

*Second Language Acquisition in Immigrant Groups in Germany*

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Spring 2018

Submitted for Honors Thesis at SUNY New Paltz

## **Abstract**

After the fall of the Nazi regime, Germany's immigration policy drastically changed. The need for guest workers (*Gastarbeiter*) was high in order to rebuild German infrastructure, with a majority of the guest workers coming from Turkey. Prior to and after the fall of the Berlin Wall, ethnic German Russians (*Aussiedler*) repatriated back to Germany, representing a second major wave of immigrants in the postwar era. The contemporary international crisis in Syria has led to an influx of refugees and Arabic speaking populations in Germany. As a result of these historical shifts in the latter half of twentieth century Germany to the present, Germany has taken language acquisition more seriously and consequently sees itself as an immigration nation. This is an overview of scholarship informing the context for second language acquisition among immigrants in Germany. This study explores language acquisition among these groups and finds that Turkish people do the best at learning German.

## **Keywords**

International Relations, German, integration, language acquisition, Russian, Turkish, Syrian, refugees, Arabic, immigration, assimilation, discrimination, alphabet

## Introduction

Language acquisition is vital for an easier transition into a new society. By being able to speak, read, and understand the local language, one is able to adapt more easily to their unfamiliar environment and newly adopted home. However, there are many factors that hinder the process when trying to learn a new language. There are many elements that impact three of the largest immigrant groups in contemporary Germany (Turks, Russians, and Syrians) and influence the acquisition of language among them. Some of these factors include: what knowledge of German do these immigrants have prior to arrival; how long they have been in the country; and what language family their native language belongs to, among others. Arabic belongs to Afro-Asiatic, Turkish belongs to Turkic, Russian belongs to Indo-European and Slavic (Boeree). In light of the recent refugee influx, Germany has received the highest number of asylum applications with over 476,000 ("EU Migration: Crisis In Seven Charts"). This thesis assesses which major group of recent immigrants, Turks, Russians, and Syrians, are the most successful at learning the German language and which factors are catalysts in second language acquisition and which may serve as obstacles and impediments. Language acquisition is one of the most vital facets of integration. By not being able to learn the national language adequately, immigrants face considerable obstacles when trying to find a job. As a result, immigrants have higher unemployment rates and earn less compared to their citizen counterparts (Hübschmann). Inadequate language skills are a significant impediment to labor market integration. In 2012, the unemployment rate for non-EU residents was 21.3% higher compared to EU citizens, in some countries reaching well above 30 percent (Hübschmann).

This is significant because language competency is seen as one of the most integral features of integration, which is vital to both socioeconomic and cultural success for immigrants.

By analyzing existing studies and evaluating different variables such as duration of stay in Germany, geographic location within the country (taking regional dialect into account), and prior exposure to German beforehand, I set out to determine what constellation of factors proves most beneficial for linguistic competency when learning German as a second language and as an immigrant.

### **Immigration from Turkey:**

The *Gastarbeiter* (guest worker) movement was the beginning of the Turkish immigration to Germany. The *Gastarbeiter* bilateral agreement was signed between Germany and Turkey in 1961 because there was a shortage of skilled workers ("Turkish Guest Workers Transformed German Society | DW | 30.10.2011") who were needed to help rebuild Germany post World War II. Following the war, Germany had lost much of its male workforce. This, men from countries such as Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Greece, Italy, and Turkey came to Germany for the economic opportunities the German government presented to them. Germany admitted these Turkish immigrants with open arms, with both countries under the impression that the immigrants would return back to Turkey once the restoration was done. However, this was not the case. Eager to have the Turkish people return, *Gastarbeiter*, the German government eventually offered money to them, if they returned to Turkey. Officially recruitment for *Gastarbeiter* ended September 1, 1973. These efforts did not produce the desired results because many remained, and indeed, would take measures to bring their family members to join them in their new lives that were now rooted in Germany (Huebschmann).

In the 1950s Germany underwent an economic miracle, known as the "Wirtschaftswunder". This economic miracle was the rapid reconstruction of Germany after

World War II, aided by the Marshall Plan, and was a time period that included low inflation and quick industrial growth (Van Hook). This created a shortage of workers, prompting the German government to recruit workers from Southern Europe and Northern Africa to fill the surplus of jobs available. From 1961 to 1973, German companies requested approximately 740,000 immigrants from Turkey (Worbs). The transition to a new country, West Germany, proved to be difficult for the Turkish migrants, who faced challenges in learning a new language and adapting to an unfamiliar culture. This was further impeded by the failure of the German government to set up programs to train Turkish immigrant workers in the German language.

Before beginning an analysis of the discrimination that Turkish people face in Germany, it is necessary to understand why the first wave of workers decided to stay in the first place. Although both countries were under the impression that the workers would return to Turkey after the presumed time frame, the workers found themselves presented with financial and familial reasons to remain in Germany. For one, the migrants were deterred by their financial prospects back in Turkey. Many did not have enough money to return back, restart their lives, and try to run their own business. In fact, some workers did leave Germany only to return back, after being faced with the lack of economic opportunities presented in their native country (Hübschmann). Not only did the Turks show a desire to remain, but Germany was not partial towards losing skilled workers, which would require them to train new employees. This led to the workers growing increasingly content as they gained better living conditions, prompting them to settle and raise new families (Hübschmann). Proving to be another contingent effect of the settlement, the workers found more reason to stay from fear of disrupting their children's progressing education in Germany. Ultimately, the combination of financial prospects and contentment on

both parties created both resolve and fear in the Turkish people that if they left Germany, they would lose all the stability the country had to offer.

Turkish migrants, who constitute Germany's largest migrant group, have often been criticized for not integrating, according to Germany's cultural standards, which differ with regard to the opinions of those writing on these standards. There are currently over three million Turkish people living in Germany (Sauerbrey), and of those it is undetermined how many are citizens because the German census gathers data on residents' country of birth and citizenship but not their ethnicity ("The Census 2011 In Germany").

One problem comes from the Turkish President, Recep Erdogan. He has insisted that Turkish citizens in Germany should not assimilate, calling this a "crime against humanity" ("The World From Berlin: 'Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan Wants To Be The Father' - SPIEGEL ONLINE - International"). He consistently criticizes Germany's integration policy. This causes a conflict of interest for the Turkish Germans who want to assimilate to their adopted home country but who also want to maintain cultural ties to their original homeland. "When asked about the obligatory German courses for newcomers, Erdoğan responded that those who see the ability to speak German as the most important requirement violate human rights (Huebschmann). Calling this a crime against humanity and a human rights violation is evidently an overstatement, given that acquiring a new language does not imply that one must give up the old one, like citizenship functions in Germany but the Turkish President wants his citizens to not be turned against their Turkish culture. He believes that if they keep completely assimilating to German standards, they will lose touch with their homeland and their sense of Turkish identity. He also strongly suggests that Turkish Germans learn Turkish first. While living in a bilingual household is beneficial and it is also important to learn both languages, it may cause a hindrance

to Turkish Germans living in a household that only speaks Turkish. They are at a disadvantage when they enter the school system because they are behind their German speaking peers, and unfortunately face the consequences later in life when they have to decide whether or not to pursue a university track in their education.

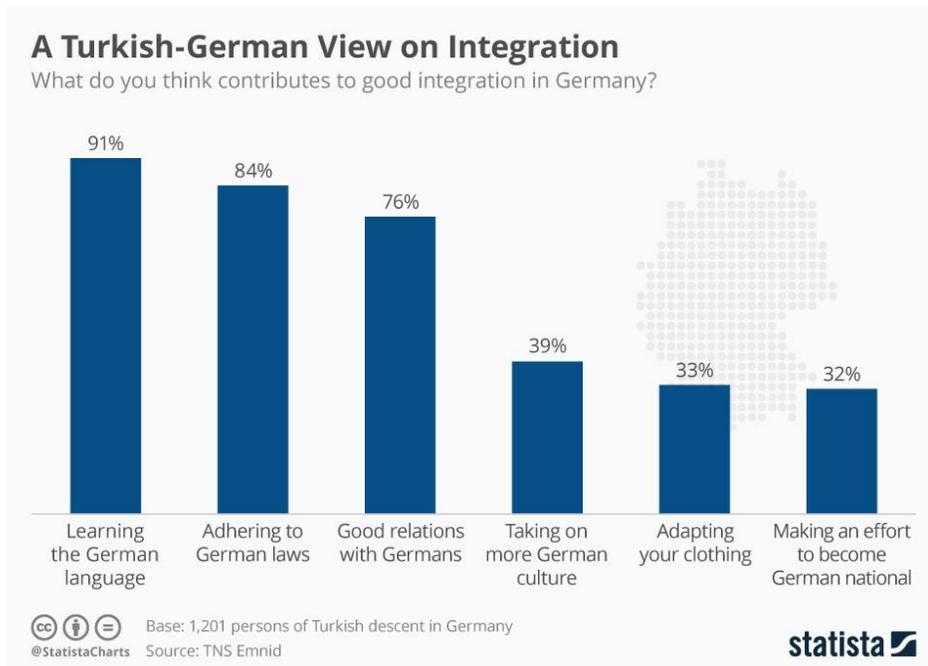
Turkey has allowed their expatriates who have lost their Turkish citizenship because they have become naturalized in a country that does not allow dual citizenship to apply for the Turkish Blue Card (*Mavi Kart*). The Blue Card allows them to get some citizen's rights back, such as the right to live and work in Turkey or the right to own land. However, they are not allowed to vote in Turkish elections ("TURKISH CITIZENSHIP LAW"). This is pertinent because it allows Turkish-Germans to not feel as if they are completely giving up their Turkish identity if they choose to become a German citizen. Only one-third of the three million of the Turks living in German hold German citizenship (The Economist). Germany does not allow for dual-citizenship outside of the European Union ("Federal Foreign Office - Law On Nationality"). Between the ages of 18-23, Turkish-German kids must decide if they want to become a German or Turkish citizen.

By forcing residents to assimilate can cause tension between groups. The host country can say that if immigrants do not integrate, it is a threat to society and their values. This can be seen as a form of racism because the host country is not accepting their new residents' cultures. This forces them to forgo their previous cultures and languages and make them learn the host countries ways. However, immigrants will feel as if they are losing touch with their culture, nevertheless they are also afraid of being excluded and discriminated in daily society.

Assimilation is one sided, integration is two sided. When assimilation occurs, immigrants acquire the behaviors and customs of their new country. However, when this happens, it suggests

that immigrants that immigrants will be seen seen as one of the natives. They adapt all customs, traditions, languages, and cultural norms and act as a native. It is implied that immigrants will lose their old sense of identity. On the other hand, there is integration. Integration is defined as, “the action of incorporating a racial or religious group into a community” (Wordnetweb). When integration occurs, it combines cultures and changes society. Integration suggests that the new country is compelled to accept the new culture coming in as equal, whether or not they clash with the original country’s values.

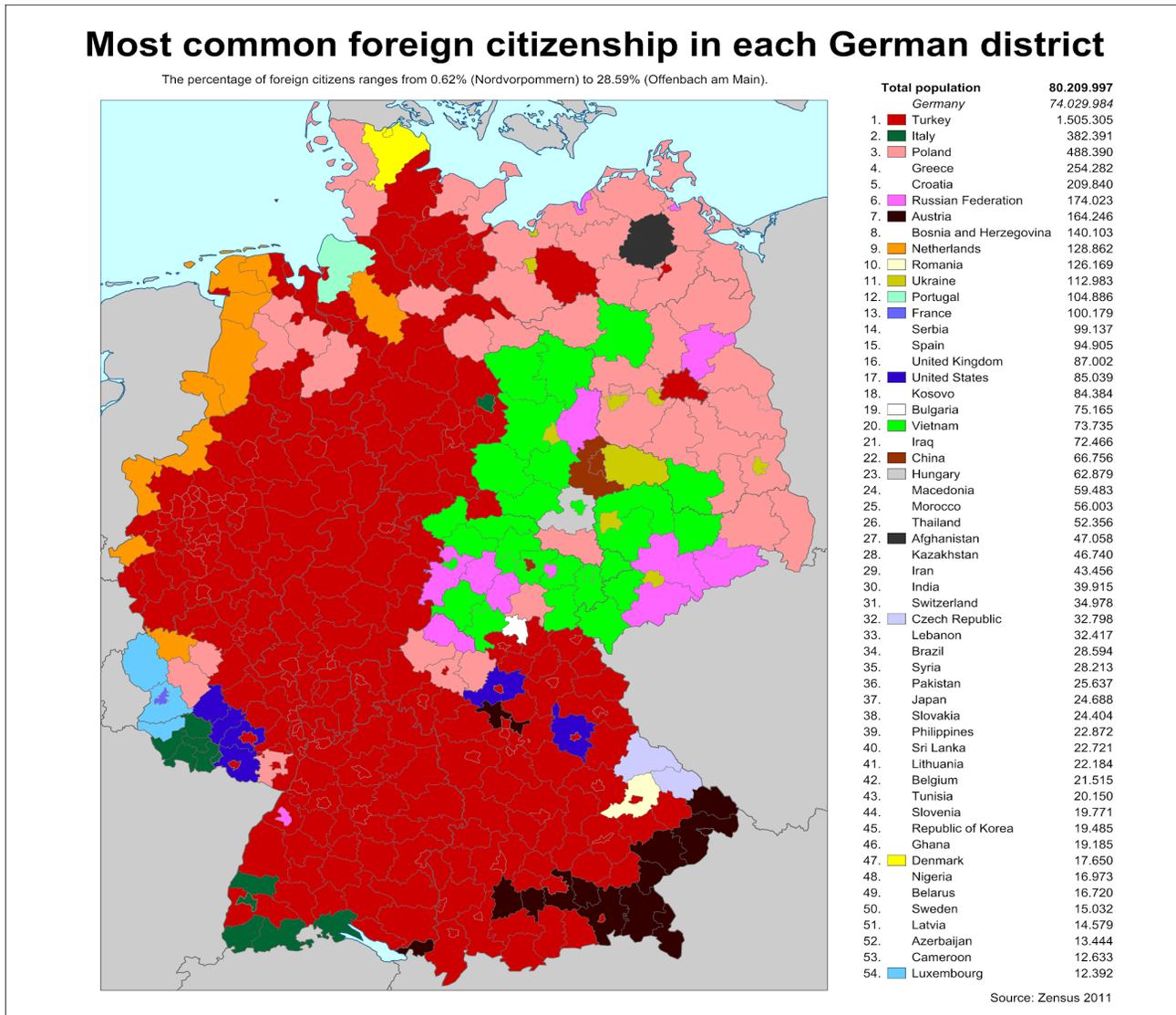
Another issue is the concept of “Tarzan German”. “Tarzan German” is what Turkish people call it when German people speak improper German to them (Gezer). They speak slowly, drop the articles, fail to conjugate verbs, use the formal “du”, and use the wrong syntax (Gezer). Turks see this as humiliating and belittling because they do know proper German but Germans automatically assume they do not. This causes a lot of tension between Turks and Germans. German people are quick to assume that their Turkish counterparts do not know the native language of the country, but that is not the reality. Turkish people are able to speak German properly, especially the second and third generations due to the length of time they have been in Germany. This is comparable to the United States when Americans speak slow, broken English with Hispanic residents. They are quick to assume that Hispanics cannot speak proper English when encountering one, even though that Hispanic could have been born and raised in the United States. This is automatic prejudice in both the United States and Germany just because of someone’s heritage. Racial discrimination is not mutually exclusive to just Germany or Europe, it is a persisting problem everywhere.



Source: Statista

This chart demonstrates that Turkish people find it necessary to integrate and the most important step in integrating is learning the language. While the other aspects do contribute to good integration, language acquisition is very important. Learning the language of the country is a vital facet to integration. Turkish-Germans are determined to be as integrated as possible. The category with the least amount of votes is, “making an effort to become a German national”. This demonstrates that Turkish people in Germany are not just living there to obtain the benefits of being a German national. Researchers assert that Turks are in fact, putting in their best effort to integrate with German society. However, there are some obstacles preventing Turks from obtaining complete integration. The popular discourse about Turks in Germany are that they are seen as lazy, conservative, Hijab wearing immigrants who do not want to learn German, but that

is not the reality. These stereotypes hurt Turkish-Germans in their daily lives are often subject to discrimination in the job-market and school system.



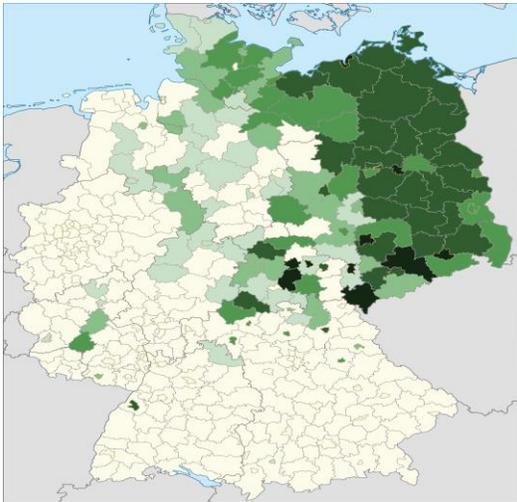
Source: German Census 2011

This picture demonstrates that most of Germany's Turkish-German population is still in West Germany, like they were when they migrated here for the post-war boom. This is reflective

of the time period of when Turkish people migrated to Germany. They did not migrate to East Germany because they did not request them in East Germany. East Germany was communist and under rule of the Soviet Union.

### **Immigration from Russia:**

Immigration from Russia dates back to the 16th century (Martin). Article 116 of Germany's Basic Law or *Grundgesetz* allows people of German heritage the legal right of return and the potential to obtain German citizenship if they experienced discrimination or oppression post-WWII as a consequence of their ethnic German background (Martin).



Source: Michael Sander, 2015

This image displays the distribution of Russian citizens throughout Germany. This shows that Russian citizens are mostly concentrated in the Northeast of Germany, mostly as a result of its proximity to central and Eastern Europe and its location as the former GDR (German Democratic Republic).

When Germans were expelled to Russia during the course of WWII, they tried not to lose their German identity and culture. While in Russia, naturally, they wanted to live among

other Germans and did not want to face cultural and religious discrimination or persecution. (Dementeva et al). Being able to live in a place where they were accepted was one of the main motivating factors when returning to Germany, in addition to the hard living conditions encountered in Russia (Dementeva et al). However, there is evidence that Russian-Germans felt as if they belonged to both cultures. When the Soviet Union broke up, beginning July 1st 1990, Germans in Russia had to prove that they were of German descent in order to come back to Germany. (Dementeva et. al). This was because the German government was determined to keep Germany as “ethnically German” as possible (Dementeva et. al). Once accepted, the German government offered their new residents language classes, vocational training, counseling, and financial support. This was is not the common case with immigrants coming from Turkey and Syria, because they are not “ethnically German”. (Dementeva et. al).

In the new immigration law that was passed in 2005 to new immigrants, *Aussiedlers* were able to only return if they able to pass a German language class. This made immigration harder for ethnic Germans coming from Russia because German is not common as a second language there. This was not the case before when Germany was calling for *Aussiedlers* to return. According to Dementeva et. al, Russian immigrants speak German at different levels and many do not speak any German. They face a lot of culture shock and are unaware of how to react to situations in their new country. Language barriers cause a lot of disagreements between Russians and Germans. Other barrier to integration and language acquisition is that immigrants live in communities surrounded only by their family and friends who speak the same language as them. It is hard to immigrants to integrate when they are not immersed in the language among native speakers.

## **Syrian Immigration to Germany**

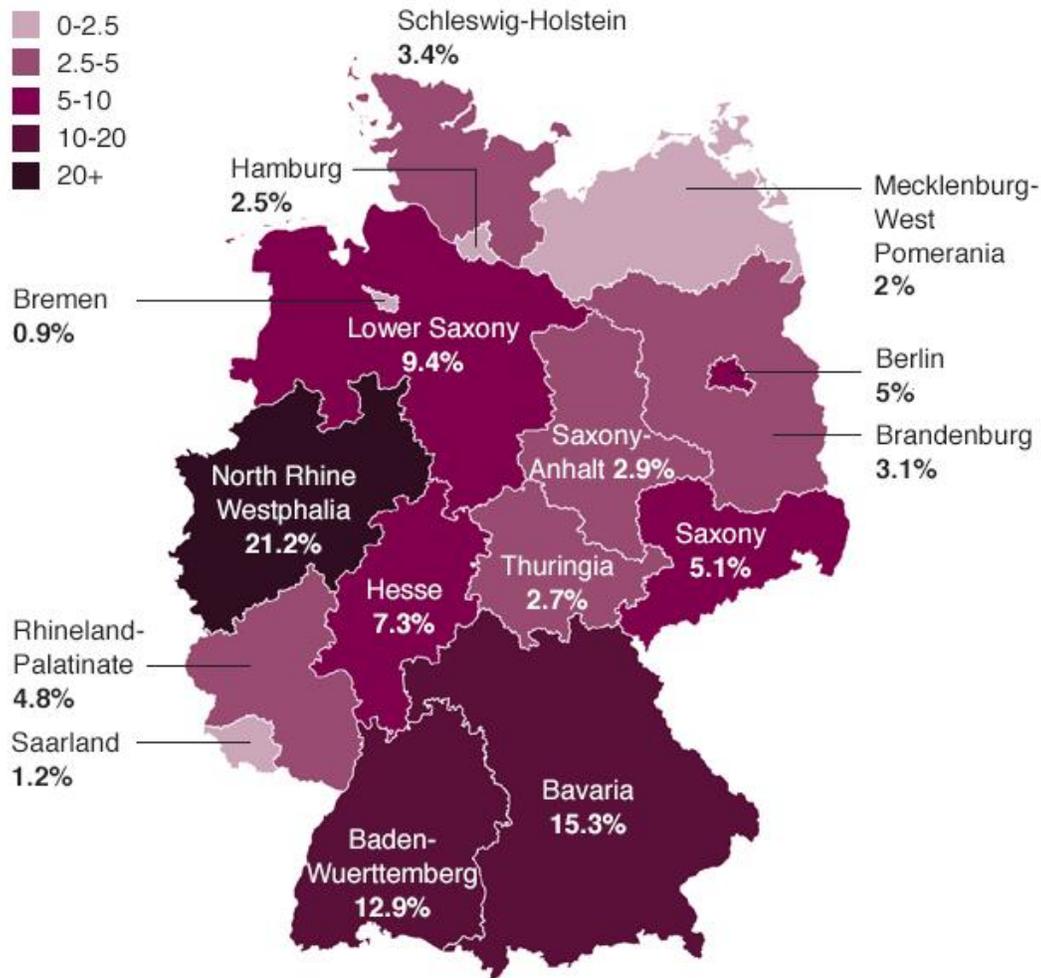
The Arab Spring was the onset of the Syrian refugee crisis in 2011 ("Tanks 'Near' Restive Syria City"). When the civil war broke out, many Syrians were forced to take refuge in other countries and sought political asylum ("EU Migration: Crisis In Seven Charts"). Only 1% of these refugees had prior knowledge of German before arriving to Germany. This caused a huge barrier when they tried to integrate ("EU Migration: Crisis In Seven Charts"). Germany has received the highest amount of asylum applications in Europe ("EU Migration: Crisis In Seven Charts"). Since there is such a large amount of refugees coming in at once, there has not been enough time for the refugees to prepare for German schools and the German schools do not have the resources readily available to teach these kids.

The current refugee crisis is an ongoing situation that is covered nearly every day on news outlets. Chancellor Angela Merkel has opened up borders considerably. This may stand as an example of Germany being the antithesis of its past. Allowing the influx of refugees to come into Germany has received a lot of criticism from conservatives. However, it has helped saved many lives of those who were living in danger in Syria. In a historical lens, during the Third Reich, Hitler was against immigration and wanted to keep Germany restricted to people with German blood only. Point number eight on the 25 Point Plan, by the German Worker's Party, announced by Hitler, states, "Any further immigration of non-citizens is to be prevented. We demand that all non-Germans, who have immigrated to Germany since 2 August 1914, be forced immediately to leave the Reich" ("The Avalon Project : Nazi Conspiracy And Aggression Volume IV - Document No. 1708-PS"). Since the end of the war, and currently under the leadership of Chancellor Merkel, it is clear that Germany has abandoned this state of mind. The adoption of this type of platform would spark controversy and outrage, as it could be seen as a

reflection of nativist sentiments. Such an ideology could potentially put Germany in the danger of reassociation with their political past. The acceptance of immigrants allows for Germany to participate in the needed protection of a vulnerable group of people. It demonstrates the leadership's willingness to take action in an international crisis to help those whose homes have fallen victim to war. While Germany is still facing criticism from conservatives for accepting a large amount of refugees despite the amount of terror attacks, they are still helping those needing safety. Chancellor Merkel is often the first person people criticize when a terror attack happens in Germany, because they believe that her ineffective policies and perceived complacency contributed to the carrying out of the attacks.

One of the initiatives Germany took, for example, in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany's most congested state, hired 3,600 new teachers to manage the inundation of an about 40,000 refugee children in 2015 (Samale). In elementary schools, refugee children are straight away integrated into the regular classes with native students and they receive additional language instruction if there are qualified teachers available (Timm). At the secondary level, refugee children who are not able to partake in class because of their low German language skills are put into preparation classes, with the objective to integrate them back into the regular classes quickly. These preparation are focused on language acquisition in the morning and then the students are placed into regular classes in the afternoon (Timm). By allowing this, they are able to integrate with native German speakers and learn like a native speaker. Being able to practice and utilize their German reaps many benefits. However, in the beginning when the refugees first arrive, they feel alienated because they are not able to participate in class due to a lack of German language knowledge. Additionally, they are facing the trauma of escaping a violent civil war. Nonetheless, these were all resources that Turkish-Germans did not have.

## Distribution of Asylum Seekers in Germany



Source: Bamf

BBC

Source: BBC

This map shows where most of the asylum seekers are concentrated in Europe. The highest rate is in North Rhine-Westphalia, with 21.2% of asylum seekers living there. North Rhine Westphalia has done the most to help Syrian immigrants integrate due to the large amount of refugees living there. Following North Rhine-Westphalia is Bavaria, with 15% of refugees living there. Bavaria is known in Germany to be very different in many ways, culturally and linguistically. This causes many hindrances when refugees are trying to learn German because

there are many different dialects throughout Germany, and Bavarian German is very distinct. They are located in a state that does not only use *Hoch Deutsch* but also Bavarian slang. Now refugees have to learn both *Hoch Deutsch* and Bavarian German. In order to be fully integrated, people would argue that it is important to learn the local dialect, even though learning the national language is the first step to integration.

### **2005 German Immigration Law (*Zuwanderungsgesetz*):**

The 2005 German Immigration Law was enacted on January 1st, 2005 (Hübschmann). This is when Germany finally acknowledged themselves as an “immigration country” (“Germany: The Development Of Migration And Citizenship Law In Postwar Germany”). This was a turning point in Germany, they started to urge immigrants to integrate by taking classes about Germany’s political system and history. This was a complete remodel from what Germany used to be. In this new law, those from non-EU countries are still not allowed to work basic jobs. However, they have the option to obtain temporary contracts for seasonal jobs. Germany declared their need for “high skilled professionals” and “scientists” (Hübschmann). Additionally, this created changes to the German citizenship law. German citizenship can only be obtained if one of the parents is German. The revised Nationality Act says that if a child of foreign parents was born in Germany, the child would obtain German citizenship if one of the parents had legally lived in Germany for 8 years and had permanent residency (Gesley). The 2005 Immigration Law essentially requires foreigners to engage in integration courses and demonstrate a knowledge of the German constitution and legal system (Gesley). By doing this, this allows the immigrants to show their inclination to be integrated.

The 2005 Immigration Law also allows new immigrants the prerogative to take part in government-funded German language classes. ("First German Immigration Law Takes Effect | DW | 01.01.2005"). The German government has put aside 200 million euros for this initiative. Between 2005 and 2013, these integration courses had 997,324 participants throughout the country (Hübschmann). This new law also only allows ethnic Germans to return (from the Soviet Union) to return if they can pass a language test. This differs from when Germany first announced their desire for ethnic Germans to return. Originally these integration courses were only allowed to these *Aussiedler*, however they are now open to all immigrants. Additionally, it helps refugees by "being more specific on the recognition of non-state and gender-specific persecution" ([www.dw.com](http://www.dw.com)). Refugees coming from countries whose governments fail to invoke the first pillar of Responsibility to Protect, which states, "The state bears the primary responsibility to protect their population from genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing (ICISS 2001)". Furthermore, this law also allows the government to force immigrants to participate in these courses, otherwise they will have to surrender their residence permits ([www.dw.com](http://www.dw.com)).

### **Second Language Learning:**

This section will seek to explore the linguistic difference between between the Russian and German alphabets. The alphabets alone contribute vastly to how Russian immigrants learn German in comparison to their Turkish and Syrian counterparts. The Russian language uses the Cyrillic alphabet, which is starkly different from the Latin alphabet, which is what the German language uses. This alone makes it harder for Russians to learn German because it adds another obstacle. They have to learn how to write in a new alphabet system, which is completely

different from what they are accustomed to. Within the Russian alphabet, there are 33 letters, compared to 26 in the German language. Additionally, Russian has two special characters that do not depict sound but rather the softness or hardness of the consonant (Dementeva et al.)

Additionally, the Russian language does not use the “Umlaut” (Ää, Öö, Üü). Another of the major grammatical differences between Russian and German is that in German, all nouns are capitalized, in comparison in Russian the nouns are written in lowercase except with proper names and sentence beginnings. Additionally, the German language has three indefinite articles whereas in Russian there are no certain indefinite ones. (Svetlana Dementeva et al.). Dementeva et. al claims that German immigrants from Russians translate sentences word for word, and since there are many large differences between the Russian and the German language, the translations are not correct and create many misunderstandings. Moreover, in Russia, students do not have the common option to learn German as a second language. They have the option to learn between English and French. This hinders Russians when immigrating to Germany, because they do not have prior exposure to the language. While learning English as a second language has many benefits to learning German because there are many similarities between the English and German language, more exposure to German would be greatly beneficial.

On the other hand, the modern day version of the Turkish language is the language closest to German out of the three studied in this paper. The founder of the current Republic of Turkey, Ataturk, sought to modernize the Turkish language (Zürcher 2010). The Turkish language was using the Perso-Arabic alphabet for thousands of years. Before modern Turkish began, they spoke Ottoman Turkish which used a lot of Arabic and Persian vernacular. Ataturk sought to change the alphabet to the Latin alphabet so the letters would better represent Turkish phonemes (Zürcher 2010). Ataturk created a language commission so they could adapt Latin

letters to meet the speaking demands of the Turkish language, which involve the letters Ç, Ş, Ğ, İ, İ̇, Ö, Ü. The reforms in the 1920s in Turkey benefited Turkish Germans. Additionally, the Turkish language has 29 letters and belongs to the Turkic language family (Zürcher 2010). The most famous similarity between Turkish and German is the use of the umlaut. Likewise, the Turkish language does not use articles for nouns, everything is gender neutral. In German there is male, female, and neutered articles. Ultimately, Turkish and German are somewhat different languages, with only the alphabet being the common factor and they are both phonetic languages, meaning they are spoken how they are written.

Turkish people have additionally spent the most time in Germany. Currently, the third generation of Turks are living in Germany and are fully immersed in the German language every day. In Turkey, students learn English as their second language, and are introduced to a third language in elementary school. They have the option to choose between Arabic, French, and German. This is extremely helpful when immigrating because Turkish-Germans have prior exposure beforehand and at least have a base knowledge for learning German.

The Arabic language is the most different and complex out of the three languages studied in the paper. Arabic verbs have many forms and irregular plural nouns (Urfahli, and Ba'labakki). Additionally, they use the Arabic alphabet which is completely different from the Cyrillic alphabet and the Latin alphabet (Urfahli, and Ba'labakki). Syrian refugees have also spent the least amount of time in Germany compared to Russians and Turks. They have had not enough time to learn the German language compared to Russians and Turks. While French is an official language in Syria, since 2014 Syrians have been learning Russian as their second language (Pizzi). Neither of these languages provides a significant advantage when it comes to learning German because they do not fall in the same language family or share many similarities.

## Cross Linguistic Influence

Cross linguistic influence is the way knowing one language affecting learning a second language (Benson). These two languages affect each other in bilingual speakers. The concept of cross linguistic influence is important in immigrants, especially Syrian children because they are the most capable of learning German the most easily, due to their age. Arabic and German  
Volterra and Taeschner have created the *Single System Hypothesis, which consists of three stages:*

In Stage I there is a single lexicon that contains words from both languages, and there is a single syntactic system. Children in this stage will never have a translation equivalent for a word in the other language. Translation equivalents are two corresponding words in two separate languages with the same meaning. Also, it is common for the child to use two different languages in a single utterance. The syntactic rules are hard to define because of the lack of two-word and three-word utterances by the bilingual child. In Stage II there are two lexicons, but there is one syntactic system. In addition, there is evidence for language separation because at this stage children become less likely to mix their languages. Across both languages, the same syntactic rules are applied. For example, Japanese has subject-object-verb word order (SOV), and English has subject-verb-object word order (SVO). An English-Japanese bilingual might apply only one of these word orders to all utterances, regardless of what language the utterance is in. In Stage III there are two lexicons and two syntactic systems, with adult-like separation of the languages. When a child reaches this stage they are considered fully "bilingual". (Volterra and Taeschner)

When Syrian refugee children are placed into regular German classes right away, they are able to pick up German a lot more easily. The older they get, the harder it is to learn German because their Arabic language foundation is completely different from the German language. The integration and language courses that older Syrian refugee students are placed in are meant to help them learn German in the morning but in the afternoon they are immersed with their fellow German classmates.

### **Analysis and Conclusion**

Turkish people have faced many obstacles. Germany was happy to welcome back their ethnic German Aussiedler and they are doing a lot to help Syrians due to the political turmoil and violence happening in their home country. However, Turkish people were always trying to be pushed out of Germany ever since the Gastarbeiter move ended, but continued to overcome the obstacles that were thrown at them. Even though the Turk-Germans have been residing and living in Germany for over 40 years, and many Turkish Germans are born in Germany, they are put at a disadvantage both socially and economically simply because they are Turkish. However, since Turkish people have been in Germany longer than their Russian and Syrian counterparts, they have had more time to learn German within generations. Additionally, the Turkish language is the most similar to the German language, because Russian and Syrian are very different and come from different language families and use different alphabets. Furthermore, German is taught as a second language in Turkey where it is not taught in Russia and Syria.

Ultimately, in a system that favors those who are ethnically German, it is harder for generations born from immigrants to live comfortably as they struggle to climb the rungs of

ladders that some believe were not meant for them. Regardless of all these barriers to integration, Turkish people in Germany still do the best at learning German.

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