Parents' Role in Their Children's Development and Maintenance of the Heritage Language: A Case Study of a Turkish-American Immigrant Family

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PARENTS’ ROLE IN THEIR CHILDREN’S DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF THE HERITAGE LANGUAGE:
A CASE STUDY OF A TURKISH-AMERICAN IMMIGRANT FAMILY

A Thesis
Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research
in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

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Indiana University of Pennsylvania
May 2015
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Title: Parents’ Role in Their Children’s Development and Maintenance of the Heritage Language: A Case Study of a Turkish-American Immigrant Family

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This case study aimed to explore the strategies and language ideologies that the Turkish-American immigrant parents in this study use in terms of maintaining the heritage language and their children’s cultural identity. Also, the attitudes of these parents and children towards Turkish as a heritage language were investigated. This qualitative study consisted of audio-recorded semi-structured interviews of one Turkish-American immigrant family living in a residential suburban area in Western Pennsylvania.

The findings of this study suggested that the parents and their children valued learning Turkish as a heritage language. However, different perceptions of the parents and the children regarding the children’s use of Turkish and their cultural identity were reported. Moreover, the parents indicated that visiting the home country played a key role in their children’s heritage language development. Finally, many issues such as the role of school support and immigrant community contact in maintaining the heritage language were discussed.
To my one and only, Erdinç...
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

The number of immigrants to the United States is growing year by year due to globalization and the increasing mobility of the world population. According to the 2013 American Community Survey, 196,222 people in the United States reported a Turkish descent.

Turkish immigration to the United States is not very recent. Kaya (2009) summarized the history of the immigration in three major waves. The first wave started in 1800 and ended around 1920, followed by the second wave in the early 1950s. Afterward, Turkey’s membership in The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Truman Doctrine announced a partnership, which resulted in a considerable increase in Turkish immigration. The third and the last wave of Turkish immigration began in the late 1980s and reached its peak in the late 1990s. Liberalized American immigration laws were not the only reason for this increase. Additionally, the policies of that time Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Özal created a new sense of openness to the outside world.

As Turkish-Americans are becoming more and more visible in the United States, terms such as ‘Turkish Americans’, ‘Turks in America’ and ‘Americans of Turkish Descent’ are used to refer to this community in addition to the ‘Turkish Immigrants’ (Micallef, 2004). The term Turkish-Americans was commonly used in many previous studies such as in Kaya (2003, 2004, 2005, 2009), Isik-Ercan (2012) and Otcu (2009, 2010, 2014). Kaya (2003) defined the Turkish-American identity as a result of materializing “through the confrontation of two driving forces: the immigrant Turkish
culture and American culture. These two forces of identity compete and strive for domination” (p. 99).

In another study by Kaya (2004), he provides a detailed description of this identity as he said that,

the Turkish community in the United States is one of the least studied ethnic groups, despite their increasing number and the long history of Turkish immigration. Their number is a mystery yet they are everywhere. Their country of origin, Turkey, has been one of the closest allies of the United States yet they are invisible in the United States. They are Muslim yet they claim their differences and promote Turkishness. They are viewed as Middle Easterners yet they assert their Europeanness as well as their Muslimness. They are seen as outsiders yet they profess their Americanness. Their identities reflect Turkey's multiple identities. (p. 295)

In this case study, the term Turkish-American Immigrants is used to refer to the participants of the study. However, it is significant to note the diversity of the Turkish immigrant community in the United States in terms of gender, class, and religious practices; therefore, the term Turkish-Americans should not be perceived as one single identity that may disregard the diversity of this community (Kaya, 2005).

Who Is a Heritage Language Speaker?

Historical Background

The field of heritage language (HL) has been emerging since the late Twentieth Century (Kagan & Dillon, 2012). The term heritage language was first originated in Canada (Cummins, 2005). With the increasing number of the immigrant population in the
United States, special attention is increasingly paid to heritage language studies. However, *heritage student* was not commonly used until the publication of the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning* by American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages in 1996 (Valdés, 2005).

**Definition of the Term**

Former studies on heritage language reported different characteristics of the heritage language learner/speaker. In other words, the scholars delivered a variety of definitions of heritage language. Wiley (2005) defined heritage language as an immigrant or ancestral language that a speaker has a personal relevance and desire to (re)connect with. According to Cummins (2005), this includes English, in theory, but it refers to practically all languages except North American English. Sometimes, the term “heritage language” has been replaced with “community language”, “native language”, and “mother tongue” to refer to a language other than English used by immigrant communities. In addition, heritage language students have been referred to as “native speakers”, “quasi-native speakers”, “residual speakers”, “bilingual speakers” and “home-background speakers” (Valdés, 1997).

The terms *heritage language* and *heritage speaker* were used since migration existed. Immigrant languages are accepted as heritage languages in several countries. A *Heritage speaker*, as a member of the second generation, is the child of the original immigrants, who typically lives in a bilingual/multilingual environment from an early age. Heritage speakers have the language of the host country as the dominant language, whereas first generation immigrants are dominant in the native language of their home country (Benmamoun, Montrul & Polinsky, 2013a). On the other hand, Kupisch (2013)
argued that the last definition does not provide a clear picture of the heritage language acquisition, since it does not distinguish between different types of bilingual learners.

According to a similar definition by Hornberger and Wang (2008), “In the U.S. context, HLLs are individuals who have familial or ancestral ties to the particular language that is not English and who exert their agency in determining whether or not they are HLLs of that HL and HC [Heritage Culture]” (p. 27). Despite the argument by some critics (Hornberger, 2005) that the word “heritage” points backward instead of forward, the term has firmly taken root in the literature.

Additional Issues Related to Heritage Language

Although most of the definitions listed above agree on the fact that heritage language is the language spoken at home; the disagreement is on whether it is categorized as a first or second language. Regarding the reason why heritage language is not considered L1, Kupisch (2013) describes the preconditions for language acquisition in monolinguals, as different from “a person whose only language coincided with that of the larger society and was also the language of instruction at school” (p. 207).

Likewise, Montrul (2013) proposed an argument in relation to the “nativeness” of heritage language speakers. Montrul (2013) revealed that heritage language speakers’ proficiency ranges from “overhearers” to “native” speakers. The proficiency among the participants of her study varied depending on several factors such as the age of exposure to the heritage language, the amount of exposure, the kind of input, and the gender of the heritage language learner.

On the other hand, Valdés (2005) provided an interesting definition for heritage language speakers. She stated that heritage languages are not used only by immigrants
who moved to areas other than their home countries, but may also refer to languages spoken by ethnic minorities, such as Aborigines in Australia, speakers of Breton in France, and Kurds in Turkey, Iran, and Iraq. Valdés (2005) continued,

American heritage language students include children of native American background, foreign born immigrants who came to the United States at a young age, the native-born children of foreign born immigrants, and occasionally the native born children of native-born individuals of immigrant background. The experiences of these heritage speakers are similar. They speak or hear the heritage language spoken at home and in their immediate communities, but with few exceptions (e.g., Foreign Language Elementary School programs, Bilingual Education), they receive their formal education entirely in English. They receive no instruction in the heritage language during the elementary or secondary grades and, as a result, become literate only in English. (p. 413)

Additionally, Benmamoun et al (2013a) affirm that the sociopolitical status of the languages is equally important: “The majority language is often the language spoken by an ethno-linguistically dominant group and is typically supported and regulated through laws and institutions” (p.133). Moreover, Benmamoun et al (2013a) describes minority languages as having “relatively lower prestige and lesser or no official status […] and may even lack a standardized script, thus limiting their reach” (p. 133).

As a final point, Benmamoun, Montrul and Polinsky (2013b) add a new dimension to this discussion by stating, “one could easily replace the word ‘dialect’ with the word ‘heritage language’ and successfully apply the same argument to heritage speakers” (p. 268). Although the term “heritage language” in general refers to the
language spoken by immigrants in the host country, it may also include minority languages or dialects spoken in the home country.

**Turkish as a Heritage Language**

Compared to the relatively large Turkish immigrant population in the United States, it is surprising how little research has been done on this population from the linguistic point of view. Whereas Kaya (2003, 2004, 2005, 2009) reports important data from the Turkish immigrant community in the United States, the term “Turkish as a Heritage Language” was first introduced to the literature by Otcu (2009) in her dissertation and journal articles (2010, 2014). Otcu (2014) identifies the presence of Turkish language in the United States as: “(1) Turkish as a heritage, home, or community language of the immigrants from Turkey to the US, and (2) Turkish as a foreign or second language” (p. 212).

Moreover, Otcu (2009) delivered valuable facts about the Turkish community in New York City through her study on a Turkish Saturday school. In addition, Isik-Ercan’s (2012) ethnographic study illustrates the experiences of Turkish-American immigrant families in terms of schooling, education, and identity.

**Purpose of the study**

Given the fact that migration itself is a challenging experience for families with children, it might be even more complicated if the parents, as is the situation in this case study, are the only source for learning the heritage language and culture. The parents in this case take on extra responsibility for maintaining the heritage language and the cultural identity of their children in this new immigrant context.
Zhang and Slaughter-Defoe (2009) portray the experience of the immigrants with their heritage languages by saying that,

The USA is a linguistically and culturally diverse nation with immigrants, refugees, and temporary workers from different parts of the world bringing their languages of origin to their new home. These immigrants have long been faced with the language choice dilemma of how to shift to English and still preserve their HL in the USA. (p. 77)

The purpose of this case study is to explore the strategies and language ideologies that the Turkish immigrant parents use in terms of maintaining the heritage language of their children and the parent’s role in the construction of their children’s cultural and linguistic identities. In addition, I am engaging in this case study to develop an understanding of the self-perceptions of the Turkish immigrant children as heritage language speakers.

**Research Questions**

During the course of this case study, the following questions guided the nature of the inquiry:

1. What are the attitudes of the Turkish-American immigrant parents and their children in this study towards learning Turkish as a heritage language?
2. Why do the Turkish-American immigrant parents in this study want their children to learn Turkish?
3. How do these parents see themselves facilitating the use of Turkish in their home?

It is significant to note that these questions are exclusive to the immigrant context of this case study and that they reflect the experiences of the participating family. The answers
of these questions, which are discussed in Chapter Five, do not attempt to draw a general conclusion for the entire Turkish-American immigrant population in the United States.

**Significance of the Study and Researcher Positionality**

Immigration to the host country and being introduced to the new culture shape the parent-child relationship. Immigrants face the challenge of guiding their children in the foreign context and linking the two cultures (Nesteruk & Marks, 2011). Some of these challenges are brought up by Vetere’s (2013) study. He describes the immigrant parents’ dilemma by posing several questions such as:

- should their child learn the language of their heritage first in order to communicate best with parents, other family relations, and immediate community members? Or should the dominate language of the broader social environment take precedence? Is it possible to teach both languages at the same time and are the resources, (dual language proficiency, literacy materials, etc.), available to achieve such a feat? (p. 2)

As a matter of fact, these questions summarize the concerns of any immigrant parent that wants his/her child(ren) to learn the heritage language and to preserve their cultural identity in the host country.

Whilst the previous studies done on Turkish as a heritage language (Isik-Ercan 2012; Otcu 2009, 2010, 2014) provided examples of Turkish families who had an external support for their children’s heritage language learning (such as weekend HL school and private tutoring), my study focuses on the strategies used by parents within the home context, which is the only place to learn and speak the HL. Also, this study
provides insights on the attitudes and the role of parents in heritage language maintenance and cultural identity construction.

Additionally, every language and the culture associated with it is definitely unique; this study differs from previous studies (Becker, 2013; Brown, 2011; Endo, 2013; Gurdado, 2008; Hashimoto & Lee, 2011; Nesteruk, 2010; Nesteruk & Marks, 2011; Park, 2013; Park & Sarkar, 2008; Shoukri, 2010; Zhang & Slaughter-Defoe, 2009) in that it focuses on Turkish language, in particular. Given that the previous studies were mostly conducted on immigrant societies such as Korean, Japanese, Spanish, Chinese, Eastern European, and Arab societies; the Turkish community has a different structure from these communities’ that might result in different arguments for the Turkish HL speakers and learners.

Besides my professional concerns, this topic raised from my personal experiences as a multilingual international student. I grew up in Iraq, where the official language was Arabic, and spoke a minority language, which was Turkmen, at home. I also grew up in a family where the mother tongue was believed to be the first language to be learned, and the most important one. Despite the fact that Turkmen does not have an official alphabet, my parents’ insistence and determination made it possible to learn and speak this language even when there was no written, educational or community support. Although Turkmen and Turkish are very similar, after moving to Turkey, we continued to use Turkmen at home. I owe my parents in not only learning the language, but also preserving my Turkmen identity. Accordingly, this study will be informative for immigrant parents in general, and Turkish immigrants in particular, who want to preserve their children’s heritage language and cultural identity.
Research Context

The participants of this study are members of a Turkish family living in residential suburb of a city in Western Pennsylvania with a population of 305,841 people according to the 2010 United States Census. According to the 2009-2013 American Community Survey of this city, which included only the responses of people 5 years and older, the percentage of the population that reported speaking a language other than English is 9.8%. In this particular city, an estimated population of 390 people with an error margin of +/-138 reported a Turkish ancestry. The presence of a Turkish Cultural Center as well as a charter school which offers Turkish classes indicates a higher Turkish population in the city.

The participating family consists of two parents, Emre Güralp and Aslı Güralp who are between 40 and 45 years of age, and their children: Zeynep and Rana, 14-year-old twins, and Beste, a 4-year-old child. Pseudonyms were used for the participants in order to protect their identities.

While both parents were born in Turkey, all of their children were born in the United States. With both Turkish-speaking parents at home, the only source for the children to learn their heritage language is from their family. More detailed information about these participants is provided in Chapter Three.

Summary of the Chapter

In light of different definitions and points of view reported, the term Heritage Language is closely related to the speakers’ population, contexts and goals of learning the language. The findings of any study related to a particular heritage language might not be applicable for other language learning. This adds to the significance of conducting
this study on Turkish as a heritage language. As a member of the Turkish community in the United States who plans to be an immigrant parent, I would like to investigate the possible challenges that immigrant parents encounter with their children in terms of Turkish heritage language maintenance. Although the findings do not intend to draw a conclusion to be generalized for the entire population of Turkish immigrant parents in the United States, they can be considered as a beginning for further research on Turkish as a heritage language. Further information on the limitations of this study is later provided in Chapter Five.

**Organization of the Study**

This thesis study is composed of five chapters. Chapter One provides historical background of the term “heritage language” and serves as an introduction into the context and the purpose of the study.

Chapter Two delivers a review of the relevant literature on heritage language learning, maintenance, language and identity negotiation in different immigrant communities, as well as the theoretical background that guided the study. The purpose of this chapter was to offer an understanding of the current challenges that heritage language learners and their families have and to restate the significance of my study.

Chapter Three combines the theoretical background introduced in the literature review with the methodology. This chapter provides a detailed description of the methods used to conduct this research in relation to the theoretical framework in order to answer my research questions. The interview design, the site of the study, the selection of the sample population, the process for data collection and finally the data coding are addressed.
Chapter Four presents the results of the data set that was collected through semi-structured interviews with the participating family. The data set is divided into four major themes and several direct quotes from the participants were used in support of these themes.

Chapter Five offers a summary of this case study and a detailed discussion of the major findings in the light of the research questions. Also, implications, conclusions of the study and suggestions for further research are listed in this chapter.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I discuss the relevant review of the current disciplinary knowledge concerning heritage language speakers, parental perceptions and practices in different contexts. This review provides a general description of the relevant literature regarding this case study’s focus and attempts to offer necessary background information for this inquiry.

Therefore, this chapter is organized in three main sections covering the following areas of foci: (1) Attitudes and perceptions towards heritage language learning, (2) Heritage language and cultural identity construction, (3) Heritage language maintenance and loss.

Before delving into the core issues of the research questions, it is significant to discuss the theoretical framework guiding the main ideas of this case study. Such ideas include, but are not limited to, heritage language learning and identity (re)construction, language maintenance and loss in the second generation and language ideologies.

**Theoretical Framework**

In this case study, I adopted the theoretical framework created by Lo-Philip (2010) for heritage language literacy and identity processes as well as Pavlenko’s (1997) model of second language learning and identity (re)construction.

Lo-Philip proposed that heritage language literacy acquisition might be considered identity processes that include the acquisition of language as a means of learning how to perceive the self and the community. She implied that a redefinition of the heritage language learner as having distinctive characteristics from the “second
language learner” label is needed. Besides, this framework needs an examination of the dominant language, heritage language and discourses to comprehend heritage language literacy development and identity processes.

More to the point, Pavlenko (1997) explains the process of identity (re)constriction under the influence of second language learning in two phases; a phase of continuous loss and later a phase of gain and (re)construction. The first phase is described as loss of: one’s linguistic identity, social networks and previous subjectivities or marginalization, the frame of reference and the link between the signifier and the signified, the inner voice, first language attrition. The second phase consists of four critical stages: appropriation of others’ voices, emergence of one’s own new voice, translation therapy, continuous growth ‘into’ new positions and subjectivities.

Attitudes and Perceptions Towards Heritage Language Learning

Heritage language speakers’ attitudes and self-perceptions regarding their language and how this may have an impact on their choices to learn or speak the language should also be considered. Jeon (2008) explores ways in which language ideology influences the maintenance of Korean as a HL in the United States. The ethnographic data was obtained from three different sources, a Korean language program at an American university, a community-based ESL (English as a Second Language) program for Korean seniors, and a newly immigrated Korean family, provided insights into the participants’ approaches toward language learning and how they are shaped and revised depending on their life changes. This paper showed a shift from assimilationist ideologies to pluralist ideologies in time. These shifts led to diverse language practices at different times. Gans (1997) refers to assimilation as “the newcomers' move out of formal and informal ethnic
associations and other social institutions into the nonethnic equivalents accessible to them in that same host society” (p. 877). However, pluralist language ideologies are seen as the support of the language of the immigrant community. Jeon (2008) provides an example to both ideologies by stating that,

We saw that while many Korean parents with young children hold assimilationist ideologies and speak to their children in English only, they shift to a more pluralist position and support their children's desire to learn Korean once the children are in college. Paradoxically, 1.5- and second-generation Korean Americans’ high proficiency in English facilitates their decision to pursue Korean when they reach college age, when Korean is perceived as a desirable addition to English. (p. 66)

**Parent’s Role and Attitudes**

What most studies supported is the fact that there is consistent evidence that parental use of heritage language at home is an important factor in enhancing their children’s heritage language maintenance (Park, 2013). De Fina (2012) elucidate the family communication implication by referring to a member of the third generation in her study, who has re-learned the heritage language in college in order to be able to communicate with her grandmother. This member also had an important role in encouraging her peers to maintain the family's multilingual identity.

Furthermore, parental involvement is considered the most important factor that influences heritage language maintenance. The findings of Brown’s (2011) study advocate that parental involvement is more vital than heritage language schools or reminding the children of the importance of the heritage language. In addition, the study
suggests that immigrant parents should avoid any communication in English if they want to maintain their heritage language.

However, parents may shift to English because of insufficient heritage language proficiency of the children, which may end up with the language loss. In addition, the fact that immigrant parents value heritage but rarely transform this into practice is because they cannot see the language’s future practical use (McCabe, 2014). In support of this theory, Brown (2011) delivered the fact that parents articulated a strong desire for their children to develop and maintain their heritage language. On the other hand, the interviews with the students in Brown’s study point to the fact that the parents did not always seem to place their beliefs into practice. Besides, despite the parents’ effort to maintain their children’s heritage language, the lack of external social and educational support is perceived as a barrier to achieve this goal (Hashimoto & Lee, 2011).

Moreover, Rohani, Choi, Amjad, Burnett, and Colahan (2006) highlighted that “parents, both consciously and unconsciously, create an environment that will either nurture or impair language acquisition” (p. 3). Regarding this point, Hashimoto and Lee (2011) assert that the way that heritage language is promoted by parents plays a key role in the children’s motivation. According to their study “all the children were much more willing to interact with Japanese literacy when they were introduced to a greater variety of recreational Japanese texts, such as storybooks, manga, cartoon character cards, Game Boys, Game Boy strategy guides, and karuta” (p. 172).

Despite the positive views of immigrant Korean parents about their children learning their heritage language, Lee (2012) claimed that the length of stay in the United States and the immigrant status were important factors affecting these views. The longer
the immigrant families had stayed in the United States, the more parents tended to use English with their children, and the shorter they planned to stay, the more parents tended to let the children practice English.

As a result, some parents believe that their children need to learn the dominant language alongside with their heritage language. According to Shoukri (2010), the members of Ontario’s Arab community valued the learning of multiple languages. Additionally, although they agreed that learning French is important, learning English was considered more important. The majority of participants in this study wanted their children to learn Arabic at school because they felt that their children’s use of Arabic is decreasing.

On the other hand, the parents’ attitudes toward heritage language learning might be so different from their children’s attitudes towards heritage language. Specifically, the parental attitudes might be more positive than their children’s. The reason claimed to be the difference in the amount of exposure to English (Mirici, Galleano and Torres, 2013).

**Perceptions of the Second Generation and Language Choices**

As the multilingual population grows faster than the monolingual English speaking population in the United States, it is important to develop a better understanding of how bilingual immigrants perceive themselves and their identity while living in a community that dichotomizes the English speaking majority versus non-English speaking minority (Brown, 2009). There are some reasons for the children of the immigrant families for maintaining their heritage language. Being able to communicate with other family members seems to be the first reason. Otcu (2014) provides an example by saying that “the children exhibit fluid and hybrid identities. They reject the adults’ Discourses by
speaking English among peers, and yet they also speak Turkish to adults when necessary and accept their Discourses” (p. 226). Zhang and Slaughter-Defoe (2009) express that especially older children want to learn heritage language to obey their parents, yet they themselves do not feel it essential or significant.

In Lee’s (2012) study, regarding the beliefs and attitudes that Korean immigrant parents and their children hold about their heritage language, the participants responded that they needed to learn Korean because they needed to speak Korean with their parents. Therefore, the usage of heritage language at home was one important factor in motivating students to learn the heritage language. Additionally, in their study, Jean and Geva (2012) linked positive effect of using the heritage language at home and with English within all contexts. Moreover, as cited in Zhang and Slaughter-Defoe (2009), Lukmani (1972) claims that,

Many language researchers agree that an individual’s motivation in learning a given language is based on the following factors: (1) attitudes toward the community and people who speak the language; (2) attitudes toward learning the language in question; (3) attitudes toward learning languages and language learning in general; and (4) the goals pursued through language learning. (p. 78)

Becker (2013) listed cultural identity maintenance, sustaining meaningful family communication and greater future opportunities for multilingual adults as the reasons why maintaining heritage language is very important for heritage language speakers. With regard to another reason why immigrant children should learn their heritage language, Park and Sarkar (2007) clarified that parents mentioned the significance of first language skills in children’s academic achievements and second language learning. In
other words, heritage language learners’ high first language proficiency helps their second language acquisition. Being bilingual offers a better understanding of what is needed to be improved in the second language (Kung, 2013).

**Heritage Language and Cultural Identity Construction**

While conducting a research on language learning in general and heritage language in particular, it is almost impossible not to come across identity issues. The critical relationship between heritage language and cultural identity has been discussed by many different scholars (Brown, 2009; Canagarajah, 2013; Endo, 2013; Lytra, 2012; Park, 2013; Phinney, 1990; Phinney, Romero, Nava & Huang, 2001; Wilson & Martinez, 2011; Zhang & Slaughter-Defoe, 2009).

**Ethnic and Cultural Identity**

While the notion of ethnic identity is defined by Park (2013) in terms of “group membership,” Phinney (1990) describes it as an aspect of one’s social identity. Phinney defines ethnic identity as feelings and attitudes that accompany a subjective sense of belonging to an ethnic community. Brown (2011) emphasizes the belief that heritage language is “the essence of ethnic identity” (p. 33). Moreover, this apparent connection between heritage language and ethnic identity proposes a reason for immigrant parents to attach great value to their heritage language (Zhang & Slaughter-Defoe, 2009).

Since the terms ‘Turkish ethnic identity’ or ‘Turkish cultural identity’ may lead to the perception of all Turkish immigrants as a single ethnicity or culture and disregard the diversity of this community in the United States, in my case study, I use the term ‘Turkish Complex Identity’ to refer to the cultural identity of the participants. However, Kaya (2003) named this identity as “Turkishness” and stated that,
There are not only multiple forms of “Turkishness”, but also complex meanings of it. Turkishness is not felt and experienced in the same way by all Turkish-Americans, and it may not have the same meaning for all Turks living in the United States. (p. 2)

In relation to ethnic and cultural identity construction, Phinney et al (2001) claim that the attitudes of parents towards ethnic and cultural identity maintenance plays a role in language proficiency of adolescents. Existing research implies that heritage language proficiency, cultural maintenance, and community contact are key factors to ethnic identity. These parental attitudes will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

**Heritage Language and Cultural Identity Formation**

Not only are immigrant parents’ attitudes towards maintaining the cultural identity significant, but several studies, which are discussed in this section, confirm the fact that speaking the heritage language has a constructive influence on the way heritage language speakers perceive themselves and their cultural identity.

To begin with, Wilson and Martinez (2011) indicated that heritage language students used a variety of identity labels that varied depending on their attitudinal conceptions of their heritage language. Lee (2013) tried to explore these labels in more detail by examining the beliefs of Korean immigrant children about their heritage language. Findings highlighted that those immigrant children’s peers and teachers at school who are not Korean had important effects on the children’s positive attitudes towards their heritage language and cultural identity. For example, all the children who participated in this study considered themselves Korean, even if they were born in America, because they could speak Korean and they looked Korean.
Furthermore, You’s study (2005) delivered similar results by showing that maintaining heritage language is important to Korean American children to maintain their positive attitude towards ethnic identity. Park (2013) supports this idea by explaining that heritage language proficiency, socialization practices with ethnic peers, and parents’ use of heritage language at home have a positive impact on cultural identity. In addition, Canagarajah’s (2013) study showed a complex attitude towards heritage language maintenance of Tamil youth. The Tamil students revealed that although English was their dominant language of proficiency, they insisted that they still had positive thoughts about their ethnic identity and heritage language.

**The Turkish Complex Cultural Identity**

While Otcu’s (2010) ethnographic study, which looked at the Turkish children’s maintenance of their Turkish language and identity in a Turkish Saturday school by exploring the school administrators’ and the teachers' beliefs and practices in that school, suggested that Turkish language is necessary to construct a Turkish cultural identity in the United States, Isik-Ercan’s (2012) ethnographic study revealed data from 10 Turkish immigrant families. Her article discusses three different contexts that were generated by parents of Muslim Turkish-American children. These contexts are mentorship by young Turkish teachers, Sunday language school, and Turkish language and history instruction. The author demonstrates how these contexts enabled children and their parents to negotiate their Turkish, American, and Muslim identities by using various cultural practices.

Lytra’s (2012) study, which also was done on the Turkish context, demonstrated how parents who grew up in Turkey and Cyprus tend to rank standard Turkish and grant
the critical role of Turkish complementary schools for the spread and promotion of the language. The parents’ opinions showed how diverse self-ascriptions of proficiency in Turkish are linked to ‘Turkishness’, affected by their emigrational and personal experiences.

**Community Contact**

Several studies highlighted the crucial role of the family and community support for heritage language learning. First, Chhuon’s (2011) research has demonstrated that learning heritage language can positively add to lives of immigrant youth in the United States, both academically and socially. Heritage language helped development of students’ ethnic identity, which may protect them from discrimination in schools and the larger community.

In the second place, Dixon, Zhao, Quiroz and Shin (2012) revealed valuable data about the factors affecting the ethnic identity development of heritage language learners. The results showed that speaking ethnic language with children and community support for the language had a positive effect on children’s ethnic language vocabulary. Besides, watching television in English mostly/only had a negative impact on preserving the ethnic identity.

Additionally, Endo (2013) indicated how the Japanese participants have intentionally used the community contact to support their children to strengthen their ethnic identities through language learning. To end with, Wiltse (2008) reported similar results and argued that the participants who used both heritage language and English in their homes and communities described themselves as bilinguals.
Language Proficiency and Cultural Identity Formation

Kim and Chao (2009) claimed that heritage language fluency is an important element of ethnic identity for second-generation Mexican youth, but not for second-generation Chinese youth. While another comparative study between Hispanic students and Asian students by Choi (2013) suggested that, in general, Hispanic students were exposed to and used their heritage language more often than did their Asian peers. With regard to speaking with parents, an extreme loss of heritage language across generations was found among Hispanic students.

There were some contrasting data regarding the relationship between language proficiency and the cultural identity negotiation of the heritage language learners. For instance, findings from in-depth interviews conducted by Brown (2009) illustrate a close connection between heritage languages and ethnic identity of four Korean-American college students. However, the study reveals that a high level of heritage language proficiency is not necessarily associated with a stronger sense of ethnic identity. In forming a positive and healthy ethnic identity, embracing the heritage culture appears to be more important than maintaining the heritage language. If ethnic minority students are more appreciative of their culture, they are more likely to cultivate a strong cultural identity, as opposed to those who merely maintained the heritage language without an appreciation of the heritage culture. These findings imply that nationality or ethnicity may be influential in terms of heritage language maintenance and loss.

Heritage Language Maintenance and Loss

In this section, I look at some studies that investigated language maintenance and loss issues (Becker, 2013; Hashimoto & Lee, 2011; Guardado, 2008; Kung 2013;

To begin, research related to language learning and teaching have begun to promote heritage language’s preservation and glorification for a more linguistically diverse global village (Kung, 2013). However, there are many factors that prevent the heritage language speakers from preserving their language. For example, family communication plays a key role in preserving the heritage identity. Guardado’s (2008) study points out that family communication is considered the most powerful instrument in maintaining the heritage language. The participating family explained that they succeeded in fighting assimilation of their child’s cultural identity when they were well aware of the assimilation. Similarly, Park (2013) makes an important point by stating that parents’ choice of the home languages is considered among the most imperative factors that cause heritage language loss in immigrant children. Park indicates that this loss typically begins when children start their schooling in the host society.

While family contact is the most important source for learning and developing heritage language, being the only source has negative consequences in some cases. In relation to this issue, Hashimoto and Lee (2011) reported that the main barrier to maintain the heritage language skills for the second generation is the fact that the parents are the only and main source of motivation. Besides, there are no external sources of practice for these children aside from the home and their annual visits to the home country, which might be limited because of time restrictions.
Other factors like age and the availability of people speaking the same language affect the choice of language for heritage speakers. As Sofu (2009) stated, the second generation who has to live away from their family for education or work stopped using their mother tongue outside of their home context. This results in a shift towards the dominant society language or a complete loss of the heritage language within generations. As stated by De Fina (2012) in that “economic migration to a new country results for most immigrants in diminished functionality of the first language, shifts into the language of the country of immigration, and eventually almost complete loss of their L1 by the third generation” (p. 349).

In support of that, several studies of immigrants in the United States showed that children from different backgrounds commonly become English-dominant, or even English monolingual, by the time they reach adolescence. While members of the first generation endure acculturation – which is defined by Gans (1997) as immigrants’ adoption of the culture of the host society – by speaking some English at home, the second generation speaks English in school or with friends, and gradually tends to use English more at home. Consequently, this generation becomes “limited bilinguals”, who prefer English for future use. Finally, the third-generation members lose the heritage language because of the lack of support both at home and in the outside community (Nesteruk, 2010).

Yet, Benmamoun et al. (2013a) provide the terms “Language Attrition” besides language shift or loss. They explain the term by explaining that,

[it] takes place at the individual level in contexts where the native language begins to be used less often. An eventual consequence of linguistic attrition is that
a native speaker will become, in the judgment of his or her peers, a non-native speaker of his/her own language. This judgment is generally based on observed difficulties with lexical retrieval, the use of code-switching to fill lexical gaps, divergent pronunciation, morphological errors, avoidance of certain structures, and overuse of other structures due to transfer from the dominant language. (p. 132)

**Additional Factors**

Finally, on the importance of school as a factor on the heritage language learning process, Kim’s (2011) study examined the meaning of Korean heritage language school for Korean immigrant families and their children. The data of this ethnographic research project, which consisted of observations and interviews of Korean-American mothers and their children, “illustrated that the heritage language school works as a social and emotional support, a buffer for reducing the detachment from parents, and provides a safe environment for the Korean-American children” (p. 1). The Korean immigrant mothers also delivered their concerns regarding the different cultural views of their children.

In Becker’s (2013) thesis study, which shares the same focus with my case study, most of the participants believed that it is the responsibility of the parents to teach the heritage language and facilitate its use at home; all of them demonstrated a desire of school support for their heritage language. In relation to the educational support, in Martin’s (2012) study, participating children were requested to assign one color to each language that they spoke and to color a silhouette – representing the student – with those colors. The data revealed that students were made to feel negatively about their unsupported languages at schools.
Yet, in another context, Oriyama’s (2012) article used a quantitative approach to explore parents’ expectations regarding their children’s literacy in heritage language, and the effect of the family’s background and the heritage community contact on the language development and maintenance. The participants were Japanese immigrants living in Sydney, who differ in their degree of community contact and attend different Japanese community schools on the weekend. The results pointed out that while language use has a stronger effect than background, community contact and school support contributed to the development of the heritage language literacy more effectively.

**Summary of the Chapter**

Based on these results in juxtaposition with previous research findings, some implications that seem to be agreed on among different scholars can thus be drawn. Heritage language maintenance is necessary in order to preserve the ethnic and cultural identity of the heritage language speaker, however, other factors such as community support is critical in this process. Although immigrant parents, in general, have a positive attitude towards the heritage language education of their children, and they show a desire in supporting this education, they do not show effort to practice this support at home in most cases. This can be attributed to the limited access of heritage language, lack of ethnic community contact and absence of school support which may result in a language shift or a complete loss in some cases.

Moreover, in the studies listed earlier, heritage language learners or the second generation expressed a desire to learn the heritage language as a mean of communication with the adults of their community. This highlighted the value of the community contact as a motivation to learn and speak the heritage language. Additionally, findings indicated
that immigrant children showed an interest in learning the heritage language considering the advantages of learning and speaking additional languages, both socially and academically.

Finally, different factors like the family background, school support, the amount of exposure to dominant language and heritage language, national pride, reason of immigration and the length of stay at the host country affected the heritage language maintenance course and the cultural identity negotiation of the immigrant children. As for this case study, the findings of this chapter offered an understanding of the current challenges that heritage language learners and their families have in different immigrant societies. Although the Turkish immigrant society was one of them, an extensive and deep examination of this population is needed in order to address problems such as: challenges that Turkish immigrant parents may face in the lack of any educational support of the heritage language, the strategies and language ideologies that these parents may adopt to develop the heritage language of their children, and most importantly, their beliefs and opinions regarding heritage language maintenance and cultural identity construction in the United States.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The aim of this chapter is to combine the theoretical background introduced in Chapter Two with the methodology. This chapter provides a detailed description of the methodology used to conduct this research in relation to the theoretical framework in order to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the attitudes of the Turkish-American immigrant parents and their children in this study towards learning Turkish as a heritage language?
2. Why do the Turkish-American immigrant parents in this study want their children to learn Turkish?
3. How do these parents see themselves facilitating the use of Turkish in their home?

The method and the plan of the data collection, the participants and the research site, as well as the data analysis and coding strategies are discussed.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of this qualitative case study aims to identify the strategies and language ideologies that the Turkish immigrant parents in this study used to maintain their children’s heritage language as well as their cultural identity. The inquiry consisted of two semi-structured interviews, with open-ended questions for both the Turkish immigrant parents, and their children currently living in a small suburban area. The interviews aim to explore the attitudes of the children and their parents towards heritage language learning and their cultural identity construction. Some of the main questions that I asked during my interview with the parents addressed issues related to: the importance of maintaining Turkish as a heritage language, the dominant language of the
child at home and within the immigrant community, the reasons for the children learning
the heritage language, parents’ attitudes towards the children if they want to speak
English with them, parental beliefs about their child’s Turkish cultural identity
construction, and the strategies used by parents in facilitation of maintaining the heritage
language.

On the other hand, during my interview with the children, I asked questions
related to the importance of learning Turkish as a heritage language, the language
preference when talking to their parents or to other Turkish language speakers, their self-
perceptions as a Turkish heritage language speaker and attitudes towards learning and
speaking Turkish. The design of the interview questions is illustrated by tables in this
chapter. Additionally, the complete list of the interview questions for both the parents and
their children is provided in Appendices A and B.

**Researcher’s Positionality**

In an effort to strengthen the reliability of this study, it is important to fully
articulate the researcher’s positionality (Merriam, 1998). Takacs (2002) explains that
“understanding positionality means understanding where you stand with respect to
power, an essential skill for social change agents” (p. 169).

The conception of this research study came from my own immigration
experiences. As an immigrant, I can understand the desire of the parents to maintain HL
and preserve the cultural identity of their children through language learning. The
importance of this topic comes from the fact that I was raised as a bilingual child. In
other words, I feel that I may share in some of the experiences that the children might
have, regarding language and identity maintenance issues.
Finally, as a graduate student in a MA TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) and Applied Linguistics program, I became further involved in theories and practices concerning heritage language maintenance. Thus, considering my cultural and professional background, my interest in studying and developing a better understanding of maintaining HL and cultural identity was born.

**Research Design**

In this case study, the data collection tool was semi-structured interviews of one Turkish-American immigrant family. Conducting interviews serves as the best tool for my study, since I am interested in the personal opinions of the immigrant family regarding learning and speaking the heritage language at home.

**Selection of the Participants**

The first step in deciding on the participants was similar to Vetere’s (2013) thesis study on “Learning through Language Socialization.” I used criterion sampling, which is cited in Vetere (2013) as “using a set of criteria to determine whether or not to select an individual as part of the sample (Perry, 2011)” (p. 29). The criteria used for the participants of this study were that: (1) both parents should be speakers of Turkish as their first language and living in the United States with at least one child, (2) all participants should be bilingual speakers of Turkish and English, (3) children should be US-born or have been living in the United States for at least two years.

Secondly, this study implemented convenience sampling in its selection of the research participants. According to Creswell (2012), participants are selected because they are willing and available for the study. In this sampling method, the researcher cannot make sure that the individuals are representative of the population. Nevertheless,
the participants still can offer useful information to answer questions and hypotheses. Furthermore, this project is envisioned as a pilot study that can be continued as larger projects in the future.

After receiving the approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects, I accessed the website of one of the large universities of the city where potential participants that fulfill the criteria set forth can be located. After identifying an initial family who met the criteria for participation, a formal e-mail was sent to both parents to invite them to participate. The e-mail provided a detailed description of the purpose of the study, and listed the necessary contact information. After the participants agreed to volunteer, they were interviewed.

**The Güralp Family**

The participants of this case study are members of one single Turkish immigrant family living in a residential suburb of a city in Western Pennsylvania. According to the 2009-2013 American Community Survey of this city, which included only the responses of people 5 years and older, the percentage of the population that reported speaking a language other than English was 9.8%. The survey did not provide details about the languages spoken, however, according to the first ancestry reported in the survey, an estimated population of 390 people with an error margin of +/-138 reported a Turkish ancestry in this particular city. During the interview with the parents, they indicated that they lived in a big city at a Midwestern state before they moved to this residential suburb.

All members of the family speak Turkish as their heritage language; the children have lower Turkish language proficiency than their parents do. More information on the language preferences of the family is explained in more details in Chapter Four.
Demographic information of all the participants is illustrated in the Table 1. Pseudonyms were used for the participants in order to protect their identities. Also, ages were given as ranges when they were not specified.

Table 1

*Participant Demographic Information*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Country of Birth</th>
<th>Educational Level</th>
<th>Length of Stay in the United States (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emre Güralp</td>
<td>40-45</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ash Güralp</td>
<td>40-45</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zeynep Güralp</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rana Güralp</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beste Güralp</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>Preschool</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Collection: Semi-structured Interviews

Turner (2010) explains the interview as one of the popular areas of interest in qualitative research design, since it offers in-depth information regarding participants’ experiences and opinions about a specific issue. In addition, as stated by Creswell (2012), an interview “occurs when researchers ask one or more participants general, open-ended questions and record their answers. The researcher then transcribes and types the data into a computer file for analysis” (p. 217). Likewise, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) pointed out that,

Interviews in this sense range from the formal interview in which set questions are asked and the answers recorded on a standardized schedule through less formal interviews in which the interviewer is free to modify the sequence of
questions, change the wording, explain them or add to them to the completely informal interview where the interviewer may have a number of key issues which he or she raises in conversational style instead of having a set questionnaire. (p. 351)

The purpose of an interview, as Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) mentioned, may be to evaluate or assess a person in some respect, select or promote an employee, affect therapeutic change, test or develop hypotheses, gather data and sample respondents’ opinions. To that end, Cohen et al. (2007) see interviews as, “enabling participants – be they interviewers or interviewees – to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live, and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view” (p. 349).

Semi-structured interviews were used in this study for the parents and their children. Semi-structured interviews consist of a set of pre-determined questions but allow the flexibility of adding additional follow-up questions to answers in order to probe for further information (Perry, 2011).

Each question is carefully designed to deliver answers to my research questions as demonstrated in Table 2 and Table 3 below.
Table 2

*Interview Questions Design - Parents*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research questions</th>
<th>Interview questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. What are the attitudes of the Turkish-American immigrant parents and their children in this study towards learning Turkish as a heritage language? | • Why do you like your child to learn and speak Turkish?  
• Do you think that speaking Turkish facilitates your child’s language maintenance or constructing their ethnic identity? How?  
• What language do you use dominantly with your child?  
• How would you identify your child’s cultural identity? And would you do anything to enhance/change it? |
| 2. Why do the Turkish-American immigrant parents in this study want their children to learn Turkish? | • Why do you like your child to learn and speak Turkish?  
• Do you think that speaking Turkish facilitates your child’s language maintenance or constructing their ethnic identity? How? |
| 3. How do these parents see themselves facilitating the use of Turkish in their home? | • How do facilitate your child(ren)’s Turkish language learning?  
• Do you ask your child to speak Turkish at home or around Turkish people?  
• What language do you use dominantly with your child?  
• Have you ever been or visited Turkey with your child? And how do you think this affected your child’s Turkish language maintenance? |
### Table 3

**Interview Questions Design – Children**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research questions</th>
<th>Interview questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. What are the attitudes of the Turkish-American immigrant parents and their children in this study towards learning Turkish as a heritage language? | • Which language do you like to use with your friends? What languages do your friends speak?  
• Which language do you like to use with your family?  
• Do your parents ask you to speak Turkish with them or with other Turkish people? Can you give me an example?  
• Do you think you need to learn or speak Turkish?  
• Why do you think your parents want you to learn or speak Turkish?  
• How would you think about yourself as a language speaker? Can you give me an example?  
• Have you been to Turkey? (If yes) What was it like there for you? Can you give me an example? |
| 2. Why do the Turkish-American immigrant parents in this study want their children to learn Turkish? | • Do your parents ask you to speak Turkish with them or with other Turkish people? Can you give me an example?  
• Do your parents ask you to speak Turkish with them or with other Turkish people? Can you give me an example?  
• Why do you think your parents want you to learn or speak Turkish? |
| 3. How do these parents see themselves facilitating the use of Turkish in their home? | • How did you learn Turkish?  
• Do your parents ask you to speak Turkish with them or with other Turkish people? Can you give me an example?  
• Do your parents ask you to speak Turkish with them or with other Turkish people? Can you give me an example? |
This qualitative study approach affords me an opportunity to look closely at this case and uncover opinions, perceptions, and perspectives. Thus, in addition to the main set of questions, follow-up questions were asked when the participants could not fully comprehend the question or when they needed a restatement. Interviews are effective in that they provide an opportunity to follow-up to the answers provided and clarify any ambiguous points for the participant.

Before the interviews, the participants were fully informed about the process of the study, my motives, and the purpose of the research. The adult participants chose the time and place for the interview and were reminded that their answers would remain confidential. After explaining the level of privacy, each participant was able to choose a pseudonym to use during the study. The parents were provided with the informed consent forms for their signature, while the children were provided with assent forms. Consent forms for adults and assent forms for children were provided in both Turkish and English for participant’s choices. The interviews were audio-recorded after the interviewees granted permission to document the proceedings. The participants had freedom to withdraw from the study at any point.

The questions were designed in order for the parents and their children to express their feelings and opinions, and the participants were encouraged to answer the questions from their own perspective. The interview with the parents was in Turkish, while the children chose to be interviewed in English. First the parents were interviewed; this interview lasted about 30 minutes. Since the children were below the age of 18, they were considered minors and were interviewed with the presence of their parents in the room.
where the interview took place. The interview with all three children lasted about 15 minutes.

The participants’ responses were transcribed digitally into a computer-based database. Upon completion of the transcription and the translation of each interview, based on the participants’ data, a coding system was developed in order to classify the outcomes of the interviews. Details of the coding system are provided in Tables 4 through 8.

**Procedures for Data Analysis**

Using the data set that was collected through the semi-structured interviews, along with the information gleaned from the review of literature, I have analyzed the findings in relation to my research questions. Data analysis, according to Cohen et al. (2007), is “accounting for and explaining the data; in short, making sense of data in terms of the participants’ definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities” (p. 461).

**Transcribing the Interviews**

After the interviews with both the parents and their children, I reviewed the audio-recordings with computer software (Audacity), and since the interviews were mostly in Turkish, I was not able to use a “qualitative data analysis computer program” (Creswell, 2012), because these kinds of programs are designed for English recordings. Before transcribing my data, I used the “Noise Removal” feature of the software so that I could clear the background noise from the interviews. Since the data set will not be analyzed on the phonological level and because it is easier to read, I used a broad level of transcription to transcribe the audio recordings of the interviews; I listened to the
recording several times while typing the conversations in a word document. After finishing the transcription, I saved the transcribed text in my personal computer for the next step: data coding.

**Data Coding System**

Creswell (2012) defined coding as the process of dividing and classifying text to outline descriptions and large themes in the data. I read the transcribed interviews several times in order to identify key points, patterns, and themes within the research questions.

The coding system was designed to help illustrate three main objectives which reflect the three research questions of this case study: (1) find out about the opinions and feelings of the parents and their children regarding learning and speaking Turkish as a heritage language, (2) explore the reasons for these opinions and feelings, (3) determine the strategies used by the parents in order to facilitate heritage language learning within this particular context and the possible challenges they might encounter. To that end, as I was analyzing the data, a number of codes were developed from the data from both interviews, which are identified in tables 5 through 8, and then these codes were grouped in four themes.

Later on, themes were documented during the revision of the interview transcriptions, which were then analyzed and synthesized by comparing and evaluating each element in regards to the research questions being used to guide this inquiry. The relationship of the themes to the research questions is presented in Table 4.
Table 4

*Research Questions and Corresponding Themes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Themes from Interview Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What are the attitudes of the Turkish-American immigrant parents and their children in this study towards learning Turkish as a heritage language?</td>
<td>1. Attitudes towards Turkish Heritage Language Learning and Speaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Why do the Turkish-American immigrant parents in this study want their children to learn Turkish?</td>
<td>2. Turkish Heritage Language and Cultural Identity Maintenance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 3. How do these parents see themselves facilitating the use of Turkish in their home? | 3. Code-switching and Code-mixing  
4. Challenges of Facilitating Learning the Heritage Language |

As noted, each theme consists of multiple related codes. These are also illustrated in the tables below.

Any utterance of both parents and/or their children that included information on the feelings, opinions and perceptions regarding learning and speaking Turkish heritage language at home or outside the home context, and the reason for holding these opinions or feelings were categorized under the first theme. Table 5 below illustrates the theme and the associated codes.
Table 5

Theme 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes towards Turkish Heritage Language Learning and Speaking</td>
<td>1. Attitudes of the Immigrant Parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Attitudes of the Immigrant Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Grounds for Maintaining the Heritage Language</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following theme, which is presented in Table 6, includes any utterance of both parents and/or their children regarding the parents’ efforts or strategies on maintaining Turkish heritage language and the examples related to Turkish complex cultural identity formation of the children.

Table 6

Theme 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turkish Heritage Language and Cultural Identity Maintenance</td>
<td>1. Parent’s Efforts in Heritage Language Maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Turkish Complex Cultural Identity Formation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information including examples of code-switching, code-mixing and the participants’ language choices was analyzed under the third theme which is exhibited below in Table 7.
Table 7
**Theme 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. In which occasions do children usually code-switch?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, any utterance that describes the challenges or difficulties encountered by the participants in terms of learning, speaking or maintaining Turkish heritage language is included in the fourth theme below in Table 8.

Table 8
**Theme 4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Challenges of Facilitating Learning the Heritage Language</td>
<td>1. School Support and Community Contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. The Immigration Dilemma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Additional Factors and Limitations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Validating the Findings**

As cited in Creswell (2012), “validating findings means that the researcher determines the accuracy or credibility of the findings through strategies such as member checking or triangulation” (p. 259).

The coding system was validated by using what Creswell (2012) terms “external audit,” which is defined as hiring or obtaining the services of a person outside of the study to conduct an in-depth review of the study and to provide written feedback or evaluation of the strong and weak aspects of the study. This can be accomplished by a
person who has the same educational, linguistic and cultural level as the researcher. This process may occur both during and at the end of a study.

In my case study, after transcribing the audio recordings of the interviews and removing the information that leads to identification of the participants, a multilingual speaker of Turkish and English, who shares the same educational and cultural background with the participants was asked to read the full transcriptions and decide if they would employ the same codes. And considered the validity of the code, they found that the codes reflected the data.

**Translation**

The parents preferred to be interviewed in Turkish, and there was code-switching between Turkish and English during the interviews with both the parents and the children. The Turkish parts of the transcription were translated into English for the ease of the English readers, and then they were checked by the same person who validated the coding system at an earlier stage.

Finally, representation of the research findings was followed to provide answers to the research questions, and described thoroughly in Chapter Four.

**Summary of the Chapter**

This chapter described the qualitative research methodology of this study, in particular the interview design, the site of the study, the selection of the sample population, the process for data collection and finally the data analysis. The study consisted of the audio-recorded semi-structured interviews of the volunteer participants, which took place in November 2014. Chapter Four will analyze and report the data that was obtained from this case study.
CHAPTER FOUR
RESULTS AND FINDINGS

In this chapter, I present the results of this case study based on the data set that was collected through semi-structured interviews with the participating Turkish-American family during November 2014. Interviews were conducted with both the parents and their children. The total length of both interviews was around 45 minutes, and the word count was around 4700 words. While the language choice for the parents, Aslı and Emre, was Turkish, the children, Zeynep, Rana and Beste, chose to be interviewed in English. However, since the three children were interviewed with the presence of their parents, there were moments when one or both of the parents made some comments in Turkish; as a result, the children were code-switching between English and Turkish towards the end of the interview.

During the interviews I asked general questions regarding the background of the family and the time of immigration to the United States, the history of the heritage language learning, language preference at home and in the presence of other Turkish community members, whether they have visited Turkey with their children, the influence of these visits on the heritage language development of the children, and the attitudes of the parents and their children towards learning and speaking Turkish as a heritage language. Participants were asked to provide several examples in order to elucidate their answers to each question.

Findings from Interview Data

The findings of this case study are organized to provide an answer for each of the research questions directly, under the four major themes that emerged in the data analysis
process: (1) attitudes towards Turkish heritage language learning and speaking, (2) Turkish heritage language and cultural identity maintenance, (3) code-switching and code-mixing, and (4) challenges of facilitating learning and speaking the heritage language. Table 4 below, which is repeated in Chapter Three, demonstrates the three research questions of this case study and the corresponding themes.

Table 4

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<td>2. Turkish Heritage Language and Cultural Identity Maintenance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Direct quotes from the participants and their translations are offered to support the findings of each theme.
Attitudes towards Turkish Heritage Language Learning and Speaking

Attitudes of the Immigrant Parents

Both Aslı and Emre demonstrated positive attitudes towards learning and speaking Turkish as their heritage language at home. They expressed this attitude by stating that they usually do not start a conversation with their children in English. The parents said that even when their children choose to speak in English from time to time, parents try to continue speaking in Turkish at home. Aslı specified that the family spoke only Turkish from the time the twins were born, and until they began school at the age of 4. Emre illustrated,

Before they start attending school, I mean Rana and Zeynep, we were always speaking Turkish at home. I mean they were speaking well at that time, but since they started attending school, when they were around 4, and because they are twins, they always speak English to each other. I mean most of the time, generally but not always, we speak Turkish to them. (Interview, 11/9/14)

Emre also stated that he wished his children were able to learn their heritage language better than they do now, and he expressed this as “shameful” as he added,
I do not know if Turkish would be useful for them as a usage, but I think that it is good for them to know Turkish better. Aslı’s sister, for example, improved her Turkish because she spent her summers in Turkey, though she was born here. I mean it would be good if our children’s Turkish was better because whenever we go to Turkey, for three or four weeks, they can’t speak that much, they don’t know the words. Of course we tried some stuff, like we read some book, but it doesn’t work, everything is happening at home. (Interview, 11/9/14)

**Attitudes of the Immigrant Children**

Similar to their parents, the children had positive attitudes towards their heritage language and they stated that “it would be cool” and “interesting” if they had the opportunity to learn Turkish at school. When I asked them why they wanted to learn their heritage language at school, Zeynep said that they cannot read and speak in Turkish as fluently as they do in English.

However, their father, Emre, indicated that his children prefer to speak in English because they are used to it from school, and because it comes “naturally”. When I asked
if they were speaking in Turkish all the time at home, Emre said that it depends on the topic that they are discussing. He clarified that whenever they talked about complicated topics that the children could not understand in Turkish, they felt the need to switch to English. Additionally, he stated that he and his wife switched to English sometimes because their children responded in English, so it came automatically.

Nevertheless, the children expressed similar attitudes towards both Turkish and English. For example, when I asked the twins “which language do you prefer to use at home?” Rana replied by saying, “I don’t really have a preference.” Moreover, Zeynep explained that it depends on the situation:

Sometimes it is English and sometimes it is Turkish, like it depends. For instance, when I’m arguing with my mom, then I use English, and then sometimes when we are just talking, then we just use Turkish, sometimes English, it changes. (Original Language Transcription, Interview, 11/9/14)

More to the point, Zeynep and Rana stated that they speak English all the time with their Turkish speaking friends and even with their relatives who live in the United States. However, they were aware of the fact that their parents would not like them to do so. When I asked the twins “If you were in Turkey with these Turkish speaking friends that you are speaking English with while you are here, would you speak Turkish with them?,” Zeynep answered this by providing an example:

I don’t know. It kinda depends on what they do, but I don’t, I mean we might, but I don’t think we would. Like for example, we went with our cousins like we met our cousins and they speak Turkish, like their parents also taught them but we
speak English with them there, and our parents get mad. (Original Language Transcription, Interview, 11/9/14)

Likewise, when I asked the twins about their feelings regarding speaking Turkish as their heritage language, Zeynep said,

It just feels like English, I don’t have to translate it in my head or think about it.

(Original Language Transcription, Interview, 11/9/14)

Then Rana added,

But then sometimes there are words that we can’t think of them. (Original Language Transcription, Interview, 11/9/14)

Grounds for Maintaining the Heritage Language

Aslı and Emre disclosed a strong desire for their children to learn Turkish. Emre listed the following reasons for this desire:

We have our family. My family, my sister, I mean my sister is also married, she has a child, too, they live in Turkey, my mother and father are also living in Turkey, our extended family, Aslı’s family, I mean all the extended family is living in Turkey. This is the first reason. The second reason is because we want them to
learn it as our heritage. The third reason, of course, as they live here we want them to become close to other Turkish people. (Interview, 11/9/14)

In addition to Emre’s desire to sustain his children’s communication with the extended family and immigrant community members, and to preserve the children’s Turkish heritage, Aslı added one more for her children’s Turkish learning; she said that it might be useful for a child to learn two languages simultaneously, in terms of learning additional languages in the future. Aslı stated that growing up as bilingual might affect the way that the brain functions in a positive manner.

As for the children, they also listed some reasons for why it is essential to learn their heritage language. For example, Rana asserted that she thinks Turkish is valuable “because I am Turkish and we have relatives and I wanna talk Turkish to them,” and she continued by saying, “it also feels really good knowing another language, what if I wanna move to Turkey or something?.”

**Turkish Heritage Language and Cultural Identity Maintenance**

**Parents’ Efforts in Heritage Language Maintenance**

During the interview with the parents, visiting the home country was an issue that came up very frequently. The family used to visit Turkey during the summer months. Aslı stated that the children learned to speak Turkish at home, and the times when they were in Turkey had a great impact on improving the children’s Turkish proficiency. Emre also added that his children use Turkish more commonly when they are in Turkey and after they return to the United States. Aslı explained the importance of visiting Turkey:
Every visit we make to Turkey is being a big improvement. For example, last year, my young daughter never spoke, I mean, she refused to speak Turkish. She wasn’t speaking Turkish last year. Then we went to Turkey, I stayed a little bit longer, I mean two and a half month, she started to speak Turkish. Now this year she speaks a little bit and answers in Turkish. These kinds of visits to Turkey are being useful. (Interview, 11/9/14)

Aslı then addressed her youngest daughter, who was present in the room during the interview by saying,

Beste was speaking Turkish very well when we came back from Turkey, weren’t you Beste? (Interview, 11/9/14)

Further, Aslı stated that she and her husband usually do not want the children to watch television a lot, but when they are in Turkey, they encourage their children to watch television all day long. She said that watching television is very important in terms of improving the children’s Turkish language and also because they do not have access to Turkish channels in the United States. Another example provided by Aslı was that the
twins were watching some Turkish television shows while they were in Turkey. She said that the twins now watch these shows from the internet because they saw them earlier during their last visit to Turkey.

Although the whole family went to Turkey together last summer, the father, Emre, and one of the twins, Zeynep, had to return to the United States earlier. Aslı stayed longer in Turkey with Rana and Beste. Aslı commented on this by saying that she noticed a great improvement in Rana’s Turkish compared to her twin, because she stayed longer in Turkey.

A further example was provided by Aslı from her younger sister. First Emre mentioned his wife’s younger sister, who improved her Turkish only by spending the summer vacations in Turkey. Aslı presented more details regarding her sister’s experience:

Kız kardeşim burda doğdu burda büyüdü, ve uzun süre, yani dokuz on yaşına kadar hiç Türkiyeye gitmedi. Dokuz on yaşına geldikten sonra, her yaz okul biterdi annem onu uçağa koyardı Türkiyeye giderdi okula başlamadan bir gün evvel gelirdi. Kardeşim şimdi yani çok uzun süre onunla Türkçe konuşman lazım anlayabilmek için onun orda büyümediğini. (Original Language Transcription, Interview, 11/9/14)

My younger sister was born and grew up here, and she never visited Turkey for a long time, I mean until she was 9 or 10. When she was 9 or 10 years old, my mother took her to Turkey every summer vacation after the classes end, and they came back the day before the classes begin. You have to speak a while with my
young sister in order to understand that she did not grow up in Turkey.

(Interview, 11/9/14)

Aslı confirmed that her sister’s Turkish was not that good before she started visiting Turkey. Yet, her Turkish has improved, and she has no accent as Zeynep and Rana have.

Besides the home country visits, the parents talked about some of their attempts to maintain Turkish language use at home. For instance, when I asked the parents whether they have forced their children to speak in Turkish when they showed resistance to the language, Aslı listed some of her past experiences with her children:

Tabii zorladık. Ben mesela istediğini vermedim Türkçe söylemezse, ondan sonra şey denemistiim, sessiz olmayı denemistim mesela sanki söylediğini hiç duymuyormuş gibi davranışlar, ya cevap vermiyorsun ya seni duymuyorum anlamıyor, ondan sonra işte Türkçe söylemezsen alamazsin bufuscated text. (Original Language Transcription, Interview, 11/9/14)

Of course we forced them. For example I remember that I did not give them what they want unless they speak in Turkish, then I tried to stay silent as if I am not hearing what they are saying at all, or pretend that I do not understand or say that you will not get it if you do not say it in Turkish. We experienced such things a lot. (Interview, 11/9/14)

Emre also added that even though the children mostly understand what has been said in Turkish, they reply in English.
**Turkish Complex Cultural Identity Formation**

Regarding the children’s cultural identity, Aslı defined her children as “Turkish-Americans.” She pointed out that the Turkish culture is closely linked to religion, and that religious occasions such as feasts or Bayram are considered to be very important representations of the Turkish culture. However, she said that even though they tried to celebrate these occasions in the past, they could not continue these traditions for a longer time. Emre associated this with the fact that there is not a big Turkish community where they are living now. Emre explained that they used to have more Turkish friends when they were living in a bigger city ten years ago. He added that the Turkish students’ organizations were not arranging too many cultural events, and the fact that those organizations mostly consisted of graduate students; these students failed to create a long-lasting Turkish community or Turkish culture in that city. Emre associated this failure to the fact that graduate students stay for at most five or six years, which cannot offer the stability and the permanency that are needed for a long-lasting immigrant community in the city where they live.

Emre agreed with his wife when he stated that his children are not aware of so many Turkish cultural elements “biz o kadar bunun üzerinde durmadığımız için,” “because we did not pay attention to that.” He explained that, Onların yaşadığı şey, yazları gidiyoruz, bir de bizden gördükleri bizden duydukları, falan. Yani tam kültürü, ne şekilde olduğunu tam bilmiyorlar aslında, yani tarihi o kadar iyi bilmiyorlar. Mesela müziğini hadi biraz biz Türk müziğini dinliyoruz diye biliyorlar ama Türk sanat müziği bilmezler Türk halk müziği bilmezler vesaire. (Original Language Transcription, Interview, 11/9/14)
What they are experiencing as a culture is from their summer visits to Turkey, what they see or hear from us. I mean, in fact, they do not know the culture very well; they do not know the history. They know the music because we listen but they do not know Turkish art music or Turkish folk music, etc. (Interview, 11/9/14)

Both parents stated that this Turkish cultural identity may be lost gradually within a few generations if their children continue to live in the United States. However, they both agreed that the Turkish identity loss may be slower if their children marry Turkish persons in the future. Otherwise, within a few generations, the children may say, as Aslı phrased, “My grandmother was from Turkey.”

Furthermore, Emre indicated that a culture is shaped by the people one meets at school or at work, and by relatives. Since Zeynep, Rana and Beste do not have many Turkish speaking friends, and their access to the Turkish community is limited, Emre thinks that it is difficult to preserve their cultural identity:

Yani sonuçta yani burda büyüyorlar burda kalacaklarına göre, yani onlar Amerikalı olaraklar belki birkaç tane jenerasyon sonra. Yani belki onlarda Türkiyenin etkileri var, tabii onların üzerinde bizim şuandaki jenerasyon olarak, ama büyüdüklerinde, şimdi eğer onlar burda kalır evlenirler çocukları falan olursa, o yavaş yavaş yani yok olacaktır. (Original Language Transcription, Interview, 11/9/14)

I mean eventually, they are growing up here, and since they will stay here, they will become Americans, maybe after a couple of generations. I mean they may have some influence from Turkey, I mean because of our generation, but when
they get older, if they stay here and get married and have children, that [Turkish identity] will get lost slowly. (Interview, 11/9/14)

Emre clarified that even if they were living in a big city and were surrounded by many Turkish people, he does not expect his daughters to be like children who grew up in Turkey in terms of their cultural identity and cultural awareness. He assumed that the only difference might be higher Turkish language proficiency:

Mesela Türkiyede yaşasaydık biz, onlar,…, on yaşındalar, ondan sonra gelmiş olsaydık buraya, en azından buraya da tamam buraya ayak uydurabilirlerdi, …, ama Türkiye kültüründen büyük bir parça olmuş olacaklardı, orda okula gitmiş olacaklardı ordaki şeylerı görmüş olacaklardı. Yani mesela, şimdi söleyeyim, Rana ile Zeynep otursa burda, ya Türkiyede bu şöyle yapılıyor, Türkiyede böyle yapılıyor dese, onların söyleme şeyi aslında o gittikleri tatillerden veya bizimle konuşmalarından geliyor yani, onların kendi uzun bir şekilde bunların tecrübesi yok. (Original Language Transcription, Interview, 11/9/14)

For example, if we were living in Turkey, they are 10 years old now, if we came here after that, at least, ok, they could have fit into here, but they would have been a huge part of the Turkish culture, because they would have attended school there, they could have experienced living there. I mean for example, let me state it this way, if Rana and Zeynep sit here and explain, this is like this in Turkey, what they are saying would be what they have seen during the summer vacations and and from our talking with them, I mean that they do not have a long cultural experience. (Interview, 11/9/14)
Code-switching and Code-mixing

As multilingual individuals, the Güralp family has varied ways of using Turkish and English. While the parents said that they were trying to speak the heritage language most of the time to each other and with their children, their children answered them in English. As a result, Aslı said that they unconsciously found themselves speaking in English from time to time:

Ne yazık ki son yıllarda hani isteğimizin dışında da olsa ingilizce konuşurken buluyoruz kendimizi çocuklarla. (Original Language Transcription, Interview, 11/9/14)

Unfortunately, in the last years, we find ourselves unwillingly speaking in English with the children. (Interview, 11/9/14)

Aslı added that living in the United States also affects the parents’ Turkish language. She noted that even while speaking Turkish, they might use English vocabulary from time to time, without being aware of it. As well, she stated that even in Turkey, the language is changing and the influence of English is increasing among the younger generation with the growing use of computers and technology.

Challenges of Facilitating Learning the Heritage Language

Regarding the experiences of the family in terms of their heritage language maintenance, Emre expressed his sadness by saying that “biz sınıfta kaldık yani kesin,” “we certainly failed” in terms of teaching the children their heritage language. Yet, Aslı said that they have tried their best to facilitate their children’s Turkish learning. She said that she had many Turkish books that were brought from Turkey, but their children showed no interest or desire to read these books:
Denedik yani biz elimizden geleni yaptık canım yani. Ya çok uzun zaman ben bayramlarda falan öyle yapmaya çalıştım. Kitap mesela, bu sene Türkiyeye gitmeden evvel hadi Türkçe kitaplar var bir sürü gönderip duruyorlardı Türkiyeden, oturup her gün bir saat bir hikaye okuyalım mesela küçük hikayeler çocuklar için falan, ondan sonra söylüyorum, ama o oraya gidiyor o oraya gidiyor, o işim var diyor, bu işim var diyor, bir türlü oturup, bir de kalabalık bir aileyiz ya.

(Original Language Transcription, Interview, 11/9/14)

We tried, I mean we did our best. I tried, for a long time, during the feasts I tried to do so. For example books, this year before we go to Turkey, we have a lot of books in Turkish, they are sending us these books from Turkey, these books are all short stories for kids. For example when I say let's read these books for one hour, one of the kids goes here, the other goes there, the other says I have stuff to do, we never sit and read, and we are also a crowded family. (Interview, 11/9/14)

Lack of Educational Support and Community Contact

One of the main challenges that the Güralp family experiences is that their home is the only place for the children to learn and speak Turkish. Both parents expressed the need of educational support for their children’s heritage language.

Also, the parents indicated how difficult it is to speak in Turkish while helping the children with their assignments. Emre asserted that they unwillingly switch to English when they are working with their children on their homework assignments:

Bir de şimdi işin zor taraflarından biri ders çalışmak oluyor, yani onlarla oturup ders çalıştık mı ingilizce oluyor, tabii okulda, o zamanlarda zor oluyor yani. O yüzden hani daha çok ingilizce konuşulmuş oluyor. Genel şeylerde de mesela, biz
Additionally, one of the difficult things is studying. I mean, once we study with them it is in English, of course in school, I mean it is difficult. As a result, we use English more. And in general cases, if we speak Turkish with them, they mostly respond to us in English. (Interview, 11/9/14)

Though both parents wished that their children had the chance to learn Turkish at school, Aslı said that this is not possible until the children go to university.

The Immigration Dilemma

Another issue that came out during the interview was the conflict that the parents felt towards the heritage language learning and speaking. In relation to this, Emre provided the following example:

Evden çocuğun giderse hani, seni hergün arar bir süre sonra aramamaya başlar hani, bir taraftan bir burukluk yaşarsın, ama diğer taraftan da dersin ki tamam kendi hayatını kurmaya başladı. Onun için aynı onun gibi, hani Türkçe ile İngilizce arasındaki hani, bir taraftan Türkçe şey ama burdaki şeyleri artık burda yaşayacaklarsa buraya uyum sağlayacaklarsa, çünkü hani göçmen olarak her zaman insannın içinde bir burukluk oluyor. (Original Language Transcription, Interview, 11/9/14)

If your child leaves your home, s/he will call you every day then s/he will stop calling you after a while. You may feel upset about it but then you would say that s/he has a life now. Turkish is like this, I mean the same dilemma between Turkish and English, you want them to learn Turkish, on the other hand, they are
going to live here and get adapted. As an immigrant you will always have this sourness inside. (Interview, 11/9/14)

Additional Factors and Limitations

Finally, some other factors were reported by the parents that were believed to limit the children’s heritage language learning and the parents’ efforts in maintaining the language. Aslı expressed the fact that having three children is a challenge for her to spend time with each daughter in order to teach and speak the language. Aslı said that she wanted to teach her children the heritage language by reading some Turkish books, but Emre indicated that “it consumes a lot of time and effort” because the language is unsupported in school.

Moreover, although the twins, Zeynep and Rana, did not show resistance to Turkish before they attended school, they tend to speak English with each other; as a result, the youngest child, Beste, had less access and exposure to the heritage language and was not able to practice it with her older siblings.

Summary of the Chapter

The data set collected from the interviews was presented in this chapter under four main categories. First, both the parents and the children revealed positive attitudes towards learning and speaking Turkish as their heritage language. Both the children and their parents stated their desire to support the children’s Turkish language maintenance by school support.

Second, the parents indicated that visiting the home country had a great influence on their children’s heritage language development and their cultural identity construction. The mother participant referred to the different strategies that she used to facilitate her
children’s heritage language learning, but they were not as effective as spending the summers in Turkey.

Third, the family’s language preferences and the occasions of code-switching between Turkish and English were discussed. The parents provided many examples and reasons for code-switching to English with their children at home.

Finally, the challenges of facilitating the heritage language learning and speaking were examined. Many issues such as the lack of school support, limited immigrant community contact, and time limitations were reported by parents as the difficulties that prevented them from maintaining their children’s heritage language.
CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter aims to present the general findings of this case study based on the following research questions that were attempted to be answered during this inquiry:

1. What are the attitudes of the Turkish-American immigrant parents and their children in this study towards learning Turkish as a heritage language?

2. Why do the Turkish-American immigrant parents in this study want their children to learn Turkish?

3. How do these parents see themselves facilitating the use of Turkish in their home?

The current findings from Chapter Four are mainly descriptive and not conclusive for the entire population of Turkish-American immigrants in the United States; therefore, in addition to the implications of this case study, the limitations and further recommendations are offered in this chapter. Moreover, the data analysis shows the connection between the findings and the existing literature I presented in Chapter Two. Thus, I organized my findings around the themes I summarized from the current data set.

Summary of the Study

As the number of immigrants to the United States is continuously increasing, the number of individuals who speak a second language at home is growing year by year; therefore, research on heritage language is getting more attention. As the dominance of one language over the other might be possible in some cases (Vetere, 2013), issues such as maintenance of the heritage language and the cultural identity become central concerns for the immigrant parents.
Although several studies focused on the Turkish immigrants in the United States in terms of their heritage language and cultural identity maintenance practices (Isik-Ercan, 2012; Kaya, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2009; Otcu, 2009, 2010, 2014), these studies have been conducted predominantly on families who live in large metropolitan areas and support their children’s heritage language learning either by heritage language schools, private tutoring or immigrant community contact. Hence, this case study aimed to explore the heritage language maintenance issues within a family in which the parents were the only source to learn the heritage language and where the home was the only place to practice it.

This case study was designed as a pilot study for a larger research study concerning learning Turkish as a Heritage language and cultural identity maintenance within the home context. To answer the research questions, a case study approach was adopted and semi-structured interviews with the parents and the children of the participating Turkish-American immigrant family were utilized. One family was identified using the criterion sampling method. To ensure inclusive collection of data, the interviews were audio-recorded, and the recordings were transcribed, coded and translated into English, respectively.

**Discussion of Major Findings**

As discussed in Chapter Three, the themes recognized from the interview data were categorized according to the research questions. The following table, which appears in Chapter Three and Four, presents these questions and the corresponding themes.
Table 4

Research Questions and Corresponding Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Themes from Interview Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What are the attitudes of the Turkish-American immigrant parents and their children in this study towards learning Turkish as a heritage language?</td>
<td>1. Attitudes towards Turkish Heritage Language Learning and Speaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Why do the Turkish-American immigrant parents in this study want their children to learn Turkish?</td>
<td>2. Turkish Heritage Language and Cultural Identity Maintenance</td>
</tr>
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</table>

As a result, the findings of this study are discussed below according to the research questions that they answer.

Q1: What are the attitudes of the Turkish-American immigrant parents and their children in this study towards learning Turkish as a heritage language?

As the maintenance or loss of the heritage language depends on many factors, such as personal motivation, ethnic pride, school and community support of the heritage language, parental support and involvement were identified as the most important factor related to successful maintenance of the heritage language because it starts at home. Parents are the first and main source of heritage language for immigrant children (Brown, 2011). As a result, the parental attitudes shape the children’s heritage language development and their perceptions of themselves as heritage language speakers.
During the interviews, both the parents and the children of the Güralp family illustrated their positive feelings towards learning and speaking Turkish as a heritage language. The parents confirmed these attitudes by providing several examples of their insistence to speak Turkish with their children. These results were consistent with the findings of previous studies (Becker, 2013; Brown, 2011; De Fina, 2012; Endo, 2013; Hashimoto & Lee, 2011; Lee, 2013; Martin, 2009; McCabe, 2014; Mirici et al, 2013; Park, 2013; Park & Sarkar, 2007).

In this case study, both parents expressed their concern over the Turkish proficiency of their children, and they also perceive that their children speak Turkish with an accent. In addition, they revealed their wish to maintain Turkish as a heritage language by school support and immigrant community contact.

While the parents expressed their positive attitudes towards Turkish HL maintenance, the children, who have learned Turkish at home from their parents in the United States and from their summer visits to Turkey, also expressed that they would like to learn their heritage language better and wished that it was supported by their school. Jean and Geva (2012) reported similar positive opinions regarding learning the heritage language by the immigrant children. In the interviews, both the children and their parents stated that they do not believe that the children speak in Turkish with other Turkish speaking individuals in the United States, nor do they believe that the children start their conversations in Turkish at home.

However, the interview data showed that the parents perceived their children’s language behavior in a different way than the children did. For example, while Rana stated that she has no language preference between Turkish and English, her twin,
Zeynep, stated that her preference depends on the situation. Krashen (1998) terms this as *language shyness*. He defines it as the ability to speak the heritage language fairly well but not perfectly by the heritage language speaker.

Considering the limited time of the interviews, the only data set regarding the language preference of the family in general, and the children in particular, was obtained from the interviews. In other words, individual perceptions do not reflect reality, and it is important to keep in mind that these perceptions of the parents and their children, as revealed from the interview, could be different if observations and recordings of the daily interaction and communication of this family in the home environment were available.

One of the major findings of this case study implies that the children’s understanding of how much Turkish they produce is considerably different from the parents’ understanding. This is because the parents have different expectations of their children’s Turkish linguistic and cultural identity. Since the parents have certain expectation of their children’s heritage language, this might influence their perceptions of their children’s language choices and code-switching.

Moreover, the parents identified their children differently than the children identified themselves. For example, the parents referred to their children’s cultural identity as “Turkish-Americans” while one of the twins, Rana, identified herself as “Turkish” as she stated her reasons for learning and speaking Turkish as a heritage language.

During the interviews with the children, their parents were present in the room and they were commenting on some of their children’s answers. I noticed that whenever the parents started speaking in Turkish, the children switched to Turkish. Nevertheless,
earlier during the interview, Emre noted that this might be a result of my presence as a Turkish speaking person in their home rather than being an unaware language preference. This would seem to imply that the parents think that their children do not speak Turkish usually, which might not be the case.

Furthermore, the children seemed to recognize themselves as emerging bilinguals of Turkish and English while their parents perceived the children as unbalanced bilinguals who tend to speak more English because of their adult presupposed kind of position of the ideal HL speakers. This difference of perspectives is a significant result that should be further investigated in the future.

An additional interesting point made by Emre was his feelings as an immigrant parent towards his children’s unbalanced bilingualism. He stated that immigrant parents never feel contented as their children will be drifting away from their language and culture. Nesteruk and Marks (2011) expressed this as “[u]sing their dual frame of reference, immigrants continuously compare the contexts of living in the U.S. with those of their countries of origin” (p. 822). Likewise, McCabe (2014) in her dissertation study on “Parental experiences with children’s heritage language maintenance and loss” reported that immigrant parents highly value heritage language learning, in general, but they do not see its future practical use for their children.

**Q2: Why do the Turkish-American immigrant parents in this study want their children to learn Turkish?**

As English rapidly becomes the dominant and even the only language for immigrant children, there are important motivations for heritage speakers to have opportunities to better learn their heritage language (Chhuon, 2011). In this case study,
both parents demonstrated positive views regarding learning and speaking Turkish at their home. Emre Güralp listed a number of reasons for these views. These reasons were mainly (1) the ability to communicate with the extended family and relatives in Turkey, (2) the fact that Turkish is their heritage language, and (3) his desire for his children to get closer to the Turkish immigrant community in the United States. Aslı agreed with her husband and added her belief of growing up as bilingual may be useful for learning additional languages in the future as a fourth reason. These reasons are parallel with the findings of Park and Sarkar (2007). Additionally, Kang (2013) summarizes these reasons as,

Korean-immigrant parents’ intention to pass on the Korean language to their American-born children and raise them bilingually is, at least in part, derived from multiple underlying forces: their perception of language as an identity marker, their language barrier in the host country and their possible return to Korea for familial obligations and economic opportunities. (p.437)

Regarding the children’s reasons for learning Turkish as a heritage language, one of the twins, Rana, said that she thinks it is important to learn Turkish because (1) she is Turkish, (2) she has Turkish relatives and wants to talk to them, and (3) she might want to move to Turkey in the future. Besides, she shared a similar opinion with her mother regarding learning an additional language. As a result, the family connections in the home country, Turkey, appeared to be the common reason for both the children and their parents to maintain the heritage language (Chhuon, 2011; De Fina, 2012; Jeon, 2008).

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Q3: How do these parents see themselves facilitating the use of Turkish in their home?

Strategies

The parents stated a number of strategies that they used with their children in order to enhance their children’s heritage language learning and speaking. Firstly, the parents said that they try to speak in Turkish at home most of the time. Aslı stated that she forced her children to speak in Turkish in the past by ignoring their requests when they made them in English, or pretending not to hear or understand them. She also referred to reading Turkish books to her children as one of her attempts to maintain the heritage language.

Secondly, the parents highlighted their visits to Turkey as the most effectual method for heritage language and cultural maintenance. Although this issue was not included in previous studies in terms of travelling and visiting the home country, “[m]uch research has demonstrated that maintenance of one’s heritage language is largely dependent upon relations and communication among family and other community members, structures that cannot be easily replaced by formal language learning settings” (Choi, 2013, p. 88). Moreover, the children tended to speak in Turkish more when they were in Turkey, because they are surrounded by many speakers of Turkish, and the amount of exposure to the language is very high compared to the United States.

Additionally, Aslı considered watching television in Turkish as a good opportunity for the children to learn Turkish. Furthermore, Aslı referred to her experience with her younger sister who was born in the United States and had a limited access to Turkish as her daughters have; Aslı believed that her sister owes her Turkish language learning to
her visits to Turkey. As a result, visiting the home country is believed to be the most powerful factor to maintain and improve the children’s heritage language by the parents.

Thirdly, Emre and Ash’s efforts were not only limited to the heritage language maintenance; they also wanted to teach their children some of the Turkish cultural traditions. However, Emre believed that his children are not very familiar with many elements of the Turkish culture and that their Turkish cultural identity might get lost within a few generations.

On the light of these examples along with the results reported on Chapter Four in regards to the cultural identity of the children, the parents’ and the children’s perceptions in this case study differ. However, I do not attempt to make very extensive claims about this difference because many questions about cultural identity were not specifically asked.

In addition, considering the fact that all identities are context driven, the children’s identities constructed during the interviews might be different from their identities constructed in other contexts.

**Challenges**

The parents also listed the challenges that they encountered as heritage language speakers. To begin with, Emre stated that they used to live in a bigger city ten years ago, where they had more Turkish speaking friends. Now, he said that they do not have too many Turkish speaking friends. Oriyama (2012) indicated that the impact of community contact on heritage language maintenance is much greater than speaking the language itself. Accordingly, the lack of the immigrant community contact (Dixon et al, 2012; Hashimoto & Lee, 2011; Isik-Ercan, 2012) resulted in less exposure to both the Turkish
language and the potential Turkish culture for the children. Conversely, Emre believed that the community contact would only improve his children’s language proficiency; it might have very little or no impact at all on their Turkish cultural identity development.

Additionally, although Aslı and Emre tried to speak in Turkish most of the time, as multilingual speakers of Turkish and English, they were code-switching between the two languages consciously and unconsciously. Aslı reported the difficulty of continuing a conversation in Turkish when their children are responding in English. Another influencing factor is being an immigrant in the United States and being exposed to English, which might result in code-switching and code-mixing even among the adult immigrants. This exemplified what Brown (2011) meant by “[b]elieving in something does not necessarily mean that they followed through on what they believed. Or they might have tried in the beginning but were not able to sustain their efforts to diligently provide HL at home” (p.35).

Another challenge that was exposed by the data was concerning the youngest child, Beste. The parents stated that their older daughters had more chances to practice Turkish before they began school; since the family was speaking only Turkish the first four years since the twins were born. Yet, Beste was exposed to English from her older sisters before she started attending school this year. This might lead to a lower proficiency of the heritage language for the younger sibling or becoming monolingual in English. This brings up the fact that the home cannot be considered as a place where heritage language flourishes (Brown, 2011).

Finally, the fact that Turkish is not supported by school and the home is the only place where the children can learn the language created more responsibility for the
parents in terms of heritage language maintenance. The parents were aware of the fact that it is much more difficult to maintain the heritage language and the cultural identity of their children without an external support. Parents felt isolated in their effort to maintain the heritage language and they observed an intergenerational shift in the relationship to the heritage culture (McCabe, 2014).

As a result, the absence of external support, such as heritage language speaking peers and heritage language schools, is perceived as a barrier to the parents’ efforts in helping their children maintain the heritage language (Hashimoto & Lee, 2011). In addition, “[i]mmigrant families with more resources and supports appear to be more successful in raising children who are balanced bilinguals” (Nesteruk, 2010, p. 278).

**Implications of the Study**

This qualitative case study was designed to help point out two main objectives: (1) find out about the opinions and feelings of the parents and their children regarding learning and speaking Turkish as a heritage language, (2) determine what strategies the parents use in order to facilitate heritage language learning within their homes and the possible challenges they might encounter.

The data set obtained from the semi-structured interviews with the Turkish-American immigrant parents and their children were synthesized with the theoretical framework presented in Chapter Two.

Firstly, the findings of this study suggested that both the parents and their children valued learning Turkish as a heritage language. Their main motivations for this attitude were (1) the ability to sustain their communication with their family connections in
Turkey, (2) the desire to maintain their Turkish linguistic and cultural heritage, and (3) the advantages of simultaneous bilingualism.

Secondly, the parents in this case were the only source for their children’s heritage language learning. However, the annual visits to the home country were considered as another valuable source for learning and maintaining both the heritage language and the culture. The examples provided by the participants demonstrated the key role of the parental attitudes and beliefs regarding the heritage language. On the other hand, the findings also put forward the complications of maintaining the heritage language with the lack of external support. The context of this case study is considered unique since the participants do not live in a large metropolitan area and have limited access to the immigrant community sources.

Both the parents and their children agreed on the importance of the educational support of their heritage language. Despite the efforts of the parents to maintain Turkish by reading books, these efforts remained unpaid with the low engagement of the children. Above and beyond, the parents’ concerns regarding the long term incomes of learning the heritage language and the sustainability of their children’s Turkish cultural identity for the next generations derogate their enthusiasm.

While reviewing my data, especially dealing with Rana who did not specify a language preference, it was my imposition that there might be a language preference for heritage language speakers from larger cultures; this might have implications for children that we have never even studied before.

To sum up, the responsibility of maintaining the heritage language should not be viewed as limited to the immigrant parents. It is also the responsibility of educators and
community leaders to raise heritage language awareness within the classroom and the community (Becker, 2013). The immigrant parents and their children need to strive in order to see the benefits of learning a language other than English (McCabe, 2014), particularly, their heritage language.

**Concluding Reflections**

Because this study is looking only at one family it is important to remember that the results of this study cannot be considered as a representation of other Turkish-American immigrant families. Considering the diversity of the Turkish-American immigrant population in the United States in terms of social, cultural and educational background, and ethnicity and religious practices, results of this case study cannot be generalized for larger Turkish-American immigrant populations.

One of the aspects of conducting case studies is the power and the complexity of qualitative research. In this case study, this might be considered as an affecting factor for my data. For example, my physical presence at the participants’ home as a Turkish speaking individual, might have influenced the amount of Turkish that was spoken by the participants, the children in particular. Also, the presence of the parents during my interview with the children might have influenced the children’s responses to my questions. It is possible that the children would have answered the questions differently if their parents had not been in the room where the interview took place.

Finally, the data reported from the parents represents the parents’ beliefs and personal perceptions of their children as heritage language speakers. For example, the parents believed that their children start all their conversations in English; however, this might not be the case all the time.
Further Research Directions

The findings of this case study raise a number of questions that can be investigated in future studies. Taking into account the limited number of the participants, one further study can be conducted on a larger sample that might include Turkish-American immigrants from diverse cultural, educational, religious and ethnic backgrounds. In addition, other qualitative and quantitative data collection designs should be utilized in order to insure trustworthiness and objectivity.

Considering the powerful agency and the heritage language ownership of the children participants, a follow-up study on the personal perceptions of these children might be conducted in the future.

Given the fact that these findings are all from one single family, I wonder if more studies should be done with heritage language speaking children. Since most previous studies on heritage language and ethnic/cultural identity maintenance is reported from the adult heritage language speaker point of view, and if many adults’ ideas are as different from the children’s ideas as it is in this case study, then we might be missing a great deal of potentially very important information about heritage language learners. Far fewer studies explored the HL learning/speaking children such as De Fina (2012), Lee (2012), Schecter and Bayley (1997), Wiltse (2008), and Zhang and Slaughter-Defoe (2009). As a result, more studies should be looking at the heritage language learners themselves to really find out their perspectives to get a richer understanding of their experiences.

Finally, the heritage language maintenance should be analyzed on pedagogical, curricular and community levels in order to offer comparisons and insights regarding the involvement of other heritage language maintenance sources.
References


Appendix A

Outline of Potential Interview Questions for Parents

In Turkish:

1. Çocuklarınızın Türkçe öğrenmelerini neden istiyorsunuz?
2. Çocuklarınız Türkçeyi nasıl ögrendi?
3. Sizce Türkçe öğrenmek çocuklarınızın kültürel kimliğini nasıl etkiler?
4. Çocuklarınızla en çok hangi dili kullanıyorsunuz?
5. Çocuklarınız Türkçe konuşmayı red ettikleri oldu mu? Nasıl bir tepki verdiğiniz?
6. ABD’de mi doğdunuz? (Cevap hayıys ise) buraya ne zaman geldiniz?
7. Türkiye’ye çocuğunuzla beraber gittiniz mi hiç? Bunun çocuğunuzun dil gelişimini nasıl etkilediğiniz düşünüyorsunuz?
8. Çocuğunuzun kültürel kimliğini nasıl tanımlarsınız? Bu kimliği korumak veya değiştirmek için her hangi bir şey yapıyor musunuz?

In English:

1. Why do you like your child to learn and speak Turkish?
2. How do facilitate your child(ren)’s Turkish language learning?
3. Do you think that speaking Turkish facilitates your child’s language maintenance or constructing their ethnic identity? How?
4. What language do you use dominantly with your child?
5. Do you ask your child to speak Turkish at home or around Turkish people?
6. Were you born in the United States? If not, how long have you been here?
7. Have you ever been or visited Turkey with your child? And how do you think this affected your child’s Turkish language maintenance?

8. How would you identify your child’s cultural identity? And would you do anything to enhance/change it?
Appendix B

Outline of Potential Interview Questions for Children

In English:

1. How did you learn Turkish?
2. Which language do you like to use with your friends? What languages do your friends speak?
3. Which language do you like to use with your family?
4. Do your parents ask you to speak Turkish with them or with other Turkish people? Can you give me an example?
5. Do you think you need to learn or speak Turkish?
6. Why do you think your parents want you to learn or speak Turkish?
7. How would you think about yourself as a language speaker? Can you give me an example?
8. Have you been to Turkey? (If yes) What was it like there for you? Can you give me an example?

In Turkish:

1. Türkçe'yı nerede öğrendin?
2. Arkadaşlarınızla hangi dilde konuşursun? Arkadaşların hangi dilleri konuşur?
3. Ailenle hangi dilde konuşursun veya konuşmak istersin?
4. Annen ve baban onlarla veya başkalarıyla Türkçe konuşmanı istiyorlar mı? Bir örnek verebilir misin?
5. Sence Türkçe öğrenmeli misin? Veya Türkçe konuşmalı misin?
6. Sence ailen neden Türkçe öğrenmeni istiyor?

7. Bir dili konuşurken, o dil hakkında veya kendin hakkında neler düşünüyorsun?
   Bir örnek verebilir misin?

8. Türkiye’ye gittin mi hiç? (Cevap evet ise) Orda olmak nasıl? Bir örnek verebilir misin?
Dear Mr. Güralp and Mrs. Güralp,

My name is Ruba Tatar. I am a second year master’s student at the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and Applied Linguistics program at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and I would like to kindly invite you to participate in my research study. This study aims to find out about you and your child’s opinions on learning Turkish as a heritage language.

As participants in this study, you will be provided with an Informed Consent form for you and an Assent form for your child(ren). You and your child(ren) would be asked to answer a few questions about your heritage language in individual interviews. Both interviews will be audio recorded and will take approximately 30 minutes. You are free to choose where and when to be interviewed.

Your participation is completely voluntary and all of your information will be held in strict confidence.

Your contribution is greatly appreciated.

If you are interested, please e-mail me at gxnt@iup.edu

Thank you!

This study has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board of Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Appendix D

Participant Parents Informed Letter of Consent (Turkish)

INDIANA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
İNGİLİZCE BÖLÜMÜ

Leonard Hall, Room 110
421 North Walk
Indiana, PA 15705
Tel: 724-357-2261
Faks: 724-357-2265

BİLGİLENDİRİLMİŞ OLUR VERME FORMU

Aşağıda bahsi geçen bilimsel araştırmaya katılmaya davetlisiniz. Bu form bu çalışmaya katılıp katılmayacağınıza karar vermenize yardımcı olmak için hazırlanmıştır. Her hangi bir konuda sorunuz olursa lütfen aşağıdaki iletişim bilgilerini kullanarak sorularınızı iletmekten çekinmeyiniz.


Eğer bu çalışmaya katılmayı kabul ediyorsanız, lütfen aşağıdaki bildirim formunu imzalayınız.
Proje Direktörü: Ruba Tatar
İngilizce Öğretmenliği Yüksek Lisans Adayı
451 Sutton Hall
Indiana, PA 15705
Tel: (724) 357-5616
E-posta: gxnt@iup.edu

Tez Danışmanı: Dr. Sharon K. Deckert
Doçent
111 Leonard Hall
Indiana, PA 15705
Tel: 724-357-2263
E-posta: Sharon.Deckert@iup.edu

GÖNÜLLÜ OLUR VERME FORMU:

Ad ve soyad (lütfen yazınız):
____________________________________________________

İmza:__________________________

Tarih:____________ Size ulaşabileceğimiz telefon numarası:____________________
Size ulaşabileceğimiz en uygun gün ve saatler:
________________________________________

Üstte bilgileri geçen şahsa bu çalışmaya ilgili katılım koşullarını, çalışmanın amacı, olası yararlarını ve olası risklerini açıkladığımı, şahsının sorularını cevapladığımı ve formu imzaladığını onaylıyorum.

Tarih: __________________________ Araştırmacının İmzası:__________________________
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

You are invited to participate in this research study. The following information is provided in order to help you make an informed decision whether or not to participate. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask.

The purpose of this study is to find out about the attitudes of the Turkish immigrant parents and their children towards learning Turkish as a heritage language. In this study I will ask you to participate in one individual interview. In order to make sure that I am collecting your answers completely, I will audio record the interview. The interview will be no longer than 30 minutes. There are no known risks or discomforts associated with this research.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to decide not to participate in this study or to withdraw at any time without adversely affecting your relationship with me. If you choose to participate, you may withdraw at any time by notifying me or my thesis chair. Upon your request to withdraw, all information pertaining to you will be destroyed. If you choose to participate, all information will be held in strict confidence.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign the statement below.
VOLUNTARY CONSENT FORM:

I have read and understood the information on the form and I consent to volunteer to be a subject in this study. I understand that my responses are completely confidential and that I have the right to withdraw at any time. I have received an unsigned copy of this informed consent form to keep for my own records.

Name (please print): ________________________________________________

Signature:________________

Date: _______________ Phone where you can be reached:_______________

Best days and times to reach you: ______________________________________

I certify that I have explained to the above individual the nature and purpose, the potential benefits, and possible risks associated with participating in this research study, have answered any questions that have been raised, and have witnessed the above signature.

Date: _______________ Investigator’s signature:__________________________
Appendix F

Participant Children Informed Letter of Assent (English)

INDIANA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

Leonard Hall, Room 110
421 North Walk
Indiana, PA 15705

Phone: 724-357-2261
Fax: 724-357-2265

CHILD'S INFORMED ASSENT FORM

I would like you ask you some questions about your Turkish learning experiences. I would like to learn more about what you think about learning Turkish. It will take about 30 minutes for us to talk. So that I can keep all of your answers clear, I will be audio recording our talk.

You don’t have to talk with me if you don’t want to. Or if we are talking, and you don’t want to answer my questions, you do not have to. We can still be friends. If you change your mind later about your talk with me, your parent or guardian can let me know. If you do want to be in my study, nobody will know who you really are, and I won’t tell anybody. You can pick a pretend name to use, or I will pick one for you if you want. When I finish my research study, I might talk about what I learned with other people, or write it down so other people can read it, but I will always use your pretend name as your secret identity.

If you would like to help me in my study, please put your name on the bottom of this sheet. I have a copy of this form to give to you to keep, as well as one for your parent/guardian to keep. If you don’t want to help me in my study, do not sign this sheet.
VOLUNTARY ASSENT FORM:

Name (please print): ________________________________________________

Signature: _________________________________________________________

Date: __________________

PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM:

I am in agreement that my child may participate in the study. I understand that my child’s responses are completely confidential and that I have the right to withdraw my child from the study at any time by contacting either the investigator or the thesis chair. I have received an unsigned copy of this informed assent form to keep for my own records.

Parent’s/Guardian’s Name (please print): ____________________________________________

Parent’s/Guardian’s Signature: ___________________________________________________

Date: __________________ Phone where you can be reached: ________________________

Best days and times to reach you: _________________________________________________

I certify that I have explained to the above individuals the nature and purpose, the potential benefits, and possible risks associated with participating in this research study, have answered any questions that have been raised, and have witnessed the above signatures.

Date: _______________ Investigator’s signature: ____________________________________
**Project director:**
Rubá Tázar
Candidate for MA TESOL
451 Sutton Hall
Indiana, PA 15705
Phone: (724) 357-5616
E-mail: gxnt@iup.edu

**Thesis Chair:**
Dr. Sharon K. Deckert
Associate Professor
111 Leonard Hall
Indiana, PA 15705
Phone: (724) 357-2263
E-mail: Sharon.Deckert@iup.edu
Appendix G

Participant Children Informed Letter of Assent (Turkish)

INDIANA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
İNGİLİZCE BÖLÜMÜ

Leonard Hall, Room 110
421 North Walk
Indiana, PA 15705

Phone: 724-357-2261
Fax: 724-357-2265

ÇOCUĞUN BİLGİLENDİRİLMİŞ RIZA FORMU

Sana okulunla ve okuldaki Türkçe dersleriyle ilgili bazı sorular soracağız.
Okulun, derslerin hakkında ve Türkçeyi öğrenmek ve konuşmakla ilgili neler
düşündüğünü öğrenmek istiyorum. Bu konuşmamız yaklaşık 30 dakika sürecek.
Vereceğin cevapları unutmamam için konuşmamızı sesli olarak kayıt edeceğim.

İstemiyorsan benimle konuşmak zorunda değilsin, veya benimle konuşurken
sorularına cevap vermek zorunda da değilsin. Biz yine arkadaş kalabiliriz. Bu
konuşmamızdan sonra fikrini değiştirirsan, annen, baban veya velin bana ulaşarak bunu
söylebilirler. Eğer benim çalışmama katılmak istiyorsan, hiç kimse kim olduğunu
bilmeyecek ve ben bunu kimseye söylemeyeceğim. Bu çalışmadan kullanmak için
gerçek ismin yerine istediğin ismi seçebilirsin, veya senin yerine ben sana bir isim
seçebilirim. Bu araştırmamı bitirdikten sonra, neler öğrendiğim hakkında başkalarıyla
 konuşabilirim, veya bir yerlere yazabilirim ancak ben her zaman senin seçtiğin ismi
kullanıp gerçek ismini asla kullanmayacağım.

Bu çalışmamda bana yardım etmek istiyorsan, lütfen ismini bu kağıda yaz.
Saklamak için, bu formun birer kopyasını sana ve ailene/veline vereceğim. Eğer bu
çalışmada bana yardım etmek istemiyorsan, lütfen adını yazma.
Ad ve Soyad (lütfen yaz):
____________________________________________________
İmza:____________________
Tarih:____________________

Üstte bilgileri geçen şahsa bu çalışmaya ilgili katılım koşullarını, çalışmmanın amaçını, olası yararlarını ve olası risklerini açıkladığımı, şahsın sorularını cevapladığımı ve formu imzaladığını onaylıyorum.
Tarih:____________________ Araştırmacının İmzası:____________________

EBEVEYN/VELİ OLUR VERME FORMU:
Çocuğumun bu çalışmaya katılmasına onay veriyorum. Çocuğumun bu çalışmada vereceği cevapların gizli tutulacağını anlıyorum ve istediğim zaman çocuğumu bu çalışmadan çekebileme hakkında sahip olduğumu kabul ediyorum. Bu olur verme formunun imzasız bir kopyasını kendi kayıtlarımı için teslim aldım.
Ebeveynin / Velinin adı ve soyadı (lütfen yazınız):
________________________________
Ebeveynin / Velinin imzası:
________________________________
Tarih:____________________ Size ulaşabileceğimiz telefon numarası:_____________
Size ulaşabileceğimiz en uygun gün ve saatler:
________________________________________

Üstte bilgileri geçen şahsa bu çalışmaya ilgili katılım koşullarını, çalışmmanın amacı, olası yararlarını ve olası risklerini açıkladığımı, şahsın sorularını cevapladığımı ve formu imzaladığını onaylıyorum.
Tarih:____________________ Araştırmacının İmzası:____________________
Proje Direktörü:
Ruba Tatar
İngilizce Öğretmenliği Yüksek Lisans Adayı
451 Sutton Hall
Indiana, PA 15705
Tel: (724) 357-5616
E-posta: gxnt@iup.edu

Tez Danışmanı:
Dr. Sharon K. Deckert
Doçent
111 Leonard Hall
Indiana, PA 15705
Tel: 724-357-2263
E-posta: Sharon.Deckert@iup.edu
Appendix H

Institutional Review Board Letter of Approval

October 15, 2014

Ruba Tatar
5617 Forbes Ave, Apt. 1
Pittsburgh, PA 15217

Dear Ms. Tatar:

Your proposed research project, "Parents' Role in Their Children's Development and Maintenance of the Heritage Language: A Case Study of Turkish-American Immigrants," (Log No. 14-181) has been reviewed by the IRB and is approved as an expedited review for the period of October 3, 2014 through October 3, 2015. This approval does not supersede or obviate compliance with any other University requirements, including, but not limited to, enrollment, degree completion deadlines, topic approval, and conduct of university-affiliated activities.

You should read all of this letter, as it contains important information about conducting your study.

Now that your project has been approved by the IRB, there are elements of the Federal Regulations to which you must attend. IUP adheres to these regulations strictly:

1. You must conduct your study exactly as it was approved by the IRB.

2. Any additions or changes in procedures must be approved by the IRB before they are implemented.

3. You must notify the IRB promptly of any events that affect the safety or well-being of subjects.

4. You must notify the IRB promptly of any modifications of your study or other responses that are necessitated by any events reported in items 2 or 3.

Should you need to continue your research beyond October 3, 2015 you will need to file additional information for continuing review. Please contact the IRB office at irb-research@iup.edu or 724-357-7730 for further information.
The IRB may review or audit your project at random or for cause. In accordance with IUP Policy and Federal Regulation (45CFR46.113), the Board may suspend or terminate your project if your project has not been conducted as approved or if other difficulties are detected.

Although your human subjects review process is complete, the School of Graduate Studies and Research requires submission and approval of a Research Topic Approval Form (RTAF) before you can begin your research. If you have not yet submitted your RTAF, the form can be found at http://www.iup.edu/page.aspx?id=91683.

It is strongly recommended that all researchers and their advisors complete CITI on-line protection of human subjects and responsible conduct of research training. The training is available at http://www.iup.edu/page.aspx?id=83408 and there is no charge to you.

While not under the purview of the IRB, researchers are responsible for adhering to US copyright law when using existing scales, survey items, or other works in the conduct of research. Information regarding copyright law and compliance at IUP, including links to sample permission request letters, can be found at http://www.iup.edu/page.aspx?id=165526.

I wish you success as you pursue this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Jennifer Roberts, Ph.D.
Chairperson, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
Professor of Criminology

JLR:js

xc: Dr. Sharon Deckert, Thesis Advisor
Ms. Brenda Boal, Secretary
October 15, 2014

Ruba Tatar
5617 Forbes Avenue, Apt. 1
Pittsburgh, PA 15217

Dear Ms. Tatar:

Now that your research project has been approved by the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, I have reviewed your Research Topic Approval Form and approved it.


Your RTAF indicates your anticipated graduation date as May 2015. This means that you must defend by no later than April 1, 2015 and all necessary documents are due by this date. A description of the required documents can be accessed at http://www.iup.edu/page.aspx?id=116439. Your thesis or dissertation must be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies & Research by April 15, 2015 if you desire to graduate by your anticipated date. You must apply for graduation by May 1, 2015. For deadlines for subsequent graduation dates, please access http://www.iup.edu/page.aspx?id=16683.

Finally, if you change your topic, the scope or methodology of your project, or your committee, a new Research Topic Approval Form must be completed.

I wish you well and hope you find this experience to be rewarding.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Melissa E. Creely, J.D., Ph.D.
Assistant Dean for Research

HEC/bb

xc: Dr.Yaw Asamoah, Dean
Dr. Sharon Deckert, Graduate Coordinator & Dissertation Chair
Ms. Julie Bassaro, Secretary