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A Proposal of a Bilingual Education Program for the Refugee Students in Düzce

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Abstract
The aim of this paper is to suggest a bilingual education model appropriate for the local context of Düzce. While there are many kinds of bilingual education models and different implementations around the world, strong forms of bilingual education models, which are centered around the goal of developing or maintaining bilingualism, are considered to be more effective. However, lack of necessary resources in the context, a variation of submersion programs is suggested. Although we label it as submersion, precautions for maintenance of the students' mother tongues, and development of literacy skills in the native language is proposed. It is also noted that further research and general educational policy is required for a better model.
Keywords: Bilingual Education Model, Submersion, Immigrants

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1. Introduction

Turkey, as a consequence of its geo-political location as a bridge between Europe and Asia, has been receiving immigrants for many years (Deniz, 2014), and it has experienced the most intense migration wave since the Arab Spring broke out in 2011 (Erdoğan, 2018). According to the statistics provided by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR, 2020), there are more than 3.5 million Syrians in Turkey. In addition, the statics of 2020 reveals that 550 thousand Syrian babies were born in Turkey and 650 thousand immigrant children attend to state schools (Erdoğan, 2019), and 1825 of those immigrants are accommodated in the province of Düzce according to the recent statistics provided by Directorate General of Immigrant Management. In addition to Syrians, there are immigrants from other countries like Iraq and Afghanistan in Düzce, as well.

Düzce, located between the two metropolis cities - İstanbul and Ankara, is a cosmopolitan city with its population of different ethnic identities. These ethnic groups, namely Abkhazians, Circassians, Georgians, and those whose origins are from Eastern Black Sea Region and Balkans, live in harmony for years. However, Yüksel and Aydemir (2020) explain that the emergent new social structure which occurred as a result of migration not only has an impact on the immigrants but also on the local people, and leads these two groups to interact with each other; thus, the adaptation process of the immigrant group can only be achieved via mutual understanding. However, their small-scale study conducted in Düzce reveals that the local residents in Düzce have negative attitudes towards immigrants in general, and they believe that immigrants should go back to their own country soon after the conflict in Syria is over.

Besides housing and nutritional needs of the immigrants, the children under eighteen have the rights to access free primary and secondary education including all services and programs according to Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1989). In parallel to this statement, Seydi (2014) explains that children deprived of education can threat the society in which they live; for these reasons, the educational needs of immigrant children are a crucial concern in today's circumstances in Turkey for the benefit of both the society and the individuals. In this respect, Ministry of National Education (MoNE) approves the enrollment of refugee students to the mainstream education programs, and this provided refugee students equal access to education as Turkish counterparts (Alpaydın, 2017).

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The main problem faced through the adaptation of refugee students into the social life and education system is the language barrier (Aktürk Çopur, 2019; Er & Bayındır, 2015; Erdem, 2017; Karaca & Doğan, 2014); on the other hand, Topçu (2017) states that 5-hour Turkish courses in a week is not satisfactory for the students to learn Turkish. As a result, this manifests the need for a well-structured bilingual education program meeting the social, educational and emotional needs of the refugee students. In addition, teachers have a crucial role in the attainment of such a bi/multicultural educational goal (Aktürk Çopur, 2019; Erdem, 2017; Kurtuluş, 2018; Karaca & Doğan, 2014); however, teachers do not have much knowledge on how to handle this issue (Karaca & Doğan, 2014), and what is worse, they are not aware of bilingual education models being implemented (Bekdemir, Kalaycı & Alagözlü, 2021). Thus, they need pre/in-service training to get prepared for the multi-cultural educational settings (Bekdemir, et al., 2021; Erdem, 2017; Kurtuluş, 2018). In other words, it is not only the adaptation of students but also teachers and any other individuals who are involved in this process.

Aktürk Çopur (2019) carried out a comprehensive study in three primary schools with the highest number of refugee students in Düzce. In her MA dissertation, she interviewed refugee children, their parents, teachers and counselors, and school principals and provided a broad perspective to the issue from different viewpoints. First, she explains that there is no general policy for the educational needs of the immigrant children; that is, they are directly thrown into the mainstream education according to their ages. The results of her study reveal that this approach leads to four main problems regarding the immigrant students at schools - no or low proficiency of the students in Turkish, discrimination, prejudice and anger tendencies displayed by the students. She further emphasizes the significance of inclusive educational approach since teachers who are committed to such an approach have more positive attitudes and try harder to help their students in the class.

Education for refugees is one of the contemporary issues not only in Turkey but also around the world, and as we also mentioned above, it requires considering variety of dimensions and most significantly the suitable education program (Demirkol Orak & Alagözlü, 2020). The aim of this study is to suggest an appropriate bilingual education program for the local setting of Düzce in the light of the related literature on existing bilingual education programs and the current status of the immigrants and in accordance with the schooling facilities, opportunities and any other educational resources. In addition, Aktürk Çopur's (2019) study forms the basis for the proposed model with its comprehensive and enlightening findings.

2. Bilingual Education Models

As Cazden and Snow (1990) stress that bilingual education is a simple explanation for a complex phenomenon; for example, there are ninety types of bilingual schooling models in Mackey's (1970) classification (cited in Baker, 2001). Basically, bilingual education is the use of two languages (minority/home and majority/foreign) to deliver different curriculum areas; thus focusing on both language skills and other academic areas (De Mejia, 2002; Genesee, 2004; Brisk, 2005). On the other hand, according to Pokrivbáková (2013), "bilingual education can be defined as teaching bilingual learners through the medium of one language, with bilingualism not being promoted at all and thus the schooling itself being monolingual" (p. 10). Hence, variation in the programs is the result of how languages are used (Brisk, 2005), and Baker (2001) classifies bilingual education models as weak and strong forms. While strong forms aim to foster the development of both home and majority language, in the weak form of bilingual education, the aim is to support monolingualism or assimilate the minority group into the language majority. The summary of both weak and strong forms of bilingual education models is presented below.

2.1. Weak Forms of Bilingual Education Models

Baker (2001) expresses that the weak forms of bilingual education models do not support bilingualism, but they are considered as bilingual education as the students are bilingual. Thus, the aim of these programs is to support monolingualism or assimilation into the language majority, and most of the time, attending to these programs is not optional but compulsory.

In submersion education model, students from the minority language group are placed in mainstream education where courses are delivered in the majority language. Basically, the aim is to assimilate the language minority, especially in the case of migration (Baker, 2001). In the model, minority and majority group students are in the same class, and everyone is expected to use the language of majority; however, minority group students do not get any linguistic help, and the underlying assumption is that minority group students will learn the language of education automatically (Walter, 2008). One of the varieties of submersion program is structured immersion, and in this case, the classes consist of only minority group students and a simplified version of the majority language is used by the teachers in the class. However, the aim is still assimilation.

Another type of submersion education is submersion with pull-out classes. In this model, minority students do not take some of the content lessons offered in the mainstream education; instead, they take some compensatory lessons in the majority language to keep up with the other pupils. Such kind of approach is easy to implement

and cost little or no additional charge (Baker, 2001). According to Baker (2001), Sheltered English is also a variation of this model. In this model, content courses are taught in the simplified version of the majority language with specific materials prepared for this purpose, and the focus is on both language and content.

In transitional bilingual education, students are allowed to use their mother tongue, minority language, and courses are delivered in this language for a temporary period, and the transition to majority language is executed by decreasing the use of minority language and increasing the proportion of majority language. As de Mejia (2002) explains, "The emphasis is to shift children from minority language communities away from the use of their first language towards the use of the dominant majority language or languages spoken in mainstream society" (p. 44). Thus, the aim of the model is to prepare the students for the proceeding stages of education where the medium of instruction is the majority language. For this model to be implemented, bilingual teachers play a significant role in the transition process, as well. In addition, there are types of this model: early and late exit programs (Ramirez & Merino, 1990). In early exit programs, students receive education in their home language during the first one to three years of schooling beside instruction in the majority language, and in late exit programs students have the opportunity to access 40% of courses in their mother tongue till grade 6 or more. In the former model, the linguistic support is high initially but little or none in the later stages, in the latter one, students get linguistic support throughout all the stages (Walter, 2008).

Two other models which support monolingualism are the segregationist and separatist forms of education. Unlike the models supporting monolingualism in the majority language, the segregationist model has the policy of "minority language only", and the minority group members do not have access to the opportunities offered in the majority language. In the separatist model, the monolingualism in the minority language is self-determined by the minority groups to seek independent existence from the majority group, though. (See Baker (2001) Chapter 9 for more details on weak forms of bilingual education models.)

2.2. Strong Forms of Bilingual Education Models

Unlike the weak forms of bilingual education models, the strong forms aim to foster bilingualism and cultural diversity in the community. In these models, the students are monolinguals, and they are supported by the school to develop competency in another language. The underlying approach in the strong forms of bilingual education to language teaching is content-driven – both language and content has equal significance (Genesee, 2004). Also, attending the classes in these models is not compulsory but optional for the students.

Immersion bilingual education model emerged in Canada in 1965 as French immersion (Brinton, Snow & Welsche, 1989), and extended to the United States in 1970s in the form of Spanish immersion (Christian, 2011). This model, unlike submersion programs, aims to foster bilingualism in the society. In this model, the development of two languages is fostered. Based on the age of entry level, there are three types of immersion: early (at the kindergarten), middle (9-10 years old) and late (at secondary school). In addition, the model can be grouped as total or partial immersion depending on the proportion of the target language used throughout the education. In total immersion programs, the education is conducted in 100% of the target language but in a decreasing manner to 50% towards the junior school. In partial immersion model, on the other hand, both home and target languages are used in equal percentages. According to Canadian Education Association (1992), the most effective one is the early total immersion, as well (cited in Baker, 2001).

Another type of strong bilingual education model is heritage bilingual education model – also called developmental maintenance bilingual education. In this model, medium of instruction is the language which has "cultural or linguistic relevance to the learner" (Walter, 2008, 131), and this language can sometimes be endangered (Baker, 2001). Great proportion of the courses are delivered in the child's home language so that the maintenance of the language is ensured; the underlying idea of the model is that the majority language can easily be acquired via intensive exposure outside the home, but the home language can be lost or not be learnt. Thus, the aim of the model is full bilingualism and cultural diversity by revitalizing the home language (Baker, 2001).

Dual language bilingual education is another strong form aiming at full bilingualism. Different from the other forms, both majority and minority group students are placed in the same classroom, and courses are delivered via languages of these two groups. A language balance (nearly) equal number of students from each group, and bilingual staff are the significant components of the model. The general idea is language separation or language compartmentalization (Baker, 2001, 216). That is, either each language is used for the delivery of separate courses or each language is used in different days or in different periods of the day (morning/afternoon). In addition, peer interaction is considered to be significant and being together with the role models of the target language helps students to be more motivated to learn the language (Christian, 2011). Another significant point to note is that each language has an equal status, and teachers and students do not code-switch between languages during the classroom activities. The outcome of such a program is bilingual individuals who possess cultural and linguistic diversity.

Another type of strong form is bilingual education in majority languages. In this model, some of the curriculum is delivered in a second language, and this language is internationally of high status like English, French and so

on. This kind of schooling is usually implemented in societies where bilingualism is widespread (Baker, 2001). In addition, International schools and European school movement are good examples of this model. It is also noteworthy that this model is different from language intensification programs where a second language is delivered as a different course but with more class hours per week (De, Mejia, 2002) (See Baker (2001) Chapter 10 for more details on the strong form of bilingual education models.)

3. Bilingual Education Around the World

It is worth mentioning about the implementation of bilingual education programs around the world before proposing an appropriate model for a specific context. In the UK and USA, the variations of submersion programs are the most common for the education of immigrants (Brisk, 2005; Zimmerman, 2010) even though Spanish immersion programs in the USA, Welch Heritage language programs in the UK and any other types of immersion programs are also widespread. Baker (2001) finds this situation ironic and expresses that "many US and UK students spend time in school learning some of the very languages that children of immigrants are pressurized to forget" (p. 374). The effort for multilingualism in Luxemburg can be a good example for the bilingual education. In the country, the aim is to raise trilingual individuals fluent in Luxemburgish, German and French (Brisk, 2005). In Slovakia, for example, Hungarians who compromise the 10% of the population have the opportunity to attend bilingual schools (Pokrivbáková, 2013). In China and many parts of Africa, where multiple languages are used, sequential bilingualism is preferred. In the early periods of schooling, the tribal or native language is emphasized, then at later periods, the official language in Africa and English in the context of China is used (Brisk, 2005). Also, in several countries, heritage bilingual education programs are implemented to maintain the language of Basque in Spain, Maori in Australia, Welch in the UK, Malay in Malaysia, Aymara and Quechua in Bolivia, Kiswahili in Kenya. Brisk (2005) also argues that bilingual education programs delivered to immigrants around the world are at risk. She explains that indigenous language education finds more support than the bilingual programs for immigrants in Australia and in some parts of Europe; in other words, submersion programs are preferred for the immigrants in the countries while its own citizens are supported to learn foreign languages or their heritage languages. (See Brick (2005) for more details on the implementations and policies of bilingual education around the world.)

4. Suggested Bilingual Education Model

A well-structured bilingual education should support students' academic achievement, help them develop competency in the language of majority/instruction, which is a variable affecting the outcomes of education (Walter, 2008) and maintain their home languages, as well (Zimmerman, 2010; Brick, 2005). Christian (2011) also expresses the significance of education in the native language, and the language is a crucial component of identity constructed via interactions and has a significant impact on the development of positive self-esteem of individuals (Zimmerman, 2010).

Under the light of the considerations mentioned above, the researcher aims to suggest an effective model of bilingual education which can be put into practice in the local context of Düzce by taking the available resources and the current position of the refugee students and the problems faced in the mainstream education into consideration. Thus, lack of bilingual teachers who could deliver courses in the refugee students' own language, the economic considerations, and the local society's subtractive attitudes (Yüksel & Aydemir, 2020) lead the researcher propose a variation of a submersion model but respecting the minority group's cultural and linguistic values based on the circumstances.

For the first two levels of primary school (Grade 1 and 2), the students can be placed into the mainstream classes as Aktürk Çopur (2019) states the new starters do not have any problems to follow the lessons. Genesee (2008) also emphasizes that "academic objectives for primary school students lend themselves well to concrete, experiential, hands-on learning activities. These kinds of activities also lend themselves well to promoting L2 acquisition among young learners." (p. 558). In addition, Turkish students at those levels do not have much school experience like their refugee counterparts and the only task is to gain literacy in Turkish. For the grade 3 and 4, however, two-hour withdrawal courses can be arranged by the classroom teachers to compensate the gap of knowledge in the students' competency in Turkish or content areas out of school periods several days a week. On the other hand, new comers at the age of grade 3 or 4 can follow a different path based on their schooling background in their home country and experience in Turkish. That is, teachers, school administrators and the parents can negotiate and determine whether the pupil should go on his education from the grade 3-4 or start from grade 1-2.

For the secondary school, submersion with pull-out classes can meet the demands of the students. However, these pull-out classes should not be within the period of normal schooling but after the classroom period in several days a week. These classes can be one-to-one or in small groups, and the content can be either fluency in Turkish or an overview of content areas like math or science depending on the students' needs. The courses can

be arranged by the school administration in accordance with either students' demands or teachers' reports. In this level of schooling, students are assumed to be catching up with the curriculum at the end of the grade 8, and the purpose of the pull-out classes is to fasten this process and the underlying message is that teachers are there to help refugee students.

Our suggestion for the high school level is preparatory classes similar to the ones held in English at former high school models called Anatolian/Science High schools since studying complex academic subjects at this level requires a more advanced level of competency in the language of instruction (Genesee, 2004). Thus, the aim of the preparatory year is to help the students reach a threshold level in Turkish language skills to be able to follow the courses in the ensuing years. The underlying reason behind such an approach, as we already mentioned above, is that students at high schools can cope with relatively complex content areas compared with the secondary school, and they will not fall behind the curriculum as a result of their lack of competency in Turkish. In addition, teachers can hesitate to simplify the courses to be able to adapt them to the refugee students' levels as the Turkish students prepare for the university exam, and they have to catch all the necessary content areas. Preferably, these courses should be delivered as summer courses; however, in case of a new arrival of refugee students in the middle of the academic year, adaptations can be offered.

Local public education centers can organize Turkish classes for adult refugees who are beyond the age of public education to improve their basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS). Furthermore, local Turkish education center (TÖMER) offer Turkish courses to foreigners from variety of different countries at different age groups and gives the certificate of C1 to the successful participants; those who are interested in improving their cognitive/academic language proficiency level (CALP) can attend to the lessons offered there. In addition, Lam (1992) mentions about "Family Literacy Programs" where adults and out-of-school youths can attend; the main goal of these programs is to help attendees gain literacy skills in the majority language, as a result, they can help their children's school work. All these programs mentioned above are important to be able help the parents of refugee students be a part of education, as they are the "cornerstones" of bilingual education programs (Brisk, 2005).

Although we mentioned that the proposed model is a variation of submersion program, we also suggest that opportunities to develop literacy in Arabic could be offered to the students as the official language in Syria is Arabic. Christian (2011) states that the literacy development can be either concurrent or sequential. Three-hour optional courses on weekdays or at the weekends can be delivered to the students. Either teachers working at religious vocational high schools or the academicians from the department of religious studies at Düzce University can deliver these courses as they study Quran – the religious book of Islam and whose language is Arabic, and to be able to carry out their studies, they are expected to learn Arabic during their Bachelor's Degree at least in a level that they can teach it at vocational high schools. These courses, as Zimmerman (2010) argues, show that students' mother tongue is valued, and it will lead to the construction of blend of home and majority culture. Also, the teaching and learning of the home language is within the responsibility of the families as it is not easy to find qualified bilingual teachers in the local context as stated in the study conducted by Chen, Yang and Chen (2017) in the USA. On the other hand, it is assumed that the literacy courses will be helpful for the refugee students.

In addition to the adaptations directly related to schooling, other actions should be taken, as well. First, in/pre-service teacher education gains more importance to be able to prepare teachers for the implementation of bilingual education models successfully. In-service training programs, especially at the local setting, is of great vitality to help teachers gain necessary skills for bilingual education and adapt themselves to this relatively new challenge. Second, bilingual course materials can be prepared for the refugee students at different age groups. The content of these materials can be simpler than the actual materials, and the goal should be to expose students to both Turkish and Arabic and provide them extra materials that can help them catch up with other students. This is not an easy project and had better be designed by MoNE all around Turkey, but it can also be conducted by the local authorities in a small scale to meet the needs and demands of the local setting. Finally, meeting the psychological needs of the refugee students is of great significance (Bircan & Sunata, 2015); thus, employing bilingual counseling teachers or translators at Counseling and Research Centers (CRC) and adapting survey materials to the refugee students might be solution to this problem.

5. Conclusion and Further Research

Although we are aware of the fact that strong forms of bilingual education are more effective, the education in the native language and its development are crucial both for academic achievement and construction of healthy identity, and our attitudes towards immigrants holds a middle position neither assimilation nor pluralism (Edward, 1985, as cited in Baker, 2001), resources at hand, unfortunately, lead us to propose a model which is closer to a weak form of bilingual education. The effectiveness of the model is arguable; however, we should not forget that "the nature and quality of classroom instruction is crucial for implementation of the program" (Genesee, 2004, 560), as a result, this emphasizes the importance of teachers (Brisk, 2005), and it arises the

significance of teacher education focusing on multicultural issues in the schools (Bekdemir et al., 2021; Kurtuluş, 2018). In addition, Gardner and Lambert (1972) argues that motivation can be a variable which can make up a gap, and integrative motivation – "willingness to be a member of another ethno-linguistic community (p. 12) – plays the most important role in the acquisition of a second language. Such a motivation in the current circumstances can be a leading factor solving language-related problems in the class. In short, implementation of a bilingual education program consists of many dimensions as discussed above (Brisk, 2005).

To be able propose a more effective and appropriate model, needs analysis should be conducted to investigate the refugee students and parents, and local people's needs and expectations. Furthermore, in accordance with the framework proposed by Douglas Fir Group (2016), school, family, and neighborhood are at the meso-level; however, cultural, political and economic values at the macro level should be considered. This is only possible by the efforts of policy-makers, though.

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