

**LINGUISTIC CAPITAL IN MONOLINGUAL SETTINGS: ATTRIBUTIONS
AND TRANSFERENCE OF KURDISH LANGUAGE IN TURKEY**

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KOÇ UNIVERSITY

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AND TRANSFERENCE OF KURDISH LANGUAGE IN TURKEY**

by

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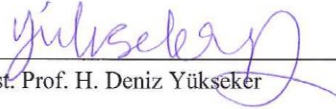
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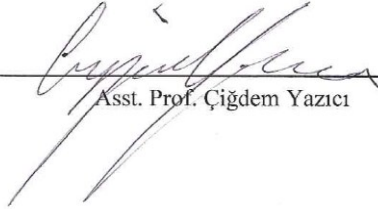
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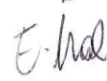
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Abstract

This thesis examines the ways in which the linguistic capital of Kurdish and Turkish are formed for the Kurdish speaking parents living in Diyarbakır and Istanbul. The concept of linguistic capital, borrowed from Bourdieu, helps us to regard language as one of the constituents of the cultural capital. This study examines the attributions to languages of Kurdish and Turkish of the Kurdish parents within the scope of their own experiences in the monolingual education system where Turkish is the only medium of instruction. The effect of the formation of the linguistic capital of Kurdish on the transference of Kurdish to the next generation is also interpreted. The data of the 23 in-depth interviews with the Kurdish speaking parents in Diyarbakır and İstanbul shows that monolingual education system, the public and private sphere dichotomy and the pressures on Kurdish had an effect on the attitudes towards Kurdish and Turkish and the transference of Kurdish to their children. In line with the historical changes, different strategies are developed by Kurdish families for the usage of Kurdish and the transference of it.

Keywords: Linguistic Capital, Monolingual Education System, Kurdish Language, Transference of Kurdish

TEZ BAŐLIĐI: TEKDİLLİ ALANLARDA DİLSEL SERMAYE: TÜRKİYE'DE KÜRTÇE DİL AKTARIMI VE ATIFLAR

Özet

Bu tez, Kürtçe ve Türkçenin lengüistik sermayesinin Diyarbakır ve İstanbul'da yaşayan Kürt aileler açısından ne şekillerde oluştuğunu incelemektedir. Lengüistik sermaye kavramı, Bourdieu'dan ödünç alınarak, dilin kültürel sermayenin bir bileşeni olarak incelenmesini sağlar. Bu çalışma, Kürt ailelerin Türkçe tekdilli eğitim sistemindeki tecrübeleri ışığında Kürtçe ve Türkçeye ne gibi anlamlar atfettiklerini incelemektedir. Atfedilen anlamların ve tecrübelerin Kürtçenin çocuklara aktarımı üzerindeki etkisi de bu bağlamda yorumlanmaktadır. Diyarbakır ve İstanbul'da Kürtçe konuşan ailelerle yapılan 23 derinlemesine görüşmenin verilerine göre tekdilli eğitim sistemi, kamusal/özel alan ikiliđi ve Kürtçe üzerindeki baskıların Kürtçe ve Türkçeye yapılan atıflar ve çocuklara Kürtçe aktarım üzerinde etkisi olduğunu göstermektedir. Tarihsel deđişikliklerle birlikte, Kürt aileler Kürtçenin kullanımı ve aktarımıyla ilgili deđişik stratejiler geliştirmektedir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Lengüistik Sermaye, Tekdilli Eğitim Sistemi, Kürtçe, Kürtçenin Aktarımı

Kurtasî

Ev tez, li ser pêkhatina Sermiyanê Lenguîstîkî (Linguistic Capital) a kurdî û tirkî ya malbatên ku li Stenbol û Diyarbekirê dijîn radiweste. Têgeha Sermiyanê Lenguîstîkî ji Bourdeieu hatiye wergirtin û herwiha ev têgeh dihêle ku li ser ziman weke ku sermiyanekî çandê ye em bixebitin.

Ev xebat vedikole ku gelo watepêdayîna malbatên kurd di binê siya tecrubeya perwerdeya yekzimanî ya tirkî de çi wateyan li tirkî û kurdî bar dikin. Karîgeriya watepêdayîna û van tecrubeyên perwerdeyê ya li ser vegûhistina zimanê kurdî ya li zarokan di vê peywendê de têne nirxandin û şîrove kirin. Li gorî danayên ku bi 23 hevdîtînen berfireh ên bi malbatên ku bi kurdî diaxivin û li Diyarbekir û Stenbolê dijîn re hatine berhevkirin, pergela perwerdeyê ya yekzimanî, duyatiya taybet û gelemperî û çewisandinên li ser kurdî, nêzîkpêdayînen li kurdî û tirkî dide xuya kirin ku bandor li ser vegûhistina zimanê kurdî ya li zarokan dibe. Bi veguherînen dîrokî re, malbatên kurd jî hewl didin ku hindê stratejiyên axaftina kurdî û vegûhistina kurdî ya li zarokan bi pêş ve bibin.

Peyvên Mifteyî: Sermiyanê Lenguîstîkî, Pergela Perwerdeyê ay yekzimanî, kurdî, vegûhistina kurdî

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Acronyms

AKP	Justice and Development Party (<i>Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi</i>)
BDP	Peace and Democracy Party (<i>Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi</i>)
CHP	Republican People's Party (<i>Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi</i>)
DEP	Democracy Party (<i>Demokrasi Partisi</i>)
DP	Democratic Party (<i>Demokrat Parti</i>)
DTP	Democratic Society Party (<i>Demokratik Toplum Partisi</i>)
HADEP	People's Democracy Party (<i>Halkın Demokrasi Partisi</i>)
HEP	People's Labor Party (<i>Halkın Emek Partisi</i>)
İHD	Human Rights Association (<i>İnsan Hakları Derneği</i>)
KCK	Group of Communities in Kurdistan (<i>Koma Civakên Kurdistan/Kürdistan Topluluklar Birliđi</i>)
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government (<i>Hikûmeta Herêma Kurdistanê/Kürdistan Bölgesel Hükümeti</i>)
KURDÎ-DER	Association of Research and Development of Kurdish Language (<i>Kürt Dili Araştırma ve Geliştirme Derneđi</i>)
PKK	Kurdistan Workers Party (<i>Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan/ Kürdistan İşçi Partisi</i>)
SHÇEK	Social Service and Children Protection Institution (<i>Sosyal Hizmetler Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu</i>)
TİP	Worker's Party of Turkey (<i>Türkiye İşçi Partisi</i>)
TMK	Anti-terror law (<i>Terörler Mücadele Kanunu</i>)
TZP-Kurdî	Kurdish Language and Education Movement (<i>Tevgera Ziman û Perwerdehîya Kurdî/Kürt Dili ve Eđitimi Hareketi</i>)
YİBO	Regional Primary Boarding Schools (<i>Yatılı İlköđretim Bölge Okulu</i>)

CHAPTER I: Introduction

This thesis is concerned with the ways in which the linguistic capital of Kurdish is formed for the Kurdish parents within the context of the monolingual education system in Turkey. The formation of the linguistic capital of Kurdish is also related with the formation of that of Turkish. The linguistic capital of a language is not intrinsically deficient or lacking but it may be considered as lacking due to its value in different fields. I take the field of education as one of the most important signifiers of the linguistic capital of Kurdish within Turkey. The concept of linguistic capital, borrowed from Bourdieu, regards language as one of the constituents of the cultural capital.¹ The term cultural capital refers to the dispositions which are based on the economic capital but represent themselves in non-economic ways that in the last instance, they can help pass class characteristics on to the next generation. Kurdish is one of the constituents of cultural capital that is transferred through generations and as the medium of education Turkish forms the dispositions that serve to maintain the privilege of certain classes.

A field or a market, according to Bourdieu is a social space where the positions and the relations of people are formed according to the different capitals they have. Within the different fields, the capitals or the resources can be converted to one another. However, the value and the capacity of a capital to be converted into other capitals within a certain field is not stable rather, there is always a struggle within the fields over the accepted and valued capitals. In different fields, people struggle for the acceptance of their capitals that they bring from their habitus –their

¹ Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," in Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education, ed. John G. Richardson (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1986).

family and social class— in varying degrees; some want to preserve the status-quo, while some want to change the structures of the fields.²

The field of education is the place where the cultural capital (including the linguistic capital) of the privileged classes is presented as the norm. The children are “educated” according to the appropriate norms of the field. Acting appropriate within the education system of the nation-state contributes to the formation of the appropriate citizens as well.

Within the hierarchy of languages formed in the field of education, the linguistic capital of Kurdish is formed and there is a continuous struggle for the changing of the composition of the capitals of the field of education by people whose cultural and linguistic capitals do not fit into the education system. Rancier’s “ignorant school master” —the teacher at schools— is ignorant not because he or she does not have any knowledge but rather it is because he or she is unaware of the inequality between the teacher and the student. The inequality occurs from the fact that the student is regarded as the ignorant one (by the teachers, thus by the students) and the teacher as the one who is knowledgeable. The students who are called ignorant are expected to forget what they bring from home. The knowledge they bring from home is not valuable at school. But “the one who is supposedly ignorant in fact already understands innumerable things. He or she has learned them by listening and repeating, by observing and comparing, by guessing and verifying. This is how one’s mother tongue is learned.”³ Kurdish as a mother tongue is presented as a burden to be ashamed of within the official school system in Turkey, let alone the knowledge it brings being appreciated.

² Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, ed. John Thompson, trans. Gino Raymond and Matthew Adamson (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1999), 15-16.

³ Jacques Rancière, “On Ignorant Schoolmasters,” in *Jacques Rancière: Education, Truth, Emancipation*. ed. Charles Bingham Gert J.J. Biesta, and Jacques Rancière, (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2010), 5.

The analysis of the field research of this thesis is designed in mainly two layers. First, I am going to take a thorough look at the experiences of the Kurdish mothers and fathers within the field of education, their relation to languages and the ways in which they experienced conflict (if they ever did). By understanding the conflicting aspects of the monolingual education system for the minoritized groups whose mother tongues are different from the language of instruction, I analyze the ways in which schools offer certain linguistic and cultural capitals as the *educationally profitable* ones. Educationally profitable linguistic capitals are the linguistic resources and capabilities of certain groups that are favoured over others at schools. The linguistic capabilities which are favoured in the education system are institutionalized as the educationally profitable linguistic capital. The unequal social class distribution of the educationally profitable linguistic capital is a hidden aspect of the relationship between social origin and educational achievement.⁴

I use the word “minoritized” for the Kurds living in Turkey within the history of the formation of the republic and the transformation to the nation-state from the Ottoman Empire. Within this transition, languages other than Turkish were excluded from the education system, with Kurdish being totally excluded and denied in all areas of life. Thus, this situation resulted in Kurdish becoming a language to be whispered in the public sphere. In some cases, it even caused a language shift in favour of Turkish for some speakers. However, with the relative freedom in the legislation and within the lives of the speakers, and with the relative increase in the written production, publications and broadcasts in Kurdish, a new sort of linguistic capital was attributed to the language. The Kurdish political movement had a major role in the constitution of the attributions towards the Kurdish language as well.

⁴ Pierre Bourdieu, and Jean-Claude Passeron, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*, trans. Richard Nice (London: Sage Publications, 1990), 116.

The respondents in this study differentiated Kurdish and Turkish as two languages in opposition by giving them attributes based on a binary framework. Each language was associated with a set of adjectives which diametrically opposed that of the other. For instance whereas Turkish was referred as a cold language, Kurdish was a sentimental one. Therefore for a given purpose, one had to choose one language or the other. However, emphasizing the possibility of the transitivity of languages and accents could undermine such a binary opposition. The transitivity of languages includes the tolerance and acceptance of borrowed words among languages and the embracement of different dialects. This aspect of any language surely unsettles essentialist oppositions such those perceived between Kurdish and Turkish by the respondents in this study.

These attributions by Kurdish families directly affect the transference of Kurdish to children. Among the two different patterns of the transference of Kurdish –transferred or not-, the non-transference of Kurdish is more widely analyzed since there is a contradiction revealed. It is important to note that the strategies and the decisions of transference of Kurdish to children change according to the different children of the family. Also, for the same child, different strategies may be practiced for different periods of the childhood. However, the decisions of not transferring Kurdish were mainly based on two ideas. The first was that the parents did not want their children to go through the difficulties that they had because of the incompatibility of the languages at home and school. By teaching Turkish, the parents were transferring the cultural capital and the world of Turkish to the child. The second reason why they did not choose to speak Kurdish was related with political pressures and the perceived dialect differences between parents.

With the relative relaxation of the laws concerning the usage of Kurdish and expressing Kurdish identity, bilingualism de facto entered the public spaces. Slowly, Kurdish found a place within television channels, unofficially at schools, and in publication. Simultaneously, the private sphere, that is the home of the Kurdish speaking people, was exposed to more Turkish through increasing school attendance. Children going to school may bring Turkish home and introduce Turkish to their siblings. In such a situation the private sphere was no longer the place where the mother tongue was preserved and continued.

The blurring of spheres challenges the traditional differentiation of languages. Thus, there is a need for struggle and a political discourse to be formed considering the usage of Kurdish in the public sphere including the transitivity of languages. The struggle of the Kurdish movement made great achievements in the usage of Kurdish within the public sphere; nevertheless the extent to which a language shift in favour of Turkish has occurred is a question still to be scrutinized. This question needs to include the ways in which people place Kurdish within their lives. Thus, it is important to investigate how the discourse on the importance of the Kurdish language resonates within the lives of the people and what kind of meaning people attribute to Kurdish and Turkish.

Outline of the Thesis

After the first chapter of introduction, in the second chapter I will comparatively analyze the concepts of cultural and linguistic capitals by Bourdieu and the literature based on those concepts that discuss the education system and the relationship that minority groups form with them. This chapter also focuses on the works that are based on Kurdish and its relation with the education system in Turkey. In the third chapter I will provide a brief background of the situation of the Kurdish

language in Turkey, legislations and discussions about Kurds and Kurdish, and the different stages that Kurdish has gone through from the end of the Ottoman Empire and the transition to the nation-state with the republic, up until the 2000's. In the fourth chapter, the methodology of the thesis will be presented and in the fifth and the sixth chapters, the findings of my field research will be discussed with the categories that were revealed from the interviews. In the concluding chapter, the significant results of the in-depth interviews will be taken into account and their implications will be discussed in relation to the theoretical framework.

CHAPTER II: Theoretical Framework: Cultural Capital in Education

Bourdieu's concepts of cultural and linguistic capital are going to form one of the important theoretical concepts of my research. My research question is mainly concerned with how Kurdish language(s) form a linguistic capital that does not fit into the monolingual Turkish education system and how the linguistic capitals of Turkish and Kurdish are shaped by the Kurdish speaking families which in turn affect the transfer of the language to children. I am interested in the literature that focuses on the role of the official language within the education system and the aspects of the system that lead to attributions to languages and the formation of their linguistic capitals.

According to Bourdieu, though connected to the economic capital, there are other kinds of capitals, which contribute to the preservation and reproduction of social classes. Before discussing the other kinds of capital, there is a need to look into his conceptualization of class. Bourdieu first gives a definition of class which he defines as "class on paper": "On the basis of knowledge of the space of positions, one can carve out *classes* in the logical sense of the word, i.e. sets of agents who occupy similar positions and who, being placed in similar conditions and submitted to similar types of conditioning, have every chance of having similar dispositions and interests, and thus of producing similar practices and adopting similar stances."⁵ For him, this definition of class is only a potential. It is a *probable class* in the sense that the sets of agents are more inclined to be mobilized through same objectives.⁶ Thus the agents who occupy similar positions and dispositions constitute only a potential class until they act in a mobilized way for their purposes, meaning that without the mobilization their class stays as a class on paper. I think that this definition bears

⁵Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 231.

⁶ Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 231.

similarities with that of E.P. Thompson. For Thompson, the class is not a “‘structure’, nor even a ‘category’ but something which in fact ‘happens’ (and can be shown to have happened) in human relationships.”⁷ Thus, his conceptualization of class as something not stable, but as something that can be observed in human relationships in which class *happens* opens up a new framework. Within this framework, this research will take class as something that can be observed in human relationships and as something which makes people inclined to similar dispositions.

Class and its dispositions reflect themselves in many ways and serve for the preservation of the privileged status of certain classes. Those dispositions may manifest themselves in the kinds of capitals other than economic capital, including cultural capital, social capital and symbolic capital. Bourdieu is interested in those other kinds of capital that in the end serve the purpose of preserving the economic capital in certain classes. Education is one of the institutions that serve this purpose since the holders of the capitals which are not educationally profitable, and which does not fit into the education system, are destined to be pushed out of the system or struggle to change the composition of the field.

When discussing Bourdieu’s concepts, one has to take the structure and agency debate into consideration. Dispositions and capitals are firstly formed and acquired, within the family according to class positions. “The dispositions produced thereby are also *structured* in the sense that they unavoidably reflect the social conditions within which they were acquired,”⁸ but one has to consider that the habitus one gains from the family is not a “destiny”. On the contrary, according to Bourdieu, social life is not determined to the degree that it does not allow any changes. There is always a struggle over the legitimate forms of capital. In the

⁷ E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage Books, 1966), 9.

⁸ John B. Thompson, “Editor’s Introduction,” in *Language and Symbolic Power*, ed. John Thompson, trans. Gino Raymond and Matthew Adamson (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1999) 12.

education system the legitimate and privileged capitals are contested as well. Those officially accepted within the education system might as well change but until it changes the divisions represent themselves as the norm.

According to Bourdieu, within the symbolic strategies for the production and the reproduction of the common sense, agents aim to impose their divisions of the social world on others and to place themselves within these divisions. These strategies can be located between the insult, where there is a risk of counter-insult, and the *official naming*, which is a symbolic strategy of positioning others on the divisions, performed by the holders of the monopoly of the legitimate symbolic violence that is the delegated agent of the state.⁹ Where there is an insult towards a specific ethnic identity or language, for instance, the doer of the deed, the one that insults is also open to “counter-insult”. If the official naming supports the insult, then the doer of the deed is positioned within the “dominant” which takes its power from an agent of the state. For the ones who can impose their division of the social world as “common-sense”, the encounter with the social world is without a real conflict. Bourdieu’s metaphor is explicatory in this sense: “When habitus encounters a social world of which it is the product, it finds itself ‘as fish in water,’ it does not feel the weight of the water and takes the world about itself for granted.”¹⁰ If a person’s habitus is in line with the requirements of different fields (e.g. education) then one is like a fish in the sea, the fish does not feel the conditions under which the sea came into being, with its lightness and naturalness in the sea, without a conflict. The fish also has no idea about why other fish would not have the means to conform to the sea. Just as “the dominant group is presented as non-ethnic”, also “its values are

⁹ Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 239.

¹⁰ Pierre Bourdieu and Loic Wacquant, “Towards a reflexive sociology: A Workshop with Pierre Bourdieu,” *Sociological Theory*, 7 (1989): 43.

presented as the norm or as standard and somehow shared and universal, rather than particularistic and changing, as all values are.”¹¹

A state/country can just as well present its official language as the norm and as if that language is exempt from the ethnic connotations it has. Thus, the education system, though prone to changes, is an institution that forms a field that some can conform to by their dispositions that come from the environment that they are born into.

In my case, I am concerned with the aspects of the Turkish language’s aspects that are usually taken for granted and understood as natural and as a product of the monolingual education system. Within that system the linguistic capital of different languages are also affected by monolingualism. Every language or dialect has a linguistic capital but if it is also the linguistic capital that the education system and labour market requires, the formation of the hierarchy among languages is inevitable. Thus, in a country like Turkey, where the official language is the only language of instruction in education, the linguistic capital that serves as the access to resources is not equally distributed among its members. Within the hierarchy of languages the linguistic exchanges involve an act of power.¹²

The cultural capital and social capital are the non-economic (not directly transmittable into money) resources owned by people that have the potential of preserving the privilege of their keepers, and thus can be transferred into economic capital. Social capital is the connections and networks that people form which can be used in order to acquire resources. Cultural capital can exist in three forms. In the embodied form, it signifies the dispositions of people. In its objectified form, it is the

¹¹Tove Skutnabb-Kangas, “Education of Minorities,” in *Handbook of Language and Ethnic Identity*, ed. Joshua A. Fishman (New York:Oxford University Press, 1999), 44.

¹² Pierre Bourdieu and Loic Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, (Cambridge: Polity, 1992), 145.

cultural goods. The institutionalized form, the one that Bourdieu sets apart, is the cultural capital that frames institutions like the education system.¹³ Linguistic capital is one of the constituents of cultural capital which can also present itself in all three forms. One's ability to speak the legitimate language in the legitimate way signifies linguistic capital. The transmission of the linguistic capital through generations is related to the competence acquired from the family and the education system.¹⁴ The education system and the family are interrelated when forming one's linguistic capital, but the institutionalized cultural capital within the education system forms the legitimate ways of speaking. It favours certain languages over others in such a way that the languages and dialects which are not favoured –as well as being a non-native speaker of the institutionalized language- are formed as educationally not profitable.

The linguistic capital of a language comes from not only its usage as a dominant language in the education system but also from its value within other markets. Bourdieu's example is important in this sense. He claims that "the defenders of Latin or, in other contexts, of French or Arabic, often talk as if the language they favour could have some value outside the market, by intrinsic virtues such as its 'logical' qualities; but, in practice, they are defending the market".¹⁵ Therefore, the linguistic capital of a language is shaped according to its value in the market. Family and school are the two markets in which competences of languages are constituted and the prices of the linguistic capitals are determined. Family and school are social spaces in which linguistic competences are produced and confirmed.¹⁶ Within these different fields, some dispositions are determined

¹³ Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," 243.

¹⁴ Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 61-62.

¹⁵ Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 57.

¹⁶ Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 81.

according to reinforcement of what is acceptable or disapproved and embarrassing. What is acceptable in one market might be unacceptable in another.¹⁷

Bourdieu defines linguistic field as a structure that includes power relations of the groups possessing different competences like dominant and dominated languages. All the linguistic exchanges take place within a linguistic field.¹⁸ The dominant language, language of the authority becomes the legitimate language. Being able to speak the legitimate language with a linguistic competence creates a linguistic capital for its speakers in a certain market.¹⁹

The value that the speakers assess the language spoken or the way that they are being spoken, such as their accents, is related with their class positions.²⁰ Thus, language as an embodied capital which serves for the preservation of the privilege of certain classes is also apparent in the perceptions of the speakers of the languages. Bourdieu gives a striking example about the relation between language and class that gender also intervenes. The working class male speakers in New York resist the legitimate way of speaking language by associating manliness with the way they speak.²¹ This is one of the ways of resisting the dominant cultural capital as making fun of it by associating femininity to the dominant and masculinity to their linguistic capital.

As Bourdieu argues, the desire to speak politely contains an internalization of the differentiation of sexes, classes and generations.²² For instance, it includes the choice of using polite language or words when talking to elderly people, women or

¹⁷ Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of The Judgement of Taste* (London: Routledge, 2010), 78.

¹⁸ Pierre Bourdieu, "The Economics of Linguistic Exchanges," *Social Science Information*, 16(6) 1997: 647.

¹⁹ Bourdieu, "The Economics of Linguistic Exchanges," 651.

²⁰ Bourdieu, "The Economics of Linguistic Exchanges," 660.

²¹ Bourdieu, "The Economics of Linguistic Exchanges," 661.

²² Bourdieu, "The Economics of Linguistic Exchanges," 662.

the people perceived as from high classes. This might also include the attribution of politeness to the dominant language and impoliteness or vulgarity to minority languages. The usage of the word “minority” for a language and every linguistic relation is a result of a history of a process of power relations. Within the power relations, legitimate language might create a linguistic capital that is institutionalized.

The linguistic capital is a function related with the symbolic mastery of the speaker and the practical mastery that comes from the class of the speaker. For Bourdieu, each person communicates through a language at the same time by forming a relation with the languages. Within this relation to language the formations and differences between bourgeois and working class languages can be observed. The attributions to bourgeois language such as abstraction, formalism, intellectualism are actually socially constituted relations with languages, and thus with the speakers of them.²³ The distinction that the privileged classes create through language is by excluding the “vulgar”.²⁴

Childhood within the family is the world where words define reality of things. For instance when the mother tells the child to bring something and if the child brings another thing, the mother says that it is not that object but the other. The relation that the child forms with language and what it refers to is not abstract. When the child starts school, he/she starts learning symbols, rules and abstraction. Therefore if the language within the family and the instruction of school are different, the children cannot bring the concrete knowledge they formed at home to school, let alone form the abstract. With the shift of languages, the reality of the child also changes. The language of the child from a rural area is always corrected by the

²³ Bourdieu and Passeron, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*, 116.

²⁴ Bourdieu and Passeron, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*, 118.

language of the classroom and as the teacher corrects the way the child speaks, it stigmatizes the language of the child.²⁵ Thus, language becomes one of the criteria by which the success of children is measured. The educational system, an institutionalized classifier, reproduces the hierarchies of the social world by transforming social classifications into academic ones²⁶, and it does this by claiming equality for all and neutrality.

Bourdieu criticizes linguists for legitimizing official language when they talk about *the* language where it is the language that imposes itself on people as the only legitimate language. The official language that also serves as the language of the state sets itself apart as the norm whereby the other linguistic practices are valued accordingly. Thus, in a situation where there are multiple languages or dialects or a particular use of language for different classes, the language that forms itself as the legitimate one also needs to monopolize the linguistic market. Teachers correcting the linguistic practices of children are the result of this monopoly of the official language.²⁷ In Turkey where language of instruction in education is only Turkish, the speakers of other languages or dialects may associate the teachers, who constantly correct their ways of speaking, with authority that humiliates their identity and language. Correcting may go hand in hand with marking the students speaking other languages as if they have a problem with understanding. As Bourdieu argues, within the process of legitimizing and imposing the official language, the institution of education has a crucial role. Additionally, the unification of the labour market also has a decisive role in the unification of language, and thus devalues other languages

²⁵ Bourdieu and Passeron, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*, 119.

²⁶ Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 388.

²⁷ Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 45.

and dialects.²⁸ The knowledge of the legitimate language is unequally distributed among people whereas the recognition of this language is almost uniform.²⁹

One's value of linguistic products is determined by their relation to a certain market. In the linguistic habitus, a sense of acceptability of linguistic products is formed which leads to a world where all the corrections and the self-censorship according to those corrections are made. Thus, the linguistic products are priced according to the market and the relation to the market is formed in ways that manifests itself as timidity, embarrassment (or silence or it can be manifested as ease and confidence). Self-censorship forms the manners of speaking; it forms the choice between two languages within the context of bilingualism, and also determines what can and cannot be said.³⁰ The acceptability is related with the relation or harmony of the market and with the habitus, where habitus itself is the product of its previous relations with the markets.³¹ A family occupies a certain position in social space, and thus a child born into that family forms certain dispositions towards the usages of language by the help of the family's sanctions.³² The dispositions towards the usages of languages are never independent from the history of power relations of groups that struggle for legitimizing their cultural and linguistic capitals as the norm.

Cultural Capital in Educational Research

The literature of bilingualism, which is against the monolingual education system, is critical of the dominant language being the only way of accessing the education system but that literature disregards the interaction between the spheres of education and home, and the power relations within which this interaction takes

²⁸ Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 48-49.

²⁹ Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 62.

³⁰ Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 77.

³¹ Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 81.

³² Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 82.

places.³³ Within the literature of bilingualism and sociology of education, one has to take a critical approach in order not to legitimize the existing structures of language i.e. official language, and the education system itself as an institution. The studies that I examine are the ones that use the concept of cultural capital in the analysis of the education system, question the social exclusion of some groups from that system and explore the ways of class reproduction.

In the countries where there is a clash between a native language and the dominant language in the education system, it is important to investigate how linguistic capital is transformed into economic capital.³⁴ Piller and Takahashi claim that there was a paradigm shift in the studies considering language and social inclusion in 1970s. For them, the focus of the studies has shifted to the ways in which the institutions set up barriers for some and favour the others.³⁵ They reject the idea that linguistic assimilation is the high road to social inclusion.³⁶ Their main argument is that multilingual institutions can be as exclusionary as the monolingual ones unless there is a “shift in our understanding of what inclusive linguistic diversity means”³⁷ and that shift is possible by regarding the transitivity of different languages and accents. This means that multilingual institutions need not only to include more than one language but also criticize the mentality of the monolingual institutions which defend the clear cut separation of languages. This criticism of multilingual approaches is important in the sense that it not only does not take some

³³ See Skutnab-Kangas, Tove. *Linguistic Genocide in Education or Worldwide Diversity and Human Rights?* New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2000.; Fishman, Joshua A. *Handbook of Language and Ethnic Identity*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.; Heller, Monica. *Bilingualism: A Social Approach*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.; Cummins, Jim. “Interdependence of First and Second Language Proficiency in Bilingual Children.” Edited by E. Bialystok, *Language Processing in Bilingual Children*, 70-89. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

³⁴ Ingrid Piller and Kimie Takahashi, “Linguistic Diversity and Social Inclusion,” *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 14, 4 (2011): 371.

³⁵ Piller and Takahashi, “Linguistic Diversity and Social Inclusion,” 377.

³⁶ Piller and Takahashi, “Linguistic Diversity and Social Inclusion,” 372.

³⁷ Piller and Takahashi, “Linguistic Diversity and Social Inclusion,” 378.

languages as monolithic and peculiar to some places (like the sphere of home) but also because they regard the power relations that can affect the usages of languages.

Another study that focuses on the interaction between the two spheres is that of Weininger and Lareau. They use Bourdieu's concepts in the American school system; therefore questioning their relevance opens up a new argument. The argument is focused on the interaction between the spheres of school and home. For them, the attempts of the school system in United States to incorporate the opinions, values and culture of the families is a new system that creates a need for the reconsideration of Bourdieu's concepts. The paper focuses on the parent-teacher conferences at two schools in the United States to modify the "reproduction thesis" of Bourdieu. In Bourdieu's reproduction thesis, habitus is initially formed within the family. Thus, ones' dispositions are formed as inherited cultural capital and are transferred across generations. The schools, on the other hand, are the institutions which promote the cultural capital of the dominant classes and are formed according to the habitus of those classes. The authors agree with Bourdieu in the sense that in order to understand a teacher's message, the parents need a certain kind of cultural capital that is differentially distributed.³⁸ But they add that the situation is different in U.S. in the sense that the education system tries to form an interaction between the spheres of school and home by "parent involvement" and "harmonizing the home and school environments".³⁹ Even though they agree with Bourdieu that people inherit cultural capitals within the families, they reformulate Bourdieu's ideas in the context of U.S. schools arguing that the school system has created a link between children's home and school lives.⁴⁰ I think that these attempts are very limited and

³⁸ Elliot B. Weininger and Annette Lareau, "Translating Bourdieu into the American Context: The Question of Social Class and Family-school Relations," *Poetics* 31 (2003): 384.

³⁹ Weininger and Lareau, "Translating Bourdieu into the American Context," 399.

⁴⁰ Weininger and Lareau, "Translating Bourdieu into the American Context," 399.

that the reproduction thesis of Bourdieu and Passeron is still relevant. With the ethnographic data Weininger and Lareau, found out that within the schools that are segregated by social class, at the conferences between middle-class parents and the teachers, the latter did not monopolize the interaction with working-class parents,⁴¹ and that middle-class parents more overtly challenged the authority of the teacher in their interaction.⁴² I think that their findings do not challenge the concepts of Bourdieu but rather they make a contribution to them. Because middle-class parents are more likely to question the authority of the teachers and have more to contribute to the system when compared with working-class parents, the privilege of the middle-class within the education system is still preserved. For me, the promotion of the dominant class's cultural capital within the education system, even in the U.S., where there is an attempt to accept multilingualism at schools, is not abandoned with parent-teacher conferences. The main contribution of this article is its argument on the interaction between the spheres of school and home. This approach is relevant to my research in that I also pay attention to how the interaction between home and school takes place for the Kurdish families and how the linguistic capital of Kurdish in Turkey is situated within that interaction. The approach of this article is also important for my research in that it makes me question the possible ways of challenging the privilege of certain cultural capitals. The ways of challenging might range from the political struggle of the education system to accept the linguistic capital of Kurdish to the repudiation of the current privileges of Turkish and the cultural capital it brings.

In another article, Weininger and Lareau analyze the ways in which the concept of cultural capital is used in educational research. For them, the concept of

⁴¹ Weininger and Lareau, "Translating Bourdieu into the American Context," 386.

⁴² Weininger and Lareau, "Translating Bourdieu into the American Context," 376.

cultural capital has opened up a new perspective for the researchers in that it regards culture as a resource that can be monopolized in favour of certain classes and can be transferred to next generation.⁴³ They use the term cultural capital different from the studies that narrow the concept to “highbrow”. They argue that the way Bourdieu uses it has a wider aspect that each person has a cultural capital in a way but some are not valued in certain institutions and fields which make them unvalued. The authors defend the necessity for a wider conception that points to a process that enables or disables people from passing the evaluations of the institutions like education.⁴⁴ They reject the dominant interpretation of the concept of cultural capital in educational research that resembles Weberian “elite status cultures”⁴⁵, cultural practices that provide prestige for its owners. I agree that this kind of conceptualization narrows down the concept of cultural capital in a way that restricts room for further research. The authors challenge the two assumptions of the studies that make use of cultural capital in educational research.

Weininger and Lareau argue that the concept of cultural capital is narrowed down first by its reference to only prestigious “highbrow” pursuits, and second with its differentiation from the effects of “ability”.⁴⁶ The authors’ argue that, referring to Bourdieu’s text “The Forms of Capital”, cultural capital does not need to provide prestige for its owners nor does it need to be “highbrow”; instead they take cultural capital as a “competence” that “enables appropriation ‘of the cultural heritage’ of the society”.⁴⁷ Still, it has the potential of exclusion of some groups which do not hold a kind of cultural capital, whose appropriation is different from other groups because

⁴³ Weininger and Lareau, , “Cultural Capital in Educational Research,” 567.

⁴⁴ Elliot B. Weininger and Annette Lareau, “Cultural Capital in Educational Research: A Critical Assessment,” *Theory and Society* 32, 5-6 (2003): 569.

⁴⁵ Weininger and Lareau, , “Cultural Capital in Educational Research,” 574.

⁴⁶ Weininger and Lareau, , “Cultural Capital in Educational Research,” 575.

⁴⁷ Weininger and Lareau, , “Cultural Capital in Educational Research,” 579.

of the dominance of a certain cultural capital in certain fields. This interpretation of cultural capital fits my research in that knowing Turkish does not necessarily form a “highbrow”, or prestige for its users, but it involves a kind of cultural capital that in the field of education it is one of the means of distinction for the ones who are comfortable with it. I argue that Turkish as the official language and educational language forms its cultural capital with its naturalness as being the dominant language and its distinction is formed in contrast to Kurdish (and any other language or dialect which does not fit into “proper Turkish”) which is labelled as “deficit”, and “peasant-like”.

According to Blackledge, in a similar vein as Weininger and Lareua’s approach, cultural capital is not peculiar to the ones who are educated nor is it peculiar to certain classes. Cultural capital refers to the fact that some people might be privileged in their own community but in another field like the school setting, it might not fit in and another kind of knowledge might be required.⁴⁸ For instance, Kurdish does not “lack” linguistic capital but rather it has its own capital within the Kurdish speaking community but that resource might not act as a resource in the Turkish monolingual education system. Blackledge found that in the context of Bangladesh families living in the United Kingdom the teachers had an attitude towards the Bangladeshi women as if the latter had the *wrong sort of* capital, as if the linguistic capital of the women was an obstacle for their children to be competent in English.⁴⁹ Referring to the findings of Blackledge, one might offer that it is for the benefit of the children to learn the standard language but the idea that assimilation is the highway to inclusion is a deficit in the sense that it ignores the symbolic values of a language and its linguistic capital within the community. Also, linguistic capital

⁴⁸ Adrian Blackledge, “The Wrong Sort of Capital? Bangladeshi Women and Their Children’s Schooling in Birmingham, U.K.,” *International Journal of Bilingualism* 5, 3 (2001): 348.

⁴⁹ Blackledge, “The Wrong Sort of Capital?,” 361.

becomes like a “second nature”⁵⁰ in that it is not enough for a child to know the dominant language, but he/she has to know it in a standard way and be its natural speaker.

For Bourdieu, the Black American vernacular in relation with the standard English forms a good example of a linguistic capital of children that is devalued at school but he also claims that within the context of colonialism, even if the dominant speaks the language of the dominated, he still cannot hide the power relations in which the act of speaking the dominated language is a “strategy of condescension”.⁵¹ The hierarchy formed between languages is a long history of dominance. For Fanon too, who analyzes the kinds of relationships that people form within the context of colonization describes the relation that the “negro” forms with the language of the colonizers. For Fanon, a language is not only a way of communication, but one who possesses a language also possesses the world implied by that language.⁵² Possessing a language is also a way of possessing power. This act of possessing power by speaking a certain language also includes speaking it in a certain way. Thus, the power relations manifest itself in the attitude towards accents and mixed languages. Fanon gives a striking example that the middle-class in the Antilles only speak Creole with their servants. In the school, children are encouraged to humiliate such a mixed language like Creole.⁵³

The accents are a part of the linguistic capital. As Urcioli with reference to Gumperz claims that accents can be observed in everyday life situations where the perception of ethnic and race boundaries lies beneath and these perceptions have

⁵⁰ Thompson, “Editor’s Introduction,” 12.

⁵¹ Bourdieu, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, 143.

⁵² Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks*, trans. Charles Lam Markmann (London:Pluto, 2008), 9.

⁵³ Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks*, 10.

consequences that affect people's social positions.⁵⁴ In a similar vein, according to Spolsky, the way a person speaks creates assumptions about the speaker's gender, educational level, profession, and place of origin.⁵⁵ This symbol is so powerful that it not only points to an ethnic identity but it always reminds the appointed connotations of that language each time it is heard.

Another writer who takes the unequal relationship among languages into consideration is Allan Luke. Luke's main argument is that language is an important factor in the reproduction of the educational inequality.⁵⁶ He takes race and language as forms of capital, referring to Bourdieu, as elements of habitus that children bring into context of school. But through resistance, people can change the criteria of judgment in the social field.⁵⁷ While recognizing the changeability of habitus, Luke claims that some aspects of it stay. Some forms of capital may be acquired later in life, such as learning a language or altering an accent but for him embodied dispositions remain.⁵⁸ The value of a language as cultural capital changes in different social spaces but it is important to investigate the ways that some are institutionalized in those social spaces like education.

Samy Alim analyzes a lawsuit which is symbolic in understanding how the institutionalized cultural capital at the school system can exclude the cultural capital of some students while privileging others, therefore causing discrimination. In the trial, the plaintiffs argued that the school did not take the economic and social backgrounds of children into consideration in teaching them "standard English". The

⁵⁴ Bonnie Urciuoli, "Language and Borders," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24, 1 (1995): 531.

⁵⁵ Bernard Spolsky, "Second Language Learning," in *Handbook of Language and Ethnic Identity*, ed. Joshua A. Fishman (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 181.

⁵⁶ Allan Luke, "Race and Language as Capital in School: A Sociological Template for Language Education Reform," in *Race, Culture, and Identities in Second Language Education: Exploring Critically Engaged Practice*, ed. Ryuko Kubota and Angel M. Y. Lin, (London: Routledge, 2009) 287.

⁵⁷ Luke, "Race and Language as Capital in School," 290.

⁵⁸ Luke, "Race and Language as Capital in School," 293.

judges ruled that the school should take the home language system into account as a way of teaching “standard English”.⁵⁹ By referring to this trial, Alim claims that one should be analyzing language within broader socio-political context and should regard the unequal power relations that the hierarchy of languages serves to maintain. Like the rule of the judges argues, this hierarchy is beyond the well intention of the educators or individuals. The author claims that traditional sociolinguistic and educational approaches, which highlight the discourse of “equality” of languages, serves for the promotion of “standard language”.⁶⁰ From a linguistic point of view, all languages might claim to be equal but the attributions to those languages and their exclusion from the institutions like education causes de facto hierarchy among them.

As a part of cultural capital, Sandel analyzes the linguistic capital of languages in Taiwan and its effects on language use and maintenance or shift. Sandel, borrowing the concept of linguistic capital from Bourdieu, analyses the linguistic capitals of the national and the native languages in Taiwan within the context of political pressures on the native languages. The article focuses on the experiences of the participants learning practices of languages at school and home and the reasons of language choice. The article argues that the experiences of the respondents who faced difficulties at school because they could not speak the language of instruction when they started school affected their language practices.⁶¹ Because of their past experience, they taught their children Mandarin, the language of instruction at schools; with the changes in the political situations, the parents started to encourage their children to speak their native language alongside the

⁵⁹ H. Samy Alim, “Critical Language Awareness in the United States: Revisiting Issues and Revising Pedagogies in a Resegregated Society,” *Educational Researcher* 34, 7 (2005): 26.

⁶⁰ Alim, “Critical Language Awareness in the United States,”: 28.

⁶¹ Todd L Sandel. “Linguistic Capital in Taiwan: The KMT’s Mandarin Language Policy and Its Perceived Impact on Language Practices of Bilingual Mandarin and Tai-gi Speakers,” *Language in Society* 32 (2003): 537.

national language. This finding matches exactly the findings of my field research of the Kurdish speaking parents in Turkey. Sandel also found out, which was also revealed in my case, that having lived with the grandparents eases children into speaking their native language.⁶² He emphasizes that the use and attributed linguistic capitals of languages are related with the political changes in the status of those languages and there had been a “revolarization” of Tai-gi, the native language with the political changes.⁶³ The findings support that the linguistic capital is not fixed and that it is affected by the changes in the market value of the language.⁶⁴

Gai Harrison claims that English has a linguistic capital because of its role in both the global economy and local economy of Australia and the respondents in the article were also aware of this situation of the power of English for exclusion. The article argues that more attention should be given to the role of languages in social work by highlighting the unequal relations as one is privileged over the others through a process of linguistic othering.⁶⁵ Using Bourdieu’s concept of linguistic capital as a measure of cultural capital that is the ability to speak another language or speak the language in certain ways⁶⁶, Gai analyses the ways in which English constitutes a linguistic capital for the Australian social workers and found that English became an integral part in bilingualism and respondents regarded it in a pragmatic way but they also questioned the beneficiary position of the native English speakers. Although Gai found out that in the Australian context, the respondents viewed bilingualism as a positive aspect, they showed how being a non-native speaker of English, goes in line with the process of linguistic othering and social

⁶² Sandel, “Linguistic Capital in Taiwan,” 542.

⁶³ Sandel, “Linguistic Capital in Taiwan,” 544.

⁶⁴ Sandel, “Linguistic Capital In Taiwan,” 547.

⁶⁵ Gai Harrison, “Language Politics, Linguistic Capital and Bilingual Practitioners in Social Work,” *British Journal of Social Work* 39, 6 (2009): 1082.

⁶⁶ Harrison, “Language Politics, Linguistic Capital and Bilingual Practitioners in Social Work,” 1094.

exclusion;⁶⁷ some claimed that they had an ascription of English since they were children that English was necessary for economic survival.⁶⁸ As one of the respondents of Gai states, these ascriptions make people accept “the underlying assumptions of English” as well in the process of being a speaker of English.⁶⁹

The hierarchy among languages where one language is valued more over the other may affect the usage and maintenance of those languages. In order to be able to measure ethnolinguistic vitality of a language, Bourhis, Giles and Rosenthal have developed some criteria using status, demographic and institutional support data. Alongside these, the subjective perception of vitality of the group was also regarded as one of the criteria.⁷⁰ Referring to Bourhis, Giles and Rosenthal, Yağmur borrows the term ethnolinguistic vitality, in which low vitality groups are more likely to go through linguistic assimilation. Even though there are “objective” criteria for the vitality, like demographic variables, migration, rate of mixed marriages, institutional support and representation, the theory of “subjective vitality perceptions” is also determining factor.⁷¹

Within this theoretical framework, Yağmur conducted a study in Australia, France, Germany and the Netherlands in order to understand the ethnolinguistic vitality of the Turkish minorities in those countries. He found out that Turkish is mostly spoken in the domestic domain and within the neighbourhoods which are concentrated in working class suburbs. Even though he claims that there is little institutional support for Turkish in the countries for its maintenance, there are

⁶⁷ Harrison, “Language Politics, Linguistic Capital and Bilingual Practitioners in Social Work,” 1096.

⁶⁸ Harrison, “Language Politics, Linguistic Capital and Bilingual Practitioners in Social Work,” 1094.

⁶⁹ Harrison, “Language Politics, Linguistic Capital and Bilingual Practitioners in Social Work,” 1091.

⁷⁰ R.Y. Bourhis, H.Giles and D. Rosenthal, “Notes on the Construction of a 'Subjective Vitality Questionnaire' for Ethnolinguistic Groups,” *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 2, 2 (1981): 145-155.

⁷¹ Kutlay Yagmur, “Does Ethnolinguistic Vitality Theory Account for the Actual Vitality of Ethnic Groups? A Critical Evaluation,” *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 32, 2 (2011): 112.

networks that go beyond neighbourhoods, such as mosques or cultural organizations. Besides these networks, the maintenance of Turkish within the family makes children acquire Turkish as the first language who are born into those families.⁷² This compartmentalization of languages to specific spheres is connected with a concept that Joshua Fishman uses as diglossia. According to Fishman, the maintenance of languages is related with their usage specific to some spheres. If a language or a variety of language stays peculiar to a sphere, it can be preserved. He defines a specific form of bilingualism as diglossia, where the language of the non-integrated ethnolinguistic groups is associated with home, elementary education and local government and commerce whereas the integrative language is associated with higher education, central government and nationwide commerce.⁷³ Sorban criticizes this view of Fishman by claiming that he ignores the role of power within the process of this separation of spheres and that he ignores the underlying reasons of language choice, assimilation process and the relation between identity and language. She carried out 50 interviews on carrier histories of the Hungarians in Romania in order to understand the relationship between language of education, language skills and strategies in the labour market. She found out that there was a stigmatization about mixed languages and that social norm of languages in the situation of bilingualism was that they should be separated and spoken “appropriately”.⁷⁴ I argue that this kind of desire to appropriate languages, to make them separate both related with their speaking and their spheres is a manifestation of a nation-state mentality. It is the manifestation of the separation of the private and public, formal and the informal, and it is the manifestation of a mentality that draws clear-cut boundaries and assumes

⁷² Kutlay, “Does Ethnolinguistic Vitality Theory Account for the Actual Vitality of Ethnic Groups?” 117.

⁷³ Joshua Fishman, “Bilingualism and Separatism,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 487 (1986): 171.

⁷⁴ Angella Sorban, “Sociological Aspects of Bilingualism in Education and in the Labour Market,” (PhD diss., Babeş-Bolyai University, 2011).

that these boundaries overlap with ethnicity and languages. Within this context, the languages are also faced with constructed dualities such as minority and majority, dominant and dominated, “vulgar” and “elite”.

Nancy Dorian is interested in situations where mixed languages occur. She focuses on the relation between a language that has lower prestige, less-favoured and the one which is dominant. She argues that it is easy to understand the language loyalty of the people who have learned their native language first and who are competent in that language. Their language loyalty continues even if their native language is not a favoured language.⁷⁵ However, according to Dorian, one needs to pay attention to the conditions where imperfect speakers insist on speaking a local language even if they are aware of the fact that it is in a position of weakening. In the first group that she defines, people have learned the local language first and better than the dominant language, they chose to continue speaking it. The other group that she focuses in the paper consists of the ones who cannot speak it fully but still continue using it. She calls those imperfect speakers as “semi-speakers”.⁷⁶ She found some patterns as to why these semi-speakers continue using the language even if there is not any compelling communicative need for it. One is the generational linguistic socialization outside the nuclear family. They are often with grandparents. The second reason for language maintenance is a sense of community identity. She also claims that even if two persons who were in similar situations in the sense of the first two conditions, their language loyalty might differ and one can fully abandon using the language. She theorizes this by on more individualistic inclination.⁷⁷ She explains this feature by shift-resistance personality of some people and their curiosity

⁷⁵ Nancy C. Dorian, “Language Shift in Community and Individual: The Phenomenon of the Laggard Semi-Speaker,” *International Journal of Sociology of Language* 25 (1980): 86.

⁷⁶ Dorian, “Language Shift in Community and Individual,” 86.

⁷⁷ Dorian, “Language Shift in Community and Individual,” 91.

where only exposure to a language produces passive bilingualism with no productivity.⁷⁸ The patterns of inter-generational communication and sense of identity to a community are similar for the Kurdish speaking people in Turkey as well and it is in line with my findings, but it is important to note that the same conditions for two different people do not mean absolute language maintenance or shift as seen for Kurdish in Turkey.

Kurdish in Turkey and Education

There are a few studies in Turkey whose main focus is on the Kurdish language including the reports. One of those few studies is an article which uses the concept of linguistic capital. It focuses on the Kurdish and Arabic speaking women and the relation between their mother tongues and their socio-economic positions but with the modernist tone of the article the argument reaches a point where it implies that assimilation is the best solution for educational success. In the article, Smits and Gündüz-Hoşgör use the data of the 1998 Turkish Demographic and Health Survey to compare the socio-economic situations of the people in Turkey who can speak Turkish and who cannot.⁷⁹ According to the authors, for Kurdish women who did not complete primary education and do not speak Turkish, language is a barrier that prevents their access to resources that require Turkish.⁸⁰ The theoretical background of the authors in defining Turkish as having a linguistic capital in Turkey is based on Bourdieu. The authors argue that the studies which pay attention to language including Bourdieu, mostly focus on its symbolic meanings but for them it is important to look at its socioeconomic consequences. With the analysis of the data, they found that about 4.1 per cent of the women who were at the ages of 15–49

⁷⁸ Dorian, "Language Shift in Community and Individual," 93.

⁷⁹ Jeroen Smits and Ayşe Gündüz-Hoşgör, "Linguistic Capital: Language as a Socio-economic Resource among Kurdish and Arabic Women in Turkey," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 26, 5 (2003): 829.

⁸⁰ Smits and Gündüz-Hoşgör, "Linguistic Capital," 830.

living in Turkey are not able to speak Turkish.⁸¹ Among the non-Turkish speaking Kurdish women, 89 per cent has had no education at all and that 92 percent is illiterate.⁸² With these percentages, one can conclude that some Kurdish women who have gained some education do not speak Turkish.

Smits and Gündüz-Hoşgör conclude that Kurdish and Arab women who are able to speak Turkish have a higher probability of being employed and working in the non-farm sector, have husbands with higher education and occupations, and have higher household incomes than the women who are not able to speak Turkish.⁸³ They claim that the predictions they made about linguistic capital theory are supported by their analysis on the socioeconomic conditions of Arab and Kurdish women who are not able to speak Turkish. The main problem of this analysis is the confusion in the causal direction of their argument. They cannot differentiate whether the reasons of worse socio-economic conditions for the non-Turkish speaking women are because of their lack of education and thus unemployment or if it is due to the fact that they do not speak Turkish. Therefore, in order to overcome this problem, they had analysis among the women without education, and found that the ones who are able to speak Turkish were significantly better on socio-economic outcomes.⁸⁴ This analysis has mainly two deficits. Firstly, it ignores the political movement behind Kurdish and the symbolic connotations of it and secondly it implicitly offers assimilation for non-Turkish speaking people in order to have the same chances of access to resources as the Turkish speaking people have rather than criticizing the institutions that promote this differentiation. Without analyzing the social and political context that the languages are spoken in, the analysis of a usage, symbolic

⁸¹ Smits and Gündüz-Hoşgör, "Linguistic Capital," 839.

⁸² Smits and Gündüz-Hoşgör, "Linguistic Capital," 841.

⁸³ Smits and Gündüz-Hoşgör, "Linguistic Capital," 847

⁸⁴ Smits and Gündüz-Hoşgör, "Linguistic Capital," 847.

value or the effects of being a speaker of that language would be deficient. If a language is degraded and there is a hierarchy between languages, it is never a differentiation exempt from power relations.

There are different levels of being competent in languages, therefore it is also important to define what bilingualism means. Ceyhan and Koçbaşı clarify the term bilingualism so that it does not necessarily mean that a person can use both languages in equal competences but rather it is the social and psychological situations of people using two languages. Thus, a person who uses Kurdish at home and within the family and uses Turkish at school is regarded as bilingual.⁸⁵ The authors remind us that the terms first, second languages and home language, mother tongue are not fixed, considering that the children in their research could speak in Kurdish with their parents and Turkish with their siblings or relatives around their ages at home. Alongside the parents talking in Kurdish with their children, the authors observed some parents spoke in Turkish with them so that their children would be successful at school⁸⁶. The authors have conducted school ethnographies in cities that received migration in Germany and Turkey. In the school they chose in Turkey, the first languages of the nearly half of the students were Turkish and the other half were Kurmanji/Kurdish and some were Arabic, Zazakî and Armenian. The observations they made within the classrooms show that groups who are the target of prejudice and stereotype, are prone to have prejudices towards other groups as well, such as the relations between Kurds and the Roma. This situation manifests itself in languages as well. Nesrin Uçarlar reminds us that while the Kurdish in Turkey resists the language planning and struggles for the continuation of linguistic rights, this

⁸⁵ Müge Ayhan Ceyhan and Dilara Koçbaşı, *Göç ve Çokdillilik Bağlamında Okullarda Okuryazarlık Edinimi: LAS Projesi Türkiye Raporu*, (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi, 2011), 11.

⁸⁶ Ceyhan and Koçbaşı, *Göç ve Çokdillilik Bağlamında Okullarda Okuryazarlık Edinimi*, 12.

occurs at the risk of forming a domination of the dialect of the majority over the other dialects.⁸⁷ This can be valid for the relationship between the dialects of Kurmanji/Kurmancî (the dialect of the majority) and Zazakî. The manifestations of this may be that Zaza speakers can speak the Kurmanji/Kurmancî dialect as well but it is not valid for the situation the other way around.

When the stereotypes are institutionalized and the teachers continue them towards their students, the students might cut off their bounds with the institution. In other words, they might devalue the acts within that area that they are faced with prejudice.⁸⁸ There is also an interesting observation that they had in the classroom which shows how school and education disregards the knowledge of Kurdish speaking children, thus it disregards the linguistic capital of them. In a Turkish lesson of the seventh grade, the teacher asks what kind of suffix is *-me* in Turkish. A bilingual child answers that it is possessive suffix. The teacher gets angry and accuses the child of not listening and answers that it is “negative suffix” in Turkish. But what the teacher does not know is that the same suffix is actually used for possessive suffix in Kurdish.⁸⁹ This also means that the child is told by the authority within the education system that the knowledge he brings into school from his life outside is valueless and it is actually wrong. Derince, furthering this point, argues that for Kurdish children or children from minority language speaking communities, it is not enough to speak the language of instruction at schools. The linguistic inequality continues for those children since the colloquial language they speak is different from the language they need in order to be successful at school.⁹⁰ He also

⁸⁷ Nesrin Uçarlar, “Between Majority Power and Minority Resistance: Kurdish Linguistic Rights in Turkey,” (PhD diss., Lund University), 237.

⁸⁸ Ceyhan and Koçbaşı, *Göç ve Çokdillilik Bağlamında Okullarda Okuryazarlık Edinimi*, 34.

⁸⁹ Ceyhan and Koçbaşı, *Göç ve Çokdillilik Bağlamında Okullarda Okuryazarlık Edinimi*, 44.

⁹⁰ Şerif Derince, “Eğitimde Çiftillilik ve Dillerarası Bağımlılık,” *Birikim* 254 (2010): 51.

points out to the institutionalized cultural capital by claiming that the schools in Turkey by not providing a mother tongue based education, excludes the linguistic identity of the children.⁹¹

Another striking finding of Ceyhan and Koçbaşı is that a child of the first grade had whispered to the researchers that he was going to a Kurdish course outside school. When he was asked why he was whispering, he told that he did not want his teacher to get in trouble.⁹² At such an early age, the children are taught to hide that their mother tongues are different from Turkish. Even if it is well known by the teachers as well in schools, it becomes like a fact that no one enunciates. Within the footnote though, the authors noted that a second grade classroom teacher promoted children to sing in Kurdish, but that grade was out of their project, therefore it stayed as an exceptional observation. It is worth noticing that at the schools in the Kurdish region and with the Kurdish speaking teachers, different practices may occur like talking some Kurdish with the students or referring to Kurdish as the first language of children as I will go back when analyzing my data.

The example of Irfan Aktan shows how the attributions to languages affect language use and its relation to feeling of belonging to a class. Remembering from his childhood, he tells that the children who migrated to big cities and who were relatively rich and came for a visit to their villages, claimed that they forgot Kurdish. He tells that those children liked to pronounce Kurdish wrong, reminding other children that Kurdish was the language of the poor. Departing from this anecdote he claims that upper-middle Kurdish class avoids using their mother tongues.⁹³ Derince claims that the reason why middle-class Kurdish families who live in city centres or

⁹¹ Derince, "Eğitimde Çiftdilcilik ve Dillerarası Bağımlılık," 51.

⁹² Ceyhan and Koçbaşı, *Göç ve Çokdillilik Bağlamında Okullarda Okuryazarlık Edinimi*, 47.

⁹³ Irfan Aktan, "Lo!" *Birikim* 254 (2010): 62.

migrated to western cities use more Turkish at home is the fact that they have more educational opportunities and that the language of education is Turkish.⁹⁴ But I think the attributions to languages of the speakers and the hierarchy among languages supported by the institutions should also be taken into consideration. In a similar way to my argument, Öpengin claims that the reason why the parents were reluctant to teach Kurdish to their children in Diyarbakır and in Şemziman (a village in Hakkari) was the perception that connected being “urban” with Turkish and because of that they shifted to Turkish as the means of communication within family.⁹⁵ He claims that it is the consolidation of linguistic monopolization as a result of the urbanization.⁹⁶

Ergin Öpengin argues that there is a language shift in favour of Turkish among the speakers of Kurdish in Turkey. He does not claim to be representative of the Kurdish community but rather points out to a tendency of the usage of Turkish and Kurdish in that community. He argues that within the process of socialization of children Turkish became dominant and Kurdish is being replaced by Turkish.⁹⁷ There is a language shift in the Kurdish speaking people in the benefit of Turkish across generations. The people who had more years of education and the people who are younger are more inclined to speak Turkish.⁹⁸ However, he does not deny the symbolic and pragmatic functions of language and the fact that language might be empowered by those functions and by reaction.⁹⁹ For Öpengin, Kurdish gained an *integrative* value meaning that some parents taught Kurdish to their children just

⁹⁴ Derince, *Anadili Temelli Çokdilli ve Çokdialektli Dinamik Eğitim*, 19.

⁹⁵ Ergin Öpengin, “Türkiye’de Kürtçenin Durumuna Toplumbilimsel Bir Bakış,” *Birikim* 253 (2010): 31.

⁹⁶ Öpengin, “Türkiye’de Kürtçenin Durumuna Toplumbilimsel Bir Bakış,” 32.

⁹⁷ Ergin Öpengin, “Language Practices and Education in Mother Tongue: Some Problems Concerning Kurdish Mother Tongue Medium Education in Turkey,” *Mukaddime* 3 (2010): 77

⁹⁸ Öpengin, “Language Practices and Education in Mother Tongue,” 76.

⁹⁹ Öpengin, “Language Practices and Education in Mother Tongue,” 77.

with the ethnic identification motivations even if it did not have an instrumental value.¹⁰⁰ Öpengin claims that Kurdish lost its power and sphere as a language of communication within the society, ironically in the 1980's in the context of urbanization and schooling, when it gained its *integrative* meaning and significance of identification.¹⁰¹ Language loyalty may be a factor in the continuation of languages even if the differentiation of spheres into languages is violated and the dominant language intervenes within the sphere of home. This evaluation in some ways disapproves Fishman in the place where Fishman ignores the power relations and resistance that the languages hold.

Another point that Öpengin makes is that the Kurdish used in the television channels (like Nuçe TV or Sterk TV) is a purist one, which does not support code changes (which means using borrowed words from other languages in speaking Kurdish). This purist language may cause language insecurity for Kurdish speaking people in Turkey which is a situation that forms negative perceptions among the speakers of the language about their linguistic abilities.¹⁰² This is another aspect of linguistic insecurity, alongside the dominant language correcting the “illegitimate” ways of speaking. As Bourdieu argues, through censorship of the dominant language and its constant corrections, people start controlling and correcting the language they use. This recognition of the dominant language may lead to a linguistic insecurity among the speakers.¹⁰³

Cuma Çicek claims that with the new politics of individualistic cultural rights after 2002, the politics of security that Turkey has applied in Kurdish regions are continued with the “cultural management” (*kültürel idare*) where Kurdish is

¹⁰⁰ Öpengin, “Türkiye’de Kürtçenin Durumuna Toplumbilimsel Bir Bakış,” 33.

¹⁰¹ Öpengin, “Türkiye’de Kürtçenin Durumuna Toplumbilimsel Bir Bakış,” 35.

¹⁰² Öpengin, “Türkiye’de Kürtçenin Durumuna Toplumbilimsel Bir Bakış,” 33.

¹⁰³ Bourdieu, “The Economics of Linguistic Exchanges,” 656.

completely excluded from collective rights such as education and public services.¹⁰⁴ This restriction also affects the use of Kurdish and in line with the criticism of Fishman, these power relations and restrictions on language affect the compartmentalization of languages. According to Çiçek, in order to understand language loss (or shift) we have to look at the dynamics that restrict language use, i.e. the social circumstances that the language is under.¹⁰⁵ While regarding the law that allows teaching Kurdish in private schools in 2002 and Kurdish state channel - TRT6- positive, Çiçek claims that the new era of the individualistic cultural rights that reduces learning and teaching of Kurdish to domestic linguistic choice does not offer Kurdish a long lasting life.¹⁰⁶

This compartmentalization of languages has a gender aspect that the girls in Turkey who are less likely to be sent to school are also less likely to face the dominant language Turkish. This is another aspect where the hierarchy among languages and their values in different linguistic fields coincide with the hierarchy between sexes and the different hierarchies are intertwined. Carol Benson's argument is in line with that of David Corson that girls have less opportunity to be exposed to the dominant language because of the gender roles that restrict them within domestic sphere and family.¹⁰⁷ In contrary with this, an interesting finding that the survey of Union of Education (*Eğitim-Sen*) conducted with 781 people representing Turkey is worth noticing. Firstly, the identification with identity and language and the statement of mother tongue did not match exactly. In the survey people were asked

¹⁰⁴ Cuma Çiçek, "Bireysel Haklar, Kolektif Haklar ve Dil Kaybı," *Birikim* 253 (2010): 17.

¹⁰⁵ Çiçek, "Bireysel Haklar, Kolektif Haklar ve Dil Kaybı," 19.

¹⁰⁶ Çiçek, "Bireysel Haklar, Kolektif Haklar ve Dil Kaybı," 23.

¹⁰⁷ Carol Benson, *Girls, Educational Equity and Mother Tongue Based Teaching*, Bangkok: UNESCO, 2005; David Corson, *Language, Minority Education and Gender: Linking Social Justice and Power*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1993.

what their mother tongue was, 16.9 percent answered that it was another language other than Turkish. 10.6 percent of the respondents said that their mother tongue was Kurdish, and 3.2 percent said it was Zazakî (the reference of Kurdish (*Kürtçe*) and Zazakî (*Zazaca*) is on behalf of the statements of the respondents). However, the percentage of the people who ethnically identified themselves as Kurdish was slighter higher (12.3 percent) than the statement of mother tongue as Kurdish whereas people who ethnically identified themselves as Zaza was the same (3.2 percent).¹⁰⁸ The language shift was pointed out with the percentage that the parents speak in their mother tongues among themselves or with the relatives is between 45 to 72 percent while the percentage reduces to 27 when they are speaking with their children.¹⁰⁹ A claim of Şerif Derince is that although girls have less opportunity to learn the language of education Turkish before they start school in areas where Kurdish is dominant especially in domestic and social relations, girls who manage to start and continue school give away their mother tongues more easily than boys.¹¹⁰ This argument was proposed on the workshops that they did for the book *Dil Yarası* with the teachers working with Kurdish children. The teachers observed that girls could continue school less than boys, they were quieter in the class and in the long term they forgot Kurdish faster.¹¹¹ Again by referring to the fieldwork of *Dil Yarası*, he claims that while men were bilingual whether they were educated or not, women were more monolingual in Turkish if they were educated and in Kurdish if they were not educated.¹¹² This claim needs further investigation and an analysis of the reasons

¹⁰⁸ Adnan Gümüş, *Eğitimde Anadilin Kullanımı ve Çift dilli Eğitim: Halkın Tutum ve Görüşleri Türkiye Taraması 2010* (Ankara: Eğitim-Sen, 2011), 59.

¹⁰⁹ Gümüş, *Eğitimde Anadilin Kullanımı ve Çift dilli Eğitim*, 67.

¹¹⁰ Derince, *Anadili Temelli Çok dilli ve Çok dilyalektli Dinamik Eğitim*, 17.

¹¹¹ Şerif Derince, *Toplumsal Cinsiyet, Eğitim ve Anadili* (Diyarbakır: DISA, 2012), 15.

¹¹² Derince, *Toplumsal Cinsiyet, Eğitim ve Anadili*, 33.

why such a gender difference would occur needs an understanding that does not hold women responsible on “not holding onto” native languages.

This research aims at contributing to the studies that are inspired by Bourdieu’s concepts of cultural and linguistic capital by examining the formation of the linguistic capital of Kurdish. It aims at doing so by analysing the attributions to Kurdish and the hierarchy of languages within the socio-political context. It aims to discuss the situation and transference of Kurdish in Turkey and the different aspects of the formation of its linguistic capital. Thus, the next chapter will analyse some of the main events within the history of Turkey which has effects on the constitution of the linguistic capital of Kurdish including the policies of the Turkish state and different social movements.

CHAPTER III: The Situation of Kurdish in Turkey: A Brief Background

Kurds and Kurdish

The Kurds had not formed a state (except an experience of the Republic of Mahabad Republic with the help of the Soviet Union that lasted less than a year¹¹³), and their language did not become the official language of a state until 1992 with the formation of Kurdish Regional Government that gained autonomy from Iraq. Therefore, the issue of the standardization of Kurdish had started to be discussed at the beginning of the 20th century and is still being discussed.¹¹⁴

The chief dialect of Kurdish in Turkey is Kurmanji (Kurmancî) but there are also people who speak Zazakî. There are two major dialects of Kurdish, Kurmanji spoken by the northern Kurds and Soranî by the southern. The two other dialects of Kurdish are Zazakî spoken by both Sunni and Alevi Kurds and Gorani.¹¹⁵ According to the survey of Union of Education (*Eğitim-Sen*) in 2010, 10.6 percent of the respondents stated that their mother tongue was Kurdish and 3.2 stated that it was Zazakî. While people who stated that they are Kurdish in the survey is slightly more than that it is 12.3 percent, the percentage is the same for the ethnic identification of Zaza and the mother tongue of Zazakî. The report analyzed the generational difference for the language loss. The people who stated their mother tongue as Kurdish were compared with their parents and it was found that there was a language loss of 14.43 percent (out of 97 people whose mother tongue is Kurdish, 83 could preserve their language) and this percentage is higher for Zazakî (24.23 percent)¹¹⁶ However, one has to take into consideration that the population of the Zazakî speakers were low in

¹¹³ George S. Harris, "Ethnic Conflict and the Kurds," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 433 (1977): 112.

¹¹⁴ Amir Hassanpour, *The Language Factor in National Development: The Standardisation of the Kurdish Language 1918-1984* (Illinois: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1989).

¹¹⁵ McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, 10.

¹¹⁶ Gümüş, *Eğitimde Anadilin Kullanımı ve Çiftilli Eğitim*, 59-60.

the survey (33 people) that it might be another reason why the percentage shows high. Whether Kurdish language being the mother tongue or the language mostly spoken at home is an estimate of the population of the Kurds is another debate. Alongside this difficulty, other ambiguities make it harder to estimate the Kurdish population as well. The estimation of the Kurdish population in Turkey varies according to different sources. In 1975, Bruinessen estimated that there were 7.5 million Kurds living in Turkey by which he calculated from the official numbers from the census.¹¹⁷ The problem with the census numbers is that people answering the census questions are likely to claim that their mother tongue is Turkish because of the official discourse. At the time McDowall wrote his book in 1996, he claimed that there were about 24-27 million Kurds living in the Middle East and at least 13 million of those were living in Turkey (out of a population of approximately 60 million).¹¹⁸ It can be claimed that Kurds form approximately one fifth of the population in Turkey.

The written production in Kurdish first appeared in the sixteenth century with the two dialects of Kurdish, Hewramî and Kurmanji. Later in the nineteenth century, Soranî began to have written works.¹¹⁹ The written Kurdish was introduced to print culture in 1898 with the newspaper published in Cairo, *Kurdistan* and it was mainly in Kurmanji, also in Ottoman language.¹²⁰ *Kurdistan* was a bilingual journal that supported both the Union and Progress and the Kurdish people.¹²¹ Journals such as *Rojî Kurd*, *Yekbûn*, *Jîn* and *Hetawî Kurd* were published in Kurmanji and in

¹¹⁷ Martin Van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State: The Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan* (London: Zed Books, 1992), 14.

¹¹⁸ David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds* (London: New York: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 3.

¹¹⁹ Amir Hassanpour, Jaffer Sheyholislami and Tove-Skutnabb Kangas, "Kurdish: Linguicide, Resistance and Hope," *International Journal of Sociology of Language* 217 (2012), 2.

¹²⁰ Hassanpour et al., "Kurdish," 6.

¹²¹ McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, 90.

Ottoman within the period of 1908-1920.¹²² With the formation of the republic, the written products in Kurdish were banned in Turkey. A play in Kurdish was published in 1965 by Musa Anter, who was put into prison because of his play, after a 40-year silence.¹²³ A few books were published in Kurdish until the end of the 1970s but they were all banned and Kurdish could not find a way in written language until the official ban was lifted in 1990s.

Formation of the Republic: 1910s-1930s

Within the *Millet* system in the Ottoman Empire different communities had autonomy of self-governance. *Millet* as a word refers to religion, the religious community and nation.¹²⁴ These meanings were used in the Ottoman Empire concurrently where one can conclude that the religion and nation were intertwined, as it was for the Kurds as well. The *Millet* system allowed autonomous self-governance with religious leaders (for instance the Armenian and the Jewish Communities) and also for other non-Muslim communities.¹²⁵ The Kurds and Arabs were regarded as a part of the Muslim *Millet*. Nevertheless, before the formation of the republic, the Kurds in the Ottoman Empire had relative autonomy; Kurdish could be a language used in education, and publication in Kurdish was not restricted.

One of the main ideals of the new Turkish republic which was laicism also had an effect on the usage of Kurdish within the religious schools. With their closure and centralization of education, Kurdish had also lost its space within education. The closure of the religious schools in 1912 was among the first signs of the laicism of

¹²² Platforma Neteweyî, accessed August 25, 2013, <http://arsivakurdi.com/magazin>.

¹²³ M. Malmisanij, *The Past and The Present of Book Publishing in Kurdish Language in Turkey* (Sofia: Next Page Foundation, 2006), 19.

¹²⁴ Clifford Edmund Bosworth et al., ed., *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, (Leiden: E..J. Brill, 1993), 61.

¹²⁵ Stanford Shaw, *History of The Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey Volume I: Empire of the Gazis: The Rise and Decline of the Ottoman Empire, 1280-1808* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 59.

the new republic and according to McDowall their closure was an end to Kurdish being the medium of instruction at schools.¹²⁶ However, Öpengin claims that within the *medrese* Kurdish was not the language of instruction but it was rather a medium of communication, thus its role was more of an instrumental one.¹²⁷ But in any case with the Unification of Education (*Tevhid-i Tedrisat*) in 1924 any use of Kurdish, either instrumental or as a language of instruction was forbidden. With this law, all the institutions of education were bound to the Board of Education (*Maarif Vekaleti*)¹²⁸ where the education system was standardized, centralized, “monolingualized” and controlled.

Bozarslan identifies the official doctrine of the Turkish republic throughout the 20th century as one which synthesizes the ideas of the Westernizers, the Islamists and the Nationalists, culminating in a Turkish-Islamist synthesis based on Turkification.¹²⁹ After World War I, Kurdistan -the place which historically referred to “the land of the Kurds”- with the formation of the nation-states, started to be ruled by the Turkish, Syrian, Iraqi, and Iranian States. With modernity, the locus of political power has changed, and thus control over territory meant increasingly control over the population living on it, the citizens.¹³⁰ For Abbas Vali, nation-state and statelessness are the products of the same historical process; they are both products of modernity.¹³¹ Thus, Kurds in the period of nation-states became the “stateless”.

¹²⁶ McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, 192.

¹²⁷ Ergin Öpengin, “Language Practices and Education in Mother Tongue: Some Problems Concerning Kurdish Mother Tongue Medium Education in Turkey,” *Mukaddime* 3 (2010): 68.

¹²⁸ “Tevhidi Tedrisat Kanunu,” MEB Mevzuat, accessed August 20, 2013, <http://mevzuat.meb.gov.tr/html/110.html>.

¹²⁹ Hamit Bozarslan, “Political Crisis and the Kurdish Issue in Turkey,” in *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s: Its Impact on Turkey*, ed. Robert Olson (Kentucky : The University Press of Kentucky, 1996), 137.

¹³⁰ Abbas Vali, “The Kurds and Their Others : Fragmented Identity and Fragmented Politics,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 18,2 (1998): 84.

¹³¹ Vali, “The Kurds and Their Others,” 85.

Kurdish identity started to be formed under the influence and/or the pressure of different states but the different formations of the Kurdish identities under different states also affected each other. This fragmentation was clear for the Kurdish language as well. In Turkey, language started to be effected from modern Turkish so that northern Kurds started to use Latin alphabet for written Kurdish, whereas southern and eastern Kurds continued with the Arabic alphabet. Sheyholislami claims that Kurds who were under different states could not communicate easily for they were affected by the dominant languages of those states. Therefore it created a gap between them that lacked the means for sharing an identity construct.¹³²

The treaty of Lausanne in 1924 that Turkey signed after World War I granted some rights to minorities such as the use of mother tongue as the language of instruction at schools. The minority in the treaty is defined as religious minorities that are non-Muslims such as Armenians, Jews and the Greeks. Thus, Kurds living in Turkey were not granted any rights in continuing their language or culture. This mentality of granting the name “minority group,” and thus claiming to guarantee their rights to non-Muslims still has an effect on the current writings as well. Aydıngün and Aydıngün by analyzing the homogenizing role of the elites of the Turkish republic, reproduce this mentality. They mention the exclusion of Armenians and Greeks¹³³ within the unification of language however the words Kurds and Kurdish do not take place even once. The authors point to the importance given to Turkish language in the formation of the Turkish nation by the forming elites. They claim that the purification and simplification of language did not start with the formation of the Turkish Republic. They claim that this act of simplification goes

¹³² Jaffer Sheyholislami, “Identity, Language, and New Media: The Kurdish Case,” *Language Policy* 9,4 (2010): 292.

¹³³ Ayşegül Aydıngün and İsmail Aydıngün, “The Role of Language in the Formation of Turkish National Identity and Turkishness,” *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 10,3 (2010): 427.

back to the period of Tanzimat (starting with 1839) and it is explicit in the movement called the Young Pens (*Genç Kalemler*) founded in 1911. The authors of Young Pens had the idea that the difference in language used by people and the elite (Ottoman Turkish) was a problem.¹³⁴ Thus, the unification of language also meant that forming national feelings through language. Within this transition period from empire to nation-state, the formation of a national language which started with Tanzimat, was important in the formation of the Turkish Republic. This emphasis on language continued throughout the republic, also by Kemal Atatürk, who stated that one of the most important characters of a nation was its language.¹³⁵ Within this analysis, one has to consider one of the main groups who suffered from the unification of language and the homogenizing ideology of the republic were Kurds and Kurdish. In fact, Kurdish language and culture had faced systematic assimilationist politics of the Turkish State.

The republic of Turkey which was formed in 1923 was a nation-state project that was based on homogenizing different ethnicities into “Turk,” different languages into Turkish and different dialects into “proper Turkish” which was the Turkish of Istanbul. The official discourse of the Turkish State with the formation of the republic was that Kurdish did not exist as a language. This discourse was clear in the constitution of 1924 and within the constitutional committee it was claimed that Turkish state was a nation-state (*devleti milliye*) and that the state would not recognize a nation other than the Turks.¹³⁶ In 1924, the public use of Kurdish was

¹³⁴ Aydıngün and Aydıngün, “The Role of Language in the Formation of Turkish National Identity and Turkishness,” 418.

¹³⁵ Aydıngün and Aydıngün, “The Role of Language in the Formation of Turkish National Identity and Turkishness,” 423.

¹³⁶ Mesut Yeğen, “Türk Milliyetçiliği ve Kürt Sorunu,” in *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasi Düşünce: Milliyetçilik* ed. Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekingil (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002), 883.

restricted and Kurdish tribal leaders were resettled.¹³⁷ In article 12 of the constitution of 1924, where the official language was declared as Turkish, being a speaker of Turkish was also a requirement to be elected to the parliament.¹³⁸ Speaking Turkish became the only way by which the speakers of other languages could be a part of the governing.

The legislations considering the restrictions on the linguistic and cultural rights were legitimized by Kurdish unrest and revolts. With the Şeyh Said Revolt (1925) and Ağrı Revolt (1927-1930), the Kurds and their language were regarded as a possible threat to the “unity” of the nation-state and strict bans on language and identity were applied. Alongside the revolts, Kurdish organizations were formed around different circles. These organizations were also targeted with legislations. The “Law of Associations” prohibited political associations to be based on ethnicity. This law also affected Kurdish groups and they were closed down.¹³⁹

The Ottoman state with its system of *millet* had relative autonomy for the communities alongside the autonomy given to the tribes. The new Kemalist regime, through deconstructing these social forms of the tribes also abolished the caliphate. For McDowall, the ability of the Turkish state to suppress the Şeyh Said rebellion showed the difficulty to unite the linguistic, geographical, religious, and socio-economic differences among Kurds.¹⁴⁰ After Şeyh Said, a law called the Law on the Maintenance of Order (*Takrir-i Sükûn Kanunu*) was passed in order to prevent the oppositions to the newly formed republic. With this law, government banned organizations and publications for two years that it considered as opposition.¹⁴¹ With

¹³⁷ Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 223-224.

¹³⁸ “1924 Anayasası,” Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi, accessed August 18, 2013, <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/anayasa/anayasa24.htm>.

¹³⁹ McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, 94.

¹⁴⁰ McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, 197.

¹⁴¹ Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 171.

the Reform Plan for the East (*Şark Islahat Planı*) in 1925, public use of Kurdish was subject to punishment.¹⁴²

Meanwhile, there had been works done for the formation of Turkish as the official language of the state and the language of instruction at schools. The law on the Adoption and Application of the Turkish Alphabet (*Türk Harflerinin Kabulü ve Tatbiki Hakkında Kanun*) was accepted in 1928. This law banned the usage of the formerly used Arabic alphabet and obliged use of the Latin one (where in the law was called as the “Turkish alphabet”).¹⁴³ Parliament passed a law in 1929 ordering that within the companies and organizations each written communication or the contracts, calculations and processes should be in Turkish.¹⁴⁴ The language was like a symbol of the new republic that it had to be unified, authentic (which means that the least possible borrowed words from Arabic or Persian was preferred), and westernized. With the purification of language, the borrowed words from Arabic and Persian were detected and they were replaced by the new ones. “Nation Schools” (*Millet Mektepleri*) were organized to spread the new alphabet to every corner of the country. The spreading of education meant the infusion of language and the ideology of the new state to the citizens.

Solidification of the Ideology: 1930s-1950s

In 1932, the Turkish Language Association (*Türk Dil Kurumu*) was established with Mustafa Kemal’s order. After The First Congress of the Turkish Language (*Birinci Türk Dil Kurultayı*) at the same year, the intentions of the language reform were explained as bringing Turkish to a position so that it could

¹⁴² Mehmet Bayrak, *Şark Islahat Planı: Kürtlere Vurulan Kelepçe* (Istanbul: Özge, 2009).

¹⁴³ “Türk Harflerinin Kabul Ve Tatbiki Hakkında Kanun,” MEB Mevzuat, accessed August 21, 2013, <http://mevzuat.meb.gov.tr/html/112.html>

¹⁴⁴ “İktisadi Müesseselerde Mecburi Türkçe Kullanılması Hakkında Kanun,” Mevzuat, accessed August 21, 2013, <http://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/1.3.805.pdf>

become the perfect means for showing the national culture and making it competent so that it will meet the needs of the civilization. Within the scope of these aims, there was a need to discard foreign elements from the language.¹⁴⁵ Thus, purification of the language implied a desired shift in the minds of the people. This shift meant that the language of the nation-state could not be a “mixture” of languages like the Ottoman language. The identity of being a Turk was also desired to be created through the Turkish language in the sense that the shift to the Latin alphabet and the purification of language -the subtraction of the Arabic and Persian words- cut off the connections with the Arab world and with the Ottoman past. Extraction of the Arabic and the Persian words was a way of proving that Turkish existed as a separate language that no other people could understand, thus proving that Turks existed as a nation.

The banning of Kurdish as a language of publication occurred almost at the same time with the switch to the Latin alphabet. Kurdish was banned without any reference to a language called Kurdish by the laws in constitution. In article 2 of the 1924 constitution, it was written that the language of the Turkish state was Turkish.¹⁴⁶ The official discourse in the 1930s was based on the construction of the Turkish identity and national language (“pure” Turkish) by leaving out the different languages and dialects.

Before the Multi-Party System

Within the period of one party rule of the Peoples Republican Party (CHP), changes in the demographic structures where Kurds lived were made. The demographic intervention into the places where mostly Kurds lived was tried to b

¹⁴⁵ Şerafettin Turan, “Atatürk Devrimlerinin Bütünlüğü içinde Dil Devrimi,” in *Atatürk’ün Yolunda Türk Dil Devrimi* (Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu, 1981), 15-16.

¹⁴⁶ “1924 Anayasası,”

legitimized by the revolts. The Settlement Law (*İskan Kanunu*)¹⁴⁷ in 1934 after the Şeyh Said revolt targeted the tribal leaders (*aşiret*) which were the ties that Kurds formed in the Ottoman period. The law divided Turkey into three zones. In the first one, Turkish speaking people and people from the Turkish ethnicity were living and this zone could receive migration. In the second one, there were people who needed to be “Turkified” with the settlement policies. The third zone included the places where it was closed to settlement with security reasons.¹⁴⁸ Alongside the legal prohibitions, with the demographic changes it became harder for Kurdish to be the language of everyday life practices.

In 1934 with the law of Surname (*Soyadı Yönetmeliği*) the Kurdish names were forbidden to be given to children.¹⁴⁹ The politics showed clearly that the Kurdish identity was discouraged from being passed on to future generations.

Dersim

In 1930s the efforts of the state were on the ways that could prove that Kurds were actually Turks and in 1936, the governor of Dersim¹⁵⁰ claimed that the Kurds were the “mountain Turks”.¹⁵¹ The Dersim operation was an event that showed how far the Turkification process could reach. Afterwards, Sabiha Gökçen explained the reason of the operation as “eliminating the last remnants of feudalism”.¹⁵² The official numbers were that five thousand people were killed in Dersim¹⁵³ but the

¹⁴⁷ “İskan Kanunu,” International Migration Law Database, accessed August 21, 2013, <http://www.imldb.iom.int/viewDocument.do?id=%7BF7D74EA1-0219-44BF-B41F-31B9825F8B85%7D>.

¹⁴⁸ Kemal Kirişçi and Gareth M. Winrow, *Kürt Sorunu: Kökeni ve Gelişimi* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1997), 103.

¹⁴⁹ Kerim Yıldız, *Kürtlerin Dilsel ve Kültürel Hakları* trans. Atilla Tuygan (Istanbul: Belge, 2004), 24.

¹⁵⁰ Dersim is the traditional name of the region. After the operation in Dersim, the government changed its name to Tunceli.

¹⁵¹ Kirişçi and Winrow, *Kürt Sorunu*, 108.

¹⁵² Ayşegül Altınay, *The Myth of the Military Nation* (London: Palgrave, 2004), 41.

¹⁵³ Altınay, *The Myth of the Military Nation*, 43.

Kurdish sources claim that it could be more.¹⁵⁴ The Dersim massacre was framed as the elimination of the remnants of feudalism, and Kurdish was the language of the people living in “the last remnants” of Kurdistan to be conquered.

After the Dersim operation in 1937 and 1938, a girl’s institute (*Kız Enstitüleri*) was formed in Elazığ (the city that Dersim was previously under) and the aim was firstly to educate the girls who had become orphans. By doing so, it was aimed to make it easier for them to forget their pasts and their languages. For Akşit, women came to be seen as the carriers of the forbidden languages as far as they are unreachable by the central nationalist projects.¹⁵⁵ She analyzes the girl’s institutes and focuses especially on the roles that are attributed to women as the carriers of ideology and language. Her claim is that mother tongue is the most important mean in peoples’ relations with their own history. By being detached from the mother tongues people are first detached from the knowledge of the mother, and then from the language itself.¹⁵⁶ The importance that the nation-state and minority group movements give to language comes from the relation that language has with history and knowledge.

While aiming to create the dominance of Turkish language and ethnicity over others, the legislations aimed at creating a new collective identity as they rapidly tried to erase all the connotations that showed that Kurds and Kurdish exist. Some legislation intended to repress Kurdish identity because the state had a hard time controlling the Kurdish rebellions after the formation of the republic. With the Kurdish revolts and the fear that Kurds could form a separate state, Kurdish identity and language was seen as a “threat” to the indivisibility of the Turkish state.

¹⁵⁴ Mehmet Kalman, *Belge ve tanıklarıyla Dersim Direnişleri* (Nujen: İstanbul, 1995).

¹⁵⁵ Elif Ekin Akşit, “Tartışma: Anadilde Eğitim ve Kadınlar,” *Fe Dergi* 1 (2009): 32.

¹⁵⁶ Akşit, “Tartışma: Anadilde Eğitim ve Kadınlar,” 34.

Multi-Party Period

Within the period of DP government (1950-1960) Kurdish intelligentsia were initially allowed to be organized with the student associations. During the 1950's, the Kurdish formations were in small circles that were not in relation with each other. They were mostly discussing the late history with their awareness of being Kurdish without speaking Kurdish.¹⁵⁷ In 1959, students who were mostly Kurdish were arrested and accused of being Communist, pro-Kurdish (*Kürtçü*) and separatist. This became a milestone within the Kurdish political history. After this event, arrested Kurds began to separate themselves as leftist and rightists.¹⁵⁸

Meanwhile, legislations continued the "Turkification" process. In 1949 with the Provincial Administration Law, the non-Turkish names of places were changed and the celebration of the Kurdish New Year, Newroz was forbidden.¹⁵⁹ The changing of the names was another attempt at an interruption in the memory that people had in Kurdish. Giving Turkish names from the center to the places where people had called in Kurdish was also a sign of centralization.

With the relative freedom of the constitution of 1960, one of the most important pieces in Kurdish was published in 1968 which was significant for promoting Kurdish as a written language.¹⁶⁰ The second half of 1970's was characterized by an outburst of political movements of the leftists as well as the Kurdish movements. Kurdish movements were both "legal" and "illegal".

¹⁵⁷ Hamit Bozarslan, "Kürd Milliyetçiliği ve Kürd Hareketi (1898-2000)," in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce: Milliyetçilik* ed. Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinil (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002), 852.

¹⁵⁸ Ahmet Alış, "Kürt Etnobölgesel Hareketinin Doğuşu, Kitleleşme Süreci ve Türkiye İşçi Partisi: 1959-1974," in *Türkiye Siyasetinde Kürtler: Direniş, Hak Arayışı, Katılım*, ed. Büşra Ersanlı et al. (İstanbul: İletişim, 2012), 63-64.

¹⁵⁹ Camille Overson Hensler, *Recognition of Linguistic Rights? The Impact of Pro-EU Reforms in Turkey* (Great Britain: Kurdish Human Rights Project, 2005), 10-11.

¹⁶⁰ Bozarslan, , "Kürd Milliyetçiliği ve Kürd Hareketi," 853.

Within the institution of education, practices that reinforced assimilationist mentalities, which were not really different from previous years, were started to be implemented. Regional Primary Boarding Schools (YİBO) which were opened in 1962 had the implicit aim of imposing the “Turkish consciousness”. Although some schools were opened in the Western cities, more of them were centered in the Kurdish populated villages such as Diyarbakır, Muş, Bitlis, and Van. With the help of these schools, the families of the children were also traced.¹⁶¹ While the educational policy of the YİBOs was to assimilate different ethnic, cultural or religious groups until 1990s, after that period it shifted to controlling them.¹⁶²

Both coup d'états in 1960 and 1971 had consequences for the Kurds and the causes were related with the broader socio-political conjuncture. For İsmail Beşikçi, the coup d'états in 1960 and 1971 were related with the Kurds in the sense that around the times corresponding the former, Kurdish identity found place in the constitution in Iraq and in the latter, Kurds gained autonomy at the north of Iraq.¹⁶³

The Coup D'état in 1980

The coup d'état in September 12, 1980 was a milestone in the Kurdish political movement. One of the leading generals of the coup d'état, Kenan Evren, has explained the ban on Kurdish with these words in an interview:

“One of the mistakes of September 12 was to ban Kurdish. The prohibition was like this; Kurdish cannot be used in speaking, neither in the demonstrations nor in anywhere. We said that Kurdish cannot be used in schools. Why did we say that? When I was the president, I had been to a primary school in a village. I don't remember whether she was a third or the fourth grade student, I opened up the book and told her to read. She couldn't read it. A fourth grade student who cannot read. I

¹⁶¹ Ayhan S. Işık and Serhat Arslan, “Bir Asimilasyon Projesi: Türkiye’de Yatılı İlköğretim Bölge Okulları,” *Toplum ve Kuram* 6-7 (2012): 121-122.

¹⁶² Işık and Arslan, “Bir Asimilasyon Projesi,” 135.

¹⁶³ Selahattin Ali Arık, “İsmial Beşikçi’yle Söyleşi: 1960-70 Arası Dönemde Türk Solu, Dr. Şivan, Kürdler,” *İsmail Beşikçi Vakfı*, accessed August 30, 2013, http://www.ismailbesikcivakfi.org/default.asp?sayfa=duyuru&id=61#.Uhp_JpI3CAU.

was angry. [...] Then I found out that the teacher was also Kurdish and taught children in Kurdish. I came back and we banned Kurdish. We said that the lessons cannot be taught in Kurdish but the prohibition was a bit harsh. Then this ban was eliminated but it was a mistake. Afterwards I realized that it was a mistake.”¹⁶⁴ (My translation)

1982 constitution strongly emphasized on the national unity and asserted that this unity is formed on the basis of Turkish ethnicity. Although there had been changes in the constitution to 1990s and with the reforms that started in 2001, the law on education that establishes it as monolingual is still valid. According to article 42, no other language than Turkish can be taught as the mother tongue in the educational institutions to the citizens of Turkey.¹⁶⁵ But the foreign language education and the education through the medium of the foreign languages are to be arranged by law and the international treaties are valid.¹⁶⁶ As long as article 42 stays in the constitution, it can always be used as an excuse for not providing an education through the medium of the mother tongue.

In the prison of Diyarbakır at the period of the coup d'état, which forms a milestone within the collective memory, the humiliation of the Kurdish identity was extensive. On the wall of the prison where the prisoners met their families, it was written that they should “speak Turkish, speak a lot”.¹⁶⁷

The Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) was formed in 1978. In 1984, after the coup d'état, with the incursion in Erzurum, Şemdinli-Hakkari declared that they were going to struggle with arms. The PKK stated that Turkish state was a colonizer in Kurdistan and they were going to struggle against it.¹⁶⁸ With the acts of the PKK, Kurdish was increasingly regarded as a threat to the national unity by the state.

¹⁶⁴ “Kürtçeye Ağır Yasak Koyduk ama Hataydı,” *Milliyet*, November 7, 2007, accessed November 30, 2012, <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/2007/11/07/siyaset/siy01.html>

¹⁶⁵ “Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Anayasası,” Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi, accessed November 27, 2012, http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/anayasa/anayasa_2011.pdf.

¹⁶⁶ “Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Anayasası.”

¹⁶⁷ İsa Tekin, *E Tipi Hilton Diyarbakır Zindanı: Türkçe Konuş Çok Konuş* (Istanbul: Peri Yayınları, 2012).

¹⁶⁸ Bruinessen, “Turkey and the Kurds in the early 1990s,” 3.

During the armed conflict, the Turkish state destroyed the villages that they claimed to be aiding the PKK. The Kurdish villages that were claimed to be aiding PKK were forcibly evacuated. The Turkish state forced the Kurdish villagers either to choose between being a village guard, i.e. in the support of the Turkish state and fight the PKK or to be expelled.¹⁶⁹

With the forced evacuations, there had been a huge migration from the Kurdish villages to the big cities and to Western Turkey. The migration did not start in the 1990s though. In the 1950's there had been migrations from the rural places to the urban but the migration from the Kurdish cities accelerated after the 1990's with the military operations towards the guerrilla movement of PKK. Keyder and Yenal define three different periods of migrations and the formation of the wage labour in Turkey. First was a long process of migration from 1950's to 1980's which the authors call semi-proletarianisation by informal ways. The migrants were living in the slums, thus they did not pay rent and at the economically hard times, they could go back to their villages or send their children. Their relations with the villages continued so that they could take some of the agricultural surplus at the beginning and they could send some money to the elders living in the village.¹⁷⁰ The second way of the proletarianisation process in Turkey was with the temporal formation of wage labour rather than a disengagement from the village. This process occurred when the peasants went to the highly commercialised places and worked seasonally or longer, a process that the authors called as temporary proletarianisation. The third process of proletarianisation is based on the forced dispossession of the land. This model was especially prevalent after the 1980's, and accelerated with 1990's as it is related with the Kurdish migration of the peasants who were either forced to leave

¹⁶⁹ Bruinessen, "Turkey and the Kurds in the Early 1990s," 11.

¹⁷⁰ Çağlar Keyder and Zafer Yenal, *Bildiğimiz Tarımın Sonu: Küresel İktidar ve Köylülük* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2013), 413.

their villages by the soldiers or left because there was no safety. For them, there was not a village to return back to. The Kurdish migrants were dependent on the money economy in every aspect including the places that they lived because they had to pay rent. This difference from the migrants who could live in the slums is caused by the commodification and the change in the urban economy with the global influx.¹⁷¹ This third process is directly relevant with my research since the respondents mostly faced the possibility of migration and they became a part of or witnessed the process of proletarianisation with the forced dispossession of the land.

The Kurdish peasants who were forced to leave their villages in the 1990's either migrated to cities such as Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir alongside the cities within the region such as Van, Batman, Diyarbakır, Urfa and Mersin. Although it is hard to differentiate the reasons of migration since the economic reasons often interfere, within the period of the 1990s to the 2000s, Diyarbakır gained an extensive Kurdish migration after Istanbul.¹⁷² Hassanpour et al. claim that with the forced migration in 1990's, the rural base of Kurdish was reduced and it disrupted the range of dialects people spoke.¹⁷³

A symbolic event in 1991 occurred as one of the elected parliamentarians, Leyla Zana, added to her oath in Kurdish that she was making it for the brotherhood of the Turkish people and Kurdish people. After that she and other three Kurdish elected parliamentarians were prosecuted¹⁷⁴. The Kurdish language was left out from all spaces in Turkey and was officially banned until 1992. The Anti-terror law of 1991 also had the vague notion of the “disruption of the indivisibility of the state” so that even speaking Kurdish could be regarded as a “terrorist activity”.

¹⁷¹ Keyder and Yenal, *Bildiğimiz Tarımın Sonu*, 145.

¹⁷² Bekir Ağır, *Kürtler ve Kürt Sorunu* (Istanbul: KONDA Araştırma, 2008), 10.

¹⁷³ Hassanpour et al., “Kurdish,” 12.

¹⁷⁴ BBC News, “Turkey Gives Kurdish MP Leyla Zana 10-Year Sentence,” *BBC News*, May 20, 2012, accessed September 10, 2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-18188426>.

Nevertheless, some legal changes have paved the way for a relatively more free use of Kurdish in public sphere. Among the changed articles within the 1982 constitution was Law 2932, which in 1983 had ordered that the mother tongues of the people living in Turkey was Turkish and the language used within all the institutions including the educational one had to be Turkish.¹⁷⁵ This law was annulled in 1991. Prime Minister Turgut Özal declared that the law that banned the usage of Kurdish and other minority languages was lifted.¹⁷⁶ One of the articles of the 1982 constitution that referred to the nation-state and which is still valid is article 3. In this article, it was written that the Turkish state, with its country and nation was an indivisible unity and its language is Turkish.¹⁷⁷

The Situation after 2000s: Changing Demands and Discourses

In the 2007 general elections, the Kurdish party, Democratic Society Party (DTP) (following the political views of their predecessors HEP, DEP and HADEP) entered into the parliament with the independent candidates because of the ten percent election threshold. Because of the closure case, the party participated in the 2009 elections with a different name- Peace and Democracy Party (BDP)- and they formed a group with 20 representatives at the parliament.¹⁷⁸ While under difficulties, these Kurdish parties were trying to be representative in the parliament, all while the political pressures continued. The trial of the Group of Communities in Kurdistan

¹⁷⁵ "Türkçeden Başka Dillerle yapılacak Yayınlar Hakkında Kanun (Resmî Gazete ile yayımı: 22.10.1983 Sayı: 18199)," accessed September 1, 2013, TBMM, http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/KANUNLAR_KARARLAR/kanuntbmmc066/kanundmc066/kanundmc06602932.pdf.

¹⁷⁶ Martin van Bruinessen, "Turkey and the Kurds in the Early 1990s: Guerrilla, Counter-insurgency, and Emerging Civil Society," in *Kurdish Ethno-Nationalism versus Nation-Building States Collected Articles*, (Istanbul: ISIS Press, 2000), 9.

¹⁷⁷ "Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Anayasası."

¹⁷⁸ Şeref Kavak, "Kürt Siyasetinin 2000'li Yılları: "Türkiyelileşme" ve Demokratik Toplum Partisi," in *Türkiye Siyasetinde Kürtler: Direniş, Hak Arayışı, Katılım*, ed. Büşra Ersanlı et al. (Istanbul: İletişim, 2012), 155.

¹⁷⁸ Bozarlan, , "Kürd Milliyetçiliği ve Kürd Hareketi," 852.

(KCK) in 2010 in Diyarbakır became a symbol of the demand to defend in their mother tongue. The KCK was accused of being a political organization that supported PKK. In the trial, the judges did not let the prisoners defend themselves in Kurdish. Though it was not formally against the law before the hunger strikes of the KCK prisoners either, the judges used their judgment and claimed that the prisoners knew Turkish. Therefore they should have defended themselves in Turkish. Against the attitude of the judges, the prisoners claimed their rights to defend in their mother tongue according to Lausanne Treaty.¹⁷⁹ According to the treaty of Lausanne in 1923, in its article 39, the right to defend in any other language rather than Turkish was accepted.¹⁸⁰ Referring to the rights of the prisoners, in 2010 in Diyarbakır, the lawyers demanded that the prisoners should have the right to defend in their mother tongue, Kurdish and the trial had to be postponed for this reason.¹⁸¹ The judge had reported that the prisoners spoke in a language that was not known.¹⁸² However with the hunger strikes, there had been a change in the law. The Minister of Justice has announced that despite Turkish being the language of the court people can defend themselves in a language that they feel comfortable with.¹⁸³ Thus, the political pressure of the prisoners in the hunger strike affected the practice of the law.

¹⁷⁹ "Mahkeme Kürtçe'yi Tanıdı Ama Duymamakta Israrlı," *Bianet*, November 11, 2010, accessed , November 30, 2012 <http://bianet.org/bianet/siyaset/126030-mahkeme-kurtceyi-tanidi-ama-duymamakta-issarli>.

¹⁸⁰ "Lozan Antlaşması," Türk Tarih Kurumu, accessed December 1, 2012 <http://www.ttk.org.tr/index.php?Page=Sayfa&No=249>.

¹⁸¹ "KCK Davası Kürtçe Kararını Bekliyor," *Bianet*, November 8, 2010, accessed December 8, 2012, <http://bianet.org/bianet/ ifade-ozgurlugu/125949-kck-davasi-kurtce-kararini-bekliyor>.

¹⁸² "Mahkeme Kürtçe Savunma Yapan Sanıkları Susturdu," *Bianet*, November 4, 2010, accessed November 30, 2012, <http://bianet.org/bianet/siyaset/125889-mahkeme-kurtce-savunma-yapan-saniklari-susturdu>.

¹⁸³ "Anadilde Savunma" Komisyon'dan Geçti," *Bianet*, November 15, 2012, accessed November 30, 2012, <http://bianet.org/bianet/ ifade-ozgurlugu/142124-anadilde-savunma-komisyon-dan-gecti>.

Reforms

With the effect of the Turkey's integration process with the European Union, in 2000s, some legal changes have been made with the official status of Kurdish and the rights of the Kurds.¹⁸⁴ The government of Justice and Development Party (AKP), which is still governing, has made some changes in the status of Kurdish.

In 2001, Turkey had gone through a process of reforms that included linguistic rights as well. The reforms included changes in the constitution of 1982 which was prepared after coup d'état. There had been changes in the articles which paved the way for abolition of the restrictions on Kurdish and its usage as a part of linguistic right. Among the changed articles there was Article 26, which is the law of Freedom of Expression and Dissemination of Thought, Article 28 on the Freedom of Press, and Article 34 on Meeting and Demonstrations.

Article 26, while removing the parts where it restricts the usage of the languages that are prohibited by law, added a new part which claimed that freedom of speech could be restricted when it involves national security, public order, preserving the characteristics of the republic and if there is a threat to the "indivisibility of the state". The "threat to the indivisibility of the state" and "national security" are such definitions that could persecute the thoughts regarded as a threat. The perception of threat might range from discussion of a change in the regime to speaking and dissemination of Kurdish which is apparent in the prosecutions of Kurdish broadcasting and publication.¹⁸⁵ Article 28 regarding the press had a change that annulled the prohibition of the language prohibited by law but the parts where there can be exceptions in the freedom of the press are in a similar vein with article

¹⁸⁴ Hassanpour et al., "Kurdish," 12.

¹⁸⁵ Malmisanij, *The Past and The Present of Book Publishing in Kurdish Language in Turkey*, 19-20.

26 that regard the national security and “indivisibility of the state” where not changed. Article 34 which regarded marches and demonstrations had a change that no longer needed an administrative authority to set the site and the routes of the demonstrations.¹⁸⁶ Still, restrictions are allowed regarding the national security, public order and crime commitment.

With the harmonization package of Turkey which required changes in the legislation for the process with the European Union to continue in 2002, the articles that restricted the usage of language that was prohibited by law were removed such as the Press Law. Also, the article concerning associations was reorganized by removing the parts where it prohibited the promotion of languages other than Turkish and the claims of the existence of minorities. It is important to note that while freeing the usage of languages other than Turkish within associations, it obliges the official writings of the associations to be held in Turkish.¹⁸⁷ This points to the way the state of Turkey regards the linguistic rights of the people; it does not consider the usage of other languages within civil offices. Thus, it does not regard languages other than Turkish to be a part of public rights but instead wants to confine them within the scope of cultural rights. As it is going to be seen further in this research, the usage of Kurdish is relatively more free compared to past in the public sphere (e.g. in hospital). Doctors or nurses might use Kurdish if they know the language but it is not an official policy but rather a matter of coincidence.

According to Yıldız, rather than delegitimizing language, the government had based its law to repress Kurdish identity on Anti-terror law (*Terörler Mücadele Kanunu-TMK*). For instance, according to the article 8 of the law, the written or oral propaganda that aims at an intervention to the indivisibility of the state are not

¹⁸⁶ “Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Anayasası.”

¹⁸⁷ Hensler, *Recognition of Linguistic Rights?*, 16-17.

allowed.¹⁸⁸ The change in legislation that led to a formation of a Kurdish channel by the state is with the third harmonization law in 2002 that included an amendment to the Law of Broadcasting and Television Channels.¹⁸⁹ The formation of the national channel (TRT 6) which broadcasts in Kurdish started broadcasting in January 2009.¹⁹⁰

The harmonization package in 2003 allowed the opening of private language courses in other languages including Kurdish. It states that these languages are the ones that the citizens of Turkey traditionally use in their daily lives but it states that these languages cannot be taught as their mother tongues.¹⁹¹ It is worth noticing that within the mentality of the state, there is still a presupposition that the “unity” would be established on the basis of language. It regards the mother tongue of people as a “tradition” and does not accept mother tongues being the language of instruction. In 2005, the negotiations had officially started for the integration of Turkey with the European Union.¹⁹² The government of AKP has made some changes in the status of Kurdish but still it was out of the education system as a medium of instruction and of the public offices.

A recent change is the elective course in Kurdish at schools for the children who finished the first four years of education.¹⁹³ With the changes of the official status of Kurdish by the national TV channel in Kurdish and the Kurdish elective courses in the schools, the question that whether these have any effects on Kurds in their relation with Kurdish arises.

¹⁸⁸ Yıldız, *Kürtlerin Dilsel ve Kültürel Hakları*, 29.

¹⁸⁹ Hensler, *Recognition of Linguistic Rights?*, 17.

¹⁹⁰ “Tarihçe,” Türkiye Radyo Televizyon Kurumu, accessed November 30, 2012, <http://www.trt.net.tr/Kurumsal/Tarihce.aspx>.

¹⁹¹ Hensler, *Recognition of Linguistic Rights?*, 17.

¹⁹² “AB Katılım Müzakereleri,” Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Avrupa Birliği Bakanlığı, accessed November 29, 2012, <http://www.abgs.gov.tr/index.php?p=37>.

¹⁹³ “Haftada iki Saatlik Seçmeli Kürtçe,” *Hürriyet*, June 13, 2012, accessed November 30, 2012, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/20752519.asp>.

Despite these reforms, the eight-decade bans on the Kurdish language have left a mark on the collective memory of Kurds. The abolition of some of the restrictions on Kurdish did not result in immediate flourishing of the language. The long years of repression of Kurdish has left marks on people's attitudes towards using Kurdish. But alongside these sociological and psychological aspects, the laws continued to repress the usage and spreading of the language by stigmatizing the acts of the claims for language rights. For instance, at the trial of Union of Education, the decision of the Supreme Court on education through the medium of the mother tongue is important in the sense of the vagueness of the article regarding the freedom of speech in the constitution. The interpretation of the court regarding freedom of speech of the union was in favour of the "indivisibility of the state". It regarded the advocacy of the education through mother tongue as a threat to the national integrity.¹⁹⁴

In 2002, more than a thousand university students from different parts of Turkey requested Kurdish elective courses by proposing a petition to their universities and the students were detained for this request.¹⁹⁵ The request of the students for Kurdish lessons at universities evolved into a process of stigmatizing Kurdish by punishing the students who signed the petition by taking them under custody where most of them were released. According to the narrations of the students, under custody they were forced to withdraw their signatures and they were humiliated.¹⁹⁶ Custody became a tool for "reminding" them of the desired way of being a citizen in Turkey.

The private language courses in Kurdish had also faced harassment and bureaucratic impossibilities that the closure of them in 2005 was reasoned as if they

¹⁹⁴ Hensler, *Recognition of Linguistic Rights?*, 32.

¹⁹⁵ Hensler, *Recognition of Linguistic Rights?*, 12.

¹⁹⁶ Kerim Yıldız, and Koray Düzgören, *Türkiye'de Kürtçe* (Istanbul: Senfoni, 2002), 15-23.

had lack of interest from Kurds.¹⁹⁷ The practical obstacles hindered the courses that the size of the door of the courses could be a reason for the prevention of opening of some.¹⁹⁸ It can be argued that the Kurds did not feel the need to take a course and to pay for it in a language that they know since birth, but instead they want to be educated in it. The closure of the courses being a pretext that the Kurds are not interested in their own language is another ideological tool for the preservation of the dominance of Turkish.

The requirement that the certificates of the Kurdish private courses should be in Turkish and that the teachers were obliged to use Kurdish at a lower level¹⁹⁹ was another manifestation of the mentality towards Kurdish. Teaching a language is also accepting the Kurdish identity, thus requires a shift in the mentality of the forming ideology of the republic. However, the limited usage of Kurdish in Kurdish private courses is a limited shift in mentality that still preserves the hierarchy among languages. The process of trials of the students who signed for petition in universities and the obstacles in private Kurdish courses form good examples of how in formality Kurdish was not banned but the application of the laws formed de facto restrictions.

Currently, Kurdish lessons are given by the Kurdish Institute, branch offices of the Union of Education (*Eğitim-Sen*), by the elective courses in universities in various cities such as Istanbul, Ankara, Bingöl, Mardin, Dersim and Muş and by various Kurdish organizations such as *Kurdi-Der*. Kurdish could only find place within the state institutions with few state universities, a channel broadcasting in

¹⁹⁷ "Kurdish Language Centers Close in Turkey, Citing Lack of Interest," Foundation-Kurdish Institute of Paris, accessed September 11, 2013, <http://www.institutkurde.org/en/info/kurdish-language-centers-close-in-turkey-citing-lack-of-interest--1122905449.html>.

¹⁹⁸ Ferhat Malgir, "Kürtçe Kursu Engel Bitmiyor," *NTVMSNBC*, January 6, 2004, accessed September 10, 2013, <http://arsiv.ntvmsnbc.com/news/251297.asp>.

¹⁹⁹ Hensler, *Recognition of Linguistic Rights?*, 38.

Kurdish,²⁰⁰ and an elective course of Kurdish language for the fourth year primary school children²⁰¹ which in practice I have not met any family who could register their children.

The legal harassments were also relevant for the Kurdish channels. Turkish state had attempts to close down the Kurdish channel Med-Tv and in 1999, the same year Abdullah Öcalan was captured, the license of the channel which was issued in Britain was revoked.²⁰² Similar pressures of the state of Turkey to Denmark to revoke the license of Roj TV were applied. The Kurdish satellite channels -Roj TV, Nuçe TV and MMC- were closed down recently.²⁰³

The broadcasting in Kurdish is not only about communication through Kurdish but it is also about transferring an ideology and praising Kurdish as an important part of being Kurdish. The Turkish state accused the channels of giving messages to PKK by using Kurdish. It becomes an arena that the Turkish state cannot control by not being able to control the language, and the ideology that is transferred by the channels.

An arena which is more difficult to be controlled by the states is the internet. The rediscovering of the mother tongue through internet and television is like what Fishman says, an intellectual rebirth where the vernacular language forms the emotionalized link connecting language and nationalism.²⁰⁴ Kurds from each part of the world can communicate in Kurdish. Kurdish can be the only language of

²⁰⁰ This channel can be claimed as if it was a Turkish channel with Kurdish postsynching. There is a discourse among some Kurds that it is "TRT Cahş" meaning that it resembles the safeguards (*korucu*), speaking Kurdish but working for the Turkish state. (Ömer Kaçar, "Duran Kalkan: 'TRT Cahş'ın Arkasında ABD Var," accessed September 13, 2013, <http://german.rizgari.com/modules.php?name=News&file=print&sid=17179>.)

²⁰¹ "Haftada iki Saatlik Seçmeli Kürtçe," *Hürriyet*, June 13, 2012, accessed November 30, 2012, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/20752519.asp>

²⁰² Sheyholislami, "Identity, Language, and New Media," 293.

²⁰³ "ROJ TV, Nuçe TV ve MMC'nin Yayın Lisanları İptal," *Bianet*, July 3, 2013, accessed September 10, 2013, <http://www.bianet.org/bianet/bianet/148185-roj-tv-nuce-tv-ve-mmc-nin-yayin-lisanlari-iptal>.

²⁰⁴ Joshua A. Fishman, *Language and Ethnicity in Minority Sociolinguistic Perspective Multilingual Matters* (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1989), 283.

communication where non-Kurdish languages do not fit into the identity formation within the community. When speaking Kurdish is a must, the languages are not differentiated as some being particular to some topics. Sheyholislami reports from a moderator of a Kurdish chat room that people had difficulties in discussing political issues in Kurdish in chat rooms at first but because no other language than Kurdish was tolerated, people got used to it.²⁰⁵ This difficulty is still apparent in countries where education is through the medium of the official language of the state like Turkey, Syria and Iran. In such a situation, languages have the tendency of becoming compartmentalized as if Kurdish is the language of home and Turkish as the language of the public sphere.

In November 28, 2011, in Roboskî in Şırnak 34 villagers were killed by the Turkish warplanes with the excuse that the villagers were perceived as “terrorists”.²⁰⁶ Recently with the letter that Öcalan which he sent for the Newroz of 2013, a new process of negotiations and a process of peacemaking have started. Within this official level although there are optimistic messages, one of the protestors who were against the renewing of a guardhouse (*kalekol*) in Lice-Diyarbakır was shot dead. Also, the conflict in Syria and Rojava and the possibility of Kurdish autonomy affects the policies of the Turkish government towards the Kurds living in Turkey. Thus, both internal and external dynamics affect the changing situations of the Kurds and Kurdish language in Turkey.

Within the history of the Turkish republic, Kurdish language has gone through various stages with the changing conjunctures related with the socio-

²⁰⁵ Sheyholislami, “Identity, Language, and New Media,” 304.

²⁰⁶ Mahmut Hamsici, “‘Roboski Aydınlanmadan Barış Olmaz’,” *BBC Türkçe*, last modified May 10, 2013, accessed September 13, 2013, http://www.bbc.co.uk/turkce/haberler/2013/05/130510_mahmut_roboski.shtml.

economic changes. Thus, one needs to take these historical changes into consideration in the analysis of the changing usage of Kurdish.

CHAPTER IV: Methodology

I was interested in trying to understand the formation of the linguistic capital of Kurdish and Turkish within the monolingual education system and how it has affected the transference of Kurdish. Within the perspective of the research question, in-depth interviews were conducted with the Kurdish speaking parents at the ages of 30-50 who had school-aged children. The reason why I chose to interview the parents is that I wanted to analyze the effects of the formations of the linguistic capitals of Kurdish and Turkish on the transference of Kurdish to children. By interviewing the parents who had children at school age, it would be clearer to ask about their preferences about the transference of Kurdish to their children rather asking mere assumptions on how they would act if they had children. By doing so, I was able to ask for concrete examples and solidify the abstract concept of linguistic capital. The age range of the children were chosen as corresponding to school age with the aim of analyzing whether there were any effects of monolingual education system on the choices of parents. Within the scope of the research question, I conducted 23 in-depth interviews in Diyarbakır and Istanbul. The semi-structured questionnaire is attached as Appendix I.

Instrumentation

The semi-structured in-depth questionnaire allowed the interviewees to speak about their experiences with languages, their memories from their school lives as well as their patterns of language transfer to their children. Also, the definition of the linguistic capital finds its way mostly from the categorizations of the respondents rather than *a priori* categorizations.

The main focus of this research is to reveal the relation that the parents formed with Kurdish and Turkish and the attributions they formed to those languages under the effect of monolingual education and the fact that Kurdish had been restricted. Within the scope of the attributions to languages, patterns of language transfer were scrutinized. The questions were designed at several levels. Firstly, the life story of the respondent and the history of migration –if any- were taken. The interview allowed respondents to consider about their childhood and the memories that formed their relation to languages. Secondly, the levels of bilingualism of the parents, the transference of languages to children and its relation with the educational experiences of them, and attributions to languages were revealed.

Paradigm and Justification

By choosing the qualitative method of in-depth interviews, we assume that there is not a truth to be grasped from the respondents but rather in each stage of the research truth is constructed by the researcher, those individuals who are being talked with, and the reader or audience interpreting the study.²⁰⁷ Thus, my choices in every stage of the research (including where to conduct the fieldwork and who to talk with) lead to certain kinds of outcomes.

With this approach we again assume an interaction between the researcher and the respondents. The researcher and the study are not outside of this interaction. In my case, I had an interaction with the respondents since I was visiting their houses and there had been a couple of hours of conversation before the interview. For the axiological question, the qualitative method starts with the assumption that there is no such research as “value-free”. Therefore, the researcher should be noticing those

²⁰⁷ John W. Creswell. *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (London: Sage, 1994), 4.

values. My biases and my reactions affected our interaction between me and the respondents and the way they affect is also be important for the purposes of my study.

Selection of Respondents

I conducted interviews with the Kurdish parents who have children at the ages of attending the compulsory education -but not necessarily attending school- in Diyarbakır and Istanbul. The reason why I choose Diyarbakır and Istanbul is that it they are both metropolises and both include Kurdish speaking families with varying degrees and in different contexts. Diyarbakır is among the densely Kurdish populated cities and Istanbul includes approximately two million Kurds. Also, both Istanbul and Diyarbakır have gained Kurdish migration through forced migration. Because of the excessive migration, Istanbul received Kurdish migration from different Kurdish cities and Diyarbakır gained migration from different cities adding to its local Kurdish population. Diyarbakır, which is a major city in the region, has increased its population as twice or three times since 1990s (from 380.000 to a million) with the migration it has received from the forced evacuations.²⁰⁸ In Istanbul there are about 1.9 million Kurds living (approximately 14.8 percent of the population of Istanbul).²⁰⁹ Both Diyarbakır and Istanbul are major cities with a significant Kurdish population from different Kurdish cities. There is also a state university in Diyarbakır as well as the private high-schools and the city has been enlarged with the newly built gated communities where upper-middle class/middle-class resides. For the purpose of my study, where I needed to conduct interviews from different socio-economic backgrounds, Diyarbakır and Istanbul were suitable choices.

²⁰⁸ Martin Van Bruinessen, *Forced Evacuations and Destruction of Villages in Dersim (Tunceli) and Western Bingöl, Turkish Kurdistan* (Netherland: Stichting Nederland – Koerdistan, 1995), 11.

²⁰⁹ Ağırdir, *Kürtler ve Kürt Sorunu*, 4.

I reached my respondents by snowball method. The criteria for selecting respondents were to have one school aged child, to be aged between 30-50, and to live in the center of Diyarbakır and Istanbul. The interviews were conducted only in the city centers but not the rural areas. There were an equal number of female and male respondents roughly representing different education levels. The distribution of the education levels of the respondents were as follows: one primary school dropout, five did not go to school, five primary school graduates, one secondary school graduate, five high-school graduates and six university graduates. There was not any claim about representativeness in the research. The interviews were recorded with the permission of the respondents.

There were four female, three male respondents in Istanbul and seven female and nine male in Diyarbakır summing up to 23 interviews. The in-depth interviews were conducted in Diyarbakır between February and March 2013 in Diyarbakır. The Istanbul interviews were held between March and May 2013.

Field

It was important for me to form a relation based on trust with my respondents due to the content of the questions. Respondents were close acquaintances or were from the family of a person I knew in person. They took me to the houses of my respondents and introduced me to the people I would interview. The interviews were made face to face and alone and were mostly done at the houses following introductory small talk. A few interviews of the male respondents were done at their work places. Interviews were conducted in Turkish. Nevertheless, I told the respondents that I was learning Kurdish. Usually being able to speak Kurdish points out to being a Kurd since there are very few people learning Kurdish who are not a Kurd. This created some confusion for the respondents. For some, the fact that I was

able to understand and speak Kurdish was a positive attribute that they appreciated and made me more welcome. For some, it seemed that it did not matter at all. Either case, it created a closer relation when I understood and reacted to the Kurdish words or phrases they used during the interviews. However, it never changes the fact that I was not really “one of them” due to ethnicity and that I was a guest. A few people whom I asked for them to introduce me to some families were not pleased with the idea that “Kurds being an object of study”. Within such a case, being not Kurdish could have hindered the process. Other than that, the families who accepted me were always welcoming. The interviews which were held in Turkish made some respondents claim that they were not able to express themselves fully in Turkish or they said that they were sorry to be not competent in Turkish as much as they are in Kurdish. There might have been an implicit hierarchy formed between me and the respondents by conducting the interviews mostly in Turkish with limited usage of Kurdish, in addition to the one that is formed because I am the interviewer.

However, some of the respondents pointed to a different aspect –maybe a positive one- to the fact that I was an “outsider”. One male respondent explicitly said that he would have talked less in the interview if I were Kurdish since he would assume that I would know the things he was talking about.

After the field work, I generated categories which were revealed in the interviews.²¹⁰ I found similar concepts that are recurrent in the interviews. After defining those categories, I analyzed the patterns that were revealed.

The analysis of the interviews should be regarded within the framework of the conjuncture of the time of the fieldwork. With the new developments, changes in

²¹⁰ Alan Bryman and Bob Burgess, ed. *Analyzing Qualitative Data* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 4.

legislations or international changes, the attitudes and attributions to languages are prone to frequent changes.

Limitations of the Research

The limitations of this study are its weak sides which can be supplemented or challenged in other researches. There could be other fields where linguistic capitals are produced and contested however; the main focus of this research was the field of education. The age range of the respondents was selected as 30 to 50 years old since the criteria for the selection of the parents was that they had a school-aged child. This age range could be a wide one to gather conclusions but the criteria for the school-aged children led me to such an age range. Also, there had not been any claims about how the results were differentiated according to the class of the respondents since there had not been any apparent patterns revealed in the interviews which are based on class.

CHAPTER V: Analysis of the Findings – Attributions to Kurdish and Turkish Reifying Cultural and Linguistic Capital: Attributions to Languages

In this and the following chapter, I will be analyzing the findings of the field research conducted in Diyarbakır and Istanbul. I divide the analysis of the findings into two chapters. In the first one, I will be examining the attributions and the formation of the linguistic capital of Kurdish and Turkish for the families and in the second one; I will be analyzing the relation of these attributions with the transference of Kurdish to the next generation. There had not been any significant difference between the findings of the two cities and none among the socio-economic levels of the respondents. Therefore, I will be analysing the two cities and socio-economic levels of the respondents together. In the first part of the analysis, the themes that were revealed about the linguistic capital of Kurdish and Turkish and the attributions to those languages will be discussed. In the second part of the analysis, the effect of these attributions and the mechanisms of the decisions about the transference of Kurdish to the children will be scrutinized.

The two anecdotes that the interviewees told are distinctive in reifying the concepts of cultural and linguistic capital. First was that of a 50 year old woman. When she started school, on the first day she took out her shoes in front of the classroom door as people do when entering the houses. The respondent remembers that the teacher was angry with her taking off her shoes and humiliated her in front of the class. She depicted this anecdote as the cause of her not going to school. This is a manifestation of the hierarchical aspect of cultural capital in its institutionalized form. It shows that school as the modernizing institution leaves out, moreover humiliates, the dispositions that it regards as “not modern”. Education is one of the institutions that serve for the preservation of the privilege of a certain class. In order

to preserve the privilege, it creates dualisms among cultures, ethnicities, languages and presents the cultural capital of the privileged as the norm. The ones which do not fit into the education system are doomed to be pushed out from that system, until the dispositions presented as norm are challenged. By correcting the conducts, the language and pronunciation of the children, the teacher reminds the students that what they bring from home is not valid at school. When a certain way of doing things, the dispositions people bring from the family and neighbourhood does not fit into the education system, the clash ends up pushing the invalid cultural capital out as it happened in this case.

The other anecdote is of another 50 year old woman. She lived in Istanbul for a while but when she first came, she only knew Kurdish. She said that the neighbours, who were all Turkish, were trying to teach her Turkish. When she said “yes” in an informal way (*he*), which is also used in Turkish, the neighbours corrected her as part of teaching Turkish to a more so called polite and formal word (*efendim*). Both words are used to indicate that a person is there when somebody calls out for them. This was an interesting example that the interviewee accepted the differentiation of the languages as Turkish as the formal and the polite.

“In İstanbul, all our neighbours were Turks. They were not Kurds. May God bless them (*Allah razı olsun*) they treated us well.... I knew it but still one feels ashamed. It was different. It felt strange to say “sir/madam” (*efendim*).”²¹¹ (Female, Diyarbakır, 46, Primary school graduate)

In addition to Bourdieu’s analysis of the desire to talk politely pointing out to the internalization of the differentiation of class, age and sex, it also contains the internalization of the hierarchy of languages and ethnicities. The respondent did not

²¹¹ [“Komşuların hepsi Türktü. Kürt değildi. Allah razı olsun. İyiydi, davranıyorlardı. Bazen diyordum, onlar konuşuyordu, ben diyordum “hee”. “Yok, yok”, “efendim de, efendim”. Biliyordum da yine ne bileyim, insan utanıyordu. Değişik bir şeydi. Sanki “efendim”, garip geliyordu bana.”]

see it as a part of talking politely but regarded it as the “good intentions” of the neighbours wanting to teach her Turkish. However, the dominant language manifests itself within the “favourable” and “well-intentioned” attitudes of the neighbours. It reveals the attribution of the Turkish neighbours that they connect the impolite version of saying “yes” to being “peasant-like”. Also, there is a will of correction and within that correction, teaching Turkish is combined with teaching how to speak “appropriately” or politely.

Within the hierarchy of languages and accents and ethnicities, the attributions of the Kurdish parents to Kurdish and the linguistic capital of Kurdish and Turkish are formed in relation with the institutionalized cultural capitals. The attributions to Kurdish by the respondents are mostly around the perception that it is the language of the elderly, and as if Kurdish is being continued by the rural places due to urbanization. Kurdish is attached with being spoken among the family members, with the mothers, the old acquaintances or old friends. Also, people who migrated from villages to the city centers, who spoke Kurdish as the illegitimate way of speaking within the institution of education, had an encounter Turkish in the institution of education that formed the perception as if Kurdish was the language of the peasants. However, there were different patterns that do not fit into these categories where speaking Kurdish is attached to which will be revealed further in the analysis.

For some respondents, beyond associating Kurdish with the elderly, speaking Turkish with the elder family members creates a feeling as if the respondents are denying the family members and “betraying” them.

“With the uncles, the aunts and the grandmothers, we speak in Kurdish. They do not know Turkish. They would say to us ‘do not speak in Turkish, speak in Kurdish’.

They would consider it as a betrayal to them if we spoke Turkish with them. It was like denying them. It is an emotional reason, not a political one.”²¹² (Male, Diyarbakır, 38, University graduate)

Especially when the respondents first started school, their encounter with Turkish and Turkish-speaking people made them claim that they were alienated from their families and their language. The contradiction between the worlds presented by Turkish and Kurdish may cause alienation towards the world that is offered by Kurdish. Since the one who possesses the language also possesses the world implied by that language,²¹³ the worlds that are implied by those languages may be in clash. The clash is most obvious when the education system does not include or accept the dispositions of the families and the students. The dispositions are structured in a way that they mirror the social conditions in which they were produced. They are gained mostly from the family that constitutes the habitus of a person.²¹⁴ The habitus is in a strict clash with the requirements of the education system as a field where people whose native languages are different from the language of education. Those people could observe when they could not conform into the education system where the assumptions of the field of education were established on the dispositions of certain classes. Being a native speaker of the language of education is a quality that forms one of the aspects of the continuation of the class situation.

The place and the way of the first encounters with Turkish is another factor that creates attributions to the language. Turkish is sometimes the language where people realize that there is a language called Turkish when they attend the state

²¹² “[İşte dayıymış, teyzeymiş, neneymiş hepsiyle Kürtçe konuşurduk. Zaten onlar Türkçe bilmiyorlar. Haftada bir iki akşam bir misafir gelir, ya dayımız gelir, ya teyzemiz gelir Kürtçe konuşuruz, onlar Türkçe bilmez. Bizim Türkçe konuşmamızı onlar şey zannederdi, “Türkçe konuşmayın” derdi, hani “Kürtçe konuşun” derdi. Onlar için Türkçe konuşmak sanki onlara bir ihanetmiş gibi, onlarla onların yanında Türkçe konuşmak. Sanki onları reddetmek gibi gelirdi. Böyle duygusal bir neden, siyasi bir neden de değil.”]

²¹³ Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks*, 9.

²¹⁴ Thompson, “Editor’s Introduction,” 12.

institutions of education such as schools or with sharper encounters than schools, it may be within the Social Service and Children Protection Institution (SHÇEK) or the Regional Primary Boarding Schools (YİBO).

“When I went to children protection institution, I did not know Turkish. I did not know that there was a language called Turkish. We learned Turkish there but within time, when we were 15-16 years old, we forgot Kurdish. We were not allowed to speak Kurdish at school and our parents were not around. It was all Turkish in the protection institution. When I visited my relatives, I spoke Kurdish and they laughed at me. They made me talk on purpose.”²¹⁵ (Male, Diyarbakır, 48, High school graduate)

Within the state schools, YİBO’s and children protection institutions, the policy of language that was implemented implied that Turkish could not be learned without forgetting or being alienated from Kurdish. In those institutions, the introduction to Turkish went hand in hand with losing the nativity of being a Kurdish speaker. Also, the first encounters with Turkish for the respondents were mostly with coercion if not traumatic. Thus, Turkish includes within itself, for the people who were harshly introduced to it, the contradiction that it is both facilitative -enables social life in state institutions- and coercive - it is forced to be learned. It is never like a smooth transition of learning a language because Kurdish is not accepted formally within institution of education.

“I remember, once we talked in Kurdish with our friends in class. The teacher had beaten us to death. I still do not understand why the teacher beaten us because we spoke Kurdish. For instance in the case we continued [talking in Kurdish], it was my mother tongue, you speak with a friend again, the teacher used to join our fingers together and hit them with a piece of wood. Our finger nails used to bleed; they

²¹⁵ [“Ben çocuk esirgeme kurumuna gelene kadar Türkçeyi bilmiyordum. Türkçe diye bir dil bilmiyordum. 6 yaşında çocuk bakım yuvasına verdiler. Ben o zaman Türkçe diye bir dil bilmiyordum. Kürtçeydi. Çocuk esirgeme kurumunda Türkçeyi öğrendik. Zaman içerisinde, işte 15-16 yaşına geldiğimizde Kürtçeyi bu sefer unuttuk. Türkçe. Yani anlıyorduk. Şimdi Kürtçeyi okulda konuşmadığımızdan dolayı, bir de anne baba da yok. Hep Türkçe konuşuyoruz yetiştirme yurdunda. Aile ortamına gittiğim zaman anlıyordum ama serbestçe konuşamıyordum. . Ben Kürtçe konuşurdum, ablamgille, sokaktaki komşularla konuştuğum zaman gülerlerdi. Mahsus konuştururlardı.”]

taught us Turkish by force until our fingers bleed. It was forbidden to speak Kurdish, I mean it was really forbidden.”²¹⁶ (Male, Diyarbakır, 34, High-school graduate)

Within the field of education, the speaking of Kurdish was marginalized by not being allowed or by being presented as point of educational failure by the teachers or the school management. The memories of the parents of their educational lives are mostly about incompatibility because of the difficulties they had within the Turkish monolingual education system. The clash became tougher with the memories of some teachers being harsh on the ones who do not know Turkish. Within the field of education, there is always a symbolic struggle on the institutionalization of certain cultural capitals. These struggles and strategies, like in other fields, use insult as a way of positioning others on the divisions. Official naming which is performed by the holders of the monopoly of the symbolic violence is the institutionalized way of insult.²¹⁷ Thus, the naming by the teacher, who is the delegated agent of the state holding the legitimate symbolic violence, is a part of the imposition of the social divisions on the children, who have different cultural capitals and are coming from different social backgrounds, classes and languages. An anecdote of a respondent is quite telling in this sense where the language and capitals children bring into school do not fit into the expectations of the monolingual education system.

“One of the teachers at school wanted me to fail the class. I overheard her when she was talking to my teacher. She told that we were Kurdish and did not know how to speak and that we did not understand. And then she called for me and wanted me to read a text in Turkish. I could not read fully. She asked me and I said that I was Kurdish. Then she told my teacher to fail me because I could not read.”²¹⁸ (Male, Diyarbakır, 33, High-school graduate)

²¹⁶ [“Biz hatırlıyorum bir sefer sınıfın içerisinde Kürtçe konuşmuştuk arkadaşlarımızla. Öğretmen bizi öldürene kadar dövmüştü yani. Öğretmenin Kürtçe konuştuğumuz için neden bu kadar dövdüğünü hala anlamıyorum yani. Mesela tekrar etmemiz halinde, benim anadilim yani ne yapayım, Allah vermiş, tekrar bir arkadaşınla konuşuyorsun, öğretmen seni getiriyor parmaklarını birleştiriyor. Sert tahtayla vuruyordu parmaklarımıza. Bizim tırnaklarımızın ucu kanıyordu yani. Bize Türkçeyi parmaklarımızı kanatana kadar zorla öğrettiler. Kürtçe konuşmak yasaktı, gerçekten yasaktı yani.”]

²¹⁷ Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 239.

²¹⁸ [“Sınıfta bırakılmamı istedi. Diğer bayan öğretmen, bizim hocaya. ‘Kürttür, konuşmayı bilmiyorlar, anlamıyorlar.’ Sonuçta benim anadilim Kürtçe. Türkçeyi öğreniyorum ama senin kadar bilemem. Bir

Correcting the way children speak by the teacher, as Bourdieu claims, stigmatizes the language of the children²¹⁹ whose languages or accents are different from the legitimate language. Within the memories of the respondents, being beaten up or forced to speak Turkish was a common theme. Thus, the requirement of the field of education to speak Turkish is associated with physical or symbolic violence.

“On the first day of school, we came into the class with my older brother and then he left. The teacher entered the class and starting speaking. I did not understand a word. Those times, beating up was common in education. Students were beaten up like taming animals. You do not know Turkish and you are being beaten up. Thus, you had to escape. I had to go to school with the insistence of my brother or with his fear.”²²⁰ (Male, Diyarbakır, 34, University graduate)

Deducing from the words of the respondent, it can be claimed that the assumption of the teacher forcing children to speak Turkish was that the language children spoke at home was an obstacle to their educational lives and success. In this manner, the teacher as the representative of the field of education intervenes within the sphere of home; the linguistic policies within the public sphere affect or aim at affecting the language usages at the private sphere. As Allan Luke points out, race and language are the components of cultural capital that children bring from home to school and they are important factors in the reproduction of inequality at the institution of education.²²¹ However, the linguistic capital of a language within the education system is prone to change with resistance alongside its changing values in different social spaces. The conflict between the languages and the knowledge transferred at

zaman var, olması lazım. Geçiş süreci var. Onu unutamıyorum. ... Ben kulak misafiri oldum. Sonra çağırdı. ‘Türkçe oku’ dedi, kitabı yanına aldı. Ben de Türkçeyi tam okuyamadım. İster istemez, ne olduğumu sordu. Ben de ‘Kürdüm’ dedim. Ondan şey yaptı işte, hocaya söyledi ‘sınıfta bırak. Türkçe de bilmiyor konuşmayı, okuyamıyor da.’”]

²¹⁹ Bourdieu and Passeron, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*, 119.

²²⁰ [“Okulun ilk günü ağabeyimle beraber sınıfa girdik, beni bıraktı ve çıktı gitti. Öğretmen girince konuşmaya başladı. Ben tek bir kelime bile anlamadım. O dönemde biliyorsunuz eğitimde dayak çok ileri seviyeydi. Hayvanları evcilleştirir gibi öğrenci dövülürdü. Onun verdiği bir korku da vardı tabii. Hem Türkçe bilmiyorsun, anlayamıyorsun hem dayak yiyorsun. Ortada bir psikolojik depresyon gibi bir şey oluşuyor insanda. Doğal olarak kaçmak zorunda kalıyorsun. Ağabeyimin direktmesiyle ya da korkusuyla artık okula gitmek zorunda kaldım.”]

²²¹ Luke, “Race and Language as Capital in School,” 287.

school and home formed distrust to the knowledge and the fairness of the teachers among some Kurdish respondents against the institution of education.

There had been a community called Society For the Elevation of Kurdistan (*Kürdistan Teali Cemiyeti*) and it was written as one of the ‘harmful communities’ (*zararlı cemiyetler*) [in history books]. However, it was not a harmful community. It was constituted of the people who fought with the French and the English. The way it has been told [at schools] was not a situation that would be accepted here. There was Şeyh Sait Revolt and we were in disagreement [with the teachers]. Then you start forming an idea. You realize that you are Kurd for instance. When you use a Kurdish word in class when talking to your friend for instance and the teacher notices it, you stand out. The teacher says ‘why are you speaking in Kurdish?’ Using the initiative, they could fail you because of that.”²²² (Male, Diyarbakır, 34, High-school graduate)

Speaking Kurdish was claimed to be associated with having certain political ideas by the respondent. The prejudice of the teacher was perceived as the reason of the failure and incompatibility at school. It was not only speaking Kurdish that created this conflict, but also the knowledge transferred at school could be in conflict with that transferred from the family. The questioning of the knowledge presented at schools has various roots ranging from experiences of the Kurds with the Turkish state, narratives of the elders to the alternative sources of knowledge from the Kurdish political movements. This alternative knowledge could be a reference point that challenges the nationalistic rituals performed at schools.

“For instance our elders used to say that we shouldn’t be taking the national oath [at school] because if we did, we would be punished by God (*andımızı okuma, çarpılırsın*). Why? Because we are not Turkish.”²²³ (Male, Diyarbakır, 34, High-school graduate)

²²² [Kürt Teali Cemiyeti diye bir cemiyet kurulmuş, Zararlı Cemiyetler diye geçiyordu. Oysaki Kürt Teali Cemiyeti Zararlı Cemiyet değil. Fransızlara ve İngilizlere karşı savaşmış, savaşan insanlardan oluşuyordu. Onun öyle anlatılması, ki bizim burada kabul edilebilecek bir durum değildi. Yine Şeyh Sait İsyanı vardı. Onu da çok farklı lanse ettikleri için ayrı düştük bu konularda. Bir fikriyat oluşuyor sende. Kürt olduğunu farkına varıyorsun mesela o dönemde yavaş yavaş. Mesela bir kelimen bile, sınıfın içerisinde bir arkadaşına Kürtçe bir kelime konuştuğun zaman, o hoca farkına vardığı zaman gözüne batıyorsun. “Sen niye Kürtçe konuşuyorsun?” diyor. Kanaat notunu da kullanarak seni derslerden bırakabiliyordu yani.]

²²³ [“Mesela büyüklerimiz bize anlatıyor “Andımızı okumayın çarpılırsınız”. “Niye?”, “E, siz Türk değilsiniz.”]

The national oath which was abolished in 2013²²⁴ and was read every day before classes in primary education, included lines like “I am Turkish, honest, hardworking” (*Türküm, doğruyum, çalışkanım*) and “My existence shall be dedicated to the Turkish existence” (*Varlığım Türk varlığına armağan olsun*). The elders, who claim that it is a sin to lie by rejecting the Kurdish identity, construct the resistance in a religious way by pointing out that saying the phrase “I am Turkish” is like lying in front of God. Although the content of the student oath is strictly secular, the act of taking an oath has religious implications. And within the worlds of the elders that the respondent talks about, it is a sin to lie by taking an oath that says that they are Turkish. Thus, sacredness of Turkish identity which is tried to be created within the oath by attributing supremacy to Turkish identity is challenged. The impositions of the school are challenged by the dispositions brought from home like in this situation.

Additionally, encountering Turkish at the institution of education creates a perception especially within childhood that Turkish is the language of the educated. Thus, one who speaks Kurdish forms herself/himself on the opposite of the Turkish-speaking power holders and the agents of the state. When the people who have migrated from the village first encounter Turkish within the education system, it leads to a dichotomy of the people who are peasants/“unmodern” and the ones who are city-dwellers/“civilized”. The words of two respondents are explanatory in explaining the formation of attributions to languages within childhood.

“In my primary school there were the children of soldiers and they always spoke in Turkish. I thought that we came from the village, and Kurdish was the language of

²²⁴ “Erdoğan 'Andımız'ın Neden Kaldırıldığını Açıkladı,” *Milliyet Gazetesi*, October 8, 2013, accessed December 10, 2013, <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/erdogan-dan-partililere-gonderme/siyaset/detay/1774517/default.htm>.

the rural. I thought because they were urban and never lived in the village, they spoke Turkish.”²²⁵ (Male, Diyarbakır, 38, University graduate)

“When I was little, I thought that Turkish language was ‘*bajari*’ meaning the ones from the city. I was in the village and I thought Kurdish was the language of the villagers and Turkish was that of the city-dwellers, the elite or the civil servants.”²²⁶ (Male, Diyarbakır, 35, University graduate)

The encounters of the villagers with city-dwellers, migration (mostly forced), military force or the education system creates a clash that also manifests itself in the clash of languages. This clash includes an aspect of class that some respondents claimed that they used to associate speaking Turkish with being “upper-class”. One of the female respondents (Female, Diyarbakır, 49, University graduate) remembers her mother’s words when a soldier or a nurse came to the village and talked in Turkish. She claimed that within that encounter, they used to regard them as “upper-class”. Thus, the respondent living in the village in her childhood was introduced to Turkish from “outside”. The people from outside were the ones that they did not know from the village, they were the ones who had qualifications associated with the different institutions of the state and who symbolized the apparatus of the state.

Also, the people who had an encounter with Turkish before going to school are associated with better financial conditions by some respondents. It was another reason why being acquainted with Turkish was associated with being upper class or being urban. Thus, as well as the other kinds of capitals (cultural, social and symbolic) serve for the preservation of the economic capital, the economic capital

²²⁵ [“Ben ilkokulu, hava lojmanlarında ilköğretim var, sadece askeri personelin, subay astsubay çocuklarının bulunduğu bir okulda okudum. Orada yabancılık şöyle, orada subay astsubay çocukları sürekli Türkçe konuşurlardı. Biz mesela, en azından ben öyle düşünüyordum, biz köyden gelmiştik, köyden geldikten bir buçuk yıl sonra okula başladım. Ben şey zannederdim, biz Kürtçe konuşuyoruz, bu köy dili zannederdim. Bunlar da şehirli herhalde, hiç köyde yaşamadıkları için Türkçe konuşuyorlar zannederdim.”]

²²⁶ [“Türkçeyi ‘bajari’ şehir, yani onların dili, ben köydeyken işte köylüler Kürtçe kullanıyor ama şehirli Türkçe kullanıyor, hani Kürtçe köylülerin dili, o dönemki algıyı söylüyorum. Türkçe daha bir böyle, elit kesimin, memur kesimin. Bu da açıkçası sistemin yarattığı bir şey. Köydesin ya, sonuçta şehirde yaşayan başka köylüler de var, oraya gelince Türkçe konuşuyor.”]

helps to nourish the cultural capital. Having a television at home may not be distinctive as an objectified form of cultural capital but when we consider the period of the childhood of the respondents within the villages, it can serve as a mean of cultural capital. Within this situation, having a television at home by the help of economic capital meant access for the educationally profitable linguistic capital-Turkish.

“The financial situation of the children from the central places is better and they are in close contact with television or the financial situation of their fathers is better. It is easier for them to meet Turkish or to learn Turkish.”²²⁷ (Male, Diyarbakır, 38, University graduate)

However, being a native speaker not only meant being able to speak the language or being competent in it but it also meant having the dispositions it brought. Within the clash of worlds of school and home, being alienated from the world of the family is emphasized by some respondents.

“When I came home from school, towards my family, especially towards the women because they were home, a kind of antipathy occurred after a while. This antipathy even went to humiliation. Because at school it was as if we knew Turkish, we would have a different identity. It was as if Kurdish was a filthy language. I was nearly disturbed with the outfits, the way they talk, gestures of my mother, sisters and aunts.”²²⁸ (Male, Diyarbakır, 45, High school graduate)

There is also a gender aspect emphasized by the respondent on behalf of his female relatives at home that the women who did not have formal education were more likely to continue their habitus gained from the family. Thus, the clash of the worlds

²²⁷ [“Merkezi yerlerdeki çocukların durumları biraz daha iyi ve televizyonla haşır neşir veya babaları diyelim ki, maddi durumları daha iyi falan, onların Türkçeyle tanışmaları, Türkçeyi öğrenmeleri çok daha kolay. Yani onlar da kenar mahalleler veya köylerden gelen çocukların üzerinde bir alay ederek, aşağılayarak bir baskı yaratıyorlardı. Öyle bir şey de hatırlıyorum.”]

²²⁸ [“Eve geldiğinde, okuldan eve geldiğinde bu sefer aileme karşı, özellikle de kadınlar evde olduğu için yani onlara karşı bir antipati geliyordu bir süre sonra. Bu antipati neredeyse aşağılamaya kadar gidiyordu. Çünkü okulda Türkçe sanki, Türkçe bilmek, o dile ait o dille birleşmek, o dili öğrenirsek farklı bir kimliğe kavuşacağımızı sanki düşünüyorduk. Sanki Kürtçe pis bir dilmiş gibi ya da işte benim kucağımda büyüdüğüm annem veya ablalarım veya yengelerim, giysilerinden, konuşmalarından, hal ve hareketlerinden neredeyse bir şekilde rahatsızlık duymaya başladım.”]

of private and the public (home and the school) was more obviously seen by the children when they regarded the non-educated women and the latter could be the object of alienation. The world presented by Turkish was sometimes connected with development, improvement, civilization and sophistication by the respondents. The word “improvement” which was used to define learning Turkish is a perception that the monolingual education system in Turkish creates. As Turkish presents itself as the educationally profitable language, it presents itself as the key to improvement.

“Some speak Turkish to improve themselves even if they do not speak properly. My mother was not like that. She never talked in Turkish with us, neither our dad did.”²²⁹ (Female, Diyarbakır, 47, Primary school graduate)

Learning another language may be referred to as the improvement of oneself. This reference points to the linguistic capital of a language. However, if the connotation of “improvement” is attributed to Turkish but not Kurdish, it points to the hierarchy among them. The connotation of sophistication that being able to speak Turkish brought was mostly told by the respondent on behalf of others rather than claiming that she such a perception.

“For a while something happened to us. Even though our mother tongue is Kurdish, we spoke more Turkish when we went to the villages to say that we were ‘civilized’. When we went to villages, I did not do so but some people who went to Istanbul for a couple of months and came back spoke Turkish without knowing it much but claimed that they knew it well. Now it is not like that. Maybe back then we did not know our identity. I mean maybe to know Turkish fully meant full sophistication.”²³⁰ (Female, Diyarbakır, 47, Primary school graduate)

²²⁹ [Annem bilmiyor. Annem hiç Türkçe bilmiyor. Ne yaptı öğrenemedi de. Bazıları var hani kendini geliştirmek için düzgün olmasa da konuşuyor, benim annem öyle değildi. O bizimle hiç Türkçe konuşmadı, babam da konuşmadı.”]

²³⁰ [Mesela biz de bir ara öyle olmuştu. Biz anadilimiz Kürtçe olduğu halde biz diyorduk, köylere gittiğimiz zaman “biz Türkçeyi çok iyi biliyoruz”, “artık medeniyetleştik” demek için çok fazla konuşurduk. Yani Türkçe konuşurduk. Köylere de gittiğimiz zaman biz çocukken, ben öyle yapmadım ama mesela İstanbul’a bir iki ay gidip de gelip Türkçeyi de hiç bilmeden de konuşur ama işte “ben Türkçeyi çok iyi biliyorum” diyen insanlar vardı ama şu anda öyle değil. Kimliğimizi mi bilmiyorduk artık neydi bilmiyorum. Yani Türkçeyi bilmek herhalde, tam bir bilmişlik miydi?]

However, the attribution of “civilization” or “sophistication” was claimed to not exist anymore by the respondent. The attribution of civilization to the Turkish language may be one of the causes of the language shift in favour of Turkish where it is also related with the Turkish monolingual education system that promotes that perception of Turkish as the language of education and “civilization”. On the opposite side of the attribution of “civilization” to Turkish, the maintenance of Kurdish is sometimes referred to as the “continuation of the tradition” by the respondents. When it is conceptualized like this, it becomes as if with urbanization and relative dissociation of tradition, the usage of Kurdish would disappear as a natural consequence.

“For instance, in the counties people continue that tradition, they speak in Kurdish within the family. They are not prone to Turkish. They cannot speak Turkish, it is not possible. The continuation of Kurdish depends on the people speaking Kurdish in the rural areas, in the villages and the small places.”²³¹ (Male, Diyarbakır, 34, University graduate)

“The reason of the continuing of it [Kurdish] is a bit by virtue of the rural places. Or else, how much I can make it survive? I learned Turkish really late and now I use Kurdish at a percentage of twenty five within my daily life and that is for the simple sentences. It is not for having a conversation.”²³² (Male, Diyarbakır, 35, University graduate)

The maintenance of Kurdish being attributed to the elderly and the people living in rural places is worth analysing. Within such a framework it seems as if the continuation of language depends on the freezing of time or resisting to urbanization. Though the former is impossible, because the old generation cannot keep a language to survive for long since it is impossible to freeze time, the latter is not inevitable. Either way the attribution of continuation of Kurdish to rural places and the elderly form the language as if it is a language that cannot adopt itself to new conditions.

²³¹ [“Mesela, ilçede onlar hala o geleneği sürdürüyor kendi aile içinde Kürtçe konuşurlar. Türkçeye çok fazla yatkın değillerdir. Türkçeyi tam anlamıyla konuşamazlar, mümkün değil konuşamazlar. Şu an dediğim gibi 100 yıl sürecek olan Kürtçenin devamı kırsal alandaki, köylerde, küçük yerleşim yerlerinde Kürtçe konuşması.”]

²³² [“Şu anda devam etme sebebi biraz da kırsal kesim sayesinde. Yoksa ben ne kadar yaşatabilirim? Çok sonradan Türkçeyi öğrenen biriyim ve şu an günlük hayatının en fazla yüzde yirmi beşinde kullanıyorum. O da basit cümlelerde. Oturup sohbet biçiminde değil.”]

Personification of Languages: “Cold” Turkish, “Sentimental” Kurdish

For some respondents, Kurdish is connected with emotions while Turkish sounded and felt distant and “cold”. Languages are personified as if Kurdish is one from the family defined with the words such as “sincerity” and “warmth” and Turkish is like an acquaintance defined with the words like “cold” and “distant”. Being from the “family” always brings trust, familiarity and affinity in advance. Kurdish and Turkish are better explained and objectified by the respondents by using similarities between languages and kinship ties.

Referring to a language as “cold” implies that people attach human-like qualities to them and that they are always more than a mere mean of communication. Kurdish as the mother tongue is formed at the opposite of Turkish and their attributions are formed in contradiction to each other. The negative attributions attached to Kurdish are not trying to be negated but they are trying to be overcome by putting alongside the positive qualities left over from Turkish by referring to emotions. The 23-year-old daughter of a respondent (Female, Diyarbakır, 50, did not go to school) said that in these words:

“The other day a friend called her mother and asked how her mother was doing in Kurdish. She asked ‘*dayika min, tu çawa yi?*’ (mother, how are you?). There was more sincerity and warmth there. But the same sentences in Turkish feel so simple.”²³³

Another male respondent used similar connotations when describing the languages, again referring to Turkish as serious and cold.

“Kurdish is more comfortable, it is more modest. Kurdish is a language that calms people. It is a language of love. When people speak Kurdish they can immediately convince you but in Turkish they cannot. Kurdish language and literature are more

²³³ (“Geçen gün arkadaş, lehçesi Kürtçe böyle. Ararken diyor ki “anne ne yapıyorsun?”. Ararken dedi ki “dayika min, tu çawa ni?”. Orada daha bir böyle, gerçekten bir içtenlik var. “Anne nasılsın?” böyle çok basit geldi bana o cümle.”]

emotional. It is more affectionate. Turkish is a little bit cold and serious.”²³⁴ (Male, Istanbul, 43, Primary school graduate)

A different kind of attribution to languages in as much as emotions was revealed in one of the findings of Uçarlar. One of the respondents in Uçarlar’s research claimed that Kurds lied more easily and became rude when they spoke Turkish and were more polite in Kurdish.²³⁵ This is a discrete example where he points out to a different aspect of language but still preserving the dichotomy.

Even though different kinds of attachments were made by the respondents to Kurdish and Turkish, the binary opposition of the language of emotions and language of reason was also revealed. The attached emotions to Kurdish were rather on the basis of Kurdish being the language of dense emotions such as anger and love. Some interviewees said that speaking Kurdish with their mothers was more emotive and if they spoke in Turkish with their mothers it was like speaking to another person. The resemblance of “popping out” of Kurdish by some respondents with strong feelings forms it as a language as if it was kept latent. Where Kurdish is defined as the language of emotions, one of the prominent feelings, being angry is claimed to be expressed via Kurdish.

“[My wife] usually speaks in Turkish with the children. When she gets angry she speaks to them in Kurdish. She curses and shouts in Kurdish.”²³⁶ (Male, Diyarbakır, 48, High-school graduate)

“When I swear or get really angry I realized that I used my mother tongue. Even if we live in Turkish or think in Turkish we experience our most intense feelings in Kurdish.”²³⁷ (Male, Diyarbakır, 38, University graduate)

²³⁴ [“Kürtçe daha rahat, daha böyle mütevazı yani. Kürtçe böyle insanları yatıştıran, sevgi olan bir dildir. İnsanlar böyle Kürtçeyi konuştukları zaman, öyle güzel konuştukları zaman seni hemen ikna ederler ama Türkçede ikna edemezler. Böyle bir şey var. Kürt dili ve edebiyatı daha duygusaldır. Daha böyle insanı tatmin ediyor. Daha sevecendir yani ama Türkçe öyle değil. Türkçe biraz daha soğuk ve ciddi.”]

²³⁵ Uçarlar, “Between Majority Power and Minority Resistance: Kurdish Linguistic Rights in Turkey,” 252.

²³⁶ [“Çocuklarla genelde Türkçe konuşuyor. Kızdığı zaman Kürtçe hitap ediyor. İşte kızdığı zaman Kürtçe beddua eder, bağırır.”]

The attributions to Kurdish as the language of the elderly, the rural and associating Kurdish with emotions and Turkish with oppression or formality were revealed within the interviews. Alongside these attributions, Kurdish embodies symbolic capital for the Kurdish speakers as an important marker of identity and its symbolic values that connotes the political struggles are important for the continuation of Kurdish language. I will be discussing the connotations of Kurdish identity and struggle in the next part.

Identity and Struggle

Language as the Object of Struggle and Marker of Identity

The significance given to the Kurdish language by the Kurdish movement is itself a reason for providing a language loyalty to Kurdish. Some, perceive not speaking Kurdish as disrespectful to the martyrs who “died for the Kurdish language” and speaking Kurdish is regarded as a way to contribute to the struggle.

“It is really a strange feeling. Knowing that this language came this far under pressure, injustice was done to this language, great struggle was given in order to make this language survive, how would you avoid using that language?”²³⁸ (Male, Diyarbakır, 45, High-school graduate)

When the question was asked whether Kurdish would be transferred to the next generation to their grandchildren, a mother said that she was optimistic about it and claimed that it would definitely be transferred by pointing to “all those people who had not died for nothing”. With the effect of the emphasis of the Kurdish political movement on Kurdish language, a female respondent is in contradiction that she supports education through the medium of Kurdish but she does not have the basis

²³⁷ [“Ben küfrederken, çok sinirlendiğim zaman dikkat ettim, o söyledikten sonra, hakikaten de anadilimle küfrediyorsun. Ne kadar Türkçe yaşasak, düşüsek de günlük hayatta bu yoğun duyguları Kürtçe yaşıyoruz.”]

²³⁸ [“O duygu çok tuhaf bir duygudur. Bu dilin bu kadar baskı altında bu günlere kadar geldiğini, çok büyük haksızlıkların bu dile yapıldığını, bu dilin yaşatılması için büyük mücadelelerin verildiğini bildiğin halde, sen mademki bir dil için bu kadar şey var, sen neden bunu konuşmaktan sakınıyorsun.”]

for supporting it other than the struggle itself and she does not regard it as a necessity:

“[The language of the education] might be Kurdish. It is necessary for the gaining of our identity. I personally do not see it as a necessity but I have to say it is because some people struggle for it, fight for it.”²³⁹ (Female, Diyarbakır, 47, Primary school graduate)

Even though she does not regard the education through the medium of mother tongue necessary, in order to not to degrade the movement and the struggle, she claims that she *has to* say that it is important. This is important in the sense that she does not really attribute linguistic capital to Kurdish or she does not attribute importance to Kurdish being the language of education but rather it stays as a political discourse claiming that it is important. Also, the pressures on Kurdish intervene within her discourse on language. Because there is a load of Kurdish, insisting to use it with language loyalty has consequences in some situations. Speaking Kurdish creates a perception that it goes hand in hand with being politically accused. Insisting on speaking Kurdish with the children for some parents is like putting their children in danger.

“For example I had a cousin and he was kicked out of all universities. Why? Because he was speaking Kurdish. ... I did not impose my children like ‘you are going to speak Kurdish’. I did not say such a thing. No mother would say her children to be extreme. Children feel rage with the things they know or see or they feel hatred.”²⁴⁰ (Female, Diyarbakır, 47, Primary school graduate)

The anecdotes from the relatives such as the cousin of the respondent constitute data that supports the feeling of danger when speaking Kurdish. They create a perception

²³⁹ [“Olabilir. Neden olmasın . Kimliğimizin kazanılması için gerekli bence. Bazı şeylerin uzlaşması için gerekli bence. Pek fazla ben gerekli görmediğim halde gereklidir demem gerekiyor çünkü bazıları bunun için uğraş veriyor. Kavgaya ediyor.”]

²⁴⁰ [“Mesela benim bir amcamın oğlu vardı kaç sene önce. Gitmediği üniversite kalmadı. Niye? Kürtçe konuşuyordu. Onu oradan atarlardı, oraya giderdi, oradan atarlardı oraya giderdi. Gitmediği hiçbir üniversite kalmadı, bu mesele yüzünden. Üniversitelerde Kürtçe konuşurdu. Kabul etmezlerdi, tahammül etmezlerdi. ... Çocuklarıma o aşırıyı vermemişim “İlla Kürtçe konuşacaksın, bunu yapacaksın” dememişim yani. Çoğumuz da demiyoruz. Hiçbir anne de demez çocuğuna “böyle aşırı ol.”]

as if linguistic assimilation is the high road to social inclusion²⁴¹ in universities and in the education system. The words of the mother point out that she wants Kurdish to live. She regards it as a marker of identity and praises it as an object of political struggle but at the same time does not want her children to “possess” Kurdish as a world. On the other hand, she does not want her children to be ashamed of not being able to speak Kurdish. That is why she said that she spoke in Kurdish with her children when they were little and she knew they would either way learn Turkish. Her main motive was that her children should be able to communicate in Kurdish with the relatives and family but she does not want them to intervene in a world where Kurdish is used as a political entity, propaganda or as a social network. She said that she does not want them to attend Kurdish private courses in KURDÎ-DER (Association of Research and Development of Kurdish Language) because she does not want them to enter into that world.

Hand in hand with Kurdish language connotating Kurdish political struggles, there is a claim among some respondents that Kurdish as the marker of identity is the primary signifier for legitimizing their identity. A separate language than the dominant and official language is one of the primary grounds for a separate identity. Language signifying a group of people is rather a modern concept, where in the context of colonialism it is a colonial construction of knowledge. The idea that the language groups create a group identity was the outcome of some colonial administrative practices such as colonial census, colonial places designed according to linguistic differences.²⁴² As Lisa Mitchell argues, the possible extinguish of a language was started to be imagined in the 19th century and at the end of that century, the idea that the death of a language meant the extinguishing of “the people” got

²⁴¹ Piller and Takahashi, “Linguistic Diversity and Social Inclusion,” 372.

²⁴² Mitchell, *Language, Emotion, and Politics in South India the Making of a Mother Tongue*, 20.

stronger.²⁴³ In line with this thought, some respondents argued that their mother tongues signified their existence.

“Our mother tongue is our culture. If we lose this, we lose ourselves. If you lose your mother tongue, you lose yourself.”²⁴⁴ (Male, Diyarbakır, 48, High-school graduate)

This approach matches the definition of Nesrin Uçarlar about the direct and strong relationship between language and identity and the unification of that language (consequently unification of identity). Uçarlar defines three different approaches – Nationalist, Cultural and Trans-national- of the Kurdish intelligentsia in the European Diaspora. The ones who have the nationalist approach regard the nation-state as a necessary force and directly matches identity with language claiming that if the language would be lost so would the identity. They regard the linguistic unity as a necessity for the integration of the Kurdish people.²⁴⁵ The cultural approach includes all the dialects of Kurdish within the perspective of linguistic rights which is regarded as part of cultural rights. It is not in the need to define languages and dialects or make a clear-cut separation among them. The cultural approach supports the coexistence of them rather than favouring standardization. This approach does not support language being the strongest and single marker of identity.²⁴⁶ The transnational approach is similar to the cultural approach in the stance that it takes to the languages and dialects but it regards the struggle for the linguistic rights as a political struggle and focus on “decentralized political structures composed of autonomous administrations to protect and develop the language”.²⁴⁷ These

²⁴³ Mitchell, *Language, Emotion, and Politics in South India the Making of a Mother Tongue*, 89-90.

²⁴⁴ [“Bizim anadilimiz, kültürümüzdür. Biz bunu kaybedersek kendimizi de kaybederiz. Anadil gitti mi kendini de kaybedersin.”]

²⁴⁵ Uçarlar, “Between Majority Power and Minority Resistance: Kurdish Linguistic Rights in Turkey,” 257.

²⁴⁶ Uçarlar, “Between Majority Power and Minority Resistance: Kurdish Linguistic Rights in Turkey,” 258-259.

²⁴⁷ Uçarlar, “Between Majority Power and Minority Resistance: Kurdish Linguistic Rights in Turkey,” 261.

approaches showed up within the words of the respondents in this research regardless of the education level of the respondents.

Although the respondents claimed that the languages were like “a living thing” and it was evolving, they formed a discourse that attributed the language an “essence”. With the political attachments, using more Kurdish was regarded as returning back to that “essence” and avoiding any borrowed words in Kurdish was seen like getting closer to that “essence”. The contradictory part is that the respondents claimed that the language evolves and changes within time, and at the same time they claimed that it should be fixed, should not borrow words from languages and that people can be classified according to their distance to that “essence”. The emphasis on the Kurdish identity and the “realization” that they were Kurds made the respondents claim that they have found themselves. Within that framework, speaking Turkish did not match that self.

“Until I was seven, I did not know a word in Turkish. Then I learned Turkish. Until I finished high-school, I have nearly forgotten Kurdish. Then you return to your essence (*özüne dönüyorsun*).”²⁴⁸ (Male, Diyarbakır, 34, High-school graduate)

Within the words of the respondent, “founding self” was associated with speaking Kurdish without using words borrowed from Turkish. Trying to use the “Kurdish originated words” was like seeking for authenticity and detaching from the imposed Turkish identity.

“There used to be more Turkish within my Kurdish. After moving to Diyarbakır, more precisely after I found myself, because these problems were more recent and more, they had an effect on us. I try to not to use them. I started using the Kurdish originated words more. We did not know the names such as the forest or hospital. We used to call them “hastaxane” or “baxçe” (hospital and garden). We did not know the Kurdish word for “the teacher”. When I was little, some people called it

²⁴⁸ [“Yedi yaşına kadar bir kelime Türkçe bilmiyordum. Sonra Türkçe öğrendim. Lise bir, liseyi bitirene kadar neredeyse Türkçeyi unutuyordum ama daha sonra tekrar, diyelim ne, özüne dönüyorsun mesela. Tekrar özümüze döndük.”]

“mamoste” (teacher) and I thought whether it had to do with something religious.”²⁴⁹ (Male, Diyarbakır, 48, High-school graduate)

Similar to the attitude of the former respondent, another (Male, Diyarbakır, 45, High school graduate) claimed that he was disturbed by speaking “sometimes Turkish, sometimes Kurdish” because it reminded him of the “restrictions that the oppressive mentality brought for years”. The attributed importance to Kurdish as the mother tongue by the Kurdish movement is a strong discourse that affects people but for some respondents the reasoning ends there:

“We speak mostly with our mother tongue with our children because it is our mother tongue.”²⁵⁰ (Female, Diyarbakır, 44, Secondary school graduate)

Mother tongue being emphasized for the sake of it being the mother tongue in some situations can be reminded by relatives or family members who have nationalist tendencies. This situation might create a feeling of guilt for some people when they speak Turkish unwittingly. I would like to analyse the words of a female respondent which I regard as explanatory in the sense that they symbolize this contradiction when Turkish is spoken. To begin with, she talks about the times when she speaks Turkish without noticing it and her brother warns her to not to speak it. Thus, she feels embarrassed when she is reminded that she spoke in Turkish.

“Sometimes I speak in Turkish with my younger brother and he answers in Kurdish. At times like these, I get flustered. (*Başından aşağı kaynar sular dökülmek*). Even though I am his older sister why did I speak in Turkish with him, why does he speak in Kurdish with me? I feel guilty.”²⁵¹ (Female, Diyarbakır, 47, Primary school graduate)

²⁴⁹ [“Eskiden benim Kürtçemde Türkçe daha çoktu. Diyarbakır’a geldikten sonra, daha doğrusu kendimi bulduktan sonra, bu sorunlar daha sıcak, gelişmeler daha sıcak daha fazla olduğundan dolayı bizim üzerimizde de etkisi oldu. Kullanmamaya çalışıyorum. Kürtçe kökenli kelimeleri daha çok kullanmaya başlıyorum. Eskiden biz bilmezdik. Ormanın, hastanenin ismini bilmezdik. ‘Hastaxane’ diyorduk, ‘orman’ diyorduk, ‘baxçe’ diyorduk. ‘Mezarlık’ diyorduk. Öğretmeni bilmezdik. Ben küçükken “mamoste” dedikleri zaman, vardı bazıları söylüyordu, ben diyordum acaba bu dini şeylerle mi ilgilidir. Öğretmenin Kürtçe ismi “mamoste”ymiş.”]

²⁵⁰ [“Çocuklarımıza daha çok Kürtçe, anadil olduğu için, anadilimiz o, onu konuşuyoruz.”]

²⁵¹ [“Bak ben bazen bu kardeşimle Türkçe konuşurum, o benimle Kürtçe konuşur. Benim baştan aşağı kaynar su dökülmüş gibi oluyorum diyorum. Ben ablası olduğum halde niye ben onunla Türkçe konuştum, niye o benimle Kürtçe konuşuyor? Ben kendimi suçlu hissediyorum.”]

Speaking Turkish creates a feeling like it is a “betrayal” to the people who fight for Kurdish language and identity. People having died for this matter attribute language holiness. Thus, speaking Turkish might be as if she is estranged from the Kurdish identity. Still, the same respondent does not question the necessity of Turkish for education.

“Surely Turkish is necessary for education. Nobody says there should be no Turkish. ... I mean when it is not drawn to a side I think both [languages] are brothers and sisters.”²⁵² (Female, Diyarbakır, 47, Primary school graduate)

Within a framework where Kurdish is not used as a medium of instruction, the continuation of Kurdish becomes related with the language loyalty rather than any institutional support. Language policies of the Turkish state may have reached a point where speaking Turkish is found useful and necessary when living in Turkey but language loyalty is still an important factor in the continuation of Kurdish. The same female respondent pointed out to the symbolic value that Kurdish had and how it functions as a marker of identity:

“It is just outside, for our voice to be heard by the others, for our feeling of lowly (*eziklik*) to be surpassed, we speak Kurdish but within the houses everyone speak Turkish. Outside there are demonstrations. Look at the children who throw stones, most of them speaks Turkish better than Kurdish but they say ‘our identity should not be lost’.”²⁵³ (Female, Diyarbakır, 47, Primary school graduate)

As a marker of the identity Kurdish is sometimes used for the seizure of acceptance and recognition of Kurdish identity. The qualities of the language other than being means of communication are more relevant for the people who can be called as “semi-speakers”²⁵⁴ who are not competent in a language but continue using it or it can be relevant for the ones who are competent in both languages but deliberately

²⁵² [“Tabii eğitim için Türkçe şart. Kimse Türkçe olmasın demiyor. ... Yani, bir tarafa yönelmediği, bir tarafa çekilmediği sürece şarttır. Bir tarafa çekilmediği sürece bence ikisi de kardeştir.”]

²⁵³ [“Sadece dışarıda, sesimiz gitsin başkalarına, ezikliğimiz geçsin diye şey olur yoksa herkes kendi evinde Türkçe konuşur. Dışarıda bu şeyler olsun, eylemler olsun, ne olursa olsun. Git o taş atan çocuğa bak, çoğu Türkçeyi Kürtçeden daha güzel konuşur. Ama diyor ki ‘kimliğim unutulmasın’.”]

²⁵⁴ Dorian, “Language Shift in Community and Individual,” 86.

chose to speak one over the other. Among the young generation though, the ones who were born into a more Turkish-speaking environment form a relationship with language that can be called as “passive bilingualism”, based on the concept of Nancy Dorian.²⁵⁵ It is a situation where only exposure to a language enables people to understand that language without being able to be productive in it. This passive bilingualism brings a feeling of shame for the children who can understand Kurdish but do not feel competent in talking or writing it.

“The new generation does not know Kurdish. Moreover, mostly they are ashamed of speaking Kurdish. I sometimes ask why they [my students] do not want to learn their mother tongue and they say ‘who is left to speak this language any more’. To be honest, I feel really sad.”²⁵⁶ (Male, Diyarbakır, 34, University graduate)

The students of the respondent who is a high-school teacher claiming that there is no one left to speak Kurdish attribute Kurdish linguistic capital as if it lacks it at all. It becomes like a loop that the students do not speak Kurdish and legitimize it as if no one else speaks it. Despite this feeling of a decline in the usage of Kurdish or a language shift in favour of Turkish, language loyalty is a strong factor that affects the usage of Kurdish. Additionally, other factors intervene that attributes different kinds of capitals to Kurdish where it makes it possible to be continued. One of the few responses which paid attention to the newly defined linguistic capital to Kurdish was with the example of a Kurdish theatre. She wanted her children to learn Kurdish not just because they would communicate with the elderly, but also they would understand the works in literature and arts as well.

“I want them to learn Kurdish. I want them to register them to a Kurdish course. We go to a theatre for instance, they do not understand Kurdish. When my aunts come to visit, they do not understand. They feel so sad. It was our mistake; we did not speak

²⁵⁵ Dorian, “Language Shift in Community and Individual,” 93.

²⁵⁶ [“Yeni nesil kesinlikle bilmiyor. Hatta çoğu zaman Kürtçe konuşmaktan bile utanıyor, o seviyedeler. Bazen konuşuyorum mesela “niye kendi anadilinizi öğrenmek istemiyorsunuz?”. “Niçin özellikle sizin ananızın konuştuğu dil, Kurmanci ya da Zazaki, fark etmez, onu geliştirmiyorsunuz?” Çoğu zaman “hocam, kim konuşuyor artık bu dili” diyorlar. Çok üzülüyorum açıkçası.”]

with them. I want them to understand. Our environment is all in Kurdish.”²⁵⁷
(Female, Diyarbakır, 41, High-school graduate)

This was one of the few references to Kurdish as the language of production in arts and of attributing a linguistic capital on behalf of that production. However, surely the responses would be different if the interviews were conducted with the children who did not feel competent in Kurdish. Since the parents knew Kurdish (except a few who did not feel competent in Istanbul), they did not feel the anxiety of not speaking it within the environments of newly defined linguistic capital to Kurdish such as Kurdish theatres, conferences, or various cultural or political activities. The children would have different perspectives on their encounters with Kurdish in the places where it is attributed a linguistic capital.

Accents as Part of Identity Formation

The way a person speaks forms assumptions about the speaker’s gender, educational level, profession, and place of origin,²⁵⁸ the accents are also a part of the way a person speaks. When it points to the ethnicity or place of origin, it may create a bond among people that may lead to deliberately choosing to speak with the accent. A female respondent (Female, Istanbul, 42, University graduate) living in Istanbul felt the need to show her place of origin and liked to hear the question of where she was from. Thus, she spoke with the accent of Diyarbakır where she wanted to “express her identity and show where she was from.” In a similar way, when the accent shows that the person is not Kurdish, it creates a distance for some. With the words of the respondent, even if he claims that he does not have any

²⁵⁷ [“Evet, çok istiyorum. Öğrensinler. Kursu yazdırmak istiyorum onları. Bir tiyatroya gidiyoruz mesela Kürtçe anlamıyorlar mesela. Anneannemle konuştuğu zaman anlamıyorlar. Halalarım geliyor mesela, teyzelerim geliyor, konuştuğu zaman anlamıyorlar. Çok üzülüyorlar. “Niye biz bilmiyoruz anne?”. Bizim hatamızdı biz konuşmadık onlarla. ... Anlamalarını isterdim. Bizim çevre hep Kürtçe zaten.”]

²⁵⁸ Spolsky, “Second Language Learning,” 181.

negative or positive thoughts on accents, he creates a bond with the accent of Kurds but feels distant to the people using other accents.

“I am neutral on this subject. I do not have a positive or negative thought. For instance I like the way that people from Diyarbakır speaks but I do not like some dialects (*ağız*) of central Anatolia. I mean, they are distant. I feel distant about those people as well. They are not one of us.”²⁵⁹ (Male, Diyarbakır, 35, University graduate)

However, there is an aspect of accents which are institutionalized and both accents that the latter respondent talks about are not legitimate within the institution of education. The legitimate way of speaking within the institution is accepted by some Kurdish teachers as well where they claim that they feel the need to avoid speaking Turkish with accents. It is important to emphasize that the legitimate way of speaking –the accent of Istanbul in Turkish one might say- is institutionalized as the legitimate way. Thus, speaking without an accent is not possible but rather the phrase refers to speaking without the illegitimate accents. The legitimate way of speaking within the institution of education was based on the selection of a certain accent of the privileged. The accents which are not supported at the institution of education may be avoided by the Kurdish teachers who also chose not to transfer to their children as a part of transferring *educationally profitable linguistic capital* which appreciates a certain accent over the others.

“When I am teaching at school I try to avoid my accent a little. There is some kind of adaptation. After a while you do not notice it. For instance, I speak with the accent of Diyarbakır with my friends on the street. If a person heard from outside, they would think about me that I did not even go to high-school. I speak in a Turkish like that. My wife is Turkish, I speak differently with her. The pronunciations I make at school, I do the same for my wife and children.”²⁶⁰ (Male, Diyarbakır, 38, University Graduate)

²⁵⁹ [“Nötrüm açıkçası. Olumlu ya da olumsuz bir şeyim yok. Mesela Diyarbakırlılarınki hoşuma gider ama bazı iç Anadolu ağızları falan var, hoşuma gitmez. Hoşuma gitmez derken, bana çok uzak gelir. O insan da bana çok uzak gelir. Benden biri değildir. Öyle söyleyeyim.”]

²⁶⁰ [“Sınıfta ders anlatırken o şiveden biraz uzak durmaya çalışıyorsunuz. Bir şekilde bir adaptasyon oluyor herhalde. Bir süre sonra artık onu fark etmiyorsunuz. Mesela arkadaşlarımla ben sokakta Diyarbakır şivesiyle konuşuyorum. Hiç böyle, dışarıdan biri baksa der ki belki “lise bile okumamış”,

If the avoidance of the accent is not possible, people might avoid talking at all. It brings a silence of the speaker where they might attach qualities such as “rudeness” to their accent.

“There was a literature teacher; he used to say that I did not speak much. I said ‘I like talking but my accent would sound rude, I am afraid I would hurt you unintentionally. I would react in a way when joking, I am afraid that I would hurt you.’”²⁶¹ (Male, Diyarbakır, 38, University Graduate)

The same respondent told that he changed his accent according to his perception about the receiver. He makes guesses about the receivers’ class position, education level, where they come from, etc., like each one of us does, and he changes his accent accordingly.

“When you are on the minibus you look at the profile of the man sitting next to you. If there is a teacher or a cultured person sitting I speak without the accent. If it is obvious that he is from the region I speak with the Kurdish accent. For example, if it is not obvious or his education level look like higher the accent changes.”²⁶² (Male, Diyarbakır, 38, University Graduate)

The respondents words are important in the sense that they show how a person might change the way he or she speaks according to the receiver of the speech. The act of speaking changes according to the capitals of the speaker and the receiver. According to Bourdieu, language usage varies according to the relation between the speakers. This relation can be analysed on the basis of the distribution of capitals, especially

öyle bir Türkçe konuşuyorum. Eşim mesela Türk, onunla farklı konuşuyorum. Sınıfta hangi telaffuzları yapıyorsam, eşimle çocuğumla öyle konuşuyorum.”

²⁶¹ [“Hatta bir edebiyat öğretmeni vardı, diyor ‘sen çok fazla konuşmuyorsun’. ‘Vallahi’ diyordum ‘ben konuşmayı seviyorum ama benim aksan böyle biraz kaba gelir, fark etmeden sizi kırarım diye korkuyorum. Bir tepki veririm şaka yaparken. Belki size şey gelir, sizi kırmaktan korkuyorum’ dedim.”]

²⁶² [“Minibüse binersiniz, yanınızdaki adamın profiline bakarsınız, sol tarafa bakarsınız, bir öğretmen ya da biraz daha kültürlü bir insansa, bakarsınız o şive belirgin olmaz ama o insanla direkt şiveyle konuşurum böyle. Bölge halkından biri olduğu belliyse o insanlar, şiveyle konuşuyorum. Atıyorum, bölge halkından olup olmadığı, eğitim düzeyi biraz daha şey havası varsa bakıyorsunuz işte, şive biraz daha farklılaşabiliyor.”]

the linguistic one. The example that Bourdieu gives is similar to the respondent changing his accent.²⁶³

“In a series of interactions observed in 1963 in a small Béarnais town, the same person (an elderly woman living in one of the neighbouring villages) first used a *patois*-French to a young woman shopkeeper in the town, who was originally from another larger town in the Béarn (and who, being more of a city-dweller, might not understand Béarnais or could feign ignorance). The next moment, she spoke in Béarnais to a woman who lived in that town but who was originally from the villages and more or less of her own age; then she used a French that was strongly ‘corrected’ to a minor town official; and, finally, she spoke in Béarnais to a road worker in the town, originally from the villages and about her age.”

Béarnaise referred to people living in the Southern France of the region Béarn and who use the accent *patois*-French (local dialect). Bourdieu claims that the person, who was an educated city dweller, would encounter with French that was tried to be corrected or silence if she had not changed her accent accordingly. Thus, for Bourdieu, the person changing her accent according to the person she talks to (even if her accent is the ‘corrected’ French) and using Béarnais is a strategy of condescension and it is artificial as much as the situation where she had not changed the way she spoke.²⁶⁴ The difference between the two examples of changing accents according to the qualities of the receiver is that the educated city-dweller in the example of Bourdieu uses the strategy of condescension whereas the respondent owns both qualities of being educated and city-dweller and being born into the Kurdish accent. However, both use it as a strategy to be accepted or to create a more sincere relation and reach out to the receiver. For the respondent, the “corrected” way of speaking is a quality that he acquired with education and uses it for acceptability when he encounters another “educated” person and uses the Kurdish accent in order to not to face silence. He does not “feign ignorance” but rather calls back his accent in order to not to remind the receiver of “ignorance”. It is rather a strategy for him to

²⁶³ Bourdieu, “The Economics of Linguistic Exchanges,” 78.

²⁶⁴ Bourdieu, “The Economics of Linguistic Exchanges,” 78.

build connections or create an intimate communication. However, the respondent connects the “corrected” way of speaking, using the accent of Istanbul with speaking “properly”. He also continues his discourse based on the assumption that speaking with an accent is an outcome of being “non-educated”.

“Some of the people from Karadeniz (Black Sea region) are insistent on using their accents. They are like us too. We speak with the accent of Diyarbakır. I have a friend from Karadeniz, I know well that in class he teaches with the accent of Istanbul. At least, he tries to speak properly but when he comes and speaks to me you would say that he came from a village in a mountain, he never went to school.”²⁶⁵ (Male, Diyarbakır, 38, University graduate)

Where it is understandable as a strategy to change accents according to the receiver, the strict attitudes on the borrowing of words from other languages or the negativity attributed to the accents as the illegitimate ways of speaking are both the manifestations of the monolingual education system under the nation-state mentality and the nationalist approach. Piller and Takashi offers to make a shift in the understanding with the inclusion of the transitivity of languages and accents in order to prevent reproducing the exclusionary aspects of monolingual institutions in multilingual ones.²⁶⁶ There is a need to form an inclusion of transitivity of languages and accents in order to not to reproduce the exclusive monolingual institutions. The attributions to Kurdish and Turkish and how their relations are formed are also related with the differentiation of public and private spheres which I will be analyzing in the next part.

²⁶⁵ [“Karadenizlilerin bir kısmı o şiveyle konuşmakta hala ısrarcılar. Hani onlar da bizim gibi, ben işte Diyarbakır şivesiyle konuşuyorum, bir arkadaşım vardı Karadenizli, o da derste çok iyi biliyorum İstanbul şivesiyle dersi anlatıyor. En azından düzgün konuşmaya çalışıyor ama gelip benim yanımda oturduğu zaman dersiniz ki bu “Karadeniz’in bir dağ köyünden gelmiş hiç okul okumamış.”]

²⁶⁶ Piller and Takahashi, “Linguistic Diversity and Social Inclusion,” 378.

Public and Private Spheres

Whispering a Language: Kurdish in Public Sphere

Even though there is a relatively more free usage of Kurdish within the public sphere, with the laws prohibiting its usage being officially abolished, Kurdish is still the language where the speaker pays attention to where he/she is speaking it, who can hear its being spoken and what might others think about it. Thus, it is formed as the language that is whispered within the public sphere where a matter of trust is required for Kurdish to be spoken. As a matter of fact, it is still the language that is avoided being spoken “aloud” within institutions of education.

There had been a common understanding among the respondents that Kurdish was used more in the situations where there had been a relation of trust like there is in the one between close friends. With the friends from childhood with whom the relations were mostly formed in Kurdish, it was continued in Kurdish but if the relation is formed in Turkish with the newly formed friends or in a place dominated by Turkish, the dominance of Turkish continues even if both sides know Kurdish. The environment for Kurdish to be spoken has to be also “safe” and trusted. The official monolingual places, such as the classroom, are kept monolingual or if the body representing that monolingualism like the teacher is around, even if the teacher is also Kurdish, Kurdish is not preferred. One of the mothers explained the situation within the school with these words:

“My little girl has two or three friends, they know Kurdish and she speaks in Kurdish with them but I don’t know the others. She has close friends that she loves, she speaks in Kurdish with them as well. Not in the classroom but outside, when they have a break, when there is not teacher around, she speaks with her close friends.”²⁶⁷
(Female, Diyarbakır, 44, Secondary school graduate)

²⁶⁷ [“Mesela iki-üç tane arkadaşı var, onlar Kürtçe biliyor, onlarla Kürtçe konuşuyor ama diğerlerini bilmiyorum. Samimi olduğu, sevdiği arkadaşı var onlarla da Kürtçe konuşuyor. Derste değil,

Some teachers working in public schools might also feel the need of avoiding to speak Kurdish in the public sphere.

“At the schools there is still the mentality of prohibition. Maybe I have it because I have worked in Istanbul. We do not speak Kurdish [at school] unless there are a few of us. That is what I observed and felt. When we go out for a smoke, the two or the three of us, we speak Kurdish but in the teacher’s room we do not speak much.”²⁶⁸ (Male, Diyarbakır, 38, University graduate)

The prohibitions of Kurdish may cause marginalization of Kurdish within the fields of education and public spaces. It can be formulated as a language that can be spoken within the environment formed by trust or within small groups and mostly outside the official monolingual spaces.

Another male respondent (Diyarbakır, 45, High-school graduate) claimed that Kurdish could be avoided in the places dominated by Turkish speakers like in Istanbul and Kurdish was used in private places. He claimed that especially singing in Kurdish or referring to Kurdish identity was possible in close, safe places. The reason why he especially notes the singing is that there has been and still continues to be lynchings or assaults towards the people singing in Kurdish or referring to Kurdish identity in public sphere. Some of these assaults were done by the police and others were by civilian people. The police beating up a young boy who was singing Ahmet Kaya, a former police killing a person because of singing in Kurdish –and the singing of Kurdish being counted as “incitation” by the court which lowered the penalty- and civilian lynchings to Kurdish speakers were just a few examples.²⁶⁹ With the repression

tenefüste dışarıda, öğretmenin olmadığı zamanda iki-üç tane samimi arkadaşı var, onlarla konuşuyor.”]

²⁶⁸ [“Okulda bir şey var, hala insanlarda böyle bir yasak zihniyeti var. Belki bu bende var İstanbul’da çalışmamdan kaynaklı, belki bende vardır sadece. Kürtçe çok seyrek bir ortam olmadı mı konuşmuyoruz. Ben öyle gözlemlerdim, öyle hissettim. Sigara içmeye iki-üç kişi gittik kendi aramızda konuşuruz. Yoksa öğretmen odasında bir köşede altı-yedi kişi bir arada sohbet ederken çok fazla Kürtçe konuşulmaz.”]

²⁶⁹ Veysi Polat, “Polisten Ahmet Kaya Dayağı,” *Taraf Gazetesi*, October 08, 2009, accessed January 02, 2014, <http://www.taraf.com.tr/haber/polisten-ahmet-kaya-dayagi.htm>. ; “Kürtçe Cinayette Tahrık

of Kurdish and official monolingualism, the language was formed as the one which is whispered and not spoken out loudly in the public sphere.

There was not a consensus among the respondents on the discourse that speaking Kurdish in public sphere requires a certain political stance. Some respondents disassociated being political from speaking Kurdish on public sphere. People who are seen as “non-political” by the respondents may regard themselves as political but in the words of a male respondent, being “political” was associated with having a relation with the Kurdish movement actively or ideologically.

“For instance my wife always speaks in Kurdish at the bazaar. Maybe I am more political than she is but she bargains in Kurdish with the shopkeepers.”²⁷⁰ (Male, Diyarbakır, 35, University graduate)

Some respondents on the other hand, associated speaking Kurdish on public sphere with certain political affiliation and referred to it as being “nationalist”.

“My sister is a little bit nationalist. She stayed in Istanbul for seven or eight years. She used to speak in Kurdish in bazaars there. She would tell my wife as well that she should be speaking in Kurdish with the children.”²⁷¹ (Male, Diyarbakır, 48, High-school graduate)

Either way, every decision of speaking Kurdish or Turkish in public sphere or with the children is loaded with attributions. It also includes the judgment (or the perceived judgment) of others and that decision involves the consideration or the contradiction of the judgments. The judgment of others may sometimes be overt and it manifests itself in the metaphors on defining and positioning the languages which can also be reproduced by Kurdish speakers. Some of the respondents referred to speaking Kurdish within the places where there are people who do not understand

Sayıldı,” *AdilMedya*, April 15, 2011, accessed January 03, 2014, <http://www.adilmedya.com/kurtce-cinayette-tahrik-sayildi-h23774.haber.>; “Kürt Müzisyenlere Irkçı Saldırı,” *Demokrat Haber*, May, 04, 2013, accessed January 03, 2014, <http://www.demokrathaber.net/guncel/kurt-muzisyenlere-irkci-saldiri-h18065.html>.

²⁷⁰ [“Mesela benim eşim pazarda hep Kürtçe konuşur. Belki ben ondan daha politığım, onun hiç öyle politik bir şeyi yoktur ama esnafla falan hep Kürtçe pazarlık yapar.”]

²⁷¹ [“Abla biraz milliyetçilidir benim. İstanbul’da da kaldı 7-8 yıl. Pazarlara giderdi Kürtçe konuşurdu. Hanıma da derdi, ‘Kürtçe konuş, Türkçeyi sokakta öğrensinler’.”]

Kurdish was like moving on to “the second channel” to refer to speaking Kurdish or shifting from Turkish to Kurdish like turning over from one television channel to another (*ikinci kanala geçmek*) and some told that they have heard this expression from the Turks.

“We spoke in Kurdish with my sister-in-law and brother-in-law. When we gathered, there were the people from our village, we spoke in Kurdish. My uncles’ wives use to say to us: ‘Kurds, do not turn over the second channel’. They did not understand [Kurdish]. They were from our village but they were Turks.”²⁷² (Female, Istanbul, 50, did not go to school)

“For instance, sometimes the neighbours say that ‘you have passed onto the second channel’. I say that we cannot be at ease if we do not speak in Kurdish. We have to speak Kurdish from time to time.”²⁷³ (Female, Diyarbakır, 41, High-school graduate)

The metaphor of the “second channel” is not peculiar to shifting to Kurdish but it is also used for other languages or the accents or dialects that are not legitimate. The metaphor is like a reminder for the speakers of Kurdish that they are speaking a non-dominant language or an accent and that it may be interrupted by the dominant one.

“I lived in Istanbul for eight years. I had Kurdish friends there. We spoke Kurdish within that group. It is also about missing [the language]. With the friends from work, even if it was not very often we spoke Kurdish, when there is no one around because people can sometimes be disturbed. They might think whether we ‘are speaking something else, something secret’.”²⁷⁴ (Male, Diyarbakır, 38, University graduate)

This understanding fits the findings of Anne Schluter where she compares two different workplaces -one of them with an open kitchen and the other is a closed one- in Istanbul where Kurds work. She conceptualized Kurdish as the language spoken privately where customers cannot hear. Thus, workers in low visibility jobs talked

²⁷² [“Eltimle, kaynımla Kürtçe konuşuyorduk. Biz toplandık mı, köylüler vardı biz Kürtçe konuşurduk. Hatta annemin kardeşleri de bizim evde, onların karıları derdi, ‘Kürtler ikinci kanala çevirmeyin.’ Onlar anlamıyordu. Onlar da köyden ama onlar Türktü.”]

²⁷³ [“Mesela komşular bazıları diyor “ikinci kanala geçtiniz”. E, diyorum “Kürtçe konuşmazsak rahat etmiyoruz”. İlla arada bir Kürtçe konuşmamız lazım.”]

²⁷⁴ [“İstanbul’da 8 yıl yaşadım. Ben orada arkadaş grubum da, Kürt arkadaşlar vardı. Biz kendi aramızda konuşuyorduk. Bu biraz özlemle alakalı bir şey. Eşim de Türk olduğu için, evde de konuşamadığımız için, çalışma arkadaşlarımdan da oluyordu. Çok sık olmasa da konuşurduk. Hani kimse yoksa, bazen insanlar da rahatsız olabiliyor. ‘Bunlar acaba farklı bir şey mi konuşuyorlar, gizli bir şey mi konuşuyorlar?’ diye.”]

more Kurdish comparing with the ones in high visibility. This was explained by the workers as not wanting to “offend” the customers by talking Kurdish. The owner of the restaurant, who was a participant in Schluter’s research, and who was a Kurd himself, fired a Kurdish employee in Turkish. By doing so, he forms a more formal relation with his employee. Additionally, Schluter points out to the personal tie that the Kurdish speaking employees in the restaurant forms with the Kurdish customers.²⁷⁵ The important point in the study of Schluter is that the possible judgment of others, in this case the judgment of the Turkish customers, may cause Kurdish to be avoided by the employees in the workplace. Even though Schluter’s research shows that the usage of Kurdish changes according to the public and private differentiation where it is avoided more in the open kitchens, this differentiation might vary in different cities. For instance, one of my respondents constituted a different kind of differentiation about the usage of Kurdish in public sphere in Diyarbakır. The respondent also used the metaphor of “second channel”. However, he relates Turkish within home more than he does it to outside- to the public sphere.

“[In Adana] When our guests came home they said that we turned over the “second channel”. For them it was the second channel, for me it was the first. Now [in Diyarbakır] when my guests come, we speak in Kurdish with them. Outside the house we speak in Kurdish mostly. In a coffeehouse or in other places we speak Turkish. I do not speak Turkish outside as much as I speak at home.”²⁷⁶ (Male, Diyarbakır, 48, High-school graduate)

He relates Turkish to home because he claims that the children and his wife are shifting to Turkish at home. Within the formation of this situation, the respondent points out to the effect and the will of the mother on the dominance of Turkish at

²⁷⁵ Anne Schluter, “Kurdish Voices in Istanbul Workplaces,” *The International Journal of Diversity in Organizations, Communities, and Nations* 10, 4 (2010): 127-140.; Anne Schluter, “Competing or Compatible Language Identities in Istanbul's Kurdish Workplace?” in *Turkey at a Glance* (New York: Springer Publishing, in press) 10-12.

²⁷⁶ [“Misafirim gelirdi ‘aha yine ikinci kanala geçtin.’ Sizce ikinci kanaldır, bence birinci kanal. Türkçe ikinci kanaldır bence. Misafir geliyor mesela Kürtçe konuşuyoruz. Dışarıda özellikle yüzde 99 Kürtçe konuşuyoruz. Bir kahve ortamında olsun, bir yere gittiğimiz zaman şeydir. Ben evin içerisinde Türkçeyi konuştuğum kadar Türkçeyi konuşmuyorum.”]

home which was a pattern for other fathers as well that I will analyze further on. He claims that because of the children speaking Turkish, thus he uses Turkish mostly at home when compared to outside.

The term private sphere is an outcome of ownership. Private sphere is the space that can be privately owned.²⁷⁷ The public is constituted on the opposite of the privately owned place. Thus, Kurdish was prohibited in the public sphere for many years (and still being harassed in certain places or situations²⁷⁸); it was tried to be constituted as a language belonging to the private sphere. In 2013, Prime Minister Erdoğan had announced with the “democratization package” that the package opened up the way for education in Kurdish in private schools. It was claimed that there could be some Kurdish lessons in the private schools but again with the prerequisite that Turkish will be taught as the mother tongue.²⁷⁹ Leaving the discussion that education limited to teaching of language as second language is not education through the medium of the mother tongue, I want to emphasize the restriction of usage of Kurdish to private schools. It matches the definition of Arendt, where private sphere is the place that is privately owned,²⁸⁰ Kurdish is still restricted to the privately owned place, to the private schools like it is to the private sphere-home. Like Mouffe argues “prime task of democratic politics is not to eliminate passions or to relegate them to the private sphere in order to render rational consensus possible,

²⁷⁷ Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 52.

²⁷⁸ A symbolic example to these situations is that of the Kurdish singer Aynur Doğan. In 2011 she was been catcalled by some of the Jazz Festival listeners, while singing in Kurdish. (see: “Caz Festivalinde Kürtçe Şarkı Söyleyen Aynur Yuhalandı,” *Radikal Gazetesi*, July 16, 2011, accessed January 02, 2014, http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/caz_festivalinde_kurtce_sarki_soyleyen_aynur_yuhalandi-1056494.)

²⁷⁹ Ayşegül Kahvecioğlu, “Özel Okullarda Kürtçe değil Türkçe Eğitim,” *Milliyet Gazetesi*, October 02, 2013, accessed January 02, 2014, <http://gundem.milliyet.com.tr/kurtce-alfabe-ile-okuma-yazma-yok/gundem/detay/1771437/default.htm>.

²⁸⁰ Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 52.

but to mobilize those passions towards the promotion of democratic designs.”²⁸¹

Thus, the main challenge is to struggle against the differentiation of the public and private spheres and Kurdish being relegated to the private.

The usage of Kurdish, with many factors interfering, is no longer differentiated according to a clear-cut of the public or private sphere. Additionally, the perception of speaking Kurdish within the public sphere is complex. A male respondent claimed that he *deliberately* uses Kurdish and pays attention to using Kurdish in the public sphere. The interesting part is that he does not do it with ease but claims that he feels the tension of using it. Even in Diyarbakır where the majority is Kurdish, he claims that people turn around and look at him when he speaks Kurdish. Because of formulating public sphere as Turkish or because of the load of Kurdish coming from the past prohibitions, he is always aware and alert when speaking Kurdish. He pays attention to how others react when he speaks Kurdish and creates a perception as if the others turn around and look at him. He is aware and assumes a perception on behalf of others because he is alert when he talks Kurdish.

“Either the elderly or the people coming from the villages speak Kurdish. I condition myself consciously [to speak Kurdish]. As a reaction to this decline, I mean to show that it is not a dead language or that it is our reality, when I give money in the bus I say in Kurdish, maybe in a nervous way. I observe that heads turn at me.... Maybe they like it that I speak in Kurdish or it attract their attention. It is a wide subject. Perhaps there is no other people on earth who is this much politicized. There is also the 10-12 years of AKP government which creates a mental and political polarization. When I speak in Kurdish, the others might think that I am from a certain party.”²⁸² (Male, Diyarbakır, 45, High-school graduate)

²⁸¹ Chantal Mouffe, “Deliberative Democracy or Agonistic Pluralism,” *Social Research* 66,3, (1999):755.

²⁸² [“Ya yaşlılar konuşuyor ya da köyden gelenler falan. Ben kendimi bir şekilde bilinçli olarak şartlandırıyorum. Diyorum ki, bu gidişata bir tepki olsun, yani ölmemiş bir dil bunu da şey yapmak için, ya da bizim aslımız, dilimiz bu, bu mesajı vermek amacıyla ben parayı uzatırken şartlandırılmış bir şekilde, belki de gergin bir şekilde o binen yolcuların içerisinde parayı uzatıyorum ve Kürtçe konuşuyorum. Hafifçe bazı kafaların bana döndüğünü falan da gözlemliyorum.Bence çocuğunun hoşuna gidiyordur ya da dikkatini çekiyordur. Bu konu çok geniş bir konu. Belki de dünyanın hiçbir yerinde, belki iddialı bir söz olur ama, bu kadar politize olmuş hiçbir halk yoktur. Günün 24 saati dünyadaki bütün olayları izler, bütün Türkiye’deki olayları, dünyadaki olayları da izler. AKP’nin 10-12

In opposition to the respondent who claimed that he felt anxious when speaking in Kurdish on the bus with the driver in Diyarbakır, another claimed that he did not feel that anxiety in Diyarbakır when compared to Istanbul. Thus, it is not peculiar to the place of residence.

“When I was in Istanbul, when my mother or father called, actually I was speaking in Turkish with my father, but when my mother called I used to speak in Kurdish. When I spoke Kurdish, there were people who were looking at me, there were people who found it strange but in Diyarbakır, I had not experienced such a thing. For example, here at schools in the canteens Kurdish music can be played.”²⁸³ (Male, Diyarbakır, 38, University graduate)

Different practices may occur within the field of education as part of public sphere as well challenging the official monolingualism. The songs that are played in Kurdish possessed symbolic capital that being played at the institution of education is the entrance of an alternative ideology and ways of knowledge. Even though it may be a part of other capitals (economic, cultural or social), symbolic capital is represented and apprehended symbolically within a relation of misrecognition and recognition.²⁸⁴ Kurdish finding place outside the classroom within the canteens or breaks is highly symbolic that it is recognized within the educational institution but at the same time misrecognized as it is kept out of the core of the institution-classrooms.

The contradiction that the children may have when they start school is not only about being able to speak Turkish but not being a native also forms problems. Kurdish not being included within the system may create a clash of the worlds –the world and dispositions formed at home and the ones offered at school.

yıllık iktidarı boyunca bazı şeyler de var. Kürtçe bir şekilde konuştuğın zaman zihinsel olarak bir kamplaşma, ait hissedenden bir insan, “şu şudur, şu falan partiye ait bir insandır diye Kürtçe konuştu” diyebiliyor.”]

²⁸³ [“Mesela İstanbul’da annem ya da babam arardı. Babamla gerçi Türkçe konuşurum da, annem aradığı zaman ben Kürtçe konuşurdum. Konuştuktan sonra etraftan size bakan gözler oluyor. Garipseyen tipler oluyor maalesef ama Diyarbakır gibi bir yerde hiç öyle bir şey yaşamadım yani. Mesela burada kantinlerde Kürtçe şarkılar söylenir.”]

²⁸⁴ Bourdieu, “The Forms of Capital,” 255.

“When the children start school, they meet a new world and the two worlds start to be in conflict. For instance, it is like that for my brother. Within the family, they are more political, they do not speak Turkish. The child speaks with a very good Kurdish. It is also academic and nice. After he started school, conflict started and the child does not want to speak Kurdish sometimes.”²⁸⁵ (Male, Diyarbakır, 41, University graduate)

When we consider bilingualism with the definition of Ceyhan and Koçbaş²⁸⁶ as the social and the psychological situations of people who use two languages, it can be clearly seen that there is always inherent contradictions and confusions when people consider the bilingualism of Kurdish and Turkish.

Being a speaker of Kurdish has burdens and being a speaker of Turkish has educationally profitable linguistic capital. Nevertheless, none of the respondents said that Kurdish was not important for them. With the conjuncture and the discourse of the Kurdish political movement, the emphasis on the importance to embrace the language has a reflection on the discourse of the people. Under the discourse of the divine importance that is attributed to language, people sometimes feel guilty and ashamed that they are not competent in Kurdish or that they did or could not pass Kurdish to their children. Because of that tension, the reasoning of not passing Kurdish to children are various and sometimes contradictory. The relation people form with the languages is multi-layered and the socio-political situations and discourses are in constant fluctuations. When the different mechanisms of deciding the future of the children by language transfer interfere, the layers deepen.

The discursive importance attributed to Kurdish creates regret among the parents who did not transfer Kurdish to their children. The ones who did on the other hand are confident with their decision and there had not been a real issue on that.

²⁸⁵ [“İlkokula başladıktan sonra, çocuk farklı bir dünyayla karşılaşiyor ve bu iki dünya çatışmaya başlıyor. Mesela benim kardeşimde öyledir. Ailede anne baba Türkçe konuşmuyorlar, biraz da politikler. Çocuk çok iyi bir Kürtçeyle konuşuyor, hem de böyle akademik ve güzel. İlkokula başladıktan sonra çatışmaya başladı tekrar ve çocuk şu anda bazen konuşmak istemiyor Kürtçeyi.”]

²⁸⁶ Ceyhan and Koçbaş, *Göç ve Çokdillilik Bağlamında Okullarda Okuryazarlık Edinimi*, 11.

Thus, by introducing the ones who transferred Kurdish briefly, I am going to move to the other group who did not transfer (on purpose or not) and analyze them since I see a contradiction there.

In the next part, I will be analyzing how the attributions to languages effect the decisions of transference of Kurdish to children and how the respondents formulate their decisions about the transference.

CHAPTER VI: Analysis of the Findings - The Transference of Kurdish

Transferring Kurdish to Children

Together with the connotations that Kurdish and Turkish had for the parents and within the framework of their experiences, there had been some patterns about the transference of Kurdish to their children. In this part of the analysis, I will be examining these patterns on transference, its relation with gender, monolingualism and the market. The patterns of transference may change in one family for the children at different ages (the period a child was born in), with the changing conjuncture and the relative freedom in the situation of Kurdish. Parents may also have different patterns on different children according to their gender.

The parents who transferred Kurdish to children mostly talked Kurdish with the children until the children went to school. Underlying that decision, was the idea that Turkish was dominant on the television, on the street and at school. For them, children had to learn their mother tongue at home until the school age. They thought that Turkish was the language that children would “either way” learn. They were mostly confident with their decisions and did not emphasize a real conflict about it. Also, they were less in number than the ones who did not fully transfer Kurdish. Thus, after briefly introducing the families who transferred Kurdish, I am going to analyze the ones who did not in depth. The primary two mechanisms of transference of Kurdish to the children were either by having a relative or a family member who did not speak Turkish (like living with grandmother or grandfathers or another family member who dominantly speaks Kurdish) or by the ethnic identification which led to an attention of the parents for speaking Kurdish.

The parents, who have transferred Kurdish to their children on purpose, claimed that the children would either way learn Turkish by watching television or

playing on the street, and Turkish was going to be dominant after they start school. However, the problems that the children might face by having the *wrong sort of capital*²⁸⁷ in the monolingual education system are not emphasized as a major problem. Mostly the difficulties that their children go through are reduced to a hard time children have in the Turkish courses at schools by the parents.

“I had no uncertainty about it. I taught Kurdish to my child until he goes to school. I had not uncertainty whether he would have low notes from Turkish course. He would learn Turkish at the street anyways. We do not have any difficulties. Within the situation in Kurdistan, because in every street Kurdish is being spoken there can be difficulties but in the west, it is a problem we rarely face.”²⁸⁸ (Male, Istanbul, 33, did not go to school)

Even though the respondent claims that the children would learn Turkish on the streets in the cities in the west of Turkey, respondents living in Diyarbakır had also claimed the same regarding their children. In that sense, there had not been much difference between the parents living in Istanbul and Diyarbakır about the motives of teaching Kurdish or Turkish to their children. Within the families though, people use different levels of usages changing according to the children. For instance, one of the respondents who talked in Kurdish with the other children claimed that she only talked in Turkish with her youngest child because that child spoke in Turkish with her.

“At home, Kurdish was always used but we learned Turkish outside, at school, from the television. Now, I do not speak Turkish with my children. I only speak [Turkish] with my youngest girl. I say that they should learn their mother tongue first. Turkish is learned outside anyway.”²⁸⁹ (Female, Diyarbakır, 47, Primary school graduate)

²⁸⁷ Blackledge, “The Wrong Sort of Capital?,” 361.

²⁸⁸ [“İnan ki şu kadar kuşku girmede içime. Çocuğum Türkçe bir okula gidecek ve Türkçeden iki veya bir alacak. Eğer, dedim, Türkçeyle ilgiliyse o kadar kuşkuym olmadı. Zaten sokakta istediği kadar öğreniyor onu. Zorluk da çekmıyoruz o konularda. Kürdistan’ın şartlarıyla, tüm sokaklarda Kürtçe konuşulduğu için zorlanmalar olabilir yani ama Batıda bunlar nadiren karşılaştığımız sorunlar.”]

²⁸⁹ [“Evin içinde hep Kürtçe konuşulurdu ama biz dışarıda öğrendik, okulda öğrendik, televizyondan öğrendik. Şu an ben çocuklarımla Türkçe konuşmam. Bu küçük kızımınla konuşurum. İlk önce anadilini öğrensin diyorum. Ondan sonra zaten dışarıdan öğreniliyor.”]

The reason of not speaking Kurdish with a child could not always be explained as a choice. The tendency of the child could also be decisive. When the respondent tried to explain the reason why she only spoke in Turkish specifically with her daughter, she showed the tendency of the child as a reason.

“I do not know why but perhaps it is because she speaks [in Turkish] with me. With the other children I speak in Kurdish. She also knows Kurdish more than she knows Turkish. She knows everything in Kurdish. That’s why I feel free. She speaks well with my parents and family. It means that I have spoken Kurdish with her earlier but this year I also speak in Turkish with her. I do not know why.”²⁹⁰ (Female, Diyarbakır, 47, Primary school graduate)

Some parents, on the contrary, deliberately chose to speak Kurdish and paid attention to it when speaking with the child. The guilt of not transferring Kurdish to the first child pushes them to be more “radical” in speaking Kurdish with the latter children, as if paying the price for previous mistakes.

“My child who goes to second grade knew Turkish [when she started school]. She also spoke Kurdish confidently. But after a while we realized something. When she went out from home, she was distanced from her mother tongue. [Kurdish] is a language that is not given in education. People can avoid it as if it is a shame, or a flaw or as if it is an ancient language. A person who knows it might act as if he doesn’t. For that reason, we made a more radical decision with the second child. We tried to speak more Kurdish with him. We realized that when he goes out of the door, we do not have an effect on him.”²⁹¹ (Male, Diyarbakır, 33, Primary School Graduate)

The choice of word “radical” for speaking Kurdish with the youngest child is remarkable in the sense that it implies a resistance to the “natural order of things,” or

²⁹⁰ [“Neden bilmiyorum ama herhalde o benimle konuştuğu içindir. Öbür çocuklarımla Kürtçe konuşuyorum. O [küçük kızı] da Türkçeden fazla Kürtçe biliyor yani. Her şeyini biliyor. Onun için artık serbestim. Anne babamla, ailemle olsun çok güzel konuşur. Benden daha güzel konuşur. Kürtçe konuşması çok hoş. Önceden demek ki Kürtçe konuşmuşum ama bakıyorum bu sene ben de onunla Türkçe konuşuyorum. Neden bilmiyorum.”]

²⁹¹ [“Kızım [okula başladığında Türkçe] biliyordu, ikinci sınıfa giden. Kürtçeyi de rahat konuşuyordu. Türkçeyi de biliyordu. Ama sonradan şunu fark ettik. Evden sokağa çıktıktan sonra, anadilinden uzaklaştığını fark ettik. Dışarıda, sokakta veya okulda dayatılan bir dil olduğu için, bir zaman sonra sen farkında olmadan, sen de o şeyi kapılıyorsun. Dolayısıyla hani eğitimin verilmediği bir dil, o dilde konuştuğunda sanki bir kusurmuş gibi, sanki bir ayıpmış gibi, sanki bir ne bileyim, çok eski çağlara ait bir dil, hani, böyle bir şey, insanlar kaçıyor yani. Bilen biri dahi, bilmiyormuşum gibi davranmaya götürüyor. Dolayısıyla ikinci çocukta biraz daha radikal bir karar verdik. Daha ağırlıklı onunla Kürtçe konuşmaya çalıştık. Çünkü şunu fark ettik ki, biz ona şimdi ne verseysek odur. Kapıdan çıktıktan sonra, daha artık bizim onun üstünde bir etkimiz kalmaz.”]

like swimming against the tide. In line with this approach, another respondent claims that Kurdish would be forgotten if it was “left on its own”. Kurdish is introduced and incorporated into the daily lives with effort.

“If you leave the children by themselves, they can never reach the level that they speak about everything [in Kurdish]. Perhaps they can understand but within time, they would definitely forget their languages. It requires a special effort.”²⁹² (Male, Diyarbakır, 45, High-school graduate)

Some parents claimed that they had to pay extra attention where there is a risk of shifting into the dominant language. Encouraging children to speak Kurdish could be a work on its own as a part of child rearing. One (Male, Diyarbakır, 45, High-school graduate) claimed that he forbids his children to speak Turkish when he is at home with a manner not like oppressing them but like encouraging them. He claims that it is extra work for him and he does it to “protect” himself and his children. The usage of the word “protecting” is remarkable in the sense that he wants to reverse the language loss and regards speaking and transferring Kurdish as protection from assimilation.

The parents who stayed out of this discourse of effort mostly had one of the parents who was more confident with Kurdish (or did not know Turkish) or a relative like that within the family. Children living with their grandparents for some time or a close connection with the village where Kurdish was dominant are also other reasons.

“The older one knows Kurdish [9 years old]. My mother, before she died, always spoke Kurdish. There were elders from the family. She lived with them. Therefore,

²⁹² [“Her şeyi konuşabilmeleri için [çocukları] kendi başlarına bırakırsanız, her şeyi konuşacak düzeyi asla yakalayamazlar. Belki anlayabilirler ama zamanla dillerini unutacaklar kesinlikle. Özel bir çaba gerekiyor.”]

she knew Kurdish but the little one could not speak we are now trying to fix it with the youngest one.”²⁹³ (Male, Diyarbakır, 33, High-school graduate)

“My children learned Kurdish from us, from the neighbourhood. We were going to the village, my father and my brothers and sisters were all talking Kurdish. They had learned. Sometimes we stayed there for a month and went two or three times a year but still they speak Turkish better.”²⁹⁴ (Female, Diyarbakır, 46, Primary school graduate)

The parents who transferred Kurdish to their children either had a family members not competent in Turkish and speak fully Kurdish or transferred it with language loyalty. But both of these types of parents were competent in using it among the family.

Not Transferring Kurdish to Children: Decisions with Contradictions

This part where I am going to analyze the parents who did not transfer Kurdish to their children focuses on the motivations of the parents who chose to transfer mostly Turkish. But it is important to note that this does not mean that the children do not know Kurdish at all. In varying degrees they can understand or speak it, whereas very few of them do not know it at all.

Choosing not to transfer Kurdish to children had its roots from the inadaptability that the parents went through within their educational lives claiming that it was caused by not knowing Turkish. Because of the difficulties they had at school, they wanted their children to learn Turkish first. Thus, they spoke Turkish when they were speaking with their children even if they spoke in Kurdish with their husbands or wives.

²⁹³ [“Büyük biliyor. Büyüğü, daha doğrusu, annemgil rahmet etmeden önce hep Kürtçe konuşurdu. Büyükler vardı yani. Aile büyükleri vardı, hep Kürtçe konuşurdu. Beraber yaşadı. Yalnız küçüğü de işte konuşamadı. En küçüğünde düzeltmeye çalıştık.”]

²⁹⁴ [“Bizden öğrendi, çevrede öğrendi. Köye gidiyorduk, babamlar onlar hepsi, kardeşlerim Kürtçe konuşuyordu. Öğrendi yani. Birkaç ay gidiyorduk. Bir ay bazen kalıyorduk. Senede iki-üç kere gidiyorduk yani köye. Onlar da kalıyordu. Çocuklar da öğrendi. Ama hala daha Türkçe daha iyi konuşuyorlar.”]

The political and social burden of Kurdish may constitute it as a language that the parents want their children to be familiar with but do not want them to be so much in to it as using it as a mother tongue. This contradiction is caused by the guilt the parents feel of not transferring Kurdish to their children but at the same time they wanting to protect their children from that burden.

In an example of the respondent who had disagreements with his wife , he blames her as being the cause of their child's inability to speak Kurdish. He said that he talked with the children that his child played with on the street and tried to convince them that his son was Kurdish even if he was not speaking Kurdish. By doing so, he transfers his regrets on not teaching Kurdish to his son.

“We argue with my wife about speaking Kurdish at home, we even fight about it. I say they should learn their mother tongues because they would have difficulties on the street when they grow up.... For instance, our younger son was three or four years old when we came to Diyarbakır [from Adana]. He did not know [Kurdish] at all. He would understand but could not speak Kurdish. He became isolated on the streets when playing with other children.”²⁹⁵ (Male, Diyarbakır, 48, High-school graduate)

The parents who did speak Turkish with their children claimed that they regret it that their children do not feel competent in Kurdish. They question their decision of speaking in Turkish with their children as they observe a communication gap among generations and when they see that their children are ashamed of not being able to talk Kurdish with the effect of the discourse on the importance of the mother tongue.

Some parents who did not transfer Kurdish to their children had an understanding that transference of Kurdish was something to be taught to children in a systematic way as if it was a mathematics course. Thus, they claimed that they did not have enough time for such a systematic study as a justification for not

²⁹⁵ [“Bazen hanımla tartışırız, iş kavgaya kadar gider. Bu Kürtçe konuşma yüzünden. Anadillerini öğrensin, sokakta ileride de zorluk çekerler.... Bu ufak zorluk çekiyor, biliyorum. Ufağı hiç anlamıyor. Biz onu getirdiğimizde 3-4 yaşındaydı. Hiç bilmiyordu. Anlıyor ama hiç konuşmıyor. Mesela çocuklar dışarıda başka türlü onunla şey yapıyor, diyaloga giriyor. Yalnız kalıyor çocuklar arasında.”]

transferring Kurdish. The justification of not transferring Kurdish was also done by claiming that the parents fulfilled their duty by transferring the identity of being a Kurd to their children. Despite the claim that Kurdish as the mother tongue is greatly important, in some interviews it was claimed that whether their children spoke Kurdish was not that important. They claimed that the children had the “consciousness” of being Kurdish and it was not a big deal if they did not speak Kurdish. Despite the fact that Kurdish is an important indicator of being a Kurd and of distinguishing itself from the Turkish identity, in some cases not transferring Kurdish to children for various reasons may be legitimized by being able to transfer Kurdish identity.

“[My son] without any doubt, says that ‘father, you are Kurdish, so am I’. He has this consciousness. Even if he does not speak any Kurdish he says that he is Kurdish. He feels that belonging. To be honest, this satisfies me. I like that a person knows who he is by not denying it and adopting it, even if he does not speak that language. But I believe that my son will learn it [Kurdish] within time. Maybe when he grows up, he will tell me to speak only in Kurdish with him. Now when I speak he laughs, he does not even answer.”²⁹⁶ (Male, Diyarbakır, 38, University graduate)

Still, other parents who spoke Kurdish at home and with the children, on purpose or not, or the ones who were comfortable with their Kurdish related the Kurdish identity with speaking Kurdish. Since language is an important signifier of identity and an important aspect of creating a separate identity, for some families Kurdish is still the signifier of Kurdish identity even if their children were not comfortable with it. However, the parents were not always sure whether Kurdish would be transferred to the next generation. Considering the concept that Tove Skutnabb-Kangas uses as linguistic genocide (“linguicide”) would be helpful here. According to Skutnabb-

²⁹⁶ “Benim oğlum mesela ben ‘Kürdüm’ diyor. Hiç şeysiz diyor ‘baba sen Kürtsün, ben de Kürdüm’ diyor. Bu bilinç, mesela hiç Kürtçe bilmemesine rağmen diyor ki ‘ben Kürdüm’. Öyle bir aitlik hissediyor. Bu beni yeterince tatmin ediyor açıkça söyleyeyim. Bir insanın ne olduğunu bilmesi, o dili kullanamasa bile ne olduğunu bilmesi, onu inkâr etmemesi, onu benimsemesi insanın hoşuna gidiyor. Ama onu zaman içinde öğreneceğine inanıyorum. Biraz daha büyüdükten sonra belki de ‘baba benimle sadece Kürtçe konuş’ diyecek. Bazen konuşuyorum gülüyor, cevap vermiyor böyle.”]

Kangas linguicide, different from language death, linguistic genocide implies that there are agents involved in causing the death of languages. It can be active as in attempting to kill a language or passive in the sense of letting a language die.²⁹⁷ Among the reasons of linguicide there is the hierarchy of languages that might also be internalized by the speakers of it. Linguistic genocide can also be established by the unsupported coexistence of languages which may lead to the dying of the minority language. In addition to that, labeling some languages and hierarchizing them is another implicit way of linguicide.²⁹⁸ The attributes attached to languages such as “funny” are an outcome of this hierarchy and labeling. The feeling of shame and finding Kurdish “funny” was a recurrent theme that the parents reported about their children or the children they observed around them. With the expression of the parents, some children who are not comfortable with Kurdish might feel ashamed of talking it and say that Kurdish is “funny”.

“The child of my brother said such a thing. His mother speaks Kurdish all the time at home, she came from the village. She speaks with all other children in Kurdish as well but when she speaks with him he says that he cannot speak Kurdish and say that he finds it funny.”²⁹⁹ (Female, Diyarbakır, 47, Primary school graduate)

The children who are not used to speaking of Kurdish at home are alienated from the language. When their parents want them to get used to it they might find it strange.

“My father sometimes gets angry because the children do not know Kurdish. They need to know. From time to time, I ask for the bread in Kurdish from my wife. The children laugh. ‘Where did this come from?’ they say.”³⁰⁰ (Male, İstanbul, 50, Primary school graduate)

²⁹⁷ Hassanpour, Sheyholislami and Skutnab-Kangas, “Kurdish: Linguicide, Resistance and Hope,” 2.

²⁹⁸ Skutnab-Kangas, *Linguistic Genocide in Education or Worldwide Diversity and Human Rights?* 312.

²⁹⁹ [“Erkek kardeşimin oğlu öyle demiş. Sürekli evde annesi Kürtçe konuşur, Allah var. Türkçe konuşmaz çocuklarıyla, köyden geldi zaten. Çocuklarıyla o, okula gidinceye kadar Kürtçe konuşur. Bütün çocuklar da evde Kürtçe konuşur. Onunla konuşuyorsun, bana Kürtçe ‘çok komik geliyor’ diyor. ‘Konuşamıyorum’ diyor.”]

³⁰⁰ [“Babam kızıyor gerçekten, ‘niye Kürtçe bilmiyorlar’ diyor. Bilmesi lazım. Bazen hanıma ‘ekmeği ver’ diye Kürtçe söylüyorum. Gülüyorlar bu sefer. Gülüyor çocuklar. ‘Nereden çıktı baba bu?’ diyorlar.”]

Also, not being competent in Kurdish creates a linguistic insecurity for the children that the feeling of embarrassment may cause them to avoid using it. One of the respondents (Male, Diyarbakır, 41, University graduate) claimed that his children could not express themselves in Kurdish fully and that was because they were embarrassed to speak it. They were embarrassed that they could not pronounce words “properly”. The change in the situation of Kurdish and its presence in the public sphere and the ones who are encouraged with this presence might speak Kurdish with their youngest children.

“With my little girl I now speak Kurdish. My older daughter find it strange, she finds it really strange when I speak Kurdish. Sometimes when she cannot answer, she makes fun of it, sometimes she laughs. At the courts, tough it has changed now, it was said to be an “unknown language” for Kurdish. My daughter says that “my father speaks in a funny language”. Actually I felt ashamed. I felt sorry.”³⁰¹ (Male, Diyarbakır, 34, University graduate)

The estrangement of Kurdish is formed within the contradictory attitudes that the parents had towards Kurdish and Turkish and within the hierarchy between languages. The main motivation for not transferring Kurdish -which was commonly on purpose- to the children was that the parents had difficulties mostly at school because of not being competent in Turkish. However, some had difficulties within the public sphere because of speaking Kurdish and it could be one of the reasons that they did not want their children to be labeled.

“Because of the fear, we did not speak Kurdish in Izmir. We wanted our children to learn Turkish. We couldn’t speak on the street. If we spoke on the street, they would call us “Kurds” and would not come and talk to us.”³⁰² (Female, Istanbul, 50, did not go to school)

³⁰¹ [“Küçük kızımınla şu an ben Kürtçe konuşuyorum. Konuştuğum zaman garipsiyor, büyük kızım. Çok garipsiyor Kürtçe konuştuğumda. Bazen cevap veremediğinde alaya alıyor, bazen gülüyor. Hatta geçen gün, mahkemelerde, gerçi şimdi yasallaştı ama, anadilde savunma hakkı yoktu. Diyarbakır’daki mahkemede ‘bilinmeyen bir dille’ diye kayıtlara geçti. Kızım da ‘komik bir dille babam benimle konuşuyor’ diyor. Ben açıkçası kendimi, kendimden utandım bir an. Çok üzüldüm.”]

³⁰² [“Biz korkudan [Kürtçe] konuşamıyorduk ya İzmir’de, dedik [çocuklar] Türkçe öğrensin. Sokakta konuşamıyorduk. Dışarıda konuşsak bile bize ‘Kürt’ derlerdi, kimse gelip gitmezdi.”]

“Honestly, I did not let Zazakî to be spoken at home. I thought that the children were going to school, they did not know Turkish and they were being insulted (*eziliyorlardı*). We did not know that it was our mother tongue. My brother objected me and was saying that I should teach my language to the children.”³⁰³ (Female, Diyarbakır, 50, did not go to school)

The importance attributed to the concept of “mother tongue” by the Kurdish political movements has an effect on people that ascribing sublimity to mother tongue is a new discourse that aims at resisting linguistic assimilation but the discourse on the importance of mother tongue cannot always fill the linguistic capital that Kurdish seem to lack in some spaces. Therefore, the necessity of teaching Kurdish to children stands at the point where it is the mother tongue but might stay as a necessity that someday will be reached. It might stay as a purpose to be reached at some point but might be postponed with its always secondary position along with the other urgencies. Compared with the older generation, the discourse on the significance of mother tongue is apparent within the words of the respondent who claimed that her parents did not know a concept like “mother tongue”:

“[My family] spoke their language at home and within life, the language of communication was Kurdish for them. We are having a contradiction but they did not. If they were more careful on this, if they were more aware, maybe I would know Kurdish better.”³⁰⁴ (Female, İstanbul, 42, University graduate)

The respondent said that the contradiction that she felt because her children had Kurdish names but did not speak Kurdish is also caused by her incompetency in Kurdish. However, the parents who are fluent in Kurdish also face this contradiction of not transferring Kurdish. Most of the discourses on not transferring Kurdish were related with the feeling of protecting their children from the difficulties they faced.

³⁰³ [“Eskiden, bırakmıyordum Zaza konuşun, Allah var. Bilmiyordum. Türkçesi, okula gidiyor, Türkçe bilmiyorlar. Çocuklarımız eziliyor. Bilmiyorduk yani anadili. Zaten okula gittiğinizde öğreniyorsunuz. O zaman ‘Türkçe konuşun, siz okula gidiyorsunuz eziliyorsunuz’ diyordum. Ağabeyim diyordu ‘ablam kendi dilini çocuklara öğretin.’”]

³⁰⁴ [“Onlar kendi dillerini konuşuyorlar. Çocuklarıyla da, evde de, hayatın içinde de iletişim dili Kürtçe olmuş onlar için. Biz bu çelişkiyi yaşıyoruz ama onlar bu konuda daha özenli olsaydılar, belki ben Kürtçeyi daha iyi biliyor olacaktım.”]

“We learned Turkish after a period but now we do not speak Kurdish with our children. We completely spoke Turkish with them. They do not know Kurdish. Their mother is also Kurdish, we both speak Kurmanji but with the children we speak Turkish. Maybe it is because of the psychology we have subconsciously. We did not want them to go through the difficulties we had, we did not want them to be frustrated within the education system. Because I learned Turkish after the third grade, I had difficulties in understanding at school. ... what we did was not a correct thing to do. Now I think for my little child, about the Kurdish nurseries but even if she cannot be registered, I am thinking a special Kurdish education for her, I am going to push her to learn Kurdish after she is seven years old.”³⁰⁵ (Male, Diyarbakır, 34, University graduate)

Even if there was a motivation for keeping the children away from Kurdish and teaching them Turkish, the will of wanting their children to learn Kurdish did not vanish. The choice of age of the respondent saying that his child should learn Kurdish after the age of seven, which is the age of starting school, is not a coincidence. Moreover this contradiction blurs the concepts of first, second languages and mother tongue, which are already not fixed. Even if the mother tongue of the children is claimed to be Kurdish, speaking only Turkish with them until the age of school and postponing the learning of Kurdish as a second language and as an adult forms it closer to the learning of a second language. Kurdish was seen as a language that children would either way learn whereas Turkish was regarded as a necessity that could not be postponed since children would need it in education.

“[When the children were born] to be honest, we spoke in Kurdish with my husband but with the children we spoke in Turkish. When they grow up, we sometimes spoke Turkish, sometimes Kurdish. We wanted them to learn Turkish. They would either

³⁰⁵ [“Sıkıntı şu, biz Türkçeyi çok sonra öğrendik. Ama bizim çocuklarımızda şu an öyle bir problem, kendileriyle Kürtçe konuşmuyoruz. Tamamen Türkçe konuşuyoruz ve Kürtçe bilmiyorlar. Yani annesi de Kürt, ikimiz de Kurmanci konuşuruz ama çocuklarımızla Türkçe konuşuyoruz. Açıkçası belki bilinçaltımıza yerleşmiş bir psikolojiden de kaynaklı olabilir. O dönemde yaşadığımız sıkıntıları, eğitim alanındaki eziklikleri çocuklarımız çekmesin diye. Çünkü ben ilkokul üçüncü sınıftan sonra Türkçeyi öğrenmem birçok şeyi anlamakta zorluk çektiriyordu bana. Çok yanlış bir davranıştır ama oldu yani, ne yapabiliriz. Şimdi yavaş yavaş onları Kürtçe kreşlere, belediyelerde. Yazılabiliyor ama yazılmasa bile onlara özel bir Kürtçe eğitimi için, bu küçük kızımı özellikle yedi yaşından sonra direteceğim öğreysin diye.”]

way know Kurdish; they should have learned Turkish as well. We said that it was necessary.”³⁰⁶ (Female, Diyarbakır, 46, Primary school graduate)

For some, speaking Turkish when the children started school was like the key to success originating from the experiences of the parents who associate “dropping behind” with speaking Kurdish as the mother tongue.

“My wife is also Kurd and of course she knows Kurdish. She had all the difficulties at school like the ones I went through. She did not want our child to go through such situations, thus she said that she wants to teach children Turkish and speak in Turkish with them. For the reason that when they go to school they do not have the difficulties we had, the oppression we faced and the beatings we were exposed to.”³⁰⁷ (Male, Diyarbakır, 34, High-school graduate)

The projection of the parents about the education that their children will acquire is an important factor in the choice of the usage of language. If the parents pay attention and attribute importance to the education system, they change their patterns of use of languages and hinder Kurdish. The importance attributed to education change with the migration to cities where there are more opportunities of educational institutions and more attention is given to education system.

“We came to the center of Diyarbakır when I was four years old.... After we came, after two or three years, my father started not to speak Kurdish with us. It was only related with the education we had at school. It was because we were going to speak Turkish at school. For us to speak Turkish better, even if he knew Kurdish, he made an effort to speak Turkish with us. We sometimes spoke in Kurdish, sometimes in Turkish with him but he mostly wanted us to speak in Turkish with him.”³⁰⁸ (Male, Diyarbakır, 38, University graduate)

³⁰⁶ (“Vallahi eşimle yine Kürtçe konuşuyorduk ama çocuklarla Türkçe konuşuyorduk. Büyüyünce karışık konuşuyorduk. Ne bileyim işte. Diyorduk ‘[Türkçe] öğrensin’. Mesela Kürtçe biliyorlardı. Nasıl olsa Kürtçe bilirler, Türkçe de öğrensinler. Diyorduk lazım oluyor.”)

³⁰⁷ [“O da Kürt yani, tabii Kürtçe de biliyor. Benim eşimin şöyle bir durumu gelişti açıkçası. Kendisi de benim anlattığım zorlukların hepsini birebir yaşamış zaten okullarda. Kendisi bizim çocuğumuzun böylesi bir durumla karşılaşmaması için ‘ben çocuğuma Türkçe öğretmek istiyorum. Türkçe konuşmak istiyorum’. Yani ‘en azından bu çocuk yarın okula gittiği zaman bizim gibi baskıya maruz kalmasın, bizim gibi dayığa maruz kalmasın diye’.”]

³⁰⁸ [“Merkeze bağlı bir köyde doğmuşum. 4 yaşında merkeze gelmişim.... Biz geldikten sonra babam ilk iki-üç yıldan sonra bizimle Kürtçe konuşmamaya başladı. Bu sadece okulda aldığımız eğitimle alakalı bir şey. Hani okulda Türkçe konuşacağız diye, bizim daha iyi Türkçe konuşabilmemiz için Kürtçe bilmesine rağmen daha çok o bizimle Türkçe konuşmaya gayret etti. Biz onunla bazen Türkçe, bazen Kürtçe konuşuyorduk. Ama o genellikle kendisiyle Türkçe konuşmamızı isterdi.”]

The choice of language changes according to gender as well as with the place of residence. A striking example is that the father of the one of the respondents paid attention to talk in Turkish with the boys for the reason that he wanted them to go to school. However, for the girls he did not have a will or projection like that, therefore he spoke in Kurdish with them.

“My father spoke Kurdish mostly with the girls but for the boys he had expectations about education. The reason for him to move to the center of Diyarbakır was that he wanted at least the boys to go to school. There was not a concern about educating the girls. Even if he had hard time talking Turkish, he pushed himself to talk in Turkish with the boys because of education.”³⁰⁹ (Male, Diyarbakır, 38, University graduate)

The aspect of gender is also an important factor in the formation of the linguistic capital which will be analyzed as a separate part.

The Dialect Difference between Parents as a Reason for Non-transference of Kurdish

The difference (or the perceived difference) between the dialects of the parents was a recurrent justification for not transferring Kurdish to their children. Speaking the same dialect or being from the same city is for some parents seen as a precondition for the transference of Kurdish to the children.

“There are people like that, who speak to their children by their mother tongues as soon as they are born. It can be Zazakî or Kurdish. The main reason of that is that the mothers and fathers speaking the same language.”³¹⁰ (Female, Diyarbakır, 42, Primary school dropout)

³⁰⁹ [“Daha çok kızlarla Kürtçe konuşuyordu ama erkeklerle, özellikle okulla ilgili beklentileri vardı. Zaten Diyarbakır merkeze taşınmasının nedeni erkek çocuklarını en azından okutmaktı. Gerçi kız çocuklarını okutmak gibi bir sıkıntısı yoktu o dönem, öyle bir kaygı da yoktu. Ama erkek çocukları okusun diye bunu yaptı. Şehre gelmesinin nedeni buydu. Biraz okulla alakalı Türkçe konuşuyordu. Kendisi zorlanmasına rağmen Türkçe konuşuyordu.”]

³¹⁰ [“Öyle insanlar var mesela. Anadilleri her neyse çocuk doğar doğmaz o dille konuşurlar. O şekilde çocuğa öğretiyorlar. Kürtçe olsun, Zazaca olsun. O neden kaynaklanıyor. Anne babanın aynı dil olmasından kaynaklanıyor. Aynı dille konuştuıkları için çocuk o şekil öğreniyor.”]

“The father knew Zazakî, I knew Kurdish. Their father did not know Kurdish back then and I did not know Zazakî. That was why we couldn’t speak.”³¹¹ (Female, Diyarbakır, 41, High-school graduate)

The daughter of one of the female respondents said that her mother “by hook or by crook” (*ne yapıp edip*) taught her children Zazakî even though their father spoke Kurmanji. Also, the respondent remembered her introduction to her husband’s family. She did not know what to do when her mother-in law asked for a spoon (*kevçî*) at Kurmanji because she only spoke Zazakî. Nevertheless, since there was not another language that both sides knew like Turkish, the respondent learned Kurmanji and her children knew both Zazakî and Kurmanji.

Since every linguistic exchange involves an act of power, it also includes the power relation among the dialects. In addition to the dominance of Turkish, Kurmanji dialect might dominate over Zazakî since it is spoken by the majority of Northern Kurds. Within the interviews frequently the respondents referred to Kurmanji dialect when they said “Kurdish”³¹² even if they were Zaza themselves. This dominance takes its legitimacy from attributions to Zazakî as well, as if Zazakî is the language of the peasants or that Zaza’s learn Kurmanji easier. As Ceyhan and Koçbaş argued, the groups who were the targets of stereotype are prone to have similar prejudices towards other groups.

“I believe that with a natural path, Kurmanji dialect will be dominant, it will be the standard. It is interesting. Just like all Kurds know Turkish, all Zazas know Kurmanji. Okay, it is a different dialect but they all know Kurmanji. For instance, it is more difficult for us to learn Zazakî when compared to Zazas learning Kurmanji. It means that they are more prone to that ... I remember from the village that they made a resemblance saying that “it is like the language of peasant (*gundî*) Zazas. They would humiliate a little. It is like the point of view between Turkish and

³¹¹ [“Baba Zazaca olduğu için, ben de Kürt o zaman baba Kürtçeyi bilmiyordu, Zazacayı biliyordu. Ben de Zazacayı bilmiyordum. Ondan dolayı konuşamadık.”]

³¹² Throughout the thesis, when I use the word “Kurdish”, it includes different dialects as well.

Kurdish. This time a similar one is formed between Kurmanji and Zazakî.”³¹³ (Male, Diyarbakır, 35, University graduate)

It is worth noticing that the word *gundî* has sometimes a pejorative –not necessarily negative- connotation as people who act and think like a villager or who cannot adapt into “modern” world alongside its meaning as peasant in Kurdish. This connotation is a result of the migration from villages to cities where the clash attributes this meaning to the word *gundî*. The encounter itself invents the words and attributes meanings to it when compared to the people living in the cities.

The reasoning of some parents claiming that the dialect or local differences prevents communication reinforces the discourse that in order for a language to be the medium of communication, it has to be standardized. Even if the dialect difference was not obvious as in the case of Zazakî and Kurmanji, the difference among the languages of different cities might be an obstacle between people so much that they would rather speak in a different language that they both know.

The dominance of Turkish when there is a real or perceived dialect difference between parents is given as a cause for not being able to transfer Kurdish to children. In addition to that, people who had worked in the monolingual spaces such as the education system or the civil service for a long time, have told that they were exposed to Turkish in their daily lives so much that they started to feel more confident in Turkish. Therefore, they claim that Turkish becomes dominant when dialect differences cause difficulties in communication. People working within those

³¹³ [“Ben doğlında zaten onun standart olacağına inanıyorum. Doğlında, Kurmanci lehçesinde, onun hakim olacağını düşünüyorum. İlginçtir, nasıl ki Kürtlerin hepsi Türkçe biliyorsa, Zazaların da hepsi Kurmanci biliyor. Tamam, ayrı bir lehçe ama hepsi Kurmanci biliyor. Bizim mesela Zazakî öğrenmemiz daha zor onlara göre, onlarınki daha yatkın demek ki, onlar çok daha rahat Kurmanci konuşabiliyorlar. Tabii Kurmanclardan da ikisini konuşan var ama daha çok Zazalar Kurmanci konuşuyor. ...Köyden hatırlıyorum. Gundili Zazaların dili gibi derlerdi. Nasıl ki, Türkçeye bakış açısı arasındaki fark bu sefer Kurmanciyle Zazakî arasındaki farkta vardı. Biraz daha aşağılardı.”]

places for long periods tend to call speaking Turkish in other spaces as well as a habit.

Working as a civil servant for long years was another cause for being inclined to speak Turkish more but the reasons are intertwined. Being exposed to Turkish because of working as a civil servant was accompanied with the perceived dialect difference (between to neighbouring cities) alongside the pressure on Kurdish.

“The dialects of my husband and mine are different. One is the Kurdish of Mardin and the other is the dialect of Diyarbakır. We speak a word or two and then I think speaking Turkish is easier for us, we shift to Turkish. That is why our children could not learn Kurdish much. Maybe it was because of being a civil servant or it was because of fear or pressure. In fact it is better for us to speak in our mother-tongues.”³¹⁴ (Female, Diyarbakır, 49, University graduate)

The dialect difference between parents was a current theme that was revealed within the interviews as a cause for not transferring Kurdish to children. However, the restrictions and oppression on Kurdish came along as well.

While some parents claimed that the difference between the dialects of the husband and wife made them speak Turkish among themselves, further on their interviews the pressures on Kurdish was also added as a cause. The contradiction and the discomfort of speaking Turkish between parents or with the children is sometimes tried to be provided justification by dialect difference and the pressure on Kurdish at the same time.

“How does my child not speak my mother tongue? I feel really deficient on this subject. My husband is like that too. We blame ourselves. We call it the policy of the state to suppress people. The state did not come in to our houses and ban Kurdish but we had fears. The deaths and the pain... maybe that was why we did not embrace the

³¹⁴ [“Eşimle bizim şivelerimiz biraz farklı, bir Mardin’in Kürtçesiyle bir Diyarbakır’ın Kürtçesi farklı. Konuşuyoruz bir iki kelime, ondan sonra Türkçe konuşmak herhalde daha kolayımıza geliyor. Bu sefer Türkçeye geçiyoruz. Onun için çocuklarımız pek öğrenemediler. Birazcık da işte diyorum ya bu devlet memurluğunun verdiği şeyden midir, korkudan mı, baskıdan mı. Aslında kendi dilimizi konuşmak çok daha güzeldir.”]

language. We are newly expressing ourselves.”³¹⁵ (Female, Diyarbakır, 49, University graduate)

The same interviewee had previously claimed that the reason for not talking Kurdish with her husband was the dialect difference. She also thought that if she had talked to her sons in Kurdish they would be more politicized.

“Perhaps my child will join into this struggle. He will in any case be in it but I was afraid if he would be active in the struggle because his relatives were martyrs. They died for this matter. Maybe it was because of these fears that we did not speak Kurdish with the children.”³¹⁶ (Female, Diyarbakır, 49, University graduate)

The burden of Kurdish and the political struggle attached to speaking Kurdish creates a contradiction in that the choice of transference of Kurdish is nearly matched with the choice of political attachment to the children. Another interviewee (Female, Diyarbakır, 41, High-school graduate) who spoke Kurmanji and whose husband spoke Zazakî claimed that they *had to* speak Turkish because she did not know Zazakî. But a few sentences later, she told that she sometimes spoke in Kurmanji with her husband because he also knew it but with the children they did not. She claimed that it was because of the restrictions on Kurdish. The restrictions on Kurdish formed the language as a possible threat to the children that the parents sometimes chose not to teach Kurdish to their children in order to protect them. Thus, the choice of transferring Kurdish to children includes many concerns and thoughts as well as deciding to transfer it with the relative freedom in the situation of Kurdish.

³¹⁵ [“Anadili diyorum ya ben sonradan öğrenmişim, çocuğum nasıl bilmesin? Ben bu konuda kendimi çok eksik hissediyorum. Eşim de aynı şekilde. Kendimizi suçluyoruz, bu devletin politikası diyoruz, sindirme politikası diyoruz. Devlet gelip evimizin içinde bizi tabii yasaklamadı, kontrol etmedi ama bizim korkularımız vardı. Çevremizde çok baskı gördük. Ölümleri, acıları, belki bu yüzden de çok şey yapmadık, sahiplenmedik diyelim. Daha yeni kendimizi ifade ediyoruz.”]

³¹⁶ [“Çocuğum ileride belki bu mücadelenin içine girer, zaten girecektir de, aktif olarak girmesinden korktum çünkü onun yeğenleri, amcasının çocukları şehit olmuştu. Bu dava uğruna canlarına kıydılar. Belki bu korkulardan dolayı olmuş olabilir diye düşünüyorum.”]

Gender and Language

Language Transfer As a Part of Childrearing: Are Mothers Responsible For All?

The other aspect which gender also intervenes is that within the context of Kurdish not being transferred to children, the systematic teaching of Kurdish is sometimes associated with the mothers, as if it is the duty of the mother. Where child rearing is seen as a part of the “duties” of the mother, teaching of the language is regarded as a part of childcare. Thus, the discomfort of some parents of not transferring Kurdish is explained by blaming the mothers as “the teachers at home”.

“I love my sister but I criticize her on these subjects. I say that ‘you are the teacher of the house’. If I wanted my father to dial a number he cannot. I mean, our father did not come into this world as an engineer, you do know Kurdish and you should teach it to your children. She [my sister] says that I am right but it is all her fault.”³¹⁷ (Male, Istanbul, 33, did not go to school)

“I do not blame the kids [for not speaking Kurdish]. If there is someone to blame, it is the parents. My son [one and a half years old] understands both Kurdish and Turkish but most of the words he knows are Turkish. It is because of the mother. It is the mothers and the children.”³¹⁸ (Male, Diyarbakır, 48, High-school graduate)

Some mothers also reinforce this discourse by attributing the transference of Kurdish to the women at home. The words of a female respondent is interesting in this sense that initially she justifies not teaching Kurdish by the dialect difference with her husband and further on the interview she claimed that they would transfer the dialects of Kurdish if she and her mother in law –not the husband- spoke one of the dialects among themselves.

³¹⁷ [“Ben ablamı çok seviyorum ama bu konularda çok da eleştiriyorum. Diyorum ‘evin öğretmeni sensin’. Şu anda babama desen bir telefon numarası çevir, çeviremez. Senin baban mühendis olarak dünyaya gelmedi ki. Sen de Kürtçeyi biliyorsun ama çocuklarına da öğret yani. O da diyor ‘haklısın’ falan ama hep suç onundur.”]

³¹⁸ [“Ben çocuklarda hiçbir suç görmüyorum. Suç varsa yetişkinlerdir. Bu [1,5 yaşındaki oğlu] hem Kürtçeyi anlıyor, hem Türkçeyi ama Türkçeyi daha çok kelime olarak. Bildiği kelimelerin onda dokuzu Türkçedir. Anne. Anneyle çocuklar.”]

“If my mother-in-law spoke Zazakî with me, the children would also speak [that dialect]. If she spoke Zazakî, I would learn it, so would the children.”³¹⁹ (Female, Diyarbakır, 41, High-school graduate)

“Sometimes the children blame me. They say ‘why did not you speak in Kurdish with us?’ and I say ‘you could have talked in Kurdish, I talked to you in Kurdish as well’. My husband did not say anything. He did not interfere.”³²⁰ (Female, Diyarbakır, 46, Primary school graduate)

Those fathers blaming the mothers throw off the guilt by claiming that they did not have enough time to spend with their children in order to teach Kurdish to them.

Either way, those parents regarded the transference of Kurdish as “teaching” the language in a more or less systematic and planned manner.

“It is because of my laziness actually. Not laziness but intense work is a better way of putting it. Because I was working hard, I could not see my child so often. But he [my son] has an interest in Kurdish because we speak it with my mother and father and he hears children speaking Kurdish when he goes to the village. It arouses his attention.”³²¹ (Male, Diyarbakır, 38, University graduate)

Some fathers who felt guilty in not transferring Kurdish to their children justified it by claiming that they did not have time to take care with the children or it was the decision of the mothers for children to be successful at school.

Mother Tongue: The Language of the “Mother”

In a similar line with the gender aspect of the transference of Kurdish to children being associated with mothers, Kurdish is sometimes associated with the mothers who do not speak Turkish. As Akşit argues, women are seen as the carriers of minority languages in as much as they are not reached by the nationalist

³¹⁹ [“Kayınvalidem aslında konuşuydu benimle, çocuklar da konuşurdu. Zazaca konuşuydu benimle ben de öğrenirdim çocuklar da öğrenirdi.”]

³²⁰ [“Bazen çocuklar da beni suçluyor. Diyor ‘sen niye Kürtçe konuşmuyordun bizimle?’ Diyorum ‘konuşuydunuz, ma’ diyorum ‘ben sizinle Kürtçe de konuştum’.”]

³²¹ [“Ama bu biraz benim tembelliğimden kaynaklanıyor. Aslında tembellik değil, yoğun çalışma. Çok yoğun çalıştığım için çok fazla sık da göremiyorum ama Kürtçe öğrenmeye karşı bir eğilimi var çünkü annemin yanında falan, babamın yanında Kürtçe konuşmamızı, ya da gittiği bir yerde, köye falan götürüyorum bazen Kürtçe konuşmaları çocukların, ilgisini çekiyor.”]

projects.³²² One of the main tools of the nationalist projects is the education system. As far as the women are out of that system, they are formed as the holders of the native language. Also, the woman is formed as holy just like “holiness” is attributed to the language. The words of the respondent connect the primacy of the mother with the essentiality of the mother tongue.

“For instance my mother does not know Turkish. In a place where she is there too, it is not ethical to speak in a language that she does not understand. She would feel like a stranger. The person who is closest is one’s mother. There is no other person that comes before her. Thus, mother tongue is essential.”³²³ (Male, Diyarbakır, 33, Primary school graduate)

It is no coincidence that the term “mother tongue” refers to the language that is transferred from the mother. It connotes that language, like the mother, is sacred, fertile, essential and pure. In Kurdish both terms of “mother tongue” and “native language” are used (*zimanê dayikê* and *zimanê zikmakî*). The usage of the word mother tongue itself indicates that blessing of the native language is on the basis of women/mother who symbolizes the purity, honour and fertility. The choice of words for the slogan, which is used by different parties and associations like KURDÎ-DER/TZP-Kurdî and or BDP³²⁴, that defends the proliferation of the Kurdish language, “our language is our honour” (*zimanê me rumeta me ye*) is no coincidence within this framework. The usage of the word honour has also reference to woman as the object of honour. The reference to motherhood has also a connotation that the language, like the mother, is the honour that if it is touched or captured by the “enemy” it is a shame or dishonour.

³²² Akşit, “Tartışma: Anadilde Eğitim ve Kadınlar,” 32.

³²³ [“Örneğin annem Türkçe bilmez. Onun bulunduğu ortamda, anlayamayacağı bir dilde konuşmamız etik olmaz bir kere. Ahlaki olmaz. Orada kendini yabancı hisseder. Ki insanın en yakını, annesinden önce gelen başka kişi yoktur. Dolayısıyla anadil esastır yani. Böyle düşünüyoruz.”]

³²⁴ “Zimanê Me û Rûmeta Me ye,” *Özgür Gelecek*, February 21, 2013, accessed November 28, 2013, <http://www.ozgurgelecek.net/manset-haberler/4141-zimane-me-u-rumeta-me-ye.html>.

Among the two different patterns that were revealed through the interviews related with gender and language, first was that women were less likely to encounter Turkish since they were more likely to be “non-educated”, whereas the second pattern was related with girls within the new generation being more inclined to use Turkish. The first pattern was mostly pointed to as the perception of the respondents’ parents who claimed that girls needed not to require education and the second was upon the observations of some parents while others disagreed with such an idea. Additionally, the respondents did not use an approving language in the decision to not educating girls and some referred to this perception as “ignorance” rather than an economical problem. The perception that girls do not need education reinforced the discourse as if the women, who are preserved from education, are the keepers and transmitters of Kurdish. The transference of Kurdish is by some attached to the woman who are not educated, thus who do not know Turkish.

“At home, Kurdish is being spoken, [my] mother speaks Kurdish; she does not know any other language. She learned from her mother, and she learned from her mother as well. It is a language coming from centuries ago. We learned from our mother as well. ... The women speak Kurdish more. Men usually go to the government agencies, state institutions and they speak Turkish. They are obliged to speak Turkish. The people who are rich, who are becoming elite, it is not right to call bourgeois but the elite, they speak more Turkish.”³²⁵ (Male, Diyarbakır, 34, High-school graduate)

Some respondents, like the latter, claimed that men had more encounters with the state institutions that they had to know Turkish. Forced military service is another reason for men having encounters with Turkish more than women do. Thus, the encounters of women with Turkish who did not go to school or who were mostly at

³²⁵ “Tabii evde Kürtçe konuşuluyor, anne Kürtçe konuşuyor. Başka dil bilmiyor yani. Hani öğretilmesinden dolayı değil yani. Mesela annesinden onu öğrenmiş, o kendi annesinden onu öğrenmiş. Yüzyıllardır gelen bir dil yani. Biz de annemizden öğrendik. ...Kadınlar daha fazla Kürtçe konuşuyor. Erkekler genelde kentte daha fazla resmi kurumlarla alakalı, devlet kurumlarına gittikleri zaman Türkçe konuşuyorlar, konuşmak zorunda kalıyorlar. Zengin kesimin, elitleşen kesim, gerçi burjuva demek doğru olmaz ama, elitleşen kesim mesela Diyarbakır’da, O kesimdeki insanlar biraz daha fazla Türkçe konuşuyorlar.”

home was either by television or social environment. Turkish transferred by television is emphasized as the earliest entrance of Turkish at home for the children. The salient point is that for some girls who did not go to school and who had not spent much time outside, it was the only tool for learning Turkish.

“We, the boys who were on the streets, had conversations with the children who knew Turkish. There was not a problem [for us at school] but for instance my sister had to learn Turkish and Kurdish at home. Even just for that reason, we bought a television. Even if we were not doing really well economically we bought a television for us to learn Turkish.”³²⁶ (Male, Diyarbakır, 38, University graduate)

Even if television is seen as a tool for getting Turkish into home for most of the parents, and for the former generation, the entering of Turkish into home was not desirable for the Kurdish parents who wanted to preserve Kurdish. Besides television, the children can encounter Turkish with their siblings who go to school and bring Turkish home. It blurs the distinction of private and public spheres where Fishman argues that for the preservation of the minority languages they should be distinct.

“My little son does not know Turkish. It is my strategy until he starts school. But my daughter is eight years old, who learned Turkish after she started primary school, started to speak in Turkish with her little brother. They are already exposed to Turkish with television and as a language of the street. Within home too, if we can call it assimilation, she is assimilating her little brother. I cannot prevent it. My son also grows up with the children programmes [in Turkish] like Keloğlan and Peppe.”³²⁷ (Male, Diyarbakır, 45, High school graduate)

Within this example, the daughter of the respondent is “assimilating” the little boy alongside the television. An interviewer differentiated the attitudes of his daughter

³²⁶ [“Biz erkek çocukları yine diyelim sokakta biraz daha Türkçe bilen çocuklarla sohbet ettiğimiz için biraz daha sıkıntı yoktu ama mesela ablam için Kürtçeyi Türkçeyi biraz daha evde öğrenmesi gerekiyordu. Hatta sırf onun için televizyon almıştık. O dönem ekonomik olarak çok rahat olmamasına rağmen Türkçe öğrenelim diye televizyon almıştı.”]

³²⁷ [“Küçük oğlum Türkçe anlamaz. Okula başlayınca kadar benim stratejim o. Ama şöyle bir şey var çocuklar arasında, Kürt ailelerinde çok fazla olan bir şey. Benim büyük kızım sekiz yaşında, okula gidene kadar Türkçe bilmezdi. Okula gittikten sonra, Türkçe öğrenmeye başladıktan sonra belli bir düzeye getirdikten sonra, bu sefer eve geldiği zaman kardeşiyle Türkçe konuşuyor. Bu sefer zaten televizyon ve sokak dili falan Türkçeye maruz kalıyor. Ondan da öte evin içerisinde bu sefer o kardeşini bir şekilde asimile diyebilirsek asimile ediyor. Oğlum da öyle olacak ben bunu engelleyemiyorum. O da şu anda Keloğlan’ı, Peppe’yi falan onlarla bir andan da büyüyor.”]

and son towards speaking Kurdish. He claimed that his daughter was shy to speak Kurdish and was afraid of using wrong words while his son spoke Kurdish and he used it when he wanted something from him. The feeling of shame was recurrent for the daughters of some respondents when speaking Kurdish and they were described by their parents as being more anxious at the possibility of making a mistake. Boys could be more comfortable with their Kurdish and use it to please or gain something from the parents who praise speaking Kurdish.

“My son speaks Kurdish but with us, he does not speak. When he runs into difficulty or if he wants something from me, curries favour with me (*yararmak için*) he speaks in Kurdish. I do not know whether he talks with his friends in Kurdish outside. The oldest one speaks with comfort like me. My daughter is in high-school. She speaks but sometimes I get angry when she does not speak even if she knows. She says ‘I am ashamed that I would say something wrong’... She says ‘I would say the word wrong, you would laugh at me.’”³²⁸ (Male, Diyarbakır, 48, High-school graduate)

The important part that I want to point out to is that the criticism of women who speak the dominant language comes from men. It is those men who observe the distancing from the ethnic identity and it is more noticeable for them when they see a threat to the native language. One of the respondents criticizes young women in that sense:

“I criticize women more on this subject. They are more enthusiastic to talk Turkish and forget Kurdish. I mostly observe the tailoring workshops. There, the girls say ‘good by’ to each other. They talk about series and other stuff. They do not talk in Kurdish. I see that women are more encouraged to Turkish. When I talk to a man, he can give his answer in Kurdish well.”³²⁹ (Male, İstanbul, 33, did not go to school)

³²⁸ [“Bu [oğlum] da Kürtçe konuşur ama bizimle konuşmaz. Çok zorda kaldığı zaman veya benden bir isteği varsa, yaranmak için Kürtçe konuşur. Dışarıda arkadaşlarıyla konuşup konuşmadığını bilmiyorum. Yalnız büyük çocuk konuşuyor. Rahatlıkla, benim gibi konuşuyor. Lise son sınıfta kız var, dershanede şimdi, konuşuyor ama mesela ben bazen kızıyorum, bildiği halde diyor ‘baba utanıyorum. Belki yanlış söylerim diye.’”]

³²⁹ [“O konuda kadın arkadaşlara daha çok eleştirim olacak. Onlar daha çok hevesli Türkçe konuşmaya ve Kürtçeyi unutmaya. Şunu görüyorum, benim gördüğüm bölge hep konfeksiyon atölyeleridir. Orada mesela kızlar eve giderken böyle birbirini öpüyor. Kulak misafiri oluyorum. Diziden bahsediyor, şeyden bahsediyor. Kürtçe anlatmıyor. Daha çok kadın arkadaşların Türkçeye teşvik olduğunu biliyorum. Bir erkekle konuştuğum zaman cevabını Kürtçe güzel verebiliyor.”]

It was also interpreted by some men that women were more prone to Turkish because they saw it as a way to be superior.

“Girls are more under coercion (*ezik*) in the East. They see Turkish superior, as if they speak Turkish they are superior. It is not true actually.”³³⁰ (Male, Istanbul, 43, Primary school graduate)

The association of being manly with speaking Kurdish or Turkish with a Kurdish accent was a striking example that one of the respondents gave pointing out the attribution of the “virile values”³³¹ to the native language. He associates being manly with the usage of slang and adds that those kind of words exist more in Kurdish.

“Maybe it is because that we are man, we like to swear a lot. That is in our culture. When someone shouts, I do not ask “what is going on?” but rather I use slang. Those exclamations exist more in Kurdish. When making a resemblance, someone says to the other ‘like a bear’ (*ayı gibi*). Maybe we do not say it but when we make a resemblance we say ‘like a bear’ or like a cow (*ga gibi*)”³³² (Male, Diyarbakır, 38, University graduate)

It is also worth noticing that he uses the word “ga”-cow in Kurdish- in Kurdish while speaking Turkish for a better explanation. This reminds us of a striking example that Bourdieu gives about the relation between language and class that gender also intervenes. The working class male speakers in New York resist to the legitimate way of speaking language by associating manliness to the way they speak.³³³ This is one of the ways of resisting the dominant cultural capital as making fun of it by associating femininity to the dominant and masculinity to their linguistic capital.

³³⁰ [“Hep ezik oldukları için Doğuda, Türkçeyi daha böyle üstün görüyorlar, hani Türkçe konuşursak üstün olurmuşuz gibi. Aslında değil.”]

³³¹ Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Violence*, 88.

³³² [“Belki biraz erkek oluşumuzdan kaynaklı küfretmeyi çok rahat, bu bizim kültürümüzde var, belki ondan kaynaklı susuyorum. Sınıfta falan oluyor bazen. Ani tepkilerde, biri oradan birden bağırdı, “ne oluyor?” falan değil, “oha” falan. O ünlem falan, nidalar falan, Kürtçe nidalar daha çok oluyor. Benzetmelerde mesela birine biri “ayı gibi” der. Belki söylemiyoruz ama birine benzetirken biz “ayı gibi” ya da “ga gibi” falan deriz. Artık çocukluktan gelen benzetmelerden mi kaynaklı, “ga gibi” deriz.”]

³³³ Bourdieu, “The Economics of Linguistic Exchanges,” 661.

Experiencing Bilingualism under the Dominance of Monolingualism

The decision of transferring languages was tough also because most of the parents had to make a choice between the two languages. Speaking Kurdish with the children was seen as an obstacle for them to learn Turkish. The mentality of monolingualism suggests that bilingualism causes confusion for the children and therefore there should be a preference among languages to be taught to children when they are little. It assumes that the speaking and teaching of languages should be mutually exclusive.

“To be honest I am saying that if I talk in Kurdish with my daughter, she would learn Kurdish and would have difficulties in learning Turkish. She would lag behind like me. She would have to start life late like I did.”³³⁴ (Male, Diyarbakır, 34, University graduate)

Almost none of the parents considered transferring more than one language at home to their children (even though some were in practice bilingual in changing levels by learning languages from different sources). The most common idea among the respondents was that the child would be confused when faced with more than one language. By teaching one language, the claim was that the children could learn it better.

Though there was not an agreement on what the first language would be (Turkish or Kurdish), the idea of transferring one language to the children until the ages of seven was recurrent. The discourse of confusion is supported by the claim of the teachers representing the monolingual education system, in that the speaking of two languages at home negatively affects the understanding and success of the

³³⁴ [“Çocuğuma Kürtçe öğretirsem okuldaki derslerinden geri kalır, anlamakta zorluk çeker kaygısı yani. O kaygılardan bir tanesini ben kendim çekiyorum, ne yalan söyleyeyim. Ben diyorum benim kızım şu an Kürtçe konuşsam, Kürtçe öğrenir, Türkçeyi öğrenmekte zorluk çeker. Benim gibi geri kalır. Benim gibi hayata geç başlamak zorunda kalır.”]

children at school. This idea was supported by and takes its source from the formal discourse of the institution of education. The *delegated agents* of that institution- the teachers- reinforce the mentality of monolingualism by using their authority and their appointed title as “the person who is knowledgeable” and the appointed power of “teaching” the legitimate both to the students and their parents. One of the respondents remembers his teacher warning his parents with the claim that when Kurdish was spoken at home, it confuses the child which for the teacher coincides a low level understanding:

“When we started secondary school, my older brother spoke Kurdish and Turkish together. The teacher called my family. My father came. The teacher had said ‘at home, I suppose Kurdish is being spoken. You speak in two languages; the child has low level of understanding’.”³³⁵ (Female, Diyarbakır, 44, Secondary school graduate)

The attitudes of the parents towards bilingualism should be analysed with taking the mentality formed under the nation-state into consideration that offers monolingualism as the only choice and claims that languages had to be separate and standardized. Skutnabb-Kangas offers four myths that legitimize and normalize monolingualism at both individual and societal levels. She claims that the ideology of monolingualism rationalizes linguistic homogenization and reinforces the idea of a homogenous nation-state which is also mythical.³³⁶ The four myths are as follows: monolingualism is normal, desirable, sufficient and inevitable.³³⁷ Monolingualism is a discourse that claims people can learn other languages as second or third languages but not within the family or the environment. The discourse is in need of controlling

³³⁵ [“Ortaokula başladığımızda, kardeşim ben iki yaş büyük, orta bire başladığında, hoca çağırdı aileyi, annemi babamı. Geldi babam. ‘Sizin evde iki dil konuşuluyor herhalde’ dedi. ‘Çocukta biraz afarlama var’ dedi. Yani işte, afarlama derken, anlayamıyorum Türkçe kelimelerin bazılarını. ‘İki dilde konuşuyorsunuz. Çocukta anlama şeyi az’ deyince yani biz yine aynı dili konuştuk.”]

³³⁶ Skutnab-Kangas, *Linguistic Genocide in Education or Worldwide Diversity and Human Rights?*, 238.

³³⁷ Skutnab-Kangas, *Linguistic Genocide in Education or Worldwide Diversity and Human Rights?*, 239-248.

the teaching of languages, hierarchizing them and being able to separate them in order to identify the ethnic groups. Thus, it does not tolerate the mixing of languages.

Kurds living in Turkey are surrounded with the discourses of monolingualism of the nation-state but at the same time they are faced with counter examples and contradictory discourses. With the new discourse of bilingualism,³³⁸ people started to be confused about how to take attitudes towards bilingualism. The addition of this new discourse onto the dominant discourses of monolingualism, and the experiences from their own lives which are mostly bilingual or multilingual³³⁹ makes it harder to construct a solid argument. The discourse of monolingualism imposes that languages should not borrow words from each other and they should point out to a specific ethnic group. However, there were a few voices among the interviewees who normalized the transitivity of languages.

“The language can be mixed sometimes. You live in a society, one of them is Zaza, the other one is Kurdish, the other is Turkish, unavoidably you look at one and you speak in a way and with the other one in another way. You look at the Turk and speak Zazakî or look at the Zaza and speak Turkish”³⁴⁰ (Female, Diyarbakır, 42, Primary school dropout)

“When our child started the nursery [in Kurdish] we started speaking Kurdish to support him but still both languages are spoken at home. There is a saying that Turks use, ‘we are like hand in a glove’ (*et ve tırnak gibiyiz*). I do not believe in that but our languages are like that. We speak both Kurdish and Turkish when we speak and there is not a problem with that.”³⁴¹ (Male, Diyarbakır, 34, High-school graduate)

³³⁸ “Yol Haritası Yolu Açar,” *Özgür Gündem*, December 31, 2010, accessed January 03, 2014, http://www.ozgur-gundem.com/index.php?haberID=1464&haberBaslik=Yol%20Haritas%C4%B1%20YOLU%20A%C3%87AR&action=haber_detay&module=nuce.

³³⁹ It is important to note that bilingualism is not a situation where a person is equally competent in more than one language but it is rather the social and the psychological situations of people who use more than one language with varying degrees.

³⁴⁰ [“Dil karma olabiliyor zaten. Toplumda oturuyorsun, biri Zaza biri Kürt, biri Türk, ister istemez, ona bakıp bir şekil konuşuyorsun, ona bakıp bir şekil konuşunca aslında Türke bakıp Zazaca konuşabiliyorsun, Zazaya bakıp da Türkçe konuşabiliyorsun. Toplumda da böyle karma olabiliyor.”]

³⁴¹ [“Çocuk kreşe başladığı zaman biz de destek olmak için Kürtçe konuşmaya başladık ama yine ona rağmen bizim evde iki dil konuşuluyor. Türklerin kullandığı klasik bir laf var ya, “biz et ve tırnak gibiyiz”. Bizim dillerimiz aslında böyle. Biz et ve tırnak gibi değiliz, ben ona inanmıyorum. Ama bizim

The ones who do not pay much attention or attribute political connotations to language (even if they are connected with Kurdish political movement) were sometimes not aware of which language they are talking with. The two dialects – Kurmanji and Zazakî- was claimed to be intermingled in this case that one of the respondents (Female, Diyarbakır, 50, did not go to school) was sometimes not aware of which one she is talking with. Eriksen characterizes the identity formation of minorities with modernization by giving an example pointing to the change through generations. While the grandparents lived as Saami (Welsh, Kurd...) without paying much attention or giving it a second thought, the parents suffered from that identity and tried to escape from that stigmatized ethnic identity; the new generation tries to revive the traditions that their grandparents practiced without knowing it. He claims that is the consequence of the modernization and nations-states which bring about cultural self-consciousness or reflexivity.³⁴²

The dominant idea among the interviewees was that languages should not be mixed, they should not borrow words and accents and dialects have to be standardized. This idea matches the definition of Nesrin Uçarlar³⁴³ on the nationalist approach. The words of a respondent point out to the assumed need of the standardization of Kurdish where underneath that assumption there lays the nationalist approach.

“There should be one dialect and accent for writing and speaking. When I go to Hakkari, I should be able to speak easily with the citizens there. Among the ten words of an old lady there, I could understand one and for the rest I do not understand I used a translator. Think about it, we are both Kurds and we both speak

dillerimiz böyle. Konuştuğumuz zaman hem Türkçe de hem Kürtçe de konuşulur. Bir sıkıntı da yoktur.”]

³⁴² Thomas Hylland Eriksen, “Linguistic Hegemony and Minority Resistance,” *Journal of Peace Research* 29,3 (1992): 317.

³⁴³ Uçarlar, “Between Majority Power and Minority Resistance: Kurdish Linguistic Rights in Turkey,” 257.

Kurdish. Everyone could use their own dialect but there should be a common dialect.”³⁴⁴ (Male, Diyarbakır, 34, University graduate)

A few parents whom that the social network and the financial opportunity said that they were considering sending their children to Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). For these families the linguistic space which is preserved in Kurdish in KRG is an option for their children where they believe that they cannot create in Turkey. KRG is not seen as a distinct country but it is rather an arena where they can resist assimilation. Thus, an alternative perception of the borders is created with the sentimental connections to a place in which Kurdish gained a formal status and it is the language of education. However, it is a place that they were not considering moving to.

“A Kurdish family, Kurdish parents and the feeling of not being able to transfer Kurdish. In order to compensate this, we are sending our son to Arbil for him to continue his reality, his culture among his people. His name is in Kurdish. It creates a paradox that their names are in Kurdish and they do not speak Kurdish.”³⁴⁵ (Female, Istanbul, 42, University graduate)

The other parent that considered sending his child to KRG for education was in Diyarbakır. He had sent his child to the nursery in Kurdish but did not know what to do with the primary education. He had also pointed out to the problems that his child had because he was taught Turkish until he went to nursery. Because of that the child did not feel confident when people talked in Kurdish with him. The interesting part is that he did not have any connections with KRG unlike the previous parents who were having business relations and had frequent visits.

³⁴⁴ [“Tek şive ve tek ağız olması gerekir hem konuşmada hem yazıda. Ben Hakkâri’ye giderken oradaki vatandaşla rahat konuşabilmeliyim. O da kendisini ifade edebilmeli. Oradaki yaşlı teyzenin on kelimesinden bir tanesini anlıyordum, anlamadığım yerlerde tercüman kullanıyordum. İkimiz de Kürdüz, ikimiz de Kürtçe konuşuyoruz yani düşünün. Herkes kendi lehçesini kullanabilir o ayrı bir şey. Bu dört lehçe arasında ortak bir lehçe de olsun, Kurmanci de olsun ya da Zazaca olsun ya da ne bileyim farklı bir lehçe olabilir.”]

³⁴⁵ [“Kürt bir aile, Kürt bir anne baba, Kürtçeyi aktaramama hissi. Dolayısıyla bunu giderebilmek için büyük oğlum okuldan aldırıp Erbil’e naklini yaptırarak, kendi kültürünü, kendi halkını, kendi ortamını da ve babasının, kendi realitesini ve sonraki gelecekte devam ettirebilmesi için. İsmi de Kürtçe, Kürtçe ismi olup Kürtçe bilmemelerinin çok ciddi bir paradoksu oluyor.”]

“[When my child starts primary school] there is going to be a problem. I am not sure whether I am going to send my child to the Turkish schools. Now, I am going through that contradiction. We know that this is a situation that can be criticized, we see it like that. I thought we can send him to the Federal Region of Kurdistan (Kurdistan Regional Government)”³⁴⁶ (Male, Diyarbakır, 34, High-school graduate)

Though the former respondent had a connection with KRG because of the business they were doing, the latter had not visited or seen the place and both parents were not considering moving there. The will of the parents may be twofold. They may want to emphasize how seriously they take the matter of Kurdish and how much they care about the continuation of Kurdish. The other is that the guilt they feel because of their children being incompetent in Kurdish is so high that they regard this option as compensation.

Market

The market is used in a similar way with the notion of field in Bourdieu’s conceptualization where any source or linguistic product finds its meaning according to the structure of the field or the market. The important property of a field is that it allows a form of capital to turn into another one. The field of education, as one of the fields, allows educational qualifications to transform into profitable jobs.³⁴⁷ The need for a language to be used is related with its value in different fields. The situation where one does not need the language or it can always be replaced by other languages is related with the value of the language in certain fields or markets. Therefore, a language to be preserved is related with preserving its value in the social fields which is “the whole set of political and social conditions of production of the’

³⁴⁶ [“Yine bir sıkıntı doğacak. Ama biz şunu düşünüyoruz. Ben şahsen onu Türk okullarına gönderip göndermeyeceğime karar vermiş değilim. Şu an onun çelişmesini yaşıyorum. Bu durumun ayıplanacak bir durum olduğunu biliyoruz, öyle görüyoruz. Ben bir ara şey düşündüm. Kürdistan Federe Bölgesi’nde okula göndermeyi düşündüm.”]

³⁴⁷ Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 14.

producers/consumers”.³⁴⁸ The different fields might range from the educational field to the political or literature and arts. Thus, the need for a language to be used is also related to its position in different fields. One of the respondents explained the need to use Kurdish with a metaphor:

“Kurdish became a language to be spoken at home. It did not become a language that is needed. When you are hungry you seek for a restaurant but when you do not know Kurdish you don’t feel hunger. If you do not feel that or make others feel that, people do not go after it. ...The young people, even if they are conscious and connected, the language they use is Turkish. They even use Turkish for organizing. Kurdish remains as a language of music, weddings, songs and literature.”³⁴⁹ (Male, Istanbul, 43, Primary school graduate)

He creates a metaphor for the need to speak Kurdish. He claims that you do not need Kurdish that much that you seek for a solution to learn it. The value attributed to the language is also formed by its linguistic capital within a certain market. Speaking the language with a linguistic competence creates that linguistic capital in the market.³⁵⁰ Kurdish is mostly seen as a language that does not have value in the sense of turning it into an economic capital. The reason of putting Kurdish on the “back burner” (*ikinci plana atmak*), is seen because it does not correspond to a need. Thus, the linguistic products are priced according to their market value. In the relation to the market, they can be formed in ways that manifests themselves as timidity, embarrassment or silence or it can be ease and confidence. The self-censorship forms the manners of talking, it forms the choice between two languages within the context of bilingualism, also determines what can be said and what cannot be.³⁵¹

³⁴⁸ Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 18.

³⁴⁹ [“Kürtçe sadece evde konuşulacak bir dil haline getirdiler. Bir ihtiyaç haline getirmediler. Şimdi ihtiyaç olmayan bir şeyin kimse peşinde koşmaz. Aç olduğun zaman lokanta ararsın ama Kürtçede aç kalmıyorsun. O açlığı hissetmiyorsun. Onu hissetmediğin sürece, insanlara hissettirmedeğin sürece insanlar peşinde koşmaz. ... Çoğu gençlerimiz ne kadar birbirlerine bağlı olsalar bile, sempatizanları var, daha bağlılar, bilinçliler ama kullandıkları dil Türkçe. Yani örgütlenmeyi bile Türkçe kullanıyorlar. Kürtçe bir şey olarak kalıyor, düğünde, şarkıda, müzikte, edebiyatta kalıyor.”]

³⁵⁰ Bourdieu, “The Economics of Linguistic Exchanges,” 651.

³⁵¹ Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 77.

“You have put Kurdish on the back burner because language is a little bit about need. It is about your interest because you work by using that language, you are paid in that way. Thus, we need to regard it on the basis of being useful. The reason why we are shifting to Turkish is about that. Unavoidably it turns into a habit.”³⁵² (Male, Diyarbakır, 35, University graduate)

Another respondent (Male, Istanbul, 50, primary school graduate) who had been living in Istanbul for long years regarded Kurdish like any other language like English but claimed that his children did not attribute any linguistic capital to Kurdish that they preferred to learn European languages. However, he mentioned only the qualities of Kurdish where it enables communication with relatives.

“Kurdish became a language like English. It nearly became a foreign language like English. I say to the children it would be good for them to learn Kurdish but they say that they are going to learn German or English. ... It is good because they could have talked to a relative or their aunt or when they go to the village but unfortunately they are not learning Kurdish.”³⁵³ (Male, Istanbul, 50, Primary school graduate)

A few respondents emphasized the newly defined linguistic capital to Kurdish with its usage in arts, literature (with the relative freedom in the situation of Kurdish with the legal changes) and the reference to KRG where Kurdish gained an official status. There is also an expectance of Kurdish to be more involved in the institutions of education like in private universities, elective courses or an expectance to a transition of education through the medium of mother tongue, where the last one is the least expected.

“Within time, there will be universities accordingly [in Kurdish], there will be workplaces. There will be a need for that. If the way is paved for that, even I would be in an effort to improve myself. We are inadequate. For instance, let’s say that Kurdish is consisted of seven thousand words, I do not know any of them. We are all

³⁵² [“Kürtçeyi sen ikinci plana atmışsın çünkü dil dediğin biraz da ihtiyaçla ilgilidir. Çıkarınla ilgilidir açıkçası çünkü sen bu dili kullanarak çalışıyorsun, öyle maaş alıyorsun. Dolayısıyla işine yaramak noktasından bakmak lazım. Bizim şu an Türkçeye kayma sebebimiz bira da bu, ister istemez o alışkanlığa dönüşüyor.”]

³⁵³ [“Kürtçe de hemen hemen İngilizce gibi bir yabancı dil oldu. ‘Kürtçe öğrenirseniz daha iyi olur’ diyorum ama diyor ‘biz Almanca, İngilizce öğreneceğiz, Kürtçe öğrenmeyeceğiz. Köye gittiği zaman, bir akrabasıyla karşılaştığı zaman, yengesiyle karşılaştığı zaman konuşabilirler ama maalesef öğrenmiyorlar.”]

like that. We grabbed from Turkish, we took from Arabic or Persian.”³⁵⁴ (Male, Diyarbakır, 48, High-school graduate)

The education through the medium of the mother tongue reminds some of the respondents as children learning only Kurdish. Accordingly, they associate this education with children having the risk of not finding a job. Similar to the findings of Gai Harrison, whose respondents attributed necessity to English for economic survival³⁵⁵, Turkish by some Kurdish parents was attributed importance for financial wealth. Thus, the ones who favoured the education through the medium of the mother tongue pointed out to the risk of financial inequality.

“I do not accept the elective courses in Kurdish. If there would be a parallel, alternative education I am in favour of my children having an education in all Kurdish even if I knew they would become unemployed. It is not because I am against Turkish. It is based on the idea of becoming equal. If there was such a thing, I would send my children taking the risk of financial loss.”³⁵⁶ (Male, Diyarbakır, 45, High school graduate)

Though when Kurdish is not valuable within the market and when it has the risk of being a language not used within work life the hierarchy between languages continue, education through the medium of the mother tongue does not impose teaching of one language. The respondent claimed that Kurdish was not a language that had a value when asked within the context of KRG. He claimed that it was not official in education in KRG, where actually it is. Thus, the linguistic capital of Kurdish may not be regarded as a capital even if it is officially used in education.

³⁵⁴ [“Zaten gelecekte, zaman onu gösteriyor, buna bağlı üniversiteler de açılacak, buna bağlı iş şeyleri de açılacak, ihtiyacı olacak. Ben bile, o zemin hazırlanırsa ben bile kendimi yetiştirme şeyisine giderim. Çabalarım. Eksiklerimiz çoktur. Diyelim mesela Kürtçe yedi bin kelimedden oluşuyorsa ben bunun bir tanesini de bilmiyorum. Genel olarak, hepimiz öyleyiz. Türkçeden kapmışız, Arapçadan kapmışız, Farsçadan kapmışız.”]

³⁵⁵ Harrison, “Language Politics, Linguistic Capital and Bilingual Practitioners in Social Work,” 1094.

³⁵⁶ [“Seçmeli dersi ben kesinlikle kabul etmiyorum. Bunun bir hakaret olduğunu düşünüyorum. İleride bunun daha da gelişeceğini umut etmek istiyorum. Ya da buna paralel, alternatif bir eğitim olsa, ben işsiz kalacaklarını bilsem dahi ben yüzde yüz Kürtçe öğrenim görmelerinden yanayım. Türkçe kesinlikle karşı olmamdan dolayı ya da dili başka bir şekilde şey yaptığımdan dolayı değil. Ama bu tamamiyle bir eşitlemeyi sağlamak düşüncesinden kaynaklanıyor. Öyle bir şey olsa ben her türlü maddi zararı göze alırım ve çocuklarımı o şekilde büyütme isterim.”]

This perception brings about a question. Why was the accumulation of knowledge in Kurdish referred to by so few? The regard concerning Kurdish as a political tool and not regarding its linguistic capital as a capital is an habit that comes from the incompatibility of its linguistic capital within monolingual education system in Turkish and because it had been prohibited for long years. Like Hassanpour claims, even if there is not an official ban on languages, the unequal distribution of economic, political and cultural power works against the survival of the disadvantaged languages.³⁵⁷ It is much more restrictive for a language that the speakers of that language avoid using it -because they regard it as the *wrong sort of capital* for their children or they do not regard it as having a linguistic capital- than the prohibitions.

Although the legal prohibitions on Kurdish are lifted, its usage is not legally restricted in the public sphere and it is used as the language of television and newspapers and books –even if they face legal harassments and are not supported by the government- some respondents were not eager to flourish the language or to use it. They had still uncertainties about using it and transferring it to their children. Those parents mostly justified their uncertainty by claiming that Kurdish *lacked* linguistic capital. In some cases, a nationalist relative or acquaintance or one of the parents was like a reminder that the language of the “colonialist state”-Turkish- was like betrayal to the struggle of the Kurdish political movement. Even if this reminder could be effective, it still does not make it possible to attribute Kurdish a linguistic capital, which it has in literature, arts or science. With this reminder, it is formed as a political language that is not needed but it *has* to be spoken. It has the risk of coinciding to a situation where the written Kurdish is devalued.

³⁵⁷ Amir Hassanpour, *Kürdistan'da Milliyetçilik ve Dil (1918-195)*, trans. Ibrahim Bingöl and Cemil Gündoğan, (Istanbul: Avesta, 2005): 253.

Within the political discourse, parents whose children do not speak Kurdish, claim that they regret it that their children do not speak Kurdish but they do not take an instant action to teach them. Just a few of them took an action like sending them to Kurdish nursery or courses but the rest have left it to time and claimed that their children would learn it as an adult.

CHAPTER VII: Conclusion and Discussion

Ethnicity and language are important components of cultural capital that students acquire from the family and bring into the school. The components of cultural capital, where they are not in line with the institutionalized capital, serve for the reproduction of the inequality within the education system. Linguistic capital, as a part of cultural capital, might be one of the aspects that reproduce the inequality where the native languages do not fit into the requirements of the field of education. The institutionalized capital within the field of education is not fixed though. It is prone to changes with resistance.

The formation of the linguistic capital of Kurdish has roots in so many different sources and discourses that the Kurdish speaking people had conflicting attitudes towards Kurdish and Turkish. With the changing attitudes in the usage of Kurdish, transference of it to children was formed through different strategies varying according to changing periods and situations. However, there was a dominance of the discourse of attributing an importance to Kurdish as the mother tongue in addition to its political affiliations rather than pointing out to its linguistic capital as a means for production.

On the discursive level, most of the respondents claimed that the mother tongue is greatly important. The degrading of Kurdish was not apparent in any level. However, the usage of it was more complex. Besides, some respondents claimed that the importance attributed to Kurdish was the discourse that they *had to* embrace.

Kurdish as the linguistic capital is fought through acts of language movements. For instance, TZP Kurdî (Kurdish Language and Education Movement) which functions under KURDÎ-DER, had campaigns in which they asked for the Kurdish speaking teachers to speak in Kurdish at schools, preparing of Kurdish

textbooks, the usage of Kurdish in public life such as writing the Kurdish names for the fruits and vegetables at the bazaar.³⁵⁸ The aims of TZP Kurdî were to promote Kurdish as the official language besides Turkish and the language of education. They had civilian disobedience plans such as students speaking Kurdish instead of Turkish at schools, teachers answering in Kurdish to the Turkish questions and teachers de facto giving education through the mother tongue at schools.³⁵⁹ Though I regard the civil disobedience as an important mean for challenging the restrictions of the state, deducing from the words of the respondents in this research, civil disobedience that had the risk of affecting the children's success at school would not be wanted to be taken by some -if not most- of the parents. One of the main reasons for not transferring Kurdish to the children by the parents was that they did not want their children to be stigmatized at school and to be unsuccessful because of not knowing Turkish. Thus, Turkish for the Kurdish parents forms the educationally profitable linguistic capital within the monolingual education system. Educationally profitable linguistic capital is the linguistic resources and capabilities of certain groups that are favoured over the others within the education system and the linguistic resources and capabilities which are favoured are institutionalized as linguistic capital. In a monolingual education system, the linguistic capabilities and resources that it requires is the language of instruction. Where the language of instruction is Turkish within the monolingual education system, transferring Turkish to children is regarded as the key to school success for some Kurdish parents. The unequal social class

³⁵⁸ "TZP'den 'Kürtçe Konuşma' Kampanyası," *Yüksekova Günce*, December 02, 2009, accessed January 02, 2014, <http://www.yuksekovaguncel.com/guncel/tzpdn-kurtce-konusma-kampanyasi-h8756.html>.

³⁵⁹ Rifat Başaran, "BDP'den dilde 'B planı' mı?" *Radikal Gazetesi*, September 20, 2013, accessed January 02, 2014, http://www.radikal.com.tr/politika/bdpden_dilde_b_plani_mi-1151681.

distribution of the educationally profitable linguistic capital is a hidden aspect of the relationship between social origin and educational achievement.³⁶⁰

Additionally, the attributions to Kurdish and Turkish were important factors in the formation of the linguistic capital of Kurdish and the transference of it to the next generation. The attributions to Kurdish were concentrated around the discourse of being rural, elderly or the “non-educated” women. Though the respondents claimed that they –the rural, elder, and the women- were not the only ones to speak Kurdish, they were the ones who did not shift to Turkish since they were not competent in it. Thus, they would be the ones to continue the language. The private and the public sphere separation is an important factor in the formation of attributions to Kurdish and Turkish. The attributions to Kurdish such as the language of emotions and Turkish as formality are the manifestations of this separation.

Since Kurdish has been a language that was *whispered* for long years since the beginning of the formation of the republic, it became like a habit to not to speak Kurdish out loud in the public sphere. It made the mother tongue confined within the private sphere. Thus, the compartmentalization of languages to specific places and emotions restricted the language to certain places. According to Fishman, the continuation and preservation of native languages are related with their specificity to certain spheres. For him, a language can be preserved if it stays peculiar to a sphere. He defines a specific form of bilingualism as diglossia, where the native language of the ethnolinguistic groups is related with home, whereas the dominant language is

³⁶⁰ Pierre Bourdieu, and Jean-Claude Passeron, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*, trans. Richard Nice (London: Sage Publications, 1990), 116. For an analysis of the relation between social capital and drop-out rates see: Zeynep Cemalcılar and Fatoş Gökşen, “Inequality In Social Capital: Social Capital, Social Risk and Drop-Out in The Turkish Education System,” *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 35,1 (2014): 94–114.

associated with higher education, central government and nationwide commerce.³⁶¹

Though, the differentiation of languages within the spheres is not clear-cut and there is a complex relation between Turkish and Kurdish in private and public spheres, this differentiation has manifestations in the attributions to languages.

The dichotomies that the state policies on language have created, including the differentiation of private and public sphere, have manifestations on the attributions that people have to languages. Among these categories, there is the dichotomy of languages forming Kurdish as the language of emotions and Turkish as the language of reason, Turkish as the language of science and education and Kurdish as the family and elders. These categories might be internalized by the speakers of Kurdish as well where their means of transformative resistance³⁶² are taken away. For some respondents, speaking Kurdish out loud in public sphere (like in the institution of education or the public transportation) still creates an anxiety. This anxiety either causes silence in Kurdish or awareness and alertness of the fact that they are speaking Kurdish. Like Arendt argues, the private sphere is the space that can be privately owned.³⁶³ Within the dichotomy of private sphere, where it is the place that is privately owned, and the public sphere Kurdish was confined to the private. However, within the case of Kurdish in Turkey, the differentiation of languages is not clear-cut and the languages peculiar to certain spheres are blurred. With the relative freedom in the situation of Kurdish, the compartmentalization of languages is altered. Kurdish finds a more established place within the public sphere with the television channels, theatres, movies, books and newspapers and on the

³⁶¹ Joshua Fishman, "Bilingualism and Separatism," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 487 (1986): 171.

³⁶² Uçarlar, "Between Majority Power and Minority Resistance: Kurdish Linguistic Rights in Turkey," 173.

³⁶³ Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 52.

streets. At the same time, Turkish is able to enter the home with the children going to school and bringing the dominant language home.

It is important to add that there could be places and cities in Turkey where Kurdish is fully dominant, people use it in every aspect of daily life and where it is publicly spoken without any anxiety. Surely, there would be examples that challenge my findings since language usage is prone to change every second depending on conjecture, the place where it is spoken, the people around or the changing attributes of the speaker.

There are so many factors in the preference of the usage of the language and within the case of Kurdish as well, it is really complex. The transference of it to children is even more complex. It is the question of whether the qualities attributed to Kurdish would be dominant over the negative ones enough to enable transference. The parents who had transferred Kurdish to their children were mostly confident with their decision. They claimed that Turkish was the dominant language in Turkey, and thus the children would *either way* learn Turkish. For those parents, the difficulty that those children would go through would be at most in the Turkish course at school. The main contradiction though was seen for the parents who did not transfer Kurdish to their children. With the change in the conjuncture, the relative freedom in Kurdish, the divine importance attributed to language by the Kurdish political movement and the newly attributed linguistic capital to Kurdish, the discourse on regret was recurrent for those parents. Some took a direct action to reverse the situation such as speaking in Kurdish with the newly born children, while some left it to time claiming that their children would learn Kurdish when they are adult since they had transferred the identity of being a Kurd to their children. The link between language and identity differed also according to the nationalist approach of the

respondents where the ones with the nationalist approach had directly linked identity to speaking the native language, whereas others claimed that one needed not to speak Kurdish in order to belong to Kurdish identity.

Though, the grandparents and the ones who do not speak Turkish are important in keeping Kurdish alive and keeping it from shifting to Turkish (since it is regarded as disrespect to speak in Turkish when they are around), they cannot make the language survive where there is forced migration and people facing the urban way of life. However, Kurdish can adopt itself to these new conditions and to the needs of the people who speak it. It has the potential to be flourished. However, the children who are spoken to in Turkish with the concerns that they would lag behind in education and would be stigmatized are mostly passive bilinguals who understand Kurdish but cannot use it productively. According to Dorian, only exposure to a language produces passive bilingualism with no productivity.³⁶⁴ Thus, Kurdish children who were exposed to Kurdish within family or environment but were not directly spoken in Kurdish with can be called as passive bilinguals. The passive bilingual children would have varying levels of competences in Kurdish and Turkish. Those students would have different needs within the possibility of an education through the medium of the mother tongue. With their varying levels in Kurdish and Turkish considered, different models of education through the medium of the mother tongue would be needed. But since there are still constitutional prohibitions on the usage of Kurdish –and other languages- as the medium of education, additional ways of developing the language are to be sought. By doing so, the self-fulfilling prophecy where the struggle for education through the medium of the mother tongue is just a

³⁶⁴ Dorian, "Language Shift in Community and Individual," 93.

discourse and the people do not request it anymore or there are not so many people who wish to send their children to that education system would be prevented.

There had also been an aspect of gender that cuts the categories in the middle. The relation of gender and language was twofold. First was that women were more likely to be non-educated thus they were more likely to speak Kurdish. The second aspect is that since more attention to education is given by the Kurdish parents, girls who have education are more likely to adapt to the conditions that the education system requires which one of them is speaking Turkish. Where this argument was proposed by some of the respondents in this research, the underlying reasons of such a claim needs further investigation. This pattern of gender came out of the observations of the parents of the difference among their children for girls and boys and the young people they observe around them.

The other aspect of the relation between gender and language was the responsibility attributed to mother for the transference of Kurdish or the decision of that transference to mothers. For some respondents, the transference of Kurdish is associated with the mothers within the context of Kurdish not being transferred to children.

Linguistic capital of language is formed also according to it's the relation to the market. Within the formation of the market, Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) forms an important linguistic space. With reference to KRG, a new point of reference may be formed to Kurdish as a market that attributes linguistic capital to Kurdish. According to Bourdieu, the structure of a field or a market determines the meaning of a linguistic product. For instance, the field of education had the capacity to transform educational qualifications into profitable jobs³⁶⁵ and presenting certain

³⁶⁵ Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 14.

linguistic products as the requirements of the educational field. Thus, the linguistic capital of Kurdish varies according to different fields as well as different socio-political contexts.

With globalization, in cities people from different places and languages could visit, live or pass by. Thus, the languages heard on the streets might not be mainly Turkish. Within this context Kurdish would be like any other language. The relative freedom of the usage of Kurdish in public sphere is the combination of the impossibility of the continuation of the rigid nation state policies on language due to the conjuncture, the gains of the Kurdish political movements and the relative heterogeneity of peoples in cities.

However, even though the state policies on Kurdish is not—and is not possible to be- like that of the years of 1930s, there is still a need of a resistance to the new language planning of the Turkish state claiming that Kurdish is not a language that is efficient for the needs of education and science. The history of the Turkish republic is the formation of a collective memory. Within this history Kurdish language and identity was restricted and confined to the private sphere. However, the language policies never succeeded fully and they changed within years in interaction with the resistance of the Kurdish people. The elimination of the inequality of the languages is also possible with the challenging of the categories of the binary oppositions between languages. Kurdish needs to have the opportunity and support for being the language of education, science, literature and arts. For it to be possible, the binary oppositions as if Kurdish is the language of the elderly, private sphere, or the language of emotions needed to be changed. Also, it is possible by not only using it within political slogans as an indicator of Kurdish identity for gaining recognition but also it can be flourished as a language that is produced in. By that way, Kurdish

would gain its linguistic capital not on conflict or in opposition with Turkish. The shattering of the binary oppositions would relieve Kurdish from being attributed the qualities that are left from Turkish. By shattering the binary oppositions among languages the inherent contradiction of speaking or being have to speak Turkish would be decreased. By doing so, negative attributions to knowing and being competent in more than one language could be overcome. However, Turkish is never a neutral language and it always reminds the pressures on the Kurdish identity and language. Thus, without gaining the opportunity for Kurdish to be used in education, and in all public spheres including being the language of the market, the relation of Kurdish and Turkish would never be an easy one considering the situation of bilingualism (or multilingualism).

The resistance to the homogenizing policies of the nation-state can be realized by attributing negative qualities to the dominant language. But it would be a negative resistance that keeps the position where it stands restricted to the categories that the dominant has created. A transformative resistance, like Uçarlar argues, which forces majority to question the unquestioned prevailing discourses³⁶⁶, on the other hand, challenges the hierarchy between languages. It questions the attributions to languages themselves rather than embracing the qualities that are left over from the dominant. A transformative resistance is possible by flourishing the language, making it a language that is requested to be spoken, and challenging the perceptions that prevent it from being used in all areas. It would be possible only by challenging the categories that confine Kurdish and make the languages in contradiction with one other.

³⁶⁶ Uçarlar, "Between Majority Power and Minority Resistance: Kurdish Linguistic Rights in Turkey," 173.

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Appendix I: Semi-Structured Questionnaire

Derinlemesine Görüşme Kılavuzu

Tanışma

- Doğum yeri/Doğum yılı
- Göç hikâyesi
- Eğitim düzeyi
- Çalışma durumu
- Nasıl bir ailede/ortamda büyüdü
- Ailesi/çocukları

Kişisel Hikâye içinde Dillerin Yeri/Kullanımı/Anılar

- Hangi dilde kendinizi daha iyi ifade ediyorsunuz?
- (Herhangi bir dilde iyi ifade edemediğini düşünüyorsa) Neden böyle düşünüyorsunuz?/Avantajları-dezavantajları var mı?/ neler?
- Anne-babanız Türkçe bilir miydi? Evde hangi dillerde konuşurlardı? (sizinle, kardeşlerinle, birbiriyle)
- Okulda dille ilgili hatırladığınız bir anınız var mı?
- İlkokula başladığınızda Türkçe biliyor muydunuz? Hayırsa, zorluk çektiniz mi?
- Kimlerle Kürtçe konuşuyorsunuz?
- Kürtçe/Türkçe okuma yazma biliyor musunuz?
- Kürtçe televizyon izliyor musunuz? Kürtçe kitap/gazete okuyor musunuz?

Çocuklara Dil Aktarımı ve Çocukların Eğitimi

- Eşinizle hangi dilde konuşuyorsunuz?/ Akrabalarınızla?
- Çocuklarınızla hangi dillerde konuşmayı tercih ediyorsunuz? Neden?
- (Çocuklarla ya da eşiyile Türkçe konuşuyorsa) Türkçe konuşma sebepleri
- Çocuklarınızın Kürtçe konuşmasıyla/konuşmamasıyla ilgili ne düşünüyorsunuz?
- Kürtçe seçmeli ders hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz? Çocuğunuzun böyle bir ders almasını ister miydiniz?
- Çocuklar arasında Kürtçe konuşmada farklılık var mı?
- Kız ve erkek çocukların Kürtçe konuşmasında farklılık var mı?
- Türkçe konuşmak eğitilmiş olmayı mı gösterir?
- İnsanlar çocuklarına Kürtçeyi planlı/programlı bir şekilde mi öğretmeli yoksa çocuklar doğal olarak mı öğrenmeli?
- Çocuğunuzun hangi dilleri konuşmasını istersiniz?
- (Çocuğu Kürtçe bilmiyorsa) “Çocuğunuz niçin Kürtçe bilmiyor sorusuyla karşılaşır musunuz?” (Evetse) Ne hissediyorsunuz?

- Bazı aileler çocuklarının sıkıntı çekmemesi için Türkçe öğrenmelerini istiyor. Bu konu hakkında siz ne düşünüyorsunuz?
- Okulda/öğretmenlerle Kürtçe konuşuyor musunuz? Öğretmenler (Kürtçe biliyorsa) Kürtçe konuşuyor mu? Konuşmayı tercih ediyor musunuz? Neden?
- Öğretmenlerin Kürtçe konuşup konuşmaması bir sorun oluşturuyor mu?

Dillere Olan Atıflar

- “Anadil” tanımı
- Kürtçe konuşmak ne anlam ifade ediyor?
- Türkçe konuşmak ne anlam ifade ediyor?
- Kürtçe ve Türkçe nelerle özdeşleşiyor?
- Kürtçe/Türkçe bilmeseydi sıkıntı olur muydu?/ (Evetse) Ne şekilde olurdu?
- Kürtçe konuşuyor olmak, herhangi bir dil bilmek gibi midir?/ Kürtçe bilmekle Türkçe bilmenin farkı nedir? Kürtçe bilmekle İngilizce bilmenin farkı nedir?
- Kürtçenin kullanımının gelecekte nasıl bir hal alacağını düşünüyorsunuz? Çocuklarınızın kendi çocuklarına Kürtçe aktaracağını düşünüyor musunuz?
- Kürtçenin devamı, gelişmesi/zenginleşmesi için en önemli görev kimlere düşer?/ Kimler Kürtçe konuşmaya devam ederse, Kürtçe konuşulmaya devam eder?
- Kürtçe eğitim dili olabilir mi? Olmalı mı?

Çiftlilik/Aksanlar

- Kürt aksanıyla Türkçe konuşulması hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz?
- Kürtçenin farklı lehçeleri hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz? En iyi ya da doğru Kürtçe gibi bir şey var mı? Neden?
- Kürtçe konuşurken Türkçe kelime kullanma -ya da Türkçe konuşurken Kürtçe kelime kullanma- hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz?
- Çocuklar çift dilli büyütülebilir mi? Çocuğa ev içinde iki dil öğretilir mi?
- Sokakta Kürtçe ne kadar konuşuluyor? Siz sokakta/pazarda/alışverişte hangi dili tercih ediyorsunuz?/ Hangi zamanlarda/nerelerde Kürtçe konuşuyorsunuz/konuşmuyorsunuz?

Semi-Structured Questionnaire

Meeting

- Place of birth/Year of birth
- The history of migration
- Education level
- Occupation
- How was the family life? / In what kind of environment did he/she grow up?
- His/her family and children

The Place/Usage of Languages within the Personal History/Memories

- In which language do you feel more competent in? In which language do you express yourself more freely?
- (If states that he/she does not feel competent in any language) Why do you feel in that way?/What are the advantages/disadvantages?
- Did your mother-father know Turkish? Which language(s) were spoken at home? Which language(s) did your mother and father spoke (with you, your brothers and sisters, to each other)?
- Do you have any memories about school?
- Did you know/speak Turkish when you started school? (If not) did you have any difficulties?
- With whom do you speak in Kurdish?
- Do you read and write in Kurdish/Turkish?
- Do you watch Kurdish television? Do you read Kurdish books/newspapers?

Language Transfer to Children and the Education of Children

- In which language(s) do you speak with your husband/wife/ your relatives?
- In which language(s) do you speak with your children? Why?
- (If speaking in Turkish with the children or husband/wife) The reasons of speaking Turkish
- What do you think about your children speaking/not speaking Kurdish?
- What do you think about elective Kurdish courses? Would you want your children to take such a course?
- Do your children have different levels of speaking Kurdish?
- Is there a difference in speaking Kurdish among your daughters and sons?
- Does speaking Turkish show being educated?
- Should people teach their children Kurdish on purpose/with programme or should the children learn on its natural?
- Which languages would you want your children to speak?
- (If the children do not know Kurdish) Do you come across the question “why does your child do not speak Kurdish?” (If yes) How do you feel?
- Some families want their children to learn Turkish for them to not to have difficulties. What do you think about that?

- Do you speak in Kurdish with the teachers (if they know Kurdish) /at school of your children? Do the teachers speak in Kurdish? Do you prefer to speak in Kurdish with them? Why/why not?
- Does it create a problem when the teachers speak Kurdish at school with you?

Attributions to Languages

- The definition of the term “mother tongue”
- What does it mean to you to speak Kurdish?/How does it make sense?
- What does it mean to you to speak Turkish?/How does it make sense?
- What are Kurdish and Turkish identified with?
- Would it cause a problem if you did not speak Kurdish/Turkish? (If yes) In what ways?
- Is speaking Kurdish like knowing a language? What is the difference between knowing Kurdish and Turkish? What is the difference between knowing Kurdish and English?
- How do you regard the future of Kurdish? Would your children transfer Kurdish to their children?
- Who has responsibility for the continuation/enrichment of Kurdish?/In which situations would Kurdish would be continued to be spoken?
- Can Kurdish be the language of education? Should it be the language of education?

Bilingualism/ Accents

- What do you think about speaking Turkish with a Kurdish accent?
- What do you think about the different dialects of Kurdish? Is there such a thing as “the right Kurdish”? Why?
- What do you think about using Turkish words when speaking Kurdish or using Kurdish words when speaking Turkish?
- Can the children be brought up bilingual? Can the children be taught two languages at home?
- How much Kurdish is used at street? Which language do you prefer at street/in the bazaar/when shopping?/ Where and when do you use or do not use Kurdish?