interviewer, semi-structured ones enable researchers to have different conversational paths with the help of tailored follow-up questions (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Particularly, face-to-face interviews help researchers control the path of the questioning (Creswell, 2009).

The interview questions are from various past studies, and the questions largely concern students' daily interactions with Turkish culture and their culture of

origin. They also pertain to how they express their identities and how they perceive themselves. Additionally, the teachers of the students were also interviewed in order to verify the students' claims. As the current thesis endeavors to investigate the students' practices mostly in the Turkish education setting, the teachers were thought to be the most appropriate participant group. Thus, the reliability of the findings is increased by different parties.

3.3.1. Interview Questions

Interviewing is a fruitful method to utilize as finding out detailed information is not always possible through observation (Stake, 2010). After a meticulous literature review, interview questions were compiled and adapted from various past studies in light of research aims. Interviews were conducted with refugee students (n= 11) and teachers (n=4) to gain a deeper insight into the research questions. Questions are semi-structured and open-ended as they provide room for flexibility while protecting the structural characteristics of the questions. The issues being probed can be investigated through semi-structured in-depth interviews, and their experiences can be elaborated more through qualitative interviews (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Prior to receiving the necessary approvals, the questions were reviewed by a psychologist working with refugee families in Ankara and an academic working in this field. Pilot interviews were carried out to find out if questions were clear and comprehensible and not too time-consuming for participants. Thus, a total of three respondents were pilot-tested. Based on their feedback, the questions they had difficulty understanding were simplified. For instance, they had difficulty comprehending the concept of 5-point Likert scale items. Thus, I iterated the statements and completed the table as it was difficult for them to do so, as observed during the pilot test.

The interview questions for refugee students are divided into three parts: school-related, society-related, and family-related questions, respectively. Firstly, the participants were asked about their school life, such as their desk mates, best friends at school, extracurricular activities (if they attend), whom they talk to

about their problems, and so on. Then, they answered questions regarding their integration into society. The questions largely pertain to cultural values they have been holding, the languages they speak, and their attachment to the host country. Lastly, questions about their family language policies, their perceptions of bilingualism, and their attachment to the language and culture of origin were asked (see Appendix E).

Another pilot test was conducted with one teacher to check the comprehensibility of the interview questions; however, no problems were encountered. Therefore, no change had been made to the questions. The teacher participants answered the questions in regard to refugee students' adaptation to the Turkish education system, language preferences, and their contact with the home and host culture to triangulate the data (see Appendix G).

3.3.2. Interview Protocol

Having a reliable interview protocol enables researchers to get quality and rich data from participants (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). After obtaining the necessary approval from the METU Human Subjects Ethics Committee to gather data (see Appendix A), another permission was requested from the District Directorate of National Education for data collection from School A (see Appendix B). When all approvals were obtained, the data collection process was initiated. The interviews started to take place as of 17.12.2021.

Having an interview guide is significant as it provides rich data in accordance with the aim of the study. Thus, first of all, the participants' parents were asked to sign the parental consent form before the interview date. After they submitted the approval forms to the researcher, refugee students were interviewed at their school individually. At the beginning of the meeting, respondents were verbally informed about the purpose of the study, how the results would be used. Also, their permission was obtained to be audio recorded. They were told that they were free not to respond to a question. Additionally, they were informed that

they could withdraw from the study whenever they wanted without stating an excuse. The pseudonyms are used to protect the anonymity and confidentiality of the participants, and this brief was shared with the participants beforehand. Establishing a good climate and radiating positivity is found to be effective (Hermanss, 2004). In order to provide an atmosphere that is friendly and comfortable, icebreakers were utilized. The get-to-know questions were followed by demographic questions and in-depth questions later on. The meetings lasted around 30-45 minutes for each participant.

Next, interviews were carried out with teacher participants in their idle class hours at the school. Prior to starting the interviews, they were also acquainted with the research by giving comprehensive information about the study.

3.4. Data Analysis

After transcribing the data verbatim, they were ready to be analyzed. By means of thematic analysis, a researcher is able to identify, analyze, and report codes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Instead of a linear approach, the data are analyzed thematically by following the steps in Creswell and Poth's (2018) data analysis spiral, as the process is circular as well. First, the data are organized to come up with meaningful themes. Following this, by means of database read-through and memoing emergent ideas, first notes are constituted. According to Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), the function of memoing is not only limited to explanatory summaries, but it also blends them in to create greater analytical units. The analyzed and described codes later turned into themes. The themes call for an organization to make sense of the data, so they are meticulously combined into larger units. Since peer feedback increases trustworthiness, themes and codes are reviewed by a doctoral student at this stage so as to provide investigator triangulation as well (Merriam, 2009). Subsequently, interpretations are developed, and the data are represented and visualized.

During this process, the qualitative data analysis software MAXQDA is used. Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) can be quite practical while organizing the data, creating memos, and coding. One can systematically evaluate the data and make sense of it through MAXQDA (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Moreover, it is possible to import video and audio files and create diagrams. Considering all the features, utilizing MAXQDA noticeably facilitates the data analysis phase.

Taking these steps that are furnished by the preceding literature, first, the data were transcribed and divided into two folders: the data gathered from student participants and the data gathered from teacher participants. Then, all the data sets were read several times to take initial notes and create memos. Following this, the codes were formed so as to make sense of the data by reading all of the participants' transcriptions one by one. After coding, the codes were classified under relevant themes. Lastly, the themes were interpreted with the help of the related body of research.

3.5. Ethical Considerations

After receiving the required permission from the Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects of METU and the Ministry of National Education, the data collection procedure was initiated. Since the participants were under 18, parent approval was necessary. The parents were asked to sign the consent form for their children to take part in the study. Since complete and open information is a cardinal component of qualitative research (Christians, 2005), the participants were overtly informed about the purpose and focus of the study, how the research is pursued, the potential benefits of the inquiry, and how the results will be used. This necessary information was also clarified in the consent forms. Both verbally and written, the participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study without stating any excuse. As the anonymity of the respondents is paramount, their identities are protected under pseudonyms. To ensure the dignity of the informants and non-discriminatory language during the interviews,

the interview questions were chosen under scrutiny; therefore, any kind of discomfort and emotional harm that questions might possibly evoke were eschewed.

3.6. Trustworthiness

In all kinds of scientific inquiries, trustworthiness is the central tenet. Quantitative and qualitative study designs show divergent patterns in relation to trustworthiness. Qualitative study handles reality as a holistic, immensely contextual, and multifaceted entity, while reality is regarded as a fixed and measurable phenomenon in quantitative research (Merriam, 2009). As Bloomberg and Volpe (2019) contend, quantitative research deals with reliable and valid results, through which compatible observations are possible by other researchers, whereas qualitative study sets how well the researcher has proved that the depiction and analysis mirror the reality as a criterion.

Some qualitative researchers argue that there is a need for different terminology instead of using traditional terminology like 'validity' and 'reliability.' Guba and Lincoln (1989) use the terms credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability rather than using internal validity, reliability, objectivity, and external validity. These terms are widely accepted by qualitative researchers. The following section associates these reassuring strategies with the steps taken in this study.

The first strategy, namely credibility, concerns how congruent the research findings are with reality (Merriam, 2009). It mainly deals with the correct representation of the respondents' practices. Guba and Lincoln (1989) offer some techniques to raise the credibility of the study. Peer debriefing, prolonged engagement in the field, member checks, and progressive subjectivity are found to be effective in terms of escalating credibility. I utilized peer debriefing as I consulted a Ph.D. student and negotiated my field notes and data. My researcher biases are introduced in this chapter as well, so that the readers can see the

process I have been through. One strategy I used was thick description. A detailed description of the research site and participants is presented in this chapter.

Guba and Lincoln (1989) propose dependability strategy as a way of increasing trustworthiness, which parallels reliability in quantitative research. Dependability pertains to "the stability of data over time" (p.242). Research should thus be traceable. Here, to enable an audit trail, the documents such as transcripts have been preserved for review later on. Another method was triangulation. Denzin (1978) concurs four types of triangulation: multiple sources of data, multiple theories, multiple investigators, and multiple methods. Multiple theories, namely Social Identity Theory and Berry's Acculturation Model, are applied in this study. Furthermore, not only the Syrian students but also their teachers participated in the study. Investigator triangulation is another strategy used here so that the collected data can be interpreted by different views, which validates the findings.

The objectivity criterion corresponds to confirmability in qualitative research. It correlates with the assurance of the data through a comprehensive presentation of the process in which the results have been reached (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). To be as transparent as possible, one can achieve this criterion by virtue of reflexivity, which is also employed here.

The last criterion that was found to be effective for the trustworthiness of the study is transferability. The parallel of transferability in quantitative study is external validity. That is, it questions the extent to which the findings are applicable. The goal of qualitative research is not to present generalizable truths. Instead, it is to thoroughly describe the situation and reach broadly applicable context-relevant findings when holding the content-specific value (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019). Although there is a particular context, the results disseminate knowledge to other contexts where it might be of help. Guba and Lincoln (1989) advocate that thick description is a way of establishing the degree of

transferability. Meticulously describing the context, time, place, and participant profile paves the way for the applicability of the study in future research. The readers are extensively provided with details about participant profiles and numbers, characteristics of the research site, data collection methods, length of the interviews, and limitations of the study. In addition, purposeful sampling, which is also used in this thesis, enables researchers to make comparisons with other contexts (Merriam, 2009). This enhances the trustworthiness of the study as other researchers can follow similar steps in other situations. Taking all these strategies into account, this study was carried out in line with the abovementioned aspects of qualitative inquiry so that the trustworthy results can be useful for other investigators.

3.7. Researcher Bias

A researcher is the main interpreter of the study. A researcher has a crucial position due to having an active role in the interpretation process. As a result, researchers should give particular attention to self-knowledge so that they can comprehend the significance of the self in the production of knowledge and perpetuate the equilibrium between the universal and the individual (Berger, 2013). Therefore, in this section, I present how I remove my potential bias from the study.

Although I am not one of the subjects of forced migration, I am living in a neighborhood hosting a number of refugees. Hearing the discourse revolving around forced migrants in Turkey pushed me to discover their experiences in relation to being a forced migrant in Turkey. I wholeheartedly believe that a rigorous exploration of the path they go through can be accurately presented from an unfamiliar but fresh point of view.

Studying the unfamiliar can be advantageous. The respondents are in the expert position who supply information to the researcher, which is particularly empowering for socially marginalized and disadvantaged groups (Bergen, 2013;

Bergen & Malkinson, 2000). As my participants are the information providers, they hold an empowering position. I paid particular attention to developing reciprocity with my participants, 'equalizing the research relationship,' and conducting the research 'with' them, not 'on' them, so that the researchers' authority is deconstructed through reflexivity (Pillow, 2003, p.179). At this point, my professional background as a teacher had a tremendous effect on remaining unbiased and establishing positive rapport with the respondents.

Factors such as researchers' race, age, sexual orientation, beliefs, and ideological stances are found to be influential in shaping the study. The language used during the interviews or the questions asked might reflect the researchers' worldview and background. To eliminate this, I utilized some strategies to maintain reflexivity. As discussed before, prolonged engagement in the field is of help to remain as objective as possible. I visited School A several times to carry out the interviews. This engagement at the research site has enabled me to empathize more with the participants and abandon any possible bias. In addition, the interview questions are shared with a psychologist who works with refugee children in Ankara and with an educationalist to review them if they may arouse discomfort or not. The questions were approved by the psychologist and the educationalist after some minor changes. Furthermore, to provide investigator triangulation, I requested a Ph.D. student, who is also studying in the field of English language teaching and has experience in qualitative research, to review the results I reached to ensure that the results contained no bias. Likewise, I and my advisor worked together to analyze the data. Data triangulation is also commonly used to prove that the researcher is unbiased. Considering this, the interviews were executed with two different parties: students and teachers.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.1. Overview of the Chapter

This chapter presents the results of the qualitatively collected data analysis. The purpose of this study is to discover the acculturation orientations of Syrian forced migrant adolescents along with their identity perceptions as students in a Turkish school and language preferences. The data were analyzed according to the principles of the case study. After the emergent codes were merged under pertinent themes, the recurrent themes were associated with Berry's (1997) acculturation framework and Tajfel and Turner's (1979) Social Identity Theory.

Therefore, first of all, the acculturation strategies of the participants are reported to be in accordance with the research questions. Then, it is followed by the factors that impact acculturative practices. The identity perceptions of the participants are described in the next section of this chapter. After displaying their identity perceptions, the participants' language preferences based on the given situations are shown in this part. While analyzing the data, themes were constituted in light with Berry's (1997) and Tajfel and Turner's (1979) premises. When explaining the results, the themes and relevant codes are also shared. In order to be more reader-friendly and to prevent any confusion among data, the data collected from the teachers of the adolescents are shown at the end of each heading. As the data were collected in Turkish, the quotations of the participants were translated into English with the help of a Turkish-English bilingual person who also studied English language teaching.

During the qualitative data analysis, the codes regarding the Syrian forced migrant adolescents' acculturation orientations, identity perceptions, and

language preferences emerged. The correlated codes were later collected under the pertinent themes and constituted themes at the same time. The themes for acculturation were maintenance of Syrian lifestyle, integration, separation, integration-enhancing factors, and integration-impeding factors. The themes concerning identity perception were hybrid identities, Syrian identity, and in-betweenness. Lastly, the language preferences of the participants were identified as their Turkish usage and native language usage. Their language preferences showed divergences, which are explained at the end of this chapter.

4.2. Acculturation Strategies Adopted by the Participants

The first research question aimed to discover the refugee adolescents' acculturation patterns within the context of forced migration. The in-depth interviews with participants enabled the researcher to come up with relevant themes and codes regarding the acculturation strategies that the informants embrace. The qualitative data analysis unveiled that the adolescent Syrian refugees in Turkey largely adopt integration as an acculturation strategy. While analyzing the data, the indicators of integration pattern were identified as the enthusiasm for adopting both Syrian and Turkish culture, the enthusiasm to continue staying in Turkey, no specific preference for choosing friends in terms of their nationality, joining extracurricular activities, enthusiasm for learning Turkish culture and history, and enthusiasm to spend more time with Turkish people. These codes were interpreted as the participants' desire for integration. They show attachment to both Syrian values and lifestyle and endorse the Turkish way of living at the same time. The participants largely assent a mixture of both cultural values. They integrate into the host culture to varying degrees due to some integration-enhancing factors such as a peaceful environment, helpful people in Turkey, support from their parents, length of residence, age of migration, being able to access the things that are not always accessible in Syria such as electricity or water, the fact that they and their family members are safe and healthy, and being able to be free and themselves. These factors severely reinforce the adolescents' motivation to continue inhabiting Turkey and blend in

with the social community. Although they integrated into the Turkish community on different levels, they indicated some factors that may hinder their integration process. Mainly because of discrimination, social exclusion, the cultural differences, stereotypical beliefs about Syrian people, financial problems, and lack of interaction with Turkish people their integration paths are inhibited.

4.2.1. Maintenance of Syrian Values and Lifestyle

The adolescents in this research stated that they perpetuated their culture of origin. When they were inquired about whether they were eager to obtain more information about Syrian culture, and whether they kept in touch with their relatives back there, whether they believed they need to continue practicing Syrian traditions in Turkey, most of them replied with positive attitudes. In the following section, the opinions of the participants are presented and discussed in relation to their acculturation. In addition to the attachment to their Syrian values, the participants expressed their willingness to use Arabic or Kurdish, which is another indicator of their attachment to being a Syrian. Commitment to their native language was another substantial finding, as some of them prefer using Arabic or Kurdish in contexts where they do not have to use Turkish such as at home or in their Syrian communities. The following table displays the codes regarding the students' maintenance of Syrian values and lifestyle:

Table 4. 1

Codes for Maintenance of Syrian Lifestyle

Theme	*Codes*
Maintenance of Syrian Lifestyle	Enthusiasm for maintaining native culture
	Enthusiasm for learning Syrian history and culture
	Continuous communication with Syrian relatives in Syria
	Native language use at home
	Native language use outside home
	Being proud of being a Syrian

4.2.1.1. Maintaining Syrian Lifestyle

The participants' desire to preserve and maintain their Syrian culture was one of the emergent themes during the data analysis. All of the adolescent participants held the belief that it was important to preserve Syrian culture and lifestyle in their daily lives.

Most of the student participants (n=9) revealed that they attached importance to the Syrian way of life even though there were not many differences between Turkish and Syrian culture, as they believed. When they were asked to elaborate more on their perceptions of Syrian culture, one of them gave the following example, "*for example, weddings. In Turkey, weddings are mixed, but they are single-sex in Syria*" (SP2). This excerpt shows that the participant perceived the two cultures differently.

The participants were generally eager to continue the practices of Syrian traditions. One of the students stated that showing respect for elderly people was substantial in their tradition as he stated, *"this is the first time that I see you; I do not know you. Therefore, I have to show respect to you"* (SP3).

The students also had the enthusiasm for learning more about Syrian history. The participants were largely motivated to learn about Syrian history and Syrian traditions. SP7 was of the opinion that these traditions were significant and enjoyable, *"let's say a man is going to get married. His mother, her friends, relatives, or neighbors gather and make a wool bed with their own hands for bride and groom. These traditions are really entertaining, I think."* The excerpt shows that SP7 is in favor of maintaining such traditions as she finds them entertaining. Another point made by the students was that they were still in touch with their relatives in Syria. Most of their grandparents, uncles, and aunts were still inhabiting Syria. Two participants stated that they were able to visit Syria once after forced migration; others were not able to visit their country. Even though they did not see their relatives for years, they indicated that they were in

contact with them through their phones. Thanks to video calls, they often communicated with people there. Moreover, as some of them stated that they had stronger ties with their culture of origin, they (n=2) would like to return to Syria one day, as SP2 said, "*I would like to stay in Syria because I miss it. I got used to living here as well, but I wanted to stay there.*" This is a clear indicator of their strong attachment to culture of origin.

When asked about their at-home practices, it was possible to infer that they were dominantly practiced in their culture of origin. To give an example, their culinary tendencies hinged mostly on their home culture. Even though some interviewees were of the opinion that the differences between the two cultures were not clearly visible, others reckoned that there were differences related to their eating habits. SP2 even stated she had problems eating Turkish food as she disliked it.

Although they stated that maintaining their original culture was important, two of the participants shared that they did not know and remember much of the values pertaining Syrian lifestyle. However, SP8 explained how her mother had constantly been telling her about their previous living in Syria as:

> My mother tells us about our house there and things like that. For example, we had a very big house. We lived in my grandparents' house for some time. Then we had a house; we moved there after I was born, just like that. We had a dog; I had a small dog; at first, I was afraid. Then, I got used to it, but we lost him in the war. Sometimes I also ask my grandmother questions. I ask her about the food there. I ask how the days would pass back in Syria (SP8).

Although the participants cared about their native culture, they did not adopt all components of Syrian culture. They stated that when their behaviors such as jumping around, listening to music, and dancing were criticized by their families, they were not happy with it. Thus, some of them could not fully embrace their home culture. In contrast to the participants who would like to perpetuate their native culture, SP6 disagreed with them. At home, she had been continually warned not to behave in ways that were seen as inappropriate for their moral

values. She did not acknowledge these ideas as she did not believe that her behaviors were improper. She thus reported, "*I do not like the traditions in Syria. Everything is seen as shameful in our family. Don't do it, it is shameful! Don't talk to him/her, it is shameful*" (SP6). Their parents' attitudes have a crucial role in terms of sympathizing with their culture of origin and practices.

In a similar sense, some students did not show motivation to learn more about Syrian history and traditions. It was also found that three of them were not quite eager to learn and research Syrian culture and history. They stated that they had various things to do in their daily lives such as working at a job, looking after siblings, or doing homework; hence, they could not spare much time to improve themselves in that regard, "*I do not usually research it. I have a lot of homework to do (in Turkish). I do not have time*" (SP2).

One of the teachers (TP4) touched upon the cultural maintenance of the participants by referring to the neighborhood in which Syrians were densely populated. She thought that Syrians protect their cultural selves based on their daily habits in Turkey. When she asked whether she observed students' or families' cultural maintenance patterns, she exemplified:

> Yes, otherwise, would he come and open a grocery store here? Take a walk around this area. In fact, they have established their own environment here. For example, families do not shop at the Turkish grocery store; they do it from their own grocery store. They have their own hairdressers; they have their own clothing shops. They are trying to keep their own culture alive in order not to disappear (TP4).

Taking what TP4 mentioned into account, it can be claimed that the Syrian people created their own community in Turkey as well. Hence, it is possible to arrive at the conclusion that they try to establish a new life here by incorporating their culture as well.

In sum, the findings concerning acculturative orientations here unveiled that the participants adopted some aspects of being a Syrian while disregarding others.

Therefore, it is not quite possible to come up with straightforward categorizations concerning their acculturation patterns.

4.2.1.2. Maintaining Native Language

When the participants were inquired about which language they use while conducting certain daily activities, some of them seemed to have a tendency to use their native language in their daily activities. When they were asked about which language they mostly used at home, it was reported that they were encouraged to speak Arabic or Kurdish at home by their parents. Indeed, they had some strict policies set by their parents germane to language use at home. Moreover, three informants shared that their parents became really irritated and angry when they heard their children speaking Turkish "*my mother does not know Turkish well; she gets angry, so it is forbidden to speak Turkish*" (SP2). Similarly, SP9 also reported, "*we use Arabic at home, but my sister and I speak in Turkish if our parents do not hear us. They get angry.*" On the other hand, seven participants reported that although they spoke in their native tongue with their parents, they used Turkish when communicating with their Turkish-speaking siblings without the fear of their fathers and mothers.

The teachers believed that the families' ways of thinking were substantive in shaping the students' approach toward learning and maintaining their native language. As the students were generally encouraged to speak their native languages outside the school, they sometimes showed the same patterns during their interactions at school. The teacher participants also pointed out that perpetuating Syrian traditions or their native language was a fact of life for most of the Syrian students at their school. TP2, the physical education teacher of the participants, shared his views on the family factor in shaping students' adaptation to the new environment. He believed that the culture of origin is an indispensable part of a nation. Thus, based on his observation, he stated that refugee parents preserved their Syrian selves:

For example, let's think about it, we grew up with the Turkish culture. This is how we saw it from our ancestors. We are trying to raise our children according to Turkish culture. Surely, they have that mentality; they want it. So everyone wants to preserve their culture. In other words, culture is indispensable for a nation. You know, you can separate nations with culture; you can separate them with language. You separate them with their flag, with patriotism, and they don't want to spoil their culture. So, I don't think that way, but they have to adapt to the culture of this place in one way or another because they will live here (TP2).

In sum, the teachers presumed that maintaining one's culture of origin is a need of humankind. Thus, they regarded Syrian refugees' heritage culture maintenance as a normal desire. However, they also added that refugees need to adapt to Turkey, as well.

4.2.2. Integration

One of the acculturation strategies applied by the participants was *integration*. The students faced various hardships since their arrival in Turkey. Despite these difficulties, it was found that some of them showed a desire for integration into the host culture in many aspects. All of the interviewees believed that they needed to adopt a mixture of both Syrian and Turkish values rather than just opting for one of them. When they were asked whether they would like to have Turkish or Syrian friends the most, they answered that they did not have a preference like that. As reported by the participants, things that mattered in choosing friends were trustworthiness, being affectionate, being able to keep secrets, and having things in common for the participants. They all stated that nationality was not an important criterion when establishing friendships. Indeed, they celebrated having both Syrian and Turkish friends as an asset. Some participants (n=6) contended that their best friends were Turkish, whereas two of them said they had good friends from both nationalities. Two informants' best friends are Syrian, and one said that his best friend is another migrant from Kyrgyzstan. The codes regarding students' integration can be found in Table 4.2.

Table 4. 2

Codes for Integration

Theme	Codes
Integration	Adopting both cultures
	Wish to stay in Turkey
	No specific preference for friends' nationalities
	Attending extracurricular activities
	Enthusiasm for learning Turkish history and culture
	Spending time with Turkish people outside school
	Watching Turkish TV programs/Series/listening to Turkish music

When researching their daily practices, it was revealed that the respondents mainly watched Turkish TV programs and films. Only four participants asserted that they both watched Arabic and Turkish channels and programs. As participants contended, their favorite TV series or characters are from diverse Turkish TV channels. In a parallel sense, their hobbies such as listening to music and reading were also largely in Turkish. Even though some of their communication with Turkish people is restricted by the school environment, some of them continue to interact with Turkish culture through divergent means. Almost all of the informants reported that they were eager to acquire more information regarding Turkish history, traditions, or customs. As they contended, they would like to integrate into Turkish society; they seemed to have a passion for improving themselves in this area. When talking about Turkish history, one participant particularly seemed reasonably impressed by Turkish history. She believed that Turkish people are faithful to their history, which touched her a lot. Hence, these characteristic traits of Turkish people impress and encourage her to be a member of this society. Only one participant claimed that he was not very motivated in this as he was not interested in history. When they were asked whether they were enthusiastic about discovering Turkish culture more, one stated, "*yes, I want to learn Turkish history, for example, Çanakkale. Yes, I want to go there, for research or something. I really want to visit it*" (SP1).

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The participants generally asserted that they would like to spend more time with their Turkish friends outside the school environment. They normally did not meet their Turkish peers after school. Instead, they either spent time with their families or saw their Syrian friends, which has many underlying factors, which will be discussed in this chapter. Although they stated that they communicate with Turkish people in their day-to-day lives, they did not think this interaction was enough. Indeed, one informant said that she would be much happier if the school were a boarding school so that she could hang out more with her Turkish friends. In the summers, she attends some sports activities in Ankara and stays in a boarding school there. She mentioned that she spent those days in the boarding school with great joy. She was able to spend more time with her Turkish friends in that school. Therefore, she wanted her school to be a boarding school as well to interact more with her Turkish friends. This wish shows how motivated they are to be more integrated into the receiving society. She even wanted to live with her friends from school:

> I mean, I wish the schools were a boarding school or something. I usually go to boarding school during the summer holidays; it is a sports school in Ankara. Generally, I attach great importance to sports. I do not fall behind in my lessons. I mostly think that the school should be boarding in order to communicate more with my friends (SP10).

Another topic that emerged during the interviews was the students' desire to continue staying in Turkey and not being willing to return to their country of origin. Among 11 participants, nine of them claimed that they would like to continue staying in Turkey. Their primary reasons were the poor living conditions in Syria, their established lives in Turkey, and a 'different' language spoken there. Considering the unsafe environment in Syria, they had certain fears in regard to living there. When they were asked whether they wanted to stay in Turkey or return to Syria, one of them stated that "*because if we go there, I will not be able to get used to it because everyone speaks a different language*" (SP1). Another one shared:

If one day my mother says we are going to Syria or something like that, I would be shocked. How can it be? What will my life be like there? They speak Arabic; my friends are here and things like that (SP8).

The participants had manifold questions in their minds pertinent to return to Syria. They shared that it would be challenging for them to readapt to Syria. As they had most of their loved ones here, they did not prefer going back to Syria. When inquired whether they visited Syria after forced migration, three participants reported that they visited Syria after their arrival in Turkey. Even though they stayed there for a short period of time, two of them were delighted to turn back to Turkey. Turkey is their home right now, as they claimed. That's why they did not feel comfortable in an environment where they were not used to living. They all had been living in Turkey for many years, so they did not remember many things about their lives back in Syria, as they shared. They missed their family members back there and visited Syria; however, they were also looking forward to going back to their 'homes.' One of them had some adaptation problems there. As she said, she started speaking in Turkish with a guy in a grocery store when buying goods. Suddenly, she realized that the guy could not understand a word in Turkish. That was shocking for her as she could overtly see that the two countries had divergent ways of living. Considering these reports, it can be claimed that some of them are integrating into Turkey, and they are rarely marginalized. They asserted they are used to living in Turkey by saying, *"I miss here. When we returned home, my brother would say, "I feel at home", he said, "Oh, I'm in my own home" when we got back here"* (SP7). SP10 shared congruent opinions on the feeling of visiting Syria *"I wanted to come here. I don't know; it's like I've lost something here. I've always wanted to come here. Same thing with my brother, but my younger brothers wanted to stay there."* Considering these reports, it can be claimed that some of them were largely integrated into Turkey.

Another point that was a strong sign of integration was the students' engagement in extracurricular activities. A few of the participants (n=8) took part in varied courses after class. They were mostly interested in basketball, boxing, and

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drawing. In fact, they attended a country-wide basketball tournament last year and visited some cities around Turkey thanks to the tournament. When they were telling this, they expressed their fulfillment in participating in such occasions. Attending activities like these tournaments offers socialization opportunities for adolescents. It may also serve as a reinforcement of integration-facilitating behaviors. Their motivation to take part in such activities can be ascribed to their integration into Turkey. SP6 and SP2 seemed quite happy with the time they spent there, although they had to go into quarantine during the tournament because of a positive COVID-19 case. They accentuated being together during the whole period, *"we went into quarantine there, someone had corona. But it was very nice there; we really went into quarantine, we were all together"* (SP6). SP2 made similar comments on the basketball tournament in Burdur. She also explained her joy in joining an activity like that, *"they opened a basketball course, so I joined it. We went to Burdur, we had a competition there, and we had a lot of fun"* (SP2).

In sum, the participants were quite pleased with their experiences which included integration with Turkish people. Hence, they would like to continue living in Turkey. Although they could not spend more time with their Turkish peers as they wished, they affirmed that they would definitely hang out more with them if they had the chance.

4.2.3. Separation

Contrary to these informants, there were also students, even though very few in number, who could not wholly view themselves as a member of the Turkish community. Table 4.3 illustrates the codes regarding the separation patterns of the participants.

Table 4. 3

Codes of Separation Strategy

Theme	Codes
Separation	Not spending time with Turkish people
	Not attending extracurricular activities
	Preference of having only Syrian friends
	Wish to return to Syria

When investigating the underlying causes of why they did not feel like a member of this community, it was found that they felt separated. They did not have the chance to meet their Turkish friends after school because their neighborhoods were not the same, and they did not know the location of the houses of their Turkish friends. When their communication was only restricted to the school environment, it was challenging for them to experience all layers of the phenomenon of inhabiting Turkey. Indeed, some of the restrictive behaviors of parents regarding their children's engagement in Turkish society were also influential in their acculturation path. In addition to restrictive parents, who were influential in this case, financial concerns were also found to be the cause of Syrian students' isolation from Turkish society. SP4 stated that she needed to earn money and work seven days a week. She had to go to work immediately after her classes finished. This being the case, she could not socialize or attend some other extracurricular activities, which seriously impinged upon her acculturation strategy. She assumed that her Turkish friends would not like to hang out with her. Actually, she was often marginalized in the classroom and being teased by her peers. As these unwanted behaviors occurred, she started to feel isolated and marginalized. When she was asked whether she wished she had more communication with her Turkish friends, she asserted, "*I mean, I would like to, but no, they would not want that*" (SP4).

Although it is not possible to contend that the students sharply separated themselves from the Turkish community, they showed some degrees of separation through the ways mentioned above. They preserved their ethnic culture and participated little in Turkish contexts. Their engagement with the

Turkish culture only consisted of school context. Thus, they did not befriend Turkish peers.

4.2.4. Factors Affecting Integration

Some students were found to be largely integrated into society, whereas others showed negative acculturation patterns. Regardless of having a positive or negative acculturation pattern, the underlying factors need to be elaborated to better present the sufficient and insufficient practices. Therefore, the integration enhancing and impeding factors are listed in the light of the interviews with the participants in this section. First of all, the factors enhancing integration are detailed. Then, the impeding factors of acculturation are presented. It is followed by teachers' observations regarding adolescents' acculturation.

4.2.4.1. Factors Enhancing Integration

Various factors have an impact on students' life in Turkey. The way they practice living in Turkey is mainly shaped by their experiences. Thus, positive and negative factors that might have an impact on their lives should be described under scrutiny. When asked about the things they cherished in Turkey, the informants stated the things they liked the most were feeling safe, absence of war, access to electricity and water, being healthy, helpful people in Turkey, and being 'themselves.' Table 4.4 demonstrates the enhancing factors based on students' comments as well as teachers' comments.

Table 4. 4

Integration-Enhancing Factors

Theme	Codes
Integration-Enhancing Factors	Absence of war/peaceful environment in Turkey
	Helpful Turkish people/peers
	Being free and healthy
	Having access to basic needs
	Length of residence*
	Age of arrival*
	Parental factors*

*Indicates teachers' codes

Participants relished different aspects of living in Turkey. The prominent ones are related to safety as there is no war in Turkey. Living in a country where they can be healthy and free from bombs increases their motivation to be a member of it. The adolescents felt grateful for living in Turkey after all the unfortunate incidents they had to witness, as they stated. Moreover, nine students claimed that they were not planning to return to Syria because of the unsafe environment. They had limited options regarding adapting to the Turkish society, so they chose to integrate *"actually, it's better here because there are very difficult battles and stuff going even now because it was very difficult for us to travel through Syria"* (SP4). SP1 articulated her reasons for staying in Turkey:

> There is peace. I mean, we were in the middle of the war when I was there. I was small, but I remember. I did not feel that it was peaceful and safe there, but here I do. In other words, people feel peaceful (SP1).

Another participant stated that being able to access electricity or clean water effortlessly was something to cherish in Turkey. Since the Syrian people could not utilize these basic needs on a regular basis, she felt pleased with having access to electricity and water, which are easily supplied in Turkey. She was still in touch with her aunt in Syria during the time of data collection; however, they had limited time to talk to her because of the constant power cuts in Syria. In that sense, she regarded herself as a lucky person as "*there is always electricity here,*

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you pay bills or something, but there is electric for only 2 hours in the morning in Syria and about 3 hours in the evening. That's why it's different here" (SP2).

As five of the participants contended, the existence of friendly people in Turkey was a source of happiness for them. Besides the negative occurrences in which they felt isolated, they encountered helpful people that eased their lives in Turkey such as their neighbors or classmates. SP1 expressed her gratitude for a Turkish guy who helped them find a house to rent:

> We stayed in Mersin for two months; then, my father met a guy. We are still in touch. Since there was no job there, he brought us here to Polatlı and even rented a house for us. Then when my father came here, he started to work here. We are still like family with them (SP1).

Another aspect of living in Turkey that helped them to integrate was their peers at school. Although a few participants (n=4) shared that they experienced difficulties in Turkish in their courses, they could get assistance from their Turkish peers when they could not comprehend something due to language barriers. They articulated that they generally asked for vocabulary items that they did not know during class, or they requested information pertaining to projects or homework. Thanks to their helpful peers, they could solve their problems easily. This is of utmost significance as these practices increase their motivation for coming to school.

One participant shared an anecdote about her visit to Syria. When she was there, she felt like she was not accepted by the girls like her cousins. Even the way she ties her hair was pretty unfamiliar to her cousins. That is why she could not behave as she wanted to, and she needed to restrict herself in some respects.

> We went to Syria for a while, I remember, in 2018. The girls there were very different. I went in 2018; I still remember, so if I went now, it would be very different. Even the way I tied my hair was different. Outsiders laugh if your hair looks like that, but this is comfortable in Turkey. I like it, so you're comfortable. I am myself here. All the things I did there so that this such-and-such would not be known or talked about …There is no such thing here (SP7).

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The data collected from the teacher participants largely triangulate the students' claims. Teachers believed that they did not generally have adaptation problems with the students who had been living in Turkey for more than around five years. However, if it has been two or three years after students' arrival in Turkey, they have integration-related problems predominantly due to language barriers. Therefore, they claimed that the length of residence in the receiving country was also a determinant when acclimatizing to the new environment. As TP2 told about the initial stages of their acculturation and how it changed over time:

> You know there is a project. For that project, they first provided them with a Turkish instructor or something so they could learn Turkish. After that, they gradually began to adapt. There are some problems for now, of course, among the students. You know, there was some polarization between Turkish students and Syrian students, but when we look at it now, they gradually become closer than at the beginning. For example, I have Syrian students in my own class. There is nothing separating them and the Turkish students here, there is no problem, but there were conflicts before; of course, there were fights (TP2).

This excerpt reveals that the polarization between Turkish and refugee students diminished over time. Compared to the beginning of their arrival, their relationship is much better now.

Apart from the length of stay, TP1 mentioned the age of the participants as an integration-enhancing factor and how the acculturation could show divergent patterns based on the age of the refugees' arrival. To illustrate, the acculturation patterns of adolescents who came here at the age of five and who came at the age of 20 are different. As TP1 touched upon the language issue:

> I mean, of course, there is a difference in culture, of course, but somehow a child can adapt to it more easily than his or her parents, but the child has to know a little language and has to live a little here (TP1).

TP4 made similar comments. She shared that she did not have major integration-related problems with the Syrian students. She ascribed that to the guidance of their parents. She was of the opinion that children were often reminded to behave nicely at school due to some concerns regarding fear of deportation. Likewise,

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TP2 thought that parental guidance could be of help in the acculturation process; he also believed that the students were encouraged to become a member of the Turkish community as their future was shaped here, and they did not want to go back. Therefore, they needed to integrate to a certain extent because they did not have a lot of options. As TP4 reported:

> There is no other alternative, and those at home are probably telling them how to behave here. Children come that way. I did not experience any incompatibility with them. I think parents say sit down, do not misbehave, and do not fight at school. For example, they just escaped a dangerous situation. With the effect of the fear they experienced, with the thought that this could happen or fear of deportation. Students may be being warned at home to be smart for their future (TP4).

Another teacher participant believed that the personality traits of students were of utmost importance when integrating into a community. If they are already friendly and sociable people, they can be liked and accepted by society with minimum effort. Indeed, some Syrian students were indistinguishable from Turkish students. They could comfortably deal with their problems at school. What's more, they could even assist their Turkish friends who cannot voice their issues, as demonstrated in the following anecdote:

> Some of them are just friends with Syrians, but some of them are so sociable that if they don't say their names, which are different from Turkish names, you would think they are Turkish students. In fact, one of them came yesterday and told me that his friend had a problem. I said stop; why are you talking? Tell me or something. I asked his last name, and he said his name. When I said your name, I was surprised; I said, are you Syrian? He said yes, teacher. So you don't understand that some of them are Syrian (TP1).

To conclude, it can be interpreted that a number of enhancing factors influence Syrian adolescents' experiences in Turkey, while the most dominant ones are the absence of war in Turkey, helpful Turkish people and peers, parental support, length of stay, and age of arrival. These factors operate as a bridge between the refugee students and the host community. The next section describes the impeding factors for students' integration processes.

4.2.4.2. Factors Impeding Integration

Although one of the emergent themes was integration, there were also some recurrent integration-impeding elements found in this study. Refugees would assuredly like to be integrated into the host community; however, it is not always easy. There might be varying factors affecting their acculturation patterns negatively. The major integration-impeding factors are listed in Table 4.5.

Table 4. 5

Integration-Impeding Factors

Theme	Codes
Integration-Impeding Factors	Discrimination
	Social exclusion
	Stereotypes about Syrian people
	Cultural differences
	Financial difficulties
	The paucity of interaction with Turkish people

When the respondents were asked about the things they disliked about Turkey, the participants voiced their problems regarding inhabiting Turkey. The repeating factors were stereotypes about Syrian people in Turkey, feeling excluded by Turkish society, and paucity of interaction with Turkish people outside school. In addition, some participants had to work after school due to their financial problems, which took up much of their time and eventually impeded their adaptation here. Another factor was the usage of a different language. As their native tongue is Arabic or Kurdish, Turkish was different for them at the beginning.

The themes regarding the integration-impeding factors showed that the most frequently reported hardship was being excluded from Turkish society. Almost all participants expressed that they were ridiculed many times because of being a Syrian refugee. Since they were profoundly hurt by these discriminatory practices, they could not wholly feel like a member of this society. The participants shared their anecdotes and emotions about being a refugee. Apart

from the societal discrimination, they also reported experiencing marginalizing behaviors in school contexts. They claimed that they were often disturbed by their classmates. SP11 claimed, "*sometimes kids bother me. They're messing around, they're teasing: You're Syrian, stuff like that. It feels bad*" (SP11). SP10 had similar incidents of discriminatory behaviors "*they were constantly excluding me, they were saying you are Syrian or something. But not now, but I don't like those who always say that*" (SP10).

Indeed, it is possible to assert that continuous exclusion by their peers tremendously leaves a mark on their lives. As they are adolescents and puberty is already a daunting process, they may not entirely assert themselves. Instead, they repress their anger and even harm themselves. One of the participants (SP7) shared an unfortunate event. After a lot of marginalization and not saying anything to her classmates, she overused her wrist and sprained it during box. She also added that she punched the closet at school once because of her anger at these upsetting expressions toward her. She said she normally would not want to come to school or would not have the energy to do so; however, she came to school as her sister insisted on it. Such traumatizing incidents can surely hinder students' motivation to come to school and adapt to the new milieu in many ways. Considering this aspect of living in Turkey, which includes lots of marginalization, it is crucial to take the necessary steps to involve students in school life more. Kidding will certainly affect their viewpoints regarding Turkey and the Turkish people. SP7 shared:

> A new boy came to the class. He got along well with our friends. I just asked my friend; I asked her when he came, why he came, whether he came from another class, or if he came from another school. She said I liked him; I said no. I said there is no such thing. I don't like such topics. I don't know; he probably liked me; he asked his friends if I was Syrian or where I came from. My friends said I am Syrian. He made fun of me. They could be the reason why my ankle hurt. Three days in a row, without stopping, without thinking about anything, without going to school, because of them I only did sports (SP7).

SP3 stated that he also faced exclusion in his daily life. He illustrated this marginalization with a story that happened outside the school. When he entered a

shop to return the broken earphones he bought from the shop, the owner of the shop grumbled mainly because of the participants' Syrian identity, and he did not want to get the earphone again, according to SP3. Although returning the broken earphones is a customer's right, he felt as if he confronted discrimination there.

SP2 and SP4 contended that they were still being marginalized at school owing to their names and surnames. This was heartbreaking for them as their names and surnames were a part of their identity. Being exposed to constant disturbing discourses on the part of their identity created unwanted conflict in them. Some of them reiterated their concerns as follows "*they keep saying I'm Syrian. For example, my classmates make fun of my last name and so on*" (SP2). In a similar vein, SP8 also asserted her disturbance of undesirable jokes about her being a Syrian "*I had some friends, they used to make fun of me. Well, it bothered me. I was telling on my class to my teacher. She was also angry with them like me*" (SP8).

SP6 was of the opinion that being a Syrian in Turkey feels bad. When they first arrived in Turkey, she felt bad as she felt she was different. She claimed that all the people were different from her, although she could not describe what she meant by saying 'different.' Besides the discrimination they faced from their friends and outside the school environment, they rarely heard similar commentaries from their teachers. When she was asked if she could give a specific example for it, she said, *"so sometimes the teacher tells us. So the teacher was talking to me recently and said, "you don't belong here. No matter how hard you work, you can't be anything here," the teacher said"* (SP6).

Another factor that impedes the acculturation process was having different cultural elements like the language spoken in Turkey, as participants contended. Although Syria and Turkey share the same land border and might be expected to show similar cultural elements consequently, they have divergent cultural components, too. As the informants in this study believed, there are manifold dissimilar cultural practices between Syria and Turkey. The most frequently

stated ones by the participants were related to language use, eating habits, and disrespectful behaviors of their peers. The students stated that they had difficulty in communication at the beginning of their arrival as they did not know Turkish. Notwithstanding these students, there were still four participants who mentioned having language-related problems. Two students thought that speaking a different language here was a challenge for them. Switching between these two languages was confusing, as they stated. In a similar vein, having different food culture in Turkey was arduous to get used to. Thus, one participant still preferred eating traditional Arabic food and could not be accustomed to Turkish food. These aspects of living in Turkey might operate as impeding factors for their integration.

Stereotypical beliefs about the Syrian people were another reason impacting students' adaptation. They reported that, at school, in a supermarket, in the street, or at the hospital, students had been experiencing the hateful rhetoric of their existence in Turkey. They had been hearing or feeling the negative comments about their existence in Turkey. The undercurrents of racism were intense in every aspect of their lives, as they believed. The participants felt dismayed and sometimes angry about these practices. They did not like overgeneralizing observations on Syrian people's behaviors, such as being aggressive. Also, Turkish people's perception of Syrian people such as displaying disturbing behaviors was heartbreaking for the participants, as they shared. SP5 was sad as she had to hear the overgeneralizing remarks: "*For example, they (Turkish people) had a fight with a Syrian, but they attack all Syrians. When there is a fight, one person is guilty, but they blame everyone else*" (SP5).

SP1 was another informant whose heart was broken due to the stereotypical beliefs about the Syrian people. As she was proficient in Turkish, she could understand what the Turkish people around her talk about Syrian people. During a doctor appointment, she heard some heartbreaking opinions about the Syrian people's existence in Turkey. Although she said she did not react to these comments, she just felt so unhappy to hear these things:

Or there are some bad people. For example, those who say bad things about Syrians are very bad. For example, I don't look Syrian. I understand what Turks talk about. For example, I go to the hospital. There are a lot of fights because of the Syrians. The Turks say there is a lot of favoritism, but I don't think so. I mean, we waited in line, too (SP1).

The students also experienced financial difficulties, as they shared. Some of them had large families with more than six siblings, or they had other family members to look after, like their grandparents, aunts, or uncles. Some of the participants' fathers had health problems and thus could not work. They said when it was the case, they needed to earn money and start taking care of their families at an early age. Generally, the participants and their older brothers or sisters worked after school. When dealing with monetary problems and continuing their education at the same time, their acculturation was comprehensively affected. When asked about the hardships they had here, one said:

Work. I left school last month; I wanted to start working because my mom was struggling financially. Then I said that I am Syrian, will it be a problem? He said there would be trouble or something. He said, "It would be trouble; we don't want Syrians." I said ok, you know, he did not give me the job. I came back to school. Then there's renting an apartment and so on. They do not rent out their apartments to Syrians. Apparently, they break things; they cause damage. In a way, that is true (SP1).

Furthermore, the students stated that they did not have enough time to socialize with their friends after school. When their interaction with Turkish peers was circumscribed by the school climate, full integration into Turkey would not be quite possible. For example, SP4 had been working after school from 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. every day. Considering the fact that lessons end at 3.40 p.m. at school, one cannot show full adherence to be a part of this community. However, if the informants were in Syria, they would not have to work as they suggested. They had their own homes or gardens back in Syria, and they did not have monetary problems there. The abrupt movement of coming to Turkey forced them to start a new life in new surroundings. That is why economic issues were unavoidable, as

they shared. SP4 was unhappy because she had to deal with the monetary obstacles all of a sudden when she had a nice life in Syria.

> I mean, if I was in my own country, I would be better. I mean, I would have my own house, my job, and my power. We rented a house, but it was very difficult. Now everything has become expensive. We all have been working since our childhood (SP4).

Even though they had dreams about their future such as becoming a painter or doctor, they needed to spare time for working instead of studying their lessons. Moreover, the student participants shared that some parents of eighth-graders wanted their children to drop out of school and work a full-time job as they could not afford all the costs of living. They said they wanted to continue their education actually; however, there was nothing to do, and they had to do it, as they said. 8th grade would be the last year of their education journey for some of them. Although they had dreams like becoming a doctor or painter, they needed to start working immediately after leaving middle school. When SP4 was inquired whether she would take the high school entrance exam, she replied: "*I don't know because my father said that this is the last year of school. He says I should work. Yes, I want to go to school so much. My dream is to be a painter*" (SP4).

Another significant factor reported by the informants was the paucity of interaction with Turkish friends after school. When the participants were asked whether they met their Turkish friends after school or studied together, only one participant said they hung out a couple of times. Apart from that one participant, the others stated that they did not arrange meetings but only texted each other. They often did not see or meet after school; they either hung out with their Syrian neighbors and relatives or with their family members like siblings, mothers, and fathers. Based on the participants' responses, it can be securely asserted that when they have conservative principles and practices at home, it will be complex for them to adopt the principles of inhabiting Turkey and create a facilitating bridge between the home and the host cultural fundamentals. One

of the teachers (TP4) also highlighted that the adolescents both befriended Turkish and Syrian students. However, as they were largely living in the same area and commuting to school together, they spent more time with their Syrian friends. At this point, it became clear that the families' attitudes play a vital role in a child's level of adaptation to the new surroundings, as claimed by the teacher participants. If the families do not encourage their children to participate in social life, they believe they cannot thoroughly adapt as they still depend on their parents. In a similar sense, if the idea of returning to Syria one day is constantly emphasized at home, adolescents may not allocate room for acculturation and may not entirely embrace it.

To conclude this section, it becomes evident that a wide variety of factors influence their acculturation orientations in Turkey. Apart from the integration-enhancing factors, there were also integration-impeding factors. Discrimination, social exclusion, stereotypes about Syrian people, paucity of interaction with Turkish people, financial difficulties, and cultural differences were the most frequently reported themes regarding the difficulties they face in terms of integration. The next section describes the identity perceptions of the participants as learners.

4.3. Identity

This case study also seeks to investigate how Syrian adolescents construct their identities as a student and a minority group in Turkey. The in-depth interviews conducted with the participants put forward that they showed diverse identificatory patterns. The recurred themes during the analysis were having hybrid identity, Syrian identity, and in-betweenness. Some respondents both celebrated being Syrian and Turkish at the same, whereas others only adopted Syrian identity. In addition, there are also participants who cannot either categorize themselves by choosing one of them or including Syrian and Turkish identities like hybrid identity choosers. The following table demonstrates the codes regarding the participants' identity perceptions.

Table 4. 6

Identity Perceptions of Adolescents

Themes	Codes
Hybrid Identity	Regarding themselves as Syrian-Turks
	Attaching importance to national holidays of both nations
	Adopting elements of both cultures
Syrian Identity	Rejecting Turkish elements at home
	Parents' limitation regarding usage of Turkish
	Wish to return Syria
In-Betweenness	Being indecisive about their identity
	Being indecisive about where they belong to
	Being indecisive about returning to Syria

4.3.1. Hybrid Identity

One of the themes pertaining to identity perception was hybrid patterns. The interviews held with 11 participants revealed that the majority of the informants agreed with the statement that although they were not born in Turkey, they were mostly raised in Turkey; therefore, they regard themselves as Syrian-Turks. When they elaborated on what they meant by being a Syrian-Turk more, it was found that they both celebrated being Syrian and Turkish at the same time. While behaving like Syrians in certain contexts, they also revealed their Turkish selves in other contexts. To demonstrate, they attached significance to the national holidays in Turkey while maintaining their Syrian selves at the same time. The interviewees contended that they displayed their Syrian selves without refraining from showing them. Indeed, they shared that they were proud of their Syrian selves.

As they were successfully integrated into society, they cherished the idea that it was possible to be both Syrian and Turkish. Some participants believed that they should freeheartedly display their Syrian selves here "*I do not hide my Syrian identity, but there are people who don't like it. I don't hide it, why should I?"* (SP7).

Some informants were so integrated that they considered themselves as Syrian-Turk. The data revealed that the amount of time they spent in Turkey has a crucial role because the longer they stayed in Turkey, the more integrated they became. Once they integrated into society, they viewed themselves as hybrid beings. To be able to integrate into the host society, their positive experiences in Turkey were of utmost importance. The reason for this was that these positive occurrences in Turkey extensively facilitated the process of developing positive identities. One interviewee can be an example of this. SP9 shared that she did not encounter any perceived discrimination or alienation. She, thus, did not feel 'different' in Turkey, contrary to the other participants. The fact that she felt as if Turkey were her country also demonstrates the significance of positive experiences in the construction of identity "*Being a Syrian in Turkey is a good feeling because I feel comfortable here. I mean, it is like my country"* (SP9).

Another code that supported this theme was the participants' eagerness to espouse the cultural elements, as mentioned in the first part of this section. Embracing a mixture of both value systems was an indicator of the hybridization of identity. The adolescents who considered they would not return to Syria approved a blend of these different sets of values. The reality that they would continue to reside in Turkey worked as a motivation source to become hybrid individuals, as shared by the teacher participants. Without leaving out their home culture identity and fully assimilating, they chose to be both of them. The family attitude was one of the preeminent elements in identity construction as well. It is because the participants whose hybrid practices were welcomed at home were found to show hybrid patterns, too. The families in which both Turkish and Arabic/Kurdish were positively admitted also allowed their children to co-construct hybrid surroundings. These participants cultivated more positive attitudes towards becoming a Syrian-Turk. On the contrary, when only Syrian identities are accentuated at home, they cannot enhance their identities, which will be discussed in the following section.

The teacher participants also highlighted the importance of discourses pertaining to identity at home. They broadly assumed that parents played a vital role at this point. When talking about the students' attitudes towards national days such as 23rd April National Sovereignty and Children's Day or The Commemoration of Atatürk, Youth and Sports Day in Turkey, TP1 shared her thoughts on the issue:

> This is something that comes from the family or from home; I guess it (taking part in national events) can be given from the outside to a certain extent. However, if there is no such holiday in the environment where the child's parents live at home, I do not think that they will participate or volunteer too much. For example, in March, there will soon be the acceptance of the National Anthem. I don't think they will come, even if we tell them to come, if we don't give them assignments or if there is no school. It has to do with the family (TP1).

Additionally, TP2 reported his observations of the Syrian students' attendance on national holidays. Some of the Syrian refugees showed active participation in the celebration of national holidays. Some of them would like to take an active role during the ceremonies at school or in the province:

> Due to our profession, we participate in national holidays; we go to official ceremonies. I mean, for example, Syrian students want to come in for student selection. Especially, for example, I took SP1 to the flag ceremony once a day. I took another student in my class. They want to participate; they want to participate voluntarily (TP2).

Their participation in the national ceremonies can be seen as a strong indicator of their hybrid identities. The participants' desire to take an active role in these ceremonies can only come true if they assume that they have a Turkish self as well. As the significance of familial support highlighted before, the attendance of the students at national ceremonies might hinge on parental support, too.

4.3.2. Syrian Identity Patterns

The theme of adopting a Syrian identity appeared throughout the data set. Some participants (n=2) regarded themselves only as Syrians. The participants who reported they felt more like a Syrian also ratified that their parents had some

rigid rules at home. They considered that they needed to exhibit their Syrian identity and maintain it wherever they lived.

Establishing robust ties with their culture of origin was something the students had to do, as they believed. Since they were also constantly reminded not to forget their origin by their parents, they internalized this idea. In contrast to the parents who did not set strict rules about avoiding the Turkish language or culture at home, some parents were against accepting Turkish elements into their homes. To give an example, when asked which languages she could write, one interviewee commented, *"It's Turkish, but when I came to Turkey, I learned Arabic in time by looking at the phone because my mother told me not to forget Syria and learn where I belong, she said"* (SP6).

The thought that they belonged to Syria had been continually implied by their parents. That is why the adolescents also shared the same idea, and they would like to return to Syria as they considered it their 'home.' When they were inquired whether they missed Syria or not, all of the interviewees commented they surely missed their homes and relatives back in Syria although some of them could only slightly remember a few things about their houses or way of living there. Nevertheless, only two participants claimed that they would like to return to Syria one day as they did not belong to Turkey. As it was not completely safe to move to Syria and live there currently, they could not go there, but in the future, they would return, as they said. One participant shared that she visited Syria once only in five years. When she was asked whether she missed Turkey when she was in Syria, she answered:

> Yes, I missed Turkey because Syria was different. I'm used to Turkey, but I wanted to stay in Syria because I miss it. Of course, I got used to living in Turkey, but I wanted to stay there. I wanted to go and live there (SP2).

Similar to SP2, SP6 held similar beliefs. She did not visit Syria after they had left there, yet she missed there so much and wanted to return to her country.

On the other hand, the students who regarded themselves only as Syrians retained their native tongues, too. Although the participants did not have easy access to books or magazines in their mother tongue, they utilized the internet to learn Arabic apart from the Arabic practices at home. For instance, SP6 was trying to learn Arabic through online means on account of her parents' encouragement. Similar to the hybrid identity patterns, families played a vital role in sustaining the Syrian identities of their children, as the data unveiled.

4.3.3. The In-Betweenness

The informants in this study mostly showed that they defined themselves as both Syrian and Turkish. When inquired about how they defined themselves in addition to that, a few of them said they did not consider themselves Turkish but Syrian. No participant stated that they only viewed themselves as Turkish. They still had a robust attachment to their home culture. However, a small number of those interviewed suggested that where they belonged was too 'confusing' for them. Thus, they could not categorize themselves with both of these nationalities or only one of them.

The adolescents who felt that they were in-between reported that they had a pleasant life in Turkey. Nevertheless, they asserted that they could not establish a meaningful connection between the pace of life outside and at home. They were of the opinion that they did not precisely know where they belonged to. They were so in-between that one of the participants even said she wished she were Turkish so that she could have a 'normal' life in Turkey just like a 'normal' Turk. She could not categorize herself as Turkish or Syrian. As a result, not being able to categorize themselves created conflict in her perceptions of herself. The following excerpt illustrates the participant's need to define herself as she could not call herself Turkish, but at the same time, she wanted to be a member of the Turkish community due to her Turkish loved ones:

> Sometimes I wish I was Turkish when I'm with my friends or something. My friends are here; my loved ones are here. That's why I wish I was Turkish. I'm happy to be Syrian, but I would say Turkey is my homeland; that is, I am far from my homeland, so I would say I am here, my homeland. My friends, teachers, and all my loved ones are Turkish. Only my family is Syrian. I also think sometimes I love the Turkish language very much. That's why I love their songs, their TV series, and everything. That's why I wish I were Turkish (SP8).

In a similar sense, another participant also shared that everything was so confusing to him. Although he spent most of his life in Turkey (8 years), he made indecisive comments on the questions about his identity perceptions. To illustrate, when he was inquired whether he felt Syrian, Turkish, or both simultaneously, he asserted that he could not decide. He did not embrace the coexistence of being both of them but rather displayed similar in-between behaviors in the rest of the interview as well. When speaking, for instance, sometimes he said he did not know which language to speak as it was perplexing for him. He responded to the question "How do you feel as a Syrian in Turkey?" as follows, "*sometimes it seems more confusing. I sometimes speak Arabic with my friends, sometimes Turkish by mistake. I get confused*" (SP11).

The participants who feel in-between had mixed emotions towards almost all aspects of forced migration. It is possible to see the effects of these emotions in many facets of their lives. When commenting on what it would be like to return to Syria one day, SP8 shared her concerns:

> If one day my mother says that we are going to Syria or something, I would be shocked. I mean, how would it be if she says we are moving again? I would say, "what will my life be like there?" They speak Arabic, my friends, etc. It would be very hard. I miss it now. I even think of our old house. I miss Syria, but how can I express this feeling? I don't want to go, but I want to go, too. I don't know, so it's mixed whether I want it or not (SP8).

The adolescents with confused feelings were worried about a possible life in Syria in the future. Even though they had relatives, neighbors, or childhood friends there, they believed that it was not safe to return there and continue their lives there. They mostly did not presume that they would have a better future in Syria. After witnessing traumatic incidents such as the death of loved ones and

war in Syria, they had severe concerns regarding turning back there. This situation puts them into serious trouble when they cannot show full commitment to both Turkey and Syria, which culminates in their feeling of in-betweenness.

This research assumes that there is a relationship between the adopted acculturation strategy and the identity perceptions of the forced migrant students. The next part, therefore, explains the interconnection between informants' integration into the host community and identification of themselves.

4.3.4. The Interrelationship between Acculturation and Identity Perception

Social Identity Theory endeavors to describe human behavior through group dynamics with firm foci of group contacts (Hogg et al., 1995). As the self is constructed through the interplays between different groups, affirmative group relations are of utmost importance to create positive co-construction of identities. As it was mentioned above, the participants in this study are regarded as a minority group in Turkey. This being the case, it was presumed that their categorization and comparison together with intergroup dynamics shaped their acculturation patterns as well.

Based on the informants' remarks, it was reported that while some of the forced migrants integrated into the host society to a larger extent, the others could not satisfactorily become a member of the Turkish community. The participants who exhibited more commitment to Syrian values and less engagement in Turkish milieus were also confronted with negative group attributions. These adolescents were marginalized and othered by the host country and exposed to unfavorable discourses upon their inhabitation in Turkey, as reported. The fact that they faced out-group derogation most probably has resulted in their in-betweenness or partly rejecting Turkish value systems. At this point, it can be stated that Turkish people's acts of positive distinctiveness and out-group derogation caused forced migrants to negative identification of themselves.

Some participants have a strong desire to have a positive identity. Consequently, they also endeavor to disassociate themselves from other Syrian refugees. Some of them are of the opinion that some Syrian refugees deserve these attributions. Some stereotypical beliefs about them, such as damaging the houses and environment or creating turmoil in society, were accepted by one of the participants. These actions of Syrian refugees are deplored by adolescents; however, they feel sorry about these negative narratives as they are not the agents of these actions. Since they have been exposed to these attributions, they seek a positive identity in the end.

Although not all the participants faced 'out-group derogation' by Turkish people, the ones who encountered these discriminatory practices had difficulty identifying themselves. The fact that they feel in-between can be interpreted as a result of the unfavorable experiences they had in Turkey. In addition, their families' in-group favoring attitudes can also play a crucial role in acculturating to the new society. Indeed, SP8's statement on her wish to become Turkish exemplifies the categorization of her 'self.' This shows us the results of the level of marginalization she encountered, which even ended up her wish to disengage from her Syrian self.

On the other hand, the interrelation between identity construction and acculturation also revealed itself in positive acculturation patterns. The adolescents with more positive and less negative experiences with regard to inhabiting Turkey are more motivated to integrate into the society and also construct hybrid identities by espousing multiple identities. When they feel admitted to society, they become a part of it without disaffiliating their Syrian backgrounds. Thus, there is a close correlation between how they acculturate to new settings and how they describe themselves in these new milieus.

Similar patterns emerged in the analysis of other participants' transcriptions. Almost all of the adolescents unveiled the incidents in which they felt discriminated against. The discriminatory practices from different parties and

stereotypical contentions are the major issues that they remonstrated about. It is palpable that the major assumptions of SIT heavily have an impact on the students' level of attachment to Turkey and continue living here in harmony.

4.4. Language Preferences of the Adolescents

The last research question of this thesis interrogated the language preferences of adolescents after involving in forced migration. The language intersects with these notions as a substantial component of culture and identity. This section thus presents the students' language choices in the given situations and explores the relationship between language choice and acculturation strategies applied by the adolescents.

When exploring participants' language usage in specific situations, it was discovered that they primarily used their native language at home. However, when the activity only involved themselves, such as watching something or reading something, they preferred to do these activities in Turkish in the home environment. The following table displays the frequency of the language used in given moves.

Table 4. 7

Language Use Preferences of the Participants

Activities	Language	F
Listening to music	Arabic/ Kurdish	0
	Turkish	8
	Both	3
Reading	Arabic/ Kurdish	0
	Turkish	11
	Both	0
Writing	Arabic/ Kurdish	0
	Turkish	11
	Both	0

Table 4.7 (cont'd)

TV Programs	Arabic/ Kurdish	0
	Turkish	7
	Both	4
Films	Arabic/ Kurdish	0
	Turkish	7
	Both	4
Thinking	Arabic/ Kurdish	3
	Turkish	5
	Both	3
Language at home	Arabic/Kurdish	3
	Turkish	0
	Both	8
Language at School	Arabic/Kurdish	0
	Turkish	6
	Both	5
Social Media	Arabic/Kurdish	0
	Turkish	7
	Both	4

Table 4.7 shows that the participants' language choices differed according to the given situations. The activities such as listening to music, reading, writing, watching TV programs and films were predominantly conducted in Turkish. On the other hand, it was revealed that solely Turkish was not used at home; their native languages and both languages were spoken. Communication with their friends was mostly carried out in both languages. However, thinking was conducted in the native language, Turkish and both of them. Turkish outweighed in the school context; nevertheless, it is noteworthy that five of the participants preferred to utilize both their native tongues and Turkish, as some of them use Arabic or Kurdish with the speakers of these languages.

There are manifold reasons for this. Overall, seven participants (63.64 %) believed that their Turkish was better than their native language, whereas four (36.36 %) of them still had problems with Turkish, especially in school subjects, and believed that they were more proficient in their native language.

Furthermore, it was found that interviewees' at home and outside home language remarkably contrasted. The following section describes the areas of life in which the adolescents' native languages and Turkish are practiced.

4.4.1. Usage of Native Language

The interviewees were found to maintain their attachment to their native language, as it has been alluded to previously. Although some of them did not show the bonds of their native language to a large extent, they all cherished the idea of preserving their native language. At home, the dominant culture was assuredly discovered to be their native culture. Indeed, some participants informed that on account of the rigid language policies at home, they sometimes spoke Turkish 'secretly' when their parents were not around. In addition to this, the language they thought about daily matters was also affected by this. Although some participants (n=3) shared that they only thought in Arabic, some stated they thought in both languages, and it depends mainly on their environment. As SP2 pointed out, she did thinking in Arabic at home and in Turkish at school, "*both in Turkish and in Arabic. Turkish at school, Arabic at home. When I think in Arabic at school, I have a hard time speaking*" (SP2).

Three informants contended that they could only speak their native language at home as using other languages was strictly forbidden. The participants who could not practice Turkish at home also had trouble understanding Turkish from time to time. For example, they could not comprehend everything in the lessons. Since their interaction with Turkish was largely limited to the school environment, they had problems comprehending Turkish. On the contrary, the participants who could also practice Turkish with their siblings did not have major problems in lessons in terms of understanding Turkish. Their problems in understanding Turkish did not generally include the specific subjects; however, the projects within the scope of the lessons or some homework might be troublesome for them. In those cases, they asked for help from their classmates, as they contended.

4.4.2. Usage of Turkish

Dominant usage of Turkish was another theme that recurred during data analysis. As shown in Table 4.7, participants largely chose Turkish for certain activities. When reading or writing something, they picked only Turkish. Indeed, none of the participants knew how to write in Arabic. Since most of them did not start school back in Syria, they did not have an opportunity to learn the language and become literate in the school context. Only SP4, SP6, and SP9 knew how to read in Arabic with the assistance of their parents and Quran courses, but they could not write. SP2, SP8, and SP11 also asserted that they could read in Arabic; however, they were not very good at it. As they shared, they learned the Arabic alphabet through the Quran courses they attended in summers in Turkey. Nevertheless, their access to sources such as books or literary texts in their native language is daunting. It is unlikely to find an Arabic novel in stationery in Turkey, for instance. The paucity of provision of these sources culminates in less interaction with their native language. Thus, it can be claimed that the accessibility of sources plays a significant role in deciding which language to prefer when conducting these activities. On the other hand, most of the participants did not show excitement toward reading or writing in their native language. Only the ones who would like not to forget 'where they belong' and have robust ties with their culture of origin displayed eagerness to be literate in their native language.

In a parallel sense, three participants shared that they both used Turkish and Arabic when spending time on social media. They generally used Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp as social media applications. To give an example, SP9 asserted that she used Facebook in Arabic but Instagram in Turkish. When asked whether this situation had a specific reason, she stated that she did not know the reason. This situation might be ascribed to the fact that she largely had her relatives on her Facebook account, whereas Instagram is mostly common among the youth. On the other hand, eight participants' social media accounts were only

in Turkish. Due to their lack of reading and writing skills in Arabic, they just chose to use them in Turkish.

The activities such as watching TV programs or films and listening to music were also mostly done in Turkish and English in some cases. None of the participants opted for only the native language option. When they were inquired to elaborate more, they shared that their favorite TV series and programs were Turkish ones. They mainly watched Turkish TV programs; however, as their parents were not good at Turkish and still watched Arabic TV series or programs at home, they interacted with their native language TV programs through Arabic or Kurdish channels, too.

As the numbers show, the language spoken in the school environment is only Turkish. Most of the participants generally used Turkish during school hours. Particularly when they had Turkish friends around them, they only used Turkish. However, as reported by both the adolescents and teachers of them, when five participants (SP3, SP4, SP6, SP9, and SP11) were talking to their Syrian friends, they typically communicated with each other in their native tongue.

> They generally speak Arabic among themselves. To illustrate, three people are chatting, and if all three are Syrians, they speak Arabic; this is what I observed. But if there is a fourth person and that person is Turkish, then they speak Turkish (TP1).

On the other hand, SP7 shared that one of the reasons for Arabic usage among Syrian migrants was their desire not to be understood by the Turkish speakers. Although SP7 was originally from Syria, she felt as if she had been marginalized by them because of her relatively poor Arabic. Therefore, she did not usually become friends with Syrian peers. As she stated:

> I feel like my Syrian friends exclude me. We don't understand each other sometimes. They want to speak in Arabic so that the Turks do not understand. When I repeat something in Turkish, I feel like they will say, "don't speak, shut up" (SP7).

Another point made by the participants was that their native tongues and Turkish sometimes mixed, especially at school. It was typical for some of them to speak in their native language unwittingly when they were asked something during the lesson. When inquired whether Arabic or Kurdish words came to her mind in the course of speaking Turkish, SP6 shared her experience in primary school:

> Yes, it's happened before. The teacher from the first grade asked, 'who knows the numbers?'. I got up and started counting from 1 to 10 in Arabic. The teacher said, 'Hey, where are you going?' he said, 'I want Turkish' (SP6).

The participants considered that switching between Turkish and Arabic or Kurdish was sometimes troublesome. As given above, they might not easily switch between the languages all the time. However, contrary to SP5's incident, sometimes Turkish words come to their minds and blend into their Arabic when communicating in Arabic. SP2 told an anecdote from her visit to Syria, in which she mixed languages from time to time:

> I visited with my mother; I had a very difficult time there, I mean, neighborhoods and roads, for example, I was talking to a grocer, I spoke in Turkish, not Arabic. The man asked, 'what are you talking about?' The man did not understand me. After that, my cousin said, 'what are you talking about?'. A lot of things like that happen in Syria (SP2).

The participants enunciated divergent views on the language in which they think. Some of them (n=3) only considered things in their native language due largely to being more proficient in their mother tongue. On the other hand, five of them claimed that they only did thinking in Turkish. As mentioned above, some students regarded themselves as more proficient in Turkish compared to their native language and consequently conducted many activities in Turkish. In addition to these groups, there was also a group of students who stated that they both used Turkish and their first language. Relatedly, the context of the participants was found to be the cardinal factor when deciding on which language to think. To the adolescents in this study, switching between these two languages was rather challenging. Therefore, when they were at school, they thought in Turkish as this could make speaking in Turkish easier for them. SP2

responded to the question of which language she generally thought of as follows, "*both Turkish and Arabic. Turkish at school, Arabic at home. When I think in Arabic at school, I have a hard time speaking*" (SP2).

Another area in which Turkish was predominantly chosen was the respondents' communication with their siblings and nieces or nephews. Most of the participants purposefully spoke in Turkish with their young relatives as they wanted their siblings or nephews to be fluent in Turkish. The existing Arabic or Kurdish practices at home should be supplanted by Turkish in their conversations so as to teach them Turkish, according to them. Due to the lack of Turkish knowledge of their parents or older people in the family, the participants assumed the responsibility of teaching Turkish to younger people in the family. They heavily reported that they spoke in their native language in the conversations with their parents, whereas Turkish was predominantly used in the dialogues between them and their siblings. As some of them shared, *"mostly Arabic. I use Arabic a lot with my brothers. I use Turkish with my sister so she can learn it, too"* (SP11). Likewise, SP2 tried to teach her nephew Turkish as she believed learning Turkish was crucial to live in Turkey "*I speak Turkish with my sister; she has a child going to school. I speak Turkish with him (her nephew) so that he can learn, too*" (SP2).

The teacher participants inquired whether the parents of these Syrian refugee students encourage their children to learn Turkish or reinforce their Turkish practices. They acknowledged that the parents were not opposed to them learning Turkish and actually could not be against it as they live in a Turkish-speaking country:

> So now their future is more or less defined, so they will live in Turkey. Now, in their minds, there is no such thing as getting out of here and going back to their old life there again. Neither do their families. Now, families are probably aware of this, and they send their children to Turkish schools. They also have their children get an education in Turkish. I don't think they have any thoughts of returning again. You know, the living conditions in our country are perhaps

better and more advantageous for them, so of course, they support it - I mean to learn Turkish, but we speak for this school, of course (TP2).

When commenting on the students' attitudes towards learning Turkish and whether there has been a change in their approach towards it, TP4 remarked that they had been exposed to Turkish for many hours a day and thus did not notice any negative or disrespectful approaches towards Turkish. It was also because they established a new life in Turkey, and they needed to espouse all aspects of Turkey as otherwise, they would disappear:

> Otherwise, they will disappear. For example, my illiterate students now answer me when I ask a question in Turkish. For example, when I asked my illiterate student why her sister didn't come, she told me that her mother had got a job and that her sister was taking care of her younger sibling. They have to learn; what will they do? Think about it; if you had me listen to English for 7 hours, I would have to learn it. These kids also have to. If you put these children into this system, they learn whether they want it or not, and they are so stable that they are not absent. Very rarely are they absent (TP4).

In addition to these comments, TP4 also alluded to the differences between girls and boys. She voiced that girls spoke more Turkish with each other compared to boys. Male students frequently utilized their native language during the conversations with each other.

TP1 expressed her thoughts on the role of her parents' encouragement in learning Turkish. Although they had strict language policies at home, the parents' general attitude towards learning Turkish was quite constructive, as she shared. Indeed, they wanted their children to have a decent Turkish education from scratch. TP1 told an anecdote in which she had talked with a Syrian parent with the help of a translator student the day before the interview day:

> For example, a parent who came yesterday asked if her child could start from the first grade, as the translator students said. She said her child should learn; he doesn't know. We said that it is not possible here; such a thing cannot happen. Then she asked, "is there a lesson or a course that he can learn Turkish and learn to read and write?" Probably, the child knows the Arabic letters; she wants him to learn the Latin alphabet; I guess she was asking this. They are encouraging. Well, I think they are thinking that 'we're probably going to live here now. We

won't be able to learn Turkish probably, but my child should learn so that he can adapt here'. They possibly think that way" (TP1).

TP4 also observed that the refugee students read books in Turkish. The reason why they did not read books in their native tongues might be ascribed to a lack of available sources in their first language as well, but the students were already eager to read in Turkish. She shared that the participants also used the library to borrow Turkish books and read them. She told:

> They read the same things as their classmates. For example, they go to the library; they borrow books from the library. I see the books in their hands. For example, during the reading class, there are books taken from the library. Their Turkish teacher probably suggests it so that it's not financially a strain to go and buy (TP4).

The teachers' observations are valuable as they are regularly in contact with both the students and the parents. Although they have a problem communicating with refugee parents due to language barriers, based on the teachers' comments, it can be safely stated that they want their kids to be able to proficient in Turkish. Since they established a new life in Turkey, speaking Turkish is a necessity as it opens many doors, such as starting tertiary education and finding a job.

4.4.3. The Interrelationship between Language Preference and Acculturation

Turkish is the official language of Turkey, which makes it necessary to learn to continue living in this country. The participants displayed contrasting views on their relationship with Turkish and their native tongues. It was found that some of them preferred actively using Turkish even in their interactions with native Arabic or Kurdish speakers. In contrast to these participants, some showed less interaction with the Turkish language. Similar patterns were discernable in the acculturative practices of the participants.

Acculturation is an individual experience. That is, human-beings exhibit different strategies when they find themselves in new surroundings. Since it is an individual adventure, the underlying factors impacting acculturation differ broadly. Although these factors vary, the adopted pattern is congruent with the language being used. With this in mind, it can be claimed that there is a correlation between participants' language choices and adopted acculturation patterns regardless of the chosen patterns.

The participants who both used Turkish and their native language actively also adapted to the new country and largely integrated into it. On the contrary, the participants whose interaction with the Turkish language was only restricted to the school environment had difficulty acclimating to the new surroundings here. Thus, as teacher participants also asserted, the newly arrived students might create behavioral and disciplinary problems. Length of stay is also in accordance with both acculturation strategies and language preferences. If they are not proficient in that language, they cannot become integrated as well.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This section starts with a summary of the research. Then, the findings obtained from semi-structured interviews are discussed in accordance with the research questions as well as the findings from the preceding literature. The section is then followed by implications of results for practice. In the end, some suggestions for further research will be described.

5.1. Summary of the Study

The present thesis primarily aims to explore the acculturation strategies of Syrian adolescents after being forcibly displaced from their countries and how these adolescents identify themselves in an education environment in Turkey. The study also aims to shed light upon how their language choices, acculturation patterns, and identity perceptions as learners intersect. The research design of this thesis is a case study. As the participants' experiences regarding their acculturation and identity perceptions are investigated within the boundaries of a setting, a case study as a qualitative research method was the most suitable option. The data are analyzed within the scope of Acculturation Framework and Social Identity Theory since they are the most prominent theories pertaining to acculturation and identity studies. The data collected from 11 student participants and four teachers provided substantive insights into their practices in Turkey. After being transcribed verbatim, the data analysis process was initiated. With the help of MAXQDA, the emergent codes were formed and later categorized to create themes. As the adolescents' experiences in Turkey broadly differed, the themes regarding their practices showed divergent patterns as well. The recurrent themes about their acculturation were maintaining their culture and language of origin, integration into the host community, and separation patterns. Assimilation

was found neither in the students' comments nor the teachers'. The themes pertain to the factors affecting their acculturation were divided into two: integration-enhancing and integration-impeding factors. Peaceful environment, absence of war, helpful people in Turkey, being healthy and themselves, length of stay, age of arrival, and parental support were the frequently reported facilitating factors. Impeding factors were found to be social exclusion, discrimination, cultural differences, financial problems, and stereotypical beliefs about Syrian people, language barrier and lack of interaction with Turkish people. Another finding of this study was the fact that adolescents choose different identity patterns that might change in the continuum, similar to their acculturation patterns. They might find themselves on different points of the identity spectrum. The repeated identity perceptions were Syrian identity, hybrid identity, and in-betweenness. Their language use also corresponded to their acculturation strategies.

5.2. Acculturation in Forced Migrants

The first research question concerns how the adolescents acculturate to the new society after being forcibly displaced. The findings revealed that the adolescents divergently acculturated to Turkey. The overarching themes based on the semi-structured interviews regarding acculturation were maintenance of the Syrian lifestyle and culture, integration to Turkey, separation, integration-enhancing factors, and integration-impeding factors. Although the themes were categorized in this way, it is noteworthy to state that the participants who showed integration patterns the most also displayed some examples of separation in specific contexts. That is, the acculturation paths are heavily variable (Phinney, 2001). Thus, it is crucial to regard these concepts as a spectrum and view them as dynamic and liquid notions. Since acculturation is not viewed as a linear process in this study, the issues addressed in this thesis will be discussed in light of these perceptions.

As mentioned earlier, the most frequently chosen acculturation strategy was integration. The informants' responses containing elements like enthusiasm for adopting both host and home cultures, having close friends from both nationalities, watching Turkish TV programs and films, eagerness to learn about Turkish history and culture, attending extracurricular activities in Turkey, and their wish to stay in Turkey were interpreted as markers of their integration patterns. On the other hand, some participants contended that they feel more attached to their culture of origin. The responses that highlight the significance of preserving Syrian values, eagerness to learn about Syrian history and culture, being in constant contact with their relatives back there, the wish to return to Syria, and continuous usage of the native language both at school and outside school were interpreted as protecting Syrian way of living. Taking a deeper look at their answers pertaining to the factors impacting their integration, the factors can be investigated under two categories: enhancing and impeding factors. According to students' claims, integration-enhancing factors were found to be the peaceful environment in Turkey, being healthy in a war-free environment, helpful people in Turkey, and access to basic things like electricity and clean water. Additionally, teacher participants claimed that age of arrival, length of residence, and parental encouragement play a substantial role in their integration into Turkey. As the teachers of the student participants have been teaching in the same school, they were able to observe their integration paths within the school context. Based on their observation, it can be stated that children who arrived in Turkey at the age of five and the ones who arrived in Turkey at the age of 15 broadly differ in terms of acculturation. Another point made by the teacher participants was the length of residence. As all of the teachers claimed, they very rarely notice maladaptive behaviors and undesirable manners in students who have been living in Turkey for more than five years. Moreover, parental support was found to be crucial as the participants of this study depend on their parents; they are not adults. As they receive positive attitudes from their parents to blend in the host community, they can perform better acculturative behaviors. Additionally, the frequently iterated integration-impeding factors were social exclusion, discrimination, and stereotypical beliefs about Syrian

people. Cultural differences, financial problems, language barrier and lack of interaction with Turkish people were also mentioned by the teachers and the students.

The literature review validates the findings, too. It has shown that integration is the most common acculturation type in various contexts, similar to this study. Tartakovsky's (2012) study conducted with 151 high school adolescents from Russia and Ukraine and living in Israel also placed emphasis on the environmental constraints like perceived discrimination and perceived social support from peers, teachers, and parents. It was put forward in the study that the adolescents who received social support from peers and experienced little discrimination showed integration, whereas the ones who felt rejected showed separation or marginalization. These findings are concordant with the present thesis because, during the interviews, participants also reiterated the value of support from people in Turkey. Indeed, some responded that the best thing they relish in Turkey was the helpful people of Turkey. As Tartakovsky (2012) found, the adolescents who had social support from their parents generally revealed an inclination towards separation and marginalization. In a similar vein, this study unveiled the relationship between parents' attitudes and acculturation strategies. If robust ties with the heritage culture are continuously accentuated at home, but mainstream culture is inhibited, participants separate themselves from the receiving society. In addition, Tartakovsky's study also showed that social support from peers also culminated in assimilation, which is unlike the current thesis, which did not encounter any assimilation patterns. The family lies at the core of adaptation and acculturation, as contended by Sabatier and Berry (2008). Their research disclosed that cultural diversity, national policies, family, and school practices framed migrants' acculturation process, similar to this study.

When examining the factors affecting acculturation patterns, Berry et al. (2006) found similar results to the current research. Their international study among immigrant youth showed that integration was the most frequently encountered strategy. Similar to our findings, one significant factor affecting their

acculturation choice was the length of residence in the receiving country. As refugees spend more time in the new habitat, they become more integrated into that society, which was also verified by the teacher participants of the present study. Teachers of the refugee participants shared that if refugees inhabit Turkey for five years or more, they do not have major problems with them. In sharp contrast, newly migrated students generally have problems adapting to an unfamiliar environment. These findings are also in line with the study of Pham and Harris (2001), who found a significant correlation between the length of stay and participation in the American culture among Vietnamese-Americans with a mean age of 26. They asserted that the informants with short residence periods in America also attended Vietnamese settings and cultures more and consequently adopted marginalization and separation strategies. The residence period thus was found to be influential in regard to the chosen patterns.

Age is a crucial variable when discussing migrants' acculturation patterns (Beiser, 2005). Research has shown that adults and adolescents predominantly differ in terms of acculturating to an environment (Faragallah et al., 1997). Unger et al. (2002) unveiled that their young immigrants generally picked assimilation and integration, whereas the adults opted for separation and marginalization. It is assumed that younger and better-educated people adapt better (Dow, 2011). In a parallel sense, Birman and Trickett (2001) also highlighted the significance of age by stating that children are more capable of learning a new language, cultural behaviors, and traditions than their parents. The results of the current thesis also confirmed those of previous research. Our teacher participants could have a chance to compare older and younger students throughout their experiences with refugee students. They noticed that refugees who arrived at the age of around five could perform better adaptation models. By contrast, the ones who arrived in Turkey at the age of around 11 cannot fully become a member of Turkey. Their contentions also matched up with the previous literature.

By contrast, discrimination/social exclusion, stereotypes about Syrian people, paucity of interaction with Turkish people, language barrier, and financial difficulties were the recurrent themes for integration-impeding factors. The teacher participants also underscored the significance of language barriers in hindering their integration process. As mentioned in the previous chapter, it is important to accentuate the role of discriminatory behaviors since it was mentioned as the main problem by student participants. Overgeneralizing comments about the Syrian people are also heartbreaking for the students. Moreover, the students do not have much interaction with their Turkish friends outside school. More communication is needed so as to better integrate into the Turkish community. Apart from these difficulties, some of the participants are required to work after school; they have different concerns, so they cannot have time to participate in Turkish society more. As teacher participants contended, the language barrier can also be another problem in joining the Turkish community. Although the teachers did not have language-related problems with the participants in this study currently, it was a challenge at the beginning of their arrival.

Cultural differences were highlighted in this study. The informants asserted that cultural differences between Turkey and Syria were adversities they faced. They chiefly reported problems regarding Turkish people's manners and behaviors, especially towards the elderly. As they saw disrespectful behaviors by their peers towards the teacher, they could not comprehend the reasons. They believe that inappropriate behaviors should be forbidden. Literature also pointed out the significance of different cultural elements such as language and surroundings in performing maladaptive behaviors (Dryden-Peterson, 2017; Goldstein & Keller, 2015; Yang et al., 2018), similar to this study. The primacy of language as a component of culture has been accentuated in scholarly fields. What Yang et al. (2018) discovered was also affirmed by this thesis. As they found, difficulties in communication, which is a result of language barriers, were negatively correlated with international students' psychological needs whereas positively linked to culture shock. In addition to language's effect on the acculturation of the

participants, the teachers of them also reported challenges in communication. As they shared, some refugee students at their school might misunderstand the teachers when they are warned by them. One of the teachers relates that to the inadequate Turkish proficiency of the students. Some communication breakdowns might occur due to language-related problems. Furthermore, the teachers also asserted that they had problems communicating with the refugee parents. Although some parents can communicate in Turkish, others cannot. Especially during parent-teacher conferences, it is an issue for the teachers. As they shared, they usually ask a student for help to translate the dialogue. Kozan (2019) also mentioned language as a barrier to communication among the refugee parents, students, and teachers, which was also upheld by this study. Additionally, Kozan (2019) also underlined language's role in influencing refugee students' educational process. However, most of the participants in this research did not report any educational problems they encountered due to inadequate Turkish knowledge. It might be linked to their length of stay in Turkey, as they have been living in Turkey for more than five years. They might have minor language-related problems in their lessons. The teachers also confirmed that they did not experience language issues with the participants as they used to experience.

This study revealed that facing discriminatory behaviors negatively impinges on the students' involvement in the new environment. They revealed some undesirable discourses on their existence in Turkey. As shared in the results section of the thesis, they had been marginalized by some quarters in Turkey. Although they had been experiencing these incidents, they tried to find some ways to become a member of this community. This might be explained by their foresight to continue living in Turkey as they are obliged to do so. In a parallel sense, the role of perceived discrimination was underscored in manifold studies (Berry et al., 2006; Copeland-Linder et al., 2011; Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2003). When adolescents feel marginalized and rejected, their adaptation is directly affected by it, and they heavily disengage themselves from society. The present inquiry put forward that some participants separated themselves as they do not

have much interaction with Turkish people and the Turkish language. Their lives consist mostly of Syrian neighbors, Syrian friends, and relatives. Adolescents isolate themselves, and they are being marginalized simultaneously. At this point, it is of paramount importance to indicate that the mental well-being of the refugees is inextricably intertwined with their mutual relations with the host country and its cultural components (Breyer, 1988). Intergroup dynamics between host society and refugees are co-constructed, and these dynamics both shape acculturation and result from acculturation (Lutterbach & Beelmann, 2021). With this in mind, some implications will be discussed in the rest of the chapter for public well-being.

In modern and plural societies, one's overt racial group does not necessarily transmit information about them (Alcott & Watt, 2017); nevertheless, today, these stereotype-oriented thoughts still continue to be effective. Likewise, the findings showed that another integration-hindering factor was stereotypical beliefs about Syrian people. When asked about the aspects of living in Turkey that they do not cherish, the informants stated they were saddened by the views on the Syrian people, which did not reflect the truth. As they believe, generalizing comments about Syrian people sadden them and impede their well-being in Turkey as they do not feel accepted. Stereotype-oriented opinions of a group of people later culminate in discriminatory behaviors. Kirova (2001) underscored that teasing and name-calling have severe consequences such as isolation, lower self-esteem, and loneliness. The participants of the current thesis also noted how disturbed they feel by such discourses. Indeed, SP7 did not want to go to school for a while because her friends were calling her "Syrian" all the time without saying her name to tease her about her nationality. While she was working off stress by boxing, she actually hurt her ankle. Such events prove how dangerous the situation might become. These inter-group processes impact one's feeling of belongingness and health (McBrien, 2005). Likewise, in the thesis of Serim (2019), the impacts of discrimination were also highlighted, and peer discrimination was ascribed to the parents' attitudes regarding refugees. Parental discriminatory attitudes play a significant role in forming biased opinions among

Turkish students towards their Syrian classmates (Uzun & Bütün, 2016). As the Turkish peers of refugee students might also be exposed to these exclusionary ideas at school or at home, they are likely to perform similar attitudes towards their friends. Serim (2019) also stated that the "us" and "them" usage is quite recurrent in the dialogues of refugee students. The present thesis also encountered many "we" and "them" usage.

In the present thesis, another integration-impeding factor was found to be financial difficulties. Both for the adolescents and their parents, economic factors play a huge role in acclimatizing to the new environment. Some of the student participants have to work after school until late at night, which tremendously affected their attendance in the social contexts. In addition, some shared that they could not find a job due to their ethnic backgrounds. Economic factors were also highlighted in the preceding literature. Aycan and Berry (1996) investigated acculturation with a tight emphasis on economic integration. Data from 110 Turkish immigrants living in Canada affirmed that underemployment, unemployment, and status loss negatively impact immigrants' well-being and adaption to the new country. Jusufbašić (2019) also underlined the significance of socio-economic factors in the social inclusion of the refugee students by stating that they mostly live in disadvantaged areas due to the high cost of rent in other areas. The participants in this study also live in disadvantaged areas where the population of Turkish people is quite low. Thus, Syrian and Turkish people's interaction might also be scarce owing to the location of their houses. During the interviews, SP3 shared that he knew the location of the house of almost all of his Syrian friends. When he was inquired whether he spends more time with his Turkish or Syrian friends, he answered: "*I see them (Syrian friends) more. For example, I know their houses. I do not know the houses of all Turks.*" As a result, he can spend time with his Syrian friends after school. However, he did not have any idea about where his Turkish friends or classmates lived. Thus, they do not hang out apart from the school hours.

Another finding in relation to affecting acculturation was the lack of interaction with the Turkish community. The participants very rarely meet or hang out with their Turkish friends outside school. Their communication is only restricted to the school environment. When it is the case, they cannot spend as much time as they would like to with their Turkish peers. Actually, the comment made by SP10 shows how important it is for them to do activities together with Turks. As she said: "*I mostly think that the school should be boarding in order to communicate more with my friends.*" She expressed her joy when talking about the boarding summer school and how enjoyable it was. Such a wish shows how crucial it is to provide shared environments for adolescents. Likewise, a study by Erdogan (2012) reported similar results. The investigation conducted with Karen refugees in London, Ontario also showed that Karen refugees reported minimum interaction with Canadians. Little communication with the members of the host society was found to severely impact the integration of the participants. In sharp contrast, different religious practices were one of the significant integration-impeding factors in the study of Erdogan (2012), unlike this thesis. Religion as an enhancing factor was not reported by the participants.

As shown in the literature (Hart, 2009), refugee children and young adults undergo serious trauma during forced displacement, which severely impacts their psychological functioning and emotional well-being. It is cardinal to remember that war-affected people might show dissimilar acculturative patterns compared to immigrants. As there is coerced migration in refugees' situations, they might not voluntarily participate in all layers of the societal system or become assimilated, which is also a novel finding of this study. It is noteworthy to state that most of the participants had to skip grades because of the age difference between them and their peers. Indeed, this situation severely impacts their academic success. Also, some participants shared that they would not continue their education after middle school, although they wanted to go to university. Since they knew that their education journey would end, they might not show full adherence to take part in educational activities. As underlined earlier, parental factors and at-home practices have a huge role in adaptation. So as to

maintain and preserve their Syrian selves, some of them may hinder their children's attendance in different social contexts in Turkey. Additionally, in contrast to immigration, some factors such as being obliged to stay in Turkey or having access to basic things in this country might help them facilitate the process.

5.3. Identity Perceptions among Forced Migrants

The second research question aims to explicate the identity perceptions of forced migrants in an educational context after coerced migration and the interrelationship between identity choices and chosen acculturation strategy. Semi-structured interviews unveiled different types of identity perceptions of the informants. The emergent themes for identity perceptions were hybrid identity, Syrian identity, and in-betweenness. None of the participants performed only Turkish identity.

During the analysis process, the participants' responses were categorized under three main themes as aforementioned. Their answers containing elements such as regarding themselves as Syrians-Turks, giving importance to both countries' national holidays, attaching equal importance to both cultures, and displaying both their Syrian and Turkish selves in their daily lives were construed as hybrid identity examples. On the other hand, regarding themselves as only a Syrian, rejecting Turkish culture at home, wish to return to Syria, parental limitations on Turkish usage at home were interpreted as Syrian identity components. The last theme germane to identity perceptions was in-betweenness, under which interviewees' indecisive comments like being indecisive about their identity, not knowing where they belong to, and being indecisive about returning to Syria were categorized.

Instead of a binary approach and monolithic ideologies towards identity, this thesis attempts to explicate identity as a dynamic, liquid, and non-linear process. Hence, Bhabha's (1984) term 'hybridity' is utilized to describe the complex

nature of the self. Hybrid identity is practiced by the interactions of different cultures. Therefore, it is constructed through social interplays. As this thesis embraced Social Identity Theory as one of the main conceptual pillars, social interplays lie at the center of the discussion. It was supposed that adolescents' identities are shaped within the process of interaction with people who have been socialized differently. As a result of this situation, the adolescents might adopt plural identities in which both home and host cultures are blended. This plurality was observed in the participants of this study. They are the subjects of this intricate process by going back and forth in the spectrum of identity. The participants' responses revealed that they displayed hybrid identities. Most of them shared that they viewed themselves as Syrian-Turks. In a similar sense, they had a tendency to celebrate the national holidays of Turkey, too. The teachers' statements also verified students' claims. The teachers mentioned that the students' engagement in national ceremonies was quite high. It was noticed that some of them espoused both their own and mainstream identities. These findings were congruent with the relevant body of research. Constructing multiple identities has become a fact of life for refugees who would like to satisfy both their families and mainstream societies' expectations (Chao, 2019). Chao (2019) emphasized the power-driven dynamics and the role of linguistic identity in refugee identity construction. Additionally, trans-local practices like community-engaged activities were argued. Current thinking also highlights that trans-local practices are paramount in drawing adolescents into the community. The informants who actively engaged in these practices were found to integrate and have a hybrid identity. Some participants were interested in painting, basketball, or chess. As they stay after school for training or painting, they have more chances to communicate with people of host society. Mutual relationships can be established with the help of these extracurricular activities after school so that the host society can welcome refugees as well. In a similar vein, Asher's (2008) study also shed light on the hybrid identities of youth immigrants. In the study conducted with 10 Indian American high school students, it was shown that the participants revealed different identity patterns at school and at home. Indian end of the identity spectrum was observable at home, whereas the

American end of the identity spectrum was noticed at school. It presents that it is possible to shift between identities without sharply having or displaying only one of them. The current thesis is also built upon a similar idea. Some of the participants here demonstrated hybrid identities by assenting both their Turkish and Syrian selves. The teacher informants affirmed this as well. TP1 and TP4 shared that they could not differentiate between a Syrian and a Turkish student sometimes. They showed conformity to the rules at school and did not behave differently. Hybrid identities were accentuated in the work of Irizarry (2007) as well. The identities are not merely formed based on ethnicity or race. By contrast, identities are intricate because people's experiences and relations with others are different (Irizarry, 2007). The present inquiry also put forward diverse experiences of students. Diversity in their experiences resulted in differences and dynamism in their identity patterns, which actually reflects the nature of unstable and social construction of identity. The participants in this study had been through dissimilar occurrences in which their acculturation and identity patterns were shaped. Hence, they displayed unlike positions in their spectrum of identity. Some regarded themselves as hybrids; others believed that they were Syrians. There were also some students who could not position themselves and were thus in-between.

Some participants reported that they felt in-between. That is, they could not categorize themselves, and they were largely indecisive about their views about themselves. To illustrate, when they asked how they identified themselves, they responded they did not know. Liminality was accentuated in previous works as well (Beech, 2011; Daskalaki et al., 2016; Mason, 2020). Liminal identities are investigated "as socio-spatial, translocal bodily experiences that are temporarily crystallized and dissolved by variously embodied displacements and emplacements over space-time" as contended by Daskalaki et al. (2016, p. 184). Being in a stage of limbo means existing between positions attributed to law or customs (Turner, 1969). The participants in this research were in limbo as they had differentials at home and outside the home. It was found that maintenance of culture was a reality at home; however, adaptation to the new environment and

embracing becoming a Turkish member were other realities at the societal level. It is assumed that these different expectations generated liminality in the participants. The ones who are in a stage of limbo could not embrace one identity fully or both of the identities in a balanced way.

In this thesis, the identity perceptions of the students and their relation to acculturation processes are investigated. It is important to express that ethnic identity generally includes various dimensions like the sense of belongingness, engagement in a group, shared values, self-identification, and beliefs about one's own group (Phinney et al., 2001). Although it is multifaceted, certain factors are found to be influential with regard to ethnic identity development. Phinney et al. (2001) claimed that ethnic identity tends to be robust when immigrants wish to preserve their identities and pluralism is endorsed in the receiving society. However, if there is pressure to become assimilated and minority groups feel admitted, national identity tends to be dominant. Their study revealed that young immigrants who adopted integrated identities also had the highest scores in the measurement of psychological adjustment, whereas the ones with marginalized identities displayed the lowest scores on the psychological adjustment test. These findings support the idea of the reciprocal relationship between identity perceptions and acculturation, similar to this study. The present thesis also put forward that the informants with hybrid identity patterns presented mostly integration as an acculturation orientation. This study unveiled that the young refugees who had perceived discrimination heavily presented Syrian identity patterns and tried to preserve their Syrian selves in Turkey. In that respect, it can be claimed that acculturation orientations and identity perceptions intersect each other.

The identification of self was found to be related to the attitudes and immigration policies of the host society. Yağmur and Vijver (2012) conducted a study with a total of 1085 Turkish immigrants living in Australia, France, Germany, and the Netherlands so as to examine their acculturation and language orientations. The results revealed that Turkish identity was found to be weaker, whereas

mainstream identity was stronger in Australia, where multiculturalism was welcomed. As they suggested, if a country does not place pressure on immigrants in terms of challenging their identities, they feel the minimum need to preserve them. The findings of this thesis also emphasized the role of the host society. Most of the participants expressed their gratitude to the people in Turkey and appreciated it. Friendly attitudes from the mainstream community facilitated their adaptation. Additionally, TP4 contended that Syrian families could create their own communities in Turkey. They have their own grocery stores, hairdressers, and shops, as she said. Creating their Syrian communities here and being allowed to do so might have increased their motivation toward living in this country. Therefore, national policies that support multiculturalism carry importance as they facilitate adaptation.

The process of acculturation and identity formation is twofold. As host and home cultures interact with each other, both of them go through some changes. At this point, intergroup relations play a vital role in society. In the current thesis, the mutual relationships between both cultures are investigated. It was discovered that the participants' experiences regarding acculturation and identity largely vary. The variables are, thus, crucial to understand the underlying reasons for the differences in acculturation and identity orientations. The contrast between groups, which is the power dynamic in this study as one group is the dominant one whereas the other one is non-dominant, needs to be explored since it shapes all the process. Hatoss (2012) similarly reported that Sudanese refugees in Australia have a strong self-concept and Australian identity concurrently. Nevertheless, the findings revealed that they were regarded as outsiders by the host society. This study also found matching patterns. Some informants of this study also strive to have a positive identity and take part in social settings. However, for example, SP4 answered, "*I mean, I would like to, but no, they would not want that*" to the question of whether she would like to spend more time with her Turkish peers. This might show she felt like an outsider in this community.

Minorities might also show selective integration patterns, too. As Mishra and Shirazi (2010) found in their research, American Muslim women did not fully adhere to the mainstream culture; however, they only picked some aspects of it. The same patterns were observable in the current study. The participants did not show absolute adherence to the Turkish culture; nevertheless, they adopted certain parts of it. To give an example, they mostly adapted to the school context, whereas they did not appreciate all the behaviors of Turkish people.

Piontkowski et al. (2000) assert that if one has a paucity of knowledge about the host culture and loss of reference to one's own group, that person experiences insecurity and anxiety. Simultaneously, dominant groups' lack of knowledge about non-dominant culture and positive evaluation of themselves also impacted their acculturation, as they reported. Likewise, the findings of this thesis also highlighted the significance of attributions of mainstream culture to minority groups. Almost all the participants stated that the attitudes towards them have a tremendous impact on their identities and acculturation orientations.

The educational setting is also significant in forming students' identity patterns as children who are isolated and marginalized in the school setting may not feel belongingness anywhere (McBrien, 2005). The participants in this research expressed their gratitude to their peers for being helpful, along with discontentment with their peers' attitudes. Although some Turkish peers facilitate the process of identity construction and integration, others might hinder the process. The refugee students' involvement in educational contexts heavily depends on their level of marginalization or isolation at school. When they encounter such attitudes, they do not want to join in these contexts, which culminates in a lack of feeling of belongingness.

5.4. Language Preferences of Forced Migrants

The third research question investigated the language use practices of adolescent refugees. The findings showed that participants mostly used both their native

tongues and Turkish. When writing or reading, all of the participants shared that they only do them in Turkish. However, both languages are generally used for other activities such as watching TV programs/films, thinking, and usage of social media. In addition, the language used at home and language used with their friends at school were examined. It was found that the language at home was their native language. Indeed, some interviewees practiced Turkish with their siblings secretly at home on the grounds of their parents' reactions. In respect of the language they used with their friends, it can be stated that both languages were used in their interactions at school. When they have Syrian friends around them, almost half of them prefer using their native language with their Syrian friends.

A close examination of the language practices of Syrian adolescent refugees showed that their language practices are influenced by various factors. The teachers in this study expressed their thoughts on the language use of the students and claimed that, at the beginning of their arrival, the students mainly had problems related to their knowledge of Turkish language. As the students and teachers did not understand each other and the lessons were held in Turkish, both the students and the teachers stated language barriers as the main problem. Language barrier as a problem was highlighted in the past research as well. Watkins et al. (2012) also pointed out the role of language barriers among Karen refugee women in Australia. The findings also revealed that cultural and socio-political factors operate as barriers to education. In order to access vocational and educational opportunities, enhance self-efficacy, and diminish social isolation, language has a central role (Watkins et al., 2012). Similarly, the results in this thesis correspond nicely with the previous literature. Knowing Turkish was quite significant for the interviewees in this study, particularly for vocational opportunities. SP1 shared that she could not find a job, and she was rejected by some of the employers for being Syrian. This might be ascribed to her not being a native speaker of Turkish.

It was supposed that there is a positive relationship between acculturation and language preferences. Being an incompetent user of Turkish will presumably reduce their access to social life in Turkey, which probably impedes their integration into Turkey. If they are not speakers of Turkish, they will experience integration-related problems. As reported by the teacher participants, the students had lots of communication issues with their Turkish peers and teachers at the beginning of their school life. The issues started to be solved as they learned Turkish and were involved in Turkish settings. The study by Bartlett et al. (2017) ratified these findings as well; the integration process highlights elements like language acquisition, the continuation of biculturalism, and "mutual accommodation between the refugee's home culture and the receiving or host society" (p.110). Hence, language acquisition of the host society is found to be influential in relation to refugees' adaptation to the newly arrived community.

Considering their language-related practices both at home and outside home, it can be claimed that the participants who are living in an environment in which their language practices are accepted and they are given space to freely switch between languages tend to become integrated more. On the other hand, if they are restricted by their environments, they tend to become separated or feel in-between. They feel like being othered. The users of non-dominant languages in a society might be positioned as *others*, and the discourse regarding in-groups and out-groups is being constructed (Cooke & Simpson, 2011). As mentioned earlier, the student participants' responses considerably include 'us' and 'them' structures. Although most of them regard themselves as Syrian-Turks, the demarcation between 'us' and 'them' might explain their feelings of being othered. One study conducted by Erdogan-Özturk and Işık-Güler (2020) investigated the online discourses through tweets with the hashtag *#idontwantsyriansinmycountry* in communicative environments to comprehend the proliferation of exclusionary discourses against Syrian forced migrants. Their discourse analysis uncovered that Syrian refugees were delineated as invaders. Turkish people's tweets mainly consisted of 'us' and 'them' structures. Indeed, the hashtag itself presents the in-group vs. out-group demarcation. The

discourses toward refugees also functioned as a way to construct a collective nationalist Turkish identity. Our study also affirms that deictic pronouns lead to unfavorable narratives of refugees.

Graham and Brown (1996) underlined the role of peers in language learning. Their study conducted with native Spanish speakers in a small town in Mexico and attending bilingual school revealed that developing close friendships with the native speakers of English and their favorable opinions on the English community assisted learners in attaining native-like language proficiency. These results coincide with those of this thesis. The role of peers has been accentuated throughout this study. The students having close interaction with native speakers of Turkish who are their peers also incorporate Turkish in many aspects of their lives; speaking in Turkish is not only limited to the school environment for them. When using social media, chatting with friends, watching or listening to something, their language preference is largely Turkish. If they are surrounded by native Turkish speakers, their acculturation processes are predisposed to become smoother as well. To give an example, SP4 shared how marginalized and isolated she had been feeling since her arrival in Turkey. She does not use Turkish outside school at all. Indeed, she also added she was having language-related problems during the courses. She reported that she did not have any Turkish friends. Her level of Turkish and feeling of isolation might stem from not having enough support from her peers in terms of bettering her Turkish. Likewise, the teacher participants also verified the significance of companionship. As the students become more acquainted with their Turkish classmates, their Turkish usage increases, too. That is why they perform better linguistic practices compared to their peers who could not establish connections with their Turkish friends.

In a similar sense, Lee's (2001) dissertation research also proved that the age of arrival, social interaction with American people, and English usage were substantial predictors of English proficiency among Korean undergraduate students at an American university. Furthermore, it was shown that integration

into the American society and positive affirmation of ethnic and cultural identity is necessary for the accomplishment of second language learning and successful acculturation. The findings in the current thesis confirm these findings as well. Second language learning and successful acculturation go hand in hand for adolescents as well, along with other acculturation affecting factors. Lee (2001) asserted that gender is another predictor of English proficiency; however, this thesis' findings did not report any gender-related factors.

In addition to the social interaction with people of the receiving country, the culture of origin and familial perceptions play a crucial role in language choice, too. A study conducted by Revis (2017) similarly proved that claim. The research carried out with Ethiopian and Colombian refugee families unveiled that the groups largely differ in terms of their language policies at home. Children in Ethiopian families mostly use native language at home due to the native language only policy. On the other hand, children raised in a flexible environment were predisposed to use English, which might conclude that "explicit management" (p.58) paves the way for using a minority language. Although the current thesis did not include divergent refugee groups, Revis' (2017) findings correspond to the results of this study. The role of familial interference in language practices has been underscored throughout the study.

5.5. Implications

The present thesis explored how the forced migrant adolescents' acculturation into Turkey occurred together with their identification of themselves and their language choices. The results furnish significant applicable implications pertinent to the betterment of the experiences of refugees in Turkey, the coexistence of multicultural groups, and the whole society. Despite many ongoing efforts, some implications might still be beneficial.

The language barrier was accentuated by both the teacher and the student interviewees. Therefore, particularly at the beginning of their arrivals, more

language courses should be provided for forced migrants. This will enable them to have more chances to interact with Turkish people, which will presumably result in successful acculturation.

Teachers also have a tremendous role in refugee students' lives. The results revealed that the teachers did not have any prior training in how to approach refugee students. It is necessary for teachers to be culturally sensitive. With the help of special training about this issue, better sensitivity to refugees' backgrounds might be attained by teachers. Refugee students are "surrounded by fear and uncertainty" (Bash & Zezlina-Phillips, 2006, p.126). Hence, having an inclusive teaching approach is of importance in order not to leave any refugee students behind. When teachers have a clear understanding of students' forced migration and educational backgrounds, they can better comprehend and interpret the interpersonal relations of migrant students in the classroom (Mendenhall et al., 2017). Additionally, as suggested by Bartlett et al. (2017), school leadership, in-service and pre-service teacher programs would enable a more dynamic understanding of culture and critical thinking regarding rhetoric about assimilation and school policies. With the help of that, there will be more culturally sensitive teachers. Considering the multiplicity in the classroom, traditional pedagogies could be reconsidered in order to assist students and cater to their needs.

Apart from the teachers, the curricula are also responsible for all-encompassing education. Since the significance of native language and culture has been highlighted, the elements from their backgrounds can be included in the curricula to make them feel accepted and respected. When they negotiate their own cultures, their motivation towards the subject matter might escalate as well. In a parallel sense, incorporating their challenges through, for example, reading texts or books (Hope, 2008) can develop self-recognition in refugee students. Hence, they would feel recognized in educational settings. Wofford and Tibi (2018) also suggest interviewing Syrian refugee parents to learn more about before, during, and after their resettlement, and this might be of help in developing a curriculum

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around the findings. Considering this, some amendments in the curricula nationwide can be developed. Berry et al. (2006) highlighted that when the integration path is adopted by the whole society, cultural diversity and inclusion should be reflected in the curricula in which everybody feels they are represented in the system. Instead of a fixed curriculum, fluidity of culture and identity needs to be depicted in the curricula (Asher, 2008). Thus, there is a need for a new curriculum.

This thesis also encountered many examples of discrimination from the dominant group. As asserted by Beelmann and Lutterbach (2020), the programs are still poorly associated with developmental information, prejudice, and discriminatory behaviors. The programs should thus also address the dominant groups' predisposition to discriminate against forced migrants. This can be an applicable implication that will apparently lead to less discriminatory practices. The stereotypes are required to be deconstructed. This thesis presented that some teachers also have a bias toward Syrian refugee students' regarding their academic potential. Not only Turkish peers' but also Turkish teachers' biases should be deconstructed. Asher (2008) recommends that class, race, gender, and culture-related prejudice should be investigated by teachers through self-reflexivity with the help of teacher education.

In addition to the changes in curricula, arranging extracurricular activities appears to be another implication throughout this research. Social activities carry a great amount of importance, as has been proven in this research. The time refugee students spend with their Turkish peers should not only cover the lesson hours. Joining activities after school or peer gatherings might be beneficial in forming a hybrid identity and integration. Thus, it is recommended that the school administration and teachers should encourage forced migrant students to be more involved in such activities. The students in this study mentioned activities like joining basketball courses or chess clubs after school. The range and frequency of such occasions should be increased.

Taking the parents' role into account during the whole acculturation and identity formation process, collaboration and cooperation of families become vital to promote concurrent ethnic maintenance and adaptation to Turkey. As the teacher participants touched upon, parents are not really involved in their kids' schooling progress. It would be rather encouraging for adolescents to have their parents' full support. Hence, parents need to receive training about how to support their children after forcibly migrating to another country. The teachers also asserted that refugee families' participation in parent-teacher conferences is relatively inadequate. Although they want their kids to continue their education, they often prefer staying out of the process. It is a fact that the language barrier is primarily responsible for this situation; however, it can be extensively solved with the help of translators. School-parent relations can be reinforced through continuous communication, too. Home visits might be another way of tackling integration-related problems. Comprehending their lives and practices at home will assuredly offer authorities essential insights regarding the policies that need to be revised. If refugee students' active contribution to the national society is desired, parents' role as navigators between constraints should be taken into consideration, and they should be supported by the programs (Sabatier & Berry, 2008).

Another focal finding of this study was the significance of heritage cultural maintenance. For successful acculturation, one needs to adopt both home and host cultures. Therefore, it is suggested that the participants' culture of origin should be respected and utilized. When they are not threatened with losing their identity, they are less likely to reject the host culture and identity. Hence, they should have some room for practicing their own identity and culture. Lee (2001) also mentions how significant it is not to impose negative images about native culture as it might result in self-hatred and negative attributions towards the society. Positive attributions toward refugee students' home culture and identity might work as a bridge that diminishes their negative attitudes toward their own or host cultural group. To achieve this, the internet might be utilized as a source of the cultural bridge as well. Elias and Lemish (2009) also indicated the role of

virtual support networks in establishing relevant contact with both home and host society to cope with two life-changing phenomena, namely "adolescence and relocation" (p.547), in their study with Russian adolescent immigrants living in Israel. In such a digital age, the sources the internet offer can be exercised so as to create a sphere in which refugee students can maintain their ethnic cultures and meet local peers, too. With the help of such digital platforms, they would not feel alone in experiencing the concomitant hardships of forced migration.

As mentioned earlier, forced migration has significant psychological ramifications. Adolescents may go under severe trauma, which will possibly have an impact on them throughout their lives. So as to curtail any possible damage to their social life, school counselors' immense role needs to be reconsidered. Students' progress needs to be tracked by professionals, and necessary assistance must be supplied. Their academic achievement is also affected by their psychological situation. Thus, schools' guidance services should conscientiously observe refugee students and arrange regular gatherings with them.

The aforementioned implications are thought to be applicable and useful in refugee integration and schooling contexts. In addition, public welfare can be sustained with the aid of these implications. The coexistence of minority and majority groups can be achieved through mutual understanding and collaboration.

5.6. Conclusion

The current thesis explored the acculturation patterns of Syrian adolescent forced migrants after being forcibly displaced. The study also examines the identity perceptions of refugee students in an educational context, together with their language preferences. The literature section introduced comprehensive documentation of the theoretical framework, which are Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), and Acculturation Framework (Berry, 1997). To make

better sense of the bigger picture of the adolescents' practices, the qualitative research design was adopted. The data were gathered through interviews conducted with 11 Syrian forced migrant middle school students. Additionally, four teachers, who were working at the same school, participated in the study to triangulate the students' claims. The qualitative data analysis unveiled several themes regarding acculturation, identity perceptions, and language preferences. The findings showed that adolescents largely integrated into the Turkish community. On the other hand, separation was another recurrent theme during the data analysis. In regard to the factors affecting their acculturative practices, it was found that there are integration-enhancing and integration-impeding factors. As for the integration-enhancing factors, peaceful environment in Turkey, length of residence, age of arrival, and helpful people in Turkey were the most frequently stated themes, whereas discrimination and stereotypes were repeatedly uttered as integration-impeding factors. Identity perceptions were found to be hybrid, Syrian, and in-betweenness. As for the language practices of the participants, it can be claimed that they mostly use their native tongues at home and Turkish at school. Their Turkish practices are mainly prohibited in their homes.

 All in all, this research illuminated the acculturation path of the forced migrants. It is noteworthy to state that their paths should be interpreted as a spectrum similar to their identity patterns. It might not be convenient to sharply categorize their practices in Turkey, considering the fluidity of culture and identity. Besides, there is a need to deepen our collective understanding of forced migration in order to share cultural and linguistic settings. Education will surely have a key role in benefitting society.

5.7. Suggestions for Further Research

Based on the findings the study provided, some substantive recommendations for future studies can be made. First of all, the participant profile can diversify. This study merely addressed the Syrian forced migrants who do not have a Turkish

background and excluded the participants with a Turkmen background owing to the possible influence on the homogeneity of the results. Further studies can be conducted with multinational migrant groups. In addition, comparative studies could enrich our information about the similarities and differences between distinctive national groups so that the related implications can be presented. As Berry (2001) also recommended, research should take populations of both immigrant and receiving societies into consideration in order to better comprehend mutual behaviors between two groups, link those behaviors to extensive contexts, and increase our awareness of migration. In this respect, refugee students' peers can be included in studies as well.

A further suggestion could be receiving help from a competent translator and including the parents as well. As parents did not know Turkish very well, the semi-structured interviews could not have been carried on with them. Therefore, assist of a translator would be useful with regard to reaching parents and gathering data from them.

Another suggestion would be conducting longitudinal research due to the nature of identity development. With the help of longitudinal studies, one can observe and notice the development of an individual in terms of identity and acculturation over time. Likewise, qualitative studies may be upheld by quantitative methods so as to reach more generalizable findings. In addition, the present thesis only focused on the adolescents' experiences. No comparison between different age groups has been made. Hence, future research might also include adults and children and conduct a more extensive study.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: APPROVAL OF THE METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER

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Konu   :   Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi   :   İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Prof. Dr. Sultan Çiğdem Sağın ŞİMŞEK

Danışmanlığını yürüttüğünüz Senanur Tiryaki 'nin "Suriyeli Ergenlik Çağındaki Çocukların Kültürlenme Süreci ve Aidiyet Duygusu Gelişiminin Türk Eğitim Ortamında İncelenmesi" başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülmüş ve **489-ODTU-2021** protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Saygılarımızla bilgilerinize sunarız.

Prof.Dr. Mine MISIRLISOY
İAEK Başkanı

APPENDIX B: DATA COLLECTION PERMISSION

APPENDIX C: PARENTAL APPROVAL FORM (TURKISH VERSION)

Sevgili Veli,

Bu çalışma Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi yüksek lisans öğrencisi Senanur Tiryaki tarafından yürütülmektedir.

Bu çalışmanın amacı nedir? Bu çalışma Suriyeli ergenlik çağındaki zorunlu göçmenlerin Türkiye'de aidiyet duygularıyla birlikte yaşadıkları kültürleşme sürecini araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Çocuğunuzun katılımcı olarak ne yapmasını istiyoruz? Bu amaç doğrultusunda, çocuğunuzdan bazı soruları cevaplamasını isteyeceğiz ve cevaplarını/davranışlarını ses kaydı ve notlar alarak toplayacağız. Sizden çocuğunuzun katılımcı olmasıyla ilgili izin istediğimiz gibi, çalışmaya başlamadan çocuğunuzdan da sözlü olarak katılımıyla ilgili rızası mutlaka alınacak.

Çocuğunuzdan alınan bilgiler ne amaçla ve nasıl kullanılacak? Çocuğunuzdan alacağımız cevaplar tamamen gizli tutulacak ve sadece araştırmacılar tarafından değerlendirilecektir. Elde edilecek bilgiler sadece bilimsel amaçla (yayın, konferans sunumu, vb.) kullanılacak, çocuğunuzun ya da sizin ismi ve kimlik bilgileriniz, hiçbir şekilde kimseyle paylaşılmayacaktır.

Çocuğunuz ya da siz çalışmayı yarıda kesmek isterseniz ne yapmalısınız? Katılım sırasında sorulan sorulardan ya da herhangi bir uygulama ile ilgili başka bir nedenden ötürü çocuğunuz kendisini rahatsız hissettiğini belirtirse, ya da kendi belirtmese de araştırmacı çocuğun rahatsız olduğunu öngörürse, çalışmaya sorular tamamlanmadan ve derhal son verilecektir. (Eğer katılım sırasında ebeveyn de mevcut olacaksa) Şayet siz çocuğunuzun rahatsız olduğunu hissederseniz, böyle bir durumda çalışmadan sorumlu kişiye çocuğunuzun çalışmadan ayrılmasını istediğinizi söylemeniz yeterli olacaktır.

Bu çalışmayla ilgili daha fazla bilgi almak isterseniz: Çalışmaya katılımınızın sonrasında, bu çalışmayla ilgili sorularınız yazılı biçimde cevaplandırılacaktır. Çalışma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak için İngiliz Dili Öğretimi bölümü yüksek lisans öğrencisi Senanur Tiryaki ile (e-posta: senanur.tiryaki@metu.edu.tr) ile iletişim kurabilirsiniz. Bu çalışmaya katılımınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz.

Yukarıdaki bilgileri okudum ve çocuğumun bu çalışmada yer almasını onaylıyorum (Lütfen alttaki iki seçenekten birini işaretleyiniz.

Evet onaylıyorum___   *Hayır, onaylamıyorum___*

Veli adı-soyadı: _____   Bugünün   Tarihi:_____

Çocuğun adı soyadı ve doğum tarihi:_____

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR REFUGEE STUDENTS

(TURKISH VERSION)

1. KISIM

Aşağıdaki aktiviteleri hangi dilde veya hangi kültür çerçevesinde yaptığınızı işaretleyiniz.

Aşağıdaki aktiviteleri hangi dilde/kültürde yapıyorsunuz?	Arapça/Kürtçe	Hem Arapça/Kürtçe hem Türkçe	Türkçe	Fark etmez/İkisi de değil
Yemek				
Müzik/dans				
Kitap okumak				
TV programları				
Filmler				
Düşünmek				
Evde konuşulan dil				
Okulda arkadaşlarla konuşulan dil				
Yazı yazmak				

2. KISIM

Aşağıda Suriyeli öğrencilerin Türkiye'ye uyum süreciyle ilgili maddeler yer almaktadır. Kesinlikle katılmıyorum, kararsızım, katılıyorum, kesinlikle katılıyorum seçeneklerinden yalnızca bir ifadeyi işaretleyiniz (**1=Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum, 2=Katılmıyorum, 3=Kararsızım, 4=Katılıyorum, 5= Kesinlikle Katılıyorum**)

	1	2	3	4	5
Doğduğum ülkenin kültürünü ve yaşam tarzını korumamız ve vurgulamamız gerektiğine inanıyorum.					
Hem doğduğum ülkenin kültürünün hem de şu an yaşadığım ülkenin kültürünün ve yaşam tarzının bir karışımını benimsemem faydalı olur.					
Artık Türkiye'de yaşıyorum; bu nedenle sadece Türk yaşam tarzını benimsemem gerektiğine inanıyorum.					
Ne kendi kültürümü yaşatmak ne de Türk kültürünü benimsemek istiyorum.					
Suriyeli olmak benim için gurur vericidir; bu nedenle yaşadığım ülkede de Suriyeli kimliğimi göstermeye çalışırım.					
Suriye'de doğdum ve Türkiye'de yaşıyorum. Bu yüzden kendimi bir Suriyeli-Türk olarak adlandırabilirim.					
Türk kimliğimi daha çok benimsiyorum ve kendimi Suriyeli kimliğime daha yabancılaşmış hissediyorum.					
Kendimi herhangi bir etnik gruba veya ulusal gruba ait hissetmiyorum.					
Suriyelilerin yanında kendimi daha rahat hissediyorum, bu yüzden arkadaşlarımın Suriyeli olmasını tercih ediyorum.					
Suriyeli ve Türk arkadaşlarımın olması benim için hem değerli hem de önemlidir.					
Şu anda Türkiye'de yaşıyorum ve Türk arkadaşlarımla daha iyi vakit geçiriyorum.					

3. KISIM

GÖRÜŞME SORULARI

Okul ve arkadaşlar ile ilgili sorular:

1) Okuldaki en iyi arkadaşın kim? En iyi arkadaşını nasıl seçersin?
2) Etrafında kimler varken kendini daha iyi hissedersin?
3) Sınıfta kimin yanında oturuyorsun?
4) Okulda ve okul dışındaki boş zamanlarında kimlerle vakit geçirirsin? Neden?
5) Suriyeli arkadaşlarınla sık sık görüşüp buluşur musun?
6) Okuldaki Türk arkadaşlarınla okul dışında görüşüyor musun? Eğer cevabın evetse, ne sıklıkla?
7) Okulda veya okul dışında farklı etkinliklere katılır mısın?
8) Türkçe ile ilgili zorluk çekiyor musun? Sınıfta dil sebebiyle bir konuyu anlamadığın zaman, Türk arkadaşların sana yardımcı oluyor mu?
9) Okulda paylaşmak istediğin bir sorunun olursa, kiminle konuşmayı tercih edersin?
10) Okulda derslere katılır mısın? Öğretmenlerinle rahat iletişim kurar mısın?

Toplum ile ilgili sorular:

11) Senin için hangi dini/milli günler önemlidir? Türkiye'nin milli bayramlarını kutlar mısın?
12) Doğduğun ülkeden getirdiğin kültürel değerlere bağlı olduğunu düşünüyor musun? Bu kültürel değerlere örnek verebilir misin?
13) Türkiye'de Suriyeli olmak sence nasıl bir his? Bir metafor ile anlatabilir misin?
14) Suriye'nin tarihi, kültürü ve gelenekleri hakkında yeni şeyler öğrenmeye hevesli misin?
15) Türkiye'nin tarihi, kültürü ve gelenekleri hakkında yeni şeyler öğrenmeye hevesli misin?
16) Türkiye'deki yaşamına dair en çok hoşuna giden şey/şeyler nedir/nelerdir?
17) Türkiye'deki yaşamına dair en az hoşuna giden şey/şeyler nedir/nelerdir?
18) Türkler ile ne kadar iletişimin var?
19) Türkler ile ne kadar iletişiminin olmasını istersin?

Aile yaşamı ve dil ile ilgili sorular:

20) Arapça okuyup yazabiliyor musun?
21) Ailenizde hangi diller hangi bireyler arası kullanılıyor?
22) Konuştuğunuz diller hangileridir? Arapça ve Türkçeden başka bir dil konuşuyor musunuz?
23) Evde ailenizle konuşurken Türkçe ve Arapça kullanıyor musunuz? İki dili birlikte kullandığınız oluyor mu?

24) Türkçe konuşurken aklına hiç Arapça kelimeler gelir mi?

25) Sosyal medya kullanır mısın? Bu platformları hangi dilde/dillerde kullanmayı tercih edersin? (Facebook, Instagram, Netflix)

26) Suriye'de akrabalarınız var mı? Varsa onlarla görüşüyor musunuz?

27) Suriye'yi ziyaret ediyor musunuz? Eğer ziyaret ediyorsanız gittiğiniz zaman Türkiye'yi özlüyor musun?

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR REFUGEE STUDENTS
(ENGLISH VERSION)

PART 1

Please choose in which language or in which culture you do the following activities.

In which language/culture do you do the following activities?	Native Language	Both Native Language and Turkish	Turkish	Doesn't matter/ None
Listening to music				
Reading				
Writing				
TV programs				
Films				
Thinking				
Language at home				
Language at school				
Friends				
Social media				

PART 2

Below are the items related to the adaptation process of Syrian students to Turkey. Please tick only one of the options strongly disagree, undecided, agree, strongly agree. **(1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Undecided, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree)**

	1	2	3	4	5
I believe we should preserve and emphasize the culture and lifestyle of the country where I was born.					
It is helpful to adopt a mix of both the culture of the country where I was born and the culture and lifestyle of the country where I live now.					
Now I live in Turkey; For this reason, I believe that I should adopt only the Turkish lifestyle.					
I neither want to keep my own culture alive nor to adopt Turkish culture.					
Being Syrian makes me proud; That's why I try to show my Syrian identity in the country I live in.					
I was born in Syria and live in Turkey. That's why I can call myself a Syrian-Turkish.					
I embrace my Turkish identity more and I feel more alienated to my Syrian identity.					
I do not feel like I belong to any ethnic group or national group.					
I feel more comfortable around Syrians, so I prefer my friends to be Syrians.					
Having Syrian and Turkish friends is both valuable and important to me.					
I am currently living in Turkey and having a better time with my Turkish friends.					

PART 3

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Questions about the school and friends:

1) Who is your best friend at school? How do you choose your best friend?
2) With whom do you feel better?
3) Who do you sit next to in class?
4) Who do you spend time with in your spare time at school and outside of school? Why?
5) Do you see and meet with your Syrian friends often?
6) Do you see your Turkish friends at school outside of school? If yes, how often?
7) Do you participate in different activities at school or outside of school?
8) Do you have difficulties with Turkish? Do your Turkish friends help you when you do not understand a subject in class due to language?
9) If you have a problem at school that you want to share, who would you rather talk to?
10) Do you attend classes at school? Do you communicate comfortably with your teachers?

Society-related questions:

11) Which religious/national days are important to you? Do you celebrate Turkey's national holidays?
12) Do you think it depends on the cultural values you brought from the country you were born in? Can you give examples of these cultural values?
13) How does it feel to be a Syrian in Turkey? Can you describe it with a metaphor?
14) Are you eager to learn new things about Syria's history, culture and traditions?
15) Are you eager to learn new things about Turkey's history, culture and traditions?
16) What is/are the thing/things you like the most about your life in Turkey?
17) What is/are the thing/things you do not like much about your life in Turkey?
18) How much communication do you have with Turks?
19) How much communication would you like to have with the Turks?

Questions about family life and language usage:

20) Can you read and write in Arabic?
21) Which languages are used among which individuals in your family?
22) What languages do you speak? Do you speak any language other than Arabic and Turkish?

23) Do you use Turkish and Arabic when talking to your family at home? Do you ever use two languages together?
24) Do you ever think of Arabic words when speaking Turkish?
25) Do you use social media? In which language(s) would you prefer to use these platforms? (Facebook, Instagram, Netflix)
26) Do you have relatives in Syria? If yes, do you meet with them?
27) Do you visit Syria? If you visit, do you miss Turkey when you go?

APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TEACHER PARTICIPANTS (TURKISH VERSION)

1) Ne kadar süredir mülteci öğrencilerin bulunduğu okulda öğretmensiniz? Sizce, mülteci öğrencilerin okula uyum süreci nasıl gidiyor?

2) Mülteci öğrenciler genellikle kimlerle arkadaşlık etmeyi tercih ediyorlar? Türk öğrencilerle ve birbirleriyle olan iletişimlerini nasıl tanımlayabilirsiniz?

3) Gözlemleriniz ışığında, Suriye kökenli öğrenciler Türkçeyi mi yoksa Arapçayı mı daha sık kullanıyor?

4) Sizce Suriyeli öğrenciler Türk kültürünü mü yoksa kendi kültürlerini mi daha çok benimsemiş durumdalar?

   a) Örneğin milli bayramlara ve özel günlere katılıyorlar mı? Katılmalarını bekliyor musunuz?

   b) Hangi dilde kitaplar okumayı tercih ediyorlar? Türkçe mi Arapça mı?

   c) Sizce Türk kültürünün ve Arap kültürünün birbirine benzediği/ayrıştığı durumlar var mı? Bu konudaki gözlemlerinizi aktarabilir misiniz? (Örneğin temizlik, yeme alışkanlığı, büyüklerle iletişim şekilleri)

   d) Suriyeli öğrencilerin derslere katılımları nasıldır?

5) Mülteci öğrencilerin Türkçeyi öğrenme ve Türk kültürüne bakış açıları süreç içinde değişime uğradı mı? Uğradıysa, hangi noktalarda bir değişim gözlemlediniz?

6) Velilerle olan iletişiminizi nasıl tanımlarsınız? Velilerin size yaklaşımları nasıldır?

7) Sizce veliler çocuklarını Türk kültürünü/dilini öğrenmeleri konusunda teşvik ediyorlar mı? Ediyorlarsa, nasıl? Sizce öğrencilerin bu duruma tepkisi ne oluyor?

8) Sizce veliler çocuklarını Suriye kültürünü/dilini sürdürmeleri konusunda teşvik ediyorlar mı? Ediyorlarsa, nasıl?

APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TEACHER PARTICIPANTS (ENGLISH VERSION)

1) How long have you been a teacher at a school for refugee students? In your opinion, how is the adaptation process of refugee students going to school?

2) With whom do refugee students usually prefer to befriend? How would you describe their communication with Turkish students and with each other?

3) In the light of your observations, do students of Syrian origin use Turkish or Arabic more often?

4) Do you think Syrian students have adopted Turkish culture or their own culture more?

a) For example, do they attend national holidays and special days? Do you expect them to join?

b) In which language do they prefer to read books? Turkish or Arabic?

c) Do you think there are situations where Turkish culture and Arab culture are similar/differentiated? Can you share your observations on this subject? (For example, cleaning, eating habits, communication with adults)

d) How is the participation of Syrian students in classes?

5) Have refugee students' perspectives on learning Turkish and Turkish culture changed in the process? If so, at what points did you observe a change?

6) How would you describe your communication with parents? How do your parents approach you?

7) Do you think parents encourage their children to learn Turkish culture/language? If they do, how? What do you think is the reaction of the students to this situation?

8) Do you think parents encourage their children to maintain the Syrian culture/language? If they do, how?

SURİYELİ ERGENLİK ÇAĞINDAKİ MÜLTECİ ÖĞRENCİLERİN
KÜLTÜRLENME SÜRECİ VE KİMLİK ALGILARININ TÜRK EĞİTİM
ORTAMINDA İNCELENMESİ

Göç yüzyıllardır hayatın bir gerçeği olmuştur. İnsanlar çeşitli nedenlerle göç etmektedirler. Dünya Göç Raporu'nda (2020) belirtildiği gibi, çalışma, eğitim ve aile gibi faktörlerin yanı sıra zulme maruz kalmak, çatışma ve afetler de göçün başlıca nedenleri olarak görülmektedir. Küresel olarak her geçen yıl göç eden insanların sayısı artmaktadır. Verilere göre 2020 yılı sonunda mülteciler, sığınmacılar, şiddet, zulüm ve insan hakları ihlali nedeniyle ülke içinde göç etmek zorunda kalmış kişiler de dâhil olmak üzere 82,4 milyon zorla yerinden edilmiş kişi vardı ve mevcut veriler, 95 kişiden 1'inin zorla yerinden edildiğini göstermektedir (UNHCR, 2021). Çocuklar zorunlu göçmen nüfusunun önemli bir kısmını oluşturmaktadır (%42). Tüm zorunlu göçmenler arasında bugün dünya çapında 26,4 milyon mülteci vardır ve bunların yaklaşık yarısı 18 yaşın altındadır (UNHCR, 2021). Türkiye ise şu an yaklaşık 4 milyon mülteci ile en fazla mülteciye ev sahipliği yapan ülkedir.

Mısır ve Tunus'ta başlayan ayaklanmalar ve protestolar kısa sürede diğer Arap ülkelerinin yanı sıra Suriye Arap Cumhuriyeti'ni de etkiledi. Şiddetle bastırılan protestolar daha sonra birçok insanın ülkelerini terk etmesiyle sonuçlandı. Suriye'deki iç savaşta binlerce insan yaralandı ve hayatını kaybetti. Bu nedenle insanlar güvende olmak, eğitimlerine devam etmek ya da daha iyi koşullarda yaşamak için komşu ülkelere gitmeye başladılar. Türkiye ise en yüksek mülteci nüfusuna sahip ülke olarak Suriyeliler tarafından büyük ölçüde tercih edilmiştir. Öncelikle Suriye ile uzun bir kara sınırına sahip olması nedeniyle, çok sayıda Suriyeli Türkiye'ye sığınmıştır. Ayrıca, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Afet ve Acil

Durum Yönetimi Başkanlığı (AFAD) (2017) tarafından hazırlanan bir raporda, ev sahibi ülke olarak Türkiye'yi seçmelerinin başlıca nedenlerinin dini benzerlik, diğer ülkelere göre daha iyi koşullar, Türkiye'ye olan güvenleri ve erişilebilirlik olduğu ortaya çıktı. Türkiye uyguladığı açık kapı politikası sebebiyle çoğu 18 yaşın altında (1,6 milyon) olmak üzere 3,7 milyonun üzerinde zorunlu göçmene ev sahipliği yapıyor.

Dünyadaki ve Türkiye'deki zorunlu göçmen sayıları dikkate alındığında, bu küresel hareketlerin yaygınlaşmasının çok yönlü sonuçları olduğu söylenebilir. Göçün dünya genelindeki etkileri göz önüne alındığında, küresel ve toplumsal dönüşümlere yol açtığı görülebilir. Göç tek başına ele alınmaması gereken bir olgudur (Castles, Hass & Miller, 2014) çünkü göç aynı zamanda insanların, metaların, sermayenin ve fikirlerin büyük ölçekli küresel hareketleridir. Bu bağlamda toplumları monolitik olarak değerlendirmek yerine çoklukların ve çeşitliliklerin varlıklarını kabul etmek 21. yüzyılın getirilerine uygun olacaktır. Yukarıda sunulan göçmen sayısı göz önüne alındığında, çeşitlilik, çoğulluk ve çokluğun bu toplumlardaki insanların da gündelik bir gerçeği haline geldiği yadsınamaz. Bununla birlikte, azınlıklar her zaman ev sahibi topluluğa sorunsuz bir şekilde uyum sağlayamamaktadır. Türkiye örneğinde, yukarıda belirtildiği gibi, mülteci çocukların sayısı oldukça fazladır. Zorunlu göçmen çocukların sayısının artması nedeniyle, çocuk göçü veya genç göçü özellikle dikkat çekmektedir. Bu ülkede hayatlarını iyileştirmek için birçok girişimde bulunulmasına rağmen, adaptasyonları ve ev sahibi topluma dâhil edilmeleri ile ilgili bazı sorunlar da kaçınılmazdır.

Her ne kadar pek çok çalışma zorunlu göçmenlerin psikolojilerine odaklansa da literatür kimlik algıları ve kültürleşme süreçleri hakkında yeterli sayıda çalışmaya sahip değildir. Özellikle de ergenlik çağındaki mültecilerin deneyimleriyle ilgili daha da az araştırma olduğu görülmüştür. Her azınlık grubu farklı dilsel ve tarihsel geçmişe sahip olduğundan, bu uygulamaları kapsamlı bir şekilde anlamak için daha fazla çalışmaya ihtiyaç vardır. Zorunlu göçün ardından savunmasız veya risk altında görüldükleri için özellikle genç yetişkinlerin

dünyasını keşfetmek çok önemlidir (Hassan ve diğerleri, 2015); çünkü bazı psikolojik sorunlarla da karşı karşıya kalabilirler. Bu sorunları azaltmak için, kültürleşmelerini ve Türk eğitim ortamında kimlik inşa süreçlerini keşfetmek ilk adımdır. Bu, kapsayıcılığın temel dayanak olduğu okul ortamı ve daha iyi sosyal fırsatlar sağlamak için büyük önem taşımaktadır. Bu çalışmanın sonuçları, yetkililere mültecilerin kültürlenmesi ve entegrasyonu hakkında fikir vermesi açısından yardımcı olacaktır.

Tüm bunları göz önünde bulundurarak, bu çalışma öncelikle Suriyeli zorunlu göçmen ergenlerin yaşadıkları kültürleşme sürecini ve Türkiye'de bir azınlık gruba mensup öğrenci olarak kimliklerini nasıl inşa ettiklerini araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu araştırmanın bir diğer amacı, araştırmacıların, bu öğrencilerin Türkiye'de yaşamaya başladıktan sonraki tecrübelerini daha iyi anlamalarına yardımcı olmaktır.

Yukarıda belirtilen amaçlar göz önünde bulundurularak, bu tez aşağıdaki araştırma sorularına ışık tutmaya çalışmaktadır:

1) Suriyeli zorunlu göçmen ergenlerin ev sahibi topluma uyum sağlama konusundaki deneyimleri nelerdir?

1a) Ne tür kültürleşme stratejileri uyguluyorlar?

1b) Kültürleşme sürecinde karşılaştıkları zorluklar nelerdir?

2) Kimliklerini Türk eğitim ortamında nasıl tanımlıyorlar?

2a) Kimlik seçimi ile benimsenen kültürleşme stratejisi arasında nasıl bir ilişki vardır?

3) Günlük yaşamlarında hangi dili kullanırlar?

3a) Dil seçimi ile ev sahibi topluma uyumları arasında nasıl bir ilişki vardır?

Literatüre bakıldığında, kimlik gelişiminin yetişkinler için karmaşık olsa da ergenler için daha da karmaşık bir süreç olduğu görülmüştür (Spencer ve Markstrom-Adams, 1990). Zorunlu göç ile karşı karşıya kalan ırksal ve etnik

azınlık genç yetişkinler düşünüldüğünde, kimlik (yeniden) oluşturma ve sosyalleşme oldukça zorlaşmaktadır. Yeni bir çevrede yeni bir hayat kurmaya çalışırken, daha önceki çalışmalarda da gösterildiği üzere çoğu zaman çeşitli problemlerle karşılaşırlar. Bu tez, Suriyeli zorunlu göçmenlerin kimliklerini nasıl inşa ettiklerini ve yeni çevreye nasıl uyum sağladıklarını bulmaya çalıştığından, Tajfel ve Turner (1979) tarafından geliştirilen Sosyal Kimlik Teorisi ve Berry (1997) tarafından öne sürülen Kültürleşme Modeli bu çalışmanın temel teorik çerçeveleri olarak kullanılmıştır. Türkiye'de bir azınlık grubu olarak, ergen Suriyeli mültecilerin kendi kültürleri (Suriye) ve ev sahibi kültür (Türk) ile etkileşimleri yoluyla kimliklerini şekillendirdikleri ve hatta melez kimlikler inşa ettikleri varsayılmaktadır. Sosyal Kimlik Teorisinin ilkeleri, çalışmanın bulgularıyla ilişkilendirilebilir olduğundan bu teori seçilmiştir. Etnik azınlıklarda kimlik inşa etmede sosyal karşılaştırma, sosyal ve kendi kendini sınıflandırma, pozitif ayırt edicilik ve gruplar arası ilişkiler gibi ilkelerin rolü, ev sahibi toplumdaki konumları için çok önemlidir. Başarılı kültürleşme, olumlu kimlik oluşum sürecine katkıda bulunduğundan, SKT'nin temeli Berry'nin (1997) kültürleşme modelinin ilkeleriyle uyumludur. Sığınma hayat değiştirici bir olay olduğundan bu süreçte kültürleşme, kimlik üzerinde önemli etkilerle sonuçlanır (Espin, Stewart & Gomez, 1990; Goodenow & Espin, 1993). Mevcut araştırma bu nedenle yukarıda bahsedilen teoriler üzerine inşa edilmiştir ve bulgular bu teorik temellerin ışığı altında incelenmektedir.

Metodoloji

Bu tez, nitel durum araştırmasının temellerini benimser. Nitel araştırma, uygun araştırma soruları ve seçilmiş katılımcıların sosyal bir sorununa ilişkin içgörü sağlar (Creswell, 2013). Katılımcılar seçilirken amaçlı örnekleme tercih edilmiştir. Çalışmaya 11 mülteci öğrenci ve onların dört öğretmeni katılmıştır. Böylece farklı gruplardan veri toplanması ile bulguların güvenirliği artmaktadır. Öğrenci katılımcıları seçerken yaşlarının 13-17 arasında olması önemli bir kriter olarak görülmüştür. Ayrıca, görüşmeler sırasında kullanılan dil Türkçe olduğu için katılımcıların hem Türkçe hem de Arapça ya da Kürtçe bilmesi

gerekmekteydi. Katılımcılar Ankara, Polatlı'daki A Okulu öğrencileridir. Öğrencilerden sekiz tanesi Arap kökenli iken, 3 tanesi ise Kürt kökenlidir. Bir rehberlik öğretmeni, bir beden eğitimi öğretmeni, bir Türkçe öğretmeni ve bir de sosyal bilgiler öğretmeni çalışmaya katılmıştır. Öğretmenlerin meslekteki tecrübesi 8-20 yıl arası değişmektedir. Araştırma yeri olarak Polatlı, katılımcılara ulaşımın daha kolay olması ve şehrin mülteci nüfusunun fazla olması sebebiyle seçilmiştir. Görüşmeye başlamadan önce katılımcılar çalışmanın amacı ve verilerin nasıl kullanacağı hakkında bilgilendirilmişlerdir. Görüşmeler ortalama 30-45 dakika sürmüştür. Bu tezde yarı yapılandırılmış yüz yüze görüşmeler tercih edilmiştir. Yapılandırılmış görüşmeler görüşmeciyi sınırlarken, yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler, araştırmacıların ek sorular yardımıyla farklı bilgilere sahip olmalarını sağlar (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Literatür taramasından sonra, araştırma amaçları ışığında çeşitli geçmiş çalışmalardan görüşme soruları derlenmiş ve uyarlanmıştır. Sorular büyük ölçüde öğrencilerin Türk kültürü ve köken kültürleri ile günlük etkileşimlerini içermektedir. Aynı zamanda kimliklerini nasıl ifade ettikleri ve kendilerini nasıl algıladıklarıyla da ilgilidir. Görüşme soruları, Ankara'daki mülteci çocuklarla çalışan bir psikolog ve bir eğitimci ile paylaşılarak rahatsızlık uyandırıp uyandırmadıkları incelenmiştir. Veriler kelimesi kelimesine yazıya döküldükten sonra tematik analiz yöntemiyle analiz edilmiştir. Veri analiz sürecinde nitel araştırma analizi için kullanabilen MAXQDA programından yararlanılmıştır. Ortaya çıkan temalar bir eğitimci ve doktora öğrencisiyle tekrar gözden geçirilmiştir.

Bulgular

Bu bölüm, niteliksel olarak toplanan veri analizinin sonuçlarını sunar. Bu çalışmanın amacı, Suriyeli zorunlu göç eden ergenlerin kültürleşme yönelimlerini kimlik algıları ile birlikte ortaya çıkarmaktır. Veriler vaka çalışması ilkelerine göre analiz edilmiştir. Ortaya çıkan kodlar ilgili temalar altında birleştirildikten sonra, tekrarlayan temalar Berry'nin (1997) Kültürleşme Çerçevesi ve Tajfel ve Turner'ın (1979) Sosyal Kimlik Teorisi ile ilişkilendirilmiştir. Veriler Türkçe olarak toplandığı için, katılımcıların alıntıları

İngilizce öğretmenliği okuyan ve Türkçe-İngilizce iki dil bilen bir kişi yardımıyla İngilizce' ye çevrilmiştir.

Nitel veri analizi sırasında Suriyeli zorunlu göç eden ergenlik çağındaki öğrencilerin kültürleşme yönelimleri, kimlik algıları ve dil tercihlerine ilişkin kodlar ortaya çıkmıştır. Oluşturulan kodlar daha sonra ilgili temalar altında toplanmış ve bu temalar oluşturulmuştur. Kültürleşme temaları, etnik kültürü ve yaşam tarzını devam ettirme, bütünleşme, ayrılma, bütünleşmeyi artıran faktörler ve bütünleşmeyi engelleyen faktörlerdir. Kimlik algısına ilişkin temalar hibrit kimlikler, Suriyeli kimliği ve arada kalmışlıktır. Son olarak, katılımcıların dil tercihleri okulda, kitap okurken, film izlerken, müzik dinlerken çoğunlukla Türkçe kullanımları ve ana dil kullanımları olarak belirlenmiştir.

Bu araştırmadaki ergenlik çağındaki mülteci öğrenciler, köken kültürlerini sürdürdüklerini belirtmişlerdir. Suriye kültürü hakkında daha fazla bilgi edinmek isteyip istemedikleri, oradaki akrabalarıyla iletişim halinde olup olmadıkları, Suriye geleneklerini Türkiye'de sürdürmeleri gerektiğine inanıp inanmadıkları sorulduğunda, çoğu olumlu yanıt vermiştir. Katılımcılar, Suriyeli değerlerine bağlılıklarının yanı sıra, bağlılıklarının bir başka göstergesi olan Arapça veya Kürtçe kullanmaya da istekli olduklarını ifade etmişlerdir. Bazıları evlerinde veya diğer Suriyeli insanlar ile Türkçe kullanmak zorunda olmadıkları bağlamlarda Arapça veya Kürtçe kullanmayı tercih ettiğinden, ana dillerine bağlılık da önemli bir bulgu olarak ortaya çıkmıştır.

Katılımcıların uyguladığı kültürleşme stratejilerinden bir diğeri de entegrasyon olmuştur. Öğrenciler Türkiye'ye geldiklerinden bu yana çeşitli zorluklarla karşılaşmışlardır. Bu zorluklara rağmen, bazılarının birçok yönden ev sahibi kültüre entegrasyon arzusu gösterdiği tespit edilmiştir. Görüşülen kişilerin tamamı, Suriye ve Türkiye değerlerinden birini seçmek yerine, hem Suriye hem de Türk değerlerinden oluşan bir karışımı benimsemeleri gerektiğine inanmışlardır. En çok Türk mü yoksa Suriyeli mi arkadaş edinmek istedikleri sorulduğunda, böyle bir tercihleri olmadığını söylemişlerdir. Katılımcıların belirttiğine göre, arkadaş seçiminde önemli olan güvenilirlik, sevecenlik, sır

tutabilme ve katılımcılar için ortak noktalara sahip olmaktır. Hepsi arkadaşlık kurarken milliyetin önemli bir kriter olmadığını belirtmişlerdir. Hem Suriyeli hem de Türk arkadaşlara sahip olmanın çok önemli bir değer olduğunu düşündüklerini iletmişlerdir. Bazı katılımcılar en iyi arkadaşlarının Türk olduğunu belirtirken, ikisi her iki milletten de iyi arkadaşları olduğunu belirtmiştir. İki öğrencinin en iyi arkadaşı Suriyeli iken, biri de en iyi arkadaşının Kırgızistanlı bir göçmen olduğunu söyledi. Katılımcıların çoğu Suriye'ye dönmek istemediklerini, Türkiye'de kalmak istediklerini belirttiler. Katılımcıların bazıları Türklerle olan iletişimlerini daha da fazla olmasını dilediklerini söylerken, biri de okulunun yatılı okul olmasını istediğini ve bu sayede Türk arkadaşlarıyla daha çok görüşebileceğini dile getirmiştir. Katılımcıların neredeyse tamamı, Türk tarihi ve gelenekleri hakkında daha fazla bilgi edinme konusunda istekli olduklarını bildirmişlerdir. Türk toplumuna uyum sağlamak istediklerini ve bu alanda kendilerini geliştirmek için hevesli olduklarını iletmişlerdir. Örneğin, bir öğrenci Çanakkale'ye gitmeyi çok istediğini, oradaki ruhu hissetmek istediğini söylemiştir.

Bu katılımcıların aksine, sayıları az da olsa kendilerini tam olarak Türk toplumunun bir üyesi olarak görmeyen öğrenciler de vardır. Bu topluluğun bir üyesi gibi hissetmemelerinin altında yatan nedenler araştırıldığında, kendilerini izole hissettikleri tespit edilmiştir. Mahalleleri aynı olmadığı için Türk arkadaşlarıyla iletişimleri sadece okul ortamıyla sınırlıyken, Türkiye'de yaşama olgusunun tüm katmanlarını deneyimlemek onlar için zorlayıcı olmuştur. Nitekim ebeveynlerin çocuklarının Türk toplumuna katılımına ilişkin bazı kısıtlayıcı davranışları da onların kültürleşmesinde etkili olmuştur. Bu durumda etkili olan kısıtlayıcı velilerin yanı sıra maddi kaygıların da Suriyeli öğrencilerin Türk toplumundan soyutlanmasının nedeni olduğu tespit edildi. Örneğin, 4. Katılımcı para kazanması ve haftanın yedi günü çalışması gerektiğini belirtmiştir. Durum böyle olunca, sosyalleşmemek veya diğer bazı ders dışı etkinliklere katılamamak kültürleşme stratejisini ciddi şekilde etkilemiştir. Bu istenmeyen davranışlar ortaya çıktıkça, kendini izole hissetmeye başlamıştır. Öğrencilerin kendilerini Türk toplumundan keskin bir şekilde ayırdıklarını iddia

etmek mümkün olmamakla birlikte, yukarıda belirtilen yollarla bir miktar ayrılık göstermişlerdir. Türk kültürüyle bağları sadece okul bağlamından ibaret olduğundan Türk akranlarıyla etkileşimleri de azalma olmuştur.

Bazı öğrencilerin büyük ölçüde topluma uyum sağladığı, diğerlerinin ise olumsuz kültürleşme kalıpları gösterdiği bulunmuştur. Olumlu ya da olumsuz bir kültürleşme örüntüsüne sahip olup olmadığına bakılmaksızın, yeterli ve yetersiz uygulamaları daha iyi sunmak için altta yatan faktörlerin detaylandırılması gerekmektedir. Bu nedenle, katılımcılarla yapılan görüşmeler ışığında kültürleşmeyi artıran ve engelleyen faktörler sıralanmıştır. Türkiye'de öğrencilerin yaşamları üzerinde çeşitli faktörlerin etkisi vardır. Türkiye'de yaşama biçimlerini büyük ölçüde deneyimleriyle şekillendirdikleri görülmüştür. Bu nedenle, yaşamlarını etkileyebilecek olumlu ve olumsuz faktörler dikkatle incelenmelidir. Türkiye'de sevdikleri şeyler sorulduğunda, katılımcılar kendilerini güvende hissetmek, savaşın olmaması, elektrik ve suya erişim, sağlıklı olmak, Türkiye'deki insanların desteği ve 'kendileri' olmak olarak belirtmişlerdir. Ayrıca öğretmen katılımcıların gözlemledikleri kadarıyla ikamet süresi, Türkiye'ye geliş yaşı ve ebeveyn faktörleri de Türkiye'ye uyumları açısından etkili olmuştur. Öğretmen katılımcılardan toplanan veriler, öğrencilerin iddialarını büyük ölçüde doğrulamaktadır. Öğretmenler, Türkiye'de yaklaşık beş yıldan uzun süredir yaşayan öğrencilerle genel olarak uyum sorunları yaşamadıklarını düşünmektedir. Ancak, öğrencilerin Türkiye'ye gelişinin üzerinden iki veya üç yıl geçmişse ağırlıklı olarak dil engeli nedeniyle uyumla ilgili sorunlar yaşıyorlardır. Bu nedenle, yeni ortama alışmada alıcı ülkede ikamet süresinin de belirleyici olduğunu iddia etmişlerdir.

Ortaya çıkan temalardan biri bütünleşme olmasına rağmen, bu çalışmada bütünleşmeyi engelleyen bazı unsurlara da rastlanmıştır. Mülteciler ev sahibi topluluğa entegre olmak isterler; ancak bu her zaman kolay değildir. Kültürlenme kalıplarını olumsuz yönde etkileyen çeşitli faktörler olabilir. Ayrımcılık, sosyal dışlanma, Suriyelilerle ilgili basmakalıp düşünceler, kültürel farklılıklar, maddi zorluklar, Türklerle etkileşimin azlığı ve dil engeli

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öğrencilerin uyumlanmasını olumsuz etkileyen faktörler olarak bulunmuştur. Entegrasyona engel faktörlere ilişkin temalar, en sık bildirilen zorluğun Türk toplumundan dışlanma olduğunu göstermiştir. Suriyeli sığınmacı oldukları için katılımcıların neredeyse hepsi defalarca alay edildiklerini ifade etmişlerdir. Bu ayrımcı uygulamalardan derinden yaralandıkları için kendilerini tam anlamıyla bu toplumun bir üyesi gibi hissedemediklerini belirtmişlerdir.

Bu vaka çalışması aynı zamanda Suriyeli ergenlerin Türkiye'de bir azınlık grubu olarak kimliklerini nasıl inşa ettiklerini araştırmayı da amaçlamaktadır. Katılımcılarla yapılan derinlemesine görüşmeler, katılımcıların farklı tanımlayıcı örüntüler gösterdiklerini ortaya koymuştur. Analiz sırasında tekrarlanan temalar: hibrit kimlik, Suriyeli kimlik ve arada kalmışlıktır. Bazı katılımcılar hem Suriyeli hem de Türk olmayı benimserken, diğerleri sadece Suriye kimliğini benimsediğini göstermiştir. Ayrıca hibrit kimlik seçenler gibi ne birini seçerek ne de her ikisini de dahil ederek kendilerini kategorize edemeyen katılımcılar da vardır.

Kimlik algısına ilişkin temalardan biri de hibrit kalıplardı. 11 katılımcı ile yapılan görüşmelerde, katılımcıların çoğunluğunun Türkiye'de doğmadıkları halde çoğunlukla Türkiye'de büyüdükleri; bu nedenle kendilerini Suriye-Türkleri olarak gördükleri bulunmuştur. Suriyeli-Türk olmaktan ne kastettiklerini anlattıklarında, hem Suriyeli hem de Türk olmayı aynı anda benimsedikleri tespit edilmiştir. Belirli bağlamlarda Suriyeliler gibi davranırken, başka bağlamlarda da Türk benliklerini ortaya koydukları görülmüştür. Örneğin, bir yandan Suriyeli benliklerini korurken bir yandan da Türkiye'de milli bayramlara önem verdiklerini göstermişlerdir. Görüşülen kişiler, Suriyeli benliklerini göstermekten çekinmeden sergilediklerini iddia etmişlerdir. Suriyeli benlikleriyle gurur duyduklarını paylaşmışlardır. Topluma başarılı bir şekilde entegre oldukları için hem Suriyeli hem de Türk olmanın mümkün olduğu fikrini belirtmişlerdir.

Veriler Suriyeli kimliğini benimseme temasını ortaya çıkarmıştır. Bazı katılımcılar kendilerini sadece Suriyeli olarak gördüklerini ifade etmişlerdir.

Kendilerini daha çok Suriyeli gibi hissettiklerini bildiren katılımcılar, ebeveynlerinin evde katı kuralları olduğunu da onaylamışlardır. Suriyeli kimliklerini sergilemeleri ve yaşadıkları her yerde sürdürmeleri gerektiğini düşünüyorlardır. Öğrencilerin inandıkları gibi köken kültürleriyle sağlam bağlar kurmak yapılması gereken bir şeydi. Ebeveynleri tarafından kendilerine de sürekli olarak kökenlerini unutmamaları hatırlatıldığından, bu fikri içselleştirmişlerdir. Evde Türk dili ve kültürünün kullanılmaması konusunda katı kurallar koymayan velilerin aksine, bazı velilerin Türk unsurlarının evlerine alınmasına karşı çıktıkları ortaya konmuştur. Suriye'ye ait oldukları düşüncesi aileleri tarafından sürekli ima edilmiştir. Bu nedenle ergenler de aynı fikri paylaşıyor ve Suriye'yi 'evleri' olarak gördükleri için geri dönmek istiyorlardır. Kendilerine Suriye'yi özleyip özlemedikleri sorulduğunda, görüşmecilerin tamamı Suriye'deki evlerini ve akrabalarını kesinlikle özlediklerini, ancak bazılarının evleri veya oradaki yaşam biçimleri hakkında çok az şey hatırlayabildiklerini söylediler. Ancak sadece iki katılımcı Türkiye'ye ait olmadıkları için bir gün Suriye'ye dönmek istediklerini belirtmişlerdir.

Görüşülen kişilerin küçük bir kısmı ait oldukları yerin onlar için fazla 'kafa karıştırıcı' olduğunu öne sürmüştür. Böylece kendilerini bu milletlerden her ikisine de veya bunlardan sadece birine göre sınıflandıramamışlardır.

Arada kalmış gibi hisseden ergenlik çağındaki katılımcılar Türkiye'de keyifli bir hayat yaşadıklarını bildirmişlerdir. Bununla birlikte, dışarıdaki ve evdeki yaşamın hızı arasında anlamlı bir bağlantı kuramadıklarını ileri sürmüşlerdir. Nereye ait olduklarını tam olarak bilmediklerini düşünüyorlardı. O kadar aradaydılar ki, katılımcılardan biri Türkiye'de normal bir Türk gibi 'normal' bir hayat yaşayabilmek için Türk olmayı dilediğini söylemiştir ve kendini Türk veya Suriyeli olarak sınıflandıramamıştır. Sonuç olarak, kendisini kategorize edememesi, kendisine ilişkin algılarında çatışma yaratmıştır.

Bu tezin son araştırma sorusu, zorunlu göçle gelen ergenlerin dil tercihlerini sorgulamıştır. Dil, kültür ve kimliğin önemli bir bileşeni olarak bu kavramlarla

kesişir. Katılımcıların belirli durumlarda dil kullanımlarını araştırırken, öncelikle evde ana dillerini kullandıkları keşfedilmiştir. Ancak bir şeyler izlemek, bir şeyler okumak gibi etkinliklerin yalnızca kendilerini kapsadığı durumlarda, bu etkinlikleri ev ortamında Türkçe yapmayı tercih etmişlerdir.

Görüşülen kişilerin daha önce de değinildiği gibi ana dillerine bağlılıklarını sürdürdükleri görülmüştür. Bazıları ana dillerinin bağlarını büyük ölçüde göstermese de hepsi anadillerini koruma fikrini benimsemiştir. Evde, baskın kültürün, onların Suriye kültürü olduğu keşfedilmiştir. Nitekim bazı katılımcılar, evde katı dil politikaları nedeniyle, anne babaları yokken bazen "gizlice" Türkçe konuştuklarını bildirmişlerdir. Bunun yanı sıra gündelik konularda düşündükleri dil de bundan etkilenmiştir. Bazı katılımcılar sadece Arapça düşündüklerini paylaşsalar da, bazıları her iki dilde de düşündüklerini ve bunun esas olarak çevrelerine bağlı olduğunu belirtmişlerdir.

Katılımcılar belirli etkinlikler için büyük oranda Türkçeyi seçmişlerdir. Bir şeyler okurken veya yazarken sadece Türkçeyi seçmişlerdir. Nitekim katılımcıların hiçbiri Arapça yazmayı bilmiyordur. Birçoğu Suriye'de okula başlamadıkları için, okul bağlamında dili öğrenme ve okuryazar olma fırsatları olmamıştır. Sadece Katılımcı 4, 6 ve 9, ebeveynlerinin ve Kuran kurslarının yardımıyla Arapça okumayı biliyorlardı ama yazamıyorlardı. Katılımcı 2, 8 ve 11 ayrıca Arapça okuyabileceklerini iddia etmişlerdir; ancak, bunda pek iyi değillerdir. Söylediklerine göre, Türkiye'de yazları katıldıkları Kuran kurslarında Arap alfabesini öğrenmişlerdir. Bununla birlikte, ana dillerinde kitap veya edebi metin gibi kaynaklara erişimleri neredeyse yoktur. Mesela Türkiye'de kırtasiyede Arapça roman bulmak pek mümkün değildir. Bu kaynakların sağlanmasındaki yetersizlik, ana dilleriyle daha az etkileşimle sonuçlanabilmektedir. Dolayısıyla bu etkinlikler yapılırken hangi dilin tercih edileceğine karar vermede kaynakların erişilebilirliğinin önemli bir rol oynadığı söylenebilir. Öte yandan, katılımcıların çoğu ana dillerinde okumaya veya yazmaya karşı heyecan duymamışlardır. Sadece "nereye ait olduğunu" unutmak istemeyen ve Suriye kültürleri ile güçlü bağları olanlar, anadillerinde okuryazar olma hevesi göstermişlerdir.

Öğretmenlerin gözlemleri, hem öğrenciler hem de veliler ile düzenli olarak iletişim halinde oldukları için değerlidir. Mülteci velilerle dil engeli nedeniyle iletişim kurmakta sorun yaşasalar da öğretmenlerin yorumlarından yola çıkarak çocuklarının Türkçe'ye hakim olmalarını istedikleri rahatlıkla söylenebilir. Türkiye'de yeni bir hayat kurdukları için Türkçe konuşmak, yükseköğretime başlamak ve iş bulmak gibi birçok kapıyı açtığı için bir zorunluluktur. Öğretmen katılımcılardan biri Türkçe öğrenmede anne ve babanın teşvikinin rolüne ilişkin düşüncelerini dile getirmiştir. Evde katı dil politikaları olmasına rağmen, kendisinin de paylaştığı gibi velilerin Türkçe öğrenmeye yönelik genel tutumu oldukça yapıcıydı. Hatta çocuklarının sıfırdan düzgün bir Türkçe eğitimi almalarını istediklerini belirtmiştir.

Sonuç olarak, bu araştırma zorunlu göçmenlerin kültürleşme yolunu aydınlatmıştır. Bu yollarının kimlik kalıplarına benzer bir spektrum olarak yorumlanması gerektiğini belirtmekte fayda vardır. Kültürün ve kimliğin akışkanlığı göz önüne alındığında Türkiye'deki uygulamalarını keskin bir şekilde kategorize etmek uygun olmayabilir. Ayrıca, kültürel ve dilsel ortamları paylaşmak için toplu zorunlu göç anlayışımızı derinleştirmeye ihtiyaç vardır. Eğitimin topluma fayda sağlamada kesinlikle kilit bir rolü olacaktır.

Sonuçlar, Türkiye'deki mültecilerin deneyimlerinin iyileştirilmesi, çok kültürlü grupların bir arada yaşaması ve tüm toplumla ilgili önemli uygulanabilir öneriler ortaya koymaktadır. Mültecilerin ev sahibi ülkeye gelmelerinin ardından dil kursları sağlamak, öğretmenlere kapsayıcı eğitimle ilgili eğitimler vermek, müfredatın yeniden gözden geçirilmesi, mülteci ailelerin eğitim sürecinde aktif olarak yer alması için bazı çalışmalar yapılması ve mülteci öğrencilerin okulun psikolojik danışmanlık ve rehberlik servisi tarafından gözlenmesi bu tezin sunduğu önerilerdir.

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TEZİN ADI / TITLE OF THE THESIS (**İngilizce** / English): A CASE STUDY ON SYRIAN FORCED MIGRANT ADOLESCENTS' ACCULTURATION STRATEGIES AND IDENTITY PERCEPTIONS IN A TURKISH EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

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