IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION AND NEGOTIATION AMONG EFL LEARNERS:

A CASE STUDY

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Hakan Şentürk, certify that

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- this thesis contains no material that has been submitted or accepted for a degree or diploma in any other educational institution;

- this is a true copy of the thesis approved by my advisor and thesis committee at Boğaziçi University, including final revisions required by them.

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ABSTRACT

Identity Construction and Negotiation among EFL Learners: A Case Study

The aim of this study was to give an elaborate description of the relationship between L2 language learning and identity construction at the English Preparatory Program of a private university in Istanbul, Turkey. This instrumental multiple case study was based on the narrative accounts of five English Preparatory School students collected via interviews, classroom observations, audio recordings and learning diary entries during their English learning studies for over a year including online education during the COVID19 pandemic. The results of the data analysis show that the participants' construction of L2 learner identities during their language learning journey at the school/home was marked with instances consisting of multiple and dynamic negotiations and mediations of identities from past and present learning experiences. The participants' search for a community of practice both face-to-face and online, the fluid nature of their learner/user/speaker positionalities as L2 learners and speakers, their imagined identities before and after starting their L2 learning journey, and their L2 investments are discussed in detail. The results show how the study of L2 identity constructions during the language learning process has implications in the field of applied linguistics and English language teaching and learning in general. Based on the findings of this study, recommendations for further studies and practices in the field of English language teaching and learning are made.

ÖZET

İngilizce Öğrenenler Arasında Kimlik Oluşumu ve Müzakereleri: Bir Vaka Çalışması

Bu çalışmanın amacı, Türkiye'de özel bir üniversitenin İngilizce Hazırlık Programında ikinci dil öğrenimi ile kimlik inşası arasındaki ilişkinin ayrıntılı bir çalışmasını vermektir. Bu araçsal çoklu vaka çalışması, COVID19 salgını sırasında çevrimiçi eğitim de dahil olmak üzere bir yılı aşkın bir süredir İngilizce öğrenme süreçleri sırasında görüşmeler, sınıf gözlemleri, ses kayıtları ve öğrenme günlüğü girişleri yoluyla toplanan beş İngilizce Hazırlık Okulu öğrencisinin anlatılarına dayanmaktadır. Veri analizinin sonuçları, katılımcıların okulda/evde dil öğrenme yolculukları sırasında ikinci dil kimliklerinin oluşumu, geçmiş ve şimdiki öğrenme deneyimlerindeki çoklu ve dinamik kimlik müzakerelerden oluşan örneklerle işaretlendiğini göstermektedir. Katılımcıların hem yüz yüze hem de çevrimiçi bir uygulama topluluğu arayışı, ikinci dil öğrenen ve kullanan olarak öğrenen/kullanıcı/konuşmacı konumlarının akışkan doğası, ikinci dil öğrenim yolculuğuna başlamadan önce ve sonraki hayali kimlikleri ve ikinci dil yatırımları ayrıntılı olarak tartışılmaktadır. Sonuçlar, dil öğrenme süreci sırasında ikinci dil kimlik yapılarının incelenmesinin uygulamalı dilbilim ve genel olarak İngilizce öğretimi ve öğrenimi alanında nasıl etkileri olduğunu göstermektedir. Bu çalışmanın bulgularına dayalı olarak, İngilizce öğretimi ve öğrenimi alanında daha sonraki çalışmalara ve uygulamalara yönelik önerilerde bulunulmuştur.

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Dad,

I think you would have liked this.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

There is a Turkish proverb which says: "One language one person; two languages two persons". It captures the essence of the inextricable link between language and identity, suggesting that a person who speaks two languages represents two people, two cultures, or even two identities. In Turkey, when in the presence of another, usually older person, who does not speak another language, they will utter this idiom and insist on the importance of learning another language and gaining new insights that other languages inevitably bring.

1.1 Background

It has become a well-known fact now that English as a lingua franca and as an international language is spreading at an unstoppable and increasing rate (Crystal, 1987; 2003; Kachru, 1986) together with the rate of globalization. This also has a significant effect on the language policies in countries where English is not spoken as a native language (Kirkgöz, 2009). The main reason for this exponential spread is the desire and need for access to information, the transfer of technology and economic development (Grabbe, 1988, p. 63). The same is valid for the Turkish context. The necessity to open up to the Western world for international communication and technical developments, primarily through increased ties with the United States, was one of the main reasons for the global effect of English in the Turkish setting (Kirkgöz, 2009). Furthermore, the use of English has also increased due to the

popularity of social media and movies (Arık, 2020), especially via popular streaming sites such as Youtube, Netflix and Amazon. However, the role of English in the context of Turkey still seems to be as Doğgançay-Aktuna (1998) analyzed it more than two decades ago:

In Turkey English carries the instrumental function of being the most studied foreign language and the most popular medium of education after Turkish. On an interpersonal level, it is used as a link language for international business and for tourism while also providing a code that symbolizes modernization and elitism to the educated middle classes and those in the upper strata of the socioeconomic ladder. (p. 37)

Hence, the prevalence of English is mostly felt in the education sector where the need to learn and teach English is felt from primary school to the tertiary level. According to İnal and Özdemir (2015), the main reasons why English has become so significant in the Turkish education system is Turkey's trade relations with the world, and the ever-growing tourism industry, where English is mainly used for economic and interpersonal purposes, as well as the instrumental and interpersonal use of English on the Internet, which seems to be used by nearly half of the Turkish population, especially young people (pp. 135-136). However, Arık (2020) states that with a few exceptions, English has no regulatory function in Turkey, and its creative function is restricted to borrowing and nativization. English's interpersonal role is increasingly visible in the workplace, tourism, and the media. The most prevalent and fundamental role English plays in Turkey is that of an educational and academic tool. This has given rise to the education system to adopt English as an instructional medium. Apart from K12 institutions where English is being taught as a communicative device, English medium instruction (EMI) at universities for the

study of academic subjects has also become commonplace. According to the Measuring, Selection and Placement Center (ÖSYM, 2021) there are more than 750 undergraduate programs at state and foundation universities using English as a medium of instructions. However, using English as a medium to teach academic content has its difficulties in Turkey because teaching and learning English in Turkey has its own problems due to the "English deficit in Turkey" (see Vale et al, 2013; Kamaşak et al., 2020).

Even though the importance of learning another language, especially English, has been of utmost importance in our country, we can say that our journey of learning English has not been a successful one. According to the English Proficiency Index (EPI), Turkey ranks at #70 among 112 countries in the region, with the English proficiency level defined as " low" ("EF EPI 2021 – EF English Proficiency Index – Turkey," n.d.). The trend in the last two decades has continually switched from low to very low and back. This is surprising since in Turkey, English learning starts at primary school and continues even at universities. A few years ago, it was considered a prestige to be studying at an English medium university; however, nowadays, English medium education at Turkish universities seems to have become a norm. This means that there is a huge effort to teach English at English Preparatory programs. Apart from the requirements of the schools, students also want to learn English because they know that their future careers and statuses perceived by society are dependent on being able to speak and understand English at a proficient level. The reasons that English language education in Turkey does not seem to be yielding

better results in terms of greater proficiency by the time students are ready to matriculate into university is multifaceted.

This study will examine this process from an identity point of view and investigate how English learners at a tertiary level construct and negotiate language learner identities, and how this, in turn affects their learning experience.

1.2   Rationale for the study

The idea for this study came from my own observations in my classes both as a teacher and as a supervisor to pre-service English teachers and pre-undergraduate English preparatory school students. As a teacher, I observed that the students started the program with high expectations and enthusiasm but seemed to lose all of these near the end of the first semester. In the pilot study that I conducted prior to this proposal, I noticed in my interviews with the students that they seemed to be aware of the necessity of learning English and the social and cultural capital that speaking English would bring. However, they reported low levels of commitment to the actual formal learning process. This low level of 'investment', which is a term contributed to the identity literature by Norton Peirce (1995), needs to be studied in qualitative terms so that we have an understanding about the construction/reconstruction of identities among these learners. Norton and Toohey (2011) state that the concept of investment aims to create a meaningful link between the learners' need and commitment to learn a language and their shifting identities. Norton Peirce (1995) suggested that the notion of motivation was insufficient in explaining the "complex relationship between power, identity and language learning". According to the investment model, when language learners communicate, they are continuously

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organizing and reorganizing a sense of themselves and how they relate to the social world, apart from just exchanging information with the target language speaker. Therefore, an investment in the target language is at the same time an investment in the individual's own social identity, which is constantly changing through time and space (Norton Peirce, 1995, p. 17-18). Hence, the low levels of commitment reported by the pilot study participants can also be studied from an investment point of view instead of a motivation-based stance. Norton (2013) mentions a study by Duff conducted at a multilingual secondary school in Canada. The language learners in the class were afraid of being made fun of because of their low levels of English. Their lack to participate or commit to the learning process was perceived as lack of motivation. However, Norton (2013) argues that they were not 'invested' in the language practices of the classroom, which was a site for unequal power relations between the learners and the target language speakers. "Their investments were co-constructed in their interactions with their native speaker peers, and their identities a site of struggle" (Norton, 2013, p. 7). In our case, since the setting is an EFL one, the power relations do not take place between the learners and native speakers but with the learners and the teachers as well as their language learning peers. Interviews from the pilot study revealed that three of the participants were afraid to talk and participate in classroom practices because they were afraid that their peers and the teacher would make fun of them, either because of their pronunciation or the mistakes they thought they would make in answering questions.

Another observation was about the possible selves and imagined identities that the learners assume. I noticed that the majority of students would give

metalinguistic explanations about questions asked to them by their teachers even though the objective of the question was a communicative inquiry about something related to the lesson or their lives. They would not perceive the question asked in English as a true attempt to communicate with them but as a metalinguistic test as part of the ongoing lesson. This points to the possibility that the learners do not consider themselves as 'speakers of English who have the ability to communicate in English' but just as 'students who are part of a formal learning setting' even though our goal as language teachers is to make them communicate in the language we teach. The learners' lack of seeing themselves as speakers of English might be connected to the lack of positioning themselves as participants of an 'imagined community'. As will be discussed in the conceptual background chapter, 'imagined communities' is a term originally coined by Anderson (1983) to explain how nations will never know or even meet their fellow members but in their minds they will all live in this image of community. When applied to the context of language learning, Pavlenko and Norton (2007) argue that when individuals learn a language, they start to imagine who they might be and what kind of community they will become a part of after they learn the language. This concept of imagined community and identity, they argue, might have a major influence on the realities of the learner and therefore affect their investment in the language learning process. The interviews in the pilot study have also shown that the students were imagining themselves as future multicultural company owners, ambassadors, managers and as professionals who will be seeking job opportunities abroad. We do not know how the imagined identities of these learners are dealt with in the classrooms. According to Norton (2001), the

teachers should also have an understanding of the construct of imagined communities

and identities in language learning because this will allow them to learn more about

their students' affiliations with such communities and their influences on their

learning experiences.

All of the above-mentioned concepts are related to learner identity

construction and negotiation processes. Heller (1987, as cited in Norton, 1995)

argues that SLA theory needs to include the language learner as

> " having a complex social identity that must be understood with
> reference to larger, and frequently inequitable social structures which are
> reproduced in day-to-day social interaction….It is through language that a
> person negotiates a sense of self within and across different sites at different
> points in time, and it is through language that a person gains access to-or is
> denied access to-powerful social networks that give learners the opportunity to
> speak" (p. 13).

Norton (2013) also states that learners should not be classified in dichotomous

terms, e.g., motivated or unmotivated, introverted or extroverted, inhibited or

uninhibited. We should not forget that these classifications are usually socially

constructed during unequal power relations, changing through time and space and

coexisting in the individual in contradictory ways. At the same time, the role of other

identity categories in language learning have also attracted attention in recent times.

Norton and Toohey (2011) explain that the body of research on identity not only

examines the interconnected and multiple dimensions of the identity of learners but

also tries to look into the relations between concepts like race, nationality, gender,

social class and ethnicity and language learning. They add that these concepts are not

to be perceived as 'variables' but seen as a series of social and historical

relationships created through specific contexts and situations.

In light of these observations, I aim to study the notion of identity among beginner English language learners at a private university with an emphasis on investment, imagined identities and communities, and agency.

1.3   Purpose of the study

Research on L2/foreign language learner identity in settings where English is learnt at institutions and not the native language is scarce as the following sections will show. There is a shortage of empirical studies, which results in a lack of generalizations to be made about identity constructions in the EFL context (Vasilopoulos, 2015). Block (2010) states that the potential of English learning, the comparative importance of English, and the aims of learning English differ greatly across EFL contexts. Therefore, there is a need for more sociocultural studies conducted in the field. Taking this into consideration, the purpose of this study is to study identity construction among Turkish ELF learners who had to start their university education at the English preparatory school. Using a multiple-case study design, this study investigates the participants' investment, imagined identities and communities, and relevant agency experience during their language learning journey which lasted nearly a year (for some more than a year). Investigating the relationship between their language learning and their multiple identities constructed during their learning trajectories will show shed light on their wants and needs to commit to the learning process and have implications in the field of applied linguistics as well since it gives an in-depth look at the intricate, multiple, non-linear and contradictory nature of language learning in a social context.

1.4   Research questions

Using a poststructuralist approach to identity, this study aims to examine the

following research questions:

    i.   How do beginner EFL learners construct their learner and speaker

        identities during their English learning experiences?

    ii.   How are beginner learners invested in the language learning process?

    iii.   What role do imagined identities and imagined communities play in

        the construction of language learner identity?

1.5   Organization of the thesis

This study is organized into six main chapters. The following chapter 2 consists of

the Literature review where the main theoretical framework of this study is laid down

and relevant studies in the literature are discussed. Chapter 3 continues with the

methodological aspects of this research. In this chapter, I provide a detailed overview

of the theoretical foundation of the research design and state the main data collection

methods and analysis used in this study. In chapter 4, the results of the study from

the collected data are stated based on each participant's accounts. Chapter 5

continues with the discussion of the findings in relation to the literature and the

relevant studies mentioned. In the last chapter, the conclusion, I state the

implications, limitations and suggestions for further research needed in the field.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Theoretical concepts

2.1.1   Introduction

In the following sections, I will discuss the theoretical concepts that encompass this

study. In the introduction, I stated that this thesis investigates the construction and

negotiation of identities during the process of learning English as a foreign language

at a private university in Istanbul. The main purpose is to observe my participants'

language learning experience and study how this affects their language learning

identity. In the following part, I will discuss the theoretical concepts that are

mentioned in this study and the literature related to language learner identity and its

relevance in language teaching and foreign language learning. The first part will deal

with the theoretical concepts and constructs that form the basis of this study: the

epistemological approach, the definition of learner identity in L2, and the

negotiation and construction of identities. Other concepts which also form the basis

of identity studies mentioned in this thesis also need to be clarified: investment,

imagined identities and possible selves, and community of practice. In the second

part, I will give a detailed account of the studies that have been conducted in the field

of identity construction in second and foreign language learning.

2.1.2   Identity from a Post-structuralist Perspective

There have been numerous approaches taken when studying identity. The way

identity is conceptualized in this study is based on the views of social

constructionism and post-structuralism. These approaches are different from the

structuralist and essentialist views on identity. Structural approaches see individuals

and groups as owning identities that are fixed and are defined by common laws of

behavior (Omoniyi & White, 2006). Likewise, essentialist views on identity see it as

something that is "connected to a person's self and singular and stable" (Virkkula &

Nikula, 2010, p. 253). However, it was realized that these approaches were not not

enough to explain situations related to social phenomena and irregularities. It was

seen that the dynamic and fluid aspects of identity were ignored (Jenkins, 2008).

Poststructuralism does not perceive identity as a 'fixed-for-life' characteristic but as

a continuous life-long project where people try to keep a balance for 'ontological

security' in which they try to find answers to basic questions related to everything

about life (Block, 2006, p. 35). He adds:

> This ongoing search for ontological security takes place at the crossroads of
> the past, present and future, as in their day-to-day interactions with their
> environments, individuals are constantly reconciling their current sense of
> self and their accumulated past, with a view to dealing with what awaits them
> in the future. This process is necessarily conflictive in nature: metaphorically,
> it involves a dialectic whereby often-contradictory forces must be
> synthesized. It is not, therefore, about the simple accumulation of experiences
> and knowledge.

Hence, poststructuralism sees identity as a construct that can be "dynamic, social

relational, fragmented, multiple, incoherent, hybridized and even ambiguous"

(Umrani, 2016). At same time, Jenkins (2008) points out that identities are social by

definition because while we identify ourselves or others, we look for meaning and

meaning is always about interaction, ie., "agreement and disagreement, convention

and innovation, communication and negotiation" (p. 17). He adds that usually

identity is perceived as something that just is. However, it should be seen as

something that 'becomes' or individuals might do. Our identities are "always

multidimensional, singular and plural" but never final and fixed (Jenkins, 2008, p.

17). Therefore, in this study, a poststructuralist view of identity was used to have a better understanding of the complex and changing nature of identity construction among beginner English learners in an ELF classroom.

In addition, we also need to understand the social identity theory put forward by Tajwell and Turner (1979) to make sense of the identity construction and negotiation in social settings like classrooms. In their framework, the concept of 'self' is determined by the groups that the person belongs to. According to Turner (1982), an individual's social identity is formed by the group identification employed by the individual as a result of how this individual defines him/herself. In other words, the individual does not have just one self-identification but there are a number of identities and self-concepts that are related to the associated groups (Turner, 1982). In addition, they point out that the actions and practices of the people will be different based on the various social contexts that they feel they belong to.

2.1.3   Learner identity in L2

In her seminal article, Norton Peirce (1995) redefines learner identity by calling out for more comprehensive theories which could combine the language learner and the second language learning setting. She puts forward that language plays a crucial role during the negotiation of the self within and across a number of different contexts through time and space. This self could be related to accepted or denied opportunities of communication and interactions based on powerful social networks (Norton Peirce, 1995). In Norton (2000), a new theory of 'social identity' which combines the learners and their contexts is introduced. There, she states that identity in second language learning should refer to "how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how that

person understands possibilities for the future" (p. 5). This view is also supported by Pavlenko & Lantolf (2000) who state that second language learning does not only consists of learning the grammar, the vocabulary and the sounds of a language but also involves "a struggle of concrete socially constituted and always situated beings to participate in the symbolically mediated lifeworld of another culture" (p. 155). Therefore, we can say that language is not only a linguistic system but also one that involves social experience and identity negotiation. Ige (2010) states that in many ways identity is formed by language; and choices of language, on the other hand, may be linked to identity, which is similar to language in the way that it is personal and social (p. 3047). Hence, language can be seen as the key component in the formation of identities.

In the context of L2 learning, identity keeps on playing an important role since learning another language shows that the learner wants to negotiate new identities and explore new worlds (Kramsch, 2001). According to Norton (1997), when language learners communicate, they are continually organizing and reconstructing a sense of who they are and how they connect with the social world, in addition to exchanging information. Therefore, the situations that second or foreign language learners find themselves in show great variety and are bound to change continually. This also brings us to the understanding that we cannot talk about a fixed and rigid self that learners exhibit during the learning of a new language process. Norton (2000) also supports this in pointing out that when we define language learners, it is not easy to just label them as "motivated or unmotivated, introverted or extroverted, inhibited or uninhibited". However, we need to accept that affective factors are many times constructed in unequal social power relations which change over time and place and potentially exist in the same person

in a contradicting way (Norton, 2000, p. 5). It's worth noting that identity in relation to second language learning has been partially conceptualized as a reflection of the social identity theory by Tajwell and Turner (1979) and the sensitivities of poststructuralist views in terms of power relations and inequalities as well as contextualized language learning with possibilities of future selves. Once again, it should be emphasized that a poststructuralist approach in the case of studying identity in relation to language learning is the best way because it helps us to understand the subtleties of the language learning experience instead of just focusing only on the acquisition of a system of linguistic structures.

2.1.4 Negotiation and construction of L2 identities

Bearing this framework of identity in mind, we can examine the second language learning trajectories of individuals with their past experiences and their investments into the second language both in formal and informal learning settings. On a formal level, they go through learning mechanisms involving learning engagements during their K12 years, and as in our case, in higher education institutions. On an informal level, they might be exposed to learning experiences within their families as well as private learning opportunities in their homes. In both these levels, they experience language learning instances which define and redefine their identities on various levels. Some of the learners might have real interactions in English; others get exposed to English from TV shows, movies, songs, video games, some have the chance to experience all of them while others might not have any opportunity to interact with English at all. Therefore, the English proficiency level that each of these individuals reach in terms of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency and even style depends on their whole experience, which is related to their socio-economic as

well as cultural and academic contexts. In this regard, every individual learner's language learning journey is different in terms of their motivation, experiences, aims, and future aspirations. All of these will contribute to the construction and negotiation of numerous different identities which might change based on moments in time and space. This framework of language learner identity is based on Norton Pierce' (1995) and Block's (2006) works on the concept of identity in second and foreign language learning.

Here, we also have to clarify what we mean with the term 'negotiate'. According to Ting-Toomey (1999, as cited in Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004) "negotiation is viewed as a transactional interaction process, in which individuals attempt to evoke, assert, define, modify, challenge, and/or support their own and others' desired self- images, in particular ethnic identity" (p. 4). However, this concept of identity negotiation is valid for the context of linguistic minority groups. In our context, we draw from 'positioning theory' by Davies and Harré (1990) to be able to examine identity negotiation from discourse and narratives. According to Davies and Harré (1990), positioning "is the discursive process whereby selves are located in conversations as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced story lines" (p. 48). This is possible via 'interactive positioning' where one is positioned based on what an individual says and there is 'reflexive positioning', where the individual positions himself/herself. At this point, Davies and Harré (1990) point out that this positioning does not necessarily have to be intentional. During positioning, agency and choice are vital; however, we should remember that reflective positioning is often challenged by others and people find themselves in a constant battle between the identities that they have chosen themselves and the ones that were appointed differently by others (Pavlenko &

Blackledge, 2004). Hence, in our context, the negotiation of identities can be seen as an interaction between the representation of the self and the interactive positioning while the effort to position and reposition certain people or groups continues. This kind of negotiation may take place during spoken communication where reflective positioning might be confronted instantly or during written interaction where this confrontation to reposition might be momentarily postponed. Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) add that during negotiation we do not necessarily need two or more parties but this can also happen 'within' the person, which will result in differences in self-representation. These negotiations of identities can take place among all kinds of individuals and groups based on what kind of identity options are present. These could be based on ethnicity, nationality, gender, race, social status, religious relations and, as it is the case in our study," linguistic competence and the ability to claim a 'voice' in a second language (p. 22). The site of negotiated identities in this study is one of an educational setting, the university, but also includes sites which continue to be part of the individual's experience such as the home, a cafe or other places in the educational context such as cafeterias, libraries and other social places where learners come together at the campus.

To continue with the theoretical concepts that make up the main elements of second/foreign language learning and identity research, we need to examine the constructs of investment, imagines identities and communities, (Block, 2006, Norton Peirce, 1995; Norton, 1997; Norton, 2000, Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004) as well as situated learning and communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). In the next section, I will be reviewing the theoretical framework related to above mentioned constructs to develop a better understanding of the second/foreing language learner identity.

2.1.5   Investment and identity construction

The construct of *investment* in relation to identity and language learning was introduced by Norton in 1995 to show how the connection between the learner and a second/foreign language is constructed socially and historically (Norton Peirce, 1995). This construct illustrates how committing to language learning is not based on motivation but that learners invest in a language because they understand that a greater range of symbolic and material resources will be gained as a result of learning the language, increasing the advantage of cultural capital and social power (Darvin & Norton, 2017). Norton wanted to show that motivation would not be sufficient to grasp the underlying mechanism of commitment to learning a second or foreign language because notions of motivation assume that the language learner has a fixed, unitary and ahistorical personality. However, the construct of investment manages to catch the dynamic relationship the learner has to the ever-changing social world and perceives the language learner as an individual with a complex history and multiple desires (Norton, 2000). As mentioned before, the advantage of cultural capital and social power as a result of learning a second/foreign language will make them reassess their social identities (Norton & McKinney, 2011). Therefore, there is an essential relationship between investment and identity because when you invest in a second/foreign language, you invest in your own identity (Norton, 2000).

The concept of investment is based on Bourdieu (1991) and Weedon's (1997) works on theories on social transformation and shifts in communities. Bourdieu (1991) states that changes and reproductions in social structure are related to the negotiation of symbolic power represented in diverse types of symbolic capital in the form of economic capital, social capital and cultural capital. So, individuals gain symbolic power by earning more money and buying assets (economic capital), by

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raising their social status and reputation (social capital) and by acquiring new skills

and knowledge in the field of education and technology (cultural capital) (Bourdieu,

1991). Referring to Bourdieu's work, Norton asserts that individuals learn another

language to add to their cultural capital so that it creates a more valuable exchange

rate. The learner's economic and symbolic power as a result of learning a language

was also noted by Kramsch (2013). She also notices that Norton's formulation of

investment has powerful associations to economic relationships. She says that

investment: "accentuates the role of human agency and identity in engaging with the

task at hand, in accumulating economic and symbolic capital, in having stakes in the

endeavor and in persevering in that endeavor"(p. 195). She adds that investment in

the context of SLA has become the equivalent of 'language learning commitment',

which is connected to the choice and desire of the learner.

When we mention the choice and the desire of the learner, we also have to

mention the concept of *agency* in relation to investment. According to Duff (2012),

SLA studies associate agency with investment because we need to understand how

learners put their language resources into their learning based on "cost-benefit

assessment" (p.413). Language learners' agency can take numerous forms, from

passive participation in class to making informed judgments, exercising influence, or

opposing through silence, dropping out, or conforming even when there are social

constraints (Duff, 2012). Based on agency, the second/foreign language learners are

not passive participants in the learning process but they can make purposeful choices

and "play a defining role in shaping the qualities of their learning" (Dewaele, 2009).

Hence, agency is the "socioculturally mediated capacity to act" (Ahearn, 2001, p.

112). This means that learners with agency make decisions about how they interact

with others and take responsibility for the actions in their own lives, which in our

case is learning another language. According to Lantold and Pavlenko (2001), agency is a 'mediated relationship' in which learners are engaged in the social world. It might be the case that individuals are undertaking the same activity but in a sociocultural sense they are not pursuing the same act since their relation to the social world might be different. The significance of these involvements is also not the same. The meaning and importance that the learners will attach to these engagements is dependent on the individual's past experiences, learning aims, beliefs and their attachments to the social world which they are a part of. According to Lantolf and Pavlenko (2001), the significance that the learners will associate with their learning engagement will eventually shape the "individual's orientation to learn or not" (p. 148). After exercising agency to create opportunities to learn in relation to the investment a learner has in learning the language, the individual might find meaning in engaging in imagined identities and imagined communities, which is the topic of the next section.

2.1.6   Imagined identities and communities

In EFL (English as a foreign language) settings, it is a fact that the learners have very little opportunities to become part of experiences where English is used as a device for communication. Their opportunities to get English exposure is also limited. Learners report engagement to English content in the form of Tv series, movies, games or music. The popularity of movie and Tv streaming sites like Netflix and game-based online platforms like Twitch have helped create 'communities' where 'invested' learners can seek experiences related to using and hearing English content. All of these attempts could be contributing to the construction of imagined identities as well as communities. By witnessing the use of English in various forms and

settings, it is possible that learners see possibility for investment and as a result the

formation of desires and hopes in using the language. Here, it is possible for the ones

who have not much exposure to the target community to create an imagination of

identities that will help them to engage in those created communities (Kanno &

Norton, 2003)

Originally formulated by Anderson (1983), the phrase 'imagined

communities' suggest that nations are imagined communities since " the members of

even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them,

or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion"

(p. 6). Therefore, we can experience a sense of community with others through

imagined attachment even if we have not met them or are physically together with

them. Bonny Norton was interested in this concept of imagined communities and

applied it to second language acquisition (SLA) theory to explain how learners could

invest in learning a language through imagining their identities to be part of possible

future communities of practice. Imagination in the context of learning is a very

powerful concept because it "is a process of relating ourselves to the world beyond

the community of practice in which we are engaged and seeing our experience as

located in the broader context and as reflective of the broader connections" (Tsui,

2007, p. 660). According to Wenger (1998), imagination means creating self-images

and images of the world that do not involve real engagement. Therefore, to

understand the complex relationship between second language learning, investment

and identity, we need to examine the notion of imagined communities and identities.

Further developed by Kanno and Norton (2003), they define imagined communities

as "groups of people, not immediately tangible and accessible, with whom we

connect through the power of the imagination" (p. 241). Here we can see how

imagined communities might provide a ground for a learner's future and their connection to their learner identities. Norton and Toohey (2011) state that for learners, the community of the target language does not only exist in the reformation of past experiences and relationships but also in the imagination where more possibilities for future identity options can exist. The construction of an imagined identity within an imagined community can also have an effect on the learner's investment in the learning of the target language. Kanno and Norton (2003, p. 248) assert that a formulation of imagined identities helps us to better understand learning on both temporal and spatial dimensions. When we look at imagined identities from a temporal dimension, it can help to connect learners' future visions to their current activities and identities. In other words, what has not occured yet in the future can serve as a rationale and inspiration for what learners do now. From a spatial point of view, we can look at the relationship between national ideologies and individual learners' identities on the one hand, and on the other, we can look at the impact of globalization and transnationalism on language acquisition and identity creation. Hence, according to Pavlenko and Norton (2007), the formation of real and imagined communities for second/foreign language learners is seen to be critical in the language learning process because imagining and reimagining various memberships can profoundly affect the learners' agency, motivation, investment and resistance.

In this regard, we should also mention the notion of 'possible selves' in relation to the construction of imagined identities. Introduced by Markus and Nurius (1986), the concept of possible selves is related to what learners think about their future selves and how this will turn out after they have achieved a specific goal; for example, learning a foreign language. Even though possible selves are based on future projections, they may be based on present and past experiences as well as

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multiple representations of the self. It can happen that possible selves are positive "the successful self the creative self, the rich self, the thin self, or the loved and admired self" and also negative: "the alone self, the depressed self, the incompetent self, the alcoholic self, the unemployed self or the bag lady self" (Markus & Nurius, 1986, p. 954). Therefore, we may assume that these 'selves' are also not rigid and fixed but have the potential to change based on conditions and discourses. As Block (2006) noted "identity is a process as opposed to an essentialized fixed product".

As can be seen, the concept of possible selves and that of imagined identities and communities are interrelated and connected within the scope of learner identity and investment. By using the power of imagination, we connect to groups of people (communities) who are not physically close and easily available. However, in our daily lives, we come in touch with people who we can see and feel physically. These might consist of "neighborhood communities, our workplaces, our educational institutions and our religious groups" (Norton, 2013, p. 8). On the other hand, Wenger (1998) states that we are not only linked to communities of practice through immediate interaction; but also through the imagination of individuals. These kinds of imagined links help construct imagined communities of practice which are not confined in time and space. Hence, communities of practice are not only a matter of present affiliations but also future projections and associations. This brings us to the construct of communities of practice and situated learning theory which entail the concept of legitimate peripheral participation. These concepts will help us understand other aspects related to L2 learner identity construction and its realization in the language learning classroom.

2.1.7   Community of practice

In this section, I will define Community of Practice (CoP) (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger,1998) and its relevance in this study. Learning, according to Wenger (1998), is a contextual process with four components: practice, meaning, community, and identity. Learning in CoP is viewed as a process that occurs while we participate in a community of practice in which our existence and activities have meaning. Wenger (1998) proposes a social theory of learning where he underlines four premises that are part of the nature of learning; the fact that we are all beings of social nature, that knowledge is a thing of competence related to precious enterprises, that knowing is participation in the search for those enterprises, and meaning, which is the experience of the world in a meaningful way. Therefore, participation here does not only refer "to local events of engagement in certain activities with certain people, but to a more encompassing process of being active participants in the practices of social communities and constructing identities in relation to these communities" (p. 4).

We are all parts of communities of practice and they change over time. They might be our families, at our workplaces, and in schools. Students at schools are also involved in a variety of communities. In the classrooms, in the cafeterias, in the social clubs, in their dormitories and even on the resting places on campus grounds. Apart from the academic classroom instructions, learning, according to Wegner (1998), that is most transformative takes place in the memberships of these communities of practice.

Practice

Wenger (1998) claims that the concept of practices implies doing which is not just doing in itself but doing in a social and historical context. This context

provides structure and meaning, therefore, practice is social practice. These practices might be both explicit and tacit. It can include:

> …the language, tools, documents, images, symbols, well-defined roles, specified criteria, codified procedures, reg- ulations, and contracts that various practices make explicit for a vari- ety of purposes. …
> all the implicit relations, tacit con- ventions, subtle cues, untold rules of thumb, recognizable intuitions, specific perceptions, well-tuned sensitivities, embodied understand- ings, underlying assumptions, and shared world views…
>
> (Wenger, 1998, p. 47)

Most of the above might not be openly said; however, they are signs of membership of communities of practice.

Meaning

According to Wenger (1998), meaning is situated in a process that he defines as the negotiation of meaning, where meaning is embedded in how we experience practice in everyday life. He states that living is a continuous process of negotiation of meaning where we reproduce impressions and experiences even though everything that we talk about might be a reference to something we have done or said in the past. We "negotiate anew - the histories of meanings of which they are part" (p. 53). We are constantly involved in meaning whether we are speaking, contemplating, or trying to solve problems. We are negotiating meaning even in situations that seem routine but we become more interested in these when we care about the situation or when it is more challenging. Wenger (1998) points out that "Human engagement in the world is first and foremost a process of negotiating meaning" (p. 53). The dynamics of negotiation of meaning are interwoven with two concepts: participation and reification. Participation, in this context, means the personal and social experience of the world related to being a member of social communities and the active participation in social endeavors. Reification, however, is

to treat something abstract as something material to make it easier to understand. Wegner (1998) uses this term to "refer to the process of giving form to our experience by producing objects that congeal this experience into "thingness."" (p. 58). This "thing" then turns into a subject of something that can be used to negotiate meaning like a regulation that was written down to regulate certain actions so that we can know what to do. Participation and reification become part of the duality of meaning. To illustrate this, Wenger (1998) gives language as an example. Because words are the material shape of human meaning, they can be considered a form of reification. On the other hand, during face-to-face communication, speech seems to be very momentary; therefore, words have an effect on negotiation of meaning through participation. As a result, "words can take advantage of shared participation among interlocutors to create shortcuts to communication" (p. 62).

Community

In Wenger's (1998) CoP, 'community is not a geographically constricted social group such as a neighborhood because a neighborhood might not necessarily be a community of practice. He associates community and practice by introducing three dimensions which connect practice to the coherent source of community: 1) mutual engagement, 2) joint enterprise, 3) shared repertoire. Practice cannot exist on its own and relies on people who are engaged in actions that are meaningful when they are negotiated. These relations of mutual agreement make it possible for people to do whatever they do in a CoP. A joint enterprise keeps the CoP together because it is an outcome of 'the collective process of negotiation defined by the participants in the process of pursuing it' (p. 77). Lastly, resources are produced in the process of negotiating meaning and a shared repertoire is created in the form of artifacts. Here, we can give a language learning classroom as an example for a community of

practice. Students in a class come together for a certain amount of time and engage in classroom activities that are initiated by the teacher (mutual engagement) who is generally in control of this continuous interaction and strives to maintain this engagement for a specific amount of time (joint enterprise). During the language teaching and learning process, this joint enterprise creates artifacts in the form of books, notes, routine activities, and memories in this community of practice (shared repertoire).

Identity

According to Wenger (1998), practice and identity are deeply connected. To engage in a practice, we need to form a community whose members will interact with each other and therefore accept one another as participants. Hence, in this context, practice involves becoming a person by knowing how to negotiate meaning. This means that our practices are related to the question of how to be a person. In this context, the process of forming a community of practice is at the same time the negotiation of identities. Wenger (1998) points out that there are parallels between practice and identity and that this relationship will result in certain characterizations. The first one is identity as a *negotiated experience* where we understand ourselves through the experience of participation and how we connect these with concrete reality. The second one is our *membership in a community* where we understand ourselves based on what we know and what we don't. The third one is identity as a trajectory to learning where we understand ourselves by our past activities and the future ones to come. The fourth one is identity as the *nexus of multi-memberships* which means the way we understand ourselves by fitting numerous memberships into a singular identity. The last one is identity as the link between *the local and global*,

where we understand ourselves by interacting with local ways of belonging to more general associated groups and by exhibiting broader styles and discourses.

Legitimate_peripheral_participation

In Communities of Practice (CoP), Lave and Wanger (1991) refer to legitimate peripheral participation to explain the process of making and negotiating meaning among novice or newcomers when they join a community for the purpose of a common pursuit. According to Wenger (1998), for actual participation to become possible, peripherality and legitimacy are required as two types of modification. Peripherality ensures newcomers with an "approximation of full participation that gives exposure to actual practice" providing fewer situations of error and risk while "gaining access to sources for understanding through growing involvement" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 37). Legitimacy, on the other hand, makes a newcomer become a competent member of the community by being recognized. Therefore, legitimate peripheral participation is the adaptation process of a newcomer to become a full participant in a community of practice by interacting with more experienced members in the community.

As individuals take part in communities, these experiences create trajectories. These trajectories are called peripherality and marginality, where peripherality allows for participation and results in learning opportunities for newcomers. However, marginality does not provide participation and does not result in learning opportunities for newcomers. When individuals become part of a community of practice, they position themselves accordingly and negotiate meaning by choosing either participation or non-participation. Depending on the peripherality and marginality, individuals in a community of practice are offered learning opportunities based on the social forces or power relations in that community.

Because we live in a social context, it is possible that we belong to various communities of practice which can be new, old, central or peripheral. As a result of this multitude participation, identities are not constructed in a linear fashion; therefore they are seen as a 'nexus of multimembership' (Wenger, 1998, p. 159). Hence, our identity consists of one as well as many identities in a nexus. When individuals participate in a new community of practice, their identities need to be organized and harmonized. This is a process that might create conflict and tensions which might or might not be resolved.

To sum up, at the heart of the concept of Communities of Practice (CoP) lies the construction of identities to foster learning (Lave and Wenger 1991). They add that " learning involves "not only a relation to specific activities, but also a relation to social communities – it implies becoming a full participant, a member, a person" (p. 53). The negotiation and renegotiation of identities through participation in a community help us ensure membership of that specific community of practice.

2.1.8   The thickening of identities

Borrowed by Holland and Lave (2001), the act of "thickening" according to Wortham (2004) means that learners' identities 'thicken' through a period of time "as various people, including the student herself, position her in mostly convergent ways across many classroom events" (p. 169). The thickening of identities is thus dependent on resources drawn from many timescales such as sociohistorical categories of identities and expectation from classroom behavior to classroom contextual models of identity constructed as a result of interaction between teacher and students as well as students and students.

The notion of 'timescales' by Wortham (2004) was borrowed from Lemke (2000). Wortham (2006) states that a number of processes use resources from different timescales when they contribute to the multiple situations of social identity. Lemke (2000) describes that a person's action is situated within numerous time intervals spanning milliseconds to years. In these timescales, learners take part in ecosocial processes and assume their own roles. Wortham (2004) states that timescales are "the spatiotemporal envelope within which a process happens" (p. 166). Later, this construct was operationalized to be used in the classroom context in relation to the learners' construction of identities during their learning experiences. Wortham (2004) identified four major timescales a) sociohistorical timescales, which are categories that span over years, decade or even centuries and have an effect on the learners identity, b) ontogenetic timescales, which are directly connected to the learners' own experience as a result of sociohistorically situated events, c) the mesolevel timescale, where the learners' engagements in the classroom during the period of weeks, months, and years are observed, abd d) microgenetic timescales are similar to microethnographic analyses in that they are found and constructed in smaller time frames.

2.1.9   Native-speakerism and learner identity

The first exhibition of a foreign or second language for learners is when they have to speak and pronounce words. Here, accent is most probably the first indicator of speaking another language that learners attend to. Therefore, pronouncing words correctly and having a 'proper' accent is a measure learners take into consideration when evaluating their own language proficiency. There are numerous accounts of how nonative speakers (NNSs), these can be L2 learners or even teachers, compare

their accentedness to native speakers (NSs). Accent and pronunciation are linked to identity in that they can display one's ethnic affiliation (Gatbonton et al., 2005) and considered as significant as biological aspects like age and the beginning of learning (Levis, 2005).

The comparison that NNSs make with NSs is related to the ideology of native-speakerism which basically means that only NSs have the right to claim the language and this results in seeing NNSs as 'deficient' (Holliday, 2005; 2009; see also Widdowson, 1994 for a discussion on the ownership of English). Related to this line of thought, learners of English are perceived as individuals who have problems in understanding the language and therefore need to apply certain study strategies to improve their language learning studies (Kamal, 2015, p. 124). Montgomery and McDowell (as cited in Kamal, 2015) state that this situation is related to the belief that these individuals cannot possess the characteristics to study effectively like their 'Western' peers. Exposed to these ideologies, L2 learners are constantly positioned as 'non-native' learners without having the chance to reach a 'native speaker' status (Kamal, 2015).

Holliday (2015) mentions 'cultural disbelief' as being the heart of native-speakerism because the terms 'native' and 'non-native speaker' are accepted as being cultural. He adds that these terms are constructed terms because they cannot be seen in technical linguistics or even on a nationality basis but are categories that were professionally created with taking skin color into consideration. Holliday (2015) even calls this "native-speakerist cultural disbelief" 'neo-racist" because it is racism "hidden by supposedly neutral and innocent talk of cultural difference" (p. 13). Moreover, Jenkins (1998) states that the notion of deviating from NS norms being a mistake is a misconception.

There has been a body of research that tackled attitudes toward NNS and NS accents and pronunciation. Most of these studies suggest that L2 learners have positive attitudes towards NS accents and negative ones towards NNS accents. McCrocklin and Link (2016) studied the link between identity and accent with 78 ESL university students using a likert-scale questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. They found that the learners requested to learn a native accent stating that they perceived a native accent to be beneficial and connected to positive emotions. In another study, Sung (2014; 2016) investigated the perceptions of Chinese and English bilingual speakers towards accent and identity. The data was collected from 78 university students in Hong Kong using in-depth interviews. He found that some participants favored a local accent not because of identity concerns but because of pragmatic reasons while others preferred a native-like accent because they wanted to exhibit a positive identity or image of English bilingual speakers. Kaur and Raman (2014) studied how NNSs of English perceived NS accents from an English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) perspective. Data was collected via a questionnaire administered to 72 senior public university students between ages 22-25. They found that NS English accents were perceived to be "more correct, acceptable, pleasant and familiar than the NNS English accents" (Kaur & Raman, 2014, p. 256). Scales et al (2006) investigated the accent perceptions of 37 English learners and 10 U.S. undergraduate students via a listening task and a survey. They found that the majority of the learners (62%) wanted to acquire a native English accent; however, they could not distinguish their desired accents in the listening task. The researchers indicated that there was a discrepancy between the learners' desires and their actual achievements. In a study in the Iranina context, Sa'd (2018) studied 51 Iranian EFL learners' perception of NNS and NS accents using questionnaires and interviews. He

found that they were reluctant to reveal their L1 identity via their L1 non-native accented speech. In addition, the participants stated that they had positive attitudes towards NS accents and perceived NNS accents negatively. "The participants' negative evaluations of NNSs' accents of English are evidence of the dominance of Inner Circle speakers' norms among the Expanding Circle speakers" (Sa'd, 2018, p. 1). Not only learners, but also teachers have serious issues about perceiving themselves as legitimate users of English (Jenkins, 2005). The reasons for the negative attitudes towards NNS accents were also studied. In a study by Baugh (2000, as cited in Sa'd, 2018), there were accounts of "mockery, racism, ridicule, and discrimination" against speakers with non-native accents because of their "funny accents".

2.2   Review of studies

Most seminal studies by pioneers in the field like Norton have been conducted with immigrants living in host countries where they are surrounded by the target language and culture. However, there are fewer studies which have focused on the identity constructions of English language learners in their home countries where English as a foreign language (EFL). The present study is situated in such an ELF setting. The main focus of this study is to observe the identity construction of tertiary level students who started their language learning journey at an English preparatory school of a private university in Istanbul, Turkey. Therefore, the review of literature in this section will mainly focus on studies that have been conducted in similar settings. The first section will give a brief outlook on the various approaches/concepts used in identity research. Later, I will briefly preview seminal studies in the field followed by studies in EFL contexts and studies conducted with learners in Turkey.

2.2.1 Approaches to L2 identity research

Studies on identity in the last two decades show that there has been a transition from how language learners have been seen as individuals who acquire the language as a fixed system as opposed to members of social and historical communities who have been using language as a dynamic tool (Norton & Toohey, 2011). These studies show that identity research has been mainly approached from three different perspectives. : a) socio-psychological, b) socio-constructivist and c) poststructural. The socio-psychological approach perceives identity as a fairly fixed construct where members are part of a monolingual culture and do not change, identity is based on binary codes and all constructs are bound to move linearly in one direction (Pavlenko, 2002). However, this approach has been criticized because the assumptions made by the socio-psychological paradigm do not fit with the actual observations about identity construction in real life contexts (Block, 2010). On the other hand, the second approach, social-constructivism, sees language as 'constructing' reality and meaning emerges through relations (Carter, 2013) and therefore, identity is situated as a concept that emerges from interaction. This development of identity traits is context-dependent and leads to identity being under continuous construction and reconstruction making it a dynamic social product. This leads us to the third approach, which is the most current one used in identity studies: poststructuralism. Accepted as a post-Saussurean movement, post-structuralism does not see language as a part of a homogenous community but as linguistic practices inside a community which involve sites of struggle in heterogeneous places which can be defined by clashing claims to truth and power (Weedon, 1997). According to Block (2010), "poststructuralism is about

moving beyond the search for such 'universal and invariant laws of humanity' to more nuanced, multilevelled and ultimately, complicated framings of the world around us" (p. 13). Language, on the other hand, is seen as "a neutral medium of communication, but is understood with reference to its social meaning, in a frequently inequitable world" (Norton, 2010, p. 350). Therefore, language in the poststructuralist sense is situated in discourse where identity is constantly reflected. Therefore, in the studies that will be reviewed in the following sections, a poststructuralist paradigm was used to observe and examine the construction of identities in various different contexts and settings.

2.2.2   Identity studies in immigrant contexts

First of all, we need to visit Norton Peirce' seminal study from 1995 where she argued that SLA theories need to reconceptualize language learners' connection to the social world with a theory of social identity which combines the learner and the learning context. To achieve this, Norton Peirce (1995) studied five immigrant women in Canada to collect data by interviewing them during home visits and using diaries and questionnaires. Her purpose was to understand under what conditions these women created, responded to and resisted opportunities to speak English (p. 9). In this study, she argues that the women used the target language to construct new identities that would help them access new communities. She also introduced the term 'investment' instead of motivation to illustrate the relationship between the learner and the language.

The data that she collected from the five women showed that even though they all had a high motivation to learn English, they remained silent or chose not speak to show resistance to power relations that were not equal. For example, Eva

chose not to speak English after one of the customers at her workplace made a comment about her accent. Mai had problems speaking to her boss. Katarina was not comfortable speaking to professionals like her teacher or the doctor even though she was a professional herself. Martina was not comfortable speaking anymore because she had failed in deafening her family's rights in front of other people. Felicia, on the other hand, was uncomfortable speaking English in front of her fellow countrymates who spoke English fluently. All of this data suggests that a) language learners are not ahistorical and one-dimensional but possess complex and contradictory social identities that exhibit differences through space and time; b) even when learners' affective filter is high, what will make them speak in the target language is how much their invested in it and c) this investment is dependent on the " multiple, changing, and contradictory identities of language learners" (Norton Peirce, 1995, p. 26).

In another seminal longitudinal study, Kinginger (2004) studies Alice, a very motivated French learner, in her language learning journey during her stay in Paris. Alice shows how "to elucidate the importance of personal history, imagination, and desire in the organization of lived experience related to foreign language learning" (p. 219) and how participation in social networks or, on the other hand, marginality in those communities during the negotiation and formation of a meaningful and desired identity is of vital significance. Kinginger's study is a good example for imagined identities and investment in learning a language. Alice had a romantic image of Paris where there is no poverty, where people sit in cafes, drink wine and appreciate art. This image was reflected by the mass media and it contributed to Alice' construction of a positive French speaking identity. Alice wanted to become a French teacher and imagined herself speaking the language and teaching it

flawlessly. However, once Alice arrived in France it became clear that the reality of

living in France and learning French was not matched with the identity that she had

envisioned. She lived in the university's residence hall, her position among the other

students aws unique because she was older. Her first weeks in France were

unproductive and depressing because she was frustrated about the conditions and her

language learning level. However, Alice did not give up and continued to gain access

to the French community and language by visiting local hotels and walking around

the residence hall where students used to come together to eat and drink. In this way,

Alice reconstructed her motivation to learn French and reach her dream of becoming

a fluent French speaker and every day transformed herself to become a different

Alice. She wanted to reach this ideal person who had only existed in her imagination.

Contrary to Norton Peirce (1995), Kinginger (2004) concluded that investment alone

was not enough to explain Alice' transformation from a young woman from a

working- class single-mother family to a "person who she can admire" (p. 240). It

was rather a 'mission' instead of an 'investment' when she became a speaker of

French.

 Another study from the mid-90s by McKay and Wong (1996) shows how

dynamic as well as contradicting multiple identities were negotiated in an immigrant

context in the U.S. To collect their data, they observed four Mandarin-speaking

Chinese immigrant students during their education in the seventh and eighth grades

in California, U.S.A. The data was collected through interviews and observations

lasting for two years. They interpreted the data by taking Norton Peirce' construct of

investment into consideration to explain the students' agencies and positionings in

terms of power in their school and community contexts. At the end of the study,

McKay and Wong (1996) came up with six major findings that support Norton

Peirce but also extended some of her ideas: 1) contrary to the structuralist view of a ahistorical generic learner profile, learners are very complicated social individuals with a number of shifting and sometimes conflicting wants and needs. They are subjected to various different discourses in very complex social settings that include immensely unbalanced power relations, 2) The learners' subjectivities are places of constant contestation. As they are individuals with agency and they have the need to use it, the learners will endure positioning, try to reposition, and arrange discourses and counter-discourses amid power relations, 3) The learners' deviations from the language learning task as a result of their historic needs, wants and negotiations are not simple distractions but should be perceived as the very "fabric of the students' lives" (p. 603) and a determiner of their investment to learn the language, 4) Even though there is a economic aspect to the construct of investment, in this case the main priority was not 'investment enhancement' but the enhancement of agency and identity, 5) Not mentioned in Norton Peirce, whose primary concern was the skill of speaking, it was found that the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing have varying degrees of value for the learner depending on their identities and their social and academic needs, 6) Different coping strategies seems to be related to the overall outlook of the students' identities and the type and power of their investments in learning the language.

There are also studies conducted among adult learners as the one by Skilton-Sylvester (2002). This study also challenges traditional views of adult learner motivation since they do not focus on the complicated concepts that are related to the adults' identities, social settings, classrooms and investment in learning the target language. Skilton-Sylvester (2002) conducted an ethnographic study where she observed four Cambodian women who had joined two ESL programs in the U.S.A.

The data was collected as a result of observations in the classrooms, interviews with the participants and their classmates, tutoring sessions and informal discussions. She found that changes in the learner's identities affect the learners' claims to the 'right to speak' outside of the classroom (as Norton Peirce had suggested) but also inside the classroom to claim a right to education to support their language learning. In this regard, the traditional separation of the classroom and the real world is challenged here. "Understanding and addressing the long-term participation and investment of adult ESL learners in learning English requires seeing the classroom as a real place where the multiple selves of learners are central to teaching, learning, and program development." (Skilton-Sylvester, 2002, p. 22). Another finding is that even though Norton Peirce was against the distinction of social and cultural identity, the main source of investment for these four Cambodian women was the common cultural experience as Cambodians with their shared language, history and experiences. They situated themselves as Cambodian women in Philadelphia.

Continuing with adult learners, the next study is a good example for the case of investing in foreign language writing. Haneda (2006) studied two Canadian university students' engagement in Japanese writing in an advanced Japanese literacy course. The data was collected via a number of interviews and questionnaires. Using the construct of community of practice, identity and investment, Haneda (2006) argues how a) even writing in a foreign language is related to the individual's past experiences with the target language, the shifting identities, and agencies, b) the students' actions in past and future communities of practice are related to their differential ways of task engagements in their short-term classroom communities. The accounts of the two participants in this study revealed that their perception of selves and construction of social identity was related to their investment in the

foreign language. Their investment in the in-class activities exhibited variations depending on their imagined identities and communities with past, present and future possibilities.

All of these studies show how the relationship between learning and the language as well as the social contexts are intertwined with identity construction and negotiation in settings where English is the dominant language. However, since the present study is situated in a setting where English is not a second but a foreign language, the following studies will show how identity construction takes place in those settings.

2.2.3 Identity studies in EFL contexts

In the Chinese context, Gu (2010), for example, conducted a study among Chinese college students to investigate identities constructed discursively during their English learning experiences. She described the discursive strategies that the participants applied to oppose and differentiate while constructing their identities during their relationship with the learning community, the social environment and an imagined global community. Four third-year university students took part in the study and were interviewed, wrote diaries every week, and their online exchanges and emails were examined to observe the construction of identities. The findings were categorized under three major themes: a) identity in a learning community b) identity in local social discourse and c) identity on the global scale. First of all, Gu (2010) states that all participants exhibited an 'establishment of an opposition" during their construction of an L2 learner identity. At the level of the learning community, they seemed to have established a "chain of equivalence" between their

beliefs and the beliefs of others. Here she observes that "a marginal position in a learning community does not appear to inhibit individual learners' learning behaviors." (p. 149). At a socio-cultural level, the "chains of equivalence" represented the participants' negotiations with the accepted and existing social values which were based on their own interpretation of societal behavior. It was observed that on some occasions the learners' identity construction against ruling social values restricted their English learning. Finally, on a global level the participants strongly identified with their Chinese national identity and their historic and cultural roots and perceived their proficiency in English as a way of self-statement and a product to create a good national image.

There are also studies in China in the tertiary context, just like the present study. In this qualitative one-case study, Sung (2017) studied the L2 language learning experience of a 21 years old female undergraduate student at an English medium university in Hong Kong. Just like our study, the author chose to collect the data through a narrative inquiry to understand and interpret his participant's learning experiences through "stories to live by" (Connelly & Clandinin 1999, as cited in Sung, 2017, p. 379). The study took place at a liberal arts university in Hong Kong, where the language of education is mainly English. During the two years of the study, data was collected via interviews, self-reports, observations, questionnaires, emails, observation notes and other documents. Sung (2017) reports that Nora (the participant) had a difficult time joining class discussions when there were native English speaking students present in the phonology classroom. She developed an inferior learner identity who felt less competent than her classmates. This caused her

to participate less in classroom activities and eventually she positioned herself as a "peripheral member of the classroom community" (p. 392). In terms of agency, Nora prepared for class discussions and asked for the professor's advice so that she could perform well in front of her classmates and get recognition. Her participation and identity trajectories also gradually changed over time in a non-linear fashion from peripheral to a more complete involvement in the classroom, where she became more competent and constructed more favorable identities. In addition, the imagined identity of a future English teacher as well as her past and present identities helped her to face difficulties and had an impact on her L2 investment as well as her participation in activities during her learning journey.

The following multiple case study by Teng (2019) was also conducted at a university in China; however, this time with three EFL students (Mary, June and Rick) studying at a three-years diploma program of a non-prestigious university in an under-developed region of China. The data was collected via autobiographical accounts and narrative interviews over the course of four months. The main purpose of the study was to observe learner identity and investment in an EFL learning setting in an institutional context. Mary constructed a positive identity as she understood the advantages of being a member of the English learning community while setting realistic goals and worked towards achieving them. During her English learning process, the following positive learner identities emerged: ""innovator, agent, legitimate English user, active learner, hard-working learner, and imagined postgraduate degree holder" (Teng, 2019, p. 53). On the other hand, June's identity construction during her EFL learning experience was negative since she did not

strive to adapt to the learning community and mainly trusted her past memorization strategies. The identities that June created during her experience were: "excited but anxious attender of remedial class, driller for grammar learning, test- machine, and incompetent English speaker and user" (p. 53). Similarly, Rick negotiated a poor English learner identity because of his negative learning environment. He changed his English-related career plans and adopted a new imagined identity as a businessman. The negative identities that emerged during Rick's experience were found to be related to the following markers: "a learner who lacked confidence", a lover of martial arts fictions, an imagined identity as a fiction writer, a practiced poor English learner, and a passive English learner" (Teng, 2019, p. 53). The overall conclusion of Teng's (2019) study was the complex and interactive process of EFL learners's identity construction and related investment opportunities was linked to four contributing factors: "learners' cognitive awareness/ideology; learners' perceptions of affordances in English learning community; learners' sense of agency; and mismatches between the practiced community and the imagined community" (p. 54) (see Figure 1).
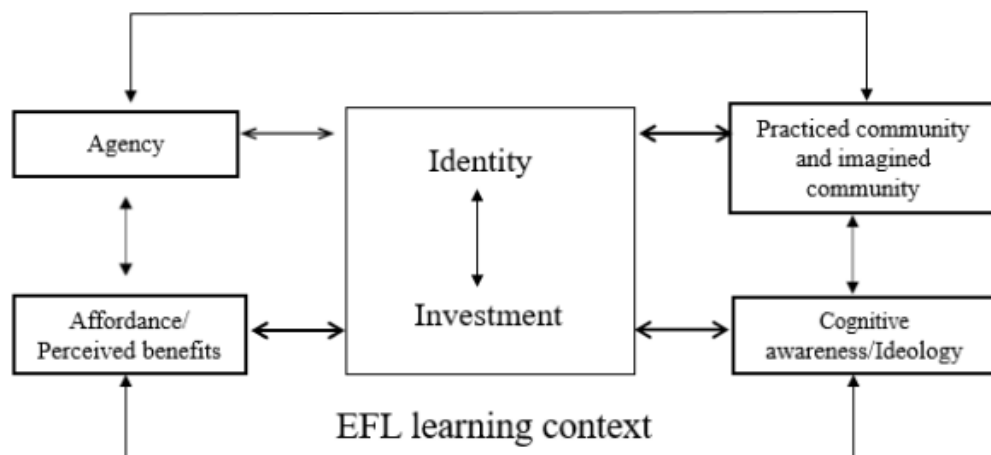
Figure 1. The interrelation of contributing factors to identity and investment.

Taken from Teng, M. F. (2019). Learner identity and learners' investment in EFL learning: A multiple case study. Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research, 7(1)

The following study was conducted by Wu (2017) in Taiwan with three EFL learners to investigate the connection between imagined identity and investment. The participants in this study were two TESOl master's program students (Brie and Leo) and one PhD program student (Alicia). The data was collected through interviews, adn oral as well as written narratives. Wu (2017) found that these high-achieving EFL learners constructed various imagined identities based on social and personal factors, resulting in investment in a variety of learning experiences. There were more restricted and passive imagined identities as learners of English in the school context while other learners constructed more complex imagined identities as English users and professionals, which lead to different investments in formal and informal situations. Apart from the beneficial effects of constructing imagined

identities, Wu (2017) found that some imagined identities could cause some

"resistant acts" that might end up with reduced investments. .

In an EFL Iranian context, Khatib and Rezaei (2012) studied the identity

construction of an Iranian English language learner (Reza). The main questions of

the study were related whether the identity of an Iranian English language learner

was related to his success and failure with regard to his language proficiency,

whether age had an effect on his identity, whether he identified with a Persian or a

Standard English accent and culture exposure during learning English. The data was

collected using in-depth interviews and ethnographic observation methods. Based on

Reza's life story and interviews, Khatib and Rezaei (2012) report that a higher

success and level of proficiency in English has provided Reza with more enthusiasm

about learning English and its culture. The learning process had turned him into a

global person compared to his peers. In relation to his age, the authors argue that

learning a language during adulthood can make learners more critical about

themselves and less open to shifts in identity based on the discourse of power

through the English language and culture. Furthermore, the participant was in favor

of using an American accent instead of a Persian one because a Persian accent has

the potential to reveal is ethnic identity, which he felt was against his will when

speaking and he did not want this side of his identity to be revealed through the use

of English. This was interpreted as the learner's own language and culture being"

minimized" when speaking English. Another result was that Reza did not like the use

of Persian culture during the teaching of English. He found "the Anglo-American

culture very fascinating for language learning." and added that Reza "went through a

reconstruction of identity because he changed from being an individual possessing a mindset of a local Persian to a more global individual." (p. 10).

In a similar study conducted again in the Iranian context, Sa'd (2017) studied 45 male intermediate EFL learners at a private language institution in Iran. The purpose of the study was to examine how the learners understand and define their own identity as well their Iranian identity, and how identity reconstruction through learning English affected them. All of the data were collected via focus-group interviews based on eight questions designed on questioning the issues surrounding identity. Findings revealed that they based their own identities on diverse personal as well as social notions such as their "ethnic origins, geographical locations, religious affiliations, national customs and rituals and values" (Sa'd, 2017, p. 13). In addition, they found that the learners recognized that learning English had affected how they understood their own identity, which they stated had a positive effect on their language learning experience. This also was reflected in their views of the tendency to identify with the target norms and culture. However, there were also learners who resisted this change in their identities as a result of learning the language by claiming that their main purpose of learning English was of an instrumental nature rather than an integrative one. There were also voices stating their views on the "imposition of Western values on an Islamic country". As a result, the authors agree that English plays an important role in the viewing, redefining and reconstructing of identities and add that "discursive practices, power relation, solidarity and otherising" (p. 13) are key elements in the construction of L2 identities.

In a Pakistani context, Umrani (2015) examined language learner identity construction, redefinition and negotiation among English Language learners at a public sector university in Pakistan. The learners' language investments and agencies, and the 'future selves' they envisioned after having acquired English language skills were studied in particular. In addition, the influence of the participants' gender, social class and ethnic linguistic backgrounds on English language learning was also considered. Data in this ethnolinguistic study was collected through classroom observations, interviews and student diaries of primarily Year 1 as well as Year 2,3 and 4 students, and also observations and interviews with non-participants such as the teachers, the director and the dean at the faculty. Umrani (2015) states that there was "an understanding of learners' identities as dynamic and multidimensional and fluid in nature, being continually reconstructed and negotiated over time in different academic, social and cultural contexts leading to a hybridized English Language Learner Identity (ELLI) situated in the 'third space'". He observed that the learners were ready to negotiate their multidimensional identities; however, they accepted the dominance of English whereas the senior students were against not only the learning of English but also English as a language for "linguistic and cultural manipulation". It was also observed that the participants' own experiences, their social class, academic, family and ethnolinguistic background as well as their year at the university program had an effect on the nature and amount of investment, agency and negotiation of identity.

In a Colombian context, Gomez Lobaton (2012) studied different learner identities that students construct as foreign language learners when interacting in an

EFL classroom. By relying on Critical Classroom Discourse Analysis and Grounded Theory, the researcher studied 18 (7 male and 11 female) Journalism students at a private university in Bogota, Colombia during their Basic III English courses which took place five hours a week. Data mainly consisted of video recording transcripts which were compared to secondary instruments like field notes and interviews. All of the data were based on spoken interactions taking place in an EFL classroom. Gomez Lobaton's findings were grouped in three categories: a) students as passive resistants: two identities were constructed at the same time among students, where in the first one the learners used their language skills to answer the teacher's questions and in the second the learners used their mother tongues to find meaning and understanding about the foreign language (English) b) circulating power and struggles for knowledge: there were power struggles about who holds knowledge and students sometimes positioned themselves as "knowledge holders" because they were instructing the teacher about certain grammatical structures and their functions c) students as answerers: assuming a position as 'answerers', student took the identity of 'passive agents of knowledge' when they were able to come up with their own strategies and meanings during classroom tasks. While doing this, they learnt to see themselves as 'capable members of a community engaged in learning'.

In this next study, the context is situated in a North-American context where the participants were learning French. Kearney (2004) studied identity construction among 19 adult language French learners at an American University. The data was made up of field notes, interviews, student work examples, course documents and questionnaires. The main purpose of the study was to identify indicators of identity

formation at the beginning of the language learning process and examine the resources the learners applied for when these identities were realized. She found that from the beginning of the learning process, the learners' identities were shaped and reshaped. The resources that the learners used varied for each individual and were enacted "in a unique way by the individual learner as he or she deals with the activity of 'being an English learner'" (Kearney, 2004, p. 64). One participant positioned herself as a student who is knowledgeable, confident and supportive by using resources from her experience at work and maternalistic feelings. A second participant's classroom identity was shaped by his curiosity and sense of humor; however, felt overwhelmed by factors outside of class and was dissatisfied about his position in the university community. A third participant's resource was her theories about language learning in which she identified herself as a student who is hardworking and persistent. The researcher concludes that these resources that each participant drew upon to construct their identities were not generalizable to other learners in that they were even different among the individuals mentioned above.

Another important research conducted in the field of identity is a recent study by Erduyan (2015). She examined multilingual identity construction of Turkish immigrant high school students in Berlin, Germany. By using ethnographic research methods (classroom observations, audio recordings of interactions, field notes, and interviews) and applying the notion of timescales and chronotopes, she studied the identity performances of 5 students in their German, English and Turkish courses through their natural interactions in the classroom. Even though it was conducted among learners in an immigrant context, the fact that she studied identity

construction in the English classroom as well makes this study a part of the EFL

identity literature. She found that in each timescale (for the notion of timescales see

Wortham, 2006) a different set of identities were constructed. Interactions on a

mesolevel timescale showed students positioning themselves in similar ways because

classes had similar routines. On a sociohistorical timescale, one participant displayed

both the discourse of a German-Turkish immigrant as well as enacted a renewed

sense of Turkish masculinity in class. At the microgenetic timescale, the participants

enacted specific types of talk in the classroom such as small-talk or interactions

based on tasks. In the last timescale, the ontogenetic level, participants' languages in

their linguistic repertoires contributed to their personal trajectories where the

students tried to fit similar sets of resources in each language to their own goals.

2.2.4 Identity studies in the Turkish context

As mentioned before, most of the studies on identity construction among language

learners are situated in settings where the dominant language is English. In the

previous section, I reviewed some of the studies that took place in EFL settings. In

this section, I will review some of the identity studies that have been conducted in

Turkey. Most of the studies that were conducted in relation to language learning and

identity construction Turkey are based on teacher identity construction in Turkey

(see Atay & Ece, 2009; Bayyurt & Ersin, 2012; Tokoz Goktepe & Kunt, 2021a;

Tokoz Goktepe & Kunt, 2021b; Yayli, 2015). However, in the following section I

will be reviewing studies by Aslan (2020), Ekoç (2013) and Ersin (2014) since they

have been conducted in a Turkish EFL context with Turkish EFL learners.

In a multiple-case study, Aslan (2020) investigates three Turkish EFL

students (Melissa, Emre and Ahmet) in an intensive pre-undergraduate English

language program at a university in central Turkey. Her main purpose was to examine the relationship between imagined identities and L2 investments by analyzing the participants' language learning narratives. Furthermore, the learners' imagined identities were also observed to explore how their L2 mediated visions related to one another. The data collection was done by a multitude of methods involving questionnaires, interviews, profile tasks and document reviews. The participants constructed various different imagined identities based on their past and present learning experiences: "(1) imagined instrumental identities as L2 learners/test-takers in the immediate English-learning communities, (2) imagined identities as L2 users in imagined academic and professional communities, and (3) imagined identities as L2 sojourners in imagined global communities" (Aslan, 2020, p. 239). In terms of multiple imagined identities and their L2 investments, Asln (2020) reached three conclusions: 1) the participants' L2 investment degrees in relation to language areas were connected to the various imagined communities to which their future aspirations were based. 2) the participants' strategic investment decisions were inextricably linked to the many identities they developed during their language learning journeys. 3) the participants' choice of different L2 investments is heavily influenced by their personal agency (Aslan, 2020, p. 258).

İn another study, Ekoç (2013) studied emerging identities during social media use and classroom writing of 35 adult EFL students at a foreign language preparatory school of a state university in Turkey. In this four-months study, the data was collected via the learners' classroom writings and the posts and comments made on a group page of a social media site. Findings revealed that in the formation and negotiation of identities, a variety of discursive instruments such as "code-switching, terms of address, hedging and politeness strategies, and multimodal resources" (p.

202) such as emoticons have been proven to be successful. Furthermore, they are developing various learner identities and imagined communities that they can project to the future and perceive themselves as part of a specific group in their lives. Also, in their social media posts, it was observed that the learners tended to exhibit more alternative sides of their identities by distancing themselves from their more formal identities such as students or language learners. Finally, another major finding was that in their writings, the participants perceived their Facebook, Blog or Twitter posts as 'communication' while their in-class writing was just 'writing' with a specific academic outcome even though they were told they would not be graded.

The last study by Ersin (2014) is a case study which investigates the imagined community, investment and identity construction of a Turkish EFL learner (Gamze) at a one-year intensive English language program at a state university in Turkey. Ersin (2014) collected her data via interviews, language journals, video recordings, stimulated recall protocols and field notes. The findings suggest that Gamze's relationship with her experience of learning English was a complex undertaking which involved the expectation of family members and herself, contradictory feelings about English, choosing unrealistic and flawless role-models, the absence of self-awareness and self-knowledge, not being aware of her own potential as a learner, and the impact of a formal classroom context in the construction of identities (Ersin, 2014, p. 94).

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1   Introduction

In this chapter, I describe the research design used in this study. The first section

deals with the approach and method I applied when conducting this study. This will

give you insights on the ontological and epistemological positions I took when

designing my research. Next, I describe the research site giving detailed information

about the university entrance system, the university as well as the English

Preparatory School (EPS) where this study took place and how I gained access.

Later, a summary of the participants that volunteered in this study is provided. After

this section, I elaborate on how I collected my data through observations, audio

recordings, interviews and written accounts of the participants. In the section that

follows, my approach to the analysis of the collected data is described. In the last

section, I talk about ethical issues related to the execution of this research.

3.2   Research approach and method

3.2.1   Research approach

Since this research aims to use a constructivist stance and because of the nature of

the research focus, I chose to approach this study from a qualitative research

methodology. According to Saldaña (2011), qualitative research is a method and an

approach to the study of natural social life where the data collected and analyzed is

mainly non-quantitative in nature and consists of textual material like interviews,

field notes, documents, photographs, and video recordings that document

experiences of oneself or others in certain scenarios. To discover and understand the

nature of identity among language learners, there is a need to reach the "intricate

fabric, many colors, different textures and various blends of materials' (Creswell,

2007, p. 35) which might give us a deeper insight into our participants' lives and

their experiences. In this study, a qualitative research approach was most suitable

because the participant's audio recorded classroom experiences, their own accounts

in their interviews and learning diaries as well as the researcher's observations were

of individual nature and very unique. Hesse-Biber (2017, p. 4) states that in

qualitative research, "a unique grounding position" is taken by researchers to "foster

particular ways of asking questions and providing a point of view onto the social

world". As a result, we will "obtain understanding of a social issue or problem that

privileges subjective and multiple understandings." Here, we should also point out

the importance of subjective meaning that we pursue in the accounts of the

participants of this study:

> Qualitative inquiry seeks to discover and to describe narratively what
> particular people do in their everyday lives and what their actions mean to
> them. It identifies meaning-relevant kinds of things in the world—kinds of
> people, kinds of actions, kinds of beliefs and interests— focusing on
> differences in forms of things that make a difference for meaning. (Erikson
> 2018, p. 36,)

The aim of this study was to investigate beginner English language learners' identity

construction during their learning experience taking place in their own social setting.

This setting consisted of a classroom at a private university in Istanbul. Therefore, in

line with the constructivist paradigm, the understanding that reality is socially

formed and there is no single reality and explanation of one experience (Merriam,

2009) was taken in this study.

3.2.2 Research method: case study

The method applied in this study is an instrumental case study. Leavy (2014) defines a case study as "a study that documents a particular situation or event in detail in a specific sociopolitical context, where the situation or event can be a person, a classroom, an institution, a program or a policy" (p. 455). Moreover, Stake (as cited in Leavy, 2014) distinguishes between two types of case studies: intrinsic, where the study is related to the case itself; and instrumental, where the case is studied to gain insight into a specific issue. According to Fraenkel et al. (2011), in an instrumental case study, the researcher is studying the case as a means to draw conclusions about a larger goal. Here, the larger goal was studying language learners in their natural settings to find out about how their identities were shaped based as a result of their language learning experiences. Since there were five different participants involved in this study and the primary objective was to collect and analyze their identity related experiences, a multiple-case study design was applied. A multiple-case study fits within our qualitative approach to our inquiry because we want to focus on the meaning and understanding of our participants as well as the context, the emerging phenomena, and the processes for which we want to develop explanations (Maxwell, 2008). We rely on these methods because our primary purpose is to gain an in-depth understanding of the complexities and dynamics of identity constructions among Turkish EFL learners.

Creswell (2007) suggests that a case could consist of a bounded system or multiple bounded systems which is examined by the researcher during a period of time using various different sources of information. Yin (2003) adds to this by pointing out that a case study is empirical research investigating an immediate

phenomenon in an authentic context. However, the boundaries of this context are not really precisely defined.

a case study as 'an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context especially when the boundaries and contexts are not clearly evident (p.13).

In this study, the focus of our analysis is multiple participants' (English as a foreign language learners) identity construction during their language learning journey. Hence, our multiple cases are the participants' experiences during their stay at the English Preparatory School. Our cases are instrumental since we want to generalize our findings from the multiple accounts we will collect and analyze. In multiple-case studies, inquiries about the main subject are made to find out about the cases' similarities and differences (Baxter & Jack, 2008). In this way, it was possible to examine the similarities and differences between each case concerning their classroom experiences as well as their identity constructions related to their imagined identities, communities and investments in the foreing language they had to learn.

3.3   Research site

3.3.1   The university entrance system in Turkey

In order to study at university in Turkey, one needs to take the national university entrance exam designed by the Student Measuring, Selection, Placement Center (ÖSYM). The ÖSYM is responsible for the content and the structure of the exam and oversees its execution every year. The exam consists of multiple-choice questions testing their knowledge based on their high-school curriculum. Senior grade high-school students can take this central exam in all cities in Turkey usually in mid or end June every year.

Since 2018, the university entrance exam is called the Higher Education Institutions Exam (YKS) and consists of three sessions. The first session is a Basic Proficiency Exam (TYT) and all applicants are required to take this exam. In this exam, applicants are tested in the following fields: Turkish language, liberal arts, mathematics and science. The second session is the Field Proficiency Test (AYT) aimed at the specific departments of the applicants. The third session is a Foreign Language Exam (YDT) and is aimed at applicants who want to study at language related departments (such as Language teaching, Language and Literature, and Translation departments).

In the weeks following the exam, the ÖYSM announces the exam scores and applicants start choosing the departments and universities they want to study based on the scores they received. At the same time, universities announce their quotas and base scores from last year so that the applicants have an idea about their chances to be accepted by the universities they want to apply to. At the end of this process, students are placed in universities based on high score rankings and the universities' quotas.

The period when candidates need to specify a list of departments and universities is a difficult time because the decision they are making at this point is going to affect their whole future career. There are so many factors they need to take into consideration: the score they received from the placement exams, the score range and quotas needed for each department the universities announce, the candidates' own interests, professions that are in demand, and the wishes of their families. It is hard for the candidates to take all of these factors into consideration and it is highly possible for them to be placed in departments and universities that they originally did not intend to study. Sometimes, candidates choose to apply to

private universities as well to be able to study at the departments of their choice. Private universities in Turkey are different from state universities because their entrance score ranges are lower than the state universities; however, their tuition is considerably higher. This of course poses a financial burden on the families who want their children to study at their preferred departments or have a university degree in case they cannot meet the score requirements of the departments at state universities.

3.3.2   The Istanbul Private University (IPU)[1]

The Istanbul Private University (IPU) is one of the oldest private foundation universities in Turkey. It was founded in 1996 by a private educational foundation that is also the owner of multiple K12 institutions. Before moving to its campus in 2000, various faculties of the university were spread out in different districts of Istanbul. Since then it gives education to more than 23.000 students at its campus in one of the districts on the Anatolian side of Istanbul. It has 13 faculties and 1 vocational school giving undergraduate education. At the same time, there are over 120 postgraduate programs conducted at 4 different graduate schools. IPU also offers more than 400 ERASMUS and 90 exchange programs, which means it accommodates a substantial number of international students. The university is located at a campus in a neighborhood on the Asian side of Istanbul. The campus is built on 125 thousand square meters of land, which makes it the biggest campus of a private university in Turkey.

        Istanbul Private University is an EMI (English Medium Instruction) university, which means that the majority of its programs are offered in English,

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[1] All school and participant names are pseudonyms

apart from a political science and international relations department in French, a business administration program in German and an art and design program in Italian.

IPU is a private university and yearly fees vary depending on the department students want to attend. They start from $8.500 (Faculty of Education) and go up to $27.500 (Faculty of Dentistry and Medicine School). The fee for a semester at the English Preparatory School is $6.000. IPU also offers scholarships (starting from 25% of the total fee to 100% full scholarship). Scholarships are given based on the students' achievement in the university central placement exam (YKS). Only 10% of the general population at this private university are full scholarship students that were placed as a result of the Higher Education Entrance Exam. Another 30% of the students are scholarship students who received 50% and 25% fee deductions depending on their performance in the Entrance Exam. The remaining 60% are full tuition paying students.

3.3.3 The English Preparatory School (EPS)

Since the medium of instruction at the Istanbul Private University is English, all students are required to prove their English proficiency prior to starting their education at their departments. They can do this in two ways: they can take the English proficiency exam at the beginning of the semester or take a TOEFL (IBT) test. Students are exempt from the EPS if they receive a 60 out of 100 from the proficiency test or score 79 from a TOEFL (IBT) test from a test center approved by the university. The ones who do not pass the English proficiency test with a 60 have to study at the EPS for a period depending on their English level, which is determined via a placement test. At the end of the placement test, the students are placed into three groups based on the classification done by the Common European

Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR): Group A (Beginner), Group B1 (Pre-intermediate) and Group B2 (Intermediate). Students placed in Group A have to study for at least three semesters on the condition that they pass each level and move up to the next group (B1 and B2) before they start their undergraduate studies. There are three semesters at the school: Fall, Spring and Summer. Students have to attend the Fall and Spring semesters while the Summer semester is not mandatory. If they fail, they will have to repeat the same level. Students who start at Group B2 will study for one semester and if they pass their tests, they can start their undergraduate studies as irregular students at their departments.

3.3.3.1 Classes

Each group receives different English classes during the semester. Attendance at the EPS is mandatory. Each student can be absent for 20% of the total hours in a semester. There are three hours of classes in the morning and three hours in the afternoon every day except Wednesday, when they have the whole day off. The main objective of the EPS is to prepare students for their English-instructed courses at their departments. Therefore, classes at the EPS are mainly aimed at teaching grammar, writing and reading skills. However, listening and speaking skills are also integrated into the main courses. Each group has two teachers. One teaches the main course and the other the Reading and Writing course in 3-hour sessions in the morning and the afternoon. Each course takes up 12 hours adding up to a total of 24 hours a week. Each semester consists of 14 weeks of instruction apart from the Summer semester which is 7 weeks long.

In the A and B1 level, the writing book is an EPS-authored book that consists of basic beginner writing skills aimed at the skills required to study the succeeding

levels at the school (Table 1). In the B2 level, all reading and writing books were written by the school itself and contain subject-specific topics based on content-based instruction to prepare them for their respective departments. Students at the B2 level are placed in classes based on their departments: science and medicine, and the other one is social and business. The contents of these books consist of texts that are based on the general lexical terminology requirements of the relevant departments.

Table 1. Layout of Courses at the EPS

Group	Title of Courses	Hours	Course Books
A (350 hours)	Grammar and Writing	12	Speakout Elementary (Pearson) EPS A Writing (EPS-authored)
	Grammar and Reading	12	Life Elementary (Heinle Pearson)
B1 (320 hours)	Main Course	12	Speakout Pre-intermediate (Pearson)
	Reading and Writing	12	Reading Explorer 2 (Heinle ELT) Ready to Write 2 (Pearson) EPS B1 Writing (EPS-authored)
B2 (115 hours)	Main Course	12	Speakout Intermediate (Pearson)
	Reading and Writing	12	EPS RD&WR Books (EPS-authored)

3.3.3.2   Classes during the Covid19 pandemic

Data collection for this study started in October 2019 at the beginning of the Fall 2019 semester at the EPS. The Fall 2019 semester was conducted face-to-face for 14 weeks since the pandemic had not started. The EPS started full online instruction through synchronous and asynchronous teaching tools (Zoom, Google Classroom, etc) in mid March 2020 during the Spring 2020 semester. This was in the middle of the B1 level for the participants who have taken part in this study. During online instruction, hours were dropped to 20 hours a week (10 hours in the morning for one course, and 10 hours for the other). This resulted in online instruction for two hours

in the morning and two hours in the evening every day with continuing Wednesday off. However, instruction in the Summer 2020 semester changed to a hybrid system. Depending on the class, students received face-to-face instruction on Monday and Tuesday, had the Wednesday off again, and continued to receive full online instruction via Zoom on Thursday and Friday. For other classes, vice versa was applied. The participants of this study studied the B2 level at the Summer 2020 semester at the EPS.

3.3.3.3   Evaluation and grading system

Evaluation at the EPS is based on formative and summative testing in the form of a participation score, quizzes, a midterm and final exam (see Table 2). In A and B1 level, students had to write three writing tasks and take a Grammar and Reading quiz as well as a midterm exam. In the B2 level, students had to write three writing tasks and perform a 10-minutes speaking presentation about a topic of their choice. In the midterm exam, all levels take a one-session multiple choice exam consisting of three sections: Use of English, Reading and Vocabulary. However, in the final exam, in addition to the one-session multiple choice exam, they take a writing exam in another session.

Table 2. Grading System for Each Level at the EPS

Level	Participation Score (10%)	Quizzes (20%)	Midterm (30%)	Final (40%)
A	Out of 10 given in each class	Writing Tasks (3) + Grammar & Reading Quiz	Use of English, Reading and Vocabulary (MCQ)	Use of English, Reading and Vocabulary (MCQ) + Writing Exam
B1	Out of 10 given in each class	Writing Tasks (3) + Grammar & Reading Quiz	Use of English, Reading and Vocabulary (MCQ)	Use of English, Reading and Vocabulary (MCQ) + Writing Exam
B2	Out of 10 given in each class	Writing Tasks (3) + Speaking Presentation	Use of English, Reading and Vocabulary (MCQ)	Use of English, Reading and Vocabulary (MCQ) + Writing Exam

Participation scores are out of 10 and are given to each student at the end of every morning and afternoon 3-hour session based on their course participation performance during that session. In order to pass each level, students need to get at least 50 out 100 from the final exam and score a minimum of 60 as their GPA. Their GPA is calculated as follows: 30% from the midterm, 20% from in-class studies (quizzes), 10% participation and 40% from the final exam.

3.3.4 Gaining access

I have been teaching at the IPU for over 20 years. I first started teaching at the EPS when I started working at the university. I taught there for 12 years and later I quit and started working as an editor and advisor at the Writing Center and started teaching at the ELT department. I have also worked as an assistant coordinator and educational technologies advisor during my years at the EPS. Therefore, I am very familiar with the system and know most of the teachers. The class and participants that I chose to use in this study were the class and students of a colleague of mine from the Writing Center. Getting the required permission from the school

administration was also easier because they knew me and were my former colleagues. It was also easy to recruit the participants for this study. Participation in the study was voluntary and once I had announced and explained my study to the class, more than 12 students accepted to volunteer (of which five participated until the end of the study).

3.4   Participants

All the participants of this study were beginner A Level students at the English Preparatory School of the IPU. They were all chosen from the same class. Their ages at the beginning of the study were 18-20 years. Four of the participants are female and one male. Nearly all of them have scholarships of varying degrees (see Table 3). In this section, I will introduce each participant in general terms. More information and their detailed vignettes are found in the results section.

Table 3. Summary of Participants

Name	Scholarship	Age	English since age	Registered Departments
Pelin	100%	18	12	Nursing
Seren	75%	18	9	Economics
Seçil	50%	19	7	Interior Design
Ulaş	50%	19	7	Radio, Cinema and TV
Banu	75%	18	8	Political Science

Pelin is a 18-years old student registered at the nursing department. She started at the EPS in the A beginner level and managed to start her undergraduate studies after finishing the B2 level in the Summer 2020 semester. She was born and raised in a city in the most southern area of Turkey at the Mediterranean coast. Pelin was placed in the nursing department with a full scholarship in exchange to an agreement stating that she is going to work at the university's hospital after she graduates. The second participant is Banu. Banu is also 18 years old and was registered at the department of Political Sciences with a 75% scholarship. She was born and raised in Istanbul. Just like the other participants, Banu started her EPS English learning journey at the A level. She passed the A and B1 level at the EPS but failed to finish the B2 level in both the Summer 2020 and Fall 2021 semesters. Eventually, she changed her university to a Turkish-medium school in the Spring 2021 semester. The third participant, Seren, is a 18 years old student registered at the Economics department of the IPU with a 75% scholarship. Seren also started at the A level and finished her English language studies at the EPS in three semesters. She started her undergraduate studies at the department in the Fall 2021 semester. Seren was born in the northwest of Turkey; however, she was raised in a number of different cities in Turkey because her father is a military officer who was assigned different posts around Turkey. Ulaş is the only male participant in this study. He is also 19 years old and was registered to the Radio, Cinema and TV department with a 50% scholarship when he started his language learning studies at the EPS. Ulaş was born and raised in a small city in the province of Çanakkale. He started at the A level in the Fall 2019 semester and after passing the A and B1 level, he did not choose to study the B2 level in the Summer 2020 semester. He wanted to stay at home and study for the proficiency exam during the summer. He did not pass the proficiency

exam at the beginning of the Fall 2021 semester and had to study the B2 level for one semester at the EPS. In the Spring 2021 semester, Ulaş started his undergraduate studies at the department. The last participant is Seçil, who is 19 years old and was registered at the department of Interior Design with a 50% scholarship. Seçil was born and raised in a city in the west/south of Turkey. It was Seçil's second year at the EPS when she repeated her A level in the Fall 2019 semester. Seçil succeeded to finish her English language learning journey after studying at the B2 level in the Summer 2020 semester.

As can be seen from the participant descriptions above, the participants come from different backgrounds based on where they grew up and their family backgrounds. They also have different aspirations and future goals based on the departments they choose to study. This selection of a diverse group has the potential to show how their common aim to learn English as a foreign language in a formal educational context will reveal identity traits throughout their narrative oral and written accounts.

3.5 Data collection

Data collection started in the Fall 2019 semester and continued until Summer 2021. Actual classroom recordings and observations were conducted between September 2019 and March 2020 until the Covid-19 pandemic started and all universities switched to online education. Interviews with the participants started in October 2019 and continued until June 2021.

3.5.1 Interviews

As the main aim of this study was to gain an in-depth understanding of my participants' language learning journey and their construction of learning identities,

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hearing their own narratives about this individual and personal process would have been the most suitable way. Therefore, semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant to learn about each of their past and present language learning stories. According to Pavlenko (2007), "language memoirs, linguistic autobiographies, and learners' journals and diaries" (p. 163) have become popular data collection tools in the field of applied linguistics. All of these form the basis of "personal narratives" which we can use to interpret and understand the participants' experiences. In other words, their identities are constructed via "stories to live by" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999, p.4) suggesting that the learners' stories are a valuable source to understand their experiences and themselves. As was previously mentioned in the theoretical framework, our approach to identity is that it is unstable and multiple as well as formed in diverse settings. Therefore, narratives were considered an effective way to learn about the participants' language learning experience and see how identities were generated during this period.

Serial interviews with each participant were conducted to fully understand their experience and gain a deeper understanding of their identity construction processes as well as their learning journeys. According to Reid (2018), using serial interviews in qualitative studies provide numerous benefits because one has the opportunity to triangulate information by the participants with the information that was given in previous interviews. By repeating similar questions, the interviewer can see whether the interviewees change their responses and if they do, we see in which ways they change. Reid (2018) also points out that interviewees might be confronted with information that contradicts with what was said in previous sessions and

therefore prevent contradictions in the data as well as contribute to in-depth understanding into the subject matter and also increase credibility. Another benefit of conducting repeated interviews was the chance to build rapport with the participants. This allowed me to dive deeper and get additional information about their feelings, their reactions, and thoughts about the experiences during their English learning period.

The Interviews were conducted with each of the participants at predetermined times (usually after their lunch breaks) during their class hours at the school. The first interviews took place at the beginning of the Fall 2019 semester right after they started their studies at the English preparatory program. The interviews took place in my office which is in the same building as the ESP; therefore, it was very easy for the participants to come to my office without spending too much time. All of the interviews were audio-recorded using a mobile phone and uploaded immediately to Google Drive. Some of the interviews were focus interviews with two participants when they were available because they liked the idea of having their classmates with them and it was also time saving for the researcher.

To retain the nature of emergent responses, I asked open-ended and exploring questions based on pre-prepared prompts related to our inquiry. These prompts were aimed at their present/past experience in learning English, their past/present perceptions of English, their investment in learning English and its difficulties, and their feelings/thoughts about their present formal education processes both at school and at home. The participants were encouraged to speak as much as they wanted (See Appendix I for prompts and questions). All of the interviews were conducted in

Turkish since the participants' English level was at a beginner's level and I did not want them to experience language issues during their narrations and replies to my questions. During the pilot study interviews, one participant clearly expressed her fear about having to talk in English because I had not told them that the interviews would be conducted in Turkish. She was very relieved when she was told that they were in Turkish.

3.5.2   Classroom observations

According to Mackey and Gass (2022), conducting observations is beneficial if we want an in-depth understanding of the various types of experiences that are taking place in the second or foreign language classrooms. In our case, it was also a good way to triangulate the collected data with other means as well as provide additional data that would help in answering the research questions of this study. I started the observation in the Fall 2019 semester and continued until the pandemic restrictions began and all instructions switched to online in mid-March during the Spring 2020 semester (see Table 4 for total number and duration of class observations). These observations gave me a chance to become part of the classroom procedure and culture and observe how my participants engaged in their language learning process. At the beginning, I felt that they were a little shy because of the presence of an additional teacher. However, it did not take them a long time to acknowledge my presence and get used to me. The seating formation in the classes was U-shaped and I generally sat at the back corner of the class so that I was not directly located in their line of sight when they were looking at the board or their teacher.

Table 4. Total Number and Duration of Data Collection Tools

Interviewee	Interviews (#/min)	Observations (#/hrs)	Diary Entries (#)
Seren	10/234	29/22	8
Seçil	8/126	31/23	8
Ulaş	9/200	26/20	7
Banu	7/87	31/23	7
Pelin	9/183	32/24	8

Class observations were conducted for 90 minutes each week. They took place in two sessions (2 x 45 minutes); one at the beginning and the other near the end of the week. The first one took place on a Monday morning and the second one on a Thursday morning (between 09.45 – 10.30). All of the observations took place during their Reading and Writing courses. The observations were audio recorded with a mobile phone placed at a central location in the classroom so that it could record all interactions taking place in the room. An additional recording device was used to record certain participants sitting in different parts of the classroom. I took field notes when necessary and noted the times so that I could go back to those moments in the audio-recording later during my analysis.

3.5.3   Student diaries

Participants were asked to write diaries about their learning experience. According to Bailey and Ochsner (1983), a diary study in second language acquisition or learning is the recording of the second language learning experience in a journal told from a first-person perspective. The participants were to be asked to write entries to their diaries every two weeks. They were asked to write about the difficulties and

major learning experiences as well as events in the classroom that had an effect on their learning experiences or anything else they want to share with the researcher related to their classroom contexts. Initially, I had planned to open an online Google Document on Google Drive for each participant assuming that it would be more practical for them to write and for me to access them. However, after a short time, I realized they were not very good at using instructional online tools like Google Documents. After about two weeks, I noticed that they did not use them at all. Therefore, I decided to prepare sheets of printed documents (see Appendix II) with semi-structured prompts that they could use to write their accounts. This turned out to be more effective since they started to write them and turned them in whenever we met in class during observation sessions or at our interviews. All of the prompts were in Turkish and they wrote all of their diaries in Turkish since just like the interviews, I did not want them to encounter language obstacles when writing about their experiences and accounts.

3.6   Data analysis

3.6.1   Transcription and translations

All interviews were transcribed by an independent professional on condition of confidentiality. As mentioned before, all semi-structured interviews with the participants were conducted in Turkish. Student diaries were also in Turkish since I did not want language proficiency to be a barrier for students while they are describing their language learning experiences. Hence, translations were required for the transcriptions of the interviews. These were done by the researcher himself and checked by two other professional EFL/ESL instructors for accuracy. One was an

native Turkish ESL instructor at the University of York, UK living in Glasgow, UK. The other was a native English EFL instructor who has been living in Turkey for more than 20 years.

3.6.2   Approach: thematic analysis

A thematic analysis approach was taken in analyzing the collected data (interview transcripts, observation notes, and student diaries). Thematic analysis is the recognition of patterns within the collected data where the researcher examines the selected data in detail and applies coding and category construction to discover themes relevant to the phenomenon (Bowen, 2009). According to Brown and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is used to identify, analyze and report themes and patterns in qualitative data.

This approach was chosen because it is the most suitable approach for analyzing qualitative research data; especially data that has been collected to study construction/reconstruction of language learner identity. Another reason was that it is a more flexible analytical approach because the researcher does not have to be dependent on a theoretical framework that already exists (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This way, as a researcher, I had the opportunity to familiarize myself with the data creating initial categories which represented patterns, situations, ideas, elements and irregularities that could be observed among the qualitative data. This was a recursive process which was later reviewed and refined to create themes that would later be categorized to form an understanding of the identity construction my participants underwent.

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3.6.3 Coding

After examining all documents collected in the study, the data was coded to create

categories. According to Leavy (2014), coding is a heuristic method of discovery

where individual parts of the data are used for patterning, classifying, and

reorganizing them into developing categories for later analysis. In Saldaña's words

(2009), a code in qualitative research analysis is usually a word or a short phrase that

symbolically ascribes combined, noticeable, essence-capturing, and/or evocative

quality for a piece of language or visual data (as cited in Saldaña, 2011, p.95). As a

result of the culmination of these codes, categories are created and relevant themes

emerge to generate theories (Figure 2).
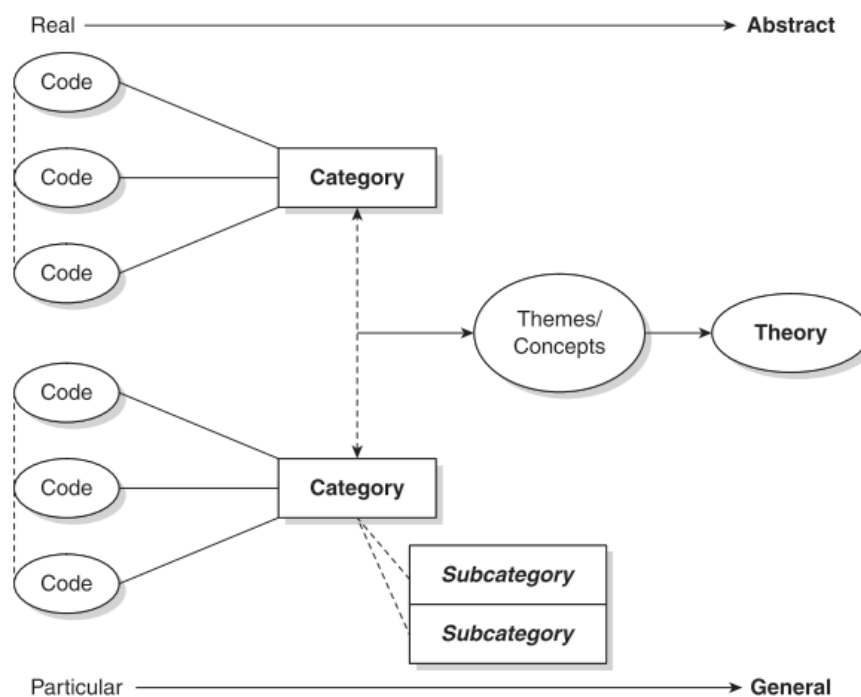
 Figure 2. A streamlined codes-to-theory model for qualitative inquiry by Saldana
(2009)

The six steps given by Braun et al. (2019) were applied for the thematic analysis of the data: 1) familiarization of the data 2) generating codes 3) constructing themes 4) revising themes 5) defining themes and 6) producing the report. In the application of these steps, I approached each case separately and later I compared them as a whole in a cross-analytical way. This is in line with Merriam's (2009) two-stage analysis method. First, the cases are analyzed within them to come up with individual pictures of experiences to help us understand them within their own contexts. Then, the cases are cross-analytically examined to reach a perspective as a whole and retrieve data to compare and contrast the cases.

In the individual case analysis, I started by reading and rereading the interview transcripts to familiarize myself with each participant's context and their individual experiences in these contexts. I also read my observation notes and diary entries of the relevant participant to triangulate data and to contribute to my immersion into the participant's life during their studies at the EPS. For each participant, I wrote notes and memos using the qualitative data analysis program MAXQDA. All data in this study was stored and analyzed using MAXQDA. After devising a list of codes, I searched for organizational themes and patterns that seemed to emerge from my data. Firstly, I coded all of the data for organizational categories, later for substantive categories and lastly for theoretical categories (Maxwell, 2005). The final emerging categories in this step were not used to generate the final theories since they were going to be used in the cross-analysis section of the data analysis. As a final step, extracts related to the theoretical categories were chosen based on the literature and the relevant research questions to paint vivid pictures of each participants' story for this study.

After finishing each participant's separate case, I employed the cross-analysis step to look at the similarities and differences of the emerging themes and categories from the participants' learning accounts. In this step, the main procedure was to look for abstractions (Merriam, 2009) among each of the cases needed to make connections among the participants' L2 learning experiences. I compared the themes and categories that had emerged from the single cases and eventually made theoretical generalizations as well as conclusions related to the research questions and the relevant literature.

3.7   Trustworthiness

In quantitative studies, to ensure that the measures are replicable and accurate, constructs like reliability and validity are used (Saldaña, 2011). However, in qualitative studies like this one, trustworthiness is established through techniques that provide credibility and transferability for the data collected. We need to make sure that the story we present to our readers is convincing and that we "got it right" in terms of the methodology we use (Saldaña, 2011, p. 135). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), credibility is ensured when conceptual interpretation of the original participants' data can be considered 'credible'. Transferability, on the other hand, deals with the questions of whether we can import the conclusions of this study to other areas and how far we can generalize or apply the results of this study to other contexts.

The credibility of this study was provided through triangulation methods. There are four methods of triangulation: 1) triangulation of methods, 2) data triangulation, 3) triangulation of analysts and 4) theoretical triangulation (Patton, 2002). In this study, the triangulation of methods was used by employing different

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data collection methods like semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. Another layer of method triangulation was established by conducting serial interviews to increase the credibility of the participants' narrative accounts. In addition, data triangulation was also established by analyzing transcripts, observation notes and learning diary entries by the participants. Another strategy used was peer-examination (Merriam, 2009). A colleague from the field provided feedback to the data to give me insights about my analysis and provide credibility for my study. As a last strategy, to establish the researcher's position (Merriam, 2009), I explained my beliefs, assumptions and biases related to the data collected in this study.

In terms of making generalizations, we need to say that these in a statistical sense are not possible in qualitative studies. However, there are other ways to suggest generalizations in this kind of research. Lincoln and Guba (1985) introduce the term "transferability" and state that it is up to the applier of the results to make the connection to the sites where implications can be transferred. To do this, the researcher needs to give "sufficient descriptive data" to establish transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 298). To make this possible, I have provided a comprehensive and detailed description of all the settings, participants, constructs, approaches and situations relevant to this study. I have given detailed information about my participants, a rich description of my research context, and an elaborate analysis of my findings. In this way, it might be possible for other investigators (or appliers) to compare and contrast as well as transfer my results and implications from this study to other contexts where it is possible to do this.

3.8 Ethical issues

First of all, prior to starting the research, approval from the institution's human and social research ethics committee was taken (see Appendix #). Afterwards, all participants involved in this study, involving other non-participants in the classes, were informed about the details of the study including privacy matters. All of them agreed to sign the consent form (see Appendix #). These details included information about the data collection procedures (observations, audio-recording, interviews) as well as the benefits of the study to the field of English teaching and learning. They were also told that participation was voluntary and if they wanted, they could withdraw anytime. Regarding anonymity, all of the participants as well as the institutions involved were given pseudonyms to protect their identity and privacy.

3.8.1 Positionality as a researcher

I have worked as an EFL teacher for nearly 30 years, of which 22 were spent at the institution where this study took place. I have also worked as a teacher and a semi-administrative staff at the EPS for 13 years. Therefore, it was important to acknowledge that my experience as an English language teacher might have an effect on how I was approaching my participants' language learning and identity construction journeys during the data collection process. According to Creswell and Miller (2000), researchers, whether they are conducting quantitative or qualitative studies, might affect the way they are interpreting their data because of personal biases. Especially in qualitative research, it is important to state your own views on the matter by reflecting and showing your own beliefs, perspectives and practices (Duff, 2008). I accomplished this by discussing my position and role as a researcher as well as a staff at the same school they were receiving instruction with the

participants. They knew that I was teaching at the same university; however, they were also aware that I had no direct role at the EPS and that it was not possible for me to have any impact on their scores or other academic tests. They also knew that I had previously worked at the EPS and that I was aware of the learning/teaching procedures at the school. I also knew their teachers; however, both at the observations and the interviews, I made it clear that I would not share any information about them with their teachers nor the administration. Even though my office was located in the same building and I had a fair understanding and knowledge of their general learning context, I believe that I managed to position myself as an 'outside' researcher. I realized this in the way they presented themselves in their interviews as well as in their friendly and warm manners in our encounters in non-contextual settings such as the cafeterias or social spaces within the campus. We used to sit for a coffee or tea and chat about their general experience at school and out of school, sometimes talking about their studies and sometimes about general issues or popular events. On the other hand, they continued to call me 'hocam' (*'my teacher'*), which is a very common way to address a teacher in Turkey even if this teacher is not their teacher but a teacher in general.

At the same time, as a researcher in the field of language learning and teaching, I also have to acknowledge that I am aware of the 'English deficit' that my participants were subjected to and I had my own beliefs about the origins and outcomes of it. I had been a part of language teaching and learning processes at the school for a very long time and it has to be said that my observations of both the learners and teachers had inspired my interest in the construction of identities among learners and their effects on the learning process. I used to see the students start the English preparatory program with very high aspirations and motivation. They would

learn to speak English which seemed to be very important for them. However, their aspirations as well as their high energy would fade away slowly after a month and I was very curious about the reasons for this. This seemed to be the case every year.

We cannot deny that when conducting a case study, the acknowledgment of the case as well as the observer in the case will have an effect on the whole case study (Edwards & Talbot, 1994). During my data collection procedures of this study, I took all of these into consideration and acknowledged them fully so that my participants had an understanding of my position and reacted accordingly. It is impossible to be completely objective in social research, however, subjectivity does not mean that one will be biased or unreliable. According to Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006), a common view about qualitative paradigms is that subjectivity provides a certain significance in the research process and in how reality is constructed socially.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.1   Introduction

In the previous sections, I have contextualized the study by presenting relevant

studies from the literature. In addition, I have described how and where I have

collected the data to investigate the construction and negotiation of identities among

EFL beginner learners at a pre-undergraduate program of a private foundation

university in Istanbul, Turkey. My main sources of data consisted of extensive

multiple interviews with the participants, of their diaries and notes based on my

observations and audio-recordings from their classroom.

In this next section, I present my findings in a thematic manner to give a

glimpse of the learners' English learning experience in a timeframe of more than a

year. Each part is devoted to the accounts of each of my participants' life stories,

personal narratives, classroom experiences and sometimes written accounts. For each

participant, the themes were mostly approached from a similar dimension but since

there are multiple facets of the construction of identities, these themes also show

variations among each participant, which helped us to see a more comprehensive

picture of how identity manifests itself in the learning process. The main categories

that were used to organize the findings are listed in Figure 3 below:
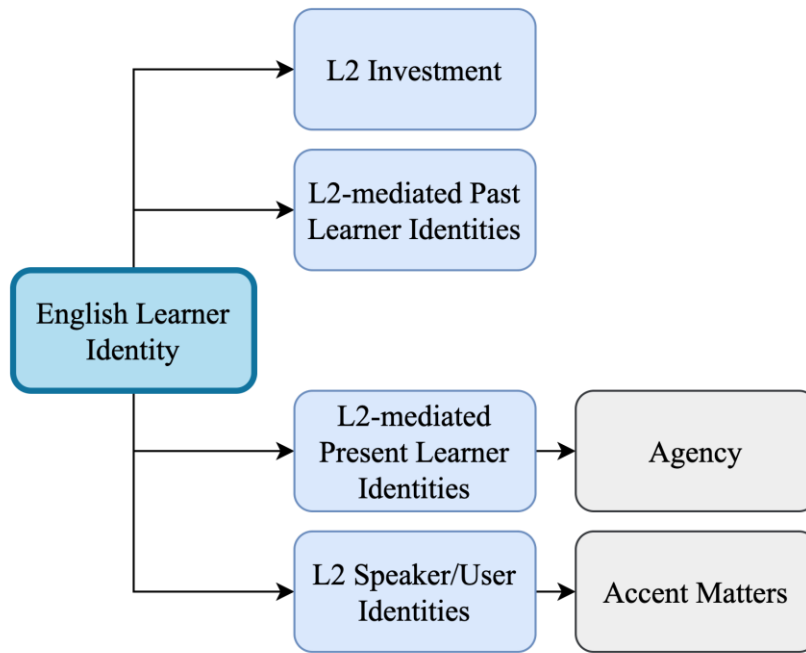
Figure 3. Major learner identity categories used in this study

As was the case, multiple other themes related to the above categories emerged during the categorization of the result and they were organized in a relevant manner based on the main categories. We have to note that the participants of this study are part of many different social spheres and therefore have exhibited a variety of multi-dimensional identities, which are in a contradicting, dynamic, flexible and non-linearly changing nature. Taking these into consideration, I have to add that since this was a qualitative study, the results cannot be generalized because they are not based on statistical data (Lewis, 2014). Therefore, the main purpose during the presentation of the results was to be able to transfer the findings to contexts that are similar in nature and attempt to make generalizations based on these (Shenton, 2004). In qualitative research, meaning is "conferred; interpretations are socially constructed arguments; multiple interpretations are to be expected" (Trent & Cho, 2014, p. 641). All the stories and narratives used here illustrate: "a social process that

constructs meaning through interaction (...) it is an effort to represent in detail the perspectives of participants (...) whereas description produces one truth about the topic of study, storytelling may generate multiple perspectives, interpretations, and analyses by the researcher and participants" (Willis, 2007, p. 295 as cited in Trent & Cho, 2014, p. 646).

4.2 Seren's case

4.2.1 Vignette

Seren is 20 years old and was born in a city in the northwest of Turkey. Seren's father is a military officer and officers in Turkey are assigned different posts in various locations in Turkey, depending on their ranks and positions. After living there for two years, Seren says her family moved to a city in the middle Eastern Anatolia region. From there they moved to another city in the midwest of Turkey, where they lived for 16 years. At the moment, they live in the southern coast of Turkey, again because her father had to take another position there.

Seren started learning English at Grade 4 in primary school. Her mother is a university graduate and works as a primary school teacher. Her father is a Military Academy graduate and continues working as a colonel. Seren's 25-year-old sister graduated from medical school.

Seren studies Economics at the Private Istanbul University on a 75% scholarship. She actually wanted to study industrial engineering because she believes that as an engineer, she would be taken more seriously and to her the title bears some weight. However, since in Turkey, students choose their department and university based on their Central University Placement exam scores, Seren was unable to pursue the engineering path as her scores were not as high as they needed to be. Still, even

though it's not engineering, she is happy with the department because she claims that the curriculum is nearly the same and it keeps her on the path she wants to pursue. Just like the other participants, Seren had to start at the beginner level (A1-2) and finish B1 and B2 levels at the English Preparatory Program before she could start studying at her department.

Seren says that she misses living in Istanbul. When she was there she did not have the opportunity to enjoy the city because of the busy program of the Preparatory School. Later, because of the pandemic and online education, she had to move back to Antalya to her family. Seren is also recording vlogs for her Youtube channel.

4.2.2   Progress at English Preparatory School

Seren finished her English learning studies at the EPS in three semesters starting from the A Level beginner group in the Fall 2019 semester. She continued with the B1 Level in the Spring 2020 term, which switched to online instruction at the end of March 2020 due to the COVID19 pandemic. She graduated from the EPS at the end of the Summer 2020 semester at the B2 Upper-Intermediate level. Her scores were all the passing grade of 50 with her lowest score of 58 in the Spring 2020 midterm and her highest score of 91 in the Summer 2020 final exam (see Table 5).

Table 5. Seren's Progress at EPS

Seren	Fall 2019 A Level	Spring 2020 B1 Level	Summer 2020 B2 Level
Participation (10%)	8	9	8
Quizzes (20%)	78	79	81
Midterm (%30)	81	58	65
Final (40%)	86	80	91
Total	82	74	80
Attendance	44/70 (350/87%)	21/64 (320/93%)	5/23 (115/96%)

Note. Participation out of 10. All exam scores and total out of 100.

Seren's participation scores were also fairly high with all over 8 out of 10. We can also say that she almost attended all of her classes with 87% of attendance in the Spring 2019 semester, which was before the pandemic. She attended more than 90% of her classes during the Spring 2020 and the Summer 2020 semester, which was completely conducted online.

4.2.3 Investment in English

"...Living in Turkey, working in Turkey, these are the things that all young people want, but really, I want to go abroad"

Another present gain that Seren perceives as an investment is that she believes English to be a world language and a language that is used to communicate with her and her sister's friends coming from countries that do not speak English. She repeats this at various times in her interviews and uses expressions like: *dünya dili İngilizce* "English is a world language", *biz sadece İngilizce olarak anlaştık* "We communicated using only English", *ben Rus arkadaşımla İngilizce konuşuyorum* "I speak English with my Russian friend", *herkes ortak bir dil konuşuyor* "everybody

speaks a common language", *tabi ki ortak dünya dili* "of course it's a common world language". We can see that the concept of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) seems to have naturally occurred to her as a powerful social gain that makes her become an international person who can communicate with the whole world. Apart from the social gains English seems to provide, Seren believes that English is needed for her studies at her department as well since the medium of instruction at the university is English. She adds that she needs to learn English because of the nature of her future profession. She studies Economics and wants to go abroad; however, she is aware that she needs English to do this and acknowledges its power:

Extract 1

1	Seren:	Zaten Türkiye'de yaşamak, Türkiye'de çalışmak, hani bunlar bütün gençlerin
2		istediği şeyler ama gerçekten, ben birazcık dışarıya açılmak istiyorum ve
3		annemlerin, yani annemin tarafı çok fazla Amerikada ve Fransa'da yaşayan
4		insanlar var. Onların da bana yardım edebileceğini düşünüyorum yani bir
5		yoldan.

1	Seren:	*Living in Turkey, working in Turkey, these are the things that all young people*
2		*want, but really, I want to go abroad and on my mother's side, there are a lot of*
3		*people who live in America and in France. I think they will be able to help me in*
4		*some ways.*

(Interview, 01/10/2019)

She is aware that living and working in Turkey is important but what matters more is to go abroad (extract 1, line 2) . She also wants to go abroad because she has relatives living in the USA and France and this should make it easier for her to go but she sees English as a main factor to achieve this.

Seren also thinks that speaking English will provide her with a socio-cultural advantage (Figure 4), to become a member of an international community by exchanging information, knowing about different cultures and she believes that speaking another language will help her meet people and will give the opportunity to be at different places where she can socialize and share with them aspects of life. She

adds "t*hat's why I think (English) will be beneficial in exchanging information. All of these are a part of social life"* (Interview, 01/10/2019).
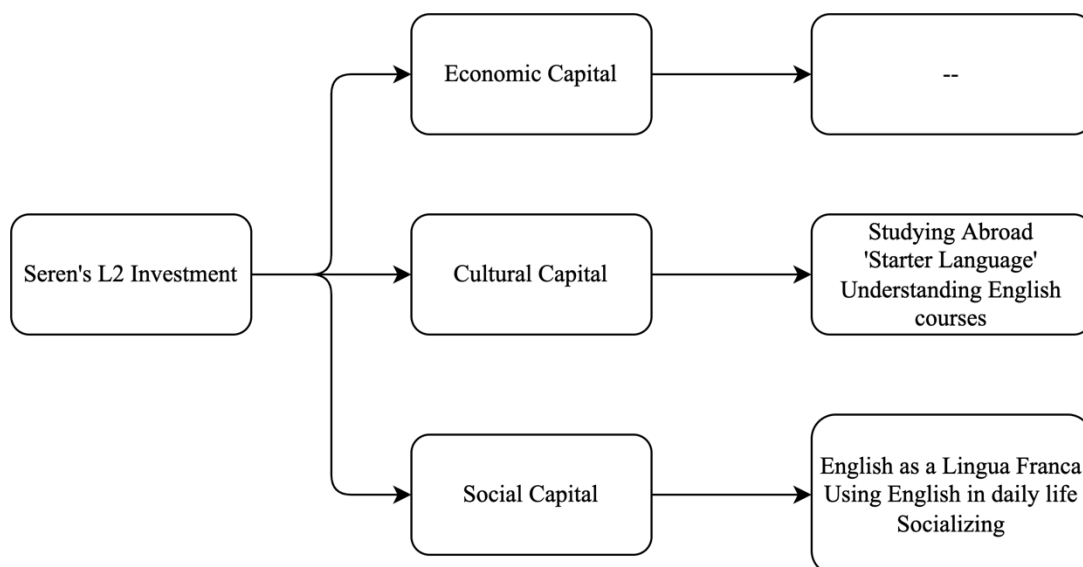
Figure 4. Seren's L2 investment

Another reason Seren wants to invest in English is that she believes that English is a 'starter language' that will open the doors to other foreign languages. She says that "t*he most accessible language to us at the moment is English*" and this will help her to learn other languages. She quotes a friend of hers who she says is a C1 level English speaker and went to Russia: "*My friend said that the reason why she understands them is her knowledge of English because on the Internet I can only find English-Russian resources. You won't be able to find Turkish-Russian resources on the Internet*" (Interview, 1/10/ 2019).

In summer school, Seren is in the B2 level and this is the second term receiving online education because of the Covid pandemic. Here I ask whether she thinks that after a while learning a language becomes boring. She questions their original motivation to study at the preparatory school even before they started

university. This is also the first time we observe how Seren's position in investing in English learning is changing:

Extract 2

1	Hakan:	R: Yani dil eğitimi eşittir sıkıcı diyebilir miyiz bir süre sonra?
2	Seren:	C: Yani birazcık şöyle, nasıl diyeyim mesela bunu hazırlık okuyan okumayan
3		diğer okullardaki bir çok arkadaşımla da konuştum, şey falan diyorlar yani evet
4		herkes hazırlık okumak ister, gerçekten, ben üniversiteye başlamadan önce hep
5		böyle hazırlık okuyayım hazırlık falan diyordum kendi içimde ama sonradan ben
6		herkeste gerçekten böyle hani bir sıkılma duydum. Yani mesela hazırlık böyle
7		ismi, o başlığın altında hep insanların kafasında şey olur, daha kolay arkadaş
8		edinme, bir sürü farklı fakültelerden arkadaş edinme, işte üniversiteye alışma
9		tarzında. Ama gerçekten bir süre sonra hani bütün fakültelerden de arkadaş
10		olmasaymış da olurmuş diyorum yani.

1	Hakan:	*So, can we say that language education equals boredom after a while?*
2	Seren:	*Well, it's like this. I have discussed this with other friends at other universities*
3		*as well, they say, well yes, everybody wants to study at the prep school, really,*
4		*before university I also said I want to study at the prep school, but later,*
5		*everybody told me that they were bored. For example, for everybody prep*
6		*school means finding friends easier, having friends from different faculties,*
7		*getting settled at university. But after a while, I say to myself, I could do*
8		*without having those friends from all the departments.*

(Interview, 12/08/2020).

In extract 2 line 2, Seren wanted confirmation from other students at other universities that the preparatory school is actually boring. Seren tells that she is not the only one who thought that studying at the preparatory school was beneficial in terms of finding friends or having friends from different departments. However, she tells us that her friends also agree that after a while learning English becomes boring and that they could do without "the friends from other faculties". Seren prefers not benefiting from the social capital learning English provides and wants to start faculty right away.

4.2.4   Past learning experience

   "...I actually was brought up with English but I never owned it"

In the following section, I present Seren's past learning experience and how this shaped her initial second language learner identity. When asked about her first exposure to English as a language, she mentions her family's efforts to familiarize her with the language. English seems to have started in the family because she mentions her sister at various occasions when talking about the importance of speaking English and why she needs to learn it. She seems to have pride in her father's status as a soldier who received English education at military school and her sister's participation in exchange programs and having international students invited to their home. Here she voices a rather powerful statement about her present situation related with her past relationship with English: *O yüzden ben aslında İngilizce ile büyüdüm ama hiç ona sahip olamadım* "So, as a matter of fact, I grew up with English around me but I never owned it". English was always around her in the family, but she is at the university, studying English at the beginner Group A level and this makes her feel inferior from the other family members who own the language and therefore seem to possess a more powerful social status because in Turkey, just like in other developing countries, speaking English fluently is seen as a privilege that helps open both social and economic doors. She says:

Extract 3

1	Seren:	Ama benim gözümde, mesela babam asker, askeriyede hani İngilizce eğitim
2		almışlar, ablamın İngilizcesi çok iyi. Sürekli öğrenci değişim programlarına
3		katılıp, bize de yabancı öğrencilerin gelmesin neden olmuştu. O yüzden ben
4		aslında İngilizce ile büyüdüm ama hiç ona sahip olamadım. O yüzden hep böyle
5		onu çok fazla öğrenip, gerçekten günlük hayatta kullanabilme isteği var bende

1	Seren:	*But in my eyes, for example my father is a soldier, he received English*
2		*education at military school, and my sister's English is very good. She attended*
3		*exchange programs all the time and this resulted in having foreign students as*
4		*guests. So, as a matter of fact, I grew up with English around me but I never*
5		*owned it. So, I have always desired to learn it really well and use it in daily life*
6		*in a meaningful way.*

(Interview, 19/10/2019)

Seren's imagined identity seems to be confined within the context that her family has provided in relation to learning/speaking English. Even though her L2-mediated real self is in relation to seemingly contradicting notions of positive and negative identities, her imagined identity is built around the rather powerful concept of "owning English" (Figure 5)
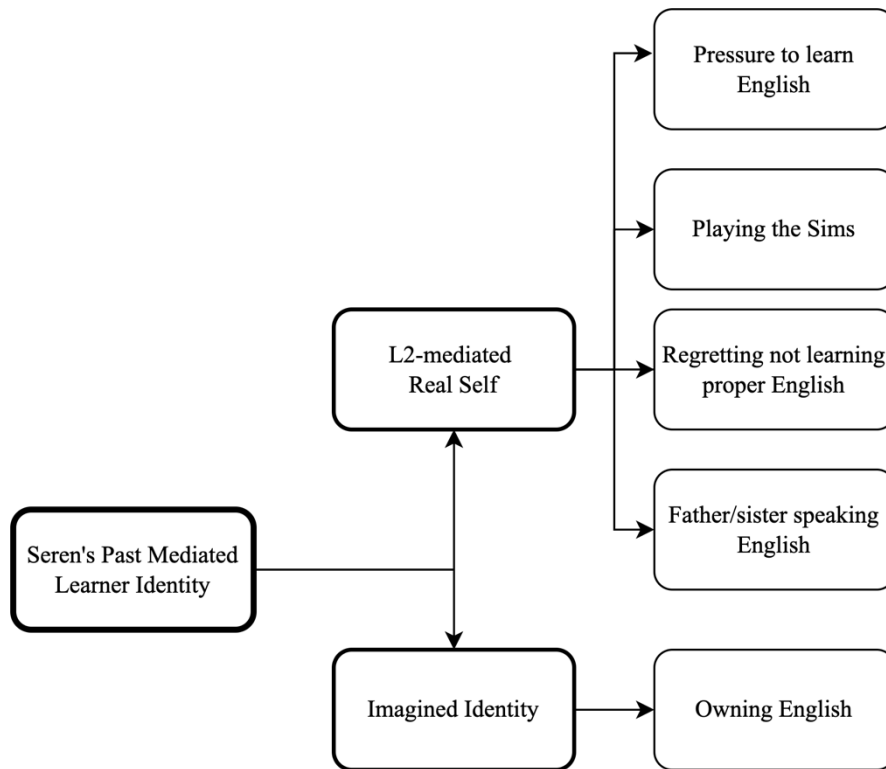
Figure 5. Seren's past-mediated identity

Seren seems to feel guilty about not having learnt English properly. She keeps reminding us that English is still prominent in her family and that everybody speaks it. In extract 4 line 6, she says that her parents are mad at her because she went to America and spent 4 years receiving education at a Turkish private school (extract 4, line 7-8) . Once again, she repeats her family's attitude towards learning English and how it had an impact on shaping her language learner identity.

Extract 4

1	Hakan	Okuldan önce herhangi bir şey hatırlıyor musun İngilizce ile ilgili?
2	Seren:	Annemler bir şeyler öğretmeye çalışıyorlardı.
3	Hakan:	Çalışıyorlar mıydı?
4	Seren:	Evet.
5	Hakan:	Peki, annenlerin İngilizceye karşı olan algısı veya fikirleri nasıldı?
6		C: Annemler bana çok kızıyorlar zaten. Hepsi İngilizce biliyor, anlattım biraz
7		önce. Nasıl bilmezsin, çünkü ben Amerika'ya da gittim. 4 sene kolejde okudum.
8		O yüzden aslında onlar hani İngilizceyi zaten bildikleri için onlar için
9		İngilizceyi öğren çok iyi bir dil diye değil de İngilizce öğrenmek zorundasın
10		gözünde bakıyorlar onlar. Çünkü kendi hayatlarında da var o dil. Tek benim
11		yok ailede.

1	Hakan:	*Do you remember anything related to English before school?*
2	Seren:	*My parents were trying to teach me stuff.*
3	Hakan:	*Were they?*
4	Seren:	*Yes*
5	Hakan:	*What was your parents' attitude towards English?*
6	Seren:	*My parents are mad at me. They all speak English, I just told you. How can you*
7		*not speak it, because I went to America. I studied 4 years at a private high*
8		*school. So, they think I must learn English not because it is a very good*
9		*language but because they think you have to learn it. Because the language is*
10		*already in their lives. I'm the only one who doesn't have that!*
11		(Interview, 19/10/2019)

English seems to be in her family's life but not hers. She keeps repeating that she was not able to pass a certain level: "*I have always studied at private schools but I have never been able to take my English to the next level because I was studying for the university entrance exam and because I was lazy sometimes*" [hep kolejde okudum ben ama İngilizcemi hiç bir zaman bir tık üste çıkaramadım. Gerek üniversite sınavından, gerek bazı kendi tembelliklerimden dolayı.] (Interview, October, 2019). This time however, she also puts responsibility on herself by admitting that she was lazy.

When asked about English exposure at home, she states that she was exposed to English video games. She always played the game "The Sims" in English and she learned a lot of words back then which she has forgotten now (Extract 5, line 4). In

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addition, Seren's sister seems to have had a huge impact on Seren's construction of an English learner identity. In all of the interviews, especially when talking about the importance of English or her first experience with English, she always mentions her sister and how she was "successfully" involved in learning English (lines 4-7):

Extract 5

1	Hakan:	...şeyi de merak ediyorum, çocukken, daha okuldan önce hiç, ne diyeyim
2		İngilizce kitaplar, İngilizce müzik, film, oyun gibi şeylere maruz kalıyor
3		muydun?
4	Seren:	Evet sürekli Sims oynuyordum. İngilizce sims. O yüzden gerçekten şu an belki o
5		kelimeleri bilmiyorumdur yani. Orada çok fazla kelime biliyordum. Ablam
6		sürekli, ablam benden 5 yaş büyük, benim 5 yaşında olduğumu düşünü, ablam
7		10 yaşındayken İngilizce kitapları çeviriyordu falan. Onun hep eğilimi vardı. O
8		her zaman yapıyordu bunları. Ben de ondan duyuyordum. Böyle.

1	*Hakan:*	*...I'm curious about, when you were a kid, before school, would you be exposed*
2		*to things like English books, music, films or games?*
3	*Seren:*	*Yes, all the time! I used to play Sims. English Sims. Therefore, seriously, maybe*
4		*I used to know more words back then than I know now! My sister is 5 years*
5		*older than me. Imagine when I was 5 years old, she was 10 and she used to*
6		*translate English books; all the time. She always had an aptitude. She always*
7		*would do these and I would hear them. That's that.*

(Interview, 1/10/, 2019)

Seren's sister is 5 years older than her. She claims that her sister was able to "translate English books" at the age of 10. This suggests that Seren, at the age of 5, remembers an awareness of the language and also a feeling of respect for her. Even now she has this respect for her sister because she had what she called an 'aptitude' towards English (extract 5 , line 6). This situation might also have created an "English learning standard" which was set by her sister that Seren always wanted to achieve because here we get the impression that she perceives herself as not having attained this aptitude towards English.

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4.2.5 Lack of quality education

"For three years I had heard almost nothing in English"

Like her peers, Seren started her English learning journey in 5th grade. When speaking about her first formal English learning experience , she states that "it was only 2 hours a week" suggesting that 2 hours of English education was not enough to learn a language. English education at Turkish public schools is known to be insufficient and Seren also had her share of this problem. When asked about the reasons why she is in the beginner A level, she states, *"It's because I was not taught English in the last three years of high school and [before that] I had only just progressed to B1 at Doğa College. I mean, it's because I was a student who had just left A2 level."* [Lisenin son üç senesinde İngilizce görmediğim için ve Doğa'da da B1'e hani daha yeni geçmiş olduğum için. Zaten A2'yi yeni bırakmış bir öğrenci olduğum için.] (Interview, October, 2019). This seems to be an important stage in Seren's language learner identity. Because they stopped getting English classes, she lost her touch with the language because of "academic courses" she claims:

Extract 6

1	Seren:	Ben Doğa Koleji'ni B1 seviyesinde diploma alarak bıraktım normalde. Ve hani
2		yabancı öğretmenimiz falan vardı ama 11. sınıfta Bahçeşehir'de İngilizce eğitimi
3		almamaya başladık. Tamamen akademi dersleri olduğu için. Ve ben mezunla
4		kaldım, 11-12 mezun, 3 yıl boyunca İngilizce hiç bir şey duymadım neredeyse.
5		Yani kulak aşinalığım o kadar yoktu ki derslere ilk başladığımda bir şeyleri şöyle,
6		hani arkadaşlarıma ben anlattım bunu. İşte ne bileyim, "pencil" dediğinde
7		hocamız ben kalemdi diye düşünerek anlayabiliyordum.
8		

1	Seren:	*I left Doğa Koleji with a B1 certificate. And well, we had a foreign teacher and*
2		*such but started not getting English instruction at Bahçeşehir. Because there*
3		*were only academic courses. And I did not start university right after I*
4		*graduated.. For three years I had heard almost nothing in English.. In fact,*
5		*English had become so unfamiliar that when I first started coming to classes*
6		*here...my friends also know this because I told them...for example, when the*
7		*teacher said "pencil", I would think about what it meant in Turkish and*
8		*understand what was being said.".*
9		

(Interview, 1/10/2019)

In extract 6 line 8, Seren implies that she was out of touch with English so much that she had to translate a simple word like "pencil" into Turkish. This suggests that she sees "translating a word into the native language" as a strategy that can only be applied by total beginners. This tells us that Seren associates language proficiency with a certain "automaticity" in understanding and using words in English.

4.2.6 Present learner experience

"*...those 10 words will only bring me 1 point in the midterms*"

In this section, I illustrate Seren's present learner experience and her negotiation with her learner identity. Here, a general trait is observed: most of the communicative exchanges in the classroom are done in Turkish by Seren. Whenever she does not understand something or wants to ask any kind of question, she does this in Turkish. Another one is the fear of making mistakes. Just like the other participants in the following sections, Seren is also concerned with making mistakes in class. In extract 7, I ask Seren whether she asks her questions in Turkish or in English:

Extract 7

1	Hakan:	Soruları Türkçe mi soruyorsun, İngilizce mi soruyorsun?
2	Seren:	Karışık soruyorum. Yani mesela bu gün işte bu in, on, under, next to bunları
3		gördük. Orada ben çok farklı bir şey düşünmüştüm. Direk kaldırdım parmağımı
4		sordum yani. Hiç bir şekilde öyle çekinmiyorum ama şöyle çekinmiyorum,
5		kendim direk hoca ile birebir konuşabilirim bunu ama sınıf ortamında yanlış
6		yapmak hoşuma gitmiyor.
7	Hakan:	Neden? Nasıl hissediyorsun?
8	Seren:	Şöyle, yani bu biraz kendim ile alakalı bir şey, her zaman en iyisi olmak isteyip
9		bazı zamanlarda böyle özgüvenim kırıldığı için o yüzden şu anda da o şeyi
10		birazcık toparlamaya çalışıyorum. Mezun hayatımdan dolayı aslında.
11	Hakan:	Özgüvenin neden kırılabiliyor?
12	Seren:	Başarısız olmaktan.

1	*Hakan:*	*Do you ask the questions in Turkish or in English?*
2	*Seren:*	*Both. For example, today we covered in, on, under, next to.I had a different*
3		*idea about something so I raised my hand without any hesitation and asked a*
4		*question. I am not shy like that but I'd rather talk to the teacher in private than*
5		*make a mistake in front of the class. I don't like that.*
6	*Hakan:*	*Why? How do you feel about that?*
7	*Seren:*	*I mean, it's to do with myself.....Honestly, it has to do with the fact that I*
8		*couldn't pass the university entrance exam in my first attempt.*
9	*Hakan:*	*Why does your self-confidence suffer?*
10	*Seren:*	*Because of the fear of failure .*

(Interview, 1/10/2019)

Seren states that she uses both languages to ask questions and gives an example about how she had asked about prepositions (extract 7, line 2). The class recordings and my observations show that, just like the other participants, nearly all questions Seren asked were in Turkish. However, she does not speak about the language she uses when asking the question, but wants to give information about how she is not reserved or inhibited about asking questions in class. In addition, she states that she does not want to make mistakes in class; therefore, she prefers to ask these questions directly to the teacher and not openly in front of the class. She does not prefer to do that because it affects her self-confidence; she does not want to be seen as someone who is unsuccessful.

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4.2.7   Agency through exposure to authentic language content

It is a common belief among English language learners that watching English movies or series, playing video games or listening to English language music will help one learn English better. Seren remembers that her sister used to recommend doing everything in English; watching English TV shows, or translating everything she hears. However, Seren does not believe that TV shows or other English content has helped her learn English. When asked about how languages are learnt the best, she states that she is undecided about this issue and reveals her beliefs about language exposure through movies or series. Her sister used to say 'watch English series, do something in English, when you see something translate it'. She always used to recommend these. But Seren does not seem to believe in the power of authentic English language content in language learning. She stated that she already had been watching English series since devices like computers, mobile phones etc. have been around in her whole life, and she had not seen her English improve at all (Interview, October, 2019). She also suggests that they cannot substitute actual formal classroom education:

Extract 8

1	Seren:	Buradayken mesela günde 6 saat İngilizce dizi izlememle burada 6 saat ders
2		görmem arasında çok fark var. Yani bir şeylerin gerçekten bir insan tarafından
3		öğretilmesi, bilen bir insana direk bir soru işareti, kafanda varsa onu sorup
4		cevabını direk almak, bunlar öğretiyor bence insana. Hani o yerde yaşamak ayrı
5		bir şey. Şu an ben mesela İngiltere'de ya da Malta'ya gidip İngilizce eğitim
6		görsem belki çok daha üst seviyede olur İngilizcem hani iki haftalık bir süreçte.
7		Çünkü okuldan çıktığımda da ben İngilizce konuşmaya çalışacağım, birazcık
8		zorlayarak. Hani bu insanın kendini zorlayabilmesi ile de gelişebilir ama bence
9		başındaki insan çok önemli yani.

1	Seren:	*For example here, there is a huge difference between receiving education for 6*
2		*hours and watching an English series for 6 hours. Well, being really taught by*
3		*someone, being able to ask someone when you have a question and get an*
4		*answer, I think these really teach you something. Of course living there is*
5		*something else. If I were to go to England or Malta to learn English, my*
6		*English would be at a higher level maybe, well, in two weeks time maybe.*
7		*Because when I leave the school building, I will try to speak English, I will be*
8		*forced to do so a little. Maybe this can be improved by forcing yourself but in*
9		*my opinion the person who teaches you is very important.*

(Interview, 19/10/2019)

Seren clearly believes in the benefits of formal education (extract 8, line 1). She thinks that conscious learning in the form of asking questions, having a teacher in class is more beneficial than watching something in English because according to her she had been doing this for a long time and she did not see its benefits. However, for her, living in an English speaking country is a much more effective way to learn English because there (England or Malta), according to her, you could learn English "in two weeks" (extract 8, line 5). This shows how Seren feels about learning English in an English speaking country. She cites two countries: England and Malta. England seems to be an obvious choice since it is a native English speaking country. However, Malta is not a native English speaking country even though English is among the official languages. It is well-known by foreigners for its English teaching courses. It is possible that she heard about how effective the language course might be there. That is why she attributes a "two-week" learning time to native English

speaking places because you "are forced to speak English there once you leave the classroom" (extract 8, line 8). This, obviously, is not the case in an EFL setting like Turkey. Nevertheless, she adds that a learner could be forced to speak English but this depends on the "person who teaches you" (extract 8, line 8-9). Here, Seren uses the expression "*the person who supervises you*" ["başındaki insan"]. Obviously, she uses this expression to mean "a teacher" but in Turkish the word "başındaki" implies someone who apart from supervising also has a certain power over you and your actions. This shows that Seren has a strong belief in formal teaching settings; but, they need to be managed by someone who can 'force the learner to speak in English'.

At the B1 level, in her second semester at the preparatory school, Seren continues to uphold her belief that watching English content on TV does not help in developing her language skills. She clearly states that she watched the TV series "not for the sake of learning English":

Extract 9

1	Hakan:	Tatilde İngilizce ile ilgili ders çalışmak dışında bir şey yaptınız mı?
2	Seren:	Ben dizi izledim. Ama şey değil yani, öyle İngilizce öğrenmek için ya da
3		İngilizceye katkısı olsun diye değil.
4	Hakan:	Ama olmasın, olmadığını düşünüyorsun?
5	Seren:	Bilmiyorum oluyormuş gibi gelmiyor bana. Ben mesela işte La Casa De Papel'i
6		İngilizce dublajlı izledim

1	Hakan:	*On your holiday, did you do anything else related to English apart from*
2		*studying?*
3	Seren:	*I watched a TV series. But not to learn English or that it has a contribution to*
4		*my English.*
5	Hakan:	*But even if this was not your purpose, don't you think it made a contribution?*
6	Seren:	*I don't know. It doesn't feel like it has one. For example, I watched La Casa de*
7		*Papel in English dubbing.*

(Interview, 19/10/2019)

The original language of La Casa de Papel is in Spanish; however, since you can change the audio language into multiple languages (including Turkish), Seren chose to watch it in English even though she does not believe in its benefit as a language

learning tool. This seems to be contradicting with her beliefs, but she does not want to lose a valuable opportunity for exposure to real English and exerts her agency to do so.

4.2.8 Agency choices to pass the course

"if I memorize 50 words from Skylife magazine, this will maybe bring me only 1 point in the finals"

Seren also does not seem to be eager to read extracurricular content which might help her to get real language input apart from the course books. This would also help her gain autonomy and be responsible for her own learning. However, during her B2 level in summer school in 2020, she seems to just want to pass the English course. When speaking about the magazines and books at home, she says that she finds reading them a little too extra because "students are responsible for certain words, certain grammar" and she adds:

Extract 10

1	Seren:	.. Nasıl diyeyim ben atıyorum bir dergiyi açtım, oradan İngilizce 10 tane kelime
2		öğrendim ama 10 kelime bana vizede 5 puan getirmeyebilir. Çünkü bizim
3		sorumlu olduğumuz kelimeler belli. Yani eğer İngilizce derslerim de devam
4		ederse fakültedeyken sanki yine böyle kendi kendime İngilizce
5		çalışamayacağım, sadece bize verilen konulara çalışmak zorunda kalacakmışım
6		gibi geldi. Demek istediğimi anladınız mı?
7		(...) İşte atıyorum speakout'taki kelimeleri ezberlemek zorundayım eğer ben
8		finalden atıyorum işte 90 almak istiyorsam. Ama benim işte sallıyorum Skylife
9		dergisinden 50 kelime ezberlemem finale belki 1 puan etki eder yani. Hani
10		(anlaşılmıyor) ama sınav yeterliliği olarak gelişmez.
11	Hakan	(...) mesela fakülteyi düşün, fakültede derslerin İngilizce olacak. Sence
12		speakout'daki kelimeler mi yoksa skylife'deki kelimeler mi geçecek?
13	Seren:	Speakout'takiler geçmeyecek bence zaten. Ama şu an ki bizim hedefimiz bir tık
14		daha hazırlık sınavlarını verip, hazırlığı bitirmek şeklinde olduğu için.

1	Seren:	*How shall I put it, let's say, I open a magazine to read, and I learn 10 words*
2		*from there, but those 10 words might not even reward me with 5 points in the*
3		*midterms. Because we are responsible for learning a certain set of vocabulary.*
4		*So, if my English courses are going to continue, I don't think I will be studying*
5		*English based on my own decisions, I think I will study only the topics that I'm*
6		*given. Do you know what I mean?*
7		*(...) I need to memorize the words in Speakout if I want to get a 90 from the*
8		*finals. But let's say, if I memorize 50 words from Skylife magazine, this will*
9		*maybe bring me only 1 point in the finals. So, (inaudible) but will not improve*
10		*my exam proficiency.*
11	Hakan:	*(...)for example, think about your future studies, your courses at the*
12		*department will be in English. Do you think you will come across with more*
13		*words like the ones in Speakout or in Skylife?*
14	Seren:	*I don't think they'll be from Speakout. But our aim at the moment is to be*
15		*successful at the courses and pass preparatory school exams*

(Interview, 30/7/ 2020)

Seren measures her contribution to learning the language with the reward she will get in an exam. If she reads any kind of English content that does not provide her a return as points, she considers this as a waste of time, namely an 'extra'. We can see that she does not want to spend more time on any content that would be related to the exam because the main aim for her is to pass and move on to her studies at the department. She questions the validity of two sources in relation to the return she will get in an exam: Speakout, which is a course book; and Skylife, an authentic aviation

magazine usually read in domestic airplanes (extract 10, lines 7-8) Even when she is

asked about whether content from Speakout will help her in her future faculty

studies, she agrees that the course book might not help her but she still insists that her

major goal is to pass, and not learn more 'authentic' words (extract 10 , lines 14-15).

When I ask about whether this is her objective, she openly says "*yes, well, my*

English is improving but let's say whatever paragraph we have read that day, I look

up the meanings of new words from that paragraph. At the moment, apart from that

I'm not into things like reading a novel and underlining words and translating them

and memorizing their meanings" ["Yani evet İngilizcem gelişiyor ama sadece

atıyorum o gün hangi paragrafı okuduysak o paragraftaki bilmediğim kelimeler

çıkarıp ezberliyorum. Şu an onun dışında yaptığım ekstra bir roman okuyup

kelimelerin altını çizip çevirip ezberlemek tarzı bir şeyim yok" (Interview,

30.07.2020). All of these show that Seren is aware of the distinction between

learning English for communicative purposes and learning it just to pass her course.

This construction of learner identity (Figure 6) might be related to her agency

choices that she seems to internally organize and manage.
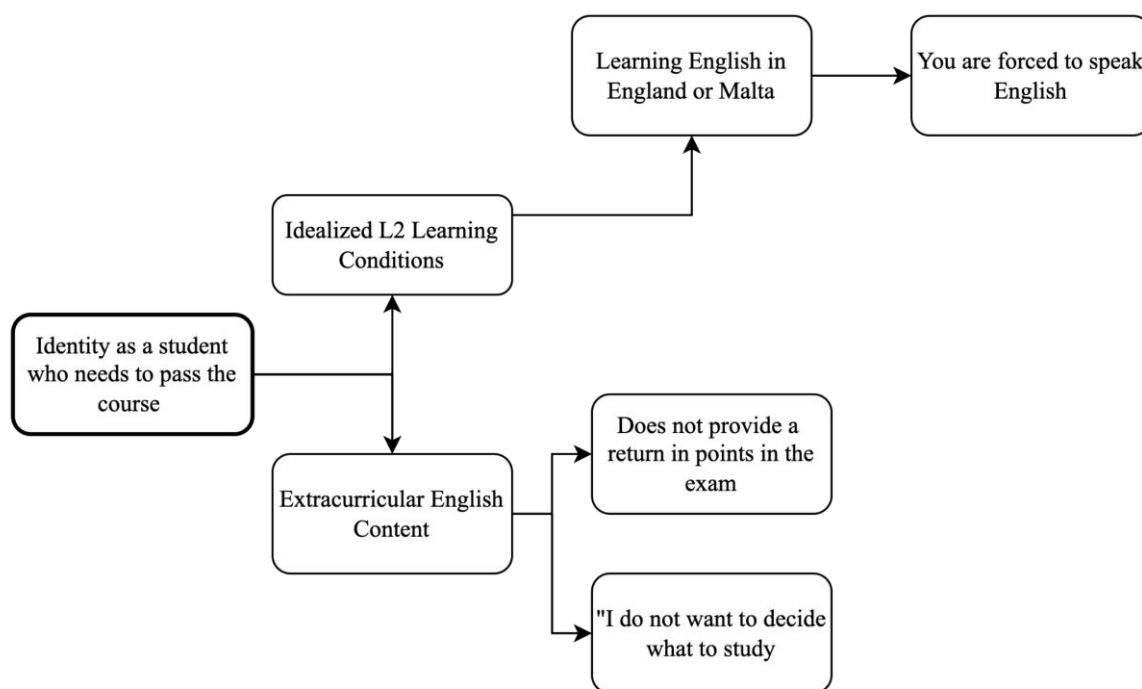
Figure 6. Identity as a student who need to pass the course

Another point to make is that she does not want to take the responsibility of deciding on the learning content. In extract 10 lines 4-5, she says that she "does not want to study English based on her own decision" but only study what she is given. This also shows a decline in the investment she is making to learn the language. She intentionally uses her agency to construct an L2 learner identity that should not make her own decisions because she does not believe that those decisions will bring her points in the exam.

During her third semester at the preparatory school, Seren's motivation to participate in class is dependent on a variety of factors. She seems to be disturbed by the silence in the class (they are conducting online classes via Zoom), feels a responsibility to answer and also thinks about the participation grade she is going to receive. When asked about whether she is disturbed by silence in the class, she says:

Extract 11

1	Seren:	Evet. Yani mesela direk bana yöneltilen sorularda cevap veriyorum zaten. Ama
2		başkasına ya da genel olarak hani sınıfa sorulan sorularda hiç bir cevap alınmıyor
3		genelde. O yüzden bari ben konuşayım, ders ilerlesin. O yüzden hani hem
4		sorumluluk hem de birazcık da nasıl diyeyim dediği gibi o participation olayından
5		dolayı birazcık da zorunda hissediyorum kendim.

1	Seren:	*Yes, I do answer questions that are directly addressed to me. But when they are*
2		*addressed to someone else or the class in general, usually there are no replies.*
3		*So, I say well at least I gotta say something so that the lesson can move on.*
4		*Therefore, I feel forced to answer because of that responsibility and a little*
5		*because, how shall I say, because of that participation thing"*

(Interview, 3/8/ 2020)

This implies that Seren still cares about the participation grade that she is going to receive at the end of each class. This participation score has become a part of her language learner identity. During this term, she feels a little anxious during online classes because she does not know what participation grades the teachers are giving them. This is one of the differences between face-to-face education at the preparatory school and online education. At the end of the lessons, the teacher fills in a form with their participation scores and students have the chance to see it. However, since all of them are in their own homes, this is not possible anymore. They explicitly have to ask for the score. Seren thinks that her participation score must be high because she is one of the few people that actually participates in the activities, especially the writing ones. However, not being able to know still makes her anxious:

Extract 12

1	Seren:	Şu an hocaların bize ne kadar participation notu verdiklerini bilmiyoruz mesela.
2		Önceki hocalarımızın tahminen kaç verdiğini bir tık biliyorduk. Çünkü
3		yüzyüzeden online geçildiği için ortalama ne kadar alıyoruzdur diye biliyorduk
4		yani ama şu an ki hocaların notunu bilmiyoruz mesela. Ben bayağı bir katılıyorum
5		açıkçası. Ama gerçekten hiç katılmayan insanlar oluyor. … Mesela biz hoca
6		birlikte yaptığı zaman dersi üç kişi falan yazıyoruz ve işte atıyorum mikrofonum
7		bozuk hocam diyenler oluyor, hiç katılmayanlar, görüntüsünü, kamerasını
8		kapatanlar, işte mikrofonunu kapatanlar. Orada üç kişi konuştuğu için onun
9		participation notunun ayrı olmasını isterim ben, mesela o kişilerin arasında ben
10		de olduğum için ama bunu bilmiyorum, ne kadar not veriliyor.

1	Seren:	*At the moment, we don't know what participation scores we are receiving. We*
2		*used to know it in face-to-face education but since we have switched to online,*
3		*we don't know anymore. Frankly, I do participate a lot. But there are really*
4		*people who do not participate at all….For example, when the teacher does*
5		*something together with us, in the class it's only three people who are writing*
6		*and there people who say that their microphone isn't working, some don't*
7		*participate at all, some turn off their cameras, their microphones. I want the*
8		*participation scores to be different for the three people who are talking there,*
9		*for example, I'm one of these three people, but I don't know what scores are*
10		*given.*

(Interview, 2/7/2020)

Here, she also states that she doubts there might be an unjust situation for the 'three people', including herself, who participate in the lesson but might not receive the participation score that they deserve. She also complains about the others either coming up with excuses (extract 12, line 6) or just turning everything off (extract 12, line 7).

4.2.9 Writing assignments/homework

"I can't get into the mindset of sitting down and writing my own essay yet"

Seren does her homework. The reason she states for doing her homework is that she likes to participate and when she does not do it, she cannot participate in her classes. This implies that the teacher goes over the homework in class and in those moments, Seren uses her homework as a tool for participation. She says "*I don't like just sitting in class and listening to the teacher, not knowing what's going on so I try to do my*

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homework. I do not lack motivation for that." [Derste sadece oturup ne olduğundan habersiz dinlemek hoşuma gitmediği için yapmaya çalışıyorum ödevlerimi. O konuda bir motivasyon eksikliğim yok.] (Interview, August 3, 2020). However, this does not apply for writing essay assignments. Seren cannot write them at home because it takes too much time. She has no problem writing them in class because there is a time limit; but since there is no limit at home, she spends too much time thinking about what to write:

Extract 13

1	Seren:	Mesela essay ödevlerimiz oluyor, onları da şey için istiyorlar, hani pratik olsun,
2		yazmayı pekiştirelim, zorlanmayalım ama o konuda birazcık ben sıkılıyorum,
3		çünkü yani ben essay'i hani belli bir kronometre olmadığı sürece 2 saatten aşağı
4		yazamıyorum. Yani çok uzuyor, düşün düşün düşün, hani sınav ortamında 1 saat
5		15 dk'ya sığdırmak için tabiki yapabiliyorum onu. Mesela dün sınavımız vardı,
6		orada yaptım ama kendim yazmaya başladığımda çok uzun saatler aldığı için
7		onu pek sevemedim hala daha. Yani kendim oturup bir essay yazayım gibi o
8		kafaya giremedim hala. Ama onun dışındaki gramer ödevlerini falan yapıyorum.

1	Seren	*For example, we have essay homework assignments, they want them so that we*
2		*can practice and reinforce our writing skills, so that it's not difficult for us, but*
3		*this challenges me a little because, well, if there is no set time limit I cannot*
4		*write it under 2 hours. In other words, it takes too much time, just think think*
5		*think, of course I can do it in an exam setting in 1 hour 15 minutes. For*
6		*example, we had an exam yesterday, I did it there but if I try to do it on my own*
7		*at home it takes too many hours, therefore, I don't like it. In other words, I can't*
8		*get into the mindset of sitting down and writing my own essay yet. Apart from*
9		*that, I do my grammar or other homework.*

(Interview, 3/8/2020)

Even in her third semester at preparatory school, Seren seems to have problems in completing assignments that require her to produce language that is not part of a controlled activity (e.g. grammar assignments). She cannot get into the 'mindset' (extract 13, line 8) of spending time practicing a skill that will help her contribute to becoming a more proficient user of English. We need to note that she tries to justify the reason why this kind of homework is given. She states that they (teachers) want students to do writing homework assignments at home so that they can practice and

reinforce their writing skills. In this way, they become used to the writing process and therefore it will not be difficult for them anymore (extract #13, line 1-2).

At this point, writing seems to be a challenging task for Seren. She states that every day she writes at least 50 new words. "*It's not only vocabulary. It's also writing. They should have prepared us in the A level for the writing that is expected from us in the B1 level. When I write now, my brain leaks*" [Benim her gün abartısız 50 kelimem çıkıyor. Bence sadece vocab olarak değil A ile B1 arasında şey sıkıntısı da var bence, bize hani bir dönem boyunca A verildi ve bence en azından sona doğru birazcık böyle B1'de isteyecekleri writingin nasıl bir şey olduğunu söylemeleri gerekiyordu. Çünkü şu an ben writing yazarken beynim akıyor yani.] (Interview, 13/02/2020). She uses this expression (my brain leaks) to state how difficult writing is and how much effort she puts into the process. She continues: "*The teacher doesn't like anything we write, and there is no relation between what we think we write and what is actually expected from us*" [Hoca hiç bir şeyi beğenmiyor ve hani bizim yazdığımızı sandığımız şey ile aslında şu an bizden beklenen arasında hiç bir alakası yok.] (Interview, 13/1/2020). There is a clear frustration that can be recognized at the beginning of the second term and a new level. The discrepancy between her performance and what the teacher expects seems to be worrying her and this causes her to negotiate a negative L2 writer identity (Figure 7). Another aspect is that it is not only her performance but what was expected from them in the A level and what is expected now seems to be different. Seren is also aware of this systematic change in the curriculum which seems to ask of a substantial increase in performance and production.
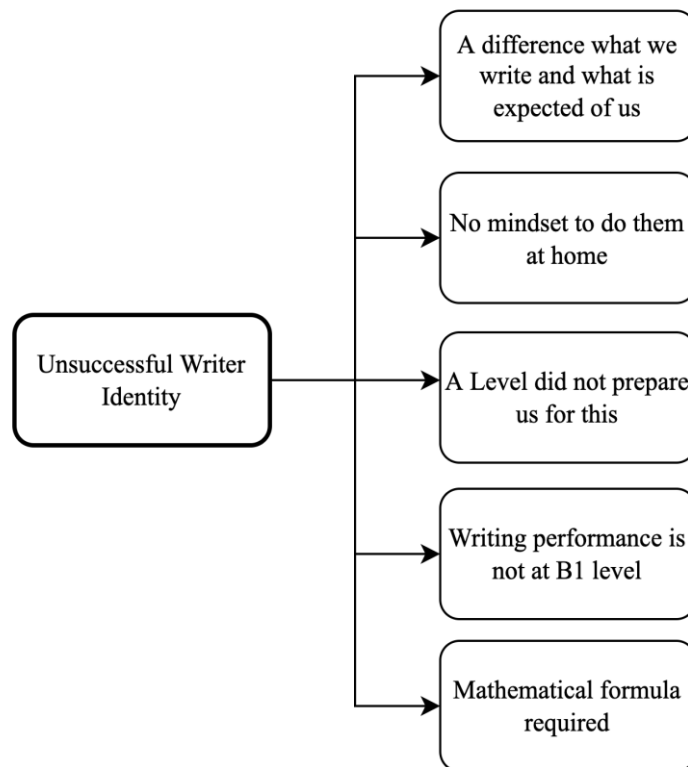
Figure 7. Unsuccessful writer identity

The meta-linguistic instructions and requirements expressed by the teachers also seem to contribute to the learner identity formation of our participants. Here, feedback to Seren's paragraph writing performance are justified like a mathematical formula and Seren's frustration is apparent in how she thinks that she cannot reach this "capacity":

Extract 14

1	Seren:	… Ben de mesela geçen gün bir paragraf yazdım. İşte şey hani hem cümlelerimi
2		beğenmiyor hoca, diyor ki hani bu cümle artık A cümlesi, kelimelerinin B1
3		seviyesindeki kelimeler, ayrıca işte cümle uzunluğunun en az 7 kelime olması
4		gerekiyor. O yüzden hem cümle uzunluğu beğenilmiyor hem cümle beğenilmiyor.
5		O yüzden hani atıyorum matematiksel olarak düşünsek bunu, işte sıralayacağımız
6		şeyler formül ise atıyorum, işte ilk topic sentences sonra supporting idea, sonra
7		işte concluding falan. Ama onları yaparken de cümlenin beğenilmesi lazım.
8		Benim böyle bir şeyim yok yani şu anda. Öyle bir cümle kapasitem yok.

1	Seren	*For example, I wrote a paragraph the other day. The teacher doesn't like my*
2		*sentences and says this is an A level sentence not a B1 level one, you should at*
3		*least have 7 words in a sentence. Therefore, they don't like the length nor the*
4		*sentence. From a mathematical point, let's say it's all a formula, the topic*
5		*sentence, the supporting sentences and the concluding sentence. But when you*
6		*do this, they also need to like the sentence. I don't have that. I don't have that*
7		*sentence capacity.*

(Interview, 13/1/2020)

For Seren, the paragraph writing process is not a language skill needed to communicate a message in written form at this point. It is a task that is dependent on a "formula" which has a strict rule and requires a certain number of elements (extract 14, line 3). The certain requirements (number of sentences, teachers' appreciation of the sentence) also create a pressure on Seren's learning process and this seems to underscore her "preparatory school student" identity. When asked about whether she accepts herself as an English speaker, she does not take her general state into consideration, but refers to her preparatory school identity: "*At the moment, I believe that I do not speak it because I absolutely lost my enthusiasm since I started the B1 level*" [Ben bilmediğimi düşünüyorum şu an, çünkü hevesim aşırı kırıldı B1'e geçtiğimden beri.] (Interview, 13/01/2020).

4.2.10   Vocabulary overload

At the beginning of the B1 level (second semester at preparatory school), Seren is overwhelmed by the number of vocabulary words she has to learn. She recognizes

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that there are too many words that she does not know. She is told by a friend who has

failed the B1 level that the vocabulary load is indeed difficult. At this point, Seren

complains that their beginner A level was not beneficial at all. She admits that their

English level was very bad and they might needed to study at A level but that this

course has no use for the B1 level at the school:

Extract 15

1	Seren:	Ama bilmiyorum. Şey kafasındayım birazcık yaz okulu okuyacağım ya, yaz
2		okulunu keşke A'yı okuyarak değil de B1'de gerekirse kalarak okusaymışım.
3		Çünkü A'nın hiç bir faydası yok bence. Yani şöyle bizim için faydası var. Çok
4		kötüydük belki geldiğimizde ama okulun B1'i için hiç bir faydası yok.

1	Seren:	*Well I don't know. I'm in a mood like, as you know I will have to study at*
2		*summer school, I wish that I repeated B1 before summer school instead of*
3		*having studied at the A level. I believe that studying at the A level has no benefit*
4		*at all. Well, it is beneficial in this sense. We were very bad when we first started*
5		*but for the school's B1 level it has no use.*

<div align="right">(Interview, 13/1/2020)</div>

Seren thinks that what she learned at the A level is not a base for the B1 level that

she is studying. She even wishes that she had started at the B1 level, and repeated it

before starting the B2 level at summer school so that she has the opportunity to fail

this course. Now, she cannot fail it because this would cause her another semester at

preparatory school and she would have to start faculty as an irregular student. Seren

openly stated that having studied during the break had no effect on her situation now

(Interview, 13/01/2020).

4.2.11 Studying B2 level at Summer School

During summer school, which is the 3rd term at the English Preparatory school,

Seren seems to have lost her motivation. Both having spent nearly 11 month at the

prep school and attending online education shows its toll. When asked about her

motivation, Seren says that the main reason she was motivated was that she was

aware that whatever she did was for her own sake:

Extract 16

1	Hakan:	Seninle son görüştüğümüzde bayağı böyle motiveliydin, ilgiliydin falan böyle.
2		Oradan böyle biraz sapma var mı?
3	Seren:	Yani zaten genel olarak hani motive olmamın sebebi şey, ne yaparsam kendim
4		için yapacağımı bildiğim için aslında ama artık hani yaz okulu, işte hazırlık o
5		nasıl diyeyim o ismin o başlığın altından çıkmak istediğim için birazcık
6		motivasyon eksikliği yaşıyorum yani.
7	Hakan:	Yani kimlik olarak bir hazırlık öğrencisi olma durumu...
8	Seren:	Aynen. O biraz artık fazla uzadı gibi geliyor bana. Bir de nasıl diyeyim yani
9		normal online olmadan önceki halinde de birazcık ben hani nasıl olur diye
10		düşünüyordum bu yaz okulu için. Çünkü hani nasıl diyeyim çoğu üniversiteye
11		göre birazcık ekstra olan bir durum yani hazırlığın üç dönem olması.

1	Hakan:	*The last time we met, you were very motivated and interested. Is there some*
2		*kind of decline there?*
3	Seren:	*Well, the main reason I was motivated was that everything I did was actually*
4		*for myself, but now, summer school and preparatory school, because I want to*
5		*leave that title, that name behind, this causes some demotivation.*
6	Hakan:	*So, you mean, having this prep school student identity...*
7	Seren:	*Exactly. It seems to me that this has dragged on for too long. Even before*
8		*online education I thought, what summer school would turn out to be like.*
9		*Because, how should I say, compared to other universities it's kind of an*
10		*extreme to be studying for three terms.*

(Interview, 12/8/2020)

Here she admits that she does not want the "preparatory school student" identity

anymore and wants to move on (extract 16, lines 4-5). She explicitly expresses that

owning this identity has lasted too long. She compares the school's studying length

with other schools saying that studying three terms is too 'extreme'. After asking

whether she associates language education with boredom, she says that in some ways

this is the case. She talked with her friends about prep schools at other universities

and they all agree on one point: at the beginning, they all want to study it but later all

of them say that they got bored. For Seren, as well as the others, prep school means

finding friends from different departments, socializing and getting used to the university.

4.2.12 User vs speaker identity

Seren also has her own rules and boundaries on what a speaker or user identity entails. At the beginning of the second term (B1 level), she did not see herself as an 'adequate' user of English. She has her own restrictions. At this time in her language learning process, she thinks that her B1 identity is not in line with the concept of an English user, but she thinks that she will know that she is proficient once she finishes B2 level (extract 17, line 5): In an interview conducted with her and Seçil, she says:

Extract 17

1	Hakan:	İngilizce kullanan birisi olarak görüyor musunuz kendinizi?
2	Seren:	Yani kullanıyorum da yeterli değilim.
3	Hakan:	Yeterliliğini ne zaman bileceksin ama?
4	Seçil:	B2'yi bitirince.
5	Seren:	Neye göre, mesela bence B2'yi bitirdiğimde sosyal hayatımda yeterli olurum
6		ama akademik hayatımda...
7	Hakan:	Sosyal hayatımda yeterli olmak...
8	Seçil:	Sosyal hayatta bence yeterliyiz şu anda, akademik hayatta yeterli değiliz. Bir
9		yurt dışına gittiğinde bence konuşabilirsin.
10	Seren:	Sosyal hayatta da yeterli değiliz, benim o bilmediğim bir sürü kelime ne o
11		zaman.
12	Hakan:	Nereden biliyorsun sosyal hayatta yeterli olmadığını?
13	Seren:	Çünkü gördüğüm kelimeleri bilmem, nasıl diyeyim bunu, çok kolay bir kelimeyi
14		bile bilmiyorum mesela.

1	Hakan:	Do you see yourself as a user of English?
2	Seren:	Well, I use it but I'm not proficient enough.
3	Hakan:	When will you know you're proficient?
4	Seçil:	When B2 is over
5	Seren:	Based on what, for example, in my opinion, when I finish B2, I'll be proficient
6		in social life but in academic life...
7	Hakan:	Being proficient in social life...
8	Seçil:	In my opinion, we are proficient in social life but not in academic life. I think
9		you'll be able to speak when you go abroad.
10	Seren:	We are not proficient in social life either, what about all the words that I don't
11		know.
12	Hakan:	How do you know that you are not proficient in social life?
	Seren:	Because, knowing the meaning of the words, how can I say this, I don't even
13		know the meaning of very simple words.

(Interview, 13/02/2020)

Here, Seren also discusses a distinction between using English for 'social life' and for 'academic life'. At first she agrees that her English level might be sufficient for using it in her social life but she is not sure about her academic life (extract 17, line 6). Later, when Seçil states her opinion about their English being sufficient for social life, Seren changes her mind and repeats her ongoing struggle with the heavy load of unknown words (extract 17, line 10-13). This shows that Seren associates language learning proficiency with the number of words that you know or in this case do not know.

At the end of the semester of B1, Seren states again that she still does not see herself as a user of English. She states that because she is at home, she does not use English and this is making this process worse for her. She adds "*I recognize that I have forgotten things that I used to be very sure about*" [önceden adım gibi bildiğim şeyleri bile unuttuğumu fark ediyorum]. In the same interview, she also states that she cannot say that she is not someone that does not know English: *"I'm very different from the time I started prep school in terms of English of course, but I also don't think that I'm proficient enough to say yes."* [hazırlığa başladığım zamana göre

çok farklıyım tabiki İngilizce adına ama evet demek için de yeterli olmadığımı düşünüyorum.] (Online Learning Diary, 26/5/2020).

In terms of acquiring an English speaker identity, Seren adds a different understanding to her experience. In the B1 level, she sees that grammar has been emphasized a lot and she wants to acknowledge its importance. However, she does not correlate it with progressing in a language. She says "*frankly speaking, I might be wrong in this opinion, but having covered too much grammar does not make me feel like I have progressed in English. We have put too much emphasis in grammar in the B2 level*" [benim açıkçası bu yanlış bir düşünce de olabilir, çok fazla gramer konusu görmüş olmak İngilizcemi çok geliştirmişim gibi hissettirmiyor bana mesela. Biz B2'de gramere daha çok ağırlık verdik] (Interview, 10/09/2021). In the same interview, she stresses this point again:

Extract 18

1	Hakan:	Gramerin önemli olduğunu düşünüyorsun değil mi?
2	Seren:	Gramerin önemli olduğunu düşünüyorum ama şey mesela atıyorum bin tane tens
3		de bilsem eğer konuşamıyorsam İngilizcem kötüymüş gibi düşünüyorum. Yani
4		kafamdaki bilgi değil de onu kullanabilmek olduğu için benim kafamdaki
5		İngilizce seviyesi o yüzden B2 daha çok böyle şeydi, yani nasıl diyeyim bizi
6		doldurma anlamında bilgi olarak doldurma anlamında iyiydi, ama günlük hayat
7		İngilizcesi olarak iyi değildi. (seren int 4 September 10 2020, Pos. 36-38)

1	Hakan:	*You do believe in the importance of grammar, don't you?*
2	Seren:	*I do believe that grammar is important but, for example, even if you know a*
3		*thousand tenses, as long as I cannot speak it, I feel like my English is bad. I*
4		*mean, it's not the information in my head, it is whether you can use it.*
5		*Therefore, the B2 level in my head was more like, how can I say it, it was good*
6		*in terms of filling us with information, but it was not good in making us use it in*
7		*our daily lives…*

(Interview,10/09/2021)

Here we can also see how Seren associates the productive skill 'speaking' as an indicator of 'knowing a language' (extract 18, line 3). She knows that it is important but does not accept grammar knowledge to be enough to say that you know a

language. For Seren, grammar proficiency does not account for an L2 speaker identity.

4.2.13 Accent matters

"...I think having no accent shows that you are Turkish"

Accent seems to be an important marker of speaker identity. Students believe that a certain accent protects them from "sounding foreign" which they do not want to experience. They want to sound like they speak the language proficiently and this, according to them, is achieved by sounding like a native speaker. The native speaker accent seems to be a standard that all of the participants want to reach. Seren also supports this view. She thinks that accent matters:

Extract 19

1	Hakan:	Peki sence aksan önemli mi?
2	Seren:	Önemli.
3	Hakan:	Neden?
4	Seren:	Yani birazcık Türk olduğunu ya da o milletten olmadığını, sonradan
5		öğrendiğini belli ediyor bence aksansızlık. Çünkü mesela bir, ablam
6		bahsetmişti bunu, iki pilot muhabbet ediyorlar İngilizce konuşarak. Biri işte
7		yabancı, biri Türk olduğunu düşünüyor ablam. Çünkü aksanı yok mesela.
8		Adamın İngilizcesi ne bileyim yüksek. Artık kendi dili gibi konuşabiliyor. Ama
9		aksanı yok ve belli oluyor birazcık.
10	Hakan:	Bir Amerikalı veya bir ingiliz gibi mi durmalı?
11	Seren:	Öyle durmasına gerek yok ama bence aksan da bir eğitim.

1	Hakan:	Do you think accent matters?
2	Seren:	Yes it does
3	Hakan:	Why?
4	Seren:	Well, I think having no accent shows that you are Turkish, or not from that
5		nation, or that you have learnt it later in life. For example, my sister once told
6		me, two pilots, they have a conversation in English. My sister thinks that one
7		was a foreigner but the other, Turkish. Because he did not have an accent. His
8		English might be advanced, I don't know although he speaks like it's his own
9		language. He has got no accent and this shows it.
10	Hakan:	It should sound like an American or an English person?
11	Seren:	It doesn't have to be but accent is also part of the education.

(Interview, 1/10/2019)

She states in extract 19, line 4-5 that "not having an accent" makes you look foreign or like someone who has learnt it later in life. When speaking in English, she does not want to give the impression that she is a 'foreigner' or even that she has learnt it. Her imagined L2 language speaker identity consists of a native speaker image. Another point here is that she refers to her sister again, who played a powerful role in constructing Seren's English learner identity. Her sister had heard pilots speaking among themselves and noticed that one was Turkish because "he did not have an accent" (extract 19, line 7).

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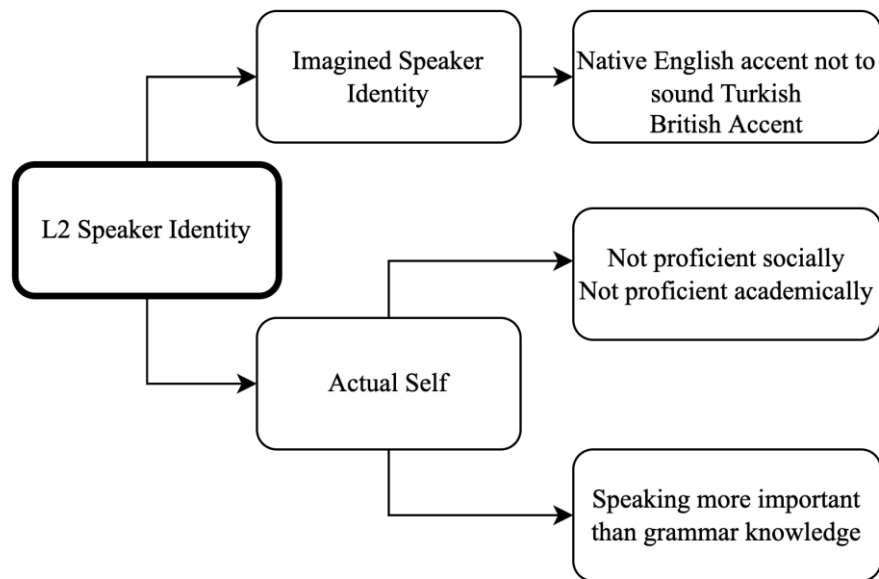
Figure 8. Seren's L2 speaker identity

According to Seren, a L2 speaker identity (Figure 8) has to be accompanied with an accent that makes it more "genuine" or "real". A speaker identity with no English accent is not preferred. She also points out that acquiring an accent is also part of language education, suggesting that if you have an accent you received a proper English education.

However, what is more preferred: an American, English or New Zealand accent? The answer to the question seems to show how Seren perceives standard American and English accents. She seems to be a little confused about them but has a certain preference:

Extract 20

1	Hakan:	Peki nerenin aksanı olmalı. Amerika mı, İngiliz mi, Avustralya mı, Yeni
2		Zelanda mı?
3	Seren:	Yani şöyle Amerikan olmamalı bence. İngiliz aksanı yani. Hepsinin aksanını
4		ayrı ayrı bilmiyorum ben. Amerikan ve İngiliz biliyorum. Amerikan zaten böyle
5		çok kullanılan falan bir aksan değil anladığım kadarıyla. Ne Amerika'da öyleydi,
6		ne de, ben Amerikan Kültür diye bir kursa gitmiştim, orada da mesela hiç, 'kant'
7		diye öğretmişlerdi bize mesela, şu an her yerde 'kent kent' diye duyuyoruz
8		mesela. O yüzden yani daha kibar…

1	*Hakan:*	*So, whose accent should it be? American, British, Australian, New Zealand?*
2	*Seren:*	*I believe it shouldn't be American. It should be British. I don't know each of*
3		*these accents. I know the American and the British. As far as I understand, the*
4		*American one is not commonly used. It was neither in America, nor in the*
5		*course at the American Culture (an institution in Turkey), they did not, they*
6		*taught us to say 'kant' (/kant/), now I hear everybody say 'kent, kent' (/kænt/).*
7		*That's why it's more polite.*

(Interview, 1/10/2019)

Seren believes that the American accent is not very commonly used and speaks about how she was taught to pronounce the word 'can't'; she was told that /kant/ is American and /kænt/ is British (extract 20, line 6). Therefore, she prefers a 'British accent" because she thinks it sounds more polite.

In another interview later, she says she is conflicted about being perceived as a foreigner or Turkish based on her accent:

Extract 21

1	Hakan:	Peki, konuştuğun İngilizceden senin Türk olduğun anlaşılması, diyelim ki bir
2		toplantıdasın veya herhangi bir yerdesin, Türkiye dışındasın, Türk olduğunun
3		anlaşılması senin için problem mi?
4		...
5	Seren:	Ben çok çelişiyorum bu konuda ya. Bazen böyle düşünüyorum bazen tezat
6		düşünüyorum. Mesela bugün will kullanırken mesela işte will'in öyle
7		kullanılmayacağını I'll diye söyleneceğini konuşuyorduk. Eğer will olarak
8		söylerseniz işte Türk İngilizcesi olarak anlaşılır falan dendi mesela. Yani bu
9		yanlış değil bence ama hani bence bize verilen algı birazcık yanlış. Ben
10		sanmıyorum diğer ülkelerde böyle konuşursanız böyle konuştuğunuz anlaşılır,
11		bu ülkeden olduğunuz anlaşılır falan...

1	*Hakan:*	*So, is it a problem for you if it is obvious from the way you speak English, let's*
2		*say at a meeting or somewhere outside of Turkey, that people would*
3		*understand that you are Turkish?*
4	*Seren:*	*I'm very conflicted about this. Sometimes I think like this and sometimes the*
5		*opposite. For example today we talked about how we shouldn't say will but use*
6		*I'll instead. They said in class if you use will, it will be perceived as using*
7		*Turkish English. I don't think that this is wrong but I think the perception that*
8		*they give is wrong. I don't think that when you speak in a certain way in a*
9		*foreign country they'll understand that you speak differently or that you are*
10		*from a specific country...*

<div align="right">(Interview, 10/12/2019)</div>

It is a fact that learners, especially in an EFL setting, create certain myths about how to use the language properly from a native speaker point of view. Here we can see that being perceived as a foreigner from the way you use the language is an issue that is being discussed among the learners (extract 21, lines 6-7). The use of 'will' instead of the contraction 'I'll' seems to be an indicator of a variety called 'Turkish English' among the students. Seren seems to be conflicted about this saying that she doesn't believe that speaking in a certain way would be an indicator that you are a foreigner.

4.3 Summary of Seren's case

Right from the beginning of her studies at the English Preparatory School (EPS), Seren's investment in learning English is aligned with a desire to become a part of a future community of English speakers abroad, mainly for social and sociocultural

reasons. She believes that English is a 'starter' language giving access to learning other languages. She explicitly did not seem to have constructed an identity related to the economic capital of speaking English. However, through the course of the program, near the end, her commitment to learning English for integrative reasons seems to drop and moving to a more instrumental motivation of passing the course and starting her studies at the department. This suggests that her original L2 investment based on a social and cultural capital had diminished and transformed to a more practical 'pass the course' learner identity.

As part of the past learning experience, Seren seems to have negotiated a negative learner identity as a family member who lagged behind learning English because all of her family members have learnt it and are using it, especially her sister. One positive aspect about her past learning experience is that she had acquired certain words from playing video games. Her engagement in English during playing the games seems to have made a contribution to her past-mediated L2 identity because she mentioned this on many occasions.

In regard to her L2-mediated speaker and user identity, speaking English in class seems to be a barrier that Seren, just like the participants, could not overcome because her L2-mediated learner identity created confidence problems making her think that she will make all kinds of mistakes; pronunciation, grammar or vocabulary. It seems that she did not adopt an L2 speaker or user identity during the learning process. Her projected ideal learner identity consisted of a speaker that is fluent and accurate while speaking. However, because she thought that she could not produce language at this level, they did not even try to speak it. However, Seren's L2 speaker identity had clear ideas about an imagined speaker with a native English accent because an accent is an indicator of English speaking mastery. A

Turkish accent would only show your ethnicity and an identity of a 'learner', which according to Seren should not be reflected during English speaking.

In the present learning experience during her stay at the ESP, many factors contributed to her constructing contradicting and flexible identities. Her agency to stick only to class content and take initiative by not engaging in out-of-class content showed that her learner identity was focused only on passing the course and not seeing English as a means of communication. This also was reflected in her communicative class interactions where she chose to speak only in Turkish with the teacher and her classmates. She chose to speak in English only when she was asked a lesson-related question or when she participated in homework or assignment parts of the lesson. She also negotiated a learner identity as an unsuccessful English writer because the process was too overwhelming for her in terms of managing the time and the vocabulary to create an English written product that would satisfy her imagined level of English writing proficiency. The process that was required and the actual outcome were not in line with the imagined L2 self that was expected to create more complex sentences with more advanced vocabulary.

4.4 Ulaş' case

4.4.1 Vignette

Ulaş is 20 years old and was born as an only child in a small city in the province of Çanakkale. Ulaş's mother is a Turkish Literature graduate but has worked at their own shoe business in their hometown since she was 13 years old. His father used to work as a lawyer before he retired. Now he works as a farmer on his own land. He says that both of his parents are of Tatar descent. Ulaş went to primary, secondary and high school in his hometown. He wanted to leave the little city after secondary

school and had asked whether he could study in Çanakkale, which can be considered a big city. After the Central High School Placement Exam (TEOG), he chose only cities in Çanakkale, mainly because his father had allowed him to do so. However, when the results came he saw that he had been placed at a school in his hometown. He says that this school had been his last choice; it was impossible for him to have scored so low. But when he checked the school selection page, he noticed that all the school selections he had made in Çanakkale had been changed by his family. They had not wanted him to leave their sides. He says when he was young, his family did not trust him much because he was not a trustable child; he describes himself as a 'delinquent'. He used to drink wine with his friends in 7th grade and started to smoke in 8th grade. He says that his parents' lack of attention and care, and the socio-cultural state of his hometown contributed to all of these negative traits. "Had I lived in another town, I wouldn't have ended up starting these so early" he says in one of the interviews. He says he would skip school in the afternoon to hitchhike to Çanakkale and then hitchhike back in the evening. They would bribe the person who was taking attendance at his high school to mark them present. In his last year of school, his family decided that he should finish high-school in Çanakkale since life in his little town would not help him academically. So, they rented him a flat there and he finished high school in Çanakkale and won the university entrance exam in his first try. He initially wanted to study either history, sociology or anthropology because he says that he also spent a great deal of time reading books in his high school years. He was very much interested in these topics. However, he later decided that an academic career as a result of studying these departments would not be financially rewarding. He was also very interested in the world of visual media like cinema and Tv and had even worked on Tv sets before. Therefore, he decided to

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study Radio, Cinema and Television. To do this he still had to trick his parents. They wanted him to study economics or law. He fooled them into believing that he had selected these departments after the exam. He says the fact that he was living alone in Çanakkale and not being on good terms with his father helped him to achieve his goal to study Cinema. Of course there was a huge fight after they had found out that this was the case. He says that both of his parents were very angry to have been deceived and it took him some serious effort to convince them to finance him during his studies. He said he convinced his mother first; "she couldn't stand being in conflict with his only son and my father had to throw in the towel". He studies at his department on a 50% scholarship.

Ulaş and his family were involved in a car accident when he was 8 years old. He says that he stayed in a coma for 6 months and suffered from amnesia afterwards. He says that he has a scar on his face (it's hidden because of his beard) and on his backhead. He also has a platinum plate in his leg. He says that this incident remained as a traumatic experience in his life.

Ulaş opened a legal case to change his name to Ulaş. In the interviews he stated that his old name meant "defender of the faith" and that he is agnostic. He wanted to change it to Ulaş or Cengiz, (which both literally mean 'war, battle') because he says he experiences constant conflicts within himself and that he identifies with this name more than Ulaş.

4.4.2 Progress at the English Preparatory School

Ulaş started the EPS at the beginner A Level in the Fall 2019 term. He passed this level and continued studying the B1 Level in the Spring 2020 semester, which switched to online instruction in mid-March 2020. We can say that in terms of the

scores he received in his quizzes, midterm, and final exam, he was a consistent student getting scores in the 60-68 range (see Table 6). He chose not to study the B2 Level at the Summer School (it is not compulsory) because he wanted to study for the proficiency exam that is administered to the newcomers before the Fall semester. However, he did not pass this exam and had to study for one semester at the B2 Level in the Fall 2021 semester. Here, his scores dropped under 60 but he managed to get a 70 at the final exam and passed this level to start at his department as an irregular student in the Spring 2021 semester.

Table 6. Ulaş' Progress at Preparatory School

Ulaş	Fall 2019 A Level	Spring 2020 B1 Level	Summer 2020 B2 Level	Fall 2021 B2 Level
Participation (10%)	8	8		6
Quizzes (20%)	60	62		54
Midterm (%30)	68	63		59
Final (40%)	67	68	Did not study	70
Total	67	66		63
Attendance	68/70 (350/81%)	63/64 (320/80%)		46/54 (270/83%)

Note. Participation out of 10. All exam scores and total out of 100.

Ulaş's participation scores were fairly high in the first two semesters at the school (8 out of 10) but dropped to 6 at the B2 Level in the Fall 2019 semester, which was conducted using a hybrid approach (part online and part face-to-face). In terms of attendance, he chose to use nearly all of his %20 absenteeism rights during the first two semesters and came close to the limit in the B2 Level with 46 hours out of the 54 hours they were allowed to be absent.

4.4.3 Investment in English

"Speaking English will make a difference in terms of personal quality."

When Ulaş started English Preparatory School, he had a clear idea of why learning English was important for him and his future career. In his first interview, he pointed out how English was one of the most invaluable languages of our times. He also added that nowadays you need more than one foreign language in the world if you do not want to come across communication problems in many areas. He said "*Because the world is increasingly becoming global and everybody is everywhere; therefore in various places there are various languages"* [*"Çünkü dünya gittikçe globalleşiyor ve herkes her yerde bulunuyor ve bulunduklarından dolayı bir çok yerde bir çok fazla dil çıkıyor"*] (Interview, 2/10/2019). The fact that 'everybody is everywhere' makes it possible to experience communication problems and that's why, according to Ulaş, we need to learn English (and maybe even more languages). Ulaş is aware that English has become a lingua franca and that he needs it if he does not want to encounter communication problems when he wants to interact with speakers of other languages.

On many occasions in the interviews I conducted with Ulaş, he mentioned that in Çanakkale he had the chance to meet many foreigners. One reason is that the small town in the province of Çanakkale is a center for ceramics production and attracts not only tourists but also international labor. Another reason is the university in Çanakalle, where Ulaş had spent his last year in high-school. Ulaş mentions two people that might had an impact on the construction of his imagined identity as an English speaker:

Extract 22

1	Ulaş:	Benim yakın çevremden, Çanakkaleliyim hocam, öğrencileri geliyor, mesela
2		arkadaşım Maca vardı İran'dan geliyordu, mesela onunla çat pat İngilizce
3		konuşmaya çalışırdık. Baktım ben İngilizce konuşamıyorum Maca'ya Türkçe
4		öğrettik bir süre sonra. Çok eski bir özel hocamın, Burcu hocamın İzmir'de
5		ev arkadaşı Nepalli, , mesela onunla da sürekli İngilizce konuşmaya
6		çalışıyoruz ama benim lise İngilizce eğitimim çok eksik oldu hocam.

1	Ulaş:	*In my close community, I'm from Çanakkale sir, students come from*
2		*different places, for example my friend Maca, he came from Iran, for*
3		*example, we tried to speak in English with him as much as we could. When*
4		*we realized I can't speak English we taught Maca Turkish. My former*
5		*private tutor, Mrs. Burcu, she had a roommate from Nepal in İzmir, for*
6		*example, we try to speak in English with him but sir, my high-school English*
7		*education was very insufficient.*

(Interview, 2/10/2019)

With these encounters, Ulaş is reminded that English is valuable as a social capital as we can see in extract 22. He mentions a friend called Maca from Iran and also his private teacher's roommate from Nepal, with both of whom he tried to communicate in English but seemed to have failed because he states in lines 6-7 that his high-school English education had been insufficient and this was the reason his English was not at a sufficient level to communicate (see Table 7).

Table 7. Ulaş' Trajectory of L2 Investment

L2 Investment	Actual Self	Imagined Self
Social Capital	English is a global language Speaking with foreign friends	Elevated Personal Quality
Cultural Capital	Standard Tests (TOEFL, IELTS)	Going abroad to study Elevated social status
Economic Capital	-	-

Ulaş also has clear visions on why he needs to invest in learning English related to his academic career. He is a Radio, Tv and Cinema department student and he says he wants to do a double major in psychology. He also wants to get a master's degree in psychology but he wants to do this abroad. He says "*There's gonna be IELTS, TOEFL exams and it will be useful in those. In terms of master's degree, my department, a double major, I will always need English.*" ["...yüksek lisansım olsun, bölümüm olsun, ÇAP yapacağım zaman olsun, bu İngilizce bana her zaman   benim bana lazım olacak yani.] (Interview, 2/10/2019).

From a cultural capital point of view, Ulaş has clear ideas about the importance of speaking English. In his first interview, he points out that speaking English will have an impact on his "*personal quality*", which shows that he believes in an "elevated self through the capital of speaking English". When asked about whether speaking English will make a difference in his status, he says:

Extract 23

1	Ulaş:	Kişisel kalite olarak yaratır İngilizce bilmem. Pek düşünmüyorum özel
2		sektör veya kamuda, zaten sinema televizyoncuyum, ne yapabilirim ki
3		kamuda. Ne bileyim Ak Partiye seçmen videosu çekemem. Yani İngilizce
4		bilmem benim biraz daha hani şey olur, el üstünde tutulmam olur, o direk
5		CV'de yer ediyor. Şu kadar, B2 seviyesinde İngilizceye sahiptir, işte
6		IELTS'e girmiştir, şunu almıştır, gerçi bizim ülkedekiler ne anlar ki
7		IELTS'tan, birçoğu dil ile veya irticalarla pardon ilticalarla uğraşmayan
8		insanlar. Yani işime yarayacağını düşünüyorum İngilizcenin. Ama bu
9		ülkede değil, diğer ülkelerde.

1	*Ulaş:*	*Speaking English will make a difference in terms of personal quality. I don't*
2		*think it will make a difference in the private sector or the state sector, what*
3		*can I do in the state sector? Well, I can't shoot a voter video for AKP.*
4		*Speaking English will elevate my status, it will make a difference in my CV,*
5		*saying that I'm at B2 level, that I speak English, that I entered an IELTS*
6		*exam and received this score, well, mind you, what do people in our country*
7		*know of IELTS, most of them are not interested in language or in*
8		*fundamentalism, sorry I mean, in refugees. Well, I believe that English will*
9		*be useful, but not in this country, in other countries.*

(Interview, 2/10/2019)

In extract 23, we see that Ulaş also wants to share his political identity and its relevance to speaking English. It's interesting to note that from an economic capital point of view, at this point he does not believe that investing in English will make any difference both in the private or public sector; but from a personal stance, he believes that it will elevate his status. However, he also adds that he believes that having an IELTS score is not a value among Turkish people (extract 23 lines 6-7). He asserts his political stance in saying that he won't shoot a video for the ruling party AKP. Another point is that Ulaş also likes to play with words in Turkish. In extract 23 line 7-8 he says "*most of them are not interested in language or in fundamentalism, sorry I mean, in refugees.*" ["birçoğu dil ile veya irticalarla pardon ilticalarla uğraşmayan insanlar."]. Here, Ulaş makes a play on the words "*irtica*" (religious fundamentalists) and "*iltica*" (refugees). He wants to make it sound like it was a wrong choice of words since both words sound very alike. Initially, he wants

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to say that our people are not interested in the value of speaking a foreign language because they do not care about the refugees (*iltica*) but he also wants to imply that our people are religious fundamentalists (*irtica*).

4.4.4   Past learning experience

"*Even at that age as a child, I could feel that she had problems*".

Ulaş' earliest memory of being exposed to English as a language was when he was 5 years old and his family bought him a game of matching cards. He says he remembers playing with them. At the same time, he says they were watching English movies. It was his cousin with whom he watched movies like Last Kingdom, Green Mile and Butterfly Effect. Since they lived in a small town, there were only a few places where they could rent or copy movies, he says, but they were expensive and they did not have money for that. So, together with his cousin, they streamed those movies online. At the same time, before receiving formal English instruction, he states that he also used to play English games like Max Payne, GTA, Call of Duty and Battlefield. These games require a certain level of English; however, it is possible to skip certain parts and understand the gameplay and just play. Most of the participants report that their first exposure to English started with playing games even though they did not understand English. He says that he still continues to play video games.

Ulaş does not mention any negative feelings about having problems in understanding what was going on in the movies (since they were probably watching it with Turkish subtitles) and the games he played. Therefore, we can say that he did not have a negative stance towards the language. Another factor that should be mentioned is his family's attitude and level in English. Ulaş says that his father

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knows English but he does not speak it all. He says that he must have forgotten it. However, he stated on several occasions that his mother speaks English at an A level. In the first interview he said:

Extract 24

1	Ulaş:	Annem bir A seviyesinde İngilizceye sahiptir ve sürekli kullanır bunu, hani
2		gündelik hayatında. Mesela Türkçe bir kelime yerini karşılamasın İngilizce bir
3		kelime söylüyor annem. Türkçesini unutuyor, İngilizcesini söylüyor artık. Öyle
4		bir şey var.

1	Ulaş:	*My mother knows English at A level and she uses it all the time, I mean, on a*
2		*daily basis. For example, when she cannot find the right Turkish word, she uses*
3		*an English word. She forgets the Turkish one and says the English one. She is*
4		*like that.*

Interview, October 2, 2019

This suggests that even when he was a child, he was exposed to bilingual practices in the household. This must have had an effect on his attitude towards English and also on the various forms of communication that are available to bilinguals, like translanguaging. This attitude was also observed in all of Ulaş' interviews and classroom interactions where he used English words while speaking Turkish. This included direct interactions with his classmates or questions asked to his teachers.

Ulaş' formal schooling in English started at the 4th grade in primary school at a state school in his small town in the province of Çanakkale. When recounting his past English learning experience, Ulaş did not mention unfavorable attitudes towards English in his interviews, but he acknowledged on many occasions that the education they received was very bad. Based on his interview data, we cannot say that he was a disengaged learner; however, the conditions did not allow him to become the English speaker that he was probably aiming for. Ulaş went to the same school for his primary, secondary and high school education. He only changed to another school in his last year of high school. They had only one teacher at primary school and one teacher at secondary.

Talking about his first formal learning experience, he remembers that they first started learning English words for the first 2 months, and then the "am, is, are's". He says in his first interview (2/10/2019): *"Well, all the am-is-are's. First of all we learned words, only words for 1-2 months. There were units, we learned words from these units first. Then we continued with grammar. We progressed from there with am-is-are.".* Again, his learning experience does not reflect a negative stance towards learning English. However, this started to change when he started secondary school. Talking about his English teacher in secondary school, he refers to her as "someone with problems":

Extract 25

1	Ulaş:	Banu hoca da şöyle bir kişilikti, biraz sorunları vardı. Daha ben o yaşta çocuğum
2		kendisinin sorunları olduğunu hissedebiliyordum. Çünkü, 30 kişilik bir sınıf
3		düşünün hocam, 30 kişide en önde ben varım, bir de yanımda 13 senelik bir
4		arkadaşım var, şu an oda İstanbul'da zaten, ikimiz de İstanbul kazandık. Ona bir
5		şey soruyorum, gene konu ile ilgili bir şey soruyorum. Bir anda arkasını dönüp
6		"ben size konuşmayın demedim mi" diye bir başlıyor bağırmaya. Oysa ki, bir
7		harala gürele gürültü de yok, birbirimizle fısıldaşıyoruz. Ben soruyu soruyorum
8		geliyor bağırıyordu bana. Hani şey olarak, Banu hoca, ortaokuldaki hocam.
9		Gürültü yapmayın, konuşmayın cart curt.

1	Ulaş:	*My teacher Banu had a character with problems. Even at that age as a child, I*
2		*could feel that she had problems. Imagine a class with 30 students, 30 students*
3		*and I am right at the front and right next to me is is a friend of mine whom I*
4		*have known for 13 years, he is also in Istanbul now, we both came to İstanbul. I*
5		*ask him something, something related to the subject. She immediately turns*
6		*around and starts to scream "didn't I tell you not to speak". As a matter of fact,*
7		*there is not much rumble going on, we're just whispering to each other. I ask a*
8		*question, she would scream at me. So, Banu teacher, my secondary school*
9		*teacher. Don't make any noise, don't talk, etc.*

Interview, 2/10/2019

In this extract 25, we can see that the type of instruction in Ulaş' class was an authoritarian one where the teacher is the dominant figure and center of knowledge in the class. According to Ulaş' experience above, the possibility to create or initiate

an English-mediated community of practice (CoP), even if it's in the form of a chit-chat or question/answer exchange, was not allowed by the teacher as can be seen in extract 25 line 6, he remembers being told not to make any noise and do not talk. With the use of [car, curt] in Turkish, he sarcastically comments further on the "don't make noise, don't talk" and wants to mean that there were other ways of being warned not to talk or make any noise but uses a sarcastic slang (cart, curt) to express this. Even though Ulaş' engagement with English seems to be a positive one, he does not recount a positive stance about his formal language learning experience in the classroom. This seems to continue during his high-school education. In terms of learning, Ulaş kept repeating on various occasions during his first interviews how bad language learning at high-school was. Clearly, his language awareness was very high due to his exposure to English games or movies, but at school Ulaş seemed to be denied the language learning opportunities he was trying to achieve. In his first interviews, he says that his English education at high-school was very insufficient. Instructions about the central university entrance exam and its components were prioritized over language education. Therefore, they were given mathematics or literature education in their English classes. In addition, he says that they were given English exams beforehand and told to memorize them. In a focus group interview (including another classmate), Ulaş said the following:

Extract 26

1	Ulaş:	Lisedeyken lanet ettirdiler hocam İngilizceden.
2	Hakan:	Neden?
3	Ulaş:	İngilizce dersine matematik koyuyorlar. Önüme kağıdı veriyorlar bu İngilizce
4		sınavanız çözün gelin diyorlar.
5	St:	Bize cevaplı sınav kağıdı veriyorlardı. Derste de top oynuyorduk.
6	Ulaş:	Biz matematik çözüyorduk. Lanet olsun.

1	Ulaş:	*At high school, they made us hate English sir.*
2	Hakan:	*Why?*
3	Ulaş:	*They would show us mathematics in English class. They would give us a*
4		*document and tell us that this is our English exam and we should go and do it.*
5	St:	*They would give us the exam together with the key! And in class we would play*
6		*football.*
7	Ulaş:	*We would solve math problems, damn it!*

(1/11/2019)

In this extract, he points out that 'they' made them hate English. This implies that Ulaş actually wanted to learn English but the school with its own teaching policies made it difficult for learners to achieve this goal. In extract 26 line 7, Ulaş expresses this frustration of being denied this opportunity: [lanet olsun] "*damn it*". In another instance in the same interview, he remembers the grammar dominated structural instructions and subjects from the syllabus as well as expresses disappointment about the system that regulates language learning in Turkey.

Extract 27

1	Ulaş:	Ve bu kadar sürede bu kadar süreye rağmen, past tense simple işledik, ortaokulda,
2		lisede anlatmıştı hocam, lisede İngilizce derslerimize ya matematik sokuşturdu ya
3		Türkçe, ya edebiyat sokuşturdu o yüzden pek bir şey öğrenemedik. Hani biz bu
4		simple'ları gördük, past'ları gördük, preposition'ları gördük ama yok. Neden yok,
5		işte sorun burada? Başta, eğitimden kaynaklı bir şey var ki biz burada hazırlığa
6		düşüyoruz.
7		

1	Ulaş:	*And in all that time, all that time we spent, we covered past tense simple, my*
2		*teacher had taught it in secondary school and in high school sir, in high school*
3		*in our English classes, they would do either mathematics or Turkish literature,*
4		*that's why we hardly learned anything. So, we covered the simples, the pasts,*
5		*prepositions but no, it didn't work. Why didn't it work, well, that's the problem.*
6		*Initially, there is a problem with our education and that's why we are at prep*
7		*school.*
8		

(Interview, 1/11/2019)

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Ulaş wants to show me that he has a grasp of the major subjects in English learning. He states that they have covered the past tense simple. Note that here he chooses to add the 'simple' as well to show that he knows the distinction of the simple past tense and the progressive one. He also adds (using the plural to express the multitude of topics that they have been instructed) they received education about the "*simple's, the past's, prepositions*" ["bu simple'ları gördük, past'ları gördük, preposition'ları gördük"] (extract 27, lines 5-6) but adds a strict "*but no*" ["ama yok"] to show that all these formal instructions of grammatical structures do not work. He blames the education system for his not being able to pass the preparatory school exemption exam: " *that's why we are at prep school.*" [" biz burada hazırlığa düşüyoruz"]. Here, his past-mediated self (Figure 9) uses the pronoun 'we' instead of 'I' to show that this is not something that only he is subjected to but maybe a generation of Turkish high-school graduates born in the late 90s.
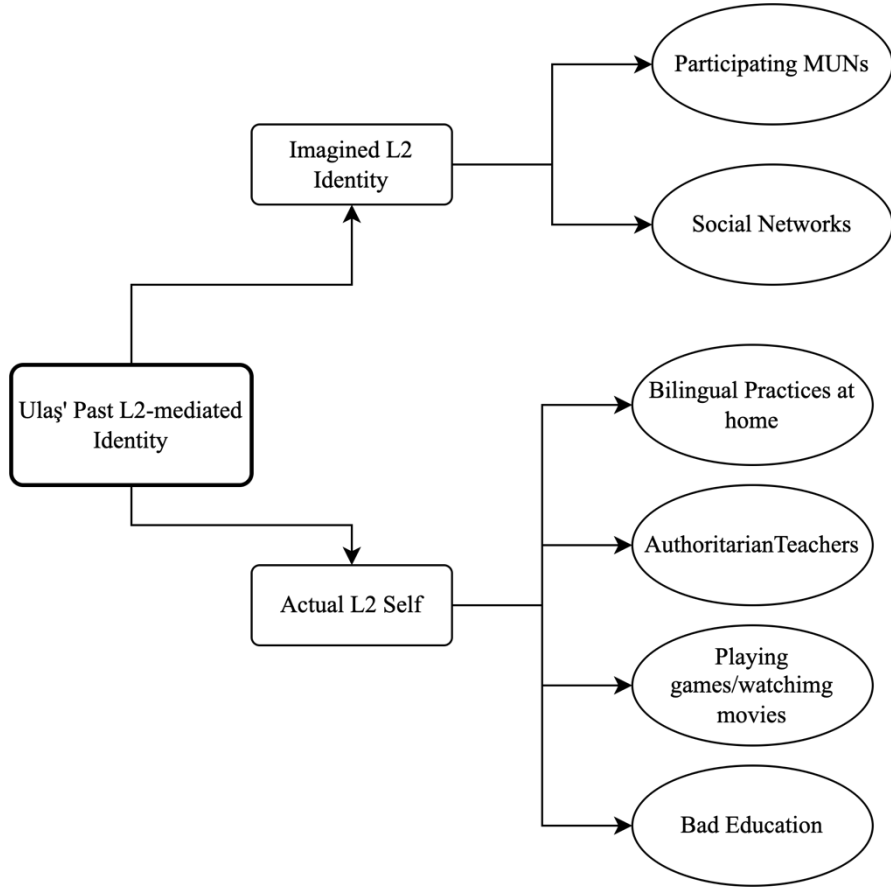
Figure 9. Ulaş's past L2-mediated identity

Even though he has this negative attitude towards the form of instruction that he was subjected to, Ulaş continued to acknowledge his positive feelings towards the language when he explained his (then) current state and level of English. "*That's why I came here with what little English I had from secondary school, and I am also familiar with the language because I dabble in Tv series and games. But in general I like English. I don't have any hostility towards the lessons*" ["Hani o yüzden ben ortaokul İngilizcem ne kadar varsa onunla geldim, bir de dizi ve oyunlara da biraz haşır neşirim biraz oradan aşinalığım var. Ama İngilizceyi severim genel olarak. Bir düşmanlığım yoktur derse."]. Talking about his language level, I asked him why he ended up at the beginner level at the English Preparatory school even though he had

started learning English in fourth grade. Again, he replied mentioning being denied community of practice (CoP) opportunities even though he was seeking them:

Extract 28

1	Ulaş:	Çünkü dil nankördür hocam. Kullanmıyoruz, yazmıyorum. İşte ne bileyim böyle
2		İngilizce kullanabileceğimiz sosyal platformlarda da bulunmadım lise
3		zamanında. Mesela benim arkadaşlarım MUN'a katılırdı. Bizim Çanakkale
4		Troya MUN vardır ve bir çok arkadaşım ona katıldı. Mesela benim lisenin ilk üç
5		senesinde, lise biraz kötü bir liseydi, sosyal olanakları hiç yardım etmiyorlardı.
6		Ben Troya MUN katılalım dediğimde bana götüyle güldüler affedersiniz. Hani
7		kimi bulacaksın, kime katılacaksın, bak kişi başı şu kadar para istiyorlarmış
8		falan.

1	Ulaş:	*Because language is ungrateful. We don't use it, I don't write. Well, and I*
2		*wasn't on social platforms where English was used during my high school*
3		*years. For example, some of my friends participated in MUN. We had this*
4		*Çanakkale Troya MUN and a lot of my friends participated in it. For example,*
5		*in the first 3 years of my high school education, it was a bad high school, they*
6		*wouldn't help us with social activities. When I said let's participate in Troya*
7		*MUN, they laughed their asses off, excuse my language. Well, who can you find,*
8		*who can you join, and they are asking for this much money per person.*

(Interview, 2/10/2019)

Ulaş is well aware that to speak a language you need active engagement. He says that "language is ungrateful" ["dil nankördür"], which is a Turkish saying about how you need to 'be constantly in touch' with a foreign language or it will leave you immediately because you haven't paid enough attention to it. Ulaş knows this saying and says that he wasn't able to use it (he means speak it) and write it. At the same time, he seems to blame himself about not seeking enough opportunities on social platforms (extract 28, line 2) because he knows that those kinds of interactions might be helpful in learning the language. At the same time, he is also aware of other opportunities that could provide him with English speaking activities. He mentioned his friend who participated in a MUN (Model United Nations). A MUN is an international roleplay activity where high-school students from all over the world play UN delegates and simulate a UN committee. As a positively engaged learner

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with aspirations, Ulaş wants to take part in these events and most probably talks about MUNs to his teachers and his classmates. However, the reaction he receives is that they "*laughed their asses off*" ["bana götüyle güldüler"] (extract 28, line 7). This implies that they made fun of him for even suggesting the possibility of taking part in an international activity like MUN. The main reason he gives for this negative reaction is the socio-cultural level of the high-school he is attending. He states that it was not a very good high-school and they were not helping them in arranging these activities. In extract 28 lines 7-8, he expresses this reluctance by stating that there were no authorities you could ask about these kinds of activities. In addition, they also commented on how economically difficult it would be to engage in such activities. Obviously, Ulaş' tone in telling these sounds of frustration. Here we can see that Ulaş is actively seeking opportunities to participate in communities of practice; however, because of the cultural, social and economical vision of his classmates and school teachers, he cannot take this step.

4.4.5   Present learner experience

   "Well, I generally try to speak in English but most of the time there are times when I answer in Turkish"

Ulaş started English Preparatory School with great enthusiasm. We have already seen how his attitude towards English learning was in his past learning experience. When he started at the B1 level in the Fall 2019 term, his language awareness was already very high and he possessed a positive stance towards English and the formal learning process even though his past learning experience was a negative one. On various occasions, he repeated how English was neglected in high-school and how this affects his present English level. When asked what level he thinks he will

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achieve, he says C1. "I cannot reach native or grandmaster C2 level, well, I can, but for that I need to go to a place like India for example. Mother tongue, they used to be a British colony, I need to go to countries where they speak it like it's their mother tongue" [Hani bir anadil, grand master c2 olmak olamam da, olabilirim ama onun için İngiltere'ye veya ne bileyim böyle bir Hindistan'a falan gitmem lazım. Anadil, zamanında İngiliz sömürgesi olmuşlar, orada anadil gibi konuşan ülkelere gitmem lazım] (Interview, 02,10/2019). The reason he chooses a former colony is that he thinks they are cheaper than going to England. He also gives Malta as an example. Ulaş believes the best way to learn English is to speak English in your community. He says "English should be learnt by speaking it in a community" [İngilizce çevre olarak konuşularak öğrenilmeli]. Here he means that this community is the class because he continues by giving examples from his classroom and how his teachers force them to speak English all the time. However, at times, he seems to be contradicting himself: "When we don't understand something, they speak to us in Turkish. This is very good" [Anlamadığımız yerde bize Türkçe konuşmaya başlıyorlar. O çok iyi mesela hani]. In addition, when asked about whether he asks his questions in Turkish or English, he says:

Extract 29

1	Ulaş:	Genellikle zaten İngilizce konuşmaya çalışıyorum, practice olsun diye hem de X
2		hocamız "English please" diyor. Hani bizi, nasıl desem, bizi konuşmaya teşvik
3		ediyor. "English please" dediği için biz de İngilizce konuşuyoruz genelde. Yani
4		ben İngilizce konuşmaya çalışıyorum genellikle ama çoğunlukla Türkçe cevap
5		verdiğim oluyor…
6	Hakan:	Türkçe cevap verdiğin zamanlar ne zaman oluyor hatırlıyor musun?
7	Ulaş:	Hatırlıyorum, şöyle bir düşüneyim hocam, mesela çoktan seçmeli bir example
8		var, ben derim ki "B" değil de Bursa derim, o şekilde.

1	Ulaş:	*Generally, I try to speak in English, so that it's a practice, also, teacher X says*
2		*"English please". Well, how can I put it, she encourages us to speak. Because*
3		*she says "English please", we usually speak in English. Well, I generally try to*
4		*speak in English but most of the time there are times when I answer in Turkish.*
5	Hakan:	*When do you answer in Turkish? Do you remember?*
6	Ulaş:	*I do, let me think, for example when there is a multiple choice answer I say*
7		*'Bursa' instead of 'B'.*

(Interview, 2/10/2019)

In extract 29 line 4, he contradicts himself again saying that "most of the time, he replies in Turkish". This is in line with my class observations. Ulaş (and the other participants) tend to reply in Turkish to the more 'communicative' questions while they answer in English to the lesson-related questions. However, here Ulaş says that he uses the Turkish alphabet coding system of using Turkish cities when replying to multiple choice questions.

Ulaş keeps notes on A4 pieces of paper. He does not have a notebook. He says he has been working like this for a long time. When asked how frequently he takes notes, he says that he does it all the time" and adds:

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Extract 30

1	Ulaş	Hani bilmediğim bir şey varsa, kelime yazarım. Gramerleri sürekli yazmaya
2		çalışıyorum çünkü benim değil de gramer tarafım çok eksik hocam. Hani
3		gramerleri sürekli yazarım, bilmediğim kelimeleri de tek tek not alırımı, şu anda
4		üçüncü haftamız, saydım, bir work ile beraber 32-34 tane kağıdım olmuş.
5		Dosyam yanımda hocam gösterebilirim"].

1	Ulaş	*If there is something I don't know, I write the words. I always try to write the*
2		*'grammars' because I really lack in my grammar side. Well, I write the*
3		*grammars all the time, and note down all the words that I don't know, we're in*
4		*week three now, ı counted, together with a worksheet, I have 32-34 sheets of*
5		*paper. I can show you my dossier.*

(Interview, 2/10/2019)

 We can see that one of the ways Ulaş is investing in learning the language is writing down the new words and linguistic structures ('grammars') that are covered in class. When he goes back to his dorm room, he says that he takes a look at them. When asked about doing his homework, he says that he tries to do them; however, he is manipulated very easily by his roommate. His roommate is also a preparatory A level student, and when he does not finish his homework on time, his roommate asks him to go out or to the fitness center. When they return from working out, he says that he might go to sleep and this prevents him from doing his homework. On the other hand, he says that this does not happen too much.

In all my interviews with my participants, I asked how they would rate themselves out of 10 in terms of the effort they take to study after classes. I called this the 'effort scale'. In his first interview, Ulaş stated that his effort scale was six. He was a six because if he gave himself a nine or eight out of ten, it would be difficult to keep up with it for the rest of the term and this would psychologically affect him. He says: "*I still have 2 months to go. I could have a psychological decline, I don't know, maybe I experience something, I might not take the lessons seriously. (..) I might not do my homework. Giving myself a ten just after three*

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weeks is not fair" ["Çünkü daha 2 ayım var. Benim bir psikolojik düşüşüm olabilir, ne bileyim işte bir şey yaşarım, dersi iplemem. (...) Ödev yapmam. Daha üç haftadan kendime on vermem, haksızlık olur"]. (Interview, 2/10/2019). When I insist on asking whether he is sure about the number, he is adamant:

Extract 31

1	Ulaş	Şu an ki durumum 6. Kesin kararım. Çünkü öğrenme aşamasındayım. Mesela
2		hoca bana %100'lük bir şey veriyor ben onun ne kadarını alıyorum; hiç daha
3		kendimi sorgulamadım. Ama ben %100'ünü almaya çalışıyorum. O %100'ünü
4		almaya çalışırken de işte bazen ders çalışmam olsun, ödevim olsun, yapıyorum
5		ama bu sürekli devam edebilecek bir şey değil. Çünkü ben üniversite sınavına
6		hazırlanırken de böyle başladım hocam, ilk 6 ay köpek gibi çalıştım, kalan 3 ay
7		bir boşlamışım.

1	Ulaş	*At the moment, I'm a six. This is my decision. Because I'm in a learning stage.*
2		*For example, the teacher provides me with 100% of something, but how much of*
3		*that can I take in, I don't know yet. I try to take the 100% but regarding*
4		*studying or doing my homework, will I be able to go on with this, I don't know.*
5		*This was the same with my university exam preparation, the first 6 month I*
6		*studied like crazy, but in the last 3 months I didn't do anything.*

(Interview, 2/10/2019)

Here we can see that Ulaş uses an internal belief system to show that a six out of ten for his effort in and out of class can be justified. This type of investment is related to his academic capital in learning the language; however, this investment is mixed with his feelings of guilt about classroom requirements.

After passing the B1 Level, during his own studies in Summer 2019, Ulaş reported an effort scale of 10 out of 10. He stated that he really used English and also benefited from it. He said that he reads articles from the social academic site 'academia.edu'. He says:

Extract 32

1	Ulaş:	Academia'yı işte makale falan okumaya başladım. O dereceye geldiysem diye
2		düşündüm ben olmuşum diye düşündüm, sonra özgüven yapmaya başladım. ufak
3		ufak böyle, yükseliyorum rising, rise, rise, rise
4	Hakan:	Peki, academiaya'da ne tür makaleler ilgini çekiyor.
5		Tarihi, sosyolojik ve psikolojik makaleler daha dikkatimi çekiyor hocam.

1	Ulaş:	*I have started reading articles on Academia. I thought that if I had reached that*
2		*level, I accomplished a lot, then I started to gain self-confidence. Little by little*
3		*I'm rising, rise, rise, rise.*
4	Hakan:	*What kind of articles interest you?*
5		*Historical, sociological, and psychological articles seem to catch my attention*
6		*more.*

(Interview, 7/2020)

Here we can see that Ulaş recognizes the benefits of investing in English and how it has become a linguistic capital that transforms into a tangible product. He reports that he can read articles in subjects that interest him such as history, sociology or psychology, and cultural areas that Ulaş mentioned being interested in on many occasions both during his interviews and during his classes. From his perspective, this is also a sign that he has become a legitimate user of the language.

4.4.6   User vs speaker identity

"if we count my inner voice switching to English, yes, I could be both a user and speaker but I'm definitely a user"

In our interviews in the A beginner level during the Fall 2019 semesters, Ulaş did noy consider himself as a speaker of English but as a user of English. Just like the others, Ulaş has an accuracy-based understanding of speaking the language. According to him, you need to be accurate and fluent to consider yourself a speaker of a language. However, when asked about the difference of a user and a speaker of English, he gives his mother as an example:

Extract 33

1	Ulaş:	Aradaki fark, mesela annem gibi. Annem gün içerisinde Türkçe kelimeleri
2		unutup İngilizce kelimeler üzerinden bana bir şeyler diyebiliyor ve ben onu
3		anlayabiliyorum. Ben de gün içerisinde Türkçe kelimelerin yetersiz olduğu
4		yerde hani bu biraz daha edebiyatımızdaki yanlış batılılaşma gibi ama orada
5		İngilizce kullanıyorum ama tam olarak konuşamıyorum. Çünkü daha öğrenme
6		aşamasındayım.

1	Ulaş:	*The difference is for example, like my mother. My mother, during the day, might*
2		*forget some Turkish words and use English ones instead and I do understand*
3		*her. I, too, during the day, use English words when I forget the Turkish ones,*
4		*well, this is like the wrong westernization in our literature, but there I'm using*
5		*the language but I'm not exactly speaking it. Because I'm still in the process of*
6		*learning it.*

(Interview, 2/10/2019)

In extract 33, Ulaş as well as his mother seem to be using translanguaging skills to retain communication in situations where they cannot remember a Turkish word. Here Ulaş says that he can understand these; however, as he does not perceive this strategy as 'speaking', he accepts this as using the language. Therefore he sees himself as a user of English rather than a speaker. This stance seems to have changed later during his second term at the EPS after having finished the B1 level in the Spring 2019 semester. He says that he used to consider himself as a user because "*because there are no individuals in my social setting who could stimulate me to speak English, I cannot say that I speak English apart from the monologues I have with myself.* ["pek sosyal çevremde İngilizce konuşmamı tetikleyecek bireyler olmadığı için kendi içimde ki İngilizce monologlar dışında pek konuştuğum söylenemez."] (Diary Entry, May 2020). Ulaş still does not consider himself a speaker of English because there are no English speakers who could make him speak the language. He is pointing to the impossibility of a community of practice and this fact makes it difficult for him to consider himself a speaker. However, the aspect of talking to himself makes him wonder whether this practice could be an indicator of a

speaker of English. His engagement with English in imagined situations helps him to situate himself as a speaker. He says: "...b*ut if we count my inner voice switching to English, yes, I could be both a user and speaker but I'm definitely a user."* ["Ama iç sesimin İngizceye kayması sayılırsa evet hem kullanan hem konuşan biri olabilirim ama kesinlikle kullanan biriyim."] (Diary Entry, 26/5/2020]. During the summer break in 2020, the aspect of 'internal dialogues' came up again and he says that he continues to speak with himself in English. He says:

Extract 34

1	Ulaş:	Gün içerisinde kendime İngilizce küfür ediyorum, İngilizce monologlara
2		giriyorum. Bu genellikle ayağımı masanın köşesine çarptığımda 'What the fuck'
3		dememle başlayıp ilerleyen saatlerde İngilizce monologlara dönebiliyor. Ama
4		çoğunlukla mesela hocam o bende şöyle başladı, izlediğim yabancı dizi ve
5		filmlerin repliklerini tekrar ederim, o replikleri kendime yorumlayarak ve oradaki
6		ana karakterin yerine kendimi koymamla falan devam etti.
7	Hakan:	Hah, bunu hala yapıyor musun? (...)
8	Ulaş:	Sadece İngilizcelerini değil hocam aksanlarına kadar yapabiliyorum diyeyim ben
9		size.

1	Ulaş:	*I curse myself in English during the day, I start English monologues. This*
2		*usually starts with me saying 'What the fuck' when my foot hits the corner of the*
3		*table and then turns to English monologues later on. But mostly it started like*
4		*this, I repeat the lines I hear in foreign TV series and movies I watched, and*
5		*continued by adapting those lines to myself and putting myself in the place of the*
6		*main character there.*
7	Hakan:	*Oh, do you still do this? (...)*
8	Ulaş:	*Let me put it this way teacher, I not only do their English but also I do their*
9		*accents*

(Interview, 7/7/2020)

In extract #, we can see how Ulaş uses his imagined identity to situate himself as a speaker of English in situations that require him to make natural comments regarding the communicative situation he is in at that very moment. In this example, this is cursing to himself in English. Another aspect of the use of an imagined identity is his search for an imagined community of practice by replicating lines from English TV series (extract 34 line 4). Here, he not only repeats the lines, but also copies their

accent to establish authenticity as an imagined speaker in this fictional imagined

community of practice taking place on TV (extract 34, line 8).

4.4.7 Accent matters

> "*Because it makes it difficult for people to understand each other, in some*
> *way, I look at accents as some kind of racism*"

Ulaş had a strong opinion about English accents right from the beginning of our

interviews. First of all, he wanted to point out that there is a distinction between

a*ccent, dialect and vernacular* [aksan, şive, ağız] and he wanted to state that he is

aware of these in the Turkish language. He comes from a region where they have a

strong Agean Turkish accent and this must have created an awareness of accents in

languages. He also has an understanding of accents in English and he thinks that

owning a certain accent is not important. In his first interview, about accents he says:

Extract 35

1	Ulaş:	O aksan dediğimiz şey de bir türlü ağız. Kültürün nasıl yaşadığı ile, nasıl
2		konuştuğu ile ilgili, mesela Amerikan ingilizcesi çok kozmopolit bir yapıda
3		olduğu için; Hintlisi var, Arap'ı var, Yahudi'si var. Amerikan halkı zaten komple
4		karışık bir halk. O yüzden çok bir aksan hissetmezsin. Ama british aksanı, yani
5		ben duyduğumda kelimeleri seçemiyorum bile aralarında. O yüzden gereksiz.
6		Çünkü insanlarla ayrıma yol açıyor o aksan. İşte sen İngiliz aksanını
7		konuşuyorsun, seni anlayamıyorum. İnsanların birbiri ile anlaşmasını
8		zorlaştırdığı için bir nebze, nasıl desem, ırkçılık olarak bakıyorum ben aksan
9		konusuna.

1	Ulaş:	*That what you call accent is actually some kind of vernacular. It's about how*
2		*you experience your culture, or how you speak, for example, For example,*
3		*American English has a very cosmopolitan character because there are Indians,*
4		*Arabs, Jews etc. I mean American people are a mixture of totally different*
5		*people. Therefore, you won't hear an accent. But a British accent, well, I cannot*
6		*distinguish the words when they speak. Therefore, it's useless. Because it leads*
7		*to segregation, that accent. You speak with a British accent therefore I cannot*
8		*understand you. Because it makes it difficult for people to understand each*
9		*other, in some way, I look at accents as some kind of racism.*

<div align="right">(Interview, 02/10/2019)</div>

He believes that in America since there are people from different ethnic backgrounds, you will not hear an accent when they speak. However, according to him, this is not the case in Britain. He states that the British are difficult to understand and implies that somehow the British have this accent on purpose so that they are not understood by everyone, and this creates a situation where not everyone can understand them but only the ones who have the capability to do so (most probably only the British). He goes so far to even call this "some kind of racism" (extract 35, line 9). This might indicate that Ulaş' imagined speaker identity (Figure 10) involves an accent that is easily understood by everyone speaking English.
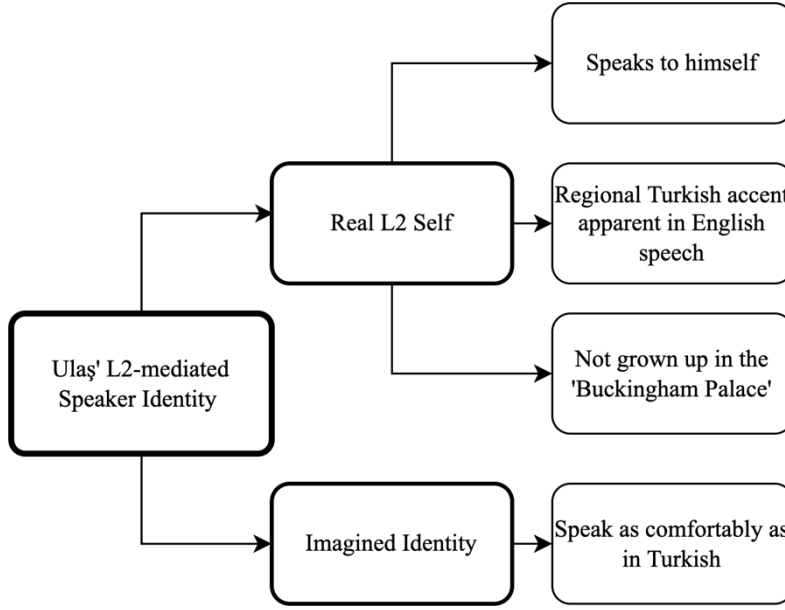
Figure 10. Ulaş's L2-mediated speaker identity

In another interview, I asked him whether he thinks speaking with a Turkish

or American accent matters. He comes up with an observation about different

Turkish variations of English:

Extract 36

1	Ulaş:	Hocam şimdi ben Türk şivesi İngilizceyi üç kolda ayırıyorum. Bir yeni öğrenilmiş
2		bir Türk şivesi var. O, sürekli böyle düşünüp düşünüp düşündüğünü önce
3		gramerleri aklına getirip o gramerleri sıralayarak söyleyenler. Diğeri de aşırı
4		derecede çok küçük yaştan İngilizceye maruz kalıp, Amerikan da olabilir bu
5		İngiliz aksanı, benim bir arkadaşım var mesela Bora, şu an kendisi üniversitede,
6		İngilizce işletme okuyor, çocuk hayatı boyunca özel okullarda geçirmiş,
7		İngilizceyi sürekli yabancı hocalardan görmüş ve çok akıcı konuşuyor.
8		Konuşuyor ama gramerinde eksiler var. O gramerindeki eksileri konuşa konuşa
9		kendisi kapatıyor.

1	Ulaş:	*Sir, I classify the Turkish-accent English into three parts. Firstly, there is the*
2		*newly learned (beginner) Turkish accent. In this one, the speaker continuously*
3		*thinks and thinks and thinks about the grammars first and then speaks by lining*
4		*up those grammars. The other one is where the speaker was exposed to English*
5		*extremely young and has, it could be an American English accent, for example I*
6		*have a friend, Bora, he is at university at the moment, studying business*
7		*administration in English, he spent his whole life in private schools, he has*
8		*always had foreign English teachers, and speaks fluently. He speaks but there*
9		*are flaws in his grammar. He hides these flaws by speaking fluently.*

(Interview, 01/11/2019)

In this extract, we can see how Ulaş tries to formulate versions of Turkish speakers' struggles in trying to speak the language while they are learning it. It looks like a learner's natural formulation of what 'interlanguage' (Pelinker, 1972) is. Ulaş divides Turkish English speakers into two (even though he says three, there is no mention of the third one). In the first group, Ulaş believes that when beginner Turkish learners speak, they first think about what they want to say. Here the 'what', according to him, consists of 'grammars' (extract 36, line 3), which might imply that Ulaş perceives the language as chunks of grammar. This seems to be natural because just like the majority of Turkish EFL learners, most of his EFL education consisted of structural explicit explanations of grammar structures. Therefore, it is natural to see that Ulaş perceives English speaking as "thinking of grammars and speaking by lining those grammars up". This is probably also the kind of English speech he observes among his peers in the classroom. The other group he mentions is the speaker who most probably learnt English at a young age and was exposed to it fairly early. He gives his friend Bora as an example (extract 36, line 6). Those speakers, he believes, speak with an American accent, have received education at private schools, had private foreign tutors and speak it fluently. Here, Ulaş implies that Turkish fluent speakers of English are socio-economically different from him as a beginner learner who needs to 'think' before he speaks. However, he also adds that they still have

problems in their grammar but overcome these problems by speaking fluently implying that 'speaking fluently does not require accurate grammar usage'. At the end of this dialogue, I ask whether he thinks accurate grammar is important when speaking in English and he says that it's important. He states that he cares about punctuation in Turkish even on platforms like WhatsApp. He adds: "*For me while speaking it's important because for the person across me, when I'm communicating with a person I don't want to leave this impression: this person has just learned English, he is trying to say something but…*" ["Benin için konuşurken önemli, çünkü karşımdaki kişinin, karşımdaki bir insanla iletişim kurarken onda şu şeyi bırakmak istemem; bu İngilizceyi daha yeni öğrenmiş, bir şeyler aktarmaya çalışıyor ama…] (Interview, 1/11/2021). Here we can see that he does not want to leave the impression that he is a learner of English, which suggests that his imagined speaker identity is based on a flawless accurate speaker of English.

In his third interview, I asked him whether he would care about being recognized as a Turkish person when speaking English with a Turkish accent in an international setting or even here in Turkey. As mentioned before, Ulaş comes from a region where Turkish is spoken with an accent; therefore, Ulaş is familiar with the concept of standing out in a crowd from his Agean accent when speaking Turkish. He is comfortable about this fact and says that if he started speaking in his own accent, we would not understand him. About being recognized as Turkish when speaking English, he says that he would not care (extract 37 line 1). Actually, according to him, this would create an opportunity for a cultural exchange, he says. He adds that when speaking in English, we create our own variation because of a 'cultural exchange':

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Extract 37

1	Ulaş	Benim için fark etmiyor. Esasında fark edildiğinde orada bir kültürel exchange'de
2		olabilir. Mesela ben İngilizce konuşurken sonuna, mesela X hocayla veya Y
3		hocayla İngilize konuşurken 'hocam' ekliyorum....bence güzel çeşitlilik oluyor
4		ama bana fark etmiyor yani, bana koymuyor. Hani Türk olduğumun anlaşılması,
5		işte şive, ağzımın farklı olması.
6		Zaten o Britanya adasındaki her yerde ne bileyim bir Wales'teki Thames'deki aynı
7		İngilizceyi konuşmuyor, ağız farklılığı vardır. Bir İskoç ile İrlandalı arasında bile
8		o kadar fark var ki.

1	Ulaş	*It doesn't matter to me. Actually, when it's recognized there can be a cultural*
2		*exchange. For example, when I'm speaking in English, at the end of words, for*
3		*example when I'm speaking to X teacher, or Y teacher, I add "hocam" when I'm*
4		*addressing Teacher X or Teacher Y. For example this creates a cultural*
5		*exchange...in my opinion, it creates a nice diversity, but for me it doesn't*
6		*matter, it doesn't put me off being recognized as Turkish or having an accent, or*
7		*a dialect.*
8		*They don't speak the same English on that British island anyway, I mean,*
9		*people in Wales or Thames, there are dialect differences among them. Even*
10		*between an Irish person and a Scottish person, there are so many differences.*

(Interview, 4/12/2019)

Ulaş is well aware that even native speakers have different accents or variations and they do not speak the same English even on the British islands. He also seems to have developed an understanding of the concept of 'local variations' because he gives the use of 'hocam' [*my teacher*] as an example (extract 37, line 3). It is very customary to address the teachers with the word 'hocam' [my teacher] in Turkey. Here he wants to point out that even when we speak English, we tend to address our teachers as 'hocam' and this creates a cultural exchange, according to him, between the languages. Even if you speak the language without an accent, from the use of 'hocam', your Turkish identity will be revealed, he suggests, and this does not bother him. In one of his interviews, Ulaş gives a detailed account of all of his friends who study at English preparatory programs at various universities. When they come together, they make fun of each other in English. They also make fun of their accents. He also adds that they have noticed they are not pronouncing the initial /h/

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in English words as well when they speak English because in their regional Turkish accents, the initial /h/ is not pronounced. Ulaş has a strong understanding of his real self which is positioned as an non-fluent English speaker with a regional accent. In his July 7, 2019 interview, he said that he believes that "accent is a cultural deformation" [...aksan kültürel bir deformasyon]. He takes the standard language and adds cultural information to it and according to him you get what is called an accent: an Indian accent, an Irish accent, a Turkish accent. Once again, we see that Ulaş has a connection to the nature of languages and how they are spoken and this seems to be a part of both his learner and speaker identity. In one of the later interviews (7/9/2020), he emphasizes that he actually would like to speak as comfortably as he does in Turkish. Because he speaks with a regional accent in Turkish, he said that he wanted to use English in the same way. In extract 38, he gives examples on how he would like to use some words but at the same time points out that he is not a native speaker nor has lived in an English-speaking country:

Extract 38

1	Ulaş	E tabi biraz daha hani öyle herkesin öğrendiği going to, want değil de hani
2		mesela insanların rahatına gelmiş zamanında, going to ya gana demiş, işte wanta
3		wana demiş tarzda biraz daha rahat konuşmayı tabi isterim hocam yoksa hani
4		bende Buckingham Sarayında yetişmedim. Manchester'da sokaklarda Samuel
5		Adams biramı yudumlamadım. Gerçi Samuel Adams yani şey birası Boston,
6		Amerikan birası da genelde millet İngiliz birası gibi düşünüyor. Yani o şekilde
7		hocam benimkisi.
8		Artık çok şey, kalıplara takılmıyorum. Hani önceden sormuştunuz ya İngilizceyi
9		bir Türk gibi mi konuştuğunu düşünüyorsun, çok önceki…Bence önemli değil
10		hocam sonuçta hani anlaştığınızda bir problem kalmıyor gibi düşünüyorum ben
11		o şeyi aştım.O radikalliği aştım biraz.

1	Ulaş	*I mean, of course I would like to speak in a more relaxed way... like when*
2		*people say gonna or wanna instead of going to or want to, I mean not like the*
3		*way everybody learns these things. I didn't grow up in Buckingham Palace,*
4		*mind you. Or take sips from my Samuel Adams beer in the streets of*
5		*Manchester. Mind you, Samuel Adams is an American beer from Boston, but*
6		*people think it's English beer.*
7		*I no longer obsess with stereotypes. Remember you had previously asked me if I*
8		*thought I spoke English like a Turkish person....I believe it's not important, in*
9		*the end, if you can communicate, there is no problem. I believe I have overcome*
10		*this opinion, I have overcome that radicalism.*

(Interview, 7/9/2020)

In extract 38 line 4, in a way, he asserts an objection against the native-speaker norm in speaking English. In a rather sarcastic way, he says that he is not from Buckingham, or that he did not drink beer in the streets of Manchester, implying in a humorous way that he is not an English native speaking person. He goes further by naming a beer brand that he thought was typically British, but notices right away that it is actually American. He even names the city, Boston, showing that he has a command over types of beer and their origins. At the end, however, he states that he had changed his mind about accents; he does not think radically about them anymore. What matters for him now is communication. If you can communicate your message, it doesn't matter what accent you speak in English.

4.5   Summary of Ulaş's case

In terms of L2 investment, Ulaş negotiates an English learner identity with socio-cultural aspirations. For him, English is mainly a cultural and social capital. He believes that his social as well as cultural status will be elevated through speaking English because he will be able to read academic articles in the field of history, psychology and sociology, which seem to be his favorite topics. Even in class, when the topic comes up, he speaks up about issues related to history, cinema, literature

and global and local social issues. However, he chose to engage with these in Turskih interactions rather than English. In class, as the language of communication, he chooses to speak English; however; as a 'provider of knowledge' he needs access to resources, which usually are in English and therefore he identifies with an imagined English community of practice that is situated majorly in written resources.

Related to his past learning experience, Ulaş negotiates a positive learner identity with a negative formal past learning experience. It is a positive learner identity because he had been exposed to English movies and English games in childhood and his family was also involved in learning and speaking English. His high awareness of language usage might probably come from his family since bilingual practices like translanguaging were being used. The negative side of his L2-mediated past self is related to his formal language learning experience because he can been as a survivor of the 'English deficit' of the Turkish education system: no English classes, English classes given by other teachers who are not English teachers, grammar-based instruction by authoritative teachers, exam questions are given beforehand and no opportunities for communities of practice are provided even if he wanted to find them (e.g. MUN).

In terms of his present speaker/learner identity, Ulaş negotiates a positive L2 speaker identity by retaining a regional self because of his strong connection to his native regional accent and actual self. However, these identities seem to be contradicting and clashing from time to time. In the beginning, he was adamant that a native accent with accurate production of English was to be achieved. Later his learner identity positioned as an non-fluent English speaker with a regional accent, one that is aware that regional differences have a potential for cultural exchange.

4.6 Seçil's case

4.6.1 Vignette

Seçil is a 21 years old Interior Design student and was born and raised in a city in the west/south of Turkey. Seçil started the EPS one year before her classmates. This was her third semester at the A beginner level. She had spent two semesters trying to pass this level; however, because of her exam anxiety, she says, and her dyslexia, she was unable to pass and move to the upper levels in her first year at the university. In her second year, she was able to finish the EPS in three semesters (A, B1 and B2). She also says she took private English lessons during her education at the preparatory school. She is on a 50% scholarship.

Seçil went to a state primary and secondary school. However, she studied high school at a private school because her parents wanted her to get a better education. Seçil is happy to be studying interior design. She says as a child she used to build models of buildings with her father for school projects and her teachers would always exhibit her designs. She also says she would spend hours in furniture shops looking at and examining different types of furniture. It was decided by her family that interior design would be the best area for her to study. However, Seçil's true passion was the theater. In primary school, she was a very shy and silent kid sitting at the back of the class afraid of socializing. One day, her teacher decided to stage a play and chose Seçil to be one of the players. She says that this was a turning point, and she shined on stage. After that play, her self-confidence got a boost and she became more sociable. At the same time, her interest in acting and the theater had peaked. She wanted to go to acting school, the conservatory, but her family was against it saying that it would not be a good career choice. She says that she had many fights with her parents over this issue during her high-school years. Only when

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her mother promised her to send her to a private acting school when she starts university in Istanbul was she convinced and agreed to choose a career in interior design. Once she finished preparatory school, she started acting school and was about to stage a play when the Covid-19 pandemic started.

Seçil's mother is an associate professor and her father is an assistant professor at a university.

4.6.2   Progress at English Preparatory School

For the duration of this study, Seçil studied English at the EPS for three semesters between Fall 2019 and Summer 2020. She started at the A Level Beginner group and graduated from the EPS at the B2 Level Upper-Intermediate level. As can be seen in Table 8, her scores throughout the semesters were fairly consistent with passing grades higher than 50. She scored lower only in the quizzes at the A level and one time in the midterm in the B1 level.

Table 8. Seçil's Progress at EPS

Seçil	Fall 2019 A Level	Spring 2020 B1 Level	Summer 2020 B2 Level
Participation (10%)	8	9	8
Quizzes (20%)	38	54	88
Midterm (%30)	67	39	93
Final (40%)	60	89	95
Total	60	68	92
Attendance	52/70 (350/85%)	23/64 (320/93%)	8/23 (115/93%)

Note. Participation out of 10. All exams and total out of 100

Seçil's participation grades were also fairly high with 8 and higher out of 10 throughout the whole three semesters. She attended 85% of her classes in the A Level, which was entirely face-to-face. In the B1 Level, which started face-to-face in February 2019 but switched to online in mid-March 2020, and B2 level, which was conducted entirely online, she attended 93% of her classes.

4.6.3 Seçil's investment in English

Seçil's investment in English is based on academic, social and cultural gains. She believes that she will need English basically for her academic studies at the department and when she goes on trips abroad. She says that she'll need to broaden her academic connections. Seçil plans to study for two years and then go abroad to continue her studies. She has clear goals on how she is going to use her English:

Extract 39

1	Seçil:	Yurt dışındaki okullara şansının verileceğini düşünüyorum açıkçası hani. Nasıl
2		desem, iki yıl burada okuyup iç mimarlığı, ondan sonra yurt dışındaki
3		üniversitelere başvurmam için akademik anlamda konuşabilmem, buradaki
4		derslerde anladıklarım, derste konuşma pratik yapabileceğim, yurt dışında da
5		daha şey, alışkın olduğum için daha kolay adapte olabilirim.
6	Hakan:	Yurt dışına mı gitmek istiyorsun, yurt dışında mı okumak istiyorsun?
7	Seçil	Çok istiyorum.

1	Seçil:	*Honestly, I believe I will have the chance to go to schools abroad. How should I*
2		*say, after studying for two years at interior design here, I should be able to speak*
3		*academically, understand the courses here and be able to speak in classes. This*
4		*should help me to adapt better abroad because I would be used to it.*
5	Hakan:	*Do you want to go abroad, study abroad?*
6	Seçil:	*I want it very much*

(Interview, 15/10/2019)

On several occasions in most of the interviews, Seçil emphasized her desire to go abroad. Here again in extract 39 line 6, she states that she wants it very much. She also seems to be very confident that she will "be able to speak academically,

understand the courses and be able to to speak in classç She seems to make a distinction between 'speaking academically' and 'speaking in classes' which implies that for her academic speaking is a one-directional action (e.g. a presentation) while speaking in class involves interaction with others.
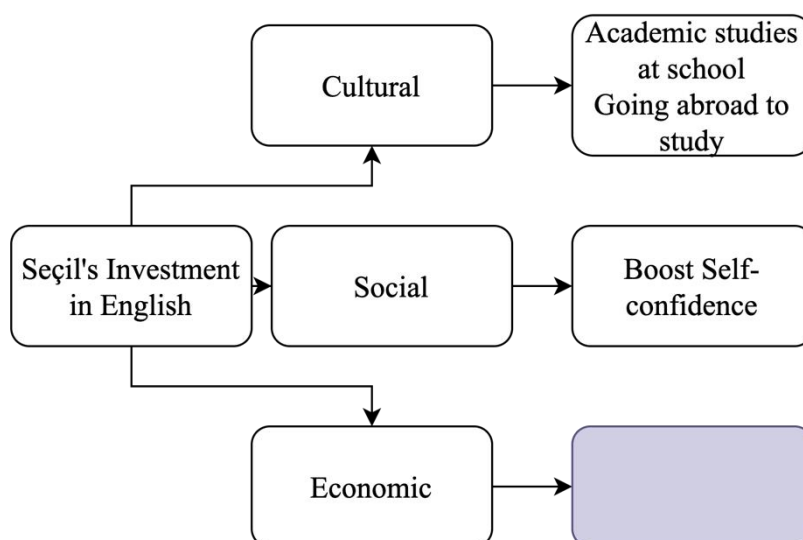

Figure 11. Seçil's investment in English

Another reason why Seçil believes in the importance of learning English is that she says it will boost her self confidence. In general, Seçil believes that speaking English has an effect on a person's confidence. She states that there will be a difference in how she speaks to people, especially when speaking to foreigners in social settings (Figure 11)

4.6.4 Past learning experience

"My mother had always warned me about the importance of learning English…"

For Seçil, English as a 'course' has always been a part of her life. She first formally started learning it in 2nd grade at primary school when her mother decided to send

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her to a private course because there were no English classes before 4th grade at that time. Even though she has been learning English since 2nd grade, Seçil started at the beginner level at the English Preparatory School. The reason for this she states as "being forgetful". She recounts her first learning years as very fruitful: "*throughout my primary school years, I took private lessons and with the private teacher I progressed a lot, my vocabulary progressively developed and actually I received 90-100 from my exams, it was really really good.*" ["ben 2. sınıftan, ilkokul boyunca bir özel ders hocasından daha aldım ve özel hoca da gayet iyi ilerliyorum, kelime haznem gittikçe gelişiyor ve gerçekten sınavlardan 90-100 alıyorum, çok çok iyi"] (Interview, 15/10/2019). However, when she started secondary school she states that "something happened" which she cannot describe but guesses it to be connected to the onset of puberty. She stopped studying and started to forget everything very quickly. She says when she did not repeat it, she would forget it the other day. Another reason she states is that her mind wanders: "*It's like my mind is not there. Since primary school I have been absent-minded in class. That might be the reason*" ["Dalgınlık yani. İlkokuldan beri çok dalıyorum deste. Belki onun da kaynağı olabilir"] (Interview, 15/10/2019). On the other hand, she says that learning English was never a priority at school and she blames the Turkish education system for that. She says:

Extract 40

1	Seçil:	Tek yaptığımız her gün testleri cevaplayarak üniversite sınavına hazırlanmak.
2		Annem beni her zaman İngilizce öğrenmenin önemi ve benim için ciddi bir sorun
3		haline geleceği konusunda uyarmıştı ama ben hep bunu çözmek için zamanım
4		olacağını düşünmüştüm. Sonra, yeterlilik sınavında dank etti. İngilizce benim için
5		bir kabusa dönüştü ve bunun üstesinden gelmem iki yılımı aldı. İngilizce
6		konuşmanın önemli ve gerekli olduğunu biliyorum; ancak eğitim dilimiz Türkçe
7		olsaydı daha iyi bir öğrenci olurdum.

1	*Seçil:*	*All we did was prepare for the university exam by answering tests every day. My*
2		*mother had always warned me about the importance of learning English and*
3		*that it would become a serious problem for me, but I always thought that I*
4		*would have time to solve it. Then, at the proficiency exam it hit me. English had*
5		*become something like a nightmare and it took me two years to overcome it. I*
6		*know that speaking English is important and necessary; however, I would be a*
7		*better student if our medium of instruction was Turkish.*

(Interview, 21/11/2019)

According to Seçil, a foreign language is learnt best by using it in daily life. She says that the most important part in learning a language is forming sentences; however, she is not sure whether grammar knowledge is essential. She regrets that she did not learn it when she was a child. At the same time, she believes that you can learn a language through watching movies. When asked if she can use it in daily life she says: "*Unfortunately not. My parents do speak it. I try to speak it with my parents but consequently we live in Turkey. There are not many people speaking English in Turkey. If I go abroad, I could speak a little.*" [Hayır maalesef. Annemler biliyor. Annemlerle çat pat konuşmaya çalışıyorum ama hani sonuçta Türkiye'de yaşıyoruz, Türkiye'de de çok İngilizce konuşan insan yok. Yurt dışına gidersem eğer çat pat bir şeyler konuşabilirim.] (Interview, 15/10/2019). Right from the beginning, it is clear to Seçil that she needs opportunities where she can use the language in daily life, most probably for natural communicative needs since she does not associate the classroom environment as a place where language communication takes place (see

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Table 9 for summary). Her actual self is in search of a community of practice where she can utilize the language for real purposes.

Table 9. Seçil's Past L2 Learner Identity

Seçil's Past L2 Learner Identity	Positive	Negative
Actual L2 Self	Private lessons in 2nd grade Good grades until secondary school Parents speak English	Bad Education Being absent-minded Phobia for English-subtitled movies English is a nightmare No opportunity to use it in daily life
Imagined L2 Self	Would speak English abroad	-

During our first interviews, Seçil pointed out that she tries to overcome this by watching a lot of movies. However, she said that she has always been afraid of watching them in the original language and watched them dubbed in Turkish. She actually used the phrase 'phobia against subtitled movies' to show her dislike of reading Turkish subtitles in original movies. Obviously, she is now aware that this will not help her to receive English input and decided to rewatch known movies with English subtitles. However, throughout the term, whenever I asked her about watching movies and series, she kept saying that she still watched them with Turkish subtitles. Even though Seçil perceived watching movies as an input for real daily English use, she was not willing to challenge her comfort zone in trying to understand spoken English in movies or series.

4.6.5   Imagined identity

"I speak with the people there in a very well way"

Seçil likes to imagine herself speaking English. Her imagined identity at the beginning of the preparatory school was mainly based on academic achievement. She

envisions herself in the interior design department, making a presentation about her project. Teachers ask her questions and she answers without hesitation. Here she emphasizes the notion of 'without hesitation' in Turkish by using the phrase "...onlara çat çat söylüyorum.". This phrase is a common slang in Turkish to show that you gave an answer to someone without hesitation and in a self-confident manner. Here, we can see that Seçil desires to speak English fluently and in a confident manner. Seçil said on many occasions that she does not feel comfortable speaking in front of the class for fear of being made fun of. Therefore, the imagined L2 identity that she constructed is the total opposite of the actual self, which has problems in performing without thinking about what to say. Apart from speaking fluently in her own presentation in school, she also sees herself abroad, listening to the friends she has made there and speaking to them in an accurate way. She expresses this by saying: "*I speak with the people there very well* ["...oradaki insanlarla çok güzel konuşuyorum"] (Interview, 15/10/2019). Here, we can see again that she emphasizes her speaking skills and how she speaks in a *'very well'* way. Later, during summer school, I ask her again whether she imagines herself speaking in English. Once again, Seçil says that she sees herself presenting something in English in front of a jury at her department during her studies. I especially ask whether she can see herself presenting at a workplace, and she says no, she is speaking in front of her professors at her department. Again she says that in this imagined situation, she is confident but might be hesitating from time to time. Even in an imagined situation, Seçil cannot completely see herself speaking English fluently. This might be due to the fact that she is studying her third term (as a repeat student) at the English preparatory school and still feels that she cannot speak fluently. This might have affected her ability to imagine herself speaking without

hesitation. After she finishes preparatory school, she adds that she also sees herself speaking English in her "future job". She sees herself making English project presentations at meetings and also includes an academic aspect as well; she says she most probably will speak more if she starts her master's degree studies.

4.6.6 Present learning experience

"I'll be embarrassed. It's been like this since my childhood. I'm afraid to raise my hand in class."

In class, as a language learning student, Seçil takes a more passive role than a participating and assertive student. She is aware of this and mentioned it occasionally in the interviews. When asked about how much English she uses in the lessons, she says that she does not speak a lot in terms of forming sentences but answers questions when asked. The reason for this she states is that she is afraid of making mistakes. She says,

Extract 41

1	Seçil:	Utanırım. Küçüklükten beri böyle benim. Sınıfta el kaldırmaya çok korkarım.
2		Yanlış söylerim, arkadaşlarım dalga geçer, öğretmenin gözünden düşerim
3		korkusu var küçüklükten beri.
4	Hakan:	Bunu başarısızlıkla mı eşleştiriyorsun?
5	Seçil:	Evet bir nevi.

1	Seçil:	*I'd be embarrassed. It's been like this since my childhood. I'm afraid to raise my*
2		*hand in class. Since I was a child I've been afraid that I would humiliate myself*
3		*in front of the teacher, that my friends would make fun of me, that I would give*
4		*the wrong answer.*
5	Hakan:	*Do you associate this with failure?*
6	Seçil:	*Yes, in some way I do.*

(Interview, 15/10/2019)

Seçil's fear of saying something wrong in front of the class and the teacher and being made fun of prevents her from being more active and assertive in the classroom. What is important to note is that she lists a combination of all the concepts related to

anxiety: being embarrassed, being afraid to raise hands, humiliating yourself in front of the teacher, friends making fun, and giving the wrong answer. In one sentence, Seçil lists a long list of anxiety markers that make it difficult for her to even attempt legitimate peripheral participation (Figure 12).
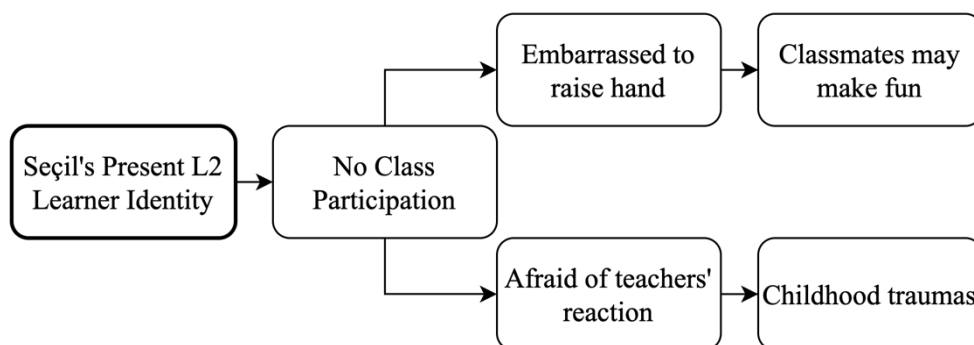

Figure 12. Seçil's present L2 learner identity in relation to class participation

Even though her imagined identity shows full participation in a community of practice, we can see that her actual L2 self is burdened by fears originating from her childhood. When Seçil does not understand something during class, she does not ask the teachers because she is worried about how they would react. She thinks it is going to be a stupid question and that she will humiliate herself in the eyes of the teacher. She adds: "*Because when I was a kid, I experienced things like these, frankly, experiencing these again...you go back to your childhood*" ["Çünkü küçüklüğümde böyle şeyler yaşadım, açıkçası aynı şeylerin tekrarlanmasından... Yine küçüklüğe iniyorsun..] (Interview, 15/10/2019). This shows that Seçil's learner identity related to class participation and interaction with teachers was damaged during her childhood most probably as a result of a traumatic negative comment from a teacher or similar altercations. She is afraid that she will experience something familiar and does not want to experience those moments again. Therefore,

she is protecting herself by not participating unless the teacher asks her a direct question.

4.6.7 Present speaker identity

"*I try to form accurate sentences and spend a lot of time at that moment and naturally people don't wait*"

In a later interview, when the topic of speaking English in the classroom comes up again, Seçil says that she does not speak enough in the classroom. She mentions again that she panics to say something wrong because the class is crowded (there are around 20 students in the classroom). Here, Seçil adds that she would not panic at all and would be very comfortable speaking to foreigners if they would ask her for directions because a foreigner would understand the level of her English and she would try to tell and help. However, she repeats that she does not feel the same about speaking in the classroom. She says "*I don't why but in class it's like they are going to make fun*" ["Ama nedense sınıfta şey yapacaklar gibi, dalga geçecekler gibi.] (Interview, 21/11/2019). She states that when her classmates laugh in class after a pronunciation mistake, it affects her motivation because it is an academic setting. In addition, she adds "*apart from that, I take more time thinking, I try to form accurate sentences and spend a lot of time at that moment and naturally people get impatient*" [Bir de ben daha çok uzun düşünüyorum, cümle kurarken doğru kullanmaya çalışıyorum ve zaman çok kaybediyorum o sırada ve insanlar da beklemiyor haliyle] (Interview, 21/11/2019). Here we can see that Seçil is worried about accuray when speaking. She wants to form correct sentences and for this she needs time. However, she also believes that she does not have the right to take the time of her classmates when participating in class because people *'naturally'* do not like to wait. This shows

that her engagement is also dependent on the image of herself in the eyes of her classmates. Table 10 summarizes Seçil's present L2-mediated speaker identity.

Table 10. Seçil's Present L2-mediated Speaker Identity

Seçil's L2 Speaker Identity	Speaking with foreigners	Speaking in Class	User of English
Actual Self		- Academic Environment - Performance Anxiety - Laughing at pronunciation mistakes - Takes time to form correct sentences	- No (A, B1) - Maybe because she reads English books and watches English movies. (B2)
Imagined Self	- More comfortable because foreigners are more understanding		- Only if spoken accurately and fluently

For Seçil, 'knowing a language' means speaking it. This was valid for most of the participants. They would not accept themselves as a 'user' of the language unless they can speak it. On the other hand, speaking a language for them means speaking it fluently and accurately. Seçil pointed this out on many occasions. She perceived using a language as speaking it and was complaining that she could not speak it at all in daily life. Here we can see that there is a 'longing' or 'desire' to have the opportunity to speak the language in a daily life setting rather than speaking in the classroom. We can say that Seçil, just like the other participants, was asking for the opportunity to take part in a Community of Practice (CoC). She emphasized the fact that 'one wants to speak'. She says:

Extract 42

1	Seçil:	Yani illa bir konuşma istiyor insan. Arkadaş çevresinde de olsun. Yurt dışına
2		gittiğinde tam kullanırsın.
3	Hakan:	Peki, diyelim ki yurt dışına gittim ve hiç konuşmadın ama her şeyi anladın.
4	Seçil:	E: O da kendi ayıbım.
5	Hakan:	R: Belki öyle bir fırsat olmadı konuşacak.
6	Seçil:	E: Ama dinledim, o da doğru.
7	Hakan:	R: Yani yine kullanmış olmuyor musun?
8	Seçil:	E: Evet oluruz. Çok çelişkili.

1	Seçil:	*Well, one really desires to speak. In your circle of friends and when you go*
2		*abroad, you'd want to be able to fully speak.*
3	Hakan:	*So, let's say you went abroad and did not speak at all but understood*
4		*everything.*
5	Seçil:	*Well, that would be shameful.*
6	Hakan:	*Maybe you did not have the opportunity to speak?*
7	Seçil:	*But I listened. Well, that's true, too.*
8	Hakan:	*So, wouldn't you have used it?*
9	Seçil:	*Yes, we would. This is confusing.*

(Interview, 3/3/2020)

In extract 42 line 5, Seçil states that it would be 'shameful' if she would not be able to speak in English even though she would understand what was said. She does not associate using a language with her ability to understand what is being said but connects it directly with the ability to speak it. When she is reminded of the fact that listening is also a part of 'knowing a language', she is confused and accepts that this would also mean that you are actually 'using' a language. Here, we can see that Seçil's L2 identity is dependent on an 'English speaking' self. She finds it difficult to accept that this L2 identity could also exist if one would only understand a language. However, as mentioned before, Seçil does not see herself speaking English because of her view that it should be spoken fluently and accurately. This view of using a foreign language seems to prevent her from constructing an L2 identity. Later, near the end of her second term at the EPS, she states that she considers herself to be a user of English because she reads English books and watches English movies. However, she is still hesitant and adds that "*It's a little early to say that because I*

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still have the B2 level to start but yes, I guess, I speak English to myself, does that count?" [Daha bunu söylemek için erken çünkü önümde bir b2 kuru daha var ama evet sanırım kendi kendime İngilizce konuşuyorum bu sayılır mı?] (Learning Diary, 15/05/2020).

4.6.8 Accent matters

`*...it seems to me it is pretentious to speak with an American accent."*
When it comes to the matter of English accents and their importance, Seçil thinks that speaking with a certain accent is important. However, understanding it is another issue. She says that accents make the learning more difficult. She believes that, for example, the British accent is too strong and more difficult to understand while the Americans are speaking too fast.

She also read somewhere that the Turkish speak English in the most correct way in terms of not having a specific recognizable accent. She also does not care if she had a Turkish accent when speaking English. When asked again in summer school (B2 level), she answers that she speaks English with a straight Turkish accent and not as fast as an American and not as clear as the British, directly like Turkish people speak English. She adds that it is not a problem for her to be speaking with a Turkish accent and says:

Extract 43

1	Seçil:	Açıkçası Türkçe aksanı ile konuşmayı daha çok istiyorum. nebileyim, bana
2		Amerikan aksanı ile konuşmak biraz daha özenti gibi geliyor bana. Dizilerde
3		bizim hoşumuza gidiyor ama açıkçası öyle konuşmak istemem

1	*Seçil:*	*Frankly, I'd like to speak with a Turkish accent, I don't know, it seems to me it*
2		*is pretentious to speak with an American accent. We like to hear it in Tv shows*
3		*but frankly I wouldn't want to speak like that.*

(Interview, 21/11/2019)

In extract 42, Seçil clearly states that she does not want to speak in an American accent because she thinks that it is 'pretentious'. Here, Seçil seems to have built a speaker identity that is connected to a Turkish self. Even though we cannot say that there is a certain 'Turkish accent', she acknowledges one and also takes it as her speaker identity. It is possible that even though she speaks English with a standard accent, she perceives it as flawed and accepts this 'flaw' as a certain way of speaking that is part of her local identity. In extract 42 line 2-3, she adds that she likes to hear this kind of accent (American or British) and uses the pronoun 'we', which might mean that 'people in general' are fond of this kind of accent but she seems to refuse these kinds of English accents. Figure 13 shows a representation of her L2-mediated speaker identity in relation to using English accents.
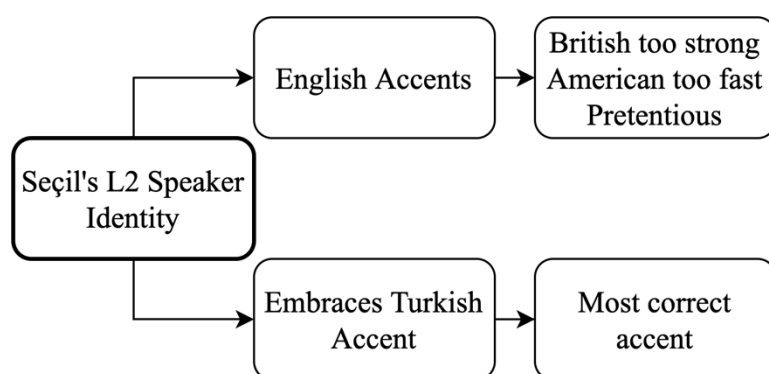

Figure 13. Seçil's L2 speaker identity in relation to English accents

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4.6.9   Vocabulary learning

"Does a person have the capacity to do that many things?"

At the beginning of the second semester (B1 level), Seçil is startled by the number of new words she has to learn. She is eager to invest time into learning them; however, she is frustrated by the way the new words are introduced and by the high number of words they are expected to learn in a short time. She expresses her frustration in a very direct way in in interview at the beginning of the semester:

Extract 44

1	Seçil	Dank diye böyle hani kelimeleri tak tak verdiler ki, ben onu saçma buluyorum.
2		Hani neredeyse çok fazla, 600 kelime, ondan bile fazla kelime ezberleyeceğiz.
3		Bunları bir anda ezberlememizi beklemeleri çok tuhafıma gidiyor. Hani nasıl
4		ezberleyebilirim. Bir insanın kapasitesi o kadar şey yapabilir mi?

1	Seçil	*They've just bombarded us with words, just like that bang bang, I find that*
2		*ridiculous. It is almost too much, 600 words, we have to memorize even more*
3		*words like that. How can I memorize them? Does a person have the capacity to*
4		*do that many things?*

(Interview, 13/02/2020)

For Seçil, having to memorize that many words does not make sense. She thinks this requires a capacity that is above what a person can do. This seems to have an effect on her investment in learning the language. One month later, I asked her again about her challenges with learning new vocabulary and she does not seem to have changed her mind. She says that she cannot deal with the difficulty of learning new words. The memorization process is challenging her a lot and she writes sentences using the words over and over again and then repeats them for 40- 50 times but does not get what she wants. She does this two times every week. She feels that it gets too frustrating and that is why she cannot work on them every day. Here she compares learning new vocabulary by memorizing and watching English series:

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Extract 45

1	Seçil:	Bir süre sonra bıkkınlık geliyor, kelime sürekli çalış çalış. Bazen de olmuyor
2		daha da sinir oluyorum. Ama böyle dizilerde falan daha aklımda kalıyor. Mesela
3		geçende dizilerde kullanılan kelimelerde daha aklımda kalmaya başladı. Ama
4		şeyde mesela, derste çalışırken ya da derste öğrendiğimde hemen uçup
5		gidiveriyor.

1	Seçil:	*After a while I feel fed up, studying and studying words all the time. Sometimes*
2		*it doesn't work and I get angry. But in series and the likes, it seems to stick*
3		*more. But for example, when studying in a lesson or what I have learned in a*
4		*lesson seems to fly away immediately.*

(Interview, 03/03/2020)

Seçil seems to be aware that learning words in class is different from learning words from authentic input in the form of movies or Tv series. In class she is probably instructed to use the words in sentences and write them down many times. However, she seems to get angry at herself for not being successful in learning them. She describes this as "they fly away immediately", which shows that the instructions in class do not contribute to her vocabulary acquisition.

4.6.10   B2 online education

"*If I had been the first to go, I might have been more relaxed but when I saw them speak so well, I got tense*"

Just like the other participants, Seçil had to start online education in mid March 2019. Since they already had face-to-face education before the pandemic, Seçil knew her classmates and they had established a class identity before online education started. Therefore, Seçil says that online education in the B1 term was fun for her and that classes were busy and it was over very quickly. She had reported her effort scale to be 7 out of 10 and as can be seen in Table 8, her participation score was 9 out of 10 and she only missed 23 hours of class. However, since online education continued in Summer School at her B2 level, things changed. This time she reported a 4 out of

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10 in her effort scale. She was not very keen on attending the classes and had to drag

herself to attend the lessons. She stated the reason as:

Extract 46

1	Seçil:	(...) Modum eksi biraz. Yaz işte. Dışarıda olmak istiyorsun, denize falan girmek
2		istiyorsun. Ders bana böyle bir yük gibi geliyor açıkçası. Geçen dönem çünkü
3		evdeydik, evde olunca da böyle hani zamanı değerlendirmek istiyordum,
4		derslerim için böyle gerçekten verim aldığım bir şeydi ama şu an hem sokağa
5		çıkabiliyorum, en azından tedbirli bir şekilde, çok sıcak hava, zorluyor yani.

1	Seçil:	(...) My mood is a little negative. Well, it's Summer. You want to be outside, go
2		swimming and so on. Frankly, lessons seem like a burden to me. Because last
3		semester we were at home, and when I was at home I wanted to spend my time
4		efficiently, my lessons were really something efficient but now I can go out, at
5		least by observing the rules, it's really hot and this makes it difficult.

(Interview, 13/07/2020)

At the beginning of B2 summer school, she felt scared because at the

beginning of B1, she had taken the classes at school and she knew how the lessons

would progress and could make a plan about the forthcoming lessons and B1 in

general. However, now she is intimidated by the prospect of having to write essays

(they were expected to write only paragraphs in the B1 level) and also perform a 10

minutes presentation in front of the class on Zoom. She sounds like she is

overwhelmed by all of these and does not know how she is going to tackle all of

them. She compares online classroom procedures with her face-to-face experience to

show how easier it was back then. She says:

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Extract 47

1	Seçil:	(...) Hani en azından yazdığımda Nermin hocaya mesela gösteriyordum, hani
2		yanımda bana nasıl yapılacağını gösteriyordu. Burada işte biraz daha zorluyor,
3		komplike bir hal aldı. Mailden yollamam gerekiyor falan. Biraz daha soru
4		işaretleri var kafamda nasıl olacağına dair. Öyle. Bir de sunum işi çıktı ya; hani
5		sunum yapmamız gerekiyor draft kağıdı falan. O da bir...
6	Hakan:	O|sunum birazcık can sıkıyor galiba?
7	Seçil	E: Bir tık can... Nasıl yapacağım acaba! Çünkü bir de uzun bir şekilde
8		konuşmam isteniyor, 10 dakika boyunca bayağı kafamda soru işaretleri..

1	Seçil:	(...) For example, when I wrote something I would show it to Nermin teacher,
2		and she would show me how to do it. Now it's a little more difficult and
3		complicated. I have to send it via mail and so. I have question marks about how
4		this is going to be. That's that. And there is this presentation, we need to do a
5		presentation and there is the draft to it and so. And that is
6	Hakan:	The presentation is bothering you I think?
7	Seçil:	A little bit. How will I do it? Because it is expected of me to speak for a long
8		time, for 10 minutes. There are a lot of question marks in my mind

(Interview, 13/07/2020)

Here we can see that Seçil is both confused and intimidated by the way online education makes it difficult to receive feedback about her writing performance. She feels more comfortable when she can show her writing to the teacher and receive oral feedback face-to face. During online education, she feels the lack of having direct contact with the teacher. In extract 47 line 2-3, she states that she finds it more difficult and complicated to get in touch via email to receive feedback about her writing performance, especially in a new format, mainly writing essays because this would be the first time they would learn how to write it. Another concern of hers is doing a presentation where she has to speak for at least 10 minutes on Zoom. She seems to be confused about how she is going to arrange to speak for 10 minutes. As was mentioned before, Seçil suffers both from exam anxiety and speaking in front of others because of her fear of making mistakes and being made fun of or just the feeling of failing. Therefore, this kind of task weighs heavily on her shoulders and she seems to panic about it. When the day came to present, Seçil felt extremely

anxious because she was not the first one to present but had to wait for two other classmates. This caused her anxiety to build up while waiting and listening to the others' presentations. She said "*If I had been the first to go, I might have been more relaxed but when I saw them speak so well, I got tense*" ["İlk başta belki olsaydım daha rahat olabilirim ama hepsi böyle çok güzel konuşunca kasıldım"] (Interview, 02/09/2020). After she started her presentation, at the beginning she was "*horribly nervous*" [dehşet derecede heyecanlıydım] but after a while she said that she spoke automatically and with the help of her notes, she started to feel more comfortable. Her topic was the 'Architectural Change of Hagia Sophia', starting from the Byzantion, through the Ottoman Empire and ending with the Turkish Republic. It was a topic that she was interested in, especially because she was going to study interior design. The teacher gave her a 95 out of 100. When I asked her about how she felt receiving such a high score, she said "well, it's not bad" ["yani fena değil"]. She added that it was the second best score in the class but the teacher had not given her a 100 because she had too much writing on the slides, which Seçil believes was not the case but she respected the teacher's assessment. Even here we can see how Seçil struggles with a state of "not having achieved it". Later she confesses that she is happy with the score but her initial reaction is not that of a student who has received the second highest score. Below is a summary of Seçil's present learner identity in relation to online learning (Figure 14)
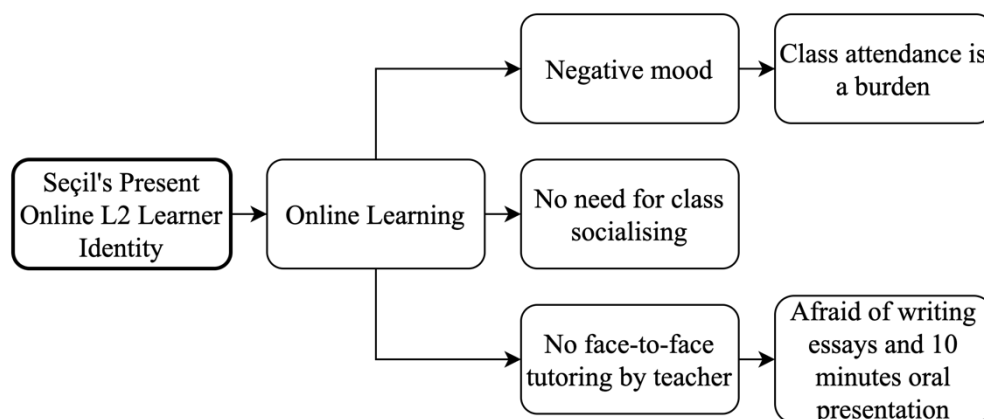
Figure 14. Seçil's online learner identity in relation to online learning

During B2 Summer School, Seçil took private speaking classes. She later said

that they were one of the major factors of overcoming her speaking anxiety and

becoming more automatic while forming sentences. She took lessons from an

English native speaker and the fact that she could not resort to speaking in Turkish

helped her a lot. She says:

Extract 48

1	Seçil:	Yani böyle şey konuşuyordum daha önceden, hepsi karışıyordu. Present perfect
2		karışıyordu, future tense karışıyordu, hepsi birbirine giriyordu. Ama bunda şey
3		oldu artık hani düşünmeden doğru bir şekilde konuşabiliyorum artık. Cümleyi
4		kafamın içinde kurmadan direkman otomatikleşmiş bir şekilde konuşmaya
5		başladım bence. hoca da öyle dedi. (Seçil Int 2 September 7 2020, Pos. 28)

1	Seçil:	*I used to talk like, I would mix them all up. I would mix up Present Perfect, I*
2		*would mix up Future Tense, all of them would get mixed up. But now this*
3		*happened, like, I can speak correctly without thinking. In my opinion, I have*
4		*started speaking directly automatically without forming the sentence in my*
5		*head. The teacher confirmed this.*

(Interview, 02/09/2020)

Extract 48 shows how Seçil feels she moved from trying to form the

sentences in her head to speaking automatically. However, she credits her native

private speaker for her success because she had to speak English with her without

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resorting to Turkish. It was a learning setting where she had the opportunity to speak in English just like she would have done if she had a community of practice.

Establishing a classroom identity was another issue that Seçil felt she needed to deal with. At the beginning of B2, since it all started online and it was not possible to get to know her classmates. She says she felt a little weird at the beginning but states that once the teacher started to use the breakout rooms to initiate group work, she felt a little better because that was the time when she had the chance to speak to her classmates and they were doing something collaboratively. Here she reported that they "*warmed up to the class a little*" ["sınıfta bir tık ısınır gibi olduk"]. However, even though she mentions collaborative work as a means to a warmer classroom setting, she also adds that 'knowing your classmates' is not necessary because "t*he teacher is our main concern, we gotta listen to the lesson*" ["Çünkü zaten hoca ile işimiz, ders dinleyeceğiz"] (Interview, 13/07/2020). Here, Seçil seems to be trying to find an internal justification for not having the need to socialize or interact with her classmates since it is also not possible and this should not affect her studies nor her success in class. She tries to explain that this should not prevent her from learning or from being successful at this level.

4.7 Summary of Seçil's case

In terms of L2 investment, Seçil believes in the cultural and social gains of learning English. She knows that it will help her in her academic studies and also boost her self-confidence. However, she does not mention any economic gains of learning English, which seems to be a common trait among the other participants.

In terms of her past experience, Seçil seems to have constructed a past-mediated negative identity that is connected to having received bad English

education and not realizing the importance of learning it. English was not taught in a communicative way, only as tests and this caused her to perceive it not as a communicative tool but as an instrumental tool to pass tests. Furthermore, her deeply rooted fear of making mistakes, her dyslexia, her phobia to watch English speaking movies made her position English as a nightmare.

Her present learner identity is again complex and full of contradictions: her imagined identity shows full participation in a community of practice during academic events and social gatherings but her actual L2 self is burdened by fears originating from her childhood. She lists a whole set of negative identity markers related to anxiety: being embarrassed, being afraid to raise hands, humiliating yourself in front of the teacher, friends making fun, and giving the wrong answer.

Her ideal self projects herself speaking to foreigners without problems because "they would not judge her and understand her mistakes" but does not feel comfortable at all speaking in class which shows that the engagement of her actual self is dependent on the image in the eyes of her classmates. For her, knowing a language means speaking it. She finds it difficult to accept that an L2 identity could also exist if one would only understand a language.

4.8 Pelin's case

4.8.1 Vignette

Pelin is 20 years old and was born and raised in a city in the most southern area of Turkey at the Mediterranean coast. Both of her parents were also born in the same city and have been living there for their whole lives. Pelin's mother is a secondary school graduate and used to work at a factory before she got married. Her father is a high-school graduate and used to own a car repair shop but is now retired. Both her

parents are of Arab descent and speak fluent Arabic; however, since they did not speak Arabic at home, Pelin neither speaks nor understands Arabic. She stated in one of her interviews that she does not regret not speaking Arabic and she does not wish to learn it. Pelin has a working older sister and 2 younger sisters who go to secondary school. Pelin is the first person in the family to have left her hometown. She says that she likes being in a large family and when asked how many cousins she has she responds "*I really don't know the number. I have cousins whose names I don't know, both from my mother and father's side*". Pelin describes her family as "socially conservative" but not radically religious. Her mother and her aunts do not wear headscarves, which can be seen as a secular trait. When asked about her family's social situation, she states they are "socially conservative" where the father is the major breadwinner and decision maker in the house, and the mother is the one who takes care of the children and the household in general.

Pelin studies at the Nursing department with a full scholarship. Initially she wanted to study physiotherapy and rehabilitation but her university exam score was not high enough for the department. Since she did not want to lose another year (she had started primary school a year late) she had to choose a department based on her score and nursing was available. She also did not want to go to a big city like Istanbul because she thought it was too crowded and complicated. She had rather thought of studying in smaller cities like Çanakkale (population of ~180.000) , Adana (population of ~1.700.000) or even Ankara (population of ~5.600.000) but she says she had no other choice than the nursing department at the Istanbul Private University.

Pelin has an agreement with the university in exchange for a full scholarship. The agreement stipulates that she has to work as a nurse for four years at the

university's hospital. Pelin is an avid online gamer and likes to take walks in her free time.

4.8.2   Progress at English Preparatory School

Pelin started the English Preparatory Program at the A level (beginner) in the Fall 2019 semester and studied for another two semesters (B1 and B2) and graduated from the English preparatory program in the Summer 2020 summer school semester to start at the nursing department in the Fall 2021 semester. Table 11 shows her grades in all the terms she studied at the preparatory program.

Table 11. Pelin' Progress at EPS

Pelin	Fall 2019 A Level	Spring 2020 B1 Level	Summer 2020 B2 Level
Participation (10%)	9	10	8
Quizzes (20%)	83	71	94
Midterm (%30)	91	73	67
Final (40%)	81	70	78
Total	85	74	78
Attendance	37/70 (350/90%)	3/64 (320/99%)	5/23 115/96%)

Note. Participation out of 10. Exams and total out of 100.

As can be seen from the grades she received during the program (Table 11), she was a successful student in all the semesters. The only difference is in the first semester when her scores are above 80 and she seems to drop down to 70s in the following semesters. From her attendance, we can see that she attended 90% of the classes in the A level and nearly all of her classes in the B1 and B2 levels. Half of the classes in the B1 level and all of the classes in the B2 level were conducted online.

4.8.3 L2 investment

Pelin is not sure whether English will provide her with an economic capital in the future because she is studying nursing and already has an agreement with the university hospital in exchange for a scholarship (for a summary of her L2 investment see Figure 15). At the time of the first interview, she could not imagine how, as a nurse, she would need to use English during her profession. When I told her that Turkish hospitals attract a diverse range of patients, Russians, Syrians, Arabs, she replied that her English will only be beneficial in situations where she has to help them but nothing else. When I ask her how the thought of being an English-speaking nurse sounds, she states that it would be nice. However, from a professional point of view, Pelin does not seem to fully believe that it would help her. An English-speaking identity in the nursing world does not seem to exist for Pelin therefore she does not seem to see an L2 investment in that regard (Figure 15). In an interview after she passed her preparatory school, I asked her again about her future prospects with regards to speaking English and she was still not sure about it. She especially focused on her studies at the department where most of the courses will be in English. She said that she believes her level to be sufficient to understand the lessons apart from her vocabulary knowledge, which she believed to be lacking in. However, she also stated that practically most of the lessons are covered in Turkish, which made her feel comfortable.
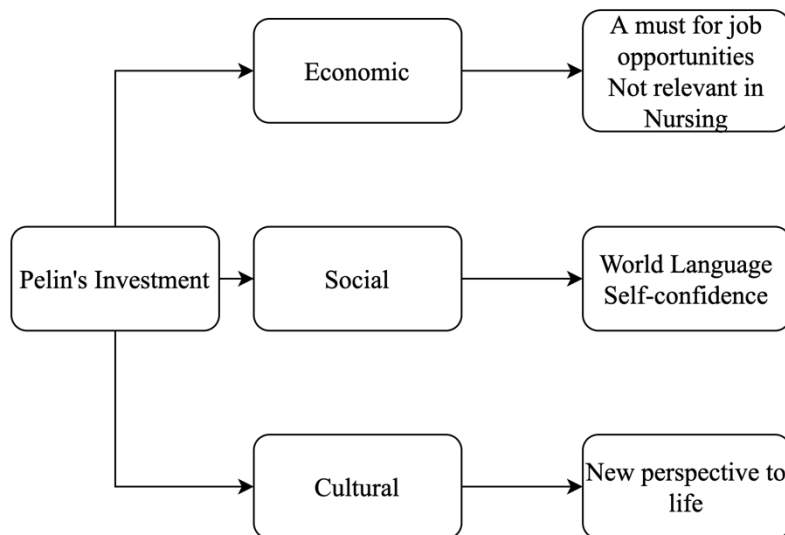
Figure 15. Pelin's investment in English

When Pelin started the English Preparatory School, she had a clear and direct

understanding of why English was important and why it needed to be learnt. She

stated in her first interview that she liked to speak English and that she had fun with

its pronunciation, she enjoyed it when she spoke English. She did not think that

English was difficult, especially compared to European languages like German. "At

least there are no articles you need to differentiate," she said. About its importance,

Pelin thinks that English is now a world language and in Turkey it has become a

second language that everybody needs to know. When asked about why English is so

widespread, she gives examples from the school as well:

Extract 49

1	Pelin:	Birçok yerde İngilizce konuşuluyor, bir çok şey İngilizce. Mesela burada okulun
2		her yeri İngilizce mesela hani.
3	St:	Bilmediğin bir yere gitsen illa İngilizce bilen biri vardır ve iletişim kurabilirsin
4		yani.
5	Pelin:	Ama Türkçe bilen yoktu bir yere gittiğinde. Türkiye'den bahsetmiyorum.
6	Hakan:	Bunun sebebi ne sizce?
7	Pelin:	İşte dünya dili, herkes biliyor artık, herkesin ikinci dili olmuş İngilizce. Mesela
8		Japonya'da, Çin'de, herkes yani, Japonca bilmese bile İngilizce biliyor. Orada
9		İngilizce bilen sayısı daha fazladır belki.

1	*Pelin:*	*English is spoken in many places, a lot of things are in English. For example,*
2		*here at school, everything is in English.*
3	*St:*	*If you go to a place you don't know, there will definitely be someone who speaks*
4		*English and you'll be able to communicate.*
5	*Pelin:*	*However, there won't be anyone who speaks Turkish if you go anywhere. I'm not*
6		*talking about Turkey.*
7	*Hakan:*	*What do you think is the reason?*
8	*Pelin:*	*Well, it's a world language, everybody speaks it, it's everybody's second*
9		*language. For example in Japan, in China, well everybody, even if they don't*
10		*speak Japanese they speak English. Maybe the number of English speakers is*
11		*more there.*

(Interview, 8/10/2019)

Pelin recognized in her immediate environment that English is used everywhere. In the school, most of the signs are in English. She also is aware of the fact that English is spoken everywhere in the world, that English is a lingua franca. In extract 49 line 5, she states that Turkish will not help her 'anywhere', while English is a 'word language' which is spoken everywhere.

In terms of its place for job opportunities, she says: "*For example, you're going to start a job, you need to speak English, they ask you if you speak another language besides English. English, is definitely a must*" ["İşe başlayacaksın mesela, İngilizceyi bilmen gerekip üstüne artık dil biliyor musun diye soruyorlar. İngilizceyi... O kesin şart yani] (Interview, 8/10/2019). However, it is contradicting that she does not associate this with her own future profession, nursing. This might have an impact on her L2 learner identity since her value of English as a future

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economic capital does not match with her own projected future self. On the other

hand, according to her, speaking another language gives you another perspective to

life, you do not look at the world from one point of view. Pelin believes that she will

make it to B2 level in English and that the C level is only needed for professional

purposes. She believes that you need to love it and have interest in a language if you

want to learn it. You need to listen to music, read and write if you want to learn it

thoroughly. At the same time, you have to have self-confidence, she says, "Self-

confidence will change a person". She is motivated by the vision of a fluently-

English speaking self. Even now, when she sees progress in herself, when she reads

without mistakes, she is impressed by herself and says she wants to learn more in

situations like these. In a focus interview, when asked about whether English might

change their status in general, Pelin answers with a confident "of course" and

mentions 'self-confidence' again; however, this time as an outcome of speaking

English.

Extract 50

1	Hakan:	Özgüven mi konu?
2	Pelin:	Aynen öyle. En azından kendime bir şey kattım, bakış açım gelişti, kendimi
3		geliştirdim ve istediğim zaman turistlere yardımcı olabileceğim, bir rahatım,
4		istediğim zaman, yabancı ülkeye gittiğimde zorluk da çekmeyeceğim. Yabancı
5		insanlarla arkadaş olabileceğim. Hep olmayı düşünmüşümdür, hayal etmişimdir.

1	Hakan:	Is self-confidence the case?
2	Pelin:	It definitely is. At least I have contributed to myself, my point of view has
3		broadened, I've improved myself, and I can help tourists whenever I want, I'm
4		comfortable, I will not face difficulties whenever I want to go abroad. I will have
5		foreign friends. I always wanted, imagined having foreign friends.

(Interview, 8/10/2019)

In extract 50, we can see how Pelin creates the content for self-confidence as a result

of speaking English. She believes that it will add to her actual self, which will have

become larger and will have moved forward. All of these will lead her to have the

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ability to help tourists whenever she wishes to; she will be comfortable and also face no 'difficulties' when traveling abroad. In addition, she can make foreign friends. This is something related to her imagined identity. She envisions herself having foerign friends, something that she always dreamt about.

4.8.4   Past learning experience

"*For all these years, they could have taught us but they didn't*"

Just like the others, Pelin started her formal English learning journey when she was in 4th grade. Before school, she remembers learning some basic words from playing video games. At the same time, she says that her sister would try to speak English in the house. Her playful interaction in English with her sister continued throughout her whole learning life. She says: "*We try to speak English with my sister from time to time. Because she also likes to contribute. And she also expects me to contribute to her.*" ["Ablamla İngilizce konuşmaya çalışıyoruz ara ara. Çünkü ablam da bir şeyler katmayı seviyor. O da benden, benim ona katmamı istiyor."] (Interview, 8/10/2019).

When she was a kid, Pelin says she took part in an English choir and the way she expresses it makes it sound like it was not a big deal: "*I took part in an English choir. And that's it!*" [" Koroya falan katılıyordum, İngilizce korolarına. O kadar"] (Interview, 8/10/2021). Pelin also started her English preparatory education at the A2 beginner level. When asked about why she thinks this was the case even though they had started learning English so early, she says:

Extract 51

1	Pelin:	Eğitim kalitesi iyi değildi bence. Öğretilebilirdi o kadar sene içinde ama
2		öğretilmediyse de bu genel herkesin problemiyse kesinlikle bizde değil sıkıntı
3		bence.
4	St:	Bir de ben cidden hiç öğrenmek istemedim. Hep yapamayacağım gözüyle bakıp
5		dinlemedim falan.
6	Pelin:	Ben istemiştim öğrenmeyi ya lisede falan.
7	Hakan:	Yani sence, senin durumunda, seninle çok alakalı değil diyorsun. Daha çok
8		şartlarla alakalı.
9	Pelin:	Mesela bir öğretmenimiz vardı, böyle "me to"ya "me the" derdi falan, bende
10		bütün orada filmler kopardı. Hepsi aynı öğretmiyor.

1	Pelin:	*I think, the quality of education was bad. For all these years, they could have*
2		*taught us but they didn't, and if this is a general problem, it is definitely not our*
3		*fault.*
4	St:	*Also, in my case, I really didn't want to learn.I always thought I couldn't do it*
5		*anyway so I didn't pay attention in class.*
6	Pelin:	*I wanted to learn when I was in high school.*
7	Hakan:	*So, in your situation, in your opinion it was not up to you? Was it more related*
8		*to the conditions?*
9	Pelin:	*For example, we had a teacher who would say "me, taa" instead of "me, too",*
10		*this would kill all of my desire to learn in class. Not all of them teach the same.*

(Interview, 8/10/2019)

Just like the other participants who received English education starting at grade 4,

Pelin blames the education system. In extract 51 lines 1-3, she implies that not

learning proper English was not 'their' fault. She also states that she is not alone

saying that this is a "general problem". She also notes that she believes that teachers

had the potential to teach ("they *could* have taught us"), but that they did not do this.

This sounds like, according to her, not providing them with a good education was

intentionally done. Pelin also emphasized that she actually was eager to learn but

blames the teachers for not providing quality education. In extract 51 line 9 she

mentions a teacher not being able to pronounce words correctly and how this had a

negative effect on her motivation to learn. Here we can observe a positively

motivated English learner identity with low expectations from the education system
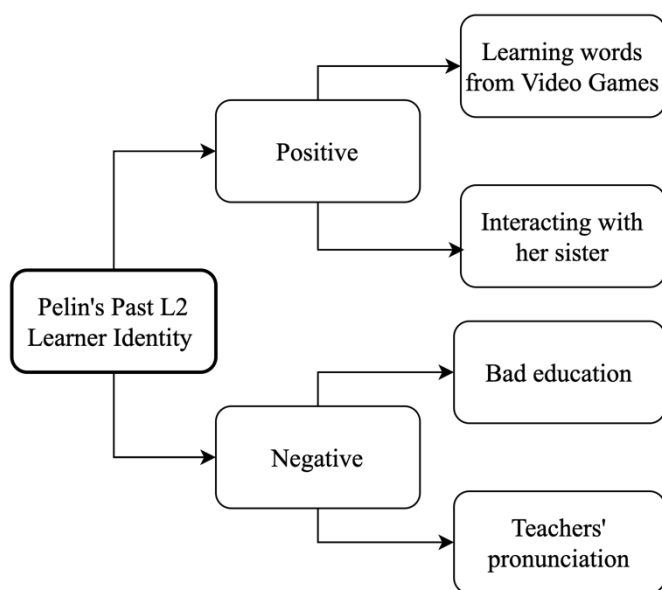
(Figure 16).

Figure 16. Pelin's past L2 learner identity

4.8.5   Present learning experience

"We show some effort but it's not enough, I know that we can do more"

In her first semester at the A2 beginner level, Pelin was very eager to learn and showed this by participating in the lessons. She mentions that she wants to participate all the time and raises her hand constantly to answer lesson-related questions. Normally, she says, she would be shy but she noticed that all of the students are at the same level and make the same mistakes, therefore, she feels comfortable and not anxious at all. Especially when I asked her if she would be annoyed when someone made a comment about her mistakes, she said she would not care at all: "they can say whatever they want" ["...istediğini desinler"]. Here, Pelin exhibits a strong self-confident L2 self that does not shy from making mistakes in front of the class. This can be exemplified with a instance in class where she pronounced the word 'building' as /bɑɪldɪŋ/. There was an explosion of laughter right away from her classmates. Pelin chose to laugh with them and did not seem to be affected by her classmates' fun-making. However, she continues to ask her questions

in Turkish and says that she has not moved to the point of asking questions in English, yet. About being shy in the classroom, she says that it is actually a problem in learning a language: "*In my opinion, one needs to be assertive…you would learn it but if you cannot speak, there is a big problem, the whole deal is speaking*" ["Atılmak gerekiyor bence…Öğrenir ama konuşamazsa zatın sıkıntı büyük, olay konuşma zaten. (Interview, 8/10/2019). Pelin's awareness about learning a language is that you have to speak it. This is another instance among the participants where 'speaking' a language is emphasized as the primary proficiency marker skill. Pelin, just like the other participants, believes that you have to be able to 'speak' the language to become a legitimate user of it. Another proficiency marker that is mentioned is the capability to form full sentences. When asked about whether she sees herself as a speaker of English, she emphasis the lack of forming full sentences:

Extract 52

1	Pelin:	Derdimi anlatırım herhalde. Kendimi tanıtma açısından. Kendimi tanıtabilirim.
2		O kadar
3	Hakan:	Yeterli değil mi İngilizce konuşan birisi olarak?
4	Pelin:	Hayır.
5	Hakan:	Ne lazım peki, o tanıma uymak için ne gerekiyor sizce?
6	Pelin:	Mesela cümle kuramıyoruz. Mesela diyeceğim bir şeyin cümlesini
7		kuramıyoruz.
8	Hakan:	Az önce kurdun, ben sana bir şeyler sordum İngilizce, sen bayağı konuştun. I
9		can speak, I don't speak, she is going to speak dedin.
10	Pelin:	-ing falan takmadan hani şu şeylerde.
11	Hakan:	İngilizceyi kullanan birisi olarak da mı görmüyorsunuz kendinizi?
12	Pelin:	Kullanıyoruz canım, kullanmıyor muyuz, ben kullanıyorum. Mesela ne bileyim
13		ya, kullanıyorumdur herhalde?

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1	Pelin:	*I guess, I can say what I want to say in the most basic way, in terms of*
2		*introducing myself, I can introduce myself. That's all*
3	Hakan:	*Don't you think this is sufficient for someone speaking English?*
4	Pelin:	*No*
5	Hakan:	*So, what is missing? What do you think is needed to fit this description?*
6	Pelin:	*For example, we can't form sentences. We can't form the sentences of whatever*
7		*we want to say.*
8	Hakan:	*You did form a sentence just now, I asked you some things in English, and you*
9		*spoke quite a lot, you said 'I can speak, I Don't speak, she is going to speak'*
10	Pelin:	*Without adding the -ing in those things*
11	Hakan:	*Don't you even see yourself as a user of English?*
12	Pelin:	*Well, we use it, don't we use it? I use it. For example, I don't know, well I think*
13		*I use it.*

(Interview, 8/10/2019)

In extract 52, Pelin expresses her understanding of a speaker of English. She emphasizes that a speaker has to form full grammatically correct sentences and just being able to introduce yourself is not enough at all to be accepted as a speaker. She even notices that some '-ing' is missing in the sentences that she tried to form at the beginning of the interview when we had a casual conversation in English (extract 51, line 10). However, she seems to associate grammatical accuracy with passing her courses. When asked about whether rules are important in a language, she says "*in my opinion, they are not, but they are important here. I can find my way abroad. It doesn't matter whether I use 'could' or 'used' to. They will understand me (…) But we need them to pass our exams.*" ["Yani bence değil, burada önemli ama. Ben dışarı çıkınca derdimi anlatırım yani. Ha could kullanmışım, ha used to kullanmışım. Beni anlarlar. (...) Ama sınav geçmek için işte"] (Interview, 01/11/2019). This seems to imply a distinction between 'using English for communicative purposes' and 'using English for academic purposes' where grammatical accuracy seems to matter.

In the lessons, Pelin takes notes in a notebook, especially when there are "*strange things that I don't know, that I might forget later*" ["tahtada bilmediğim garip, benim unutabileceğim bir şey oldu mu hemen onu geçiyorum"] (Interview,

8/10/2019). She checks the notes later, rewrites them and does her homework regularly. When asked about these, she says that she does it all and adds: "we really want to learn". Here we can see that Pelin is actively engaged in the learning process and has a positive attitude towards English. She is constructing an identity as an enthusiastic and devoted English learner. When asked about how she would rate her effort out of 10, she says she is between 7-8 and adds: "*It's like it's not enough. It feels like this effort is not enough. We show some effort but it's not enough, I know that we can do more, that's why I said 7-8, for example I could read a book in English*" ["Yetmiyormuş gibi sanki. O çaba yeterli değilmiş gibi geliyor. Çabalıyoruz ama yeterli değil gibi, daha fazlasını yapabileceğimizi bildiğimiz için 7 veya 8 dedim ben…mesela kitap okuyabilirim İngilizce] (Interview, 8/10/2019). This shows that Pelin thinks that despite all of her efforts, she still can do more to add to her English learning experience.

At the beginning of the second semester, after the break, Pelin says that she did not study at all during the break. She engaged with English only by playing online games. She changed the settings of the game that she is playing into English and was matched with English speaking players around the world. The kind of online game she is playing requires you to chat with the other players in the game. This chat can be in a written or oral form. She said that she was interacting in English with other players by saying "yes, ok" and that was all. When I asked why she did not speak to them, she said "*By the way, I forgot how to speak, I cannot even speak in class*" [Ben bu arada İngilizce konuşmayı unuttum, derste de konuşamıyorum zaten]. (Interview, 10/02/2020). Pelin seems to invest in learning English by playing games but does not use it as an opportunity to engage in spoken communication because even though she has been receiving English education for a semester (around 3

months), she still does not see herself as a 'speaker of English' and even thinks that she has forgotten how to speak even in class. In the evenings, Pelin watches English series but continues to watch them with Turkish subtitles. At the same time, academically she reviews the new words that were covered and tries to write her own sentences with them. When asked about the effort scale, Pelin says at the beginning of the second semester (B1) she feels she is giving it a 5.5 out of 10. She feels that she will have problems with learning the new vocabulary. Just like the other participants, she feels overwhelmed with the number of words they have to learn and does not know how to deal with it and how to progress in that regard.

4.8.6   Speaking in class

"*But if they'd force us to speak in English I would.*"

In terms of speaking English in class, in her second semesters, Pelin still asks her questions in Turkish and converses with her friends in Turkish as well. She says that their teachers do not speak English all the time and choose to instruct some parts in Turkish. However, she expresses that she envies her friend whose teacher only speaks in English in class and does not use Turkish at all. In terms of speaking English in class, Pelin wants to be forced so that she can try. In a focus interview together with another student, she says:

Extract 53

1	Pelin:	Türkçe anlattıkları için Türkçe konuşuyoruz. Ama bizi İngilizce anlatmaya
2		zorlasalar İngilizce konuşurum.
3	St:	Evet, mesela Alper Türkçe konuştuğunda hoca diyormuş ki anlamıyorum yani.
4	Pelin:	Aynen. Bir anlatmıştı Alp, sırf hoca Türkçe konuştuklarını duymasın diye görevli
5		ile dışarıda konuşmuş.
6	St:	Keşke öyle olsa.
7	Pelin:	Hocalarımız iyi tabi ki de. hepsinden çok memnunuz ama İngilizce konuşsalardı
8		daha iyiydi.

1	Pelin:	*Because they instruct us in Turkish, we speak Turkish. But if they'd force us to*
2		*speak in English I would.*
3	St:	*Yes, for example when Alper speaks in English the teacher says I don't*
4		*understand.*
5	Pelin:	*Totally. Once Alp told me that the teacher spoke to a janitor outside the*
6		*classroom just so that no one could hear her speak in Turkish.*
7	St:	*I wish that it was like that.*
8	Pelin:	*Of course our teachers are good, we are all happy with them but if they'd speak*
9		*in English it would be better.*

(Interview, 10/02/2020)

In extract 53, we can see that Pelin and her friend do not want to be left on their own in deciding when to speak in English. They seem to desire a setting where they are forced to speak in English. For example, in line 3-4, the student gives an example where the teacher pretends not to understand Turkish. This she thinks will leave them in a position to speak in English if they want to communicate with the teacher. This communication is not only limited to 'class speech' which consists of instructions and all kinds of feedback but also real life communication between the teacher and the students. Here again, students are expressing that they are in need of a community of practice . We also have to note that the students do not feel that they themselves can construct this community but need the help and authority of the teacher to create one where they are forced to speak in English to establish communication. Figure 17 shows a summary of Pelin's L2 speaker identity
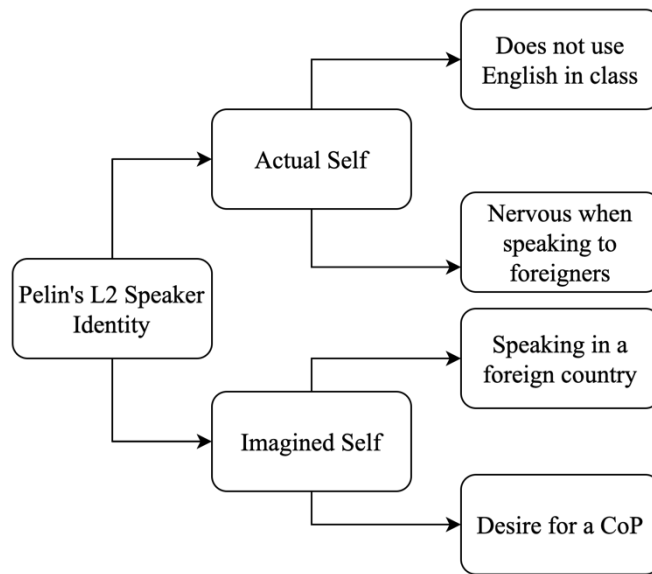
Figure 17. Pelin's L2 speaker identity

4.8.7   Imagined identity

Pelin hesitantly accepts that she might be a 'user of English', of which she still does

not seem to be convinced. This also shows when asked about whether she imagines

herself speaking in English. Pelin does say yes but cannot elaborate and where and

how. She only imagines herself speaking English in a foreign country but where and

under what circumstances she does not say. At the same time, she says that she

would feel nervous when a tourist in Turkey would ask her for directions. The main

reason for that is that it would be a 'real situation': "*It's like, it's going to be*

something in real life for the first time, I'm going to tell something to someone"

["Gerçek hayatında ilk defa bir şey olacak ya böyle, birine bir şey anlatacağım"]

(Interview, 8/10/2019). Here we can see that even imagining the prospect of

engaging in a real life English speaking situation seems to be causing a hint of

anxiety for Pelin even though she had said that she could imagine herself speaking

English in a foreign country. There seems to be a contradiction between the imagined

actual-self English speaking identity, which seems to be more immediate and

realistic, and the imagined-self English speaking identity, which seems to be more like a future projection of herself. In a later interview, Pelin tells that she actually had an encounter with a Korean girl in Kadıköy. She says that she mostly understood what she said but could not answer at all. Her main issue was worrying about whether she would say something incorrectly. Even though Pelin thought that the girl's accent was bad, she stated that the girl's English was better than hers. In an interview conducted at the end of her second semester (B1), she says during school time, she would consider herself a 'user' of English because she was using it in her lessons and while listening to music. However, if she had an encounter with someone speaking English she says: "*if someone said something to me I'd still speak gibberish", I won't be able to speak but maybe understand.*" [hala biri karşıma gelse hebele hübele yaparım konuşamam ama onu anlayabilirim belki] (Learning Diary, May 2020).

4.9 Summary of Pelin's case

Pelin seems to be invested in learning English for a number of reasons, all of which are related to owning economic, social and cultural capitals. Even though she believes that English brings an economical capital, she does not position herself in that economic future because she cannot see how English would benefit her in the nursing world. However, she sees the social and cultural benefits of it as a boost in self-confidence and as an acquisition of a new perspective. All of these contribute to her learner identities in positive and negative ways. For example, in a positive sense, her past-mediated L2 learner identity was impacted by playing video games in English and her interactions with her sister while her formal English learning experience including having bad teachers contributed to a construction of a negative

L2 learner identity. This might have led to a positively motivated English learner identity with low expectations from the education system.

Her present learning identity exhibits positive traits of a strong self-confident L2 self that is not afraid of making mistakes in front of the class. However, there was still a lack of an actual speaking self because she chose to speak Turkish with her classmates and teacher during communicative exchanges. However, in class Pelin wants to be forced to speak English so she does not have another option. In terms of her imagined identity, there seems to be a contradiction between her imagined actual-self English-speaking identity, which seems to be more immediate and realistic, and the imagined-self English-speaking identity, which seems to be more like a future projection of herself.

4.10 Banu's case

4.10.1 Vignette

Banu (f) is 20 years old and was born and raised in a neighborhood in Istanbul which is known for its crowded narrow streets and socio-economically low profile. She stayed there until the age of 7 when she moved to live with her grandmother who lives in another neighborhood. This neighborhood is known to be one of the most hip and modern places in Istanbul. This was a radical transition for her. During the week, she went to school there and during the weekends and the summers she stayed with her mother who lives in the Asian part of Istanbul. It seems that moving distances had become part of Banu's life when she was very young. During her education at the English Preparatory School, she used to complain about the commute, which took her around 2 hours every day. The reason why she had to move to her grandmother was because of her mother and father's divorce. Banu does

not like to talk about her father much and she does not speak to him very often. She lived at her grandmother's for 2 years and then moved to the Asian side with her mother. Her mother lives in one of the last districts to the east of Istanbul. Her mother never remarried. She still works as an accountant. Banu went to two primary schools, two secondary and three high-schools of which the last one was a private school. She says she was an "angry girl who would get into arguments". At the same time she says the reason why she changed so many schools was the "bad" neighborhoods they were located in.

Banu was not able to pass the English preparatory school (see Table 12); therefore, she decided to change schools and start at another university where English was not a medium of instruction. She also changed her department. At the Istanbul Private University, where she started her language learning journey, her department was Political Science. At the new university, she changed her major to Aviation Management. In this new school, she was exempt from the English Preparatory School because it accepted having received English education at the B2 level, which she had already started at her previous school but did not choose to finish. She said she was happy that she changed schools because there she was able to start as a freshman at the university without studying at a English Preparatory program. Furthermore, the medium of education at her new school is Turkish, which was another reason for her to switch. However, the new university is farther away from her recent home than the previous school was. She had to commute to her previous school for two hours.

Banu is an avid gamer. She likes to play online games, especially League of Legends. She is also a tattoo enthusiast. At the same time, she likes to listen to Turkish arabesque music, which is a very melancholic type of traditional Turkish

folk music with arabic influences. She also likes watching Turkish melancholic Tv series.

4.10.2 Progress at the EPS

Banu started studying at the English Preparatory School in the Fall 2019 Semester in the A level. She studied at the EPS for four semesters but did not pass B2, which was a requirement for her to begin her studies in the Political Science department. In Table 12, we can see all the grades she received during her stay at the EPS.

Table 12. Banu's Scores at the EPS

Banu	Fall 2019 A Level	Spring 2020 B1 Level	Summer 2020 B2 Level	Fall 2021 B2 Level
Participation (10%)	6	5	2	2
Quizzes (20%)	54	46	0	35
Midterm (%30)	65	47	90	39
Final (40%)	79	99*	0	0
Total	68	67	-	-
Attendance	68/70 (350/81%)	64/64 (320/80%)	74/23 (115/36%)	104/70 (350/70%)

Note. Participation out of 10. Exam results and total out of 100
* make up exam

As can be seen in Table 12, Banu had attendance issues right from the beginning of her studies at the EPS. In the first A level, she did not come to school for 68 hours, which was close to the limit. Students at the EPS have to attend at least 80% of the classes. In the second term (B1), she spent all of her absenteeism rights by not attending 64 hours. Banu failed both the B2 Summer school and the B2 Fall 2021 semesters because of absenteeism. In terms of participation, she received a 6 in the first semester and a 5 in the second one. This shows that Banu was not evaluated by

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her teachers as a student who fully participates in class. In the last two semesters, her participation grades were very low because she did not attend classes after she failed. In terms of her grades, Banu's grades for her quizzes, midterm and final exam were not bad. However, this seems to have changed in the second semester when all of her grades dropped below 50. Still, she managed to receive a 99 in the Spring 2020 semester final exam, which was conducted online because of the pandemic. In the last two semesters in the EPS, Banu did not enter the quizzes nor the final exams even though she received a 90 in the midterm at the B2 Summer School.

4.10.3 Past learning experience

"…*because I'm used to hearing English since my childhood, it comes as an easier language to me*"

Just like the other participants, Banu's formal English education started in 4th grade. According to Banu, English is an easy language. In school, she tried to learn German but it was too difficult for her. At the same time, Banu has been familiar with English since her childhood because she has relatives who had once lived in Australia and now are back in Turkey. She mentioned them on many occasions in our interviews to show that she has opportunities to speak with people who speak English at a higher level. She said: "*Well, because I'm used to hearing English since my childhood, I find it easier*". [Yani İngilizceye daha küçüklüğümden beri kulağım alışkın olduğum için daha kolay geliyor bana.] (Interview, 18/10/2019). This is the main reason she believes that she will become a proficient speaker after she finishes preparatory school. She is always together with her aunts and cousins and they care about English education and speak to her in English all the time even though they know

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Turkish. Banu is aware of the importance of learning English mainly for its economic gains. In fact, she states:

Extract 54

1	Banu:	Yani önemli, çünkü şu anda neredeyse dünyada en çok konuşulan dil İngilizce,
2		kabul edilmiş zaten. Onun için bence öğrenilmesi gerekir.
3	Hakan:	Yani öğrenilmesi gerekiyor! Ne için öğrenilmesi gerekiyor? İşin için mi yoksa
4		kendin için mi?
5	Banu:	İş için genelde. İş için düşünüyorum ben. Bölümüm de belki yurt dışında bir
6		şeyler yapmak istersem bana çok lazım olacak.

1	*Banu:*	*Well, it's important because at the moment English is the most spoken language*
2		*in the world, this is already accepted. Therefore, it needs to be learned.*
3	*Hakan:*	*So, it needs to be learned, for what does it need to be learned? For work or for*
4		*yourself?*
5	*Banu:*	*Mainly for work. I want it for work. Also for my department, maybe if I want to*
6		*do something abroad it will be very useful for me.*

(Interview, 18/10/2019)

Here we can see that Banu mainly associates learning English with economic gains. She repeats this in further interviews. She thinks that she needs English mainly for work, for her department (which is in English) and *'maybe'* if she plans on doing something abroad but she seems to be a little vague about this and does not give much detail.

Banu justifies her starting at the A1 beginner level at the university by explaining that a language is best learnt by practicing to speak it and that only listening to it is not enough because after a while you start to forget how to speak. She discusses this further when speaking about the merits of a good language learner. According to Banu, the most important characteristic of a good language learner is the desire to learn. She adds that motivation as well as perseverance is a factor. She says,

Extract 55

1	Banu	Motivasyon, yani öğrenmek istiyorsa bunu bir yere kadar geldikten sonra
2		bırakmaması lazım. Devam etmesi lazım. Çünkü bir yere gelip bıraktıktan sonra
3		kesinlikle hiç bir şey hatırlamıyoruz. Çünkü ben lisede ilk iki sene çok iyi
4		İngilizce gördüm, sınıftaki en iyi öğrenci bendim, hoca da biliyordu zaten. Ama
5		ben son iki sene üniversiteye hazırlanacağım için İngilizce görmedim ve şu an
6		neredeyse hepsini unuttum.

1	*Banu:*	*Motivation, in other words, if you want to learn, you should not stop after you*
2		*reach a certain point. You should continue. Because when you stop after a*
3		*certain point, you certainly do not remember anything. In the first two years of*
4		*high school, I received a very good English education, I was the best student,*
5		*the teacher knew this as well. But I did not receive any English education in the*
6		*last two years because I needed to study for the university exam and at the*
7		*moment I don't remember anything.*

(Interview, 18/10/2019)

Here Banu draws from her own past learning experience when expressing her views on what a good language learner needs to do. She praises her own education in the first two years in high school (extract 55, line 4) and also mentions that she was the 'best' student. She also feels the need to say that the teacher was aware of her language learning quality. However, now she is at the beginner level of the preparatory school and the reason for this is that she did not receive any English education in the last two years and consequently she has forgotten 'everything'. She thinks that if she had received English education in the last two years, she would have started at the B1 level and not at the A level. Banu does not think that she could have passed the proficiency test as a higher-level English-speaking student; she still sees herself as a preparatory school student, only to be starting one level higher than her present level even though she would have received two years of English education. Figure 18 summarizes her past-mediated L2 identity.
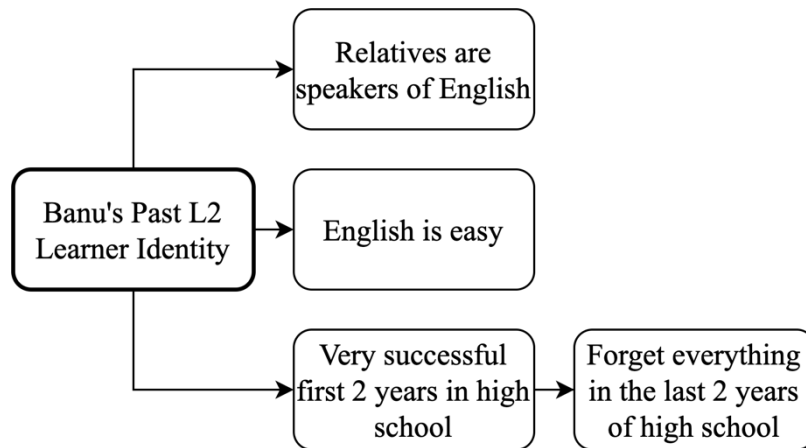
Figure 18. Banu's past L2 learner identity

4.10.4 Present learning experience

"I'm not the person who opens a book or a notebook every day"

Banu's participation in classroom activities and her general attention to classroom coverage depends on her sleeping patterns. Banu needs to commute for two hours every day to come to school. She wakes up at around 5.30 so that she can get on the 6.55 bus and arrive at school at around 8.30. She stated many times that her participation in class depends on whether she is sleepy or not. In my observations in class, I noticed that after a few weeks of active participation, she started to sleep in the first hours of the morning sessions. At the beginning she said that she only slept in the last hour or the one before the afternoon session; however, after a while this started to happen in the morning classes as well and attracted the attention of the teachers and her classmates. Her long commutes also affect how she does her homework or her assignments. She sleeps at around 20.00 after she comes home because she says she feels so tired every day. That's why she does most of her homework and assignments on the bus to or from school.

Banu says that she takes notes in class and has a notebook. When I asked her if she reviews her notes later, she said she does this only during her commute on the

bus. She also uses her weekends to do some of the assignments and homework.
When asked about the effort scale in her first interview, Banu says that it is a 7 out of
10. The remaining three she deducted because she cannot repeat the topics covered
afterwards and she had already had 50 hours of absence. In Table 12, we can see that
in the first term Banu had 68 hours of absence from the 70 hours that are allowed
during the Fall semester. She attributes those absent hours to her hospital visits. Banu
has scoliosis and needs to go to the hospital for checks and treatment. However, she
had a similar number of absences in the second term and failed two times because of
absence in the following two semesters. Figure 19 presents a summary of her present
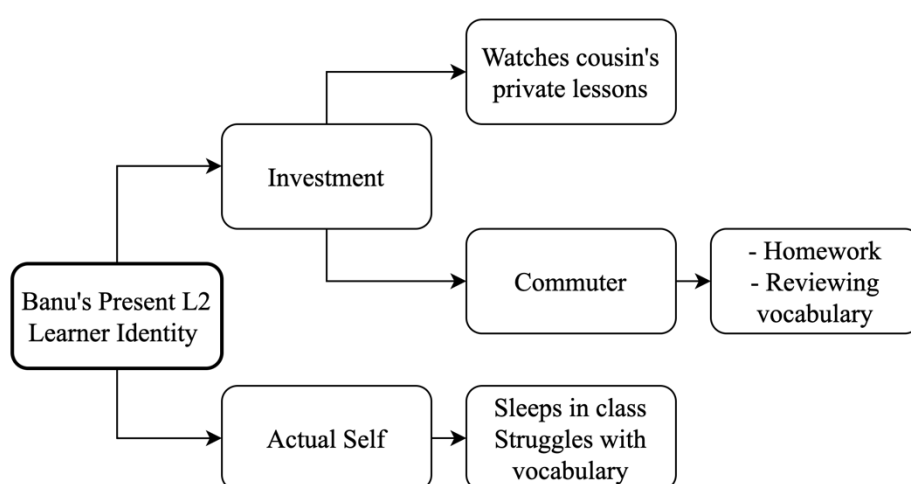L2 learner identity.

Figure 19. Banu's present L2 learner identity

At the beginning of the B1 level, Banu stated that she was comfortable with
what is covered in class and that she did not face many difficulties with the new
topics. They seemed like a continuation of the A level to her and after repeating them
a few times, she handled them. However, just like the others, Banu seems to struggle
with the large number of vocabulary that they are exposed to. She says:

Extract 56

1	Banu:	Çok fazla kelime var. İşte hepsini not alıyorum. Hepsini tek tek çevirip
2		bakıyorum. Onlar ile ilgili cümlelere bakıyorum. Onları hatırlamaya çalışıyorum
3		falan. Bazıları yerine oturuyor ama bazıları yine böyle, bu neydi yaa falan
4		oluyorum.

1	Banu	*There are too many words. I write all of them down. I translate all of them one*
2		*by one and look them up. I look up sentences related to them. I try to remember*
3		*them etc. Some of them will stick but others are like, I'm like, what the heck was*
4		*that?*

(Interview, 21/02/2020)

Here we can see that Banu seems to be investing in learning vocabulary. She uses a variety of general vocabulary learning strategies to do that. However, it seems that these strategies do not work with all of them. When I ask her how she deals with all this vocabulary load and whether she reviews them every day she says "*No, because I'm not the person who opens a book or a notebook every day*" ["Hayır. Çünkü ben sürekli böyle kitap açan defter açan bir insan değilim"] (Interview, 21/02/2020). Here she exercises her agency in novel ways. She takes photographs of the words either from the board or from the notebook and reviews them when she "gets bored" while commuting from or to school. This way, she says, there is no need for extra study because the words are always with her. About her homework, she says that she does not do them all the time. Sometimes she is tired when she comes home and does not want to do anything. At the beginning of the B1 semester, Banu reported an effort scale of 7.5 out of 10. Apart from her studies at school, Banu says that she "visits her cousin who gives private lessons to another relative". She says that she is also present while her cousin gives private lessons. She does not elaborate how this helps her with her English but she says that this is how she tries to get out-of-class English help. She describes this process as "*there I get some practice, repeating previous stuff. Things fall into place*" [Orada yine bir pratik falan, eskileri böyle bir tekrar

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etme. Oturuyor yani yerine] (Interview, 04/03/2020). She does not elaborate how this helps her with the studies at school or with her general English learning process.

4.10.5   L2 speaker identity

"Most of the time I speak in Turkish. But in class, the teachers warn me to speak English, and then of course I try."

At this time of the interview, Banu does not see herself as a speaker of English. However, when asked whether she can imagine herself speaking in English, she says that she 'sometimes' sees herself speaking in English, especially in a foreign country. She says:

Extract 57

1	Banu:	Evet bazen ediyorum.
2	Hakan:	Nasıl?
3	Banu:	Çok havalı. Yani güzel ama yani herhalde düşünüyorum acaba böyle konuşabilir
4		miyim falan diye.
5	Hakan:	Nerede hayal ediyorsun kendini konuşurken?
6	Banu:	Yurt dışında falan.
7	Hakan:	Yani ne bileyim iş ile ilgili bir şey hayal ettiğin oluyor mu veya okulda oluyor
8		mu?
9	Banu	Okulda değil, genelde yurt dışında ve işimi yaparken düşünüyorum.

1	Banu:	*Yes, sometimes I do.*
2	Hakan:	*How?*
3	Banu:	*It's so cool. Well, it's nice but I wonder whether I can speak like this and so.*
4	Hakan:	*Where do you see yourself speaking?*
5	Banu:	*Well, abroad I guess.*
6	Hakan:	*Do you imagine yourself at a workplace or at a school?*
7	Banu	*Not at school, I imagine myself speaking it while doing my job...*

(Interview, 18/10/2019)

As can be seen, to see herself speaking in English is something that is *'cool'* for Banu. She likes the idea; however, she cannot fully envision herself and expresses a little doubt and says that she wonders whether she can do this in the future (extract 57, line 3). Another important point here is to see that she can only think of herself speaking at work and abroad. Even though her department is in English and there can be numerous situations here in Turkey to speak in English, she can imagine herself only at work. In later interviews, Banu repeats that the only reason why she learns English is for her future job; however, she adds that she will also need it in her department for her studies. When she is asked about being able to communicate in English she says "that is very difficult to do in Turkey". This might mean that Banu's imagined L2 identity (Figure 20) is based on a professional self that requires English only for professional needs rather than communicative needs.
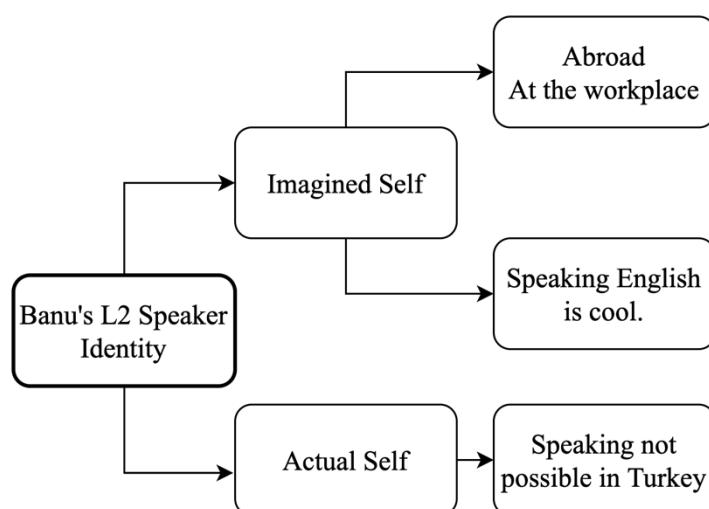

Figure 20. Banu's L2 speaker identity

Another point related to her not seeing English as a communicative device could be the lack of English speaking opportunities during her classes. When asked about the factors affecting her ability to speak English in class she says that there are

no such factors. She adds: "*I mostly speak in Turkish. But in class, the teachers warn me to speak English, and then of course I try. Apart from that, I speak Turkish in class with my friends.*" ["Ben çoğu zaman yani Türkçe konuşuyorum. Ama derste, hani uyarıyor beni, İngilizce söyle, o zaman İngilizce söylemeye çalışıyorum tabi. Onun dışında arkadaşlarımla Türkçe konuşuyorum derste."] (Interview, 18/10/2019). It seems that Banu speaks English only when she is forced to do so by her teachers. Her low engagement in English speaking activities in the class might be a factor contributing to a negative construction of her L2 speaker identity. Banu has on many occasions mentioned and shown in class that she is a fan of Turkish series and traditional arabesk music.

4.10.6 Accent matters

Banu does not believe that speaking with an American or British accent is important. However, she says that it is important to pronounce the words correctly. "*Everybody has a different accent, even in Turkish we have different accents, that is not important at all*" she said in her first interview. Later, she emphasized the importance of pronouncing words correctly (in an intelligible way) and associated it with "being made fun of when speaking incorrectly". She says,

Extract 58

1	Banu:	...bence önemli, çünkü bir yere gittiğin zaman böyle hani yurt dışına mesela
2		çıktığın zaman insanlar sana konuşur, sen konuşuyorsun böyle, zaten başka bir
3		yerden geldiğin çok belli oluyor. Hani seninle böyle bir gülse, dalga geçse
4		moralin bozuluyor.
5	Hakan:	Niye böyle bir şey yapsın?
6	Banu:	Hayır olabilir, olabilecek bir şey. Yapan insan vardır, güler. Bunu nasıl telaffuz
7		falan filan diye.

1	Banu:	...I think, it is important, because when you go somewhere, for example
2		abroad and people talk to you, and you talk back, it's already too obvious that
3		you come from another place. So, if someone laughs or makes fun of you, that
4		would put you down.
5	Hakan:	Why would someone do this?
6	Banu:	Well, it might happen, it's possible. There are people like that, they'll laugh,
7		they'll be like what kind of pronunciation is that and stuff.

(Interview, 19/11/2019)

For Banu, it seems that it is an issue to be perceived as a 'foreigner' because in extract 58 line 3 she says that it is already obvious that you are a foreigner from your non-native accent and on top of that, if you make a pronunciation mistake, they will laugh and this will make you feel bad. Here, Banu shows that even as a foreign speaker, one has to speak with correct pronunciation in a language in order to not sound foreign. Banu seems to have constructed a native-like speaker imagined identity where speakers of a foreign language have to speak the target language fluently and accurately or otherwise they will be ridiculed by the native speakers of that language.

In an interview in December 2019, she stated her wish to be able to speak like an American or a British person because 'it sounds more pleasant to the ear'. Later, in the B2 Summer school, Banu seems to have changed her mind about speaking with an accent. Now she supports that the most important aspect is to be able to communicate your message properly. She says "*When I'm abroad, the people there will not say 'hey you're speaking English but your accent is very bad'. They will see*

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whether I can talk or not in my opinion" [Yurt dışına çıktığım zaman oradakiler bana

demeyecek 'vay İngilizce konuşuyorsun ama aksanın çok kötü' demeyecek bana.

Konuşabiliyor muyum konuşabiliyor muyum ona bakacaklar bence] (Interview,

17/07/2020). Banu also seems to have constructed an L2 emergent speaker identity
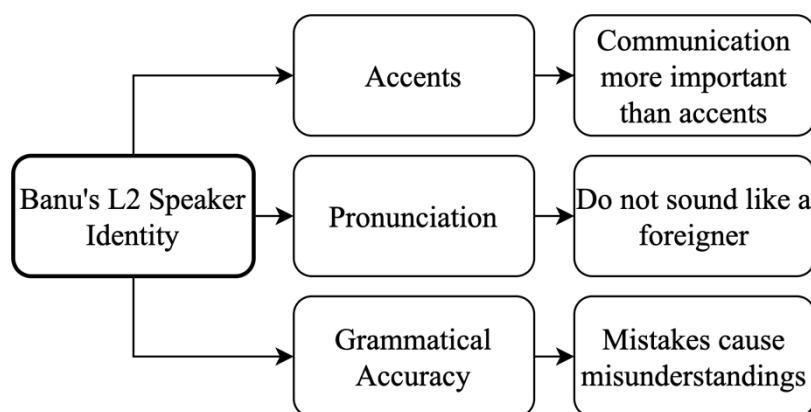
(Figure 21).

Figure 21. Banu's L2 Speaker identity regarding emergent communication

Just like pronunciation, Banu believes that grammar is also important when

speaking English. She says that when you have your grammar incorrect there can be

misunderstandings. For this she gives an example from Turkish speakers coming

from the east. She says,

Extract 59

Banu:	…mesela Doğu'dan bir insan geliyor, elinde herhangi bir yiyecek. Böyle soruyor "bu yeniyor". Sen onun soru sorduğunu anlamıyorsun, diyorsun ki yeniyor yani. Ama aslında sana soru sormaya çalışıyor. Bence onun için gramer önemli, İngilizcede de böyle yani.
Banu:	*…for example, imagine a person who comes from the East and they have some food in their hand. They will ask "this is for eating?". He asks "this to eat". You don't understand that this was a question and you say "yeah, to eat". But in fact this person asks a question. Therefore grammar is important, and this is the case in English as well.*

Here, Banu wants to show how grammar mistakes might lead to misunderstandings and gives an example from a typical usage of a statement that usually is turned into a question using intonation. She is not aware of the fact that this is a common way to express a question, but in Turkey this way of forming a question is associated with an 'eastern vernacular'. Therefore, Banu expects the speaker to say "is this to eat?" instead of "this to eat"? Hence, she expects a misunderstanding to happen; however, the way she supposedly replies is still an answer to the question. This does not change the fact that Banu considers grammar to be important and that she expects grammatical accuracy even in Turkish.

4.10.7   B2 summer school (online)

"*There are things I need to do but I'm listening at the same time.*"
In the middle of March 2020, online education started at the EPS due to the COVID19 pandemic. Even though Banu's most challenging obstacle studying English at the EPS was commuting, Banu was not positively affected by the advantage of joining classes in her own home. For her, online education was really bad and she did not like it at all. At the beginning, she did not attend the classes because there was no attendance requirement and she states that "*she did not understand what was said in class*" [...çünkü ben derste konuştuğumuz zaman anlamıyorum] (Interview, 17/07/2020). She took extra private lessons and that is how she passed the B1 level. As in Table 12, her absence in the B1 level was 64 hours of the 64 hours that they were allowed not to attend (320 total hours of instruction). Another reason was that she preferred to sleep in the morning hours. She says "... *no one could have woken me up at that hour, so I did not attend*" [...beni de kimse kaldıramazdı, girmedim ben de.] (Interview, 17/07/2020]. Even when she attended

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classes, her participation was at the minimum. She did not turn on the camera and just silently listened to the lessons. She spoke only when she was asked by the teacher. She said that they were not asked much in the classes anyway, let alone in English. Therefore, she did not speak, only when she had to answer and that did not happen on many occasions. Banu did not believe that she benefited from online education in terms of learning English. She only wanted to pass the EPS and that was why she was taking classes online.

Banu experienced technical difficulties, too, which also contributed to her frustration. Her internet connection was not stable and the live streaming software Zoom threw her out of sessions. She describes this frustration in detail:

Extract 60

1	Banu:	Zaten böyle şeylere sinir oluyordum. Hani mesela dinlemeye kalksam donuyor
2		birden. Birden atıyor, geri giremiyorum. Hatta ben final sınavındayken de attı
3		beni. 2 saat bağlanmaya çalıştık. Yani sıkıntılı oluyor. En son derslere girdim
4		sinirlerdim, dedim bir daha girmiyorum ders alırım daha iyi..
5	Hakan:	Peki, bu senin için bir stres yaratmış mıydı final sınavında?
6	Banu:	Evet çok stres oldum. Bağlanamıyorum, geri giremiyorum. Bir de bütün sorularım
7		bitmiş, son sorumda attı beni.

1	Banu:	*Things like these made me mad. For example, I was just trying to listen to the*
2		*teacher but it (Zoom) would suddenly freeze. I would get disconnected all of a*
3		*sudden. I even got disconnected during the final exam. I tried to reconnect for*
4		*two hours. So it was problematic. In the last classes, I got angry and fed up so I*
5		*said to myself I'm not going back again, I'd rather take private lessons.*
6	Hakan:	*Did this cause any stress in your final exam?*
7	Banu:	*Yes, I was very stressed. I cannot connect, cannot get back in. And I had done*
8		*all of the questions and it threw me out at the last question.*

(Interview, 17/07/2020)

As can be seen from the extract above, Banu seems to be distracted a lot by technical problems that make it difficult for her to attend the classes and listen to what is being covered. However, she also does not mention if she has tried to solve these technical problems because it is unlikely that these problems happened to her all the time she

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tried to connect to the lessons. Even if this was the case, she could have sought help and most probably found a solution for the technical problems. On the other hand, she was offered private classes from her relatives, who as mentioned before are proficient speakers of English because they have lived in Australia for many years. Banu repeated this on many occasions in our interviews. She always mentioned those relatives and that they would be helping her in her English learning endeavors. At the end of the B1 semester, she did not attend the final exam but received a 99 out of 100 in the remake exam which was also administered online.

Banu took the B2 level at the EPS in the summer of 2020 and once again it was conducted online. Once again, she failed because she did not attend classes for 74 hours out of the 23 hours they were allowed to be absent. The summer school at EPS is usually shorter than the normal semesters and classes are more intensive. Before summer school, she had imagined it to be easier and manageable. She did even receive a 90 out of 100 from her midterm exam but did not attend any of the quizzes. She cites her health problems as a reason and said that she had received a report from the hospital stating that she had to undergo some kind of treatment and frequently visit the hospital (because of her scoliosis). However, the school did not accept the report and she failed because of absenteeism. On the other hand, we need to note that she had already failed before she was given the report. She states that she was not motivated enough to attend the classes and cites some issues she had with the teacher who would not allow her to keep her camera shut. In the online lessons in the EPS, it was obligatory to turn the cameras on so that the teacher could see that the students were actually attending the classes. This was a problem for Banu. She attended the classes in the first few weeks but later, turning off the camera became an issue. She told the teacher that she was listening and also answering questions when

asked. However, she said that she was alone at home, and sometimes she had to go to the bathroom and she had some chores to do and when she turned the camera off the teacher told her that she could not do that. She says,

Extract 61

1	Banu:	…kapattığım an bana şey yapmaya başladı böyle hani kapatamazsın, edemezsin,
2		işte şöyle böyle. Ben de birazcık şey oldum. Düştü böyle motivasyonum, bayağı
3		düştüm. Yine öyle birkaç durum oldu, evde tek kalıyorum sonuçta. Yapmam
4		gereken şeyler var ama o arada dinliyorum. Bunu da söylüyorum. Yok diyor
5		olmaz.

1	Banu:	…once I turned it off, she started to say you cannot turn it off, you cannot do
2		that and this and that. And I became a little…, my motivation dropped, it
3		dropped a lot. And then later, the same happened, because I'm staying alone at
4		home. There are things I need to do but I'm listening at the same time. And I
5		told her that. No, she said, this is not acceptable.

(Interview, 2/9/2020)

Banu shows that she was not willing to invest in the learning process by rejecting the rules of the EPS. In addition, she admitted that turning on the camera was not the only reason why she did not attend the classes. She says that her friends were also encouraging her to skip classes to go out and even though she wanted to refuse them, she did not because she still had the right to not attend classes. However, this ended very quickly. One day, her cat had a health problem and she had to take her to the vet during a lesson. She asked the teacher whether she could join the class during her ride to the vet but the teacher refused stating that she had to turn on the camera. That was the last time she attended her classes. She states that she got very angry when she was refused to join the class on the road. She says,

Extract 62

1	Banu:	Zaten hani normalde de biraz böyle ufak şeylere sinirlenen bir insanım, çok
2		sinirlendim. Çünkü hani özel bir durum, hayvan orada ölsün mü? Rahatsızdı
3		gitmem gerekiyordu. Dedim devamsızlığım doldu, kameramı kapatayım,
4		otobüste olacağım hani, yok dedi. Biraz da hani çocuk azarlar gibi konuştuğu
5		için ben de dedim daha girmiyorum.

1	Banu:	*I'm a person who gets mad at little things, I was very angry. Because, well, it is*
2		*a special situation, should the animal die? It was sick and I had to go. I saidI*
3		*was at my absenteeism limit, let me turn off the camera, I will be on the bus, she*
4		*said no. She also spoke like she was scolding a little child and therefore I said I*
5		*won't attend again.*

(Interview, 21/09/2020)

Here, we can see that Banu shows her personal feelings about an incident in class. She states that she has a temper (extract 62 line 1) and this was triggered with her cat becoming sick and she not getting the permission from her teacher to go to the vet. She had already spent her absenteeism rights and if she was written absent in this hour, she would fail. However, she does give another reason for not attending the classes. She accuses her teacher for "scolding her like a child", which seemed to have an effect on her will to attend classes again. Banu states in extract 62 that she is hot-tempered and also gives an example of how she thought the teacher scolded her for not turning on the camera or for asking her to excuse her to get her cat to the vet. Even though Banu knows that the EPS requires students to turn on their cameras and she also knows that she must attend all classes because if she does not, she will fail of absenteeism, she encounters a problem that requires her to leave the home and she does. In the same interview, she said "*Because it was a special situation, should I let the animal die?*" [Çünkü hani özel bir durum, hayvan orada ölsün mü?] (Interview, 21/09/2020). As a result, during the online instruction period, Banu seems to have constructed a negative online learner identity (Figure 22) where her actual-self

seemed to be not returning with investments that could have resulted in positive
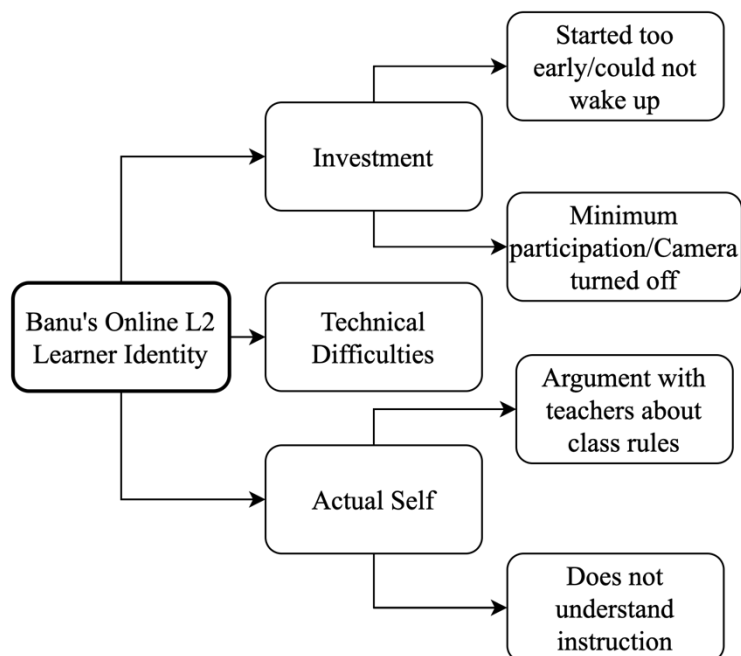
commitment in the learning process.

Figure 22. Banu's online L2 learner identity

4.11   Summary of Banu's case

In terms of L2 investment, Banu knows that English is valuable in terms of its

economic capital. Her learner identity related to her investment is mainly based on

how English is needed in job settings. Apart from that, she is also aware that English

is a global language. Her past-mediated identity was built on the fact that her family

members lived in an English-speaking country and were native-like speakers of

English. This made her believe that English would be easy for her to learn. She

started as a very successful learner but lost all of it in her last two years of high

school.

Her present-mediated learner identity is as contradicting and as flexible as the

other participants. However, her learner identity is overwhelmingly burdened by her

commuter status that causes her to sleep in class because she has to wake up very early in the morning. Furthermore, she uses her time in the bus to go over her assignments and other notes she took in class (via taking pictures of the board). In regard to this, her actual self and the way she invests in learning the language seem to clash because she spends time outside of class with English-related content but sleeps during formal morning classes.

In terms of imagined identity, she can see herself speaking in English which she thinks is *'cool'*. However, she cannot fully envision herself using English in the future. Banu's L2 speaker identity is also conflicted in that the imagined side and the actual self cannot be harmonized since she does not think speaking English in Turkey is possible. Her low engagement in English speaking activities in the class might be a factor contributing to a negative construction of her L2 speaker identity. Banu has also constructed a negative online learner identity which consists of a multitude of markers consisting of a continuous struggle between her investment, technical difficulties and the realities of her actual self.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

5.1   Introduction

In the following section, I interpret key themes that emerged from the findings in this

study with the related theoretical concepts as well as studies in the literature as laid

out in the previous section. All the following interpretations of the results are

informed by the poststructuralist conception of identity, that is identity is not

perceived as a "simple accumulation of experiences and knowledge" but is a

continuous pursuit for ontological security which "takes place at the crossroads of

the past, present and future, as in their day-to-day interactions with their

environments, individuals are constantly reconciling their current sense of self and

their accumulated past, with a view to dealing with what awaits them in the future."

(Block, 2006, p. 35). Hence, identity is naturally constructed under conflicting and

contradicting circumstances yielding to identities that are layered, fluid, dynamic and

complex.

The main purpose of this multiple-case study was to investigate L2 learner identity

construction among beginner EFL learners at a private university in Istanbul, Turkey.

Three main research questions guided this research:

  i.   How do beginner EFL learners construct their learner and speaker identities

        during their English learning experiences?

 ii.   How are beginner learners invested in the language learning process?

iii.   What role do imagined identities and imagined communities play in the

        construction of language learner identity?

Key themes that have emerged in the qualitative data are the construction of L2 learner and speaker identity, the role of L2 investment in this construction, how imagined identities and communities play a part in these constructions, and the significance of community of practice in relation to the learners' L2 learner identity construction experience.

5.2   Construction of L2 learner identity

One major dimension of identity negotiation is about taking "new subject positions at the crossroads of the past, present and future" (Block, 2006, p. 39). As Block (2006) further explains, we are shaped by our sociohistory. To analyze identity construction through time and its relation to the individual, in her study, Erduyan (2015) employed the notion of 'timescales' by Wortham (2004), who borrowed the term from Lemke (2000). Wortham (2006) states that a variety of processes use resources from different timescales when they contribute to the various situations of social identity. Lemke (2000) explains that a person's action is positioned within numerous time intervals spanning milliseconds to years. It is in these timescales that learners take part in ecosocial processes and assume their own roles. Wortham (2004) defines timescales as "is the spatiotemporal envelope within which a process happens" (p. 166). Later, he operationalized this construct to be used in the classroom context with regard to learners' construction of identities during their learning experiences. He identified four major timescales, of which the first two are relevant to this part of the discussion: a) the sociohistorical timescale, which are categories that span over years, decade or even centuries and have an effect on the learners identity, and b) ontogenetic timescales, which are directly connected to the learners' own experience as a result of sociohistorically situated events. According to Wortham (2004),

learners' identities 'thicken' through a period of time "as various people, including the student herself, position her in mostly convergent ways across many classroom events" (p. 169). The thickening of identities is thus dependent on resources drawn from many timescales such as sociohistorical categories of identities and expectation from classroom behavior to classroom contextual models of identity constructed as a result of interaction between teacher and students as well as students and students.

In the next sections, I discuss the main components that contributed to the L2 learner identity constructions during my participants' language learning journey: their construction of identities through sociohistorical and ontogenetic timescales.

5.2.1 The past experience: does the past stay in the past?

Based on the narratives of my participants, the past does not stay in the past. Major language learning related factors contributed to the participants' L2 learner identity construction before they came to the EPS. The first factor is the impact and role family members play in the construction of an L2 learner identity. These were mainly positive experiences that made the participants develop favorable attitudes towards the language and resulted in positive L2 investment. However, they might also result in negative attitudes depending on the nature of the past experience.

Seren, Banu and Seçil were all affected by their families' attitudes about English. Seren mentioned the effect of her sister on her language learner identity on many occasions. Most of the time, when she narrated her attitudes towards English or when she stated the importance of learning English she gave examples from her sister's accounts. It was her sister who told her about the importance of having a native accent as well as English being a world language. Similarly, Seçil was affected by her mothers' warnings about learning English. It was her mother that

wanted her to start learning English at a very early age and she started getting English language instruction when she was in second grade.

Furthermore, Seren's sister always suggested that she watch and read everything in English and get exposed to as much English content as possible. However, at the same time, it was her sister's aptitude towards English that made Seren feel that she had always lagged behind in learning English because she compared herself to her. Seren made a powerful statement about what kind of effect this had on her: " I grew up with English around me but I never owned it". Seren feels that her sister 'owns' the language with her aptitude and most probably higher proficiency in it. Her sister's owning the opportunity or incidence of having learnt the language makes Seren feel inferior. She witnessed how her sister invited international friends from exchange programs and how she interacted with them. This observation might have helped her see English as a linguistic capital that will result in a valuable return: socializing with people around the world. Here, we need to notice that Seren, most probably unknowingly, touches a debated issue in ESL/EFL teaching and learning by using the phrase "I never owned it". 'It' here refers to English. Seren complains that she did not have the chance to 'own the language'. The subject of the ownership of English has been debated by Widdowson (1994) and Holliday (2009, 2015). Widdowson (1995) approaches the question of ownership from a Standard English point of view and states that Standard English is not a communicative device anymore but only a symbolic commodity of a special community with the purpose of representing identity. Therefore, it serves a multitude of communities for their own needs. Holliday (2009), on the other hand, approaches ownership from a 'native-speakerist' view where ownership is claimed by the native speakers of the language. Seren's statement about ownership is related to both views.

It is related to Widdowson (1995) in that Seren perceives English to be in the custody of English native speakers and not as an international language with which she can interact in her own way without the worries of having to reach grammatical accuracy. She was not given the chance to identify with it as her own means of communication. It is also related to Holliday (2009, 2015) in that Seren still believes in the native-speakerist norm which had been imposed on her throughout her whole English learning journey. She was never made aware that English in international settings is used in a "untidy, imperfect" way with the only purpose of making yourself understood. Holliday (2009) states that the messiness in these interactions are not related to incompetence but are an indicator of the "user's communicative success, which is never going to be that high, even among so-called 'native speakers'"(p. 151). Seren was not given the chance to communicate herself in "untidy and imperfect" way without being compared to native-speaker norms and therefore will state that she 'never owned English'!

The same is valid for Banu whose relatives had returned from Australia and were, according to her, 'native speakers' of English. Their existence was a 'push' for Banu to engage in English. At the beginning of the program, she mentioned that her relatives would help her in the learning process and that it would be relatively easy for her to pass the course. At one point she mentions that she watched one of her relatives give private tutoring to other students and the experience of 'watching' them helped her in improving her English.

My participants sociohistorically-based learner identities (Wortham, 2006) were matched with the sociocultural value that families usually see in English proficiency. A similar finding was reported by Ersin (2015) who conducted a longitudinal study with an EFL language learner at an intensive English language

program at a Turkish university. Her participant, Gamze, mentioned that she took her sister as a role-model and constructed an imagined identity based on her. Gamze repeats in her interviews how she worships her sister's English fluency and her accent. She also mentions how her sister was influential in managing to interact with the locals in Italy in their search to find a hotel during a holiday, and this affected her attitude toward speaking English.

In another study, Aslan (2020) investigated identity construction among three intensive English program students. Her findings also revealed construction of imagined identities based on relatives and family members' views about English being a linguistic capital. One of her participants, Melisa, reported that her brother had told her "*English won't leave you unemployed*". Another participant, Ahmet, stated that his cousin believed "*you need to learn English for more job opportunities*' (p. 250). These views of their family members had an effect on how they view English and its attached linguistic as well as economic capital.

Most of my participants expressed the value of English from an economic as well as social point of view, which most probably was also their family members' stance. The fact that English proficiency is still a sought-after value in the job market as well as asserts a certain social status still holds true. Therefore, English is perceived as an "instrumental tool" that will help their chances of getting better jobs (Arik, 2020) and higher respect among members of the community. Hence, English is seen as an economic and symbolic capital and this might have contributed to creating their imagined identities which motivated them to commit to the learning process..

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5.2.2 Lack of quality education: The fate of generations

All of the participants were affected by the reality of having received bad quality English education in their previous learning experience. They all started at around 4th grade (Apart from Seçil who received private tutoring in second grade). Even though they had received formal English instruction for about 8 years, they had to start the English Preparatory school at the beginner A level (as a result of the scores they received in the proficiency exam).

My findings revealed that their disadvantage in proficiency because of their past education conditions had a negative effect on their L2 learner identity in that they felt remorse against the education system and their past education during their language learning experience at the EPS. Prior to the university, they did not have the chance to construct a positive imagined identity of competent language learners.

Ulaş, Seren and Pelin explicitly stated how they were affected by the low level of English education they received during their secondary and high-school years. When asked about their past formal learning experience, Ulaş started his sentences with "they made us hate English". He explained how they were taught other courses during their English classes. Not having English classes at all was a common incidence among the participants. Seren also went through a similar experience even though she had started very strong at a private school but when she changed schools, they stopped giving English education. She explained that in the last three years in her high school education she did not hear a single English word.

In terms of testing, Ulaş stated that they were given a 'document' and told it was the English exam, and instructed to "*go and do it*". Furthermore, when they had their English classes, they consisted of grammar-based content that was not communicative at all. Ulaş illustrated this saying "we covered the simples, the pasts,

prepositions but no, it didn't work". This lack of education made Ulaş feel that he was already disadvantaged when he started at the EPS.

Pelin made a powerful statement when the subject of past formal English education came up: "For all these years, they could have taught us but they didn't". Pelin was aware of how the education system had neglected them in terms of providing a higher quality English education and how they actually had the potential to teach but chose not to do it. She also complained about the low quality of the teachers and how their pronunciation affected them in a negative way.

When my participants started at the EPS, they already negotiated a negative L2 learner identity in that they came from an education system that had not given them the opportunity to be successful in their langıage education. To explain learners in this situation, Lamb (2011) refers to the 'Matthew Effect' which originated in the economics context but was adapted to an educational one. In this context, it basically means that when learners have the chance to receive better education it has a spiraling effect with positive outcomes whereas when the education is bad, this will result in bad performances in the learners' future learning trajectories.

This is more apparent in language learning than in other subject areas because a) students' perception of languages are affected by the perceptions of their parents. If their parents appreciate foreign language learning, so will their children (Gardner, 1985, as cited in Lamb, 2011), b) language learners are more prone to negative comments than other learners because the possibilities to make mistakes is much higher and when they do not make mistakes, they are subject to sound pretentious (Tsu, 1996, as cited in Lamb, 2011), and c) underachievement is hard to remedy because language learning content accumulates through time and it is difficult to return and change it (Jones & Jones, 2001, as cited in Lamb, 2011).

In her study, Aslan's (2020) participants started with a similar 'incompetent' language learner identity before coming to university. Aslan (2020) states that the findings of her study "showed that the biographical factors based on the individuals' personal histories and language learning experiences might act as a significant role in constraining or enabling the range of their imagined identities" (pp. 242-243).

5.3   The present experience

5.3.1   Power relations and the fear to make mistakes

In her seminal study, Norton Peirce(1995) extensively examines the notion of 'power relation' in the language learning process and learner identity construction. Based on the work by Bourdieu (1977), she puts forward that communicative competence must also entail an awareness of the right to speak, what Bourdieu states as the "power to impose reception" (Norton Peirce, 1995, p. 18). Therefore, she assumes that power relations are a significant component of social interactions between the speakers and the learners of a language. However, the learners in her study were situated in an immigrant setting and their social relations regarding power were based on their interactions with the native speakers in their communities.

In our learning/teaching context, this is not the case. Nevertheless, we can still speak of the existence of power relations and how these affect the learners trajectories and learning experiences. In our case, a power relationship had existed on different layers: a) between the learner and the other classmates, b) the learner and the teacher c) the experienced power relation concept from the learner's past L2 identity. The last one might determine what kind of identity the learner will construct based on (a) and (b) during his/her learning experience.

While Seçil and Seren were affected by their past power experiences in their learning trajectories, Pelin and Ulaş seemed to have found ways to absorb these in positive ways. Seçil reported on many occasions that she did not want to ask or answer the teachers' questions because she was afraid she would humiliate herself in front of the class. Some words she used in relation to her participation in class were: being embarrassed, being afraid to raise hands, humiliating yourself in front of the teacher, friends making fun, and giving the wrong answer. These were not constructed during her interaction with native speakers of English but most likely because of her past trauma with teachers who mıust have scolded her because she gave a wrong answer or because of fun-making classmates. Furthermore, Seçil reported that she would not feel intimidated at all if she would speak to a native person (outside the classroom context) because there the pressure to perform would not exist and she would not be judged because of her mistakes. All of these affected her participation in class and therefore her L2 learner identity. In the Turkish education system, teachers are known to be authoritative and symbols of power assertion. Even though this was not the case with the teachers that I observed in Seçil's classes at the EPS, this did not change the fact that she continued to withhold her potential to actively participate.

Seren also reported that she preferred to ask her questions privately to the teacher instead of in front of everyone. Again her fear was related to "making mistakes in front of the class". Making mistakes seems to be an issue even though the power relations that exist between immigrants and the native speakers or between L2 learners and the presence of proficient speakers (Norton Peirce, 1995, Norton, 2000) did not exist in our context. Almost all learners came with a "should not make mistake" L2 learner identity. This is not the same with other types of learner

identities because here, there is an 'exhibition' of language use in front of others and it includes a phonological component (pronunciation) which can be a matter of fun-making and ridicule even though there are no proficient speakers among them and the main medium of communication is not English.

In Pelin's case, for example, Seren and Seçil witnessed in class a burst of laughter when Pelin mispronounced the word 'building' as '/bɑɪldɪŋ/'. The same happened to Ulaş on numerous occasions. We do not know how Pelin and Ulaş managed to overcome their fears but the fear of making mistakes in the class is a major negative L2 learner identity marker. There is an account of a student who dropped her French course because the teacher in class made fun of her pronunciation and actually continued to do this even though the student had tried to improve herself (which was an anecdote by a teacher of mine whose advisee had dropped a French course just because of this). Similarly, Sung (2017) reported her participant Nora to have participation issues based on power relations caused by exchange students whose aggressive mode of participation intimidated Nora and eventually caused her to withdraw.

5.3.2   Online L2 learner identity during the pandemic: did it work?

The COVID19 pandemic had a profound effect on the education system as it did in all other sectors. In mid-March 2020, all face-to-face education stopped and just like in the rest of the world, the university and the EPS switched to online instruction. It was a new experience both for the students and the teachers. My participants started to receive online language instruction during their B1 semester (the B1 semester had started in February 2020 before the pandemic) and throughout their B2 semester at summer school.

While Seren and Seçil were similarly affected by online education in regard to feedback procedures, Banu's whole L2 learner identity clashed with online instructional practices and caused a significant decrease in participation. For Seren, online education affected her investment in terms of her participation in class. She stated that she participated in class activities because she needed to have a high participation score. However, the nature of online instruction prevented her from learning about the score. In the classroom, she used to go to the teacher at the end of the lesson and ask. Then the teacher would tell the score she had received for that particular class and it would justify her participation and therefore increase her investment in class activities. Her engagement was reinforced by the score she would receive. However, in online instruction, this was not possible anymore. She did not ask either.

Seçil had a similar experience with regard to receiving feedback about her writing assignments. In class she would directly ask the teacher about her writing and the teacher would point them out. However, during online instruction, she could not figure out how to arrange the feedback procedure and they were not told how to approach their teachers. This caused some frustration and must have affected her engagement in her writing practices.In addition, Seren compared herself with the other classmates who would tell that their microphones were broken or would turn their cameras off completely.

On the other hand, Banu's engagement and participation was affected negatively by online instruction and it was not a favorable experience for her. Banu reported that she had major difficulties in participating and generally understanding online lessons. Her engagement was very limited. In the first semester in March 2020, attendance was not required and she reported not attending and preferring to

sleep instead. Even when she attended, her camera was off and she only answered when she was asked.

In this semester, Banu exhibited only instrumental engagement which was aimed at passing the course without much investment into the learning process. In the B2 semester, Banu's disengagement in class did not change. She preferred to keep the camera off stating that she was listening to the lesson. However, the EPS online lesson regulations required her to keep the camera on, which she refused and this resulted in her failing the course because of absenteeism. She exhibited a negative L2 learner identity with an unfavorable attitude to the mode of instruction. Even during conventional in-class instruction, Banu seemed to be disengaged toward the end of the semester. She usually slept in class citing her long commuting hours. During online instruction, commuting was not a problem anymore, but this only showed that she did not own an integrative learner identity that wanted to actively participate in the learning process.

As a result, the participants' L2 learner identities were constructed and negotiated based on sociohistorical and ontogenetic timescales (Wortham, 2004). Their family members' ideas and beliefs during their past learning trajectories carried multiple dimensions of learner identities to their present learning experience at the EPS. This resulted in them investing in classroom practices on a variety of levels (Haneda, 2006; MacKay & Wong, 1996; Umrani, 2015). Furthermore, having received a lower quality of education also contributed to adding another layer to their L2 learner identity, which had an effect on their present engagement (and disengagement) with the language and their commitment to participation in classroom procedures. Their present learning experience illustrated that power relations were also existent in the EFL classroom among classmates who affected

some of my participants' 'right to speak' (Norton Peirce, 1995, Norton 2000) by laughing at their pronunciation mistakes. Finally, the execution of online instruction during the pandemic caused my participants' L2 learner identities to fluctuate due to the muli-model instructional practices applied.

5.4   Construction of L2 speaker identity: I speak therefore I am!

The construction of an L2 speaker identity was a complex matter to observe among my participants. In my interviews, I introduced the terms user vs speaker as a dichotomy to see where and how they position themselves in the L2 speaker/user identity scale and how they define both concepts. My main finding is that whether they speak about 'using' the language or 'speaking' the language, the notion of proficiency always comes up. They always mentioned a barrier of how well they can grammatically, phonetically, or fluently use or speak the language. Each of them had their own line about where this point of proficient speaker/user started.

For example, Seçil believed that she could call herself a speaker of English once she finished the B2 level. Seren agreed to this statement but added that this would only be valid for social interactions and not on an academic level. Later, she decided that she would not call herself an English speaker because in social interactions she would lack the vocabulary needed to communicate.

One theme, however, was common to all of them. All of them expressed that to take on a speaker identity, you need to speak the language fluently and accurately. Performance, for them, is an indicator of a proficiency of language, not competence because competence cannot be observed as tangible product. Hence, they might perfectly understand interactions in English, for example when watching a movie; but this alone would not indicate that they are proficient language users because they

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cannot speak it fluently or accurately. Seren unknowingly pointed out the dilemma over the concepts of performance vs competence when she said "*I do believe that grammar is important but, for example, even if you know a thousand tenses, as long as I cannot speak it, I feel like my English is bad*". Seren believes that it is possible to be competent grammatically but if you cannot perform it, you are bad in English.

Ulaş approached the user/speaker constructs a little differently from the others. He did not identify himself as a speaker but as a user because while speaking Turkish, he would use English words in times when he forgot a word. These were obviously code-switching and translanguaging practices (see Canagarajah, 2011; Baker, 2011; Garcia, 2011). Later he said that he could also identify as a speaker if he took his inner voice into consideration. He had internal dialogues with himself, cursed in English and imitated scenes from movies, even including their accents. This shows that Ulaş had constructed an imagined identity that he used to engage in imagined dialogues with himself. He also used this identity to put himself in characters from movies. We can say that he created an internal community of practice whose community consisted of English-speaking characters from movies and TV shows.

As a result, my findings showed that my participants were not ready to assume an L2 speaker identity because of the productive elements they believed a speaker identity possessed. There seemed to be a major difference between the imagined identity of a speaker and their actual selves. This might be because of the native-speaker perspective that exists among EFL learners and teachers in Turkey (Karakaş, 2017, as cited in Arik, 2020). This 'native-speaker' norm exists even though they are aware that they are most probably going to interact with other non-native speakers of English. "As in many EFL contexts although native norms play an

important organizing role, sociocultural and interactional communicative orientation is not necessarily towards interaction with the native speaker" (Dogançay Aktuna, 1998, p. 31). However, they cannot overcome the feeling of inferiority which seems to stem from the lower quality of English education they received during their K12 education and their comparison with other EFL countries, especially north-european ones. Another factor contributing to the existence of the participants' reliance to native-speaker norms is what Holliday (2005) calls the ideology of 'native-speakerism" that has been imposed to non-native speakers of English around the world. My participants' perception that they need to speak English accurately to be accepted as 'English speakers' is explained by Kamal (2015) as being positioned as non-native' learners as a result of being exposed to these ideologies. Therefore, they cannot have the chance to reach " native speaker" status. The concept of 'native-speakerism' is also directly related to the perception of native and non-native accents, which are accepted to be indicators of identity, whether it be learner identity or ethnical identity (Gatbonton et al., 2005; Levis, 2005).

5.4.1 Accent matters

The data from the narratives of my participants revealed that they also had constructed imagined identities of speakers with certain views on what kind of accent they should use when speaking English. Studies by Khatib and Rezaei (2012) and Sa'd (2017) show that identities are also based on social notions such as ethnic origins, geographical locations, religious affiliations, national customs and rituals and values" (Sa'd, 2017, p. 13). The attitudes related to these notions can be observed in their projections of the accents they believe should be used. For example, Reza in Khatib and Rezaei (2012) was not happy about his accent because it gave

away his Persian ethnicity, therefore, he preferred an American accent. My participants had similar attitudes with some of them changing through their language learning experience.

Seren, for example, believed that as a Turkish speaker one should have an English native speaker accent so that your 'Turkishness' or 'English learner' identity is not revealed. She gave an example of two pilots talking and one of them revealing that he was Turkish because he did not have an apparent native accent. Seren's imagined speaker identity is the one with a native speaker accent. In Reza's case, this was seen as a positive attribute because he "went through a reconstruction of identity because he changed from being an individual possessing a mindset of a local Persian to a more global individual." (p. 10). However, in Seren's context, this translates to a mismatch between the actual self and the imagined one because she cannot perform in the accent she wishes to speak. There are other studies that have revealed similar results. McCrocklin and Link (2016) found that ESL learners perceived native accents to be beneficial and were connected to positive emotions. Sung (2014; 2016) found that his participants preferred a native accent because they wanted to show a positive English speaker identity as a bilingual speaker of English. Studies by Kaur and Raman (2014), and Scales et al (2006) revealed similar findings where L2 learners perceived native accents positively while showing unfavorable attitudes towards non-native accents.

For Banu it was important to pronounce words correctly because she did not want to "be made fun of when speaking incorrectly". She did not want to be labeled as a 'foreigner' because it is already clear from her non-native accent that she comes from another country and above that making pronunciation mistakes might make her feel bad and maybe people will laugh. She also said that a native accent 'sounds

more pleasant to the ear'. This is again in line with Holliday's (2005) notion of native-speakerism where nate-speakers norms are imposed on non-nateive speakers because they were made to believe that only native speakers of a language can claim the language as their own. The aspect of being made fun of was also investigated by Baugh (2000, as cited in Sa'd, 2018), who found that non-native accents were described as "funny" and non-native speakers were met with "mockery, racism, ridicule, and discrimination".

Another participant, Ulaş, believed at the beginning of the study that having a native accent (British and American) creates a barrier for communication because they are difficult to understand. He even went so far as to call it "*a kind of racism*" because they do not want to be understood by non-native speakers. His imagined speaker identity was based on an accent that could be understood by everyone. Ulaş's statement comparing the use of native accents to racism is very much in line with Holliday's (2015) take on 'native-speakerist cultural disbelief', which he calls 'neo-racist' because the notion of native-speakerism is an imagined term which has no grounds in linguistics. Therefore, he believes that it is racism because it is hidden in seemingly "neutral and innocent talk of cultural difference" (Holliday, 2015, p. 13).

Similarly, Seçil was against using an American accent because she found it "pretentious". This could be because her imagined identity did not deviate from her actual self, which is Turkish and speaking with an American accent did not come natural to her and she could not assume this 'fake identity'. This seems to be similar to Sung's (2014; 2016) findings where some of his participants expressed their preference towards using local accents because of identity and pragmatic reasons. They stated that they preferred to speak English with a local accent because they

wanted to avoid being associated with Anglophone cultures. One of the participants said "There is no good to pretend to be Americans" (Sung, 2016, p. 61) which sounds very similar to what Seçil tried to express.

Later, Ulaş indicated that he changed his mind and believed that each variety introduces an opportunity for "cultural exchange". He gave an example from what he called the Turkish variety of English speaking where students add the word 'hocam' [teacher] at the end of sentences in English sentences when they address their teachers. Unlike Sa'd and Hatam (2017) where the participants were resisting change because a foreing language identity would be an "imposition of Western values" on their own values, Ulaş was not against any Western values but also indicated his desire to be speaking more comfortably (fluently) but was not able to do that because he "did not grow up in the Buckingham Palace or take sips of Samuel Adams in the streets of Manchester"!

5.5   Imagined identities and imagined communities: the future experience?

In the previous sections, I have discussed my participants' language learner identities in relation to their past and present learning experiences, but what about their future experiences? Can language learners' future language participation take place as imagined identities in English-speaking imagined communities? This was another notion that Norton Peirce (1995) suggested. Taking the notion of imagined communities from Anderson (1982), and the notion of community of practice, Norton adapted these into the learning context in relation to learner identity to explain how learners could invest in learning a language through imagining their identities being a part of possible future communities of practice. According to Tsui (2007), imagination helps us to relate ourselves to the community of practice that is

not in our reach and where we can position ourselves in a wider context with wider connections. Wenger (1998) states that with the power of imagination, we construct images of ourselves and the world with no real interaction.

This was also the case with my participants. Similar to other EFL settings, they are completely distant to real communities of practices where they can actively and authentically participate in language interaction. Therefore, my participants also expressed their desires and projections in communities that they had imagined. Seçil's major imagined community was an academic setting, at school, where she would see herself presenting to professors and "speaking very well and fluently". She liked the prospect of imagining herself speaking in these academic meetings. Her imagined community of practice was an academic one at the beginning but switched later to a professional one where she would, again, make presentations in a meeting. Seçil's imagined identity being limited to her school setting is similar to the findings of Wu (2017), where Brie and Alicie constructed imagined identities of becoming good language learners at school as well as studies by Kanno and Norton (2003), and Norton and Toohey (2001), where participants' imagine identities were constraint to language learners only.

On the other hand, Pelin and Banu could only imagine themselves in job-related communities where they spoke English. They both had a hard time giving details about these communities. Since Pelin was a nursing department student and did not see an English-speaking self in her future job environment, it is possible that she could not really create an imagined identity because she could not have an imagined community to place this identity in. Similarly, Banu described it as 'cool' to be speaking like that (in her imagined community) but could only imagine herself abroad and in a job setting. Pelin also expressed her dream of going abroad and

having foreign friends. She stated that she had always imagined having foreign friends.

However, one aspect was common among them, their desire to study at their department and pass their courses. This suggests that they assumed the imagined identity of a test taker. This finding is in line with the findings of Wu (2017) and Aslan (2020) whose participants also took on imagined identities of test takers and 'good' language learners which seems to be restricted and passive compared to more powerful imagined identities that would help them make more effective commitments to the learning process.

In contrast, as mentioned before, Ulaş had created a distinctive type of imagined identity by participating in a different mode of community of practice. He stated that he would have monologues in English, cursing in English when he hit his foot at the table, and in his mind, he would imitate scenes from movies or TV series, sometimes getting into character and improvising lines in character, even imitating their accents. Ulaş, as a cinema student, had a powerful urge to be part of an English-speaking community but was frustrated at not having been given this opportunity. Therefore, he might have created an imagined identity who lived in movie scenes and TV shows, which were his imagined community of practice. I could also observe this in Ulaş's classes and in the interviews, when he would make reference in English to scenes from popular movies and TV shows. This ties in with Norton's (2001) point that even though these imagined identities and communities are not concrete constructs, that does not mean that they are less effective in investing in the learning process. Ulaş's situation could also imply that he sees himself as an English-speaking actor and aspires to be part of English movies. This is again similar to Wu's (2017)

finding where one of his participant's aspired to become an English-speaking professional who requires perfect command of English.

One other finding that needs to be discussed is the language practices that the imagined identities of my participants perform are usually one-directional and do not seem to involve interactive two-way communications, like giving presentations in a meeting, or in front of a jury. Similarly, Ulaş's imagined identity is engaged in monologues. It is interesting to note that even in their imaginations, they do not create identities that use English to 'communicate' with other individuals but are engaged in either one-way language performances or academic endeavors. This might be a resılt of coming from test-oriented and non-communicative language learning contexts where authoritative teacher-based instruction was the norm. Furthermore, as mentioned previously, even in their classes at the EPS, they did not use English as a communicative device but only as a medium to answer coursebook or material-related questions. It might be that their real life engagement with English also restricted their creation of imagined identities in their respective imagined communities. Teng (2019) also reported similar findings which he defined as "mismatches between the practiced community and the imagined community" (p. 54). This, together with the participants' cognitive awareness and ideology, their perceptions of the needs in an English learning community, and their understanding of agency were directly connected to the construction and negotiation of their learner identities and relevant investments in learning the language.

5.6 L2 investment: English as a linguistic capital

One of the main pillars of Norton's theorization of identity construction in language learning is the notion of 'investment' (Norton Pierce, 1995; Norton, 2000). This

sociological construct, inspired by Bourdieu (1977), points out the significance of the social and historical connection between language learners and their conflicting want to learn and practice the language. If the learners 'invest' in the language they want to learn, they know that they will gain a greater variety of symbolic and material resources, which will help them to contribute to their cultural capital (Norton & Gao, 2008). According to Norton and Gao (2008),

> "Unlike notions of instrumental motivation, which conceive of the language learner as having a unitary, fixed, and ahistorical "personality," the notion of investment conceives of the language learner as having a complex identity, changing across time and space, and reproduced in social interaction" (p. 110).

Instead of asking about the motivation of the learners, Norton's notion of investment asks how the learner invests in the language practices in the classroom and community. So, how did my participants invest in the language learning process?

My findings were consistent with the findings in the literature both in immigrant and EFL contexts (Aslan, 2020; Ersin, 2015; Kinginger, 2004; Norton Peirce, 1995; Norton, 2000; Norton, 2008; Skilton-Sylvester, 2002; Teng, 2019). All of my participants were aware of how speaking English would increase their economic, cultural and social capital. Their beliefs that English has become the norm in job requirements, that English is a Lingua Franca that we need to communicate with other people around the world , and that they would need it for their academic studies at their respective departments.

However, the main question was whether the understanding of the value of this capital transformed to investing in language practices in the classroom and the community. My findings suggest that their awareness of these capitals did not result in the construction of relevant imagined identities who have visions of becoming

legitimate members of an English-speaking community. Therefore, their

participation and engagement in communicative experiences both in and outside of

class was limited. Instead of internalizing English as a tool for communication, they

perceived and treated it like a course they have to pass. Therefore, their L2

investment was mainly based on getting satisfying results in their exams. English

was mainly seen as a means and end to answering questions that were written in

textbooks. This is similar to the findings of Gomez Lobaton (2012) whose

participants positioned themselves as "answerers" and constructed identities of

"passive agents of knowledge" only.

Seren had explicitly stated that she did not want to engage in extracurricular

activities on her own because she would not know how this would have an effect on

her scores and in the exam. How would she know when and how the content of a

magazine would be part of her exam? These were her main concerts. She was also

adamant that watching English movies and TV series did not have an effect on her

English level. She saw them merely as a waste of time. Instead she chose to study

classroom-related material like weekend assignments and homework, vocabulary

lists and grammatical structures that were covered in class. Her main exertion of

agency was directed at passing the course and leaving the 'English-preparatory-

school student' identity that she had been taking since the beginning of the school.

She wanted to take the identity of the 'department student' that she had aimed at

before starting university. For this to happen, she needed to pass the course.

5.7   Community of Practice in an EFL context: How Is it possible?

My data from the narratives of my participants suggest that there is a natural search

and urge to participate in a community of practice where they can use the language in

a natural and real way. The participants voiced a powerful message throughout their stories "We want to speak English, please force us.". Here, the main emphasis is on the verb 'force'. In the social theory of community of practice, Wenger (1998) states that learning is a process that occurs during our participation in a community of practice where the learners' existence is meaningful. It was clear from the data from my participants that they were searching for meaning during their instructional process in and out of class. Wegner (1998) describes four components of the relation of community of practice in the learning context: community, practice, meaning and identity. The classroom together with the teacher and the students in an EFL context could be perceived as a community of practice but based on Wegner (1998), the 'meaning' component seems to be missing in those classroom settings.

Pelin, Ulaş and Seçil stated on many occasions that they were seeking opportunities to participate in a community of practice. Pelin voiced her frustration about not being forced to speak English in class and besides, her teachers were not speaking English all the time. She was even jealous of other friends whose teachers in their classes refused to speak in Turkish and had a English-only policy. Previously she had also stated her desire to meet international students at the campus so that she could practice speaking English. Similarly, Seçil mentioned many times that "*one needs to speak*" when learning a language. Similar concepts were stated in Skilton-Sylvester (2002) who found that during the construction of language learner identities, they develop a desire for the 'right to speak' outside as well as inside the classrooms. Their identities also claim a right to receive education in the classroom that fits the world outside. They point out ESL learners' long-term participation and investment is rooted in seeing the classroom as a real place where learners' multiple

selves should be central in all learning and teaching engagements (Skilton-Sylvester, 2002, p. 22).

Another example from my data is Ulaş who sought opportunities during high-school to take part in a Model United Nations (MUN) activity. A MUN is an international roleplay activity where high-school students from all over the world play UN delegates and simulate a UN committee. During this role-play activity, participants act like representatives of their countries and engage in discussions that involve politics, international relations and diplomacy. These discussions are known to improve the participants' debating, public speaking and leadership skills. It is likely that Ulaş saw this as an opportunity to participate in a real language use setting that might give him access to a real community of practice. Norton (2001) reports from her data that the learners were aware of the "sharp distinctions between language as a linguistic system and language as a social practice. (p. 168). This made the learners question the use of English out of the classroom. Ulaş was aware that he needed more practice and that the classroom was not providing this. Therefore, he sought ways to participate but was denied the opportunity because of financial constraints.

To sum up, the participants in this study constructed and negotiated L2 learner identities that were contradicting, historical, complex and multidimensional in nature. Their past and present L2 learning trajectories as well as their future projections shaped their imagined identities that would have an impact on how they invested in the learning process. Concerning their past experiences, the ideas and attitudes about English of their family members determined how they perceived the importance of English and its relevance in owning a cultural or symbolic capital. In addition, their limited L2 learning experience during their pre-tertiary years also

defined their investment and imagined identities during their learning process at the EPS. This included the fact that they were disadvantaged in their education and their negative past power-related interactions had an effect on their participation. The result of these power-relations was the fear of making mistakes during their performances and this had a profound effect on their participation in language practices in class. Another point was that they did not identify as English users or speakers because their imagined identities were restricted to 'test-taker' and 'language learner' positionalities. They associated a native accent with an English speaker identity and therefore had difficulties in constructing and negotiating an English speaker identity. Furthemore, the learners are in constant search of a natural community of practice apart from the L2 classroom so that they could position themselves as legitimate L2 speakers in a real L2-mediated community.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

6.1   Introduction

This study investigated learner identity construction and negotiation among EFL

beginner learners at a English preparatory program of a private university in Istanbul,

Turkey. This study is an instrumental case study that involved five participants

whose language learning experiences were collected as data. To have a detailed

account of the learners's identity construction and negotiation engagements, the data

was collected using a number of qualitative methods including extensive semi-

structured interviews, classroom audio recordings and observations, and diary

entries.

The theoretical construct underlying this study regarding the construction and

negotiation of learner identities is informed by Norton Peirce' (1995) view of

identity and its relation to language learning as well as poststructuralist views by

Norton (2000) and Block (2006). Using these theoretical constructs in the analysis of

my findings helped me to form a deeper understanding about the underlying

processes and experiences of my participants' language learning journeys.

Here, I provide concluding remarks to my study about language learner

identity construction among EFL beginner learners in an EFL context. This section

will include implications for practice in the field of English language teaching and

learning, follow with the limitations observed in this study and finish with

recommendations for further research.

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6.2 Implications for practice

This study offers pedagogical implications aimed at all stakeholders in the teaching/learning process in EFL contexts like Turkey.

i. All stakeholders in the teaching/learning process should acknowledge the fact that language learners own identities that are multiple, contradictory, and historical. That means when learners start their language learning journey, whether it be for the first time or later, they come with a set of identities that are prone to change in positive and negative ways depending on multiple factors in their learning contexts. Administrators and policy makers can make more informed decisions about curriculums and learning environments. Teachers should be able to select and adapt their material as well as their teaching methods, strategies and techniques accordingly. Furthermore, when teachers have an understanding of the varied identities of their students, they will know why learners behave and assert themselves in a certain way, understand classroom management issues more efficiently and create more meaningful learning and teaching experiences in the classroom.

ii. The data in this study has shown that learners (as well as teachers) perceive language production from a native-speaker centered perspective and this affects the learners' imagined identities in a way that it clashes with their actual self and with the achievability of this goal. EFL teachers should acknowledge through their practices in the classrooms that their learners are legitimate speakers of the language by introducing varieties of English including local varieties as well as varieties from other EFL contexts instead of exposing them only to British or American English standards. Norton (1997) states that any language learners who sees themselves as legitimate

speakers of English have the right to own it. Similarly, Holiday (2009) claims that non-native speakers can also claim ownership to English. Students can be informed about the 'intelligibility' concept which approaches pronunciation from a non-native perspective (for more information, see Bayyurt, 2018; Jenkins, 2000). They should be informed that native accents as a goal are not realistic and one does not need a native accent to become a good English speaker. Teachers should give examples from popular non-native English speakers so that the learners can see that there are non-native successful English speakers.

iii. One of the main findings of his study is that learners did not position themselves as speakers nor users of English due to their limited linguistic competence in the language and the teachers' acknowledgement of this competence. Furthermore, the teachers' definition of bilingualism is also generally based on this traditional view of linguistic competence. Pavlenko (2003) offers teachers to adopt a definition bilingualism that is based on 'multicompetence'. According to Cook (1992), bilinguals are not the sum of two monolinguals and therefore have a unique state of mind that is different from those of monolinguals. Therefore, they should also be treated and be accepted as legitimate L2 users. Teachers should look beyond the notion of linguistic competence but see how these learners bring other resources to the classrooms that are different from monolinguals. When teachers acknowledge their learners as bilinguals disregarding their linguistic competence, this will have a profound impact on the way their learners position themselves as legitimate L2 speakers and users and lead to changes in the investestment they make to the learning of the target language.

iv. Teachers and curriculum designers could incorporate the Internet and social media tools to expose the learners to L2-mediated online communities where they have opportunities to participate in real-life interactions with English-speaking individuals. Since my participants were between the ages of 19-21 at the time of the study, they are considered to be digital natives and are already using a variety of multimodal online resources. However, they were not using these to participate in interactions in English but mainly in Turkish. This kind of systematic activities involving social media tools like Twitter and Instagram could help them become a part of an English-speaking international community and help them develop their L2 self-confidence.

v. Since the participants of this study were students at an English preparatory school (EPS) of a Turkish private university, their learning took place in a non-English dominant setting. In addition to the non-communicative instructional choices that are common at these schools, this type of context restricts their vision of the English-speaking community to a linguistics-only community, which affects the way they negotiate their identities. My participants voiced strong desires to have opportunities to use the language in more realistic communities of practice and literally asked teachers to "force" them to speak English. Schools and teachers should make it possible for the learners to create spaces where the learners have a ground to construct identities through the power of imagination.

vi. To create spaces where learners have the opportunity to initiate imagined ideas beyond 'passing the test' and 'becoming a good language learner', schools and teachers can offer 'practice-providing L2 communities'. This might be done by setting up spaces for the learners to come together with

international students at the university and commit to international projects and other out-of-class activities where the learners have the chance to participate in real language practices out of the classroom and negotiate identities that are based on a legitimate and competent English user.

vii. Most of my participants developed a 'test-taker' and 'language learner' imagined identity whose main purpose was to pass the course. The main reason for this is that the schools and teachers' practices and policies are based on institutional requirements to pass the courses and move up to the next level so that the students can start their studies at their respective departments. This also results in the learners perceiving English as a school-subject rather than a communication tool used to become a part of another language community. Therefore, the learners' imagined identities stay passive and restricted to learning English to pass tests. They also fail to see the cultural and symbolic capital that English could provide them. Teachers, policy makers and program/curriculum designers should be aware of this and apply relevant practices and policies that will lead to more satisfying L2 classroom practices where learners can construct imagined identities based on more competent L2 users.

viii. English preparatory school teachers should be aware of the 'English deficit' in the education system that their learners were subjected to prior to coming to their classes. Learners starting at the preparatory programs are aware of their limited L2 performance and also come with fears and anxieties attached to their learner identities as a result of their previous learning experience and other power relations between them and their classmates or their teachers.

Teachers should adopt practices in the classroom that take these past-learning trajectories into consideration.

ix. One other theme that was prevalent among my participants was that all of them were committed to watching a lot of Tv series in English and this raised the question whether streaming sites such as Netflix and Youtube have become a one-way community of practice that utilizes the exposure aspect of 'practice' in language learning. I noticed that my participants have an extensive knowledge of Tv shows like Friends, How I met your mother, Teen Wolf and similar vampire series, and animation series like Rick and Morty. Streaming sites seem to have the power to simulate a one-directional community of practice where the practice is listening and imagining being a member of the fiction they are exposed to while watching the content. School programs and teachers could use the power of these streaming sites and incorporate content into their curriculum.

x. Pre-service English teacher education programs should incorporate training based on identity studies so that they have a deeper understanding of their own learning trajectories and how the concepts of imagined identities, imagined communities and investment can inform their future language teaching practices.

6.3 Limitations of the study and recommendations for further research

First of all, this study was conducted with only five participants at a private university in Istanbul. The experiences and journeys of these learners were unique in their relevant learning contexts and settings. More studies are needed to have a better

and deeper understanding about learner identity construction and negotiation during their learning journeys. Based on the limitations of this study, the following points can be utilized in further research:

i. This study was conducted at a private university in Turkey. Even though the participants had scholarships to a certain degree, the social outlook and setting both in and out of their classes is different from that of the students in public universities in Turkey. Therefore, similar longitudinal studies are needed at public universities to see what similarities and differences occur.

ii. In our study, the participants were beginner students from different departments at an English preparatory school. Their projections about using English in the future was still not set because they were not able to know to what extent they would really need to use English.. However, there can be further studies with students whose future English investment is already established as English teachers and translators (see Aslan, 2020).

iii. Another cohort to be investigated could be learners at different grades from primary, secondary and high schools in Turkey including both the private and state sector. Investigating how the 'English deficit' at these institutions affect the construction of L2 identities could be valuable data for policies and practices at the tertiary level.

iv. In this study, I focused mainly on L2 learner identity. However, other identity markers such as gender, ethnicity, age, sociocultural and socioeconomic differences could also play roles in those interactions.

v. I did not have the opportunity to observe the students during their online education experience. There could be further research about online L2 learner

identity and how this affected their imagined identities and investments in learning the language.

vi. This study followed the participants during their stay at the English preparatory program and some until their first semester at their departments. Since this is an EMI university, once they start at their departments, they receive instruction in English to varying degrees. Their English courses are also limited to 2 hours a week. However, further research lasting through their whole stay at the university might be needed to see how their language learner identity changes over time while studying in their respective departments.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Semi-structured Interview Questions (students): These are guides for the researcher (English version)

- Why is learning English important? How important is it? What are your future projections?

- How do you feel about learning English? How are you progressing? What's your level? How far do you think you will go?

- How do you think a language is learned?

- What factors make you participate in class?

- What makes you speak/answer in English in class?

- Why do you think you can't/won't talk in English during class? How much do you talk?

- Do you take notes? Why? Why not? How frequently? Which parts of class you deem important to take notes about?

- When do you go back to those notes?

- Do you have a notebook? When do you revise your notes? Do you do that?

- Homework? Do you do them? What kind of homework do you get?

- On a scale out of 10, where do you see yourself in terms of committing to the language learning process?

- How much do you commit or think you will commit to the learning process?

- Do you see yourself as a speaker of English?

- What do you do in class when you don't understand something?

- Do you believe the teacher treats everyone the same in class in terms of asking questions and answering them?

- How much do you use your mobile phone and for what purposes?

- Do you ever feel that the teacher is making fun of some students?

English learning experience (past):

- How did you learn English? What age? What school?

- Did you have any experience about English before school? At home?

- What was your parents' perception about English? Did anyone at home speak English?

- As a child (before school, before learning English) did you watch any movies in English? Read books, listened to music, played games?

English learning experience (now):

- What do you find difficult about learning English at the moment?

- Are there any opportunities for you to speak English at the university right now?

- How do you think learning English will benefit you during your university years?

Additional learning and exposure:

- Are you taking private courses or attending a private English course?

- If yes, how are they different from class lessons?

- Do you ever speak English out of class? at school? in town?

- What do you think is the best way to learn English?

Additional Questions:

- Did learning English have an effect on your personality? How? Why?

- There is a saying in Turkish that knowing another language makes you another person. Do you believe that knowing English made you a different person? Will it make you one? How?

- How do you see English as a language?

- Has knowing English ever helped you in any situation? How? Why?

- Do you think that your gender, your class, being from an important family, ethnic background, being from a village/city, etc. affect learning English?

- After finishing school, how do you think speaking English will affect your position in life?

APPENDIX B

LANGUAGE LEARNING DIARY

(Turkish version)

Merhaba,

Aşağıdaki noktaları göz önünde bulundurarak İngilizce öğrenme sürecin ile ilgili deneyimlerini paylaşabilir misin?

- · Genel olarak öğrenme süreci nasıl ilerliyor, kendini nasıl hissediyorsun?
- · Zorlanıyor musun yoksa kolay mı geliyor?
- · Bu hafta neler öğrendin (gramer, kelime, konuşma, vs)?
- · Yeni şeyler öğrendiğini nasıl anlıyorsun? Sınıfta İngilizce olarak bir etkileşim oluyor mu?
- · Öğrendiklerini başka alanlarda, ders dışında kullanma fırsatın oldu mu?
- · Film, oyun, müzik, vb. alanlarda anlama becerilerinde bir değişiklik oluyor mu?
- · Bu süreç ile ilgili paylaşmak istediğin her şeyi yazabilirsin (kendine olan güvenin arttı mı, azaldı, vs,…)

Tarih:

İsim:

Deneyimlerim:

(English Version)

Hello,

Can you share your experiences regarding your English learning process, considering the following points?

· How is the learning process in general, how do you feel?

· Do you find it difficult or does it come easy?

· What did you learn this week (grammar, vocabulary, conversation, etc.)?

· How do you know that you have learned new things? Is there any interaction in English in the classroom?

· Did you have the opportunity to use what you learned in other areas, outside of the classroom?

· Movies, games, music, etc. Is there a change in comprehension skills in areas?

· You can write everything you want to share about this process (did your self-confidence increase, decrease, etc.)

Date:

Name:

My Experiences:

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION FORM (ENGLISH)

Participant Information Form (English)

Name: _____

Age: _____

Sex: _____

Where did you study:

 Primary School, Secondary School ve High School:

_____

_____

_____

Mother tongue: _____

How old were you when you first started learning English?

_____

Do you speak any other languages?

_____

Birthplace: _____

Where did you grow up? _____

Where do you live now? _____

CONSENT FORMS

Gönüllü Katılım Formu

Sevgili Öğrenciler,

Bu çalışma, **Prof. Dr. Yasemin Bayyurt (Boğaziçi Üniversisitesi)** danışmanlığında **Hakan Şentürk** tarafından yürütülen bir doktora tez çalışmasıdır. Araştırmanın amacı, İngilizce Hazırlık Okulunda yeni İngilizce öğrenmeye başlayan öğrencilerinin sınıf-içi sözel etkileşimlerinde (öğretmen ile, diğer öğrenci arkadaşları ile) kimlik oluşumlarını incelemek. Başlangıç seviyesi İngilizce öğrenen öğrencilerinin sınıf içinde kurdukları sözel iletişimleri üzerinde bir etnografik araştırmanın bilimsel olarak İngilizce Dil Eğitimi araştırmalarına önemli bir katkıda bunulacağı öngörülmektedir.

Bu çalışma için Yeditepe Üniversitesi etik kurulundan izin alınmıştır. Çalışmaya katılım tamimiyle gönüllülük temelinde olmalıdır. Cevaplarınız tamamıyla gizli tutulacak ve sadece araştırmacı tarafından değerlendirilecektir. Elde edilecek bilgiler bilimsel yayımlarda kullanılacaktır.

Çalışmanın verileri sınıf içerisinde yapılan gözlem (haftada 2 saat), ses kaydı, günceler ve öğrencilerle belli aralıklarla yapılan mülakatlar yoluyla toplanacaktır. Çalışmada toplanan bütün veriler (ses kayıtları, gözlem notları, mülakat notları, vs) ve katılanların kimlikleri tamamen gizli tutulacaktır. Ancak, araştırma sırasında sorulardan ya da herhangi başka bir nedenden ötürü kendinizi rahatsız hissederseniz araştırmayı yarıda bırakmakta serbestsiniz. Böyle bir durumda çalışmayı yürüten kişiye, araştırmayı tamamlamak istemediğinizi söylemek yeterli olacaktır. Onay vermeden önce sormak isteyeceğiniz herhangi bir konu varsa sormaktan çekinmeyiniz. Bu çalışmaya katıldığınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz.

Çalışma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak için Boğaziçi Üniversitesi İngilizce Öğretmenliği bölümü öğretim üyelerinden Prof. Dr. Yasemin Bayyurt (E-posta: bayyurty@boun.edu.tr), Yeditepe Üniversitesi İngilizce Hazırlık Okulu öğretim görevlisi Hakan Şentürk (E-posta: hsenturk@yeditepe.edu.tr), veya Yeditepe

Üniversitesi Beşeri Ve Sosyal Araştırmalar Etik Kurulu (Tel: 0216 578 00 00- 3873) ile iletişim kurabilirsiniz.

Bu çalışmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katılıyorum ve istediğim zaman katılımdan vazgeçebileceğimi biliyorum. Verdiğim bilgilerin bilimsel amaçlı yayımlarda kullanılmasını kabul ediyorum. (Formu doldurup imzaladıktan sonra uygulayıcıya geri veriniz).

Ø Tarih:

Ø Katılımcı Ad – Soyad: İmza:

Consent Form (English)

Volunteer Consent Form

Dear Students,

This study is a doctoral thesis study conducted by Hakan Şentürk under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Yasemin Bayyurt (Bogazici University). The aim of the research is to examine the identity formations of the students who have just started learning English at the English Preparatory School, in their verbal interactions (with the teacher, with their fellow students). It is predicted that a study on the verbal communication of beginner level English learners in the classroom will make an important contribution to scientific English Language Education research.

For this study, permission was obtained from the ethics committee of Yeditepe University. Participation in the study must be on a purely voluntary basis. Your answers will be kept completely confidential and evaluated only by the researcher. The information obtained will be used in scientific publications.

The data of the study will be collected through classroom observation (2 hours per week), audio recordings, journals and interviews with students at regular intervals. All data collected in the study (audio recordings, observation notes, interview notes, etc.) and the identities of the participants will be kept completely confidential. However, if you feel uncomfortable during the research due to questions or any other reason, you are free to discontinue the research. In such a situation, it will be sufficient to tell the person conducting the study that you do not want to complete the research. If there is anything you would like to ask before giving your approval, do not hesitate to ask. Thank you in advance for your participation in this study.

For more information about the study, Prof. Dr. Yasemin Bayyurt (E-mail: bayyurty@boun.edu.tr) from Boğaziçi University English Language Teaching

Department and Hakan Şentürk from Yeditepe University English Preparatory School (E-mail: hsenturk@yeditepe.edu) .tr), or Yeditepe University Humanities and Social Research Ethics Committee (Tel: 0216 578 00 00- 3873).

I participate in this study completely voluntarily and I know that I can withdraw from participation at any time. I accept the use of the information I have provided in scientific publications. (After completing and signing the form, return it to the practitioner).

Date:

Participant Name – Surname: Signature:

APPENDIX E

ETHICS COMMITTEE APPROVAL

T.C. YEDİTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ

Sayı : 21568116-302.14.01-E.347   30/07/2019
Konu : Hakan Şentürk Etik Kurul Onayı Hk.

İLGİLİ MAKAMA

Yeditepe Üniversitesi, İngilizce Hazırlık Okulu Öğretim Görevlilerinden Hakan ŞENTÜRK'ün "İngilizceyi Yabancı Dil Olarak Öğrenenler Arasında Kimlik Oluşumu ve Müzakeresi: Türkiye'de Bir Özel Üniversitede Vaka İncelemesi" başlıklı araştırmasının Beşeri Bilimler etik standartlarına uygunluğuna ilişkin Yeditepe Üniversitesi Beşeri ve Sosyal Araştırmalar Etik Kurul Onayı ekte sunulmuştur.

Bilgilerinize arz ve rica ederim.

İmza
Prof. Dr. Ahmet AYDIN
Rektör V.

EKLER: Yeditepe Üniversitesi Etik Kurul Onayı.tif

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3/2019 No'lu TOPLANTI KARARLARI

1)   Yeditepe Üniversitesi, Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Yüksek Lisans Programı öğrencilerinden İlknur Karadağlı Dirik'in ''İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Erken Yaştaki Öğrencilere İngilizce Öğretimi Konusundaki Mesleki Bilgilerinin Değerlendirilmesi'' isimli tez-araştırmasının Beşeri Bilimler etik standartlarına uygunluğu Yeditepe Üniversitesi Beşeri ve Sosyal Araştırmalar Etik Kurulu tarafından değerlendirilmiş ve onaylanmıştır.

2)   Yeditepe Üniversitesi, İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Siyaset Bilimi ve Uluslararası İlişkiler (İng) Bölümü öğrencilerinden Didem Uyanık'ın PSIR 480 kodlu dersi kapsamında hazırlamış olduğu ''Siyasal Farkındalık ve Siyasal Katılım İlişkisi'' adlı anketinin Beşeri Bilimler etik standartlarına uygunluğu Yeditepe Üniversitesi Beşeri ve Sosyal Araştırmalar Etik Kurulu tarafından değerlendirilmiş ve onaylanmıştır.

3)   Yeditepe Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Bilişsel Bilimler Yüksek Lisans öğrencilerinden Khaled Al-Kamha'nın ''Grup Halinde Hareket Eden Objeleri Algılamada Kullanılan Dikkat Mekanizmaları İçin Hesaplamalı Model Geliştirme'' başlıklı araştırmasının Beşeri Bilimler etik standartlarına uygunluğu Yeditepe Üniversitesi Beşeri ve Sosyal Araştırmalar Etik Kurulu tarafından değerlendirilmiş ve onaylanmıştır.

4)   Yeditepe Üniversitesi, İngilizce Hazırlık Okulu Öğretim Görevlilerinden Hakan Şentürk'ün ''İngilizceyi Yabancı Dil Olarak Öğrenenler arasında Kimlik Oluşumu ve Müzakeresi: Türkiye'de bir Özel Üniversitede Vaka İncelemesi'' başlıklı araştırmasının Beşeri Bilimler etik standartlarına uygunluğu Yeditepe Üniversitesi Beşeri ve Sosyal Araştırmalar Etik Kurulu tarafından değerlendirilmiş ve onaylanmıştır.

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