

A Proposed Bilingual Education Model for Syrian Refugee Children in Turkey

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Abstract

A great majority of Syrian people have immigrated to Turkey ever since the war in their country. Turkey has showed a welcoming and positive approach to Syrian refugees. From the beginning, the presence of Syrians was regarded as temporary; however, it turned out to be permanent. In this case, Turkish government has done its best in the effort of meeting their needs. There is no doubt that education is a primary need to be met for their part. During receiving education in Turkish system, it was discovered that Syrian refugee children experienced a number of language-related problems because of their lack of proficiency in Turkish language. It was also revealed that even additional courses in Turkish did not provide the desired results. The lack of Turkish resulted in various problems in terms of academic achievement, social interaction and integration. It is obvious that these problems can create hindrance for refugee children to integrate into Turkish community effectively. In order to overcome these language-related problems, the objective of the present paper is to offer a bilingual education model suitable for immigrants and refugees in Turkish education system in Türkiye. It is suggested that late exit bilingual education model would be effective to include Syrian school-aged children into Turkish school community in the long run.

Keywords: Bilingual education, transitional bilingual education, Syrian refugee children, integration

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1. Introduction

Since the outbreak of the civil war in Syria, Syrian people have immigrated to many countries and especially to the neighboring ones. As a neighboring country, Türkiye is hosting a large number of Syrian refugees, and they are highly located in certain cities such as Istanbul, Gaziantep, Hatay and Şanlıurfa. From the outset of the civil war, the presence of the Syrian refugees was deemed as temporary in the country and they were treated accordingly. For instance, Syrian refugee children were provided with education in the temporary education centers. However, from 2014 on, Turkish Government has changed its approach to Syrian refugees in that it has come to realize that the presence of the refugees is not temporary but rather a permanent one in the country. Relatedly, Turkish authorities have taken long-term actions to integrate the Syrian population into the Turkish community in the long run.

Türkiye has exhibited an exemplary approach to the Syrians by showing a welcoming attitude to them with all its governmental bodies while compared with the other neighboring countries. It is axiomatic that education is the most important key to open the door of integrating the minority groups into the majority ones. As a result, Ministry of National Education has started to enroll Syrian refugee children (SRC, henceforth) in the national public schools along with their Turkish counterparts with the intention of integrating them into the mainstream society. During the enrollment and education process, SRC have encountered a number of challenges relating to integration into and adaptation to the Turkish education system. One of the major potential pitfalls for them is Turkish language as a medium of instruction. Their lack of Turkish proficiency leads to academic failure in the curriculum subjects, communication problems in their interaction with the mainstream society and so on. More importantly, it establishes a barrier in front of the refugee children to fully integrate into the Turkish community.

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There are a number of studies referring to the language problems that SRC face during their education. However, it seems that those studies are concentrating on a monolingual education on the part of SRC. To my knowledge, no research studies offer a bilingual education model for the SRC receiving education in Türkiye. Educating SRC through bilingual education models may eliminate the language-related problems and facilitate their integration into the Turkish community. For this reason, there is a need for research studies investigating bilingual education models for the sake of SRC in Turkish context. Based on their investigations, those research studies should come up with certain solutions and recommendations. In this respect, this project aims at proposing a bilingual education model, suitable for Turkish educational context, for the school-aged Syrian refugee children living in Türkiye. Along with proposing a bilingual education for Syrians in Türkiye, the present project is specifically concerned with offering the model in certain cities highly populated with Syrian refugees such as Istanbul, Gaziantep, Hatay and Şanlıurfa, which attributes a considerable significance to the project.

1.1. Background of Syrian Children in Türkiye

Based on the figures in the Asylum Information Database report (ECRE, 2020) and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, 2021), there is a population of more than 3 million Syrian refugees in Türkiye as of 31 December 2020, and according to the existing literature, that is the largest refugee population in the world in the last five years (Coşkun & Emin, 2016; UNHCR, 2021). All these Syrian people are under temporary protection. According to the same report, two-third of that population is comprised of women and children. In other words, the population of the children at school age is more than one million (Coşkun & Emin, 2016; Uyan-Semerci & Erdoğan, 2018). As it is clear, the number of school-aged children in Türkiye is quite high (Alpaydın, 2017). According to ECRE (2020), only around 60 percent of the school-aged Syrian children are enrolled in public schools in Türkiye. According to Uyan-Semerci and Erdoğan (2018), and Kanat and Üstün (2015), on the other hand, the percentage is half as much, namely, around 30 percent.

Türkiye has 81 provinces, and out of them, Syrian refugees are mostly registered in four provinces such as Istanbul, Gaziantep, Hatay and Şanlıurfa. According to ECRE report figures (2020), nearly two million Syrians have taken up residence in these four provinces. According to Coşkun and Emin (2016), there are around 1.3 million Syrian children who are at the age of school. They state that 330.000 children are enrolled in Turkish schools; however, twice as many are not enrolled yet. Moreover, according to them, more than half of the Syrian refugees are children; which means nearly one million SRC live in those aforementioned cities.

1.2. Educational Background of Syrians in Türkiye

After the outbreak of civil war in Syria, millions of Syrian citizens have immigrated to Türkiye by the virtue of Turkish government's welcoming approach (Kanat & Üstün, 2015). The population of Syrian citizens in the country have gradually increased to such a high level that this case necessitated meeting their needs urgently. Undoubtedly, education is one of the central needs to be met for the part of Syrian refugees. Relatedly, the Turkish Ministry of National Education (henceforth referred as MoNE) has started to take certain steps in this direction since 2014 (Topçu, 2017 ; Tösten, Toprak & Kayan, 2017). One of the steps taken for refugee education was to provide them with Syrian curriculum within the borders of refugee camps (UNICEF, 2015). Along with the education within the borders of the camps, educational services were provided for Syrian outside of the camps as well by means of temporary education centers, which also used to follow Syrian curriculum school subjects. It is also crucial to note that two other bodies sought ways to grant education to Syrian refugee children such as private schools run by Syrians and NGOs (non-governmental organizations) (Coşkun & Emin, 2016).

Until 2016, Türkiye used to consider the issues related to Syrian refugees as temporary, and it is for this reason that she provided temporary education to Syrians in the camps or temporary education centers. However, things have changed since 2016, when the Turkish authorities chose to integrate the Syrian children by educating them in the Turkish public schools (Sarmini et al., 2020; UNICEF, 2015). In this regard, MoNE implemented an educational project towards Syrian refugee children in 2016 named as Promoting Integration of Syrian Children into the Turkish Education System (PICTES). It was a two-year project, supported by both MoNE and the European Union, and applied in the Turkish cities which are highly populated with Syrian refugees (Taştan & Çelik, 2017). The project encapsulated numerous crucial components such as training teachers in terms of methodology or giving psycho-social support related to migration or raising academic awareness on the part of Syrian children (UNESCO, 2019). Among the elements covered in the project, the ones associated with Turkish and Arabic language courses were vitally important (Taştan & Çelik, 2017). The PICTES project yielded wanted results for the part of MoNE and EU,

and it is for this reason that the project will go on under the name of Promoting Integration of Syrian Kids into the Turkish Education System (PIKTES) until October 2022 (PIKTES, 2021). After the educational background of Syrians in Türkiye, next step is to discuss the role of language in their integration into Turkish community.

1.3. Role of Language as a Medium of Academic Achievement

Turkish Language competency and proficiency is one of the key factors to integrate the Syrian refugee children into the Turkish education system. However, Turkish is deemed as a hindrance in front of Syrian children since they speak Arabic as a native language. Their lack of Turkish proficiency can be a hurdle while receiving education in the Turkish context (Taştan & Çelik, 2017). Language as a medium of instruction plays a key role in the academic achievement of the students. According to certain studies, the major reason underlying SRC's academic failure is the factor of language itself while compared to their Turkish counterparts (Aydın & Kaya, 2017; Ceyhan & Koçbaşı, 2011). As a solution, it can be thought that granting extra Turkish courses to SRC during off-hours can enhance their proficiency and competence in the language so that they can be more successful in the curriculum school subjects (Alpaydın, 2017). Yet, according to Topçu (2017), providing additional Turkish courses for the good of SRC is not adequate to foster Turkish proficiency.

MoNE has illustrated an exemplary attitude towards Syrian children by giving them the chance of being enrolled in the Turkish education system. In other words, they are given the opportunities to have equal access to Turkish education the way Turkish citizens do (Alpaydın, 2017). Despite this welcoming approach, the registration rate of the SRC is not at a desired level. It is possible to count a number of issues behind their not being enrolled in the public schools. One of the problems is likely to be Turkish as a language of instruction. To put it otherwise, preference of Turkish over Arabic may prevent the Syrians from being enrolled at a wanted level. Education in Arabic can alleviate the just-mentioned problem. (UNICEF, 2015).

One of the solutions for the SRC can be to prepare an education system or policy tailored according to their circumstances in Turkish education system. However, the current Turkish education system is far from providing a satisfying policy for them in this regard since it is based on a unilingual education system (Kanat & Üstün, 2015). In other words, the education system in Türkiye falls short of providing a program to SRC so that they can overcome the language barrier (Aydın & Kaya, 2017). Likewise, some researchers point out that Turkish education should have a more pluralistic curriculum in order that SRC can maintain their home language and culture. This is necessary to establish social cohesion and mutual respect in the society (Coşkun & Emin, 2016).

The current shortage of Turkish teachers who can speak Arabic might be deemed as another language problem in front of SRC education. There are not adequate numbers of well-trained Turkish teachers in terms of giving education to foreigners linguistically and in a multicultural context (Aras & Yasun, 2016; Alpaydın, 2017; Aydın & Kaya, 2017). This case can create unwillingness for them to teach Turkish to SRC. Accordingly, Turkish teachers are suggested to receive education as to how to teach language to non-natives of Turkish language (Cinkir, 2015). Absence of Turkish proficiency of SRC leads to failure in classroom management by Turkish teachers as well (Saklan & Erginer, 2017). Therefore, all in all, lack of language slows down the adaptation of Syrians into the Turkish public schools (Coşkun & Emin, 2016).

1.4. Language as a medium of communication and social interaction

SRC go through language-related problems quite often both within refugee camps and in the Turkish community. Very few people such as teachers or school administrators can speak Arabic; relatedly, this phenomenon creates hindrance for Syrian students to engage in effective communication with Turkish people. They cannot voice their problems and needs effectively, which blocks mutual comprehensibility (Coşkun & Emin, 2016). When we look at the case the way around, Turkish teachers see SRC's language problems as a main barrier in both educational process and communication (Tösten, Toprak & Kayan, 2017; Taskin & Erdemli, 2018). Teachers are not cognizant of what they can do at the time of communication problems that they experience with SRC (Sarmini et al., 2020). This language problem should be overcome, since schools are not only areas to learn how to read and write, but they are also the settings to build friendship and experience successful interpersonal communications (Matthews, 2008).

1.5. Language as a medium of integration

It is a reality that language is a key to open the door of integration of immigrant community into the mainstream society. Integration of the minority community into the majority one can nurture social cohesion and public order. Therefore, enhancing dialogue between refugees and the host community is vitally important (UNHCR, 2021). Otherwise, rather than social harmonization, social conflicts are likely to come into play in the society. The presence of Syrian people in Turkish community is not a temporary phenomenon, but rather a permanent one, and it is estimated that the majority of the Syrians will stay in Türkiye even if the civil war in their country comes to an end (Aras & Yasun, 2016). Therefore, their integration is a must. The Turkish authorities need to come up with long-term policies in this regard. Long-term actions will both facilitate effective integration and impede potential social conflicts (Kanat & Üstün, 2015).

The long-lasting Syrian problems make it necessary for Turkish Government to integrate the minority children into its nation-wide education system (UNICEF, 2015). SRC's being integrated into national schools in Türkiye is crucial in that it will make it easier for them to be adapted to Turkish community socially, culturally and economically (Coşkun & Emin, 2016). If we look at the case the other way around, Syrians would do well to realize the unpredictable situation of the civil war in their home country and learn Turkish for their future life in Türkiye. In this way, they can integrate more effectively into the target community and find occupational positions in various regions of Türkiye (Kanat & Üstün, 2015). By taking all these factors into consideration, language is the most important factor for Türkiye to integrate the SRC into the mainstream community (Taştan & Çelik, 2017).

1.6. Parental cooperation/participation

It is possible to say that familial support increase learners' academic success at schools. On the one hand, parents can help their children complete their school tasks; on the other hand, stakeholders such as teachers and parents can work together to enhance the learning process and product. To give an example, Topçu (2017) states that Turkish teachers are supposed to come into contact with Syrian families of the refugee children. However, teachers point out that parents avoid visiting the schools because of their lack of proficiency of Turkish language (Sarmini et al., 2020). Syrian children echo their teachers' idea in that Turkish language skills are the main reasons behind why their parents are not visiting their schools (Kılıç & Gokce, 2018). As obvious, language is a major obstacle in the path of effective communication between them in the sense that Turkish teachers are not familiar with Arabic, or Syrian families are not competent in Turkish skills. In the first place, Turkish authorities are required to eliminate this obstacle. If not, Syrian families will not support their children in integrating into the Turkish education system seeing that the education of SRC is under their parents' control (Coşkun & Emin, 2016).

1.7. Personal and Psychological Development

It is necessary to consider the SRC as a whole and integrate them holistically. Giving importance to the educational and academic side of their integration but ignoring their personal and psychological development would be incomplete. It is stated that, among others, psychological support is one of the most important needs for Syrian children to be met (Bircan & Sunata, 2015). However, the needs of psychological support are not provided to them at a sufficient level (Alpaydın, 2017).

From another point of view, suddenly switching from Arabic to Turkish in the educational contexts can be detrimental for their personal and psychological development. Rather than that, implementing a supportive and smooth transition period between languages in the curriculum can yield more useful and beneficial results in terms of language as a medium of instruction (UNICEF, 2015; Aras & Yasun, 2016), because research studies indicate that it takes around seven or ten years of refugee children to reach a fluency in the majority language and catch up with their peers in the mainstream national education (Aydin & Kaya, 2017; Baker, 2001).

Moreover, in the curriculum, the children should be given psychosocial support as well since they escaped from a civil war (UNICEF, 2015). As a consequence, war-influenced children experience trauma like psychological problems (Tösten, Toprak & Kayan, 2017). It seems that Turkish public schools are not equipped enough to grant psychosocial support to SRC who go through language problems (Sarmini et al., 2020). For instance, it can be useful for Turkish teachers to gain professional training in terms of how to give psychological support or special education to Syrian students (Taskin & Erdemli, 2018). Excluding psychological support can allow the refugee children to be more introverted and less motivated psychologically (Ceyhan & Koçbaş, 2011; Kılıç & Gokce, 2018). Of course,

Turkish government exerted exemplary efforts for the sake of Syrian people. What is more, the country should also take their well-being into consideration seeing that their presence in Türkiye is not a short-term but rather a long-term one (Kanat & Üstün, 2015). After problem statement and language-related problems, let us now move to bilingualism and bilingual education models.

2. Bilingual Education

As the name suggests, bilingual education refers to the situation where learners are educated in two languages, and there exist various kinds of bilingual education models in different countries (Brisk, 2005). Historically speaking, bilingual education is not an invention of the modern day, but rather, it has its root in the 14th century and even earlier. In a number of countries, bilingual education (hereafter referred to as BE) is implemented as a result of immigration, providing equal access to educational opportunities or integrating the minority groups into the majority community. BE, by nature, has connections with the fields such as sociology, economics, pedagogy, politics and so on (Leeman 2004; Grosjean 2010; Flores & García 2017). Based on the typology of BE in Baker (2001), there are weak forms and strong forms of BE in the literature. Here, the former types of BE will be discovered at the first place.

2.1. Weak Versions of Bilingual Education

Weak forms of BE models are aiming at assimilating the minority language and culture into the majority ones. More precisely, the ultimate goal of these education models is to attain monolingual individuals in the whole community in the long run. Under the scope of weak forms of BE models, versions such as submersion, segregationist, transitional BE models will be discussed in this section.

2.1.1. Submersion Education

Submersion bilingual education is generally represented with the metaphor of swimming pool. Metaphorically speaking, the minority children are submerged into the deep water of swimming pool of the majority language. The minority children are educated in the majority language throughout their education process and expected to learn and speak the language of the majority community. If not, inevitably, they are going to sink in the majority swimming pool rather than swim. In other words, both teachers and learners are supposed to use the mainstream language in all the educational settings rather than the native language of the minority children (Baker, 2001). The educational contexts are treated as melting pots where the language of the immigrant children is assimilated. As obvious, submersion BE works as a medium of integration and assimilation.

The first periods of submersion BE can be extremely challenging for the minority children in the sense that they do not have any idea about what is going on within the four walls of the classroom and what the teachers are talking about. Additionally, teachers might not be trained methodologically as to how to teach minority children effectively. As child directed speech suggests, they may be unlikely to modify their language of instruction according the children's current level. Therefore, it can be demanding for the children to learn the dominant language. This language problem can prevent them from adapting themselves socially and emotionally to integrate into the target community, which later on culminates in school drop-out. Apart from that, they can develop negative attitude and approach towards their identity as well. Predictably, it is also possible to say these problems will negatively influence classroom management for the part of the teachers as well (Baker, 2001).

2.1.2. Segregationist Bilingual Education

In segregationist BE, the minority children are exclusively educated in their own home language. In other words, they do not receive any education through the mainstream majority language in schools or educational programs. This educational system gives chance to merely majority children to have full access to the educational opportunities, which culminates in apartheid. As a result, majority children have opportunity to enter the dominant social and economic world whereas minority children are deprived of the permission to gain access to educational rights to be a part of the powerful professional life and integrate into the mainstream community (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1981; Baker, 2001).

2.1.3. Transitional Bilingual Education

In this educational model, the minority children are allowed to receive education in their native language to a certain time. To put it otherwise, they are educated in their mother tongue temporarily until they reach adequate proficiency in the majority language. The proficiency balance between minority and majority language is treated like a two-sided scale in that while the former one decreases, the proficiency in the latter language increases. It is worth mentioning that transitional BE is mostly implemented in USA (Li, 2018).

The transitional BE falls into two categories as early-exit and late-exit transitional BE. In the former category, the children are instructed in their native language for 3 years (Garcia & Bartlett, 2007). In the latter one, on the other hand, children can have education in their home language for 4–6 years. These transitional periods of years, be it short or long, make it easier for minority children to make a smooth transition from home language to the majority one (Serafini, Rozell & Winsler, 2020).

2.2. Strong Versions of Bilingual Education

Unlike weak versions of BE, strong versions aim at providing the learners with bilingualism and biliteracy. Below strong versions such as immersion, heritage (maintenance) and dual (two-way) BE models will be covered.

2.2.1. Immersion Bilingual Education

As a strong form of BE, immersion model intends to raise bilingual individuals. This form of BE started to appear in Canada and it spread around the world from there (Lambert & Tucker, 1972; Genesee, 1995). Immersion BE can be classified by the age of the learners such as early immersion, middle immersion and late immersion; also by time as total immersion and partial immersion. In the former one, the learners receive their education totally in the second language whereas in the latter immersion, children start 50 % of their education in the target language. The combination of early age and total immersion culminates with early total immersion, which is the most accepted one in Canada (Canadian Education Association, 1992).

It is reasonable to make a distinction between submersion and immersion BE. Submersion is a weak form of bilingualism. In submersion the minority children are educated in the majority language for the sake of assimilation and integration. Therefore, in submersion BE subtractive bilingualism occurs. On the other hand, in immersion, the ultimate goal is bilingualism and biliteracy. Education in two languages coexists at the same time; therefore, additive bilingualism takes place. Languages of both minority and majority groups progress in an academic way (Garcia, 2009). To put in another way, one language is not replacing the other, or it does not lead to the loss of the other language and culture (Baker, 2001).

There are various reasons behind why immersion BE is yielding effective results in education (Baker, 2001). First, parents support this kind of education for their children in order to raise full and competent bilinguals. Second, dedicated bilingual teachers working enthusiastically make positive contributions to the quality of the education. Third, children are allowed to use their home language in the instructional settings, which gives the impression to the children that their native language and culture are valuable. This phenomenon, needless to say, increases their motivation (Swain & Johnson, 1997).

2.2.2. Developmental Maintenance and Heritage Language Bilingual Education

As another strong form of BE, heritage language BE aims at not only maintaining the heritage language against being lost but also developing it through education. Next to the heritage language, children acquire the majority language and become full bilinguals. In the USA, a number of particular schools implement this model of BE by using the heritage languages as a medium of instruction in order to prevent them from being lost (Fishman, 1989). These kinds of schools are named as developmental maintenance bilingual education in the USA, and as heritage language education in Canada (Baker, 2001). Developmental maintenance bilingual education is granted to Native Americans in the USA to maintain and protect their heritage language from being lost since transmission of the native language to younger generation is at a very low level (Crawford, 1995). Yet, owing to various factors, American Indians are not capable of preserving their heritage language and native culture at a desired level (Baker, 2001).

2.2.3. Dual Language Bilingual Education

In terms of nomenclature, there are multiple terms to define this model such as two-way immersion, enrichment model, two way bilingual education and so on (Serafini, Rozell & Winsler, 2020). As utilized in Baker's (2001) wording, dual language bilingual education is favored to be used in this project. As a common BE model in the USA, equal or balanced number of students from both majority and minority groups are put together in the same classroom (Serafini, Rozell & Winsler, 2020). As with the distribution of the students, languages of the both groups are utilized in the classroom as a medium of instruction. As might be expected, the ultimate goal is to reach balanced bilingual individuals using both of the languages actively and proficiently in literacy and academic areas (Lindholm, 1991; Collier & Thomas 2004, 2017).

Dual language BE can be implemented in numerous ways based on the allocation of time, school subjects, person, term and so on. To give an example, the minority language is used as a medium of instruction for half of the time and so is majority language for the other half (Serafini, Rozell & Winsler, 2020). The allocation of time can be separated according to days, weeks, months or semesters. Likewise, the allocation of languages can be done in terms of curriculum subjects in the sense that minority language is used for social sciences and majority one for technology. In a similar manner, teachers are paired as a team for dual language BE, and one teacher in the pair utilizes the first language whereas the other one uses the second language (Baker, 2001). Even the materials used in the school environment should be allocated in a bilingual manner from school boards to time schedules. According to Lindholm-Leary (2001), dual language BE programs are effective and beneficial in terms of phenomena such as academic achievement, bilingual development, engaging parents in the educational process and attitudes towards other language and culture.

Since two distinctive groups coming from different cultural and linguistic background interact in the classroom together, the learners gain cross-cultural awareness (Howard, Christian & Genesee, 2003). Additionally, they produce positive approach to others such as tolerance and sensitivity; thereby avoiding negative attitudes like stereotyping and prejudice (Genesee & Gandara, 1999). From another point of view, their togetherness brings cooperation and friendship to the fore among the groups in the long run, which is one of the achievements of dual language schools.

3. A Proposed Bilingual Education Model for Syrian Refugee Children in Türkiye

It is evident that there is a large population of Syrian refugees in Türkiye and their presence has gone beyond being temporary, but turned into a permanent case. For long-term solutions, immediate actions are supposed to be taken in order to meet the refugee populations' basic needs for the purpose of their integration into the Turkish community in the long run. Education is, without a doubt, one of the most effective tools for the integration of the minority groups.

More than half of the Syrian population is comprised of school-aged children, and these children should be integrated into the Turkish education system. For this to happen, MoNE has granted official permission to SRC to be enrolled in Turkish public schools and encouraged their education by launching projects in order to integrate SRC. During education process, it was observed that language plays a crucial role in various areas such as academic achievement, social interaction with target community and integration into the mainstream society. SRC lack adequate Turkish language proficiency, therefore they have difficulty in the just-mentioned areas. In this case, it is understood that if their home language is used as a medium of instruction at schools, they will overcome language-related problems.

Educating SRC in bilingual classrooms is highly likely to facilitate their integration into the Turkish community. Out of the above-mentioned weak and strong forms of BE models, it seems that transitional bilingual education (TBE) is the most conducive and reasonable one to integrate refugee children into the Turkish educational context. TBE is conducive because SRC who fall short of Turkish proficiency will be more likely to reach academic achievements easily with their native language. Later on, they can transfer the academic achievement and knowledge from their home language to Turkish when they attain proficiency in Turkish. TBE is also reasonable for Turkish context, because it will be an initial smooth transitional period for Turkish education system where language of instruction has been practiced in a Turkish-only manner up until now. More precisely, a radical change

with a strong form of BE in Turkish education system may lead to educational breakdowns and infrastructure problems in Türkiye.

It is crucial to note that Türkiye is a geographically large country with a large number of Turkish speaking students. Therefore, it is not reasonable to implement TBE in every part of the country, but instead, it is more feasible to pilot it only in cities highly populated with Syrians from the outset. These cities are Istanbul, Gaziantep, Hatay and Şanlıurfa as exhibited in Section 2. In each one of these cities, around 500.000 school-aged children take up residence. It is estimated that there are around 2.000-3.000 students in primary and secondary schools in these big cities. In this case, approximately 150 primary and secondary schools in these cities can meet SRC's basic educational needs by providing TBE to them. If the TBE model in these cities proves to be effective, the model can be implemented and spread by MoNE in other cities populated with Syrians (perhaps other refugees) when needed. In other words, it is not pedagogically sound to implement TBE programs in every city in Türkiye from the beginning.

As mentioned before, there are two types of TBE, and a late-exit TBE model seems to be more instrumental seeing that it gives more effective results pedagogically. More precisely, late-exit TBE will yield a number of productive results to integrate SRC into Turkish community in the long run. According to the Presidency of Migration Management (2021), Türkiye is hosting a large number of Iraqi people as with Syrians. Since the native language of these two peoples is Arabic, the productive results will be twice as many. The expected positive results of the model to be implemented can be summed up as follows:

First, SRC will attain better academic achievements through their native language since learning will be more quick and effective with a well-known language. Second, they will be able to establish successful communications with both bilingual teachers and classmates, which will lead to their socialization in Turkish context. In this way, in the long run, this case will integrate them into Turkish community by creating social cohesion in the society. Third, the usage of Arabic language at schools will motivate their parents to make cooperation with teachers and participate in the education process. With this phenomenon, the rate of enrollment in Turkish public schools will increase whereas relatedly drop-out rates will decrease, another factor facilitating the integration of Syrians in Türkiye. Fourth, the ultimate goal of education is not only exclusively language teaching and reaching academic achievement, but also providing psychological support and development. Seeing that their culture and language are not ignored, but instead, appreciated, SRC will develop positive psychology internally and externally. In other words, they will develop positive well-being individually and feel sense of belonging to Turkish society. All in all, providing late-exit TBE to SRC will make it easier to integrate them into Turkish education system linguistically, pedagogically, sociologically and psychologically; and thereby integrating them holistically into mainstream Turkish community over the long term.

4. Conclusion

A growing number of Syrian people have immigrated to Türkiye ever since the civil war in Syria. Exhibiting an exemplary attitude to Syrian refugees, Türkiye with all its governmental bodies accepted their presence and did its best to meet their needs. Needless to say, education is at the heart of all their needs. It is for this reason that MoNE has given official opportunities to all the SRC to be enrolled in Turkish public schools like Turkish citizens. It is found in the existing literature that SRC have encountered a number of language-related problems both at the time of enrollment and during the educational process itself. These language-related problems came to the fore in numerous areas: (1) language as a medium of instruction for academic achievement, (2) language as a medium of communication and social interaction, (3) language as a medium of integration, (4) language role in parental cooperation/participation; and (5) language role in personal and psychological development.

The purpose of this paper was to propose a bilingual education model suitable for Turkish education system in order to integrate SRC into Turkish community so as to overcome aforementioned language-related problems. It is suggested that late exit bilingual education model would be effective to integrate SRC into both Turkish education system and community in the long term by piloting it in Istanbul, Gaziantep, Hatay and Şanlıurfa where Syrians are highly populated. There are various reasons which make late exit TBE suitable for Turkish educational system. For example, it is found that late exit TBE will provide an initial smooth transitional period for SRC to switch from their native language to Turkish over a certain time. Otherwise, a rapid switch from Arabic to Turkish could be detrimental for their personal and psychological development since it takes around seven or ten years of refugee

children to reach a proficiency level in the majority language and catch up with their peers in the mainstream national education. Additionally, it is offered that late exit TBE may yield several desired results based on the problems related to language.

First, SRC may gain academic achievements in the Turkish curriculum and catch up with their peers by receiving education in their native language seeing that lack of Turkish proficiency creates pedagogical problems for them at the beginning of their education. Second, with successful communication and social interaction in Turkish educational contexts, it is more likely for SRC to establish mutual comprehensibility and friendship. Therefore, they will integrate into Turkish community through socialization. Third, as stakeholders, teachers and parents might cooperate more to enhance the education of SRC. Fourth, they will probably develop positive feelings by realizing that TBE value their native language and culture. Receiving psychological support will also enhance their well-being and identity, thereby facilitating their integration into the mainstream community. As a final remark, it is possible to conclude that TBE model will complete their full integration into Turkish community as a whole in terms of language, pedagogy, sociology and psychology.

5. Pedagogical Implications of the Proposed Model

Given that this project has offered a bilingual education model for SRC in Turkish education system, it includes several pedagogical implications for curriculum designers of teacher training programs, educational authorities, immigration authorities, MoNE and EU.

First of all, curriculum designers of teacher training programs are supposed to realize the gap that Turkish teachers are not trained and qualified enough to teach Turkish as a foreign language. Teachers should receive education to be adequately qualified to teach language while instructing non-natives of Turkish language like SRC. Being educated and qualified in this regard will increase teachers' motivation to work with immigrants and refugees in multilingual educational settings.

The educational authorities need to realize that it is problematic to educate non-natives of Turkish, immigrants in this case, via already-existed monolingual education system. Educating the immigrants require permanent and radical solutions rather than temporary solutions. Therefore, it is an urgent need to take initiatives and develop an effective educational policy towards immigrants and refugees in Türkiye seeing that immigration is a reality of Türkiye from now on. Additionally, an effective education policy will contribute to the quality of citizens and economy in Türkiye by raising functional full bilinguals and highly educated citizens. Qualified and educated citizens will nurture social cohesion and public order, and will impede social conflicts at the same time.

MoNE and Immigrants Office are expected to cooperate and decide the most appropriate model in addition to organizing in-service educational programs related to bilingual education or educating the minority groups in Türkiye for already-appointed teachers. In-service programs are highly likely to raise teachers' awareness about immigrant students' conditions. In this way, more effective and successful communication will take place between teachers and refugee students, thereby facilitating their integration into Turkish community. In this way, teachers can manage multilingual classrooms more effectively in a multicultural context.

Finally, educating the immigrants or refugees is not exclusively limited with the boundaries of Türkiye. But rather, immigration is a world-wide problem; relatedly, it requires solutions at a macro level. In this regard, when needed, entities such as educational authorities, MoNE and EU should come together and exchange ideas and experiences for the good of immigrants. They should support each other logistically and economically in order to launch PICTES-like projects.

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