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## A Research on Communication Problems of Syrian Refugee Students from A Linguistic Social Work Perspective

### *Dilbilimsel Sosyal Hizmet Perspektifinden Suriyeli Mülteci Öğrencilerin İletişim Problemleri Üzerine Bir Araştırma*

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| ABSTRACT   | ÖZ   |
|--|--|
| <p>With this preliminary research, it is aimed to determine the problems experienced by refugee children whose mother language is Arabic in schools where Turkish education is given. The research addresses the question of how much of the problems that refugee children are specifically dealing with in school social work are due to language differences. Syrian refugee children living in Kocaeli and attending high school were selected as the universe. The research is limited to 10 high school students whose mother language is Arabic, born in Syria between 2004-2008. A semi-structured interview form was applied to five female and five male high school students in Izmit district of Kocaeli. A qualitative research method was adopted, in which hermeneutic and in-depth answers were obtained with an interview form consisting of open-ended questions. As a result, institutions and organizations working in the field of refugees need a social work approach and social workers. Not knowing Arabic or Persian is the biggest obstacle for social workers working in the field, especially in the field of integration. Therefore, the biggest obstacle in front of Syrian students is education and the Turkish language that will provide it. Difficulties in language learning span the integration process over decades.</p> | <p>Bu ön araştırma ile anadili Arapça olan mülteci çocukların Türkçe eğitim verilen okullarda yaşadığı sorunların tespiti amaçlanmaktadır. Araştırma, mülteci çocukların spesifik olarak okul sosyal hizmetinin ilgilendiği sorunların ne kadarının dil farklılığından kaynaklandığı sorusunu konu olarak ele almaktadır. Evren olarak Kocaeli’nde yaşayan ve liseye devam eden Suriyeli mülteci çocuklar seçilmiştir. Araştırma, 2004-2008 yılları arasında Suriye’de doğan anadili Arapça olan 10 lise öğrencisi ile sınırlandırılmıştır. Kocaeli ilinin İzmit ilçesinde liseye devam eden beşi kız beşi erkek öğrenciye yarı yapılandırılmış bir görüşme formu uygulanmıştır. Açık uçlu sorulardan oluşan görüşme formuyla yorumsamacı, derinlemesine cevapların elde edildiği nitel bir araştırma yöntemi benimsenmiştir. Sonuç olarak, mültecilik alanında çalışan kurum ve kuruluşlar sosyal hizmet yaklaşımına ve sosyal hizmet uzmanlarına ihtiyaç duymaktadır. Sahada özellikle entegrasyon alanında çalışan sosyal çalışmacılar için Arapça veya Farsça bilmemek en büyük engeldir. Dolayısıyla Suriyeli öğrencilerin önündeki en büyük engel eğitim ve bunu sağlayacak olan Türkçedir. Dil öğrenmedeki güçlükler entegrasyon sürecini on yıllara yaymaktadır.</p> |
| <p><b>Keywords</b></p> <p>Linguistic Social Work, School Social Work, Multilingualism, Refugee, High School Student</p>  | <p><b>Anahtar Kelimeler</b></p> <p>Dilbilimsel Sosyal Hizmet, Okul Sosyal Hizmeti, Çok Dillilik, Mülteci, Liseli</p>   |

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## 1. Introduction

Linguistic social work entitles the client to meet his/her social needs by using his/her own language. In this context, it especially respects minority groups, immigrants and refugees, supports them to keep their languages and cultures alive, allows people to express themselves and participate actively in the aid process. When the data showing the demographic characteristics of Syrian immigrants under temporary protection in Turkey are examined, it is seen that approximately 47% of the approximately 3.7 million Syrians in Turkey consist of school-age children and higher education-age youth. Migration refers to population movements in which a person or a group of people, regardless of duration, nature or reason, moves across an international border or within a state (Perruchoud ve Redpath-Cross, 2013). Migration waves from Turkey's border neighbors such as Iran, Iraq and Syria since the 1980s did not have a permanent appearance. The Syrian migration, which started in 2011, has changed the game in this sense, and the problem has become permanent with the increasing number of immigrant population from year to year and the length of stay of these immigrants in the country. Having encountered such an intense foreign migration for the first time in its history, Turkey has begun to gain the identity of a country that receives immigration. In this context, it is seen that the palliative migration policies created based on the idea that asylum seekers are temporary/guests are no longer valid, and Syrian immigrants have become more sedentary over the years.

Even though it is limited to the social welfare regime and immigration policies of the country of immigration, social work profession and discipline, meeting the basic needs of asylum seekers and refugees such as shelter, nutrition, education and health, increasing their problem-solving and coping capacities, having control over their own lives, psycho- social rehabilitation, legal status, social structure of the migrated country, immigration policies, informing about social welfare services, maintaining ties with the country of origin, connecting with the resources, services and opportunities available in the society, access to social welfare services, social acceptance and harmony, human It carries out applications at different levels, from micro to macro, in the protection and development of their rights, in the creation and development of more effective and humane migration policies for asylum seekers and refugees (Güldalı, 2009: 8). In this context, Syrian immigrants constitute an important field of study in terms of social work profession and discipline. Social work has an important position in making the voices of disadvantaged groups heard, defending their rights and considering their demands. At the point of advocacy, attention should be paid to the place of discourse. How discourse is created and used is important for the change of perceptions and understandings at micro, mezzo, macro and global levels. Linguistic social work states that changing socio-economic, philosophical and political situations should be analyzed by providing a framework for social work discourse that takes place in this context. At the point of making the analysis, it is necessary to examine how inclusive and universal the discourses, meanings and expressions in the language are, the duties and responsibilities of the social worker, institutions and organizations, how the client and the problems in the practices are conceptualized and constructed, and how the knowledge, skills and values are built (Kara, 2020: 1713). With this migration movement, which reached 4 million after 2011 and a significant part of which consisted of children in the education age, many legal regulations were needed. Due to the view that the duration of the migration would be short in the first years of the migration movement, the measures taken were generally implemented as health, shelter and meeting basic needs. The policies pursued for the education of Syrian children were initially developed with the thought that these people would return to their country in a short time, and the lessons were given

with the Arabic curriculum. In this way, it was thought that they would not encounter any problems when they returned to their countries. However, the uncertainty of the turmoil in Syria after 2013 and the danger of about 1 million school-age children being excluded from education forced the Turkish state to take comprehensive measures in the field of education. In this direction, the Ministry of National Education tried to find a solution to the education problems of the Syrians with the circular published on April 26, 2013. "Measures Against Syrian Citizens Hosted Outside the Camps in Our Country"

The circular titled is the first official document published by the Ministry of National Education (MEB, 2013a). However, this circular is more about the provision of environments where students can be taught rather than the content of the education. Undoubtedly, this circular is important because it is the first step taken in this regard. Later, a more comprehensive circular titled "Educational Services for Syrian Citizens Under Temporary Protection in Our Country" was published on September 26, 2013. The issues that are mainly mentioned in the circular include teacher employment, curriculum, enrollment of students and giving Turkish lessons, which were not mentioned in the circular on April 26 (MEB, 2013b). With this circular, Temporary Education Centers (TEC) were established, it was decided to assign Syrian teachers and to implement the Arabic curriculum, and Turkish lessons were given to those who wanted them. The legal status of Syrians in our country was achieved with the adoption of the Law on Foreigners and International Protection No. 6458 in May 2014. With this law, temporary protection status, which is a special status, has been given to Syrian immigrants in our country. In accordance with Article 89 of the relevant law, persons with this status and their family members have the right to benefit from primary and secondary education services. At the same time, the Ministry of National Education issued the "Educational Services for Foreigners" circular and made some arrangements for the education of children in our country within the scope of Law No. 6458. In this circular, students who do not have a residence permit are also given the right to enroll in Turkish schools with a foreign identification document. In addition, the Ministry of National Education aimed to provide accreditation by placing the existence of TECs on a legal basis with this circular. It is decided that TECs can be opened when necessary with the permission of the governorship, depending on the provincial or district national education directorates, provided that the course schedules and curricula determined by the ministry are followed, ensuring unity in practice and foreign students wanting to return to their countries or continue their education in educational institutions affiliated to the Ministry of National Education. It is aimed that they will not lose a year in case of a loss. This decision has revealed a dual structure in the education of Syrian students. While the children in the camps were educated in TECs opened for them, most of the children of families who migrated to the cities could not be provided with access to school. At this point, the Ministry of National Education realized the dual structure that emerged in the education of Syrian students and carried out the accreditation of TECs in a period of three years and gathered the educational activities of Syrian students into a single point, namely schools. When the Turkish literature is examined, there is only one article in the field of Linguistic Social Work, and there is no thesis or book on the subject. The article in question is Kara's article titled "Linguistic social work as a new approach" in 2020. The article is aimed at introducing and describing the subject of Linguistic Social Work. In this context, the concept has found application in this study for the first time in relation to the education of Syrian refugee students. The fact that Linguistic Social Work first came to life in this study as an application area expresses its value as originality. The demographic characteristics of 10 refugee students who voluntarily participated in the study are summarized in the table below.

**Table 1:** Characteristics of Participants

| Gender  | Demographic Summary   |
|---------|---|
| 1.Girl  | At the age of 17, the father of 4 brothers passed away in Syria.  |
| 2.Girl  | At the age of 15, the father of 4 brothers passed away in Syria.  |
| 3.Girl  | 16 years old 4 Brothers Father and mother are teachers so they have a salary.   |
| 4. Girl | At the age of 15, 6 Brothers and Fathers are in Syria, and Abi works and takes care of 7 people.  |
| 5. Girl | At the age of 16, 2 Brother Fathers work in Italy and they are well-off.  |
| 1.Boy   | At the age of 15, 5 brothers' father died in Syria. 2 older brothers are working.   |
| 2. Boy  | At the age of 16, 6 brothers are getting help from Kızılay, their father and brothers are working.  |
| 3. Boy  | At the age of 16, Father of 5 Brothers works in Kuwait and they are well-off.   |
| 4. Boy  | At the age of 16, 2 Brothers Mother is working, father has remained in Syria and their communication has been lost. When the mother became a Turkish citizen, the Red Crescent stopped aid. |
| 5. Boy  | At the age of 17, 11 brothers and sisters are working, they are getting help from Red Crescent.   |

## 2. Problems Refugee Students Experience in Education

Tunga vd. (2020) in their study, the problems experienced by Syrian children in the education process; gathered under three headings as barriers to access to school, language barrier and lack of qualified teachers. Shifting school-age students to child labor due to economic difficulties, negative reaction to co-education, security problems (peer bullying and discrimination), lack of awareness and awareness of families, deficiencies in education policies towards refugees, single parenting (one of the parents may die in the war or still in Turkey) reasons such as lack of access to school), difficulties in accessing school, high mobility within the country, and social exclusion are listed as barriers to accessing school. Since the temporary education model, which is tried to be given with persons other than MEB personnel, has disappeared, there is no need to discuss the second item, which is defined as the Shortage of Qualified Teachers. The language barrier, which is the main subject of the study, is discussed in a separate title below.

### 2.2. Language Barrier

The fact that Arabic and Turkish are quite different languages makes it very difficult for Syrian children to adapt to Turkish education. It would not be wrong to say that the decision to teach Turkish to Syrian children was delayed. As stated in the previous sections, the education of Syrian children started in TECs and Arabic was used as the language of education. The process that we can call the lost time between these two practices is one of the reasons why the target point in teaching Turkish to Syrian children has not yet been reached. Again with this policy change, it was decided that TECs should be closed and the students there should continue to the schools affiliated to the Ministry of National Education. For this reason, it has been made compulsory for Syrian students in the 1st, 5th and 9th grades to enroll in schools that provide Turkish education under the Ministry of National Education. This situation has caused especially the 5th and 9th grade students to encounter the Turkish curriculum without being able to learn the language

sufficiently. Children who were transferred to MEB schools, where Turkish education continues, with weak or no Turkish, could not follow the lessons and left the school after a while.

In the interviews with the teachers of the Syrian students placed in the Ministry of National Education, the teachers stated that the only criterion used for the placement of these students in the schools affiliated to the Ministry of National Education is their age and emphasized that the students have different language proficiency despite being the same age (Tunga et al., 2020). Another reason for not overcoming the language barrier was stated as the inadequacy of the course materials used in Turkish teaching.

Biçer and Kılıç (2017) evaluated the textbooks used in teaching Turkish to Syrian students by collecting teacher opinions. Within the scope of the study, the teachers who used these textbooks were asked for their opinions on topics such as content, suitability for student levels, distribution of basic language skills, and formal features. Teachers stated that the contents of the textbooks were simple and the number of activities was insufficient, not suitable for the level of students at different levels, in other words, they had to use the same books for students at different levels. They stated that the basic language skills are not distributed equally in the books, the books are focused on grammar and writing, and the necessary importance is not given to listening and speaking skills.

Another problem mentioned in the literature is that there is no specific curriculum for teaching Turkish to foreigners. Syrian students said that their readiness level was not at the level of the program used in Turkish lessons, and that they had difficulties in the measurement and evaluation phase. The teachers, who draw attention to the fact that the programs used are prepared for students whose mother tongue is Turkish, state that they need lesson programs prepared by experts in teaching Turkish to foreigners (Biçer ve Kılıç,2017; Tunga vd, 2020; Taştan ve Kılıç,2017; Güzel,2021; Özer vd, 2016a ve 2016b; Şimşir ve Dalmaç,2018; Özgüzel,2019).

Finally, it is seen that there are also affective reasons that play a role in not overcoming the language barrier. The resistance of Syrian families and children to learning Turkish was also expressed in NGO reports and in interviews with teachers. The fact that the Qur'an is in Arabic and Arabic is seen as the language of Islam, the fact that Syrians have temporary protection status and their belief that they will be sent to their country because they do not have the right to citizenship, and their concerns about losing their identity are among the reasons for the resistance to learning Turkish.

### **3. Methodology of the Research**

The research is a preliminary research. In the future, it is planned to conduct a more comprehensive research with larger participation based on the data of this preliminary research. In this context, first of all, a literature review was made and it was aimed to reveal the problems that need to be overcome by scanning the studies on language in the education of Syrian children in our country. For this purpose, researches conducted by academic and non-governmental organizations published between 2015-2022 were collected. In order to reach academic research, searches were made with the keywords "Syrian children", "refugee education", "Syrian refugees" and "Syrian students" in the Ulakbim database (tr index) and the google academic search engine. The scope of the research was limited to education. Ten articles meeting these criteria were included in this study. After the literature was scanned, the second stage of the research, the interview with the students, was started.

With this preliminary research, it is aimed to determine the problems experienced by refugee children whose mother language is Arabic in schools where Turkish education is given. The research specifically addresses the question of how much of the problems that social work deals with refugee children are due to language differences. Syrian refugee children living in Izmit and attending high school were chosen as the research population. An Imam Hatip High School in Izmit district was chosen as the sample area. A semi-structured interview form was applied to five female and five male Syrian students attending this high school. A qualitative research method was adopted, in which hermeneutic and in-depth answers were obtained with an interview form consisting of open-ended questions.

The interpretive approach is an approach that aims to understand society and people by questioning the meaningful construction of complex social environments and situations and the interaction of individuals with each other (Kaya, 2019: 272). In terms of the social work profession, the interpretive approach also helps individuals to understand other people and the society they live in (Pulla and Carter, 2018: 10). As an applied social science, the social work profession constructs life experiences and reality with language and provides the perception, interpretation and interpretation of the reality of clients through language.

A translator has been assigned to assist us by the Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants (SGDD) for this research. The research interviews were completed by going to the children's school in one day. interviews; Our English teacher friend, who is one of the article writers, realized it. What's your name at the beginning? How many are brothers? It was asked in Turkish and the answers were received. As the questions became more complex, the translator stepped in and asked the questions by translating them into Arabic and translated the answers he received into Turkish. During the interviews, the questions in Table 2 were asked, and their answers were recorded on a voice recorder with the permission of the students. When the answers were analyzed, it was observed that the students gave short answers that did not exceed one or two sentences and they skipped some questions saying they did not exist. Therefore, the in-depth interviews aimed in the research remained quite superficial. Spontaneous translation of answers from Arabic to Turkish may also be another reason for short answers. The small number of answers and the shortness of the answers limited the research.

**Table 2:** Semi-Structured Interview Questions with Students

| <b>EXPLANATION</b>   |  |
|--|--|
| This study, for which your participation is requested, is a scientific research and is carried out by Engin Güneş, a doctoral faculty member of the Social Work Department of Selçuk University. Participation in this research is entirely at your own discretion. If you agree to participate in the study, the researcher will conduct an in-depth interview with you face-to-face or over the phone to get your information and opinions about the research. The interview will be recorded with a voice recorder to be used for qualitative data analysis. Your answers will be used in a scientific article about immigration and your identity information is not needed. |  |
| <b>INTERVIEW QUESTIONS</b>   |  |
| 1-   | Could you briefly introduce yourself and your family? (Your gender, in what year were you born in Syria, how many years did you immigrate to Turkey, are your parents with you, how do you make a living, how many siblings do you have) |
| 2-   | Can you tell us your immigration story? (Did the family members come together, did they come in pieces, in which cities did they stay, did they stay in the camp etc.)   |

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| 3-                      | How many languages do you know? How well do you know Turkish? How did you learn Turkish? Would you tell? |
| 4-                      | Have you had problems with education related to language? How is your academic success?                  |
| 5-                      | Do you have language problems in social life?  |
| 6-                      | Do you have a story of your own that stems from not knowing Turkish?                                     |
| 7-                      | Do you receive social assistance? Can you talk about them?   |
| 8-                      | Are there any conflicts arising from language in the process of social assistance?                       |
| 9-                      | What are your suggestions for Turkey's education policies for immigrants?                                |
| 10-                     | Can you tell us about your predictions about where you will be in ten years?                             |
| Thanks for your help... |  |

#### 4. Findings of the Research

***There should not be more than one Syrian in the classrooms. Because if there is more than one Syrian, they speak Arabic among themselves, so it becomes difficult to learn Turkish (1st Female Student Orphan is 17 years old).***

The fact that Syrian students cannot find enough support for language education in the family and that Arabic is spoken in their social circles leaves the school they attend as the only place to improve themselves in terms of Turkish. It is very important to be in contact with Turkish peers in this sense. As stated by the female student in the study, cutting off communication with Turkish-speaking peers will bring failure.

When it comes to problems in schools, the solution suggestions that teachers think to solve them cannot be shared with families sufficiently, and some of the problems cause insolvency and isolation of immigrant children (Şimşir, Dilmaç, 2018). People who migrated from their own countries at the beginning of the migration process preferred to settle in a place close to a relative or compatriot who had settled in Turkey before. As a result of this, immigrant districts called “ghettos” were formed. The friend groups of immigrant children in the neighborhood and their parents speak in their mother tongue and constantly watch television programs in their own language (Özgüzel, 2019).

In this context, children who are included in the Turkish Education System without speaking a language other than their mother tongue, experience great difficulties until they reach school age or pass school age. Therefore, having Arabic-speaking peers in the classroom makes learning Turkish much more difficult.

***I have no dreams as we are constantly changing places (1st Male Student is 16 years old).***

Can you tell us about your predictions about where you will be in ten years? Responses to the question: I don't know, I don't have a dream(2nd Girl, 3rd Boy).

One of the most important obstacles to education is the unwillingness of Syrian students to go to school due to the uncertainty they feel about their future. The news that the Syrians will be returned to their own country and the hope of moving to a third western country weaken the sense of belonging to Turkey and cause no plans for the future. In addition, when the appointment time comes, teachers prefer schools with homogeneous presence in school selection and Turkish parents; Exclusionary attitudes such as wanting to send their children to schools where there are few or no Syrian students are another obstacle in the education of Syrian children.

Syrian refugees prefer Imam-Hatip schools in secondary education as an educational strategy. This research was carried out in an Imam Hatip High School in Kocaeli. The reasons such as the fact that Imam Hatips have separate classes for girls and boys, religious education courses that aim to provide vocational formation in addition to the secondary education curriculum, and the high credits of these courses in the curriculum ensure that Syrian students take the first place in their choice of Imam Hatip schools. When the Syrian student has difficulties in the lessons that require the use of Turkish, he can reach a passing level in the end of the year by getting high grades in these vocational courses, and only by getting a passing grade in the courses that do not have a weight in mathematics and similar language. Although high school education is not compulsory in Syria, girls and boys are educated in separate schools. The compulsory implementation of primary education in Turkey in the form of coeducation causes Syrian parents to react and this situation causes especially girls to stay away from school.

Can you tell us about your predictions about where you will be in ten years? Other answers to your question:

I want to be a hairdresser in Turkey (1st Girl). I want to be a football player (2nd man, 5th man). I want to be a classroom teacher in Turkey (3rd girl). I want to be a computer programmer (4th male). I want to be a doctor in Syria (4th Girl). I know that I will be a fashion designer working in very big companies in Turkey (5th girl).

***I was born in Deir ez-Zorl immigrated to Turkey 3 years ago. I know Arabic and a little Turkish. I learned Turkish in the course at the youth center. I never went to school in the past. Teachers in the classroom can't take care of me because I don't speak Turkish very well. I find it difficult to attend classes (2.Girl Orphan is 15 years old).***

Immigrants and refugees have neither a past nor a future in the lands they came from, they have come temporarily to return, they have been accepted under certain conditions and must be content with what the host state will give them. They can neither go back nor go forward, they are stuck in the present (Özer et al., 2016a). While the language of instruction plays a unifying role for speakers of that language, it has an exclusionary effect on those whose mother language is different.

Another problem related to the language barrier is the placement in the classroom. It is one of the issues identified during the interviews and workshops that there are differences between districts and schools in terms of classroom placement. It has been observed that among different criteria such as the age of the student, Turkish literacy level and knowledge level, especially age comes to the fore in class placement. It is obvious that the fact that the age criterion is the primary determinant in class placement will cause many problems, considering the years lost by these children due to war and migration. In general, children who have overcome the reading/writing/understanding problem after being placed in a class based on Turkish knowledge can skip classes according to their academic levels. Although there is no central exam for this, the school administration takes the initiative together with the relevant teachers.

***I was young when we set out. I set out with my brother, grandfather, grandmother and mother. We did not set out as fugitives. With our passport, we first went to Lebanon by plane. From there we went to Libya by plane. We lived in Libya. My uncles came to Libya We came to Turkey with my uncles. I speak Arabic, Libyan and Turkish. I speak Turkish very well. I am a translator in Turkey. I speak as well as a Turk. I learned Turkish at school from the 1st grade. I solved the language problem in 2 months. When Syrians do not understand,***



***teachers do not make an effort to correct it. I observe that some of my friends are discriminated against because they are Syrian (5th Girl Student is 15 years old).***

According to Whitaker (2010), the younger the child immigrates, the easier it is to learn the target language. In addition, it is stated in the related study that the language fluency levels of the parents may have positive or negative effects on the children's language. If the parents have low linguistic fluency, the child may have better English; because the child can act as a translator. To put it more clearly, the immigrant child may try to teach the language he is learning to his family. Conversely, if the parents' linguistic fluency is considered to be low, the child's fluency may not be that high; because the mother language spoken at home may outweigh. The target audience learning a foreign language learns the language in line with their own interests, needs, attitudes, capacities, prior knowledge and experiences (McKay & Hornberger, 2006). Efforts to integrate students from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, where there is a language barrier, and where the necessary sensitivity is not shown to differences, social aspects of coexistence, human rights and peace education, is a situation that exacerbates the conflict and alienates refugee children and leads to unprotected education, which has undesirable consequences (Dreyden-Peterson, 2011: 62-64). In a school where Syrian migrant students are concentrated, no multilingual person with a migrant background, experience of immigration, and multilingual is employed.

***When I started school, I had an argument with a teacher, she thought I was being disrespectful because I couldn't express myself. (5th Male Student 16 years old).***

The attitude of the teachers is very important in the social adaptation of the student as well as in the classroom. In the study titled Education of Syrian Children in Turkey in Istanbul: Problems and Solution Suggestions, teachers stated that they feel even more helpless when they think that children are not listened to by their teachers. On the other hand, students stated that they feel more comfortable and safe in the presence of teachers who understand the difficulties they experience in getting used to a new language, subjects and educational materials and explain their expectations and what needs to be done clearly and precisely. makes it very difficult for refugee children to continue their education, dragging them into greater isolation. In cases where teachers and administrators do not have training to cope with the problems that refugee children face at school, the results are devastating (Özer et al., 2016b).

While the student is trying to get used to the new language, curriculum and education system, on the other hand, they are vulnerable to discrimination and bullying, which they are likely to encounter. Teachers play a major role in the lack of support of families struggling with traumatic experiences, socio-economic difficulties, future anxiety, and language-related communication problems, in meeting the need for schools and role models. As can be seen, language support is vital in refugee education in cases where there is a language difference. In cases where language support cannot be provided, communication poses many difficulties for both students and teachers, while the task of Bilingual Social Workers becomes even more important.

## **5. Conclusion**

According to the data of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), more than half of the world's refugee population are children. As in all societies, children are the weakest, most vulnerable and at highest risk group of the refugee society. As UNHCR frequently emphasizes, the education of refugee children is one of the most basic human rights and states have an obligation to provide basic education to all children. In addition, the right to education of

refugee children is protected by international law with the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, of which Turkey is a signatory, the Geneva Convention on the Status of Refugees, the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Protocol of the European Convention on Human Rights. Education, as the most basic human right and most importantly the right of the future, is the only way to escape from purgatory for refugee children who are stuck between the past and the future. It is clear that they will face bad living conditions and exclusion without the necessary training to compete in the job market in the future, both in the country of origin and in their own countries where it does not seem possible to return in the near future, and such a lost generation will have social consequences. Therefore, it is necessary to support the Republic of Turkey, which is faced with a migration wave in the size of migration from Syria for the first time in its history, to create long-term and comprehensive policies instead of short-term measures in order to ensure that Syrian children have access to education.

Legislation on Syrian children's access to education in terms of their inclusion in the education system is an important step in solving the problems, but it is not sufficient.

Structural barriers, poor living conditions, poverty, child labor, inadequate care and uncertainty, which are common in the case of migrant children, negatively affect children's access to education. In this respect, school attendance rates should be closely monitored and the reasons for leaving should be determined. Conditional cash transfers can be made to families to prevent absenteeism or drop-out from school. In this sense, including students who do not attend school and their parents in free Turkish courses will play an important role in shortening the integration process.

The language barrier poses serious problems not only for Syrian students, but also for other students and teachers in the classroom. The problem frequently expressed by the teachers in the interviews on the subject is the feeling of inadequacy created by not being able to adequately help these students, who are not supported by special vocational education and who have learning difficulties due to the lack of Turkish literacy and require special attention due to the intensity of the curriculum. According to the results of the research, the language barrier is much higher for these students who were born and raised in Syria compared to their siblings who were born here or who came to Turkey at preschool age.

Where refugees live; It is expected that social services will provide solutions to many problems such as housing, adaptation, language, employment, health care, education, labor exploitation, social exclusion, abduction and human trafficking, exposure to sexual violence and sexual abuse. As can be seen, Syrian refugees have a multi-component and multi-actor structure that pushes many disciplines, professional groups, non-governmental organizations, local governments, various public institutions and organizations to work together due to their characteristics and many intertwined problems. Undoubtedly, the social work discipline and profession play a key role in the execution of these processes in a holistic and mutually supportive manner. In the adaptation process to a new country, especially consultancy, resource management and training functions appear as extremely important concepts. In particular, services such as psychosocial support, empowerment, adaptation, coexistence, advocacy, providing information, bringing together resources, schooling, combating child labor, screening services for trauma victims should be systematically and professionally expanded by the school social service.

As a result, institutions and organizations working in the field of refugees need a social work approach and social workers. It is important that social workers are present here so that the

projects carried out can reach a healthy result and be continued on a rights-based basis. However, a number of problems await solutions. Knowing Arabic or Persian can be an obstacle for social workers, especially as a requirement of the field. Institutions rightly prefer to work without the help of an interpreter in their field work, which causes different professional groups to be employed under the title of social worker.

Linguistic social work considers language as a fundamental human right, including the use of minority languages, and thus encourages the provision of services to clients in an appropriate language, in line with the social justice obligation of social workers. However, linguistic social work argues that each spoken language should be viewed as a resource that can be developed.

Since this research is in the nature of a preliminary research, a more comprehensive and comprehensive research can be conducted based on the data of this preliminary research in the future. Since Turkish is not well known in such studies, it is recommended that the research questions be prepared in Arabic. Questionnaires should be preferred in terms of being economical in terms of time and reaching more people. The issue of integration and the language problem should be handled not only by social work but also by many different disciplines, which will enrich the literature. Studies with Syrian students attending universities in Turkey will enable us to reach academically richer data sets.

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## APPENDIX

### App-1: Ethics Committe Approval

**SELÇUK  
ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
EDEBİYAT FAKÜLTESİ  
BİLİMSEL ETİK DEĞERLENDİRME KURULU  
TOPLANTI VE KARAR TUTANAĞI**

**TOPLANTI TARİHİ:** 30.09.2022

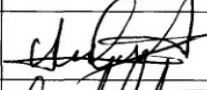
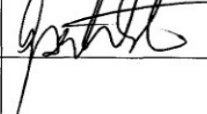
**TOPLANTI GÜNDEMİ:** Engin GÜNEŞ'in 28.09.2022 tarihli dilekçesine istinaden Etik Kurul Kararı İstenmesi yazısı.

**KARAR 2022/106:** Engin GÜNEŞ'in "Dilbilimsel Sosyal Hizmet Perspektifinden Suriyeli Mülteci Öğrencilerin İletişim Problemleri Üzerine Bir Araştırma " başlıklı çalışmaları araştırma ve yayın etiği açısından UYGUNDUR.

Toplantıya katılanların oy birliği ile kabul edilmiştir.

**Gereke:** Başvuru esnasında belirtilen koşullara uymak, araştırmaya etik kurul kararından sonra başlamak ve çalışma prosedüründe bir değişiklik olması durumunda kurulumuza beyan etmek kaydıyla etik açıdan uygundur.

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| KURUL ÜYELERİ                    |        | İMZA  |
|----------------------------------|--------|---|
| Doç.Dr. Reşat AÇIKGÖZ            | Başkan |  |
| Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Gökhan ARSLANTÜRK | Üye    |  |
|                                  |        |   |