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“This school is my home”:  
Teaching Greek as a Second  
Language for Students with a  
refugee/migrant background

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# Refugee education and linguistic support

- **Initial phase:**  
**The transit discourse**  
Various Organizations offering support programs targeting a population on the move
  - Combining NFE - PSS – SEL actions
  - Language courses for English & German Language
- Programs focused on **reception - integration (?)** designed after the closure of the Balkan Route. Ministry of Education on board – public schools open for refugee students – Establishment of Reception Facilities for Refugee Education, a Working Group (MoE), a Scientific Committee and Refugee Education Coordinators

# The initial phase assumptions...

## The perception of “educational aliens”

Dominant perception according to which refugee students:

- are a group homogenously multi-traumatized
- are absolutely different compared with any other student-group (including migrant students)
- are not able (due to transit strategies, long de-schooling periods and cultural characteristics) do not want to integrate – there is no intention to learn the host language
- are characterized by a significant higher percentage of learning difficulties

# Basic questions on educational approaches...

- They need a kind of special (humanitarian-pampering) educational treatment based on low demand and expectations actions
- Focus on a solid-stereotypic vulnerability
- And the other way: Focus on intercultural integration
- Investing on resilience and potential

# Differentiated access and support

- Based on location and type of accommodation
  - Children residing on Reception-Identification Centers on Islands: zero or very limited access, supported by RFREs
  - Children on Open Accommodation Sites (mainland): access on RFREs (at least for the first year).
  - Children living on apartments: access on mainstream classes, with or without support by Reception Classes



# Intercultural integration in terms of linguistic support

- ▶ Focus on students' strengths, life-skills and multilingual repertoires as enrichment elements
- ▶ Developing community building (Refugee Education Coordinators - Interpretation4Schools)
- ▶ Promoting the value of multilingualism and translanguaging (*Teacher, βλέπεις; Hassan με alibaba*)– make home languages visible



## IDENTITY BALANCE REINFORCEMENT AND MUTUAL ENRICHING INTEGRATION

- ▶ FE and NFE Educators' **professional development** as a non only know-how issue but related with deeper **reflection** and intercultural competence **development** → **culture of democracy**

# Reflecting on self-evident assumptions

- ▶ Choose a language you don't know and you would like to learn.
- ▶ During your first lesson you will learn to say: "Hi! My name is X. How are you?"
- ▶ Choose between:
  - Arabic
  - Farsi
  - Chinese
  - Georgian

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# To help you...

Αλβανικά:	Përshendetje! Jam Ari. Si je? / Tskemi! Me kiunaine Jeorjia. Si jeni?
Αραβικά:	مرحباً، اسمي شادي، كيف حالك؟
Βουλγαρικά:	Здравейте! Аз казвам Александра. Какво правиш?
Γεωργιανά:	გამარჯობათ, მე მევიცა გიორგი, როგორ ბრძანდებით?
Κινεζικά:	你好，我是Gina, 你好吗？
Ρουμανικά:	Salutare! Maa numesk Iannis. Tse mai fatseti?
Ρωσικά:	Привет! Меня зовут Ирина. Как дела?
Σερβικά:	Здраво. Зовем се Ђурђија. Како си, шта има ново?
Σουηδικά:	Hej! Jag heter Anna. Hur mår du?
Φαρσί:	حالت چطورہ ؟ .اسم من هانيہ است.سلام

# Challenges

- ▶ Starting from forms – simplifying – creating a non existing “baby talk”
- ▶ Starting from patterns to be used for communication – focusing on skills
- ▶ Nothing is obvious (e.g. no small-capital letters on Arabic – transcription practice needed)



<b>Α, α</b>	Με λένε Αλί.
<b>Ε, ε</b>	Με λένε Ελάρ.
<b>Ι, ι</b>	Με λένε Ίσρα.
<b>Ο, ο</b>	Με λένε Ομάρ.
<b>Λ, λ</b>	Με λένε Λένα.
<b>Μ, μ</b>	Με λένε Μαρία.
<b>Ν, ν</b>	Με λένε Νίκο



ΔΑΣΚΑΛΟΣ



ΜΑΘΗΤΗΣ



ΣΧΟΛΕΙΟ



ΤΗΛΕΦΩΝΟ

# Alternative pathways

- ▶ Focus on rules, metalanguage, grammatical forms
- ▶ Rely on a support language and interpretation
- ▶ Teaching about the language – focus on knowledge
- ▶ Focus in one dimension (e.g. teachers showing pictures / students coping the corresponding words)
- ▶ Focus on language use to communicate and interact
- ▶ Increase autonomy – expose in host language
- ▶ Using the language – focus on competences
- ▶ Balanced skill development, crating bridges between skills, transforming classroom into a language workshop (role plays, games, simulations...)

# Alternative pathways

- ▶ Language support as a duty for a specific teacher – a specific class
- ▶ Dealing with forms, practicing with drills
- ▶ Goal: newcomers to learn the language
- ▶ The whole school community is involved and contributes on language support
- ▶ Dealing with experiences, emotions, needs
- ▶ Goal for everyone: improve life-skills, active participation, develop competences for interaction and democratic dialogue

# Highlights (students)

The History teacher when I first came at her classroom, told me... *What are you doing here? Go to learn some Greek first...* And now she hasn't change... She tells me to use my mobile phone or to find something interesting to do, as it is impossible to understand the lesson.

I want to study Math, because I love my teacher... She is so nice, always available to explain, to help. I have learnt so much in her classroom, not only Math, also Greek...

# Host language and languages of origin

- ▶ Support School – Reception – Second Language
- ▶ Home – Origin Languages Support is a duty for the migrant – refugee communities
- ▶ A relation of parallel existence or antagonism
- ▶ A mutual enriching relation – connect languages
- ▶ Supporting home languages is a case of creating a democratic culture – reinforce balanced identities – empowering all linguistic repertoires – facilitate transfer of skills and knowledge (learning scaffolding)



- Γεια σας, παιδιά. Τι κάνετε;  
- Καλημέρα, κυρία. Καλά.  
- Α, έχουμε μια καινούρια μαθήτριά... Πώς σε λένε;  
- Σακινέ...  
- Από πού είσαι, Σακινέ;  
- Από το Αφγανιστάν.  
- Ωραία. Αρχίζουμε το μάθημα.  
Έχετε καμία ερώτηση;

مرحبا يا اولاد . كيف حالكم؟  
صباح الخير سيدتي. بخير  
آه ، لدينا تلميذة جديدة  
ما اسمك؟  
سكينة  
من أين أنت يا سكينة؟  
من أفغانستان  
جميل ، فلنبدأ الدرس ، هل لديكم أي سؤال؟

سلام، بچه ها. چه می کنید (چطورید)؟  
صبح بخیر ، خانم. خوب  
آها، یک شاگرد (مؤنث) جدید داریم... اسمت  
چی؟  
...سکینه  
کجائی هستی، سکینه؟  
از افغانستان  
عالی. درس را شروع می کنیم. سوالی دارید؟

-Hello, children. How are you?  
-Good morning, madam. Fine.  
-Oh, we have a new student... What is your name?  
-Shakine.  
-Where are you from, Shakine?  
-From Afghanistan.  
-Good. We are starting the lesson.  
Do you have any questions?



مذری

ارائه داده بشود و یا بخوان بنامشده شناخته شده باشد.  
این حق را دارید که با وجود کمبود بخشی از مدارکی که ازتان خواسته جواز است. فرزند و یا فرزندان تان را در مدرسه ثبت نام نمایند. مطابق ماده 72 از قانون (N.3386/2005) (ΦΕΚ 212 Α) «استثنا یا وجود کمبود مدارک» فرزندان کشور های ثالث می توانند در مدارس دولتی ثبت نام شوند. چنانچه الفه از طرف دولت یونان با وضعیت بنامشده تحت حمایت بوده باشند و تمام کسانی که تحت حمایت کمیسیون عالی سازمان ملل متحد هستند. به از مناطقی آمده باشند که وضعیت آشفته دارد. به درخواست جهت اعطای بنامشده ارائه داده باشند. ت. شهرت کشور های ثالثی باشند که در یونان می مانند، حتی که اگر ترتیب قانونی اقامت شان در این کشور داده نشده باشد»

**جهت ثبت نام در کوردکستان احتیاج به مدارک زیر می باشد:**  
 ↓ درخواست و اظهار نامه قانونی (در کوردکستان به شما داده می شود)  
 ↓ گواهی تولد بچه. اگر بچه آموزش را در همان کوردکستان در سال نوم ادامه دهد، نیازی به گواهی تولد جدید نیست.  
 ↓ دفترچه بهداشت بچه که گواهی می کند که تمام واکسن های پیش بینی شده انجام شده است.  
 ↓ برگه معاینه دندانپزشکی.  
 ↓ پزشکی که آدرس محل سکونت تان از آن معلوم گردد (مثلاً یک صورتکسابق بزرگ و یا اجاز نامه منزل تان).  
 مدارک لازم جهت ثبت نام باید ترجمه رسمی شده باشند (توسط اداره ترجمه دولتی و یا مرجع کنسولی و یا توسط مترجم رسمی که به رسمیت شناخته شده از طرف وزارت خارجه باشد).

**■ فرزندان ثبت شده در اداره ثبت احوال نمی باشند تا که بتوانم گواهی تولد بگیریم. چکار کنیم؟**  
 احتیاج به یک کپی از تولد و یا یک اظهار نامه رسمی فرزندان چقدر می باشد.  
 N.1599/86 که در آن اعلام می نمایند که سن واقعی فرزندان چقدر می باشد.

**■ جهت ثبت نام فرزندان در دبستان چکار باید انجام دهیم؟**  
 در کلاس اول دبستان بچه های ثبت نام می شوند که در 31 دسامبر سال ثبت نام، سن 6 سالگی شان را تکمیل کرده باشند. و الذین می باید به دبستان محل شان بروند، چرا که هر دبستان بچه های یک محل را قبول می کند. ثبت نام در فاصله زمانی از 1 تا 21 ماه و زودتر انجام می شود. امکان تأخیر در ثبت نام در دبستان به عجل جوی با کپی خدمت پزشکی تعلیم و تربیتی کوردکان و یا کپی بیمارستان دولتی ممکن می باشد. و چنانچه و الذین مایل باشند، شاگرد آموزش خود را در کوردکستان تکرار می کند.



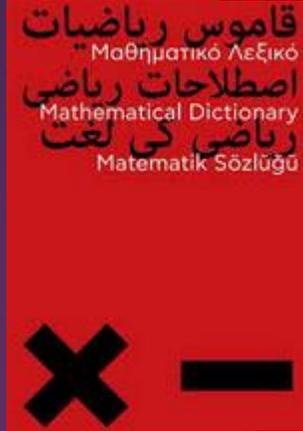
- Καλημέρα. Εγώ είμαι η Άννα. Πώς σε λένε; - Γεια σου. Με λένε Μοχάμετ.	
- صباح الخير. أنا اسمي آنا ما اسمك؟	- روز بخیر. من آنا هستم.
- مرحباً اسمي محمّد.	اسمت چیه؟ - سلام. نام من محمد است.
-Good morning. I am Anna. What is your name? -Hello. My name is Mohamed.	

# Highlights

It is really difficult to describe Bakir's excitement when he saw this book, that uses Arabic language... Although he has a limited literacy on his mother tongue, to have a Greek-Arabic book made him smiling during the first lesson and singing during the second one.

We encourage students to write the words we learn on their home languages. And then we have posters with these words all around the classroom.

# Home languages



As a tool to facilitate access to new (not only linguistic) information



Supporting new-comers to participate into pre-existing groups, using their repertoires



As a means to familiarize host society with the notion of enriching diversity and fostering democratic values



unicef  
for every child

**ΦΤΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΒΓΑΙΝΩ!**

ΔΡΑΣΤΗΡΙΟΤΗΤΕΣ ΠΡΟΜΥΤΑΞΕΩΣ  
& ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΚΗΣ - ΣΥΝΑΙΣΘΗΜΑΤΙΚΗΣ ΕΜΒΛΕΜΑΤΩΣ

# A toolkit as outcome of improvement

Improving the relationship between formal and non-formal education – from suspicion to collaboration and networking (support for joint programs)

Quality development (curricula, tools, professional skills of formal and non-formal teachers)

Steps to Overcoming the separation between Cognitive and Psychosocial-Oriented Actions

## Towards Integration

Raising resilience and investing in children's potential in conditions of inclusive regularity

Supporting life skills and school success

Knowledge, life skills, basic skills, identity empowerment as components of a unified approach

# The dilemma (lesson or game?)

It concerns education as a whole (consider the marginalization of experiential activities – projects on in the “flexible zone”)

Learning goals (development of language communication skills) or psycho-emotional - social empowerment?

Can they be integrated into **an integrated** approach?

Psycho-social-emotional learning activities with linguistic cognitive goals and linguistic activities with SEL objectives.

BRIDGES - CONNECTION - INTEGRATION

NOT ISOLATED SYSTEMS



Linking (multi)  
linguistic and SEL  
empowerment  
goals

- Learning Objectives for the Greek Language in A1
- Reinforcing use of Communicative / Task Based methodologies on Language Teaching
- Objectives of psychosocial learning, empowerment, life skills development, resilience enhancement, school readiness and independent learning ability
- Objectives to value multilingual identity that empower individuals and lead to inclusive learning environments
- Objectives to facilitate the inclusion of students with different skills and a different level of familiarity with the school language

# Basic principles for an inclusive language learning

Motivation - active participation

Developing communication skills

Team building - developing cooperation

Developing learning how to learn skills

Boosting positive emotions

Empowerment - identity affirmation/  
multilingualism

Identify / Acknowledge different speeds

Social skills - life skills



# What is needed

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Teachers who recognize diversity and multilingualism as enrichment factors

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Teachers seeking to develop their own intercultural competence

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Teachers who encourage the development of student-centered learning frameworks and have high expectations of their students

# Assumptions

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Language is acquired through the use of -  
responding to real communication needs

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Focus on interaction skills rather than forms and  
formulas

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Parallel development of 5 skills

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Focus on needs and draw on experiences

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The teacher as facilitator

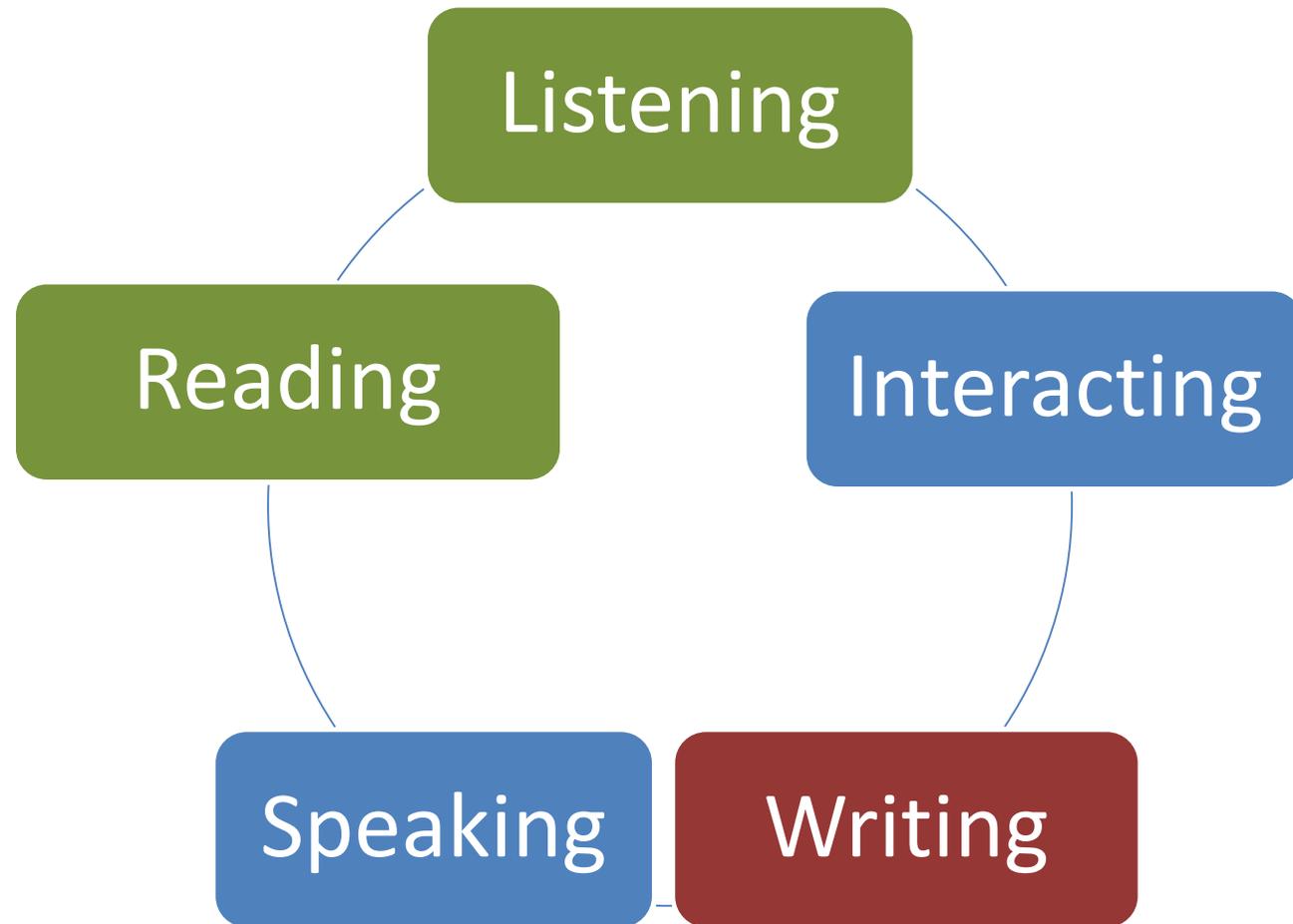
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Making use of linguistic repertoires

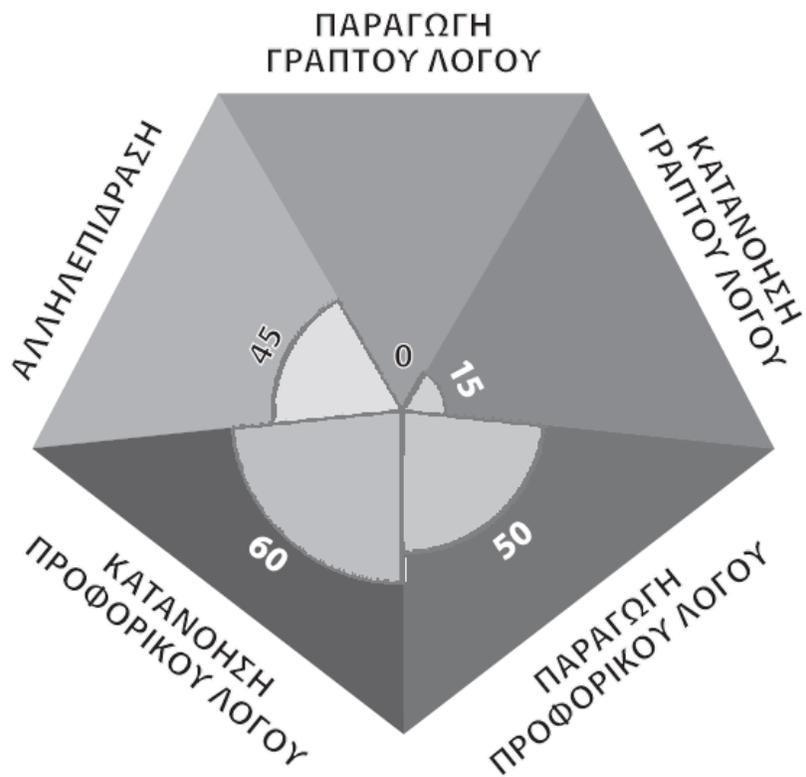
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Transition Routines

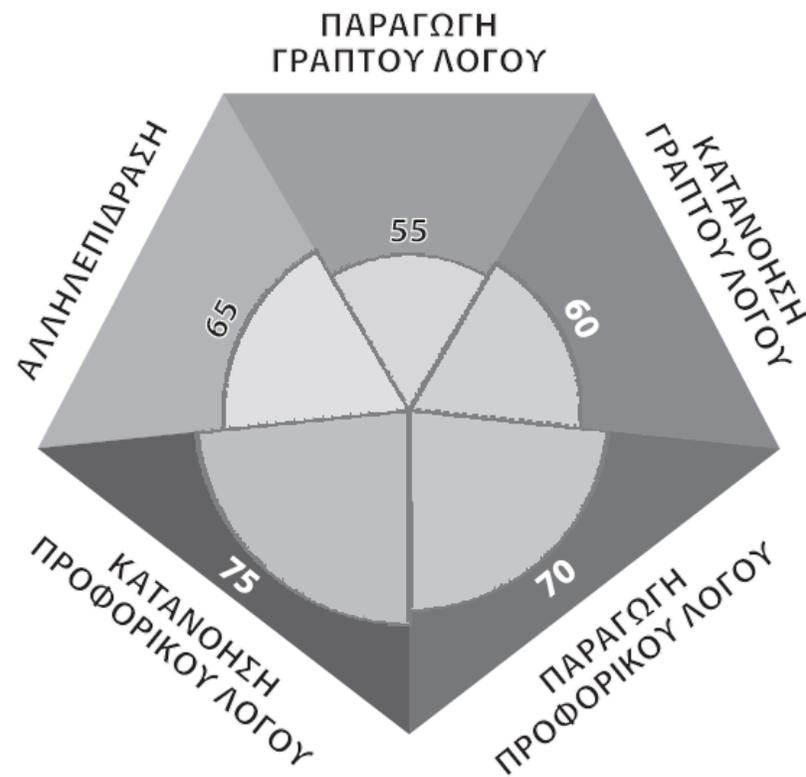
# Balanced skills approach



# How to reach balanced skills?

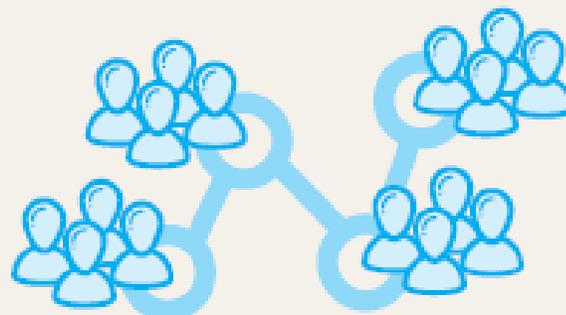


ΑΡΧΙΚΟ ΣΤΑΔΙΟ



ΕΞΙΣΟΡΡΟΠΗΣΗ

## (Συν)εργασία στην τάξη



# Challenges

Teachers' professional identity in settings based on mobility  
– the *receptionist teacher*  
- *setting achievable – measurable goals*

Investing on inclusion – strengthen reception as part of mainstreaming

Supporting teachers on lesson planning, tools use, material development

Scaffolding strategies while focusing on language use – communication – interaction – activities

Reflection on goals setting – achievements

# Challenges



It is not only language or reception class teachers' task



Investing on CLIL methodologies



Additional supportive tools for Secondary Education – including an Accelerated Learning Framework and relevant Materials (Math, Science, History, Social Sciences)

Thank You!

This experience transformed me as a human. I can see life on a different perspective, I escape from my small anxieties...

After many years I remember again why I chose this profession... That is about human beings, it is about the future...  
(Teachers)

Speaking as a student of this school, I wouldn't ask more support for refugee students, I would ask more for all students (Ali, High School Student)