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**Postgraduate Dissertation:**

**“Exploring the identity of older students in a Greek public  
Intercultural primary School, through multimodal identity  
texts”**

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“Exploring the identity of older students in a Greek public Intercultural primary School, through multimodal identity texts”

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## **Abstract**

The establishment of Intercultural Education within the global and the European context aims to integrate the fundamental principles and values of a democratic and inclusive educational and social environment for refugee and migrant students. As part of this framework, research tools have been introduced to facilitate the inclusion of these students. Identity texts, are such tools, which empower students to express their diverse identities and linguistic abilities, acknowledging their cultural, ethical, historical, and religious backgrounds. They serve as a platform for students to share and celebrate their multifaceted identities in education. The present study builds upon previous research to explore how older students in a public primary Greek intercultural school perceive their identities and how the use of identity texts supports their self-perception. Employing a qualitative approach, specifically a case study design, the research adopts a constructivist worldview, seeking to deeply understand the students' perceptions and opinions about their diverse identities. The sample consisted of 19 students from the 5th and 6th grades of a primary intercultural school in Athens. The study involved an educational intervention with the use of a picture book and literature activities as a means to engage students in discussions related to the main themes of the story. Subsequently, literature activities are organized wherein students are motivated to express their own perspectives and convey their preferences, beloved possessions, and essential items as sources of inspiration for their own narratives through writing and speaking. Following these activities, identity texts were implemented, allowing students to describe, write, and express themselves using the language(s) of their choice. Through content analysis, the collected data were categorized, studied, and examined. The findings reveal that the majority of students utilize identity texts to share important information about their hobbies, routines, as well as aspects of their family and friendship backgrounds, including their habits. Overall, this study sheds light on the value of identity texts as a means for students to express their diverse identities and foster a sense of belonging within an intercultural educational setting.

**Key-words:** Intercultural Education, Bilingual/Multilingual Students, Identity texts, Literature Activity, Self-Perception

## Περίληψη

Η καθιέρωση της Διαπολιτισμικής Εκπαίδευσης στο παγκόσμιο και ευρωπαϊκό πλαίσιο στοχεύει στην ενσωμάτωση των θεμελιωδών αρχών και αξιών ενός δημοκρατικού και χωρίς αποκλεισμούς εκπαιδευτικού και κοινωνικού περιβάλλοντος για μαθητές που είναι πρόσφυγες και μετανάστες. Ως μέρος αυτού του πλαισίου, έχουν εισαχθεί ερευνητικά εργαλεία για τη διευκόλυνση της ένταξης αυτών των μαθητών. Ένα τέτοιο εργαλείο είναι η χρήση κειμένων ταυτότητας, τα οποία επιτρέπουν στους μαθητές να εκφράσουν και να διατυπώσουν τις διαφορετικές ταυτότητές τους χρησιμοποιώντας τις γλωσσικές τους ικανότητες. Αυτή η προσέγγιση αναγνωρίζει την ατομικότητα κάθε μαθητή και αναγνωρίζει το μοναδικό πολιτιστικό, ηθικό, ιστορικό και θρησκευτικό υπόβαθρό του. Χρησιμοποιώντας κείμενα ταυτότητας, παρέχεται στους μαθητές μια πλατφόρμα για να μοιράζονται και να γιορτάζουν την πολύπλευρη ταυτότητά τους μέσα στο εκπαιδευτικό περιβάλλον. Αυτή η μελέτη βασίζεται σε προηγούμενες έρευνες για να διερευνήσει πώς οι μεγαλύτεροι μαθητές σε ένα δημόσιο δημοτικό ελληνικό διαπολιτισμικό σχολείο αντιλαμβάνονται την ταυτότητά τους και πώς η χρήση κειμένων ταυτότητας υποστηρίζει την αυτοαντίληψή τους. Χρησιμοποιώντας μια ποιοτική προσέγγιση, συγκεκριμένα μια μελέτη περίπτωσης, η έρευνα υιοθετεί την κονστрукτιβιστική προσέγγιση, επιδιώκοντας να κατανοήσει σε βάθος τις αντιλήψεις και τις απόψεις των μαθητών για τις διαφορετικές ταυτότητες τους. Το δείγμα αυτής της μελέτης περίπτωσης αποτελείται από 19 μαθητές της Ε' και ΣΤ' τάξης δημοτικού ενός διαπολιτισμικού σχολείου στην Αθήνα. Η μελέτη περιλαμβάνει τη χρήση ενός εικονογραφημένου βιβλίου και λογοτεχνικών δραστηριοτήτων ως μέσο για τη συμμετοχή των μαθητών σε συζητήσεις που σχετίζονται με τα κύρια θέματα της ιστορίας. Στη συνέχεια, οργανώνονται λογοτεχνικές δραστηριότητες όπου οι μαθητές παρακινούνται να εκφράσουν τις δικές τους προοπτικές και να μεταφέρουν τις προτιμήσεις τους, τα αγαπημένα τους υπάρχοντα και τα βασικά στοιχεία ως πηγές έμπνευσης για τις δικές τους αφηγήσεις μέσω της γραφής και της ομιλίας. Μετά από αυτές τις δραστηριότητες, υλοποιούνται κείμενα ταυτότητας, επιτρέποντας στους μαθητές να περιγράψουν, να γράψουν και να εκφραστούν χρησιμοποιώντας τη γλώσσα(ες) της επιλογής τους. Μέσω της ανάλυσης περιεχομένου, τα δεδομένα που συλλέγονται κατηγοριοποιούνται, μελετώνται και εξετάζονται. Τα ευρήματα αποκαλύπτουν ότι η πλειονότητα των μαθητών χρησιμοποιεί τα κείμενα ταυτότητας

για να μοιραστούν σημαντικές πληροφορίες σχετικά με τα χόμπι, τη ρουτίνα τους, καθώς και πτυχές του οικογενειακού και φιλικού τους υπόβαθρου, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των συνηθειών τους. Συνολικά, αυτή η μελέτη ρίχνει φως στην αξία των κειμένων ταυτότητας ως μέσου για τους μαθητές να εκφράσουν τις διαφορετικές ταυτότητές τους και να καλλιεργήσουν την αίσθηση ότι ανήκουν σε ένα διαπολιτισμικό εκπαιδευτικό περιβάλλον.

**Λέξεις-Κλειδιά:** Διαπολιτισμική Εκπαίδευση, Δίγλωσσοι/Πολύγλωσσοι μαθητές, Κείμενα ταυτότητας, Λογοτεχνική δραστηριότητα, Αυτοαντίληψη

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### Introduction

As of mid-2022, it is estimated that there are millions of people who were forcibly displaced as a result of massive migratory flows (UNHCR, 2022). Moreover, international data indicate that a significant proportion of migrants and refugees end up residing in countries different from their country of origin (IOM, 2022). Approximately half of the population, with children comprising a significant portion, is categorized as vulnerable groups (FRA, 2022; IOM, 2022).

Migrant and refugee children residing in host countries are legally required to attend school, with the right to education safeguarded by Article 14 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. Non-compliance with these regulations can result in sanctions (UN, 1948; UNHCR, 2022). In contemporary societies, the presence of multicultural classrooms is more prevalent than ever before, highlighting the importance for the scientific community to remain up-to-date. In terms of the right to education, international, European, and national organizations have developed theories and educational policies aimed at ensuring equal and free access to educational facilities for children (IOM, 2022; UNHCR, 1997). It is noteworthy that alongside the migration policies implemented by official authorities, numerous non-governmental organizations play a crucial role in operating programs to safeguard and protect the basic human rights of refugee and migrant populations (GCR, 2015).

The right to education is recognized as a social, economic, and cultural right, as educated individuals contribute to various sectors of society (Vasak, 1977). To ensure the protection of this right, multicultural education has been implemented to foster the integration of culturally diverse learners, acknowledging their individual, linguistic, national, social, and religious backgrounds (Banks, 1997). Multicultural education aligns with universal ideals and values, aiming to respect and provide equal treatment and opportunities to all students, regardless of their social, national, and cultural characteristics (Banks, 1997). It serves as an idea and a policy within the reform movement that emphasizes the coexistence of diverse students and members within a society (Morali, 2022).

There is a growing recognition that a comprehensive understanding of historical contexts, institutional dynamics, political influences, and social norms is essential in

fostering meaningful relationships. This recognition highlights the importance of official policies that promote intercultural education and address various aspects such as gender, relevance, and culture. By considering these factors, educational systems can better respond to the diverse needs of students and create an inclusive and culturally sensitive learning environment.

The foundation of intercultural schools lies in fostering communication, interaction, and cooperation among different ideologies, cultures, languages, values, nationalities, customs, and, most importantly, people. In the context of the Greek educational system, Intercultural schools have been established to cater to the needs of bilingual and multilingual students. There are national legislation and regulations in place that outline the specific details and operational procedures of these schools. These guidelines provide a framework for ensuring that Intercultural schools effectively support and educate students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Recent research studies have demonstrated the application of identity texts within the refugee population, employing a multimodal approach with both young and adult refugees and utilizing various technological tools (Gogonas & Gatsi, 2021; Skourtou et al., 2021; Tsokalidou et al., 2021). These projects have revealed numerous benefits for multilingual and bilingual students. Specifically, identity texts play a crucial role in strengthening the multilingual identity of refugees, facilitating socialization, improving communication skills, fostering critical thinking abilities, and nurturing metacognitive skills. Moreover, the utilization of translanguaging further enhances mutual understanding and interaction among the diverse identities of students (Gogonas & Gatsi, 2021; Skourtou et al., 2021; Tsokalidou et al., 2021).

The significance of conducting this study stems from the existing scientific data that emphasize the influences and positive effects of utilizing identity texts in multicultural classrooms. Building upon this body of knowledge, the study aims to contribute further insights and evidence regarding the valuable role of identity texts in promoting cultural understanding, facilitating student engagement, and fostering inclusive learning environments. By expanding upon the existing scientific literature, this study aims to provide additional support for the effective use of identity texts in multicultural educational settings.

The overall structure of this study consists of six chapters. The first chapter is dedicated to analyzing and providing a literature review on migration in the context of multicultural and intercultural education. This review encompasses both global and national perspectives, with a specific emphasis on the Greek context. The literature review aims to clarify relevant terminology and establish the theoretical framework that informs the design and implementation of the current study. The second chapter focuses on the methodology, outlining the research objectives and research questions in relation to the main issue of the study. The study's strategy and tools are described in detail to provide transparency regarding the data collection and analysis process. The third chapter presents the findings and results obtained from the collected data. This chapter provides an overview of the selected identity texts and the literature activities and presents the corresponding findings.

In the fourth chapter, which is the Discussion, the findings are compared and discussed in light of existing scientific literature. This section aims to explore the implications and insights derived from the selected identity texts and literature activities. The fifth chapter offers implications for further studies based on the findings and outcomes of this research. It highlights potential areas of exploration and suggests avenues for future research. Finally, the last chapter concludes the research by providing a summary of the study, incorporating the obtained knowledge from the results and existing literature. It also offers recommendations for future research endeavors.

## 1. Literature Review

This chapter is dedicated to conducting a comprehensive literature review on migration within the context of multicultural and intercultural education, focusing on both international and national perspectives, with a specific emphasis on the Greek context. The purpose of this literature review is to analyze existing research, clarify relevant terminology, and establish the theoretical framework that underpins the design and implementation of the current study. This literature review aims to critically present the complexities, challenges, and opportunities associated with migration in the context of multicultural and intercultural education, with a focus on the Greek context.

### 1.1 Migration

This section provides an overview of migration in global level, including some current data regarding percentages and movements of the emigratory population. Subsequently, this review focuses on the situation of migration in the context of multicultural and intercultural education in Europe and the current circumstances that contribute to migration in Greece.

#### 1.1.1 Worldwide Migration

In human history, various sociopolitical, economic, religious, ideological circumstances have led millions of people over the centuries to traverse through continents to search for better conditions to live. The term *migration* in social and human sciences is scrutinized and perceived also as the global and universal phenomenon that generates the communication and interaction of the global civilizations, the cultures, the languages, the customs, the religions, the ideologies, the politics as well as the economics. Consequently, this movement of populations constitute one of the basic factors that have made humanity evolve (Bagavos, & Papadopoulou, & Symeonaki, 2008).

In 2022, the massive migratory flows that are forcibly displaced are estimated to be 103 million people (UNHCR, 2022). Furthermore, international resources reveal that a significant percentage of people who migrate eventually live in different countries from the ones that they are originated. (IOM, 2022).

The European along with the Asian continent continues, during the last decades, to receive the vast majority of migration population, which consists of refugees,

immigrants, migrants, and asylum- seekers (IOM, 2022). While Europe for many centuries has adopted expansive policies in other continents and countries, it is other civilizations’ turn to affect Europe with their coming. Europe switched place with developing countries such as Morocco, Mexico, Egypt, Turkey, Philippines as long as it is concerned with mass of emigration, and that is as a result of the upcoming Economic growth of eastern Asian countries (Czaika, 2015). Czaika’s (2015) data allow us to discuss that European countries belong to the category of countries which “shifted from being a net emigration to a net immigration” (p.293).

Emigration data declare an increase in Eastern Europe and a decrease in Western Europe, opposingly to the immigration analytics which reach higher levels in Western Europe (Czaika, 2015). Scientists organize the study in migration flows by using the parameters of intensity, spread, and distance. In addition, the migratory and emigratory spreads show mutually increase in the forementioned decades (Czaika, 2015).

What is worth to be mentioned is that regardless of what the majority believes concerning the increase of immigration flows the last decades, the analytics rate opposes to that in a sense that immigration populations are getting higher with an average 80% simultaneously with an overall increase of 104% of the global population (Czaika 2015). Migration issues illustrate the continuous effort of each country to declare the sovereignty around the world. It is worth mentioning the missing number of people who have died in their migration journey and these numbers are still hard to record accurately and register correctly (Global Migration Data Analysis Centre- GMDAC, 2016). A significant number of migrants reported a substantial incidence of omissions or exclusions. What is more there is no serious reaction from governments on that matter.

### 1.1.2 Migration in Greece

Among the European countries, Greece due to the geographical position has received and continues to receive migratory populations. Simultaneously, Greek people across different periods of times have migrated to other countries. The last decades, the continuous economic and sociopolitical crisis has affected the type of migration each country received. In addition, Greece which in the past was characterized as country of emigrants transformed into country that receives immigrants and refugees.

In Greece, the typical and necessary processes of reception and registration of the status of the migrants are very slow or delayed and thus, there is a long period of time that people with a migrant background are under uncertainty. During the waiting time, the migratory population has not the privilege to exercise basic human rights until the long-term process is fulfilled and the status of migrants declared (European Liberal Forum & Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, 2023). Based on official global statistics for the year of 2022, the influx of migratory individuals stands at approximately 1.34 million, with 87.1% of this Image reported to consist of non-migrants (IOM, 2022).

Furthermore, Greece faces significant economic and sociopolitical challenges in sustaining the continuous influx of a large number of migrants. This situation contributes to serious problems within the social, economic, and political circumstances of the country. For instance, the unfavorable conditions in the labor market, which appeal to migrant and refugee populations, tend to attract an increased number of individuals resorting to illegal means (Voulgaridou, 2008). Simultaneously, Greek employers actively seek out and exploit undocumented immigrants for their labor (Voulgaridou, 2008). Nevertheless, due to the Greek government's inability to provide direct occupational and vocational rehabilitation programs, along with financial support for migrants to sustain their livelihoods, the phenomenon of illegal labor is exacerbated, as these circumstances create a gap that is filled through such means. (Voulgaridou, 2008).

Simultaneously, the inability of Greece to run all the necessary procedures, force people to look for alternative and direct solutions that will provide them with the basic salary to meet their needs for themselves and their families. Thus, the high percentage of absorbing migrants into the informal labor market not only results in the poor financial conditions for them but also affect the overall sociopolitical context of their lives (European Liberal Forum & Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, 2023; IOM, 2022). Under these circumstances, there is a serious and significant violation of human rights such as the access to health care, education and work (ELF&FDNF, 2023; IOM, 2022).

Studies show that this general negative and precautionous treatment and attitude towards migratory population is attributed in the multiple aspects, dimensions and characteristics that shape the Greek identity (Voulgaridou, 2008). It is indicated that, because of the Balkan influence from the neighboring countries along with the European identity which Greece has embraced over the centuries, there is a range of mixed feelings and a tendency of lack of acceptance of the migratory flows that enter the country (Voulgaridou, 2008).

From the above-mentioned percentage of people who migrate in Greece, approximately the half of the population is referred to as a vulnerable group of people, the majority of which are unaccompanied children (FRA, 2022; IOM, 2022). More specifically, when it comes to the right to education, international, European and national organizations have created and launch theories and educational policies that protect and secure the equal and free access of the children to educational faculties (IOM, 2022; UNHCR, 1997). It is remarkable that simultaneously with the migration policies that official authorities undertake, a significant part which is upon the operation of a list of non-governmental organizations runs a different kind of programs to secure and protect the basic human rights of the refugee and migratory population (GCR, 2015).

## 1.2. Diversity

This section discusses the term *diversity* as it appears in modern multicultural societies. Multicultural societies are distinguished by their diversity. Diversity is an umbrella term that various theorists have proposed different categories to describe over the years. Diversity refers to the many kinds of human beings in personal, social, national, and global level. In the personal level, individuals differ from one another in identity characteristics, such as age, religious beliefs, language, culture, sexual orientation, among others. In the social field, diversity concerns the economic status, family models, and the access to the educational system. In the national and global zone, immigration and gender issues appear in the above-mentioned notion (Olwig, 2013). Diversity illustrates the different or the differentiated forms that exist in human beings). In multilingual societies, there are cultural associations who organize private language lessons in order to protect and secure the value and the uniqueness of each language from the popular one (Nasta, 2015). Diversity is a global phenomenon, due to the needs



of labor market, which demands people to adjust faster to the new data in order to gain the most (Olwig, 2013). Of course, that reveals the power of economic actors to spread methods and politics which first acknowledge and then include diversity not from a benign aspect but as a mean for the exploitation of man power (Olwig, 2013).

### 1.3 Multicultural Education

This section describes the changes and the evolution in the field of education, in global and in national level, along with the measures that have been adopted to be correspondent to the multitude of characteristics within diverse student populations, educational policies have been adopted to accommodate their needs. The development of these policies is driven by the recognition of countries to uphold the fundamental human right to education, as enshrined in Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights established in 1948, to be in correspondent to the variety of features that diverse student population has. The need of countries to develop educational policies lies to serve the vital human right the right to education which has been established by the article 26 of the Universal declaration of Human rights in 1948 (UN, 1948). The right to education constitutes a social, economic and cultural right as the appeal of educated people reflects upon all sectors of the society (Vasak, 1977). Subsequently, multicultural education has been launched to integrate all the culturally diverse learners and their personal, linguistic, national, social and religious features (Banks, 1997). Thus, multicultural education adopts and embraces the universal ideals and values to respect and offer equal treatment and opportunities to all students regardless of their social, national and cultural characteristics (Banks, 1997). Furthermore, multicultural education is an idea and a policy of reform movement that advocates and recognizes the importance of the coexistence of all the diverse students and members of a society (Morali, 2022).

#### 1.3.1 Intercultural Education

The last few decades, multicultural theories related to diverse environments have undergone significant rethinking (Essinger, 1988; Katsifi, 2019). This trend has been particularly noticeable since the 1980s when researchers started showing an increased interest in studying the concepts of culture and communication (). It is now widely recognized that understanding historical contexts, institutional and political forces, and

social norms is crucial for establishing effective relationships, which in turn reinforces the need for official policies that promote intercultural education and address issues related to gender, relevance, and culture.

The need and the transnational declaration of human rights, including the right to education has led the countries of the United Nations to develop policies that promote and include in education system all the people. Specific to the host countries, the need to create, apply and adjust a pedagogical system that includes all the diverse cultures and languages has motivated and generated significant educational theories and pedagogical approaches in line with the Intercultural Education. In Greece, the idea of intercultural schools was developed in the decade of 90s and with the aim to support the coexistence of all cultures in a way that the respect, the care and the learning process concerned all the languages of the learners and not only the predominant societal language.

Intercultural education embodies one of the fundamental human rights that have been established since the worldwide Human Rights declaration of 1948, that is the right to equal, freely access to education. Since then, each country is obliged to comply with the implementation of the rights and in the case of no compliance there are sanctions that are applied to the countries that they do not fulfil the requirements. As a result, over time, various economic and sociopolitical crises such as conflicts, hostilities, civil wars, and poverty, stemming from diverse political, ideological, religious beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions, have prompted international committees to intervene and assess how host countries or nations ensure, protect, and uphold the implementation of principles, obligations, and provisions concerning human rights.

The principles of the intercultural school lie in the communication, interaction and cooperation of ideologies, cultures, languages, values, nationalities, customs and above all people. Educators advocate that intercultural education is a collection, a patchwork of different and differentiated teaching methods, practices and policies that are directed not only to culturally and linguistically diverse students but to the whole student population (Aggourou, 2019).

There are several research studies that indicate the principles that govern intercultural education. There are studies that declare the empathy, the solidarity and the mutual respect (Essinger, 1988; Katsifi, 2019). Others, report that intercultural education aims to enhance the educational process by incorporating social principles, democratic dialogue, and an anti-racist approach. It seeks to approach knowledge from diverse perspectives and incorporate multifaceted references grounded in social principles (Essinger, 1988; Katsifi, 2019). In addition, there are studies that illustrate the pretensions that underlie the intercultural theory. The pretensions refer to the equity and equality of the nationalities around the world (Damanakis, 1998; Katsifi, 2019). Furthermore, intercultural education also concerns the equal provision of opportunities for all (Damanakis, 1998; Katsifi, 2019).

The function of this type of education prepares students as future citizens to learn how to coexist with human and democratic values in multicultural sociopolitical contexts. Intercultural education strengthens the human relationships while each and every human being and language and culture are faced with equal treatment and the learning process concerns all the available languages. There is not a preference in teaching the dominant language; instead, there is mutually development of all the needs of students in the mother tongue and in the language of the host country so that the language skills will be expanded.

### 1.3.2. Greek Intercultural School

As far as the case of Greece and the implementation of the principles of the intercultural education are concerned, there are two important legislations. The law 2413 / 1996, initially introduced the operation, the principles, the aims, the composition and the procedures of Intercultural Schools (OGG, 1996). The law 4415/2016 sets different changes and settings to facilitate the implementation of intercultural education and introduce the function of the reception classes and the tutorial classes (OGG,2022). In educational institutions, the Zone of Educational Priorities (ZEP) and Reception/Preparatory classes have been introduced in schools to cater to the educational needs of refugees. These initiatives aim to provide specific support and resources to ensure the smooth integration and education of refugee students. (DYEP)

(OGG, 2022). Nevertheless, the assessment of the practices and the applications tend to be evaluated as rudimentary and simplistic (Katsifi, 2019).

According to the article 22, legislation 4415/2016, the experimental schools have a direct communication a collaboration with the higher education institutions (OGG,2022). This collaboration enables the implementation of new projects, methods, research, and techniques in multicultural classrooms within these schools (OGG,2022). Additionally, it emphasizes utilizing all the resources and capabilities provided by the university to support educators. The educators, who are hired by the ministry of education, are required to participate in online training courses (OGG,2022). According to the law 2413/96 and more specifically the article 35, schools with high percentage of students with linguistically and culturally diverse background are transformed into Intercultural (OGG, 1996).

The number of Intercultural schools that have been established in Greece since 1996 and continue to operate are 26 (Parthenis & Markou, 2015). From this total number, the 13 are for Primary Education, 9 are for Junior Secondary Education and 4 are for High Secondary Education. Furthermore, regarding the geographical distribution, 10 of them are located in Northern Greece, 15 in Central Greece and 1 in the island of Crete (Parthenis & Markou, 2015). In the capital of Greece, Athens, 8 Intercultural schools operate (Parthenis & Markou, 2015).

Educators in intercultural classrooms should recognize and embrace ideologies, principles, and theories that support and promote multilingualism (Lagoudakos, 2008). The capacity and ability to address the multidimensional aspects of intercultural education are acquired through continuous training and engagement with the issues that arise within this context. Unfortunately, such training is currently lacking in the Greek education system (Lagoudakos, 2008).

In the everyday life of a Greek school and of an intercultural school in particular, it is observed that the local citizens do not prefer their children to study in a multicultural school environment and thus the majority of these schools have students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds and a very small percentage of Greek students.

#### 1.4 Identity

This section addresses the notion of identity as it appears in modern, multicultural and diverse societies. Following the description of identity texts that are used in multicultural education. The notion of identity includes different parts of each individual and can be distinguished into personal, national, cultural, religious and social (Kyriakopoulou, 2012). Identity is a personal and unique feature and description of an individual (Hacker, 2020). The family and the social background in conjunction with the sociopolitical, cultural and religious ideologies, the beliefs and values encompass the individual identity (Hacker, 2020). In the context of a multicultural society, the various cultures and identities that coexist within the same society are acknowledged. More specifically, the significant number of individuals migrating to other countries for settlement contributes to an ongoing process of cultural exchange, where various cultural characteristics and traits are constantly being shared and exchanged. (Grant, 1997). Subsequently, their identity receives multiple influences and the country’s policies either allow and encourage the inclusion and the coexistence of diverse identities or promote the assimilation of the identity of minorities into the majority (Grant, 1997).

Educators and sociolinguists acknowledge the identity issues that arise due to multilingualism. Especially, it is highlighted that these issues occurred from the stereotypic views and ethnocentric point of views that continue to exist in multicultural societies (Grant, 1997).

##### 1.4.1 Hybrid Identity

Studies illuminate that the continuous migratory flows that occurred in countries for ages along with the post-colonial era that is defined after the 80s have create the second and the third generation of migration. Hence, the theory of hybrid identity advocates that second-generation migrants have the opportunity to construct their identities in a flexible and open manner, incorporating elements from multiple cultural backgrounds. (Bolland, 2020). In essence, a hybrid identity refers to the people who exercise and practice a range of different attitudes, beliefs, ideologies and languages to express themselves and in every domain that are engaged to (Bolland, 2020). In addition, hybridity assigns the interaction, the communication and the exchanging of different

political, cultural, religious and linguistic characteristics among the individual and community of which they are members (Bolland, 2020).

This theory has been attributed to the multilingual students and learners to describe and interpret the multiple aspects of their identities. In practice, multilingual students, who process multiple identities, face a range of obstacles resulting from the policies that have been adopted and implemented in all the sectors of the country in which they live. It is more common that the policies discourage the use and exercise of different characteristics such as the language. Especially in the field of education, although there are theories, policies and teaching methods that embrace the equal development of diverse characteristics of the students in practice, the majority of implemented policies tend to prioritize the development of characteristics aligned with the majority while neglecting the unique characteristics of minority groups. This jeopardizes the equitable educational development of all students (Bolland, 2020).

#### 1.4.2 Identity Texts

In the field of refugee education, the methodological tool of identity texts has been introduced and applied widely (Cummins & Early, 2011; Skourtou et al., 2006). These texts could be oral, written, musical, multimodal (Vitsou & Gkaidartzi, 2018). More specifically, identity texts consist of a tool through which the students express, communicate, verify and identify themselves. The importance as well as the uniqueness of these texts arise from the open type of schedule that there is not a correct or wrong answer and that they acknowledge the range of capabilities of the students that root from their identity. The main and crucial advantage of the use and implementation of identity texts is the recognition that the students receive from the teachers and the classmates, a recognition for their identities and their skills and capabilities that they have written about (Kompiadou, 2021).

Identity texts were initially designed and applied in multicultural school environments to educate second language learners with the provision of multiple educational techniques and methods (Cummins & Early, 2011). Identity texts are created to assist language learners in the process of language acquisition. They allow learners to decode unfamiliar words by connecting them to words and ideas they already know, drawing upon their linguistic repertoire and prior knowledge (Cummins & Early, 2011).

Identity texts have been used in different ways either with the contribution of art, oral and digital multimodal aspect in both to multilingual learners and to the teachers of multicultural classrooms of informal and non-formal education. Teachers who have students with migratory and/or refuge background, although they acknowledge the importance of the use of identity texts, they do not know how to use them (Drevenitsou, 2020; Zacharaki, 2019). Especially, when tutors do not know the host language of their students and there is a communication gap, the tutors who do not use identity texts and needs analysis mutually do not acknowledge the literacy capabilities of their students (Drevenitsou, 2020; Kyrligkitsi, 2023) Hence, identity texts encourage students getting involved in writing and in oral discussions and improve their literacy and oral skills (Papathanaki, 2022).

Consequently, identity texts are the tools that educators and researchers could use to select all the important information to assess the students’ knowledge, and design educational activities and lesson plans targeted to the student’s needs (Morali, 2023). Identity texts are the methodological tool that follows an educational intervention and through the communication, interaction and involvement, the students are capable to use their linguistic repertoire to elaborate identity texts (Kompiadou, 2021).

Creating and applying identity texts in multicultural classrooms enable students to produce more accurate literacy work. Furthermore, identity texts such as collaborative and frontloading activities and projects increase language awareness, socialization and enable students to deal with social issues (Cummins & Early, 2011).

#### 1.4.3 The utilization of identity texts in the Greek context

Greek researchers have extensively utilized identity texts to explore national and ethnic issues among multilingual students. Initially, the thesis of Kourti-Kazoulli introduced the concept in the field of education and highlights the fact that identity texts encourage students’ self-expression. As a result, they promote the multilingual and diverse identities of the students (Kourti-Kazouli, 2001). This study refers to the identity texts under the form of a diary, where students record their feelings and thoughts on a daily basis (Kourti-Kazouli, 2001). Through this procedure, it becomes evident that students exhibit greater creativity and active engagement in the assigned task, leveraging their linguistic repertoire and their multilingual abilities (Kourti-Kazouli, 2001). In addition,



through this approach, identity texts constitute the meeting point, facilitating a better understanding of each other (Kourti - Kazouli, 2008).

Furthermore, Tsokalidou conducted research on identity texts in bilingual students, to examine and identify the factors that contribute to the formulation of the multilingual identity (Tsokalidou, 2008a; Tsokalidou, 2008b; Tsokalidou, 2012; Tsokalidou et al., 2013). Hence, in another project, the translanguaging method emerges, allowing students to express themselves in any kind of language they prefer and feel comfortable with (Tsokalidou, 2017).

Moreover, published theses utilize identity texts in various ways. Some employ these texts in oral or written form to describe and identify the characteristics of bilingual adult students and of Roma women (Elefteriadou, 2014; Panagiotidou, 2014). While others focus on empowering and the strengthening the identities of young students, specifically their Roma, Pontic and Thracic identities, through the use of their mother tongue (Drobila, 2016; Stratoudaki, 2014).

In addition, research studies implemented the identity texts within the refugee population as well. More precisely, these texts were applied in a multimodal manner with young and adult refugees, utilizing various means including technology (Gogonas & Gatsi, 2021; Skourtou et al., 2021; Tsokalidou et al., 2021). These projects highlight the numerous advantages for multilingual/bilingual students. In particular, identity texts play a significant role in strengthening the multilingual identity of refugees, fostering their socialization, enhancing communication abilities, developing judgement skills and nurturing metacognitive skills. Hence the exploitation of translanguaging further enhances mutual understanding and interaction among the diverse identities of students (Gogonas & Gatsi, 2021; Skourtou et al., 2021; Tsokalidou et al., 2021).

### 1.5 Multimodality

This section advocates the beneficial use of the multimodality in the modern society in creating the meaning making and in the field of education and in particular in the multicultural education. The technological evolution has been influenced the total of the ordinary life and all the sectors of the modern society. In the multicultural societies the languages are the most important key of communication and interaction. However,



in this mediation has been added the use of the semiotics (Morali, 2022). The use and exploitation of all the available means, such as images, is necessary in meaning-making (Morali, 2022). People could use multiple modes to express themselves and to transfer a message or an idea (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009). Both in writing and in oral expression, multimodality has been applied and extensively used to facilitate and enable people to communicate better (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009).

Especially in the field of multicultural education, research reports that introducing multimodality in multilingual/ bilingual learners empowers the educational process and facilitates the comprehension of the language (Danielsson & Selander, 2021). Furthermore, the multimodality in migration studies has been used to create identity texts, in which students express their ideas, their personal points of view, with a combination of a writing, drawing and speaking, depending on the students' personal preferences. Reports suggest that multimodality promotes increased student engagement in the educational process and enhances their understanding and development of the assigned tasks with greater involvement. (Morali, 2022).

In addition, the use and implementation of multimodality in multicultural classrooms with different kind of teaching methods, lesson plans and activities encourage students to use the modes that are more familiar to them. As far as the use of multimodality in identity texts is concerned, the students are encouraged to be creative and produce their text with any kind of mode either a drawing or picture. Even their writing could be in any language they want, because the elaboration of multimodal identity texts is not related with school performance (Vitsou & Gkaidartzi, 2018).

### 1.6 Defining the term of Self-perception

This section addresses the range of definitions that have been given to the notion of self-perception. In the context of intercultural and multicultural education, identity issues surface and encompass instrumental concepts such as personality and self-perception. For the latter, extensive research has been conducted in the field of education, sociology, sociolinguistics and psychology have been conducted those studies and analyzes self-perception through various perspectives. There is a range of different definitions for this notion depending on the theoretical, ideological and interpretative approaches that give rise to various criteria and perspectives that shape

the understanding towards self-perception. The common parameter that all the specialists report in their studies and their theories is the subjunctive dimension of the self-perception; in other words, the formulation of self-perception is based on the individual's underlying acting.

Firstly, under the field of psychology and psychiatry, researchers such as Piaget defined self-perception as the image that children have for themselves and the way they understand it (Donaldson, 1991; Wadsworth, 2001). James (2007) specifies this notion focusing on its different dimensions: the social, the spiritual, the material, and the categorical self. Additionally, his theory refers to the distinction of self in the terms of “me” and “I”. The former identifies the self-image that is created from the individual's actions and experiences and the latter to the person who possesses knowledge of their identity and is aware of their life's actions and accomplishments (Kompiadou, 2021). Another study in the psychiatry and in pediatrics identifies self-perception with two basic variables: the existential self and the categorical self (Lewis, 1990). In addition, the self-perception could be also the total of beliefs, attitudes and convictions that each person has. Other research addresses the concept of self as the procedure in which the individual uses all the available capacities and abilities to exist (Kompiadou, 2021).

Moreover, additional definitions for the concept of self-reception have been formulated from prestigious sociolinguists. As Mead proposes, the central characteristics of self are formed in the interaction of humans with the social environment (Mead, 1934). Furthermore, Mead supports the idea that the sense of self does not exist inherently from birth; rather, it is gradually shaped and formed through social interactions and personal engagements as time progresses (Kompiadou, 2021). Kegan introduce in the theory of the development of the self, how the different experiences of people are a result of different mechanisms and processes of the mind (Kompiadou, 2021). Moreover, Cooley introduces to the self-terminology the gained insights that facilitate a deeper comprehension of human behavior and the underlying reasons behind people's actions (Kompiadou, 2021). For Lawrence (1986), the notion of self-perception has three components: the cognitive, the sentimental, and the behavioral (Lawrence, 1986).

The self-perception of individuals, particularly in early childhood, is influenced by several factors, including family environment, school environment, and generally the

social background of the person (Voulgaridou, 2008). The crucial element lies in how young people perceive and understand themselves, as well as the criteria they employ and the thought processes with which they engage in order to draw conclusions about their own identity and self-concept (Voulgaridou, 2008). During the last decades, researchers placed significant emphasis on studying the diverse perceptions that children from various nationalities hold (Voulgaridou, 2008).

On the one hand, studies have been conducted to investigate the self-perception of students placed in multicultural classrooms. The findings suggest that children from minority populations often exhibit lower levels of self-perception compared to students from the majority nationality (Voulgaridou, 2008). On the other hand, research suggests that students who share a common nationality often exhibit higher levels of self-perception. This indicates that individuals who belong to the same national identity tend to have a stronger sense of self and identity. research indicates that students sharing a common nationality tend to have higher levels of self-perception (Voulgaridou, 2008). There is also research that attributes the good performance at school to the students who have high levels of self-perception (Liakou, 1999).

Taking everything into account, it is posited that self-perception arises from the personal convictions, attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and behaviors that an individual has developed in response to their perception of the world around them. The concept of self-perception, encompassing various definitions, will be explored and analyzed within the context of intercultural education, along with the associated theories and terminology.

### 1.7 Literature and identity

This section describes the utilization of literature, highlighting both the benefits and the potential drawbacks in exploring identity-related issues. It delves into how literature can be effectively employed as a tool to study and understand various aspects of identity. In multicultural education and in intercultural education the literature has been used with a variety of ways to enhance the educational process. Studies indicate that the utilization of books, fairytales, storybooks, picture books and myths encourage students and multilingual students to better understand a topic, to express their opinion, their emotions and expand their linguistic repertoire. In the field of education, the story

books are used to promote the social and emotional development of students. Picture books offer the audience the opportunity to grasp the concept, theme, and episodes of a story through illustrations that are directly connected to the plot. This visual element enhances understanding and facilitates meaningful discussions among students, promoting a deeper engagement with the content.

There has been research conducted to study the identity issues in multicultural school environments. These studies promote the benefits of literature in various stages of students' development. It has been shown that multilingual students, when they have lesson plans that combine the use of picture books, tend to have better results in understanding the subject under discussion (Vitsou & Gkaidartzi, 2018). The combination of the illustration, the writing and the oral presentation of the book support multilingual students in understanding the plot of the story even if is not written or presented in their mother tongue. Moreover, it is more common the oral presentation of the book to be in the mediation language so that learners would be able to better understand the story.

The self-perception of multilingual students has been extensively examined and explored through the utilization of storybooks, fairytales, myths, and picture books, aiming to stimulate the educational process and foster greater student engagement and self-expression (Amanambu et al., 2021; Vitsou & Gkaidartzi, 2018). These resources have been instrumental in enhancing students' understanding of their own identities and promoting a sense of belonging within a multicultural context. The alternative and open type activities that occurred from the utilization of the picture books flourish the imagination and the creativity of the students, because students are actively engaged in the learning process, and it is their thoughts and ideas that play a crucial role in determining the outcome of the lesson. (Amanambu et al., 2021).

Subsequently, the literature activities implemented in multicultural classrooms serve to enhance students' engagement and encourage the utilization of their linguistic repertoire to express their bicultural and multicultural identities. These activities provide a platform for students to draw upon their diverse language skills and cultural backgrounds, allowing them to share their unique perspectives and experiences. By engaging with literature that reflects their own identities and experiences, students feel

validated and empowered, fostering a positive sense of self and a deeper connection to their multicultural identities.

## 2 Research Methodology

This chapter presents and discusses the methodological framework of the current research. First, the research objective and research question are presented. The study strategy and tools are also detailed in order to provide clarity on the data collection process. The study's limitations are also highlighted, stressing any constraints or circumstances that may have influenced the study's findings. Moreover, any ethical difficulties that arose during the research process are acknowledged and handled. The analysis procedure of the collected data is then explained to illustrate how the findings were analyzed and how conclusions were derived.

### 2.1 Aims and Research Question

This study sets in the center of the examination identity issues which emerge from the prospective of bilingual/multilingual students with migrant or refugee background. Second language learners deal with a range of linguistic, ideological and cultural matters resulting from the different cultures among the school and the family environment.

The purpose of this study is to examine the self-perception of older students in a public primary Intercultural School focusing on how much they are encouraged to speak for themselves through identity texts. This research aims to address the following question:

1. How do students attending an Intercultural school express their bicultural/multicultural identity, and in what ways do identity texts contribute to enhancing their self-perception?

### 2.2 The Worldview of the research

This research examines self-perception of refugee and migrant students in multicultural educational settings, emphasizing constructivism as the underlying worldview. Constructivism highlights students' active engagement in constructing their own understanding and knowledge. The study values participants' views to formulate knowledge of their self-perception, recognizing the subjective nature of truth and perspectives. By embracing constructivism, this research captures unique experiences and perspectives, contributing to a nuanced understanding of self-perception in

intercultural education. Researchers identify constructivism as the theory that enables participants to speak and express their ideas on the discussed issue (Crotty, 1998). This expression is directly connected with the background of each person and the society they are part of it (Crotty, 1998). Furthermore, in order to better understand the opinions and obtain a comprehensive picture of the background, these studies require researchers to visit, make notes, and understand the context of the given opinions (Crotty, 1998). In addition, the collected data gains significance within the specific environment, as individuals' opinions are meaningful when retrieved from the social context (Crotty, 1998). These opinions hold value and can be effectively understood when shared in social environments (Crotty, 1998).

In addition, during the analysis of the data, it is crucial for the researcher to give serious consideration to the social and cultural background of the participants (Coll & Chapman, 2000). This is important in order to accurately and validly interpret and analyze their ideas, as the participants' social and cultural context significantly influences their perspectives (Coll & Chapman, 2000). In research, particularly within the framework of constructivism, it is essential for the researcher to respect, understand, and acknowledge the direct impact and interaction of the participants' perspectives with their background (Creswell, 2007; Holloway, 1997). This recognition is crucial for a comprehensive understanding of the participants' opinions and the formulating of conclusions (Creswell, 2007; Holloway, 1997).

### 2.3 The Research Design

The design of this study is based upon a qualitative approach. Under the constructivist principles, qualitative research enlightens all the necessary details and information to examine the self-perception of refugee and migrants' students. Furthermore, qualitative research is designed to name and identify all the parameters and the variables that allow for a nuanced exploration of students' perspectives in an explanatory manner (Creswell, 2014).

Qualitative research, typically employs a variety of methods and techniques in its methodology. As described by Creswell (2014), these involve “the use of emerging methods, open- ended questions, interview data, observation data, document data, and audiovisual data, text and image analysis and themes and patterns of interpretation” (p.

17). The research process involves identifying themes and patterns of interpretation to gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. More precisely, one of the underlying principles of qualitative research is for the researcher to gather and understand the participants' subjective meanings and perspectives regarding a specific concept or phenomenon. It aims to delve into the lived experiences, interpretations, and insights of individuals to gain a deeper understanding of their perspectives regarding the targeted issue (Creswell, 2007).

The primary attribute of this type of research is to uncover, describe, and understand the subjective meanings of individuals in a flexible manner, while actively collaborating with the participants throughout the research process. That engagement of the participants is an opportunity to express freely their opinion for issues that directly concern them.

In particular, when the participants are students, their involvement holds great value and provides a significant opportunity to address issues that directly concern them. Their unique views and perspectives are essential to be included and investigated, as the results can have a meaningful impact and contribute to the broader the field of the intercultural education (Hatry & Newcomer & Wholey, 2015). The inclusion of bilingual/multilingual students in the educational process is crucial, and researchers and educators should prioritize taking into serious consideration their unique perspectives.

This qualitative research follows the design of a case study. Case studies are more common and applied in human sciences and in the field of education to include all and in depth the provided information (Creswell, 2014; Hatry et al., 2015). Furthermore, this kind of study enables researchers to analyze and understand their concept through flexible variables that allow the participants to express their views (Hatry et al., 2015). By utilizing such flexibility, researchers can capture the rich and diverse perspectives of the participants, leading to a deeper understanding of the phenomenon being studied.

### 2.3.1 The context of the research

Specifically, the context within the research will be framed is in two classes of a Greek Primary Intercultural School. A case study is research that investigates a specific context with specific circumstances and characteristics. Furthermore, it is important to note that the results and conclusions drawn from qualitative research cannot be



generalized to a larger population (Creswell, 2007). Instead, the findings are specific to the cases and contexts studied, and should be interpreted within that particular context (Creswell, 2007). It is essential to consider the uniqueness of each case and exercise caution when applying the findings to other situations (Creswell, 2007).

Thus, the case that is under examination are the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 6<sup>th</sup> grade of a primary school. The selection of the target age group serves the needs and objectives of the research, as the students attending these classes possess adequate writing and oral skills in most cases. This ensures that the participants have the necessary communication abilities to effectively convey their thoughts and experiences, enabling a more comprehensive exploration of the research topic.

#### 2.4 The case of a Greek primary Intercultural School

The interest of this research is focused on a particular school context in the center of the Athens. It is an experimental public intercultural school. Experimental intercultural schools have a direct communication a collaboration with the higher education institutions (OGG,2022). This collaboration allows new projects, methods, researches and techniques to be implemented in the multicultural classrooms these schools have and embraces and uses all the capabilities that the university provides to the educators. (OGG,2022).

The above-mentioned school is a 12/sessions school. The majority of the student population is from different refugee camps. The region of Attica has organized and set school buses to serve the students who come from long-distance camps. The majority of the refugee camps are far from the center of Athens, where the school is located. In addition, the student’s population has been decreased as a result of a relocation of a refugee camp in a long distance with the children now attending schools closer to their new location.

As far as the student population is concerned, this study focuses on students aged between 10 and 12 years old, specifically targeting those in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades. In this particular school, the students of the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 6<sup>th</sup> grade are divided into two separate classes. In total there are 16 students attending the 5<sup>th</sup> grade. The countries of origins for students of the 5<sup>th</sup> class are: 2 from Greece, 1 from Hong- Kong, 1 from

Ukraine, 1 from Russia, 3 Turks of Western Thrace, 5 from Afghanistan, and from 3 China. In the 6th grade, there are a total of 11 students, consisting of 1 Georgian, 1 Iranian, 4 Afghans, 2 Roma (Greeks), and 3 Pakistani.

The teaching methods that are used and implemented in the classes are in collaboration with the instructions of the university’s faculties. Thus, innovate teaching techniques and methods are applied monitoring the performance of the learners. The primary focus of the teachers is to help the students learn Greek as a second language. To address the attendance gap, particularly among older students, they employ multiliteracies, multimodalities, and second language techniques to enhance and support the acquisition of the Greek language.

In an intercultural school, the language needs of the children primarily revolve around communication and the expression of their feelings and needs. The primary goal is for them to learn Greek as a second language while still valuing and preserving their mother tongue. Tutors take into account their students’ unique experiences, memories, and initial knowledge and use them as a foundation to build a new linguistic universe. In terms of teaching methods, they emphasize teamwork, project-based learning, and brainstorming. Additionally, they have implemented certain strategies, such as completing a unit comprehensively before moving on to the next one. Repetition of concepts across all primary subjects also plays a significant role in the learning process.

#### 2.4 Participants of the research

The sample of this study is the student population of two classes, the 5<sup>th</sup> Class and the 6<sup>th</sup> Class of a Greek public primary Intercultural class. The total number of the students who participated in the research were 19 students, 11 of which were attending the 5<sup>th</sup> grade and 8 of the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. The countries of origin of students of the 5<sup>th</sup> Class who attend the research are 2 from Greece, 1 from Hong- Kong, 1 from Ukraine, 1 from Russia, 2 Turks of Western Thrace, 3 from Afghanistan and from 1 China. The students of the 6<sup>th</sup> grade participating in the study are 1 Georgian, 1 Iranian ,2 Afghans, 2 Roma (Greeks), 2 Pakistan. For the study, the two classes of the 5th grade and the two classrooms of the 6th grade were combined. The decision to merge the classes was made after consulting with the school's headmaster and the teachers, who suggested this approach to increase the number of participants in the study. This practice aligns with

the cooperative learning principles and reflects a routine that both tutors and students are accustomed to in their regular school life and activities.

The Greek language level for the majority of the participants was the beginner level. The students were able to understand and participate in the learning process. Furthermore, the students were able to be engaged in the teaching process. They could speak and share their ideas and opinions as well as write their thoughts and perspectives for a given task. There were two students, one from Ukraine and the other from Georgia, who had recently arrived in Greece and had been attending school only for the last few months; thus, the communication with those students was either in English or using online technological applications that offer oral and written translation to their mother tongue.

## 2.5 The Research Tools

This project used qualitative tools to study the self-perception of the bilingual/multilingual students. The methodological tools were a picture book, activities related to the picture book, elicitation of identity texts, and semi-structured interviews. Each tool provides a special role in the research by enabling refugee and migrant students to express their bicultural/multicultural identities and allowing for in-depth analysis of their opinions.

### 2.5.1 Picture Books

In multicultural school environments, picture books have been employed as a means to engage students in familiar and enjoyable activities within lesson plans. The researcher chose to incorporate the book of Chris Naylor-Ballesteros, “The Suitcase”. This book allows bilingual and multilingual students to understand with the illustration only the main concept of the story. More specific this story tells the tale of a mysterious stranger who arrives carrying only one suitcase. This arrival piques curiosity, leading to questions about the stranger's purpose and the origin of the suitcase. The contents of the suitcase become a source of fascination, as people wonder what it holds. The story unfolds with themes of hope, kindness, love, and tenderness, resonating with those in need of care and compassion.

The choice of the book was primarily based on its suitability for the age of the participants. Additionally, the book's theme creates a pleasant atmosphere, and the clear illustrations facilitate the learners' comprehension of the plot, making it an ideal selection.

### 2.5.2 Literature Activities

In this study, various activities were developed and implemented to enhance student participation. Previous research has demonstrated the benefits of incorporating literature activities in the field of education, particularly for young learners (Fontes & Piercy, 2000). Such activities have a positive impact on students' cognitive, social, and emotional development. When the chosen literature aligns with the students' interests and experiences, they are more likely to be motivated and actively engaged in the activities.

The researcher facilitated a range of literature activities about the general theme, plot, and episodes of the story. Additionally, a discussion was held to explore different interpretations of the story's title. Notably, the original title of the story was not disclosed in either classroom, allowing students to suggest their own title based on their viewing experience. Subsequently, the first written activity took place, where students were instructed to draw objects, they desired to have in their suitcase and label them in their preferred language (see Appendix 1, Worksheet 2). After completing the activity, the researcher asked follow-up questions to understand the students' choices and the reasons behind them.

In particular, this wide range of activities is designed and implemented to foster student engagement. It includes discussions on the topic and title to deepen understanding, exploration of the characters' emotions to enhance empathy, creation of alternative endings to encourage creative thinking, and dramatization of the story to promote active involvement and expression. These activities are carried out in groups, promoting student cooperation and collaborative learning. Through such activities, students are encouraged to engage with the story on a deeper level, fostering their emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills. The utilization of literature in the educational process contributes to the development of the emotional domain by fostering empathy towards the emotions, dilemmas, and actions of the story characters.

### 2.5.3 Identity texts

Identity texts enable students to express themselves by using their linguistic repertoire and different communication codes. The conduction of this project is designed to take place in a primary public intercultural school, with an educational intervention in which the students were encouraged to produce identity texts. More specifically, it is a study that will use a creative activity with a playful character, involving the composition of identity texts. The participants of this research, after being engaged with a short story, were asked to write about themselves and speak about their story. The aim was to allow students to be expressive either with drawings or with any kind of language they prefer to use in written or in oral form. The oral answers were recorded with the online application *Photo story* in order to present their identity texts and subsequently tell something about themselves. Multimodal identity texts were designed to be implemented in order to achieve and encourage the active engagement of all the students.

Furthermore, identity texts were utilized with a dual purpose in this research. They served as tools for participants, specifically students, to express their identity through writing, drawing, and speaking about specific concepts related to their own sense of self (Kalaja et al., 2013; Melo-Pfeifer & Schmidt, 2012). The second role of identity texts is that they generate the questions that the interviewer then poses to the students in order to gain a better understanding of their texts (Moore & Castellotti, 2011).

### 2.5.4 Semi-structured Interviews

The fourth methodological tool utilized in this study was conducting semi-structured interviews with the students. These interviews were conducted by the researcher and were designed to facilitate the understanding of the students' self-perception. By using this method, the researcher could gather in-depth insights and perspectives directly from the students, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of their experiences and perspectives. The design of semi-structured interviews focuses on each participant separately. After each student completed the activities, the researcher asked open-ended questions such as "What have you included in your suitcase?" or "Can you name the things you put in the suitcase?" and "Why did you choose those items to be in your suitcase?" (Appendix 2). These questions were aimed at fulfilling the main objective of

the researcher, which is to understand the completed activity for each student. The open-ended nature of the questions allowed for diverse and varied responses, as there is no single correct answer (Adams, 2015). The researcher keeps written notes to write down the answers of the interviewees.

However, the interviewees were given the freedom to express their opinions, knowledge, views, and thoughts on their bilingual/multilingual identity. This allowed a deeper understanding of their experiences and perspectives related to their language abilities and cultural backgrounds. The interview questions were carefully designed to address specific discussion topics and encourage interviewees to provide additional information and explanations. This approach allowed for a deeper understanding of the interviewees' perspectives and enriched the data collected during the interviews (Adams, 2015).

## 2.6 Procedure of data collection

To conduct this research, initial communication was established with the headmaster of the school to discuss the aims, content, and hours of collaboration required for this study. Subsequently, an initial meeting was held to introduce the researcher to the headmaster and engage in communication with the tutors of the targeted classes. This allowed for the establishment of a collaborative relationship and provided an opportunity to discuss the research objectives and procedures. The language that the researcher used for the lessons was mostly the Greek language except for the students who were recently arrived in Greece and the medium language was the English.

After obtaining the necessary information, the researcher incorporated it into the designed activity. The actual implementation of the research took place two weeks after the initial meeting with the educators. The first contact involved 11 students from the 5th grade and lasted for 2 teaching hours. The second contact involved 8 students from the 6th grade, also lasting for 2 teaching hours. The sample of students consisted of individuals aged 10-12. In total, the research required 4 teaching hours to complete.

The procedure for each literature activity was the following: There was a first acquaintance with the students of each classroom and then a slide presentation started, which showed the students the selected book “The suitcase” while it was at the same

time read by the researcher. After completing this presentation, the researcher asked students exploratory questions to discuss the general theme, the plot, and the episodes of the story. Furthermore, a discussion regarding the title of this story took place, with children giving different interpretations. It is important that the original title of this story was not mentioned in either classroom in order to provide space for the students to suggest a title for the story that they viewed. Afterwards, the first written activity took place with the students, who were asked to draw the objects that they wanted to have in their suitcase and name them in their preferred language (Appendix 1, Worksheet 2). When every student finished the activity, the researcher made some explanatory questions to understand their options and why they chose them.

Then, the final activity aimed to motivate students to write about themselves. Write a story that describes themselves with any kind of information they deemed necessary (Appendix 1, Worksheet 3). Students were encouraged to use their linguistic repertoire that either was their mother tongue or any other language to which they had access. At the end of this writing activity, the researcher posed short clarifying questions for a better understanding of their texts. Especially, as far as the texts that are written in languages other than Greek are concerned, the researcher needed to write the given translation by the students or the classmates.

The completed identity texts were uploaded onto the online application *Photo story*, where the students also provided oral support for their texts. In the end, they watched a short video created from their stories. This procedure was implemented successfully with the students of the 6th grade, as the small number of students allowed for it to be practically achievable within the available time frame. Due to time constraints and a large number of participants in the 5th grade, the application to transform identity texts could not be utilized. This research lasts for three months from April 2023 to June 2023, of which the time for data collection from the school environment is lasted one month.

### 2.7 Ethical issues

For the protection of the participants there was anonymity of their personalized details and information such as their names (Adams, 2015). More specifically, their names were anonymized and participants are referred to with code names, i.e., Participant 1, etc., to ensure confidentiality (Adams, 2015). Additionally, in the inclusion of the



identity texts and the literature activity, the names of the students were concealed to ensure the anonymity of the participants. This measure was taken to protect their privacy, while other relevant details such as the school context, age, and grade level are mentioned for the purposes of the research.

Furthermore, although the participants were under the age of 18, there was not a need for an official parental consent to involve students in this research (Adams, 2015). That is because of the context of the school environment, it is identified by the ministry of education as experimental and, thus, there was not a need for a protocol of a writing permission for the conduction of the research (OGG,2022).

### 2.8 Research validity and reliability

This research demonstrates both validity and reliability as the results can be replicated under similar conditions (Adams, 2015). Additionally, for the design of the literature activity, the researcher made a careful design in order to respect the participants and provide all the necessary information to the students to understand and accomplish the tasks. The interview protocol included open-ended questions, allowing the researcher to adjust the questions and choose the suitable ones for each participant. The age range of the participants students was from 10 to 12 years old.

### 2.9 Limitations of the research

During the implementation of the literature activity and the semi-structured interviews, various issues arose, particularly related to language. More specifically, in the first group of students there were students with whom the communication part had a degree of difficulties. That is because there were two students who had recently arrived in Greece and the communication was made in English. In writing, there was only the use of their mother tongue, i.e., either Ukrainian or Georgian. Thus, the interview part with the multilingual students who did not know Greek was either with the aid of other classmates who could translate into Greek or into English or with the use of online translators, which however sometimes lack in accuracy in translation.

In addition, the limited time frame for data collection posed a constraint on the students' ability to fully comprehend the task and complete the activities. Furthermore, the research was conducted during the final months of the school year when the students were engaged in rehearsals for their final performance and graduation. This created an



anxious atmosphere, as both tutors and students felt the pressure to complete the tasks quickly in order to proceed to the rehearsal.

### 2.10 Data analysis

The data collection was analyzed using content analysis. This process involves the creation of a code so that the opinions of the participants could be categorized appropriately (Creswell, 2014). Content analysis is commonly favored in qualitative research as it enables the systematic categorization of selected data with a predefined perspective. In this kind of analysis, the researcher reads carefully the data and organizes the participants' perspectives into relevant categories. Therefore, through content analysis, the researcher is able to identify the recurring themes present in the identity texts and literature activities (Luo, 2022). The aim of this research was to explore and gain insights into the self-expression of refugee and migrant students through the utilization of identity texts. These texts take a multimodal form, including oral, visual, and written expressions, and the content created by the participants was submitted to qualitative analysis.

In addition, content analysis allows the researcher examine and categorize the results without any kind of interference or bias. The data provide sufficient information to be analyzed and interpreted, allowing for a rigorous and objective examination of the research findings (Luo, 2022). Moreover, this kind of analysis provides a flexibility in studying the data. Specifically, the content analysis in this research employed three categories. Firstly, the theme of personal information emerged, encompassing basic details of the students' identity such as name, age, nationality, preferences for after-school activities, and hobbies. The second theme focused on language issues, encompassing their opinions on multilingual or bilingual abilities and the languages they speak. The third theme explored family and social background, encompassing students' perspectives on family structure, relationships, and social connections that shape their identity formation.

### 3. Findings

This chapter presents the basic key themes that emerged through the analysis of the collected data. The researcher identified three distinct themes from the data that emerged from the literature activity and the identity texts. Firstly, the personal information, which involved the students mentioning basic details related to their identity, such as name, age, nationality and their preferences in after-school activities and hobbies. A second theme was the language issues that occurred with their opinions regarding their multilingual or bilingual abilities, including the languages spoken. The third theme was the family and the social background, which included the students’ perspectives about their family structure, relationships, and social connections that contribute to their identity formation.

#### 3.1 Literature Activity “The suitcase”

##### 3.1.1 Personal information

The first aspect that stood out in the collected texts was the inclusion of information and specific details about the students' self-descriptions and personal attributes. All students mention and provide their name, either in their mother tongue or in Greek language. After a short discussion regarding the theme of the story, students were requested to answer the activity question for the things that they would include in their own suitcase. Most of the participants chose to include in their suitcase important and necessary objects to travel, such as all types of clothes and essentials like food, money, and cookware (Image 1 & 2). Another possession that they mentioned and drew were technological items that they wanted to have with them, such as a mobile phone, laptop or even a personal computer (Image 2). Furthermore, among their packings, they included favorite objects and games to spend joyfully their time. These items included books, a PlayStation console, boarding games, and toys (Image 1). In addition, there was a portion of participants who included in their suitcase some protective measures such as weapons (Image 3). The students completed the activity in writing a travel report regarding their favorite items. Their interests regarding objects tended to show a range of preferences, with a standard reference in the needs they calculate as important for them. As the participant S18 mentioned, “I draw the things I need to have to protect me and my family”.

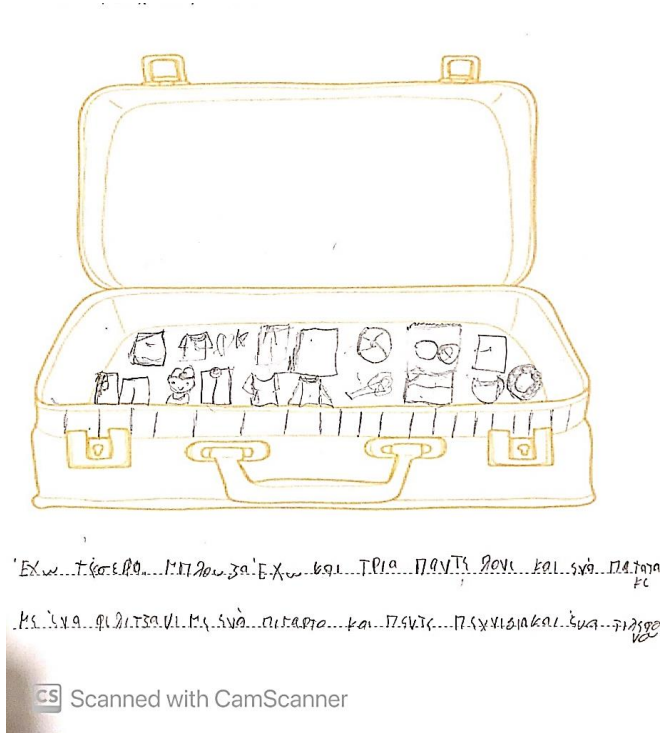


Image 1 "My suitcase", by S10 (Afghanistan)



Image 2 "My suitcase", by S 1(China)

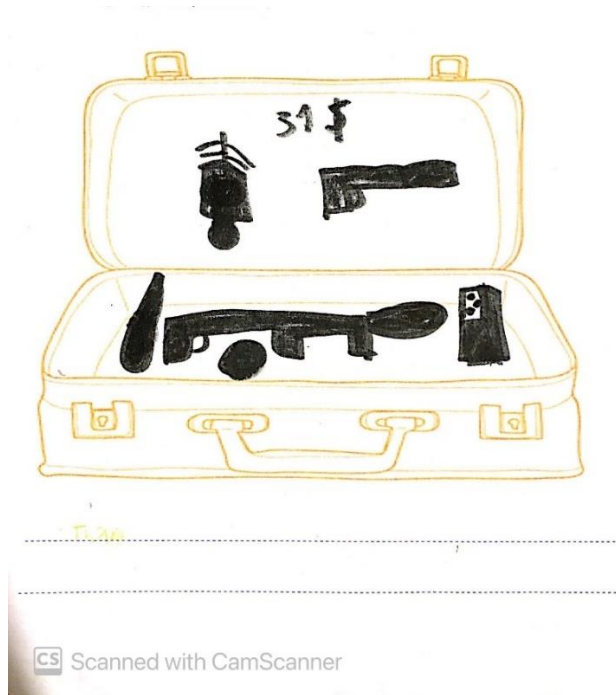


Image 3 “My suitcase” by S18 (Turk of Western Thrace)

### 3.2 Language issues

A very interesting axe was the students’ considerations regarding their multilingual or bilingual abilities, including spoken languages. In this activity, the majority of the participants wrote about the objects they wanted to have with them in a suitcase in Greek language (Image 4). It is important to highlight that although they were beginners in learning Greek they preferred to write down, name, describe, and speak about their selection in the Greek language. There were some spelling mistakes and there were not complete sentences but names and short descriptions of their preferences. One participant wrote in English to describe the things that s/he included (Image 5). Other students preferred not to describe their belongings (Image 6). In the oral support of their activity, students described the things in Greek whereas in some cases, there was a use of online translator where students speak to this application to translate their words. In other cases, there were classmates who shared the same language and spoke better Greek and translated to the researcher their classmate words.

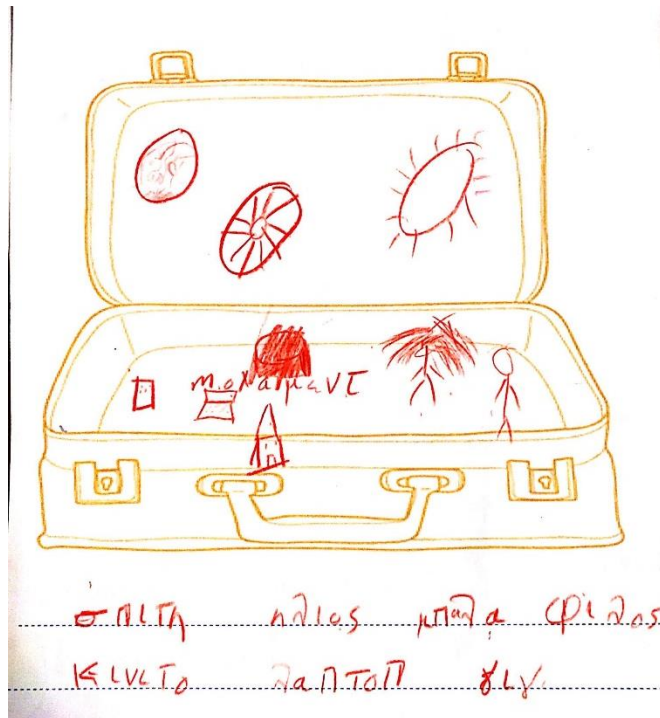


Image 4 "My suitcase" by S2 (Iran)



Image 5 "My suitcase" by S6 (Afghanistan)

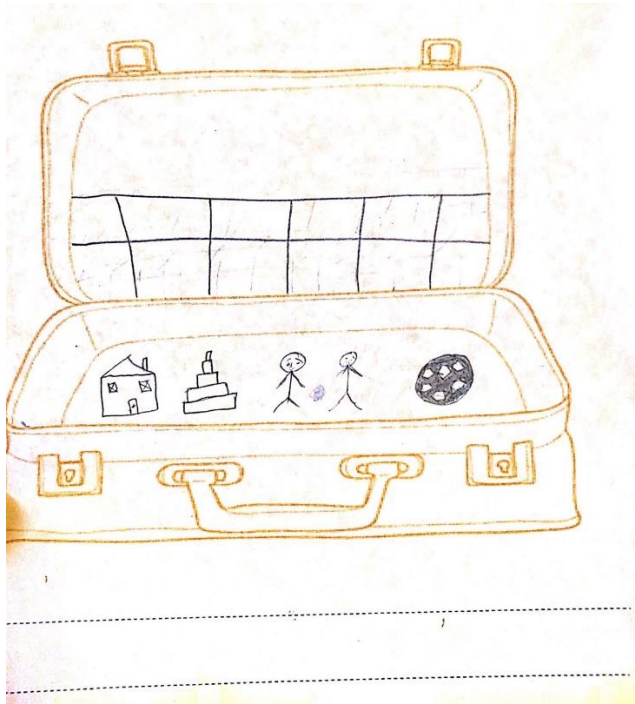


Image6 "My suitcase" by S12 (Afghanistan)

### 3.1.3 Family and social background

Finally, the last theme that emerged from the literary activity analysis is information about the participants' family structure, relationships, and social connections that have been identified as vital and necessary to be referred to and included in their suitcases. The students introduced their families through drawings and accompanying prose.

Young children rely heavily on their families for support and care due to their tender age and dependency. They respect their families so much that they packed a photo of their family or a sketch of their home (Images 7 & 8). One participant (S17) packed a gift for their family in his suitcase (Image 9). He even said (S17): "I will take some presents to give them". The students' personal involvement in the current activity was evident as they express the importance and worth of their family through their drawings and words.





### 3.2 Identity Texts

#### 3.2.1 Personal information

The analysis of the collected texts reveals an interesting pattern regarding the students' self-identification. The prominent aspect that emerges is the inclusion of information and details related to their external characteristics. All students provided their name, either in their mother tongue or in Greek and their age as basic information. Among the 19 participants, 5 of them completed the identity text activity with only these two pieces of information. It appears that students primarily identify themselves by emphasizing these two fundamental characteristics: their names and their age.

Furthermore, the students expressed and described themselves by sharing their favorite leisure time preferences. They mentioned hobbies and activities such as football, basketball, volleyball, skateboarding, and overall physical exercise (Image 10 & 11). Some students expressed their interests in activities like dancing, reading a book, and drawing (Image 11 & 12). Other participants reported their preferences in playing games or watching movies with their friends. These leisure time preferences provided additional insights into the students' self-expression and personal interests.

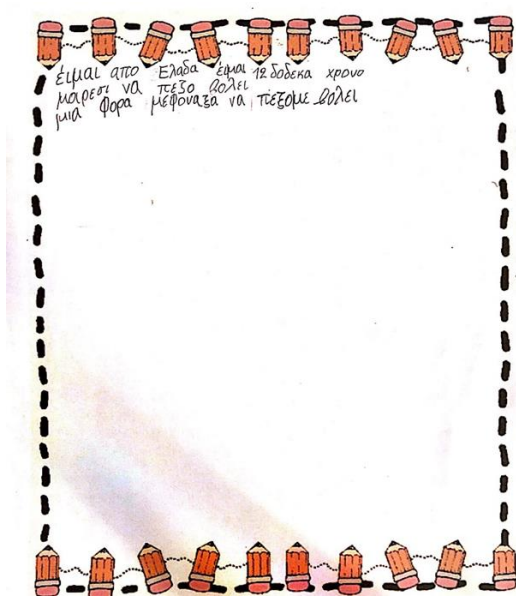


Image 10 “Identity Texts” by S17 (Greece)

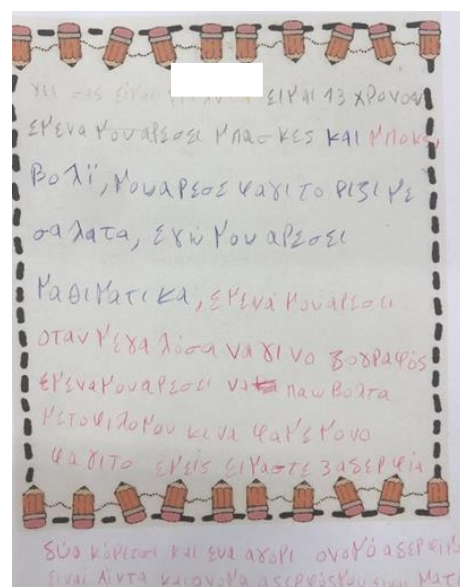


Image 11 “Identity Texts” by S8  
(Afghanistan)



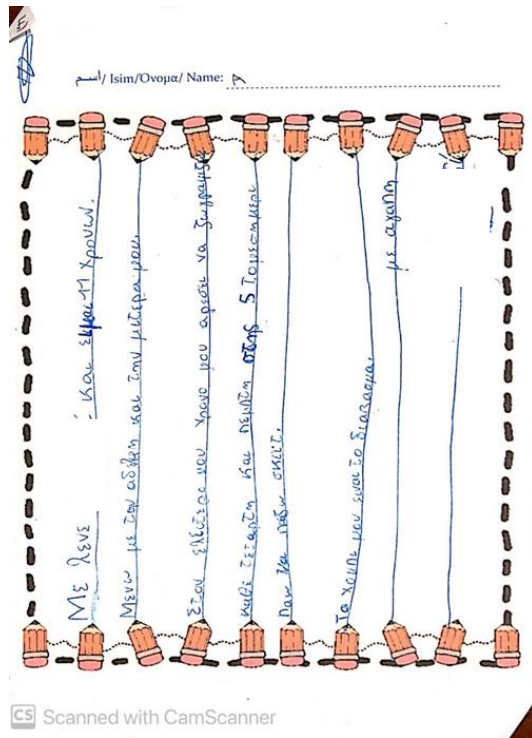


Image 12 “Identity Texts” by S3 (Hong Kong)

### 3.2.2 Language issues

The students' considerations of their multilingual or bilingual talents, including languages spoken, were quite intriguing and should be highlighted. "I can speak four languages, French, Arabic, English, and Greek," the participant S2 said. From the total of 19 identity texts, 14 were written in Greek, two in Turkish, one in Ukrainian, one in Arabic, and one in Georgian (Images 13-16).

They even labeled the variety of languages that they employ in different spaces. They stated that the language that they use with their school friends is Greek, whereas the language they use with other friends is Chinese (Image 17). Another person claims that he speaks Roman at home and Greek at school.

Regarding the students' ability to switch between language codes for communication with the researcher, they were already introduced and familiar with translanguaging as a means to express themselves. In one particular instance, a bilingual student who preferred not to write their own text had the assistance of a tutor who acted as their scribe. Through additional explanatory questions, the tutor transcribed the student's

answers. This approach facilitated effective communication and accommodated the student's preferred mode of expression.

Furthermore, it is worth to mention the type of sentences the students used to describe themselves. The majority of the students used short sentences and simple verbs to give personal information.

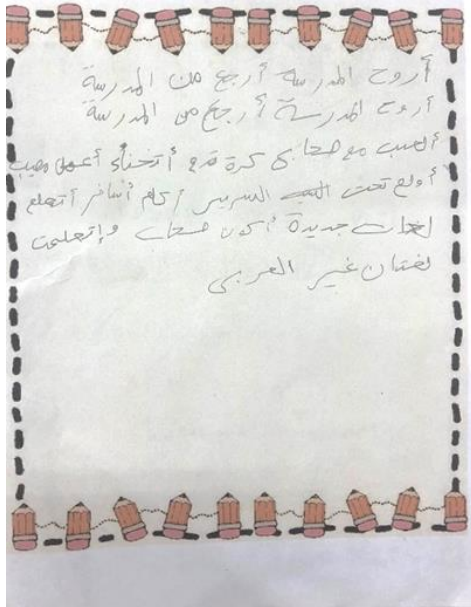


Image 13 “Identity Texts” by S2 (Iran)

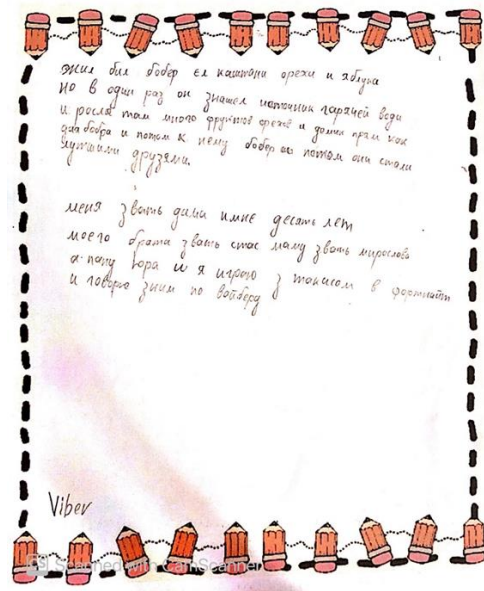


Image 14 “Identity Texts” by S7 (Ukraine)

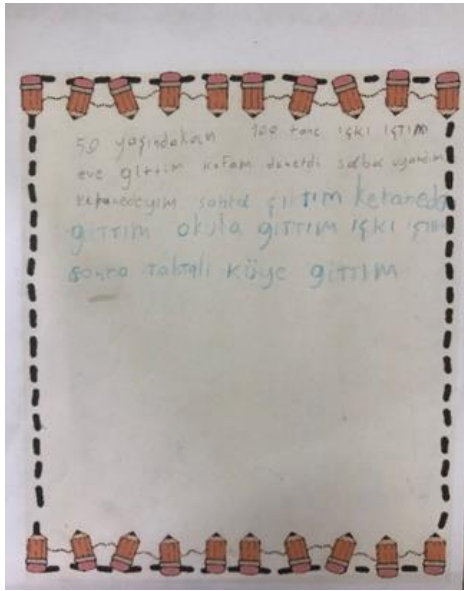


Image 15, “Identity Text” by S18  
(Turk of Western Thrace)

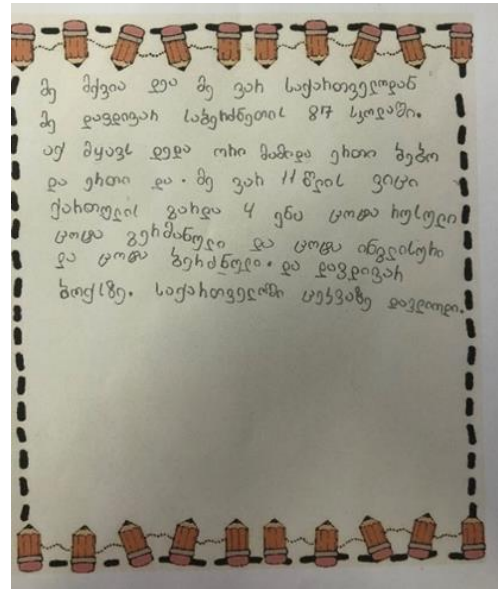


Image16 “Identity Texts” by  
S19 (Georgia)

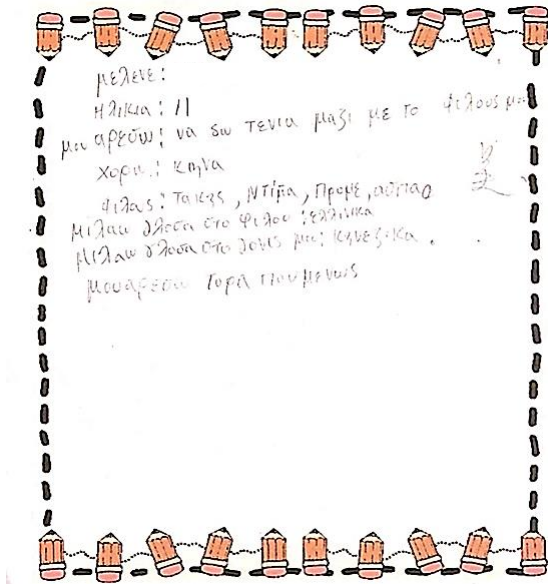


Image 17 “Identity Texts” by S1 (China)

### 3.2.3 Family and social background

A final prominent theme that emerged from the analysis of the students' texts was the information about their family structure, relationships, and social connections, which significantly contributes to their identity formation. The students made reference to their family by indicating who they live with or by describing the size of their family. Some students explicitly mention the names of their family members, while others highlight the type of relationship, they have with them. For instance, they may say, "I have my aunt Lela, my grandmother, and my sister"(S19) or "I live with my parents, my siblings Maria and Mohament"(S9) There are also students who mention having a small family (Image 18 & 19).

In addition, some students provide details and characteristics about their living arrangements, such as having a small bedroom and a large balcony. On the other hand, one participant indirectly refers to a challenging situation where they did not have a house to live in, which prevented them from attending school. They expressed their feelings and thoughts about the school environment, S16 mentioning: "I was sad when I didn't have a house to live in and I couldn't go to school". These details about family, living conditions, and social circumstances offer valuable insights into the students' personal lives and their experiences, highlighting the impact of these factors on their identity.

The students' relationship with their friends is evident in their texts through references to their friends' names and shared activities. They mention what they used to do together and what they currently enjoy doing with their friends (Image 20). Common activities mentioned include walking around, going out for food or drinks, and engaging in games and sports. These references highlight the significance of friendship in their lives and the enjoyable experiences they have with their friends.

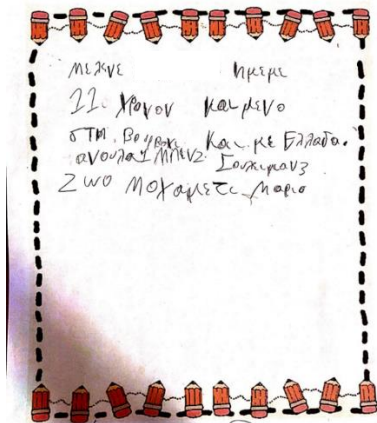


Image 18 “Identity Texts” by S9 (Pakistan)

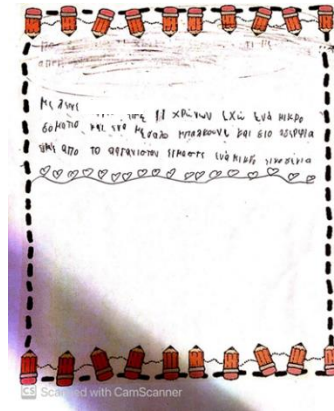


Image 19 “Identity Texts” by S10 (Afghanistan)

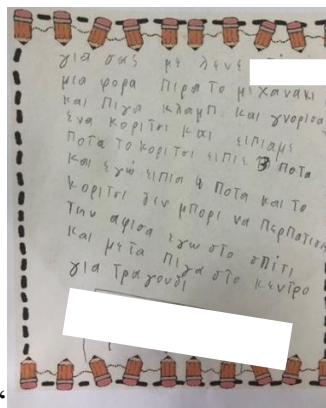


Image 20 “Identity Texts” by S4 (Roma)

#### 4. Discussion

The objective of this study was to shed light on the diverse perceptions, expressions, and attitudes that children hold regarding their bicultural/multicultural identity within the school environment. Additionally, the research aimed at investigating how the use of identity texts can empower students to speak for themselves. By examining this aspect, the study seeks to understand the ways in which students are encouraged to express themselves through the implementation of identity texts.

This research incorporated the use of technological tools to facilitate communication and interaction with the students. Specifically, the literature activities were conducted using a slide presentation displayed through a projector. Additionally, the identity texts were processed using the photo story application uploaded onto a specific platform. This research reveals that the use of technology and technological options aids students in watching the story and actively participating in literature activities, resulting in a high level of engagement. As highlighted in previous studies involving refugee and migrant populations, the utilization of technology in innovative ways leads to increased student engagement (Gogonas & Gatsi, 2021; Skourtou et al., 2021; Tsokalidou et al., 2021). These projects underscore the numerous advantages of utilization technology in literature activities for multilingual and bilingual students. Specifically, activities aimed at creating identity texts play a significant role in establishing and strengthening the multilingual identities of refugees as well as supporting their development of writing skills and enhance communication abilities among these students.

As a way to cater to the linguistic needs of the students, the researcher in this study utilizes both Greek and English. This approach acknowledges the multilingual nature of the student population and aims to accommodate their language preferences. Furthermore, when completing activities and creating identity texts, students are given the freedom to write in the language they feel most comfortable with. The coexistence of multiple languages and the practice of switching between languages is commonly referred to as translanguaging. By embracing and utilizing translanguaging, the research aimed to promote mutual understanding and interaction among the diverse identities of students (Gogonas & Gatsi, 2021; Skourtou et al., 2021; Tsokalidou et al., 2021). This intentional use of multiple languages acknowledges the linguistic resources



that students bring to the learning environment, allowing them to communicate and express themselves more effectively. In the current research, the instructions and the communication among students and the teacher were in both Greek and English to allow the students, who did not understand Greek, comprehend the story and the activities.

Additionally, the participants of the study who initially expressed difficulties and reluctance in writing and participating in the activities demonstrated a positive change in their attitude when they realized that they could use their mother tongue. Once they understood that they had the option to utilize their native language, they became more engaged and began actively participating by writing. This highlights the importance of embracing students' mother tongues and creating a supportive environment that allows them to express themselves comfortably and confidently. By providing this linguistic flexibility, students were able to overcome initial barriers and actively engage in the activities.

Furthermore, the majority of the participants in the study actively engaged in the activities and demonstrated a high level of expressiveness. They willingly shared information about their daily routines, their families, and their friends, as well as their favorite activities and hobbies. This enthusiastic participation indicates that the activity provided a platform for students to showcase and communicate aspects of their personal lives and interests. It not only facilitated language development but also fostered a sense of belonging and connection within the learning environment.

Kourti-Kazoulli (2001) presents relevant findings regarding the utilization of identity texts in education. The study emphasizes the role of identity texts in facilitating students' self-expression and highlights how they contribute to the promotion of multilingualism and the recognition of diverse student identities. In her study, identity texts were implemented in the form of a diary, where students were encouraged to record their daily thoughts and feelings (Kourti-Kazoulli, 2001). This approach reveals that students display enhanced creativity and active engagement when completing the assigned task, drawing upon their linguistic skills and multilingual capabilities (Kourti-Kazoulli, 2001). Moreover, the use of identity texts in the form of a diary serves as a meeting point, fostering improved mutual understanding among students (Kourti-

Kazouli, 2008). By sharing their personal experiences and reflections through diary entries, students can develop a deeper comprehension of each other's perspectives, promoting empathy and strengthening their connections.

In addition, Tsokalidou has also been conducting studies on identity texts among bilingual students in order to examine and identify the variables that lead to the formation of multilingual identity (Tsokalidou, 2008a; Tsokalidou, 2008b; Tsokalidou, 2012; Tsokalidou et al., 2013). As a result, the translanguaging approach is implemented in another project, enabling students to freely express themselves in the language they feel most comfortable with (Tsokalidou, 2017). Similarly, in the present research, students were given the opportunity to write and speak in their preferred language, allowing them to express their personal experiences, family dynamics, friendships, and daily habits.

Moreover, like it is mentioned in this research, identity texts are used in bilingual and multilingual students with the variety of ways in published thesis papers. Some use these texts, either orally or in writing, to explain and identify the features of bilingual adult students and Roma women (Elefteriadou, 2014; Panagiotidou, 2014). Others, on the other hand, focus on empowering and reinforcing young pupils' identities, specifically their Roma, Pontic, and Thracic identities, through the use of their mother tongue (Drobila, 2016; Stratoudaki, 2014). In this study, this research, bilingual students were encouraged to use their mother tongue to write their identity texts, allowing them to present and express their true selves.

The present study, along with previous significant research conducted in the field of education within the Greek context, demonstrates the positive impact of utilizing identity texts. The implementation of identity texts in multimodal ways is recognized as a crucial educational tool for educators, serving as an important procedure through which multilingual students can express their diverse identities within the school environment. This inclusive approach acknowledges the significance of every individual and values their contributions, creating an environment that aims at educating all students in an inclusive environment. By incorporating identity texts, educators empower students to express themselves, fostering a sense of belonging and promoting the recognition of their unique identities within the educational setting.



These exercises assist students in comprehending the key ideas of the narrative, such as its events, challenges, and the journeys of the main characters. Through active participation in these exercises, students seemed to develop a more profound comprehension of the main theme and are motivated to craft their own stories, centering on their individual experiences, perspectives, daily routines, and important relationships.

This study specifically focuses on older students attending a primary intercultural school, aiming to shed light on the diverse identities they possess. By exploring their own stories and reflecting on their unique experiences, this research contributes to a better understanding of the multifaceted identities of these students within an intercultural educational setting. The educational implementation of literature activities, leading to the creation of identity texts, provides insights into how bilingual and multilingual students perceive themselves. The analysis of these texts reveals that a significant number of students describe themselves by mentioning their hobbies, family, friends, and favorite routines and activities they engage in with them.

## 5. Implications

As the previous studies suggest, when students are given the opportunity to express their identities using the language, they feel most comfortable with, it promotes a sense of inclusion and acceptance of all individuals within the school context, both among their classmates and educators (Kourti-Kazoulli, 2001; Tsokalidou, 2008a; Tsokalidou, 2008b; Tsokalidou, 2012; Tsokalidou et al., 2013). By encouraging students to speak, feel, and express their identities in their preferred language, their unique personalities and perspectives are valued and embraced, fostering an environment that acknowledges and respects the diverse identities among the students.

This research focuses on one specific educational process aimed at motivating students to write their identity texts. However, it is important to acknowledge that there are various multimodal educational tools available for educators in multicultural classrooms to understand and include the diverse identities of their student population. Indeed, it is essential to highlight the challenging process and commend the dedicated efforts of tutors and educators who collaborate and work in intercultural schools or multicultural classrooms. These professionals face unique challenges in creating an inclusive educational environment that embraces and supports the diverse identities of their students. These tools can be utilized to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment.

## 6. Conclusion

This study has set in the center of research the impact and the advantages of the use of identity texts in the expression of the self-perception of the students. The primary aim of this research was to investigate the impact of identity texts on students' self-perception. To accomplish this, a picture book was employed and examined through literature-based exercises.

The key findings of this research provide crucial insights into students' perception of their identity. The chosen age group of participants demonstrated sufficient engagement to successfully complete the assigned tasks and enriched them with their first language, with Greek, as well as through various other semiotic tools such as drawings, images, and oral communication emerging from semi-structured interviews. These approaches allowed the researcher to gain a comprehensive understanding of identity texts with essential details. The acquired knowledge forms the foundation for exploring the beliefs, attitudes, and emotions of students in an Intercultural school setting. Given the participants' age characterized by the desire for peer group acceptance and societal integration, their beliefs, arguments, and sentiments towards their identity contribute to the broader understanding of identity-related issues and enrich the field of Intercultural education with intriguing and significant findings, which can inspire the design and implementation of future research studies.

The significance of this study lies in its focus on exploring the use of identity texts within the target group of students, whereas previous research on identity texts primarily targeted teachers. It is crucial to conduct research that specifically addresses the educational needs of bilingual and multilingual students, as this contributes to fostering intercultural education in Greece. Allowing students to express themselves in any language they choose is of utmost importance as it helps define their self-perception. This, in turn, enables educators to adapt and update their techniques and tools to better cater to the needs of the multicultural student population. By conducting such research, educators can ensure that their practices align with the diverse needs and backgrounds of the students they serve.

These research studies serve as invaluable resources and enhancements for the field of education. They provide educators and tutors with essential knowledge to create an

environment that nurtures positive self-identity, fosters meaningful learning experiences, and cultivates strong peer connections among students. By prioritizing inclusivity, these educators play a vital role in supporting the academic and socio-emotional growth of all students, thus contributing to their overall success and well-being. These processes align with the vision of a democratic and inclusive school, where every individual is equally valued and treated with respect. By implementing updated, differentiated, and multimodal educational policies, students are equipped with the necessary guidance to thrive and flourish, preparing them to become active and responsible citizens in society and the world. The focus is on providing students with the necessary tools to thrive and make a positive impact in their future roles and contributions.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1

Activities for the book "The Suitcase" by Chris Naylor-Ballesteros, Dioptra publications.

1. Reading the story.

2. Discussion to identify the heroes of the story.

- ❖ "Who are the heroes of the story? Who is the protagonist?"

3. Discussion about the topic of the story.

- ❖ "What is happening in the story?"
- ❖ Which part of the story did you like best and why?"

The children will be given Handout 1 with the pictures from the story to use in their answers.

4. Understanding the problem of the story and proposals to solve the problem of the protagonists.

- ❖ What problem did the protagonists face?
- ❖ What did they initially do and how did they eventually behave?
- ❖ How would you deal with such a problem?

5. Discuss the title of the book.

- ❖ What title would you give this story?
- ❖ Can you translate the title given by the author into your language? Why do you think he made this choice?
- ❖ If you could think of your own suitcase, what would you choose to put in it and why?" (You can name them using any language you like).

*Worksheet 2 will be distributed to the children for carrying out the activity.*

6. Creation of identification texts.

- ❖ "It's time to make up a story similar to the one we read and discussed. Your own story, the story of your life with you as the hero. In the story we read, the hero with a suitcase in his hand went to another country to live. For the hero,



his story was so important that he wrote it in a book and shares it with people.

What parts of your story are important to you and you want to share them.

- ❖ Nowadays people travel a lot, change countries. In the previous activity you recorded what you would have in your own suitcase. So, can you also write about what is very important to you and your story, for example your loved ones?
- ❖ How do you feel about being in Greece, are you happy??
- ❖ How did you make new friends? It was easy;
- ❖ In what language do you prefer and can you speak with your Greek neighbors, your teachers and play with your friends?

*Children will be given Worksheet 3 for carrying out the activity.*

7. Create a video with their texts, using the Photostory application 3. Students will choose whether they want to record the central idea of their texts in any language they wish or to use only the photos from their texts to create the video.

8. View video.



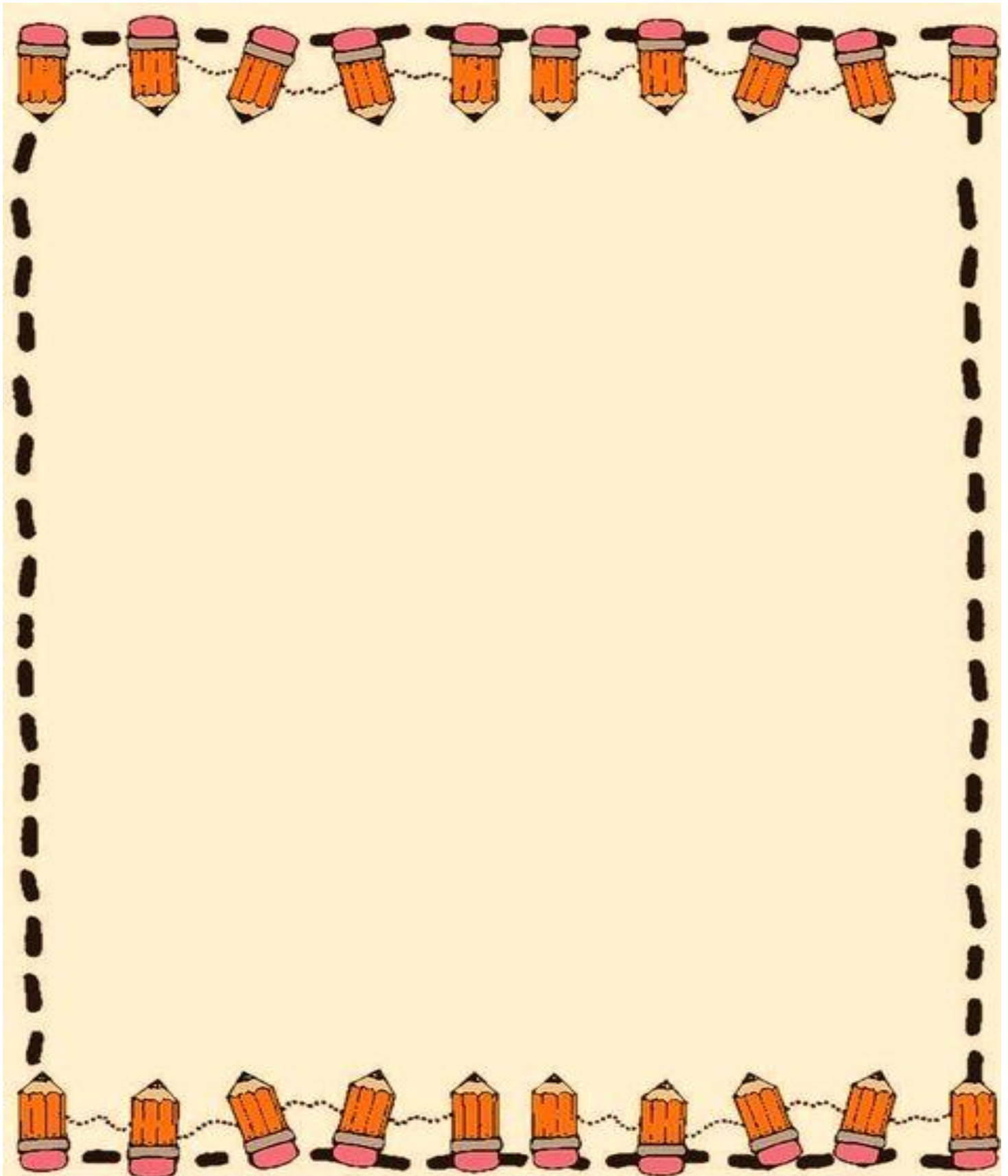
## Worksheet 2

Όνομα/ Name/ اسم/ Isim:

Με αφορμή το παραμύθι «Η Βαλίτσα» του Chris Naylor- Ballesteros, συμπλήρωσε χρωματίζοντας μέσα στη βαλίτσα, εκείνα που θα έβαζες μέσα και στη συνέχεια ονομάτισε τα.



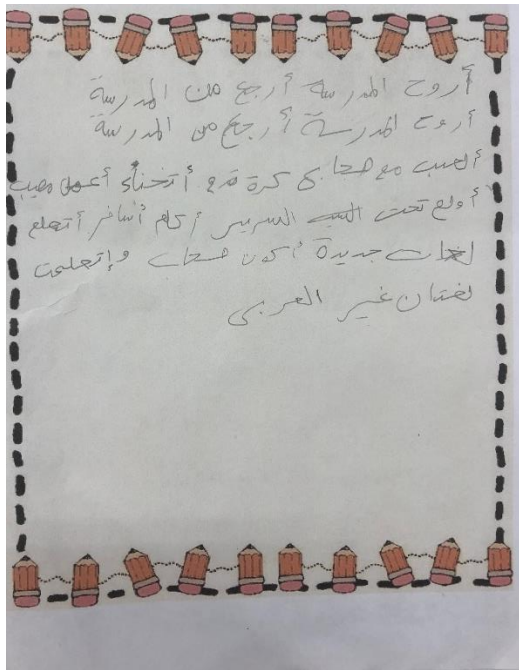
Worksheet 3 اسم/ Isim/ Όνομα/ Name:



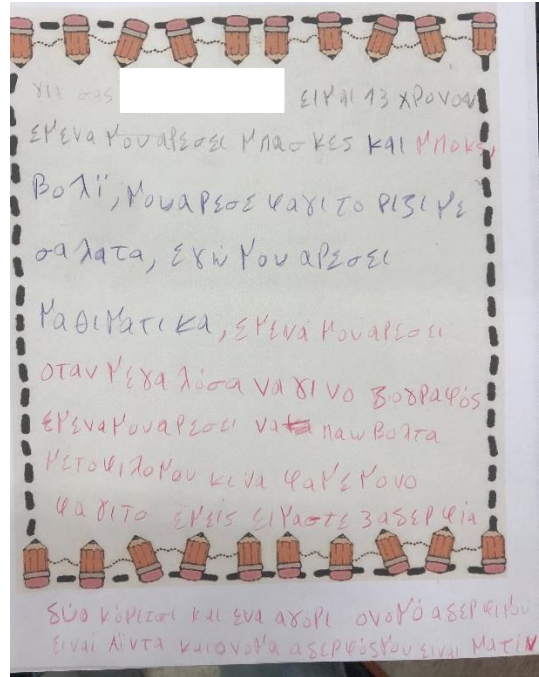


Appendix 2

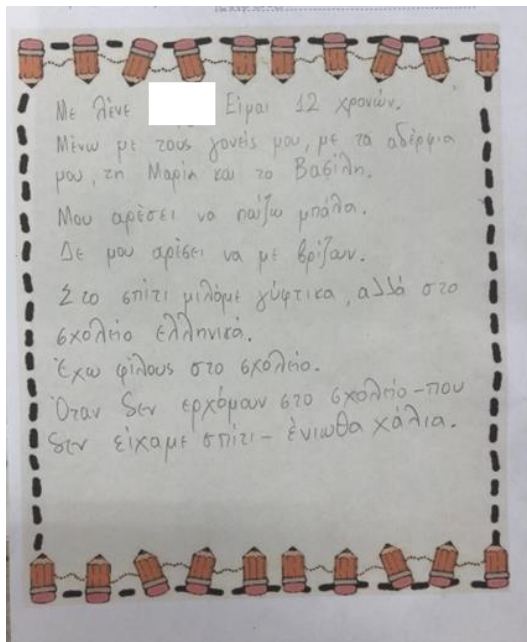
Students' identity texts



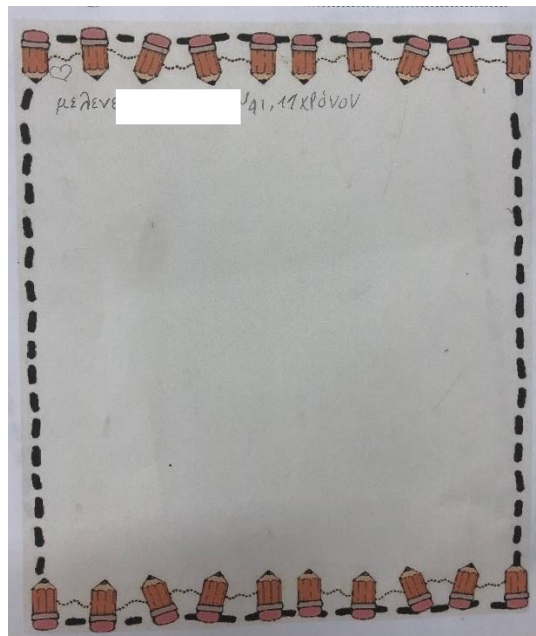
S2 (Iran)



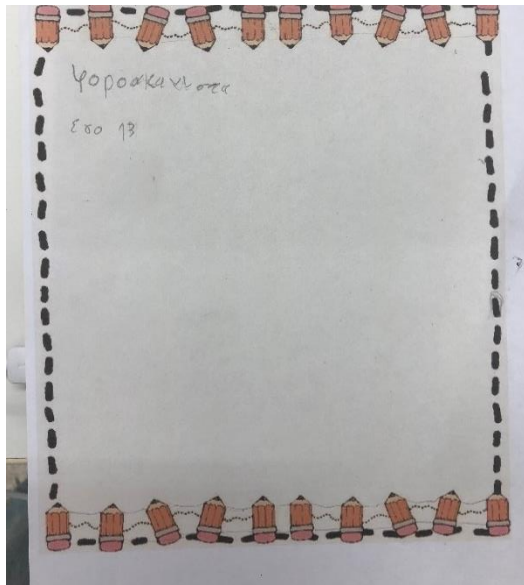
S8 (Afghanistan)



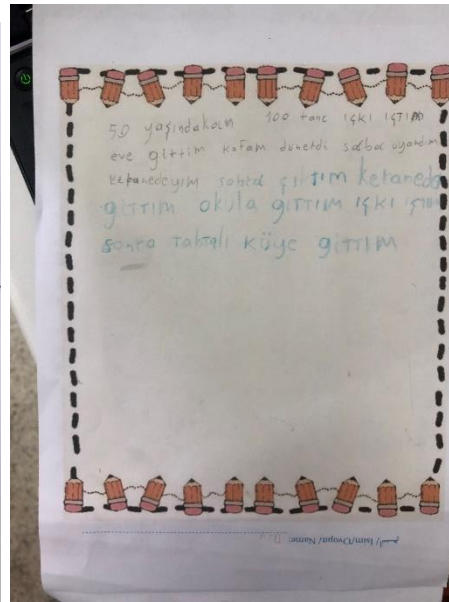
S9 (Pakistan)



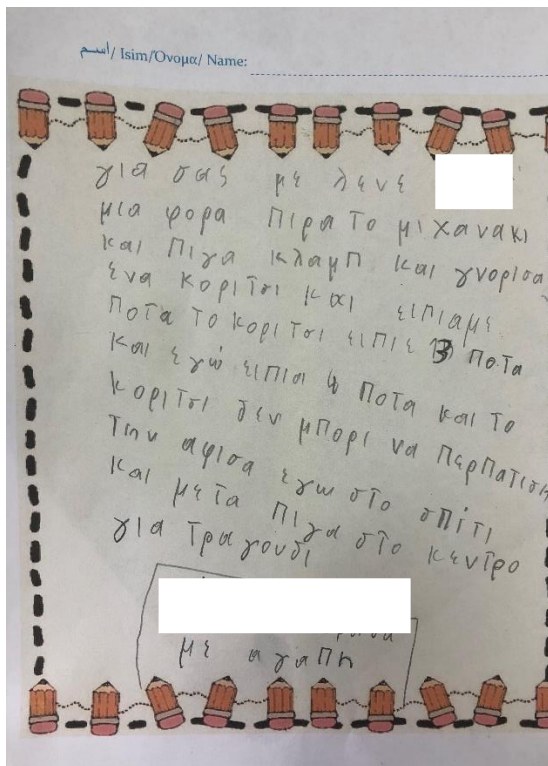
S11 (Afghanistan)



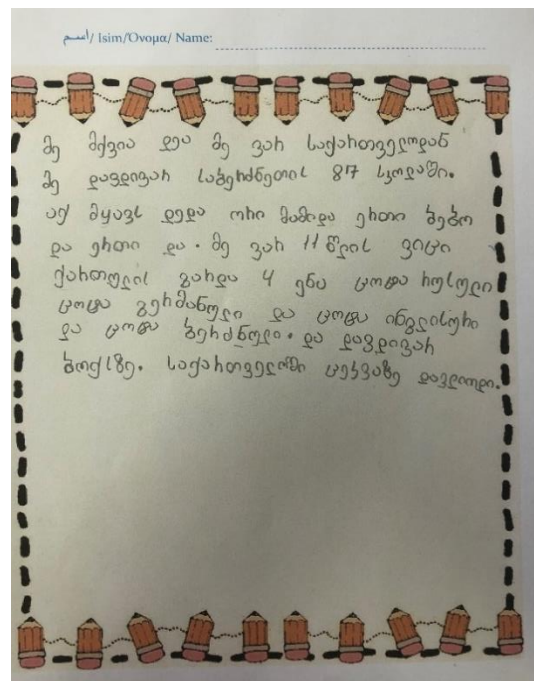
S 12(Afghanistan)



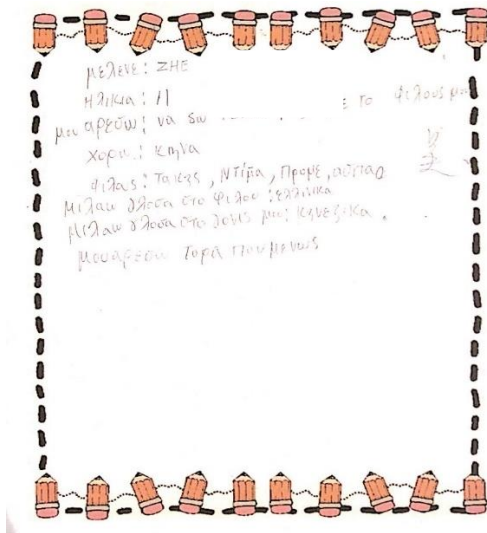
S18(Turk of Western Thrace)



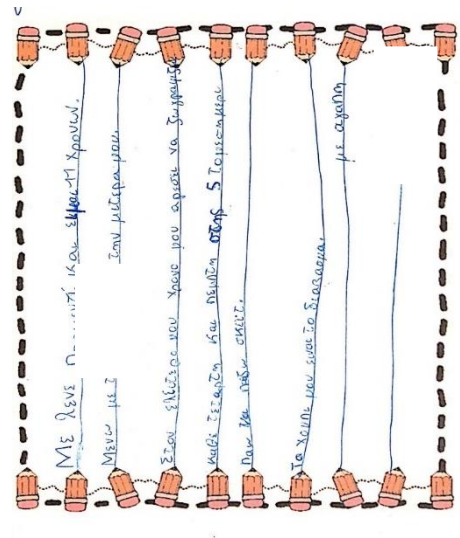
S4 (Roma)



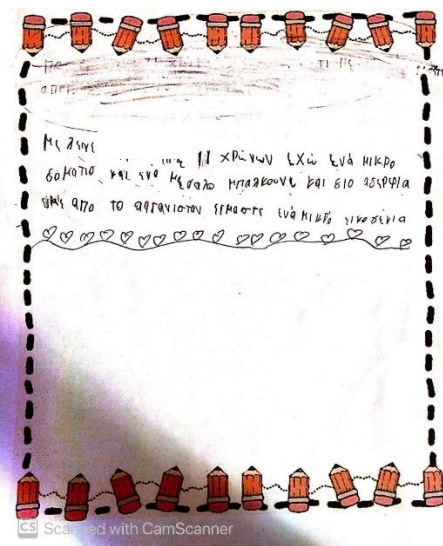
S19(Georgia)



S1 (China)



S3(Hong- Kong)

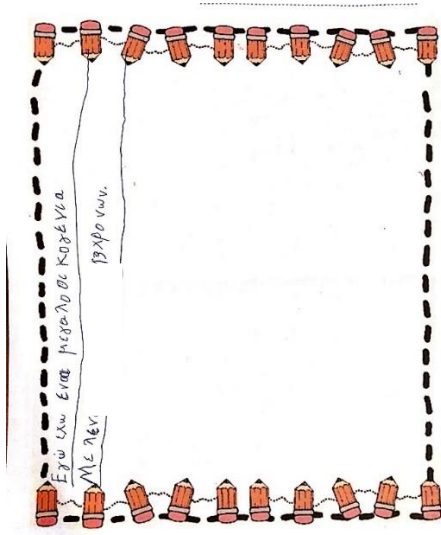


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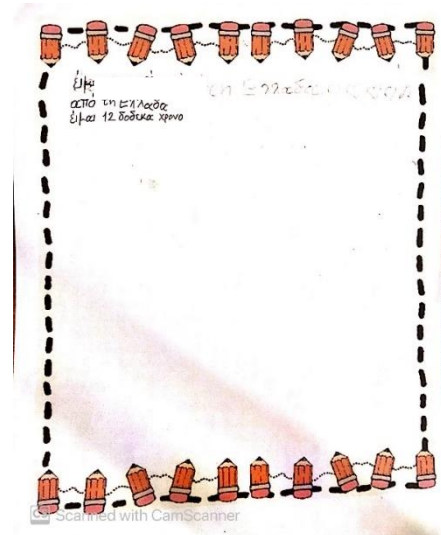


S13(Turk of Western Thrace)

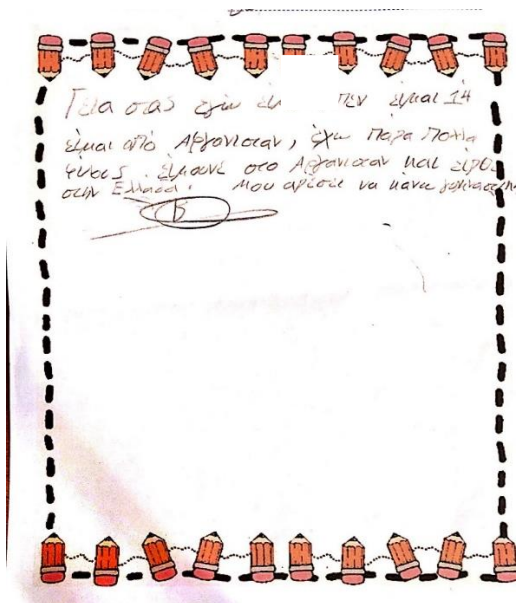




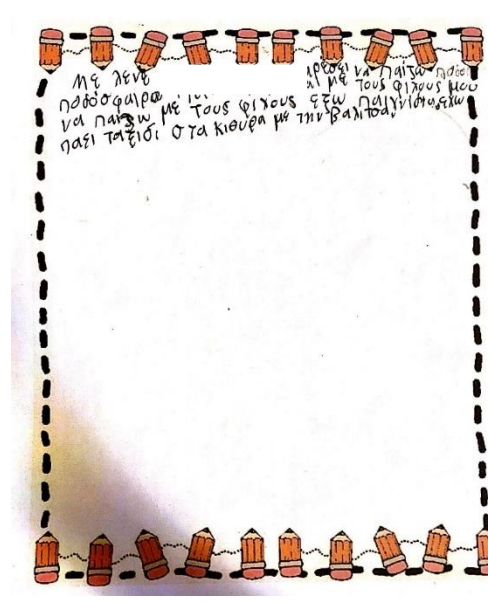
S 15(Pakistan)



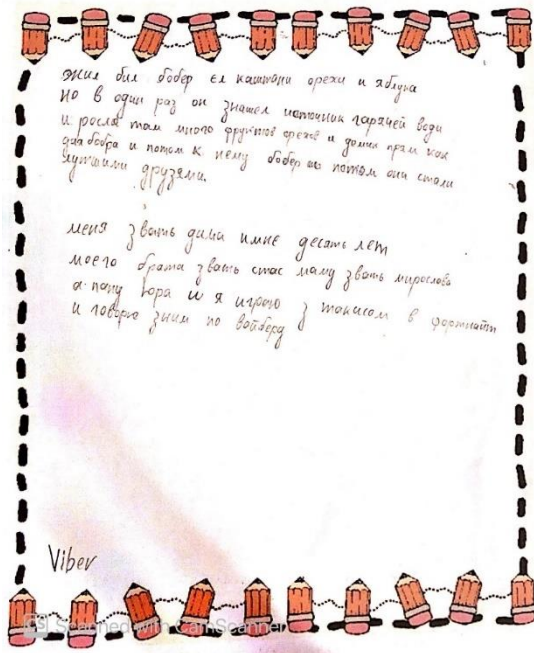
S14(Russia)



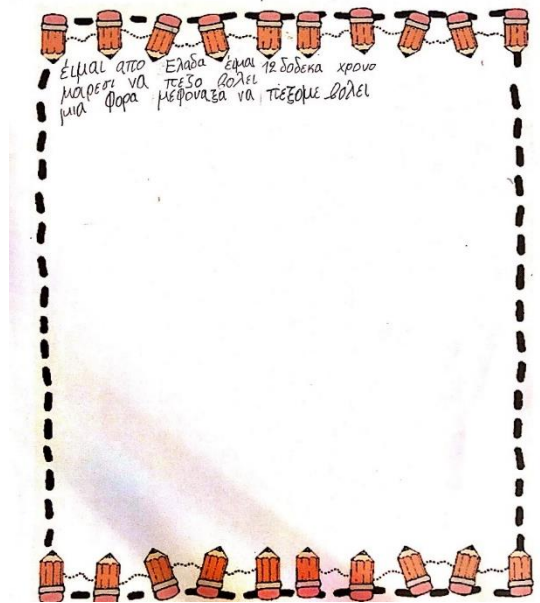
S 6(Afghanistan)



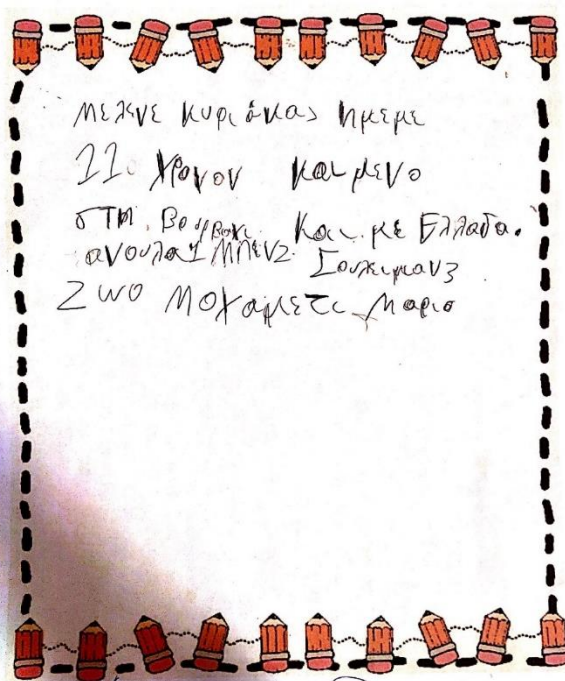
S5(Greece)



S7 (Ukraine)

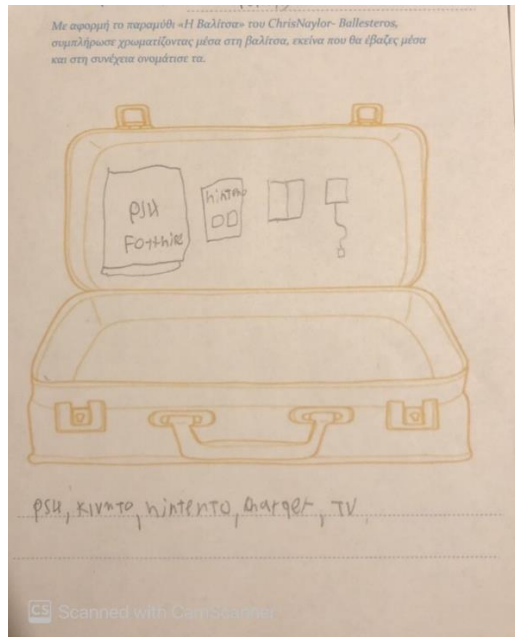


S17(Greece)



S9(Pakistan)

Students' Suitcases



S5 (Greece)



S18 (Turk of Western Thrace)



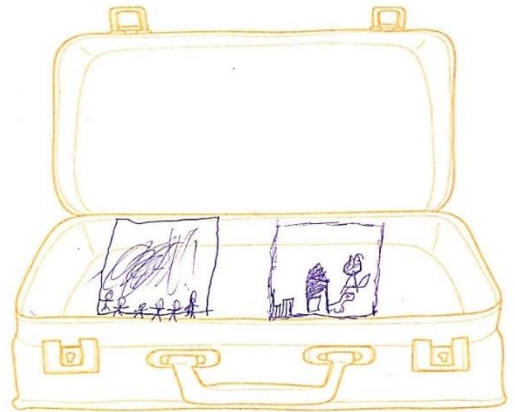
S 10(Afghanistan)



S3 (Hong-Kong)



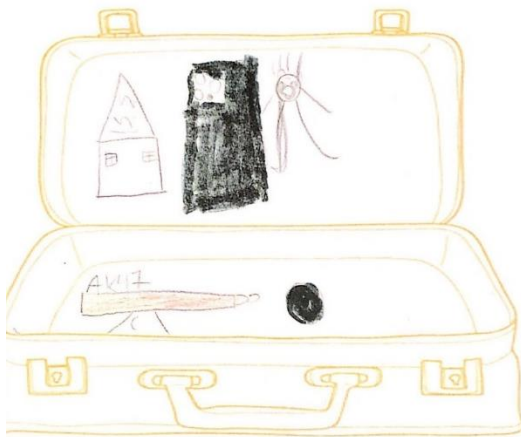
valitza. Headc with the best sun and a  
warm coffee!



ΟΙ ΚΟΧΕΥΑ ΜΟΥ... ΣΟΧΡΟΠΙΚΗ

S6 (Afghanistan)

S15 (Pakistan)



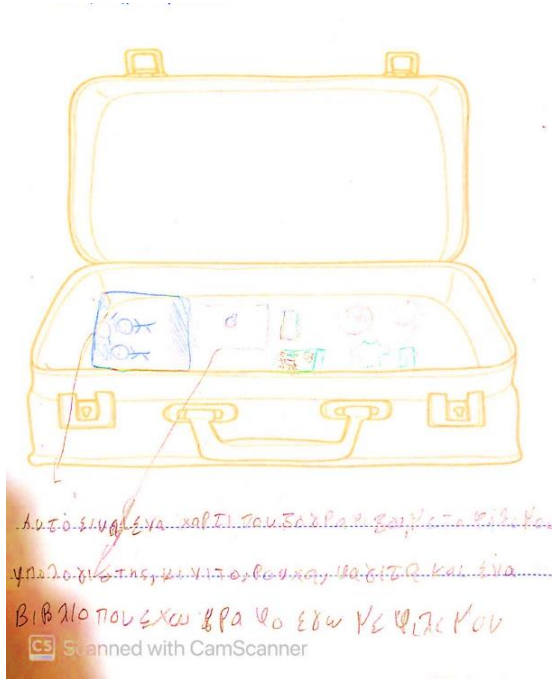
S16 (Roma)



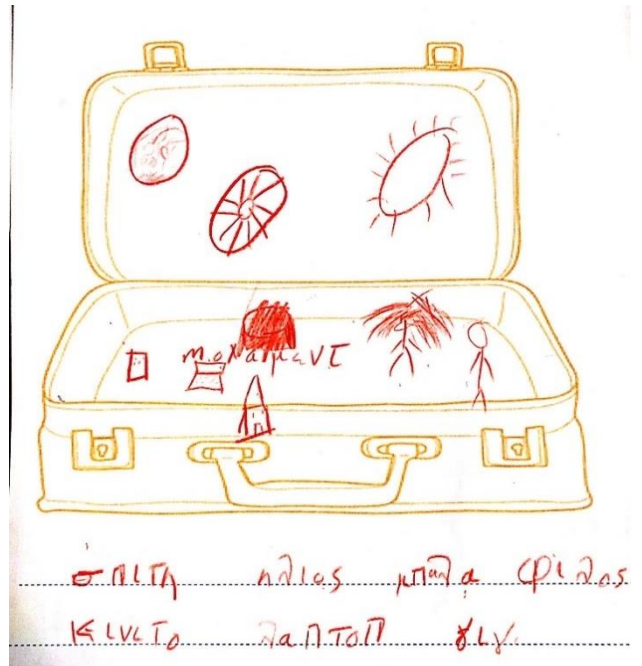
Πλουζα, Πιτεζα, Κωλιν, Τσπζετ, Κι Κιτο, Πλερεσταν, Ροζετιν  
Κοτο Χουθια, Οθονι, Πατικι, Μοστικουα

S1 (China)





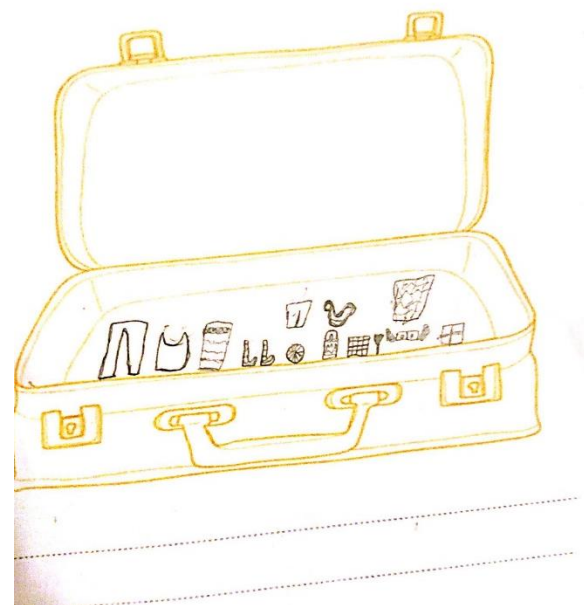
S8(Afghanistan)



S2(Iran)



S 11(Afghanistan)



S14(Russia)





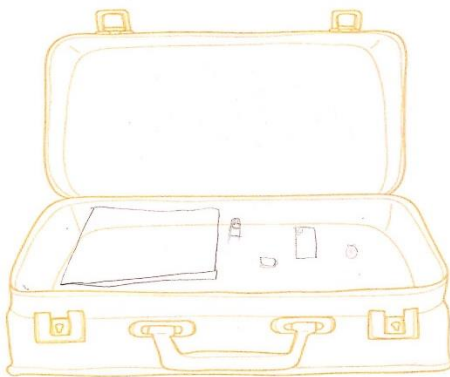
Κικιτο, Παρελώνι, βιβλίο, μπλουζάκι, δωμάτιο

S17(Greece)



Μην ξεχάσεις να πάρεις τα παπούτσια σου  
Μοχάμετ

S9(Pakistan)



Річ, яку пішов брат

S7(Ukraine)

### Appendix 3

#### Protocol of semi- structured Interview Questions

- 1 Can you tell me some information about yourself?
- 2 How old are you?
- 3 What class are you in?
- 4 Do you enjoy your time in school?
- 5 What have you included in your suitcase?
- 6 Can you name the things you put in the suitcase?
- 7 Why did you choose those to be in your suitcase?
- 8 What information have you provided to describe yourself?
- 9 Why did you choose to include that information?
- 10 In which language do you prefer to write?