

The Reasons of Syrians Learning Turkish as a Second Language, Their Perceptions of Turkey and Their Future Expectations

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Abstract

The Syrian question has not remained as an internal conflict; instead, it has affected both Turkey as well as whole Europe. According to 2020 statistics, approximately three and a half million Syrians reside in Turkey, and approximately 850 thousand of these Syrians are young people between the ages of 15-24. The determination of the reasons why the young population who could be regarded as the future of the Syria learn Turkish, their perceptions of Turkey and expectations from the future, is vitally important for both the proper administration of their process' of learning Turkish as a second language, as well as for the planning of the future of the young Syrians. This study, which aims to determine the reasons why Syrians who choose to learn Turkish as a second language, their perceptions of Turkey and expectations from the future, has been prepared per the qualitative research model. An interview form to be used in the study was prepared by the assistance of experts in the field and the form was administered to sixty-six participants. The data were analyzed by using the descriptive analysis method. According to the results of the research, Syrians want to learn Turkish in order to meet their basic needs, to get education, to find a job, to work and to eliminate communication problems in daily life. Language, education, finding a job, adaptation problems, university placement and getting an identity card stand out as the issues that Syrians have difficulties in Turkey. 52.1 percent of the young people plan to graduate from university and begin working immediately. The most important factor in this is that people have families they are responsible for and they have to make a living. The future expectations of young people, who are struggling to learn a language, receive higher education, find a job and continue their lives, look for security, peace, stability and success. Syrian young people want to leave the war behind and carry on the future with hope. In this context, it is necessary for all countries to accept their responsibilities and to determine a common framework for the solution of the problem.

Keywords: Teaching Turkish as a Second Language, Language Needs Analysis, Syrians' Perception of Turkey and the Future.

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INTRODUCTION

People have had to migrate to other geographies by leaving their homeland behind for various reasons in every period from the first age to the present. Although migration movements are generally based on improving living conditions and establishing a good future, it has been known that people have to migrate due to drought, famine and war. “The chaotic situation that arose in the country in the month of April as consequence of demonstrations known as the Arab Spring that began on 15 March 2011 evolved into the Syrian Crisis, which, in turn, led the country into a civil war. Consequently, when the civil war spread across the country and life became unbearable, Syrians, who felt themselves under threat and were unable to provide their basic necessities and security, decided to leave the country (Tunç, 2015, p. 35).

The wave of immigrants that Turkey was faced with was not something anticipated, and in that sense, Turkey was caught unaware in the face of this intense wave of immigration. With the onset of wave of immigration, camp centers, also called temporary protection centers, were set up in the border provinces. “The number of camps began to be insufficient due to the protracted civil war and as a result some Syrian refugees / asylum seekers began to stay with their relatives or in rented houses in border provinces or districts instead of camps” (Tümeğ, 2018, p. 15). The increase in the number of Syrians who had to immigrate to Turkey and establish an order here has revealed the need for some legal arrangements. Thereupon, in 2013, in order to regulate the rights of Syrians residing in Turkey, Turkey's first law on asylum, the “Foreigners and International Protection Law”, was adopted by the Turkish Grand National Assembly, the law was passed on April 11, 2014 and with the law, Immigration Management Law was adopted, and General Directorate was established.

It is noteworthy that, of the nearly three and a half million Syrians in Turkey, 830 thousand 626 are young population within the age range of 15-24 (Refugees Association, 2019). The period of transition from childhood to adulthood brings along some problems for each individual, because individuals experience both physical and psychological changes in this period, which is called adolescence. Getting to know the worlds of thought of the young Syrians, who were forced to confront the truth of war and migrate to Turkey in such a period, will both facilitate the process of teaching Turkish as a second language and planning of the future of these students. Therefore, in this study, the reasons why Syrian students who are learning Turkish as a second language preference, their perceptions of Turkey and their expectations from the future has been reviewed.

Purpose of Research

The purpose of this study is to determine the reasons why Syrians who prefer learning Turkish as a second language, their perceptions of Turkey and expectations from the future; and evaluate the findings in that regard. In accordance with this purpose, the answers to the following research questions are sought in the study:

Syrians learning Turkish as a second language;

1. What are the reasons for learning Turkish?
2. What are their thoughts on Turkey?
3. What are their expectations for the future?

METHOD

Research Design

The study was conducted according to the qualitative research model. “Qualitative research is carried out in conjunction with a long-term and intensive interaction process with a cross-section of a

field or social life. These processes reflect the everyday lives of individuals, groups, societies and organizations” (Miles & Huberman, 2016, p. 6).

The current study is a case study aimed at revealing why the Syrian students who learn Turkish as a second language preference, their perceptions of Turkey and expectations from the future. The case study is “a research method based on questions of how and why, allowing the researcher to examine the depth of a phenomenon or event that the researcher cannot control” (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018, p. 289).

Sample/Study Group

Criterion sampling was used in the study. According to criterion sampling, “in a study, observation units can be created from people, events, objects, or situations with certain qualifications. In such a case, units that meet the criteria set for the sample (objects, events, etc.) are included in the sample” (Büyüköztürk et al., 2016, p. 92). The criteria set by the researcher for sample selection in the study are “being Syrian and having learned or being learning Turkish as a second language in Turkey.”

The sample of the study consists of Syrian students who are learning Turkish as a second language in higher education institutions in Turkey and who are resuming their education at the same university in the 2018-2019 academic year. 66 students participated in the study. There were no rewards or obligations set for participation in the study; instead, the study was conducted on a voluntary basis.

Demographic information about the participants is as follows:

Table 1. Demographic data of the study group

		N	%
Gender	Female	27	40,9
	Male	39	59,1
Place of Birth	Syria	17	25,7
	Aleppo	20	30,3
	Damascus	10	15,1
	Homs	7	10,6
	Idlib	6	9
	Hama	3	4,5
	Deir ez-Zur	2	3
	Daraa	1	1,5
Educational Institution	State University	41	62,1
	Private University	25	37,9
Duration of Stay in Turkey	1-3 years	33	50
	4-6 years	31	47
	7 years +	2	3
Language Levels	A1	6	9,1
	A2	10	15,1
	B1	15	22,7
	B2	5	7,5
	C1	26	39,3
	C2	4	6

Twenty-seven of the participants (40.9%) are female, whereas thirty-nine (59.1%) are male. As the target group of the study involves students at higher education level, the ages of the participants ranged from 18 to 30. The age range in which the participants converge is between 20-25 years of age. The current situation in Syria and the ongoing civil war seriously crippled people's education; they had

to take a break from their education or put aside their higher education and start university in Turkey all over again.

17 of the participants responded to the question of which city they were born in as "Syria" without specifying the name of the city. The rest, 20 reported Aleppo as the city where they were born, while 10 reported Damascus, 7 Homs, 6 Idlib, 3 Hama, 2 Deir ez-Zur and 1 Daraa. The largest cities of Syria are Damascus, Aleppo and Homs, respectively. When the percentages of the participants are examined, it is seen that It was seen that the participants mostly come from these 3 cities.

The participants attend 19 different universities in Turkey. 12 of these universities are public universities, while 7 are private universities. İstanbul stands out with 10 universities among the cities where the universities are located. "As of November 2019, among our cities, Istanbul is the city that houses the highest number of Syrians with 552,080 people" (Refugees Association, 2019). The universities of Fırat, Gaziantep, Harran, Iskenderun Technical, Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam, Kilis 7 Aralık and Mersin are universities located in cities that are geographically close to Syria. Apart from these universities, 2 participants from Uşak University took part in our study.

It is seen that the durations of the participants' stay in Turkey varies between 1 and 7 years. 17 of the participants came to Turkey during last year. Therefore, the durations of these people's stay in Turkey were described as one year or less. Half of the participants came to Turkey during the past three years. 14 of the participants have been living in Turkey for four years, 10 for five years, 7 for six years and 2 for seven years. In order for the participants to give comprehensive responses to the questions about their perceptions of Turkey, the time they have lived in Turkey is important. This situation was given attention during the process of descriptive analysis, and a point of including the views of Syrians who had been living in Turkey for two or longer years was made.

Most of the participants (93.9%) answered "Yes" to the question "Do you speak Turkish?" Only four people (6.1%) responded "No, I do not speak Turkish." These four students are students who have just started learning Turkish as a second language at TÖMER and their levels are marked as A1. 6 of the students who spoke Turkish described the level of their knowledge of Turkish as A1, 10 as A2, 15 as B1, 5 as B2, 26 as C1 and 4 as C2. A significant portion of the participants (30 of them) speak Turkish proficiently, i.e., at the levels of C1 and C2. 20 of the participants speak Turkish at an intermediate level while 16 of them speak Turkish at a basic level. For the students who are at basic or intermediate level and continue their courses in the department, the language of instruction at the faculty is English or Arabic. These students both attend their lectures at the faculty and simultaneously learn Turkish as a second language at TÖMER.

Data Collection Tool and Analysis of the Data

An interview form containing open-ended questions was used in the study in order to determine the reasons why Syrian students learn Turkish, their perceptions of Turkey and expectations from the future. The first part of the form, which was composed of two parts, included questions aimed at obtaining demographic information about the participants, whereas the second part included nine open-ended questions prepared with view to collecting data from the participants in accordance with the objectives of the study. Prior to the preparation of the interview questions, first, relevant studies were examined and a question pool was created. In the second stage, the question pool thus prepared was submitted to two experts for their opinions, one in the Department of Turkish Education and the other in the Department of Sociology, both at a state university. Based on expert opinions, a "structured interview form" was prepared.

The form prepared in order to ensure the content validity of the interview form was submitted to the evaluation of the experts who teach Turkish as a second language to Syrians. The interview form was given its final form in accordance with the feedback received. For the reliability of the form, consistency of the participants' views was and the results of the data obtained were shared with the people who participated in the study.

The questions in the interview form are as follows:

1. Why do you learn Turkish?
2. What is the first thing that comes to your mind when Turkey is mentioned?
3. Do you like living in Turkey?
4. Would you like to live in another country? If your answer is “Yes”, where would you like to live?
5. What are the things that you have difficulty in coping with in Turkey?
6. What would you like to do after you graduate from university?
7. Do you think you will be employed in the field that you graduate from?
8. Do you plan to go back to your country?
9. What are your expectations from the future?

Since the data were collected by interview form, descriptive analysis method was used in the analysis of the data. According to the descriptive analysis, the data are summarized and interpreted according to the previously determined themes. The data can be organized according to the themes raised by the research questions or presented by considering the questions or dimensions used in the interview and observation processes. Direct quotations are often included in the descriptive analysis to reflect strikingly the views of the individuals interviewed or observed” (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018, p. 239).

FINDINGS

Why did you/are you learn/learning Turkish?

The first question asked to Syrian students within the scope of the research has been "Why did you/are you learn/learning Turkish?" When the answers of the participants were examined, it was seen that 66 students answered this question under 144 different codes. The frequencies and percentages of the codes of the participants' opinions regarding the first question are as follows:

Table 2. Frequency and percentages regarding the reasons for Syrians to learn Turkish

Theme	Codes	f	%
Why did you/are you learn/learning Turkish?	To pursue higher education	57	39.5
	To speak Turkish in daily life	35	24.3
	To find a job	21	14.5
	To become a Turkish citizen	18	12.5
	To eliminate communication problems	13	9
	Total		144

The reason for 39.5 percent of the participants to learn Turkish is “to pursue higher education”. This is followed by "speaking Turkish in daily life", "finding a job", "becoming a Turkish citizen" and "eliminating communication problems".

Some of the opinions of the participants regarding the reasons for learning Turkish are as follows:

(K2) "I had to quit my university education in Syria. I had to learn Turkish in order to continue my education in Turkey. For this, I started learning Turkish. Also, I had to speak Turkish on the street." (K17) "After I arrived to Turkey, I wanted to begin attending the university and the first thing I did was to learn Turkish." (K29) "I am an engineer. Finding a job was very important for me, but it was very difficult for me to find a good job as I didn't

... speak Turkish. If you don't know the language, being an engineer does not matter much." (K30) "I speak English and some German. However, most people in Turkey do not speak foreign languages. That's why we often have communication problems." (K35) "I wanted to study at university and become a Turkish citizen. In order to do that, I had to learn Turkish." (K38) "I am an outgoing person. I always want to communicate and get to know the people around me and my neighbors. For this reason, being able to speak Turkish in daily life was the most important need for me." (K44) "When I came here, thanks to my acquaintances, I started working as an Arabic-English translator in an office. The company I worked for was an Arab firm that won big tenders abroad. Later, they began to take jobs in Turkey and I had to learn Turkish as well. I also lived Turkey and I had to learn this language." (K59) "Initially, I tried to get in a major that was taught in English, but I was not successful. When I got in a scholarship for a major that was taught in Turkish, I first went to TÖMER and then I started attending classes at my faculty. Now, I can speak Turkish fluently." (K62) "I learned Turkish to communicate with Turks, to study at university and to have a nice profession."

Findings concerning the question “What is the first thing that comes to your mind when ‘Turkey’ is mentioned?”

The participants were asked the question “What is the first thing that comes to your mind when ‘Turkey’ is mentioned?” as the second question on the interview form. 29 different themes were obtained based on the responses given by the participants. While twenty-six of the themes are positive, three are negative. The frequencies and percentages of the codes belonging to the participants' views regarding the second question are given in Table 3:

Table 3. Frequencies and percentages relating to the codes of the question “What is the first thing that comes to your mind when ‘Turkey’ is mentioned?”

Theme	Codes	f	%
What is the first thing that comes to your mind when “Turkey” is mentioned?	Nature	14	14.7
	Civilization	12	12.6
	Beauty	8	8.4
	Education	6	6.3
	Fraternity	6	6.3
	History	5	5.2
	Tourism	5	5.2
	Food	4	4.2
	Homeland	4	4.2
	Ottomans	4	4.2
	Comfort	3	3.1
	Life	3	3.1
	Security	3	3.1
	Istanbul	2	2.1
	Justice	2	2.1
	Ataturk	1	1.05
	Challenges	1	1.05
	Democracy	1	1.05
	Freedom	1	1.05
	Future	1	1.05
	Hatred	1	1.05
	Hospitality	1	1.05
	Mercy	1	1.05
	Peace	1	1.05
	Racism	1	1.05
	Stability	1	1.05
	Tea	1	1.05
	Turkish	1	1.05
	Work	1	1.05
	Total	95	100

As far as the second question was concerned, responses of the sixty-six participants were examined and 95 different codes were obtained. "Nature" comes to the minds of 14.7% of the participants when Turkey is mentioned. 12.6 percent of the participants recall "civilization" when Turkey is mentioned, whereas 8.4 percent of them recall "beauty", 6.3 percent "education" and 6.3 percent "fraternity". The codes "history, tourism, homeland, food and Ottoman" are the major words that come to mind when Turkey is mentioned. The codes racism, hatred and challenge, which were obtained by an examination of the participants' views, are noteworthy in that they are codes that have negative meanings. Some of the participants who expressed positive views stated their opinions in the following terms:

(K5) "Turkey is a beautiful country of good people. It is good to be living in Turkey because there is religious freedom and also, we can continue our education." (K7) "When Turkey is mentioned, I remember civilization, economic growth, rapid development and political independence." (K8) "Turkey is the best place on earth and plus baklava." (K10) "Democracy, justice and education." (K11) "Turks are our brothers." (K14) "Turkey is a developed and beautiful country." (K15) "People's compassion, love, hospitality, and the country's rich history and natural beauty." (K17) "The glorious Ottoman state." (K18) "The country that is honestly siding with us." (K23) "A country that has rapidly developed within a short time and a very beautiful nation." (K24) "I remember kind-hearted people full of sincerity who I adore." (K29) "The country where I live today and I am very close to my country." (K30) "My second home." (K32) "Islamic history and civilization." (K33) "Ottoman Empire and Sultan Abdülhamit." (K38) "A country that brings Eastern and Western civilizations together and is rich in terms of civilization" (K46) "I am a computer engineer and work as an expert in companies. My average was quite good as of the end of last month. This provided me with the opportunity to travel in Turkey and visit different places. Above all, it is a country known for its natural beauty and history." (K53) "A beautiful country of tourism enjoying good universities." (K54) "A safe country and also a homeland for refugees." (K57) "My future country." (K60) "Turkish language, its natural beauty, Atatürk, Istanbul and tourism." (K61) "Tea and the Ottoman Civilization."

The views of the participants with codes that had negative meaning are as follows:

(K42) "It is a beautiful country but it will be hard to live here and you need to endure in order to face the challenges." (K58) "Turks' racism and their xenophobia, especially towards Arabs."

Findings concerning the question "Do you like Turkey?"

The participants were asked the question "Do you like Turkey?" as the third question on the interview form. All of the participants responded to this question. The percentages concerning the responses given by the participants to the question are as follows:

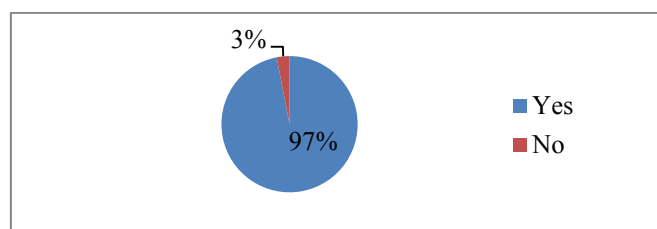


Figure 1. The percentages of the participants like Turkey

Large numbers of people have been forced to migrate to Turkey due to the conflict in Syria. The situation holds true for the 66 participants who participated in the study. 97 percent of the participants stated that they liked Turkey while 3 percent stated that they did not like Turkey.

People who like Turkey are trying to establish a new life here. To this end, they make concerted efforts to improve themselves both educationally and culturally and adapt to the society around. The two people who stated that they did not like Turkey are receiving their education in Turkey and trying to organize their lives. When these people, who were forced to leave their country in a psychologically devastated manner owing to the war, face unfavorable treatment when they come to Turkey, they cannot help but produce reactions and these reactions affect people's emotions.

Findings concerning the question “Would you like to live in another country? If your answer is ‘Yes’, where would you like to live?”

The participants were asked the question “Would you like to live in another country? If your answer is ‘Yes’, where would you like to live?” as the fourth question on the interview form. 24 of the participants answered the question “Yes”, while 41 responded “No”. Due to the fact the participant with number forty-eight (**K48**) responded to this question as “*I like Turkey, or else when my country is safe, I can live in my country.*” this view was not included in the “yes-no” categorization. The views of two of the participants who answered the question as “no” are as follows:

(K32) "I like Turkey. I come from a family of Turkmen origin and I do not like any other country." (K46) "I have not considered traveling outside of Turkey."

The participant number sixty-three (**K63**), responding “*I just do not want Turkey.*”, pointed out that s/he wanted to live in another country, no matter what country it was and that his/her only wish was to live in a country other than Turkey. Since the participant number sixty-three did not name a country, his / her response is not included in the table below.

Statistical data belonging to the countries where the participants who responded to the question as “Yes, I would like to live in another country.” are as follows:

Table 4. Countries where the participants want to live

Theme	Codes	f	%
Countries where the participants want to live	Canada	5	21.7
	Dubai	4	17.3
	Istanbul	4	17.3
	USA	2	8.6
	England	1	4.3
	Europe	1	4.3
	Netherland	1	4.3
	Qatar	1	4.3
	Russia	1	4.3
	Saudi Arabia	1	4.3
	Spain	1	4.3
	Syria	1	4.3
	Total		23

Of the responses of the 23 participants who stated “I would like to live in another country.”, Canada stands out as the country where people wanted live most (21.7%). Located on the northernmost tip of the North American continent, Canada is the second largest in the World in terms of total area. Canada is followed by Dubai, preferred by 17.3% (4 persons) of the participants. Dubai is one of the seven emirates constituting the United Arab Emirates.

Although the interview form contained the term “country” and the form was prepared bilingually, namely in Turkish and Arabic, 4 of the participants specified the place where they wanted to live as Istanbul. Likewise, 1 participant wrote their preferred place of living as “Europe” in the interview form rather than naming a country. Based on this, it could be inferred that this person would like to live in any European country no matter what country it was.

2 of the participants stated that they wanted to live in the USA. Netherland, England, Spain, Qatar, Russia and Saudi Arabia were specified in the form, each by 1 participant. When the countries where the participants want to live are examined, it is observed that they prefer prosperous countries with high living standards. One of the participants, on the other hand, stated that s/he wanted to live in Syria, his/her own country.

Findings concerning the question "What is the most challenging thing for you in Turkey?"

The participants were asked the question "What is the most challenging thing for you in Turkey?" as the fifth question on the interview form. The frequencies and percentages of the codes belonging to the views of the participants concerning the fifth question are given in Table 5:

Table 5. Frequencies and percentages belonging to the codes of the question "What is the most challenging thing for you in Turkey?"

Theme	Codes	f	%
What is the most challenging thing for you in Turkey?	Language	32	40
	Finding a job	8	10
	Racism	8	10
	Discrimination	6	7.5
	Adaptation problem	5	6.25
	Admittance to university	3	3.75
	Education	2	2.5
	Getting an ID card	2	2.5
	Nothing	2	2.5
	Accommodation	1	1.25
	Legal procedures	1	1.25
	Life	1	1.25
	Longing	1	1.25
	Low wages	1	1.25
	Obtaining a travel permit	1	1.25
	Obtaining work permit	1	1.25
	Proving marriage	1	1.25
	Rental	1	1.25
	Taxes	1	1.25
	Vehicle	1	1.25
Working hours	1	1.25	
	Total	80	100

2 of the participants stated that there was nothing challenging for them in Turkey. 20 different codes were obtained as a result of an examination of the responses of the remaining 64 participants.

When all of the participants were considered, it transpired that "language" was the most challenging thing for them. The participants reported that when they first arrived in Turkey, they could not communicate with local people as they did not know any Turkish and hence had a lot of difficulty in daily life. The views of some of the participants concerning the code "language" are as follows:

(K8) "Speaking and language." (K10) "Since there are different dialects, I sometimes have difficulty understanding them." (K13) "Communication problem." (K14) "It was rather difficult to find a job and learn Turkish before I entered university." (K15) "When I first arrived, I experienced problems with language but I was able to adapt after I learned the language." (K26) "Language and differences in lifestyle." (K29) "First and foremost, language and communication. Sometimes, harassment by some people." (K38) "Initially, it was hard to communicate with others as I did not know Turkish."

The issues that the participants found the most challenging after the language problem concerned "racism", "finding a job" and "discrimination". 10% of the participants cited views

regarding racism, 10% regarding finding a job and 7.5% regarding the code discrimination. The participants' views concerning discrimination and racism are noteworthy in that they are in general quite similar. Some of the participants reported that they were discriminated against whereas some others went further than that and stated that the discrimination they faced sometimes reached a level of racism. Some of the views of the participants concerning the three codes are as follows:

(K5) "There is the question of adaptation between Turks and Syrians and sometimes we are subjected to racism." (K18) "The Turkish society does not accept us." (K20) "Language and racism, which is sometimes displayed against Syrians." (K30) "When a bad Syrian does something wrong, some people within the Turkish society act as if everybody were like that." (K44) "Racism based on ignorance, for you cannot tell the reality to those who commit such kind of racism." (K57) "I have no rights in Turkey because I am a Syrian." (K46) "When I came from Syria, my Turkish was not good. Although I am a computer engineer, I worked as a porter with Turks for a year." (K58) "People and they also share us low wages." (K65) "Obtaining a legal work permit."

Other views that the participants stated concerning the issues that they found the most challenging in Turkey are as follows:

(K6) "People embrace Syrians but voracious landlords demand extortionate rentals from us. It is quite hard to travel to another city in Turkey using temporary protection ID cards. I cannot start even a small business on account of high taxes in Turkey." (K7) "Legal procedures are too many. Civil servants may practice according to their whims." (K32) "Some Turks behave kind of vainly. But others love everyone and behave respectfully by virtue of the very nature of Anatolian people."

Findings concerning the question "What would you like to do after you graduate from university?"

The participants were asked the sixth question on the interview form, namely "What would you like to do after you graduate from university?" The frequencies and percentages of the codes belonging to the participants' views concerning the sixth question are as follows:

Table 6. Frequencies and percentages belonging to the question "What would you like to do after you graduate from university?"

Theme	Codes	f	%
What would you like to do after you graduate from university?	Entering into working life	37	52.1
	Master's	9	12.6
	Contributing to Turkey	7	9.8
	Working in the relevant field of expertise	7	9.8
	Launching a project	2	2.8
	Going back to Syria	2	2.8
	Being a painter	1	1.4
	Doctorate	1	1.4
	Doing academic studies	1	1.4
	Founding a laboratory	1	1.4
	Going abroad	1	1.4
	No answer	1	1.4
	Opening a clinic	1	1.4
	Total		71

52.1% of the participants want to enter the working life. This figure is noteworthy as a rather high rate. The reason why the rate is so high is that the participants' economic status is not so good and therefore they are obliged to begin working to support their family. Only 12.6% of the participants want to pursue their master's degree and continue their education after graduation. Although following higher education is important for their personal development, the priority of the participants is to

graduate and find a job. The views of the participants regarding the code “Entering the working life” are as follows:

(K6) "I will find myself a suitable job." (K11) "I will start teaching." (K14) "I will work in a health institution." (K15) "I want to find a job and work and contribute to this country." (K24) "I am thinking of working in the translation-interpretation sector." (K41) "I want to do my master's degree and start my own business in Turkey." (K55) "I want to work in a hospital." (K59) "I want to find a job and start a small project."

9.8% of the participants expressed the view regarding the code “contributing to Turkey” and again 9.8% expressed the view regarding the code “working in the relevant field of expertise”. The views of the participants who wanted to contribute to Turkey are as follows:

(K17) "I will try to increase the level of the society by playing the role required by my level of education." (K21) "I want to work in Turkey." (K23) "I will continue to live in this country and be a beneficial person for this country." (K29) "I want to obtain my diploma equivalence and work in Turkey." (K32) "I want to enlist in the Turkish army because I love this country." (K40) "I want to enter the workforce and serve this country, which has accepted us." (K45) "I want to work in Turkey and serve the great Turkish nation, who has accepted us."

Some of the views of the participants who wanted to work in their field of expertise are as follows:

(K33) "Working in my field of graduation." (K38) "I want to work in my field of expertise." (K39) "I want to work in my own field." (K44) "Improving myself in the same field and returning to Syria. If I can't return, it is highly likely that I will stay in Turkey."

Views of some of the other participants are as follows:

(K28) "I want to launch a small project." (K42) "I have many dreams. First, I want start a laboratory specifically developed for myself and work with well-known dentists. I want to invent new things in my profession." (K64) "I want to raise a consciousness of civil society and non-governmental organizations and found a university. Of course, I want to realize all of this in Turkey."

Findings concerning the question "Do you think you will be able to work in your field of graduation?"

As the seventh question on the interview form, the participants were asked "Do you think you will be able to work in your field of graduation?" The frequencies and percentages of the codes belonging to the views of the participants about the seventh question are given in Table 7:

Table 7. Frequencies and percentages belonging to the codes of the question “Do you think you will be able to work in your field of graduation?”

	f	%
Yes	49	74.2
No	6	9
Perhaps	3	4.5
I do not know	2	3
Other	6	9
Total	66	100

74.2% of the participants think that they will be able to work in their field of graduation. Some of the views of the participants who responded “yes” to this question are as follows:

(K5) "Yes I do, if the war in my country ends or if I am granted Turkish citizenship." (K35) "Yes I do; indeed, I have already founded a private business." (K42) "Not as soon as I graduate I think, but in the end, I will work and my dreams will come true." (K46) "Yes I do, but I need to be patient." (K64) "Yes, I will open a scientific research center."

9% of the participants think that they will not work in their field of graduation. 4.5% of the participants responded “perhaps” and 3% responded “I do not know”. The responses given by 9% of the participants were included in the code “other”. The views of these participants are as follows:

(K14) "We have a low possibility." (K26) "I hope so." (K30) "If there is no Turkish citizenship, finding a job will be difficult." (K32) "God willing! I really like helping others. If I have an adequate salary, then it will be normal for me to work." (K44) "Job opportunities in Turkey are unfortunately limited." (K53) "I need to get a diploma equivalence first."

Findings concerning the question “Are you thinking of returning to your country if life returns to normal in your country?”

The participants were asked the question “Are you thinking of returning to your country if life returns to normal in your country?” as the eighth question on the interview form. The frequencies and percentages of the codes belonging to the participants’ views regarding the eighth question are given in Table 8:

Table 8. The frequencies and percentages regarding the codes of the question “Are you thinking of going back to your country if conditions turn to normal in your country?”

	f	%
Yes	22	33.3
No	35	53
Perhaps	3	4.5
I do not know	5	7.5
I am undecided	1	1.5
Total	66	100

33.3 percent of the participants stated that they would go back to their country if conditions turn to normal. The views of the participants thinking of going back to their country are as follows:

(K24) "If life returns to normal, be sure everybody will return and I will be the first to return." (K33) "Of course I am. My city is Homs. I really love it and I miss it a lot. The atmosphere there was like the one in Turkey. My city is the one where Halid Bin El Velid, a companion of Prophet Muhammad hails from and the second largest Muslim cemetery is there. I love Homs as much as I do Istanbul." (K56) "Yes I am, but not immediately." (K63) "Certainly, my country will remain as the best." (K64) "Of course, but I will be at the service of both Turkey and Syria. Now, I have two homelands."

53 percent of the participants stated that they would not return even conditions turn to normal. Some of the participant views are as follows:

(K42) "I may return to Syria only for a visit." (K46) "If I have a permanent job, I will not return." (K55) "No, because I have completed my education in Turkey and I will work in Turkey. How I might return to my country under the circumstances!" (K58) "Of course, but I will go for visitation." (K48) "I would return for the sake of my family and friends but if they are with me in Turkey, I won't return."

3 of the participants answered “perhaps”, 5 answered “I don't know” and 1 answered “I am undecided”.

Findings concerning the question "What are your expectations from the future?"

The participants were asked the question "What are your expectations from the future?" as the ninth question on the interview form. The frequencies and percentages of the codes belonging to the participants' views regarding the ninth question are given in Table 9:

Table 9. Frequencies and percentages regarding the codes of the question "What are your expectations from the future?"

Theme	Codes	f	%
What are your future expectations?	A beautiful life	16	17.5
	Success	14	15.3
	Peace	11	12
	Job	8	8.7
	Stability	6	6.5
	Citizenship	5	5.4
	Future	4	4.3
	Security	4	4.3
	Adaptation	3	3.2
	Freedom	3	3.2
	Staying in Turkey	3	3.2
	Higher Education	2	2.1
	Money	2	2.1
	Going back to Turkey	2	2.1
	Tranquility	2	2.1
	Graduation	1	1.09
	Hope	1	1.09
	Justice	1	1.09
	Learning Turkish	1	1.09
	Marriage	1	1.09
Understanding	1	1.09	
	Total	91	100

When the responses of the participants were examined, 22 different codes were obtained. Of the codes that emerged as a result of an examination of the participants' views, the one with the highest rate is the code "a beautiful life" (17.5 percent). Millions of people have migrated to different countries abandoning their homes, relatives and homeland due to the conflict in Syria and their lives and routines have been upset. Therefore, people's expectations for the future took the form of having a beautiful life. Similar to the code "a beautiful life", the codes "tranquility", "stability", "peace", "success" and "security" attract attention as codes reflecting people's desire to put their lives in order.

(K3) "I haven't given it a thought. But I think we will have a beautiful life and find a good job." (K8) "Beautiful days and nothing more." (K11) "A tranquil and peaceful life." (K14) "If only I had a more stable life." (K15) "A tranquil life, endless achievements and let peace prevail everywhere." (K20) "What I expect for the future is for God to bless our country with victory, compassion of our martyrs and release of our brethren from prisons." (K22) "Let beautiful days prevail and that is enough." (K24) "Living in security." (K26) "Reconciliation and success." (K32) "I want tranquility and peace by the will of God and my family." (K34) "Success; I wish for Syrians and the whole Arab world to have peace." (K40) "Being successful, making accurate decisions, and possessing a strong willpower." (K45) "Being successful in Turkey." (K46) "A beautiful life away from the politics and its effects." (K52) "I wish for peace, security, justice and success." (K54) "Elimination of ignorance and cessation of the war." (K56) "First and foremost, a good and danger-free life and freedom of thought." (K60) "We should all struggle to make the world a safe place and develop our country." (K63) "Putting an end to wars, murders and hunger and returning to our country." (K66) "I would like to be a more distinguished person in the field I am studying."

8.7 percent of the participants want to find a good “job” in the future and work. The participants' views concerning the code "job" are as follows:

(K5) "Graduating from university and finding a permanent position. In addition, I would to complete an MA and a PhD." (K39) "Living in a proud manner, finding a job and staying in Turkey." (K41) "I want to find a job. A life where wars and racism do not exist. I want to get married and have a family."

5.4 percent of the participants stated that they wanted to be Turkish citizens in the future:

(K23) "Being a citizen of this country and work for it." (K30) "A better economic and social future and we can't wait to see a better integration with the Turkish society." (K33) "Above all, being a Turkish citizen." (K35) "Being a Turkish citizen and starting a big business in Turkey and in the world." (K59) "Learning Turkish well and being able to live as a member of the Turkish community."

The participants' other views concerning their expectations for the future are as follows:

(K2) "Making a lot of money." (K6) "Adapting to all areas of life in Turkey and attaining a psychological and physical balance." (K7) "One day I will return to my city and rebuild my home. I want to start a private business between Turkey and Syria." (K18) "That the Turkish community should realize that we are brothers and that we came here at the point of the bayonet; not to grab their jobs." (K28) "Our lives in Turkey being easier." (K29) "Being able to work legally in turkey and getting an MA." (K31) "Freedom for my country and working in my preferred field." (K38) "The future looks bright, so I am optimistic and I am expecting a large portion of the future." (K42) "I want my voice to be heard across the world and leave my mark in the world." (K43) "An environment where everyone can work humanely and reaching the pinnacle of my career." (K47) "Good things, no matter what they are." (K64) "I don't expect anything for the future; let it expect things for me. Keep fighting" (K65) "Working for the future as if one will live eternally."

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The incidents that began in Syria led the country into a civil war and this resulted in dramatic changes in Syrian people's life. “In general, those Syrian who were obliged to leave their homes sought refuge in neighboring countries and took shelter in countries such as Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Iraq and Egypt. The crisis, which started in March 2011 and is still having its impacts felt on a large area, has caused more than 200,000 people to lose their lives and millions of other people to abandon the places where they used to live. In this sense, it could be said that more than 10 million people have been seriously affected by the crisis” (Öztürk and Çoltu, 2018, p. 189).

“While most of the Syrians chose to stay in the Middle East, about 1 million of them went to Europe. Turkey, on the other hand, was the country that received the highest number of Syrians” (Sputnik Turkey). 25% of the nearly three and a half million Syrians who came to Turkey are within the 15-24 age range, which is called young population. Of these people, especially those of the higher education age, experienced problems in following their education when they arrived in Turkey and indeed many of them had to leave aside their academic past in Syria and begin university all over again. In particular, determining the reasons why the young Syrians who are at their era of clutching on to life learn Turkish, their perceptions of Turkey and expectations from the future holds significance in regards to the proper administration of their process of learning Turkish as a second language and proper planning of the future of the Syrians.

Considering the field of teaching Turkish as a second language to immigrants, it is seen that the curriculum lacks of qualified instructors and materials; assessment and evaluation processes vary from institution to institution; It is seen that there is no coordination and standard among institutions

that teach Turkish to immigrants (Başar, 2020, p. 307-309). In order to eliminate the problems, the language learning needs of Syrians who learn Turkish as a second language should be determined correctly.

The reason for 39.5 percent of the participants to learn Turkish is “to pursue higher education”. All of the participants were Syrian students attending higher education in Turkey. For this reason, it is normal for their primary aim of learning Turkish to be attending higher education.

“It is known that not speaking Turkish delays the adaptation of immigrants to Turkish society and creates certain social problems” (Başar, 2020, p. 296). Indeed, 24.3 percent of the students want to be able to speak Turkish in daily life. When people settle in a different country due to immigration, it is very difficult for them to adapt to the social life without knowing the language of that country. Bölükbaş (2016, p. 30) states that while describing the problems that Syrians face in particular, performing an official transaction, filling out a form, writing an e-mail, telling the doctor about their health problems in the hospital, communicating with their Turkish friends, shopping and asking for addresses, they have problems. For Syrians who want to meet their basic needs, get education, find a job, work and continue their lives, learning Turkish and overcoming communication problems that can be experienced in daily life are important reasons for learning Turkish. Phutkaradze (2018, p. 88) states that the fact that irregular immigrants do not know the language of the society they live in, affects their business life negatively, and states that these people need to learn the official language of the country in order to continue their lives normally. As a matter of fact, 9 percent of the participants stated, in a way that supports this situation that they wanted to learn Turkish in order to “eliminate communication problems According to Tunagür and Kardaş (2021, p. 135), Syrians learn Turkish in order to live in Turkey, receive a decent education and adapt to social life.

“Finding a job” and “becoming a Turkish citizen” are among the other reasons the young Syrians want to learn Turkish. People have to produce, work and earn income in order to survive. People who do not know the official language spoken in the country usually work under difficult conditions in the service sector as a cheap labor force. The higher education diplomas do not help in increasing their income. Therefore, the Syrians who immigrating Turkey, would like to learn Turkish and get higher education, and also expect to take part in different sectors as qualified employees. The exceptional right to "become a citizen" granted to Syrians attending higher education, causes an increase in the demand of the young Syrian population to learn Turkish and to receive higher education.

The relationship between Turkey and Syria is not new. Though it dates back to earlier times, the borders between the two countries were drawn with the Ankara Treaty and they assumed their final form when the State of Hatay was annexed to Turkey. With the demarcation of the borders, many families were split and while a part of the family remained on Syrian territory, the other part remained on the Turkish side. Ties established for reasons of kinship, trade, marriage etc. have caused both people and cultures to resemble each other. Today, the mention of the word “Turkey” brings concepts of nature, civilization, fraternity, education, history, tourism, Ottomans, homeland and food to the minds of the Syrian immigrants of higher education age. These people live with us within the borders of Turkey today. However, it should be keep in mind that the people in the region lived their lives in the same territory during the Ottoman rule. Therefore, it is not surprising that young Syrians remember the concepts when the word “Turkey” is mentioned.

Almost all of the young Syrians living in Turkey love Turkey. Large numbers of Syrians migrated to Europe as a consequence of the incidents in Syria, but these people often experienced serious problems in adapting to the countries where they took refuge. Especially, the Syrians who migrated to countries that had a different religion from them, initially had enormous difficulty. Cultural similarities between Turkey and Syria make young people feel at home and love Turkey. The proximity of Syrians to Turkey generally affects their willingness to learn Turkish in a positive way. On the other hand, Tunagür and Kardaş (2021, p.) revealed in their research that only two students

wanted to learn Turkish because they love Turkey, and stated that it is thought-provoking that Syrians who have been living in Turkey since 2011 do not have the expected level of love for Turkish.

Although most of the Syrian young people state that they love Turkey, 36% of the young people wish to live in another country especially due to the possibility of having better living standards there. According to Şimşek (2019, p. 507), behind the Syrians' decision to go to Europe, there are mostly problems related to access to basic rights, including employment, education, health and housing.

The Netherlands, Spain, England, Canada, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia and Dubai, the United Arab Emirates, stand out among the countries where young people wish to live. These young people also state that they wish to live in the American continent. When the countries where the young Syrian population in Turkey wish to live are examined, it is seen that countries with higher living standards and welfare are preferred. It is not easy for young people to migrate to those countries after Turkey, because most of these countries object to accepting legal immigrants or accept only a few applications for asylum each year. Syrians trying to enter those countries in secret experience problems in the process and indeed many people risk their lives in this process.

“Negative and discriminatory perceptions about Syrians and media representations that contribute significantly to the production and spread of these perceptions are among some of the problems encountered by Syrian refugees in the host countries. The way Syrian refugees is represented in the media causes the problem to prolong and spread” (Efe, 2015, p. 7). The Syrian young people face similar hardships in Turkey, too. “Fake news such as that Syrian refugees can attend any university they want without limitations of quota; the state pays them 1500 TL a month and they can receive all health services including IVF treatment for free is being spread by anti-immigrant groups without encountering any counter arguments in an environment where accurate information is at a minimum level or nonexistent at all; accounts, websites and Facebook pages in the social media established specifically for disinformation continue to spread false information systematically” (Özipek, 2018, p. 66). Hatred speech and negative discrimination faced by Syrians in particular are unacceptable behaviors. In some cities, attitudes of local people sometimes even reach levels that could be deemed racism and Syrians experience social exclusion (See, Cengiz, 2015; Evran, et al., 2020; Çağlar et al., 2016; Karasu, 2016). It should be noted that these people did not come to Turkey by their own will. The conditions they found themselves in compelled people to migrate. Indeed, 33.3 % of the young people wish to return to their country if life returns to normal there. Though this rate may seem low, an evaluation based on the age of the participants will provide a healthier analysis of the situation. Most of the young people who participated in the study came to Turkey at a very early age. Therefore, although feelings of belonging to their own country have not yet fully taken root, 1 out of the 3 participants stated that they wanted to return to their country. Nevertheless, the fact that these young people are going to complete their education in Turkey is another factor that will make their enthusiasm to live in Turkey. It is certain that as the mean age of Syrian people increases, the rate of people wishing to return to their country will also increase.

Problems concerning language, education, finding a job, adaptation, getting into university and obtaining an ID card are among the other challenges that Syrian young people face in Turkey. Except for those of Turkmen origin, the most challenging problem that people coming from Syria face when they arrive in Turkey is language. Because of language problem, people have difficulty in communication, their education is disrupted and adaptation problems arise. People have difficulty finding jobs in line with their education as they do not speak the local language and hence are generally obliged to work in jobs requiring physical strength for rather low wages. Moreover, “rising rates of unemployment in places where Syrian population is dense lead to perceptions that Syrians take jobs that could otherwise be done by native people” (Özpinar et al., 2016, p. 4). Syrian students also face some problems in their Turkish teaching processes. Tunagür and Kardaş (2021, p. 132) group the difficulties that Syrian students experience while learning Turkish under seven themes: language skills, social relations, cultural adaptation, alphabet difference, linguistic characteristics, personal reasons and vocabulary.

Syrian families in Turkey stay either in the camps prepared by the state or in the houses they rent. Though efforts are constantly being made to improve the conditions in the camps, it is impossible for people to find the comfort of their homes. Families that are a little better off prefer to rent houses rather than stay in camps. However, “increases have been observed in house rentals and prices since Syrian refugees began to arrive in Turkey” (Özdemir, 2017, p. 123). Both the rise in demand and the desire to earn more have led to dramatic increases in rentals in cities with high immigration rates, which has negatively affected both Syrian and Turkish families. Koç et al. (2015, p. 84) also stated that the number of people who want to stay out of the camps is increasing day by day, and it was welcomed that these people put the money they brought with them into the local market in the first place, but in the next period, especially in border cities, rent increases were experienced and the increases negatively affected the tenants.

Syrians allowed into Turkey are granted temporary protection status and ID cards and these people can travel within the country only after they obtain permission to this end. Therefore, Syrians first need to have a reason for traveling from one place to another, and then they need to get permission for travel from the immigration authority. Though this is important for keeping the balances within the country and maintaining an even distribution of Syrians to cities, the practice makes the lives of Syrian people more difficult.

52.1 percent of the young people are planning to finish their university education as soon as possible and get a job immediately. The most important factor in this is that these people have families depending on them and they need to make a living. Only 12.6% of the young people wish to pursue a master's degree, i.e., continue higher education. Researches also reveal that Syrians have priorities in finding a job (see Arslan, 2018; Korkmaz, 2018; İşcan & Çakır, 2019). Here, it turns out that the priority of the young people is to find a job. 9.8 percent of the young people stated that they wanted to engage in activities that would benefit Turkey after they graduated. The fact that Turkey embraced them in their hard times causes these people to feel indebted to Turkey and therefore do favorable things for Turkey.

Admission of foreign students at higher education level in Turkey into university depends on certain criteria. According to this and contrary to the common belief, foreign students compete only with foreign students like themselves, and those who are successful as a result of the evaluations gain the right to enroll in the relevant department of the universities. While general standards for foreigners' entrance to university are the same in all universities, different universities can implement different procedures with slight changes. While some universities admit students with their own examinations, others accept scores obtained from foreign student examinations administered by one of the major universities and allow students to enroll. When the distribution of Syrian youth to the departments of universities is examined, it is seen that medicine, dentistry, nursing, architecture and engineering come to the forefront. 74.2 percent of the youth think that they will be able to work in their field of expertise. This high rate is attributable to the fact that young people generally prefer occupations that are on high demand and are in the service sector.

People living as Syrian citizens in temporary protected status in Turkey do not have the legal right to travel to many European countries. Outside of exceptions, many countries have closed their doors to Syrian citizens. Therefore, knowing that they cannot go any other country with their Syrian passports, young Syrians want to become Turkish citizens. If they become citizens, the lives of these young people will be easier and they will be able to fully benefit from the rights that Turkish citizens enjoy.

Syrian refugees are a fact of the whole World. Turkey did not act as a mere spectator to the events taking place right beside it; instead, it opened its doors to people rushing desperately to it. According to international agreements, many European countries are required to accept a certain number of Syrian refugees to their country in proportion to their level of development. Yet, “according to Oxfam, only three rich countries pledged to accept Syrians in proportion to their economic size.

According to the report, these countries are Canada, Germany and Norway” (BBC News, 2016). Other countries, on the other hand, tend to admit as few Syrians as possible and ignore the problem.

Analyses based on the responses of the Syrian youth participating in the study indicated that the Syrian youth still continue to struggle for their lives. These young people are struggling to learn the local language, get higher education, find a job and sustain their lives and expect security, peace, stability and success from the future. Young Syrians want to leave their bad days behind and look to the future with hope. In this context, all countries must accept their responsibility and a common road map should be determined for the solution of the problem.

Young people are the most important part of the population that will influence and direct the history of nations and states. Syrian youth who had to migrate to Turkey was forced to face the challenges of life at an early age. Most of the young Syrian people want to live a nice life where they can leave the bad days behind. The war, which underlies the hard times they have experienced, has inflicted a great trauma on the youth. For this reason, the Syrian youth wants all wars to come to an end so that peace will prevail all over the world.

The suggestions put forward based on the results of the research are as follows:

- The Syrian students who had to abandon their education and migrated to Turkey need to be granted the right to transfer to the related departments of the universities in Turkey, and they need to be able to complete their remaining courses and graduate from their departments.
- Regardless of the language of instruction of their departments, the students who are admitted to the universities should be admitted to preparatory Turkish classes and be made sure they learn Turkish.
- Considering that they will continue their higher education after TÖMER, beginning from the advanced level, the Syrian students who learn Turkish as a second language should be given academic Turkish courses.
- Syrians who learn Turkish in order to organize their social life and adapt to Turkish society should be provided with learning environment where they can practice the language they learn and socialize with their peers; various events and organizations should be organized.
- Those who have successfully completed the higher education process should be given the right to become a Turkish citizen; these people should be encouraged to pursue MA and PhD; in particular, following the branches that will be made among the students who graduated from departments such as medicine, pharmacy, dentistry, engineering, architecture, nursing, it should be ensured that the best ones among them start to work in the relevant institutions.
- Incentive programs that would eliminate the idea of migrating to other countries from the minds of accomplished young Syrians who are developed in the professional and academic sense and those people should be provided with projects and employment opportunities that would benefit Turkey and themselves.
- Institutions teaching Turkish as a second language should be coordinated, curriculum, textbooks and materials for teaching Turkish as a second language should be developed, language teaching principles should be built on certain foundations and inter-institutional standardization should be ensured.

- Physical conditions of the Turkish courses being held in the camps (heating, lighting, etc.) should be improved; technological tools such as computers, projectors, and sound systems should be provided and made available to the service of course centers. Instructors who will take part in the courses should be chosen among those who are experts in the field of teaching Turkish as a second language. If there is no such opportunity, instructors from the departments related to the field such as Turkish teaching, Turkish language and literature should be assigned to the courses. Instructors charged with in-service training programs should be provided with opportunities to meet with academics who are experts in their fields and to improve themselves.
- Classes should be held in mixed classes at TÖMER institution, and not all students should be Syrians as they would like to speak Arabic among themselves. In this way, Syrian students should be encouraged to use Turkish in order to communicate with people coming from different countries.
- If possible, special groups should be created for Turkmen students, and these students should gain the competence of writing in Turkish alphabet and speaking in Istanbul Turkish.

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