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CHAPTER 7

Practice, Pleasure and Persistence

Collaborative Learning in Turkish

‘Those who are good at something... achieve mastery by practice, pleasure and persistence’ wrote Margaret Meek in a booklet that has inspired a whole generation of teachers to use good literature to teach children to read (1988:3). Lek and Durkan are not yet considered good at reading and they are still a little short on practice, but their scores on pleasure, persistence, and pride as well, are very high.

I was invited to meet six children who had encountered dual language books in English and Turkish in the course of sessions designed to support their reading in English. They asked their teacher if they could help each other to read in Turkish. When I first met the children (five boys and one girl) they were lively, boisterous and excited about sharing their knowledge of reading in Turkish. All sounded, in English, like typical London school children. They were eager to talk about how they used their languages at home and to demonstrate to me what they knew about reading in Turkish. Their parents were intent on keeping the language alive: Durkan explained that his father insisted on Turkish at home. Their teacher had responded to their enthusiasm by encouraging them to help each other and also to borrow the dual language books to read with their parents.

My observations of the children were very different from the ones reported in the earlier chapters of this book. Their parents all agreed to their children’s involvement in the research, but I did not get to meet them. I focused initially on Lek and Nilhan, two keen readers, who had both learned some very basic reading at Turkish school, and was able to observe how they used a range of strategies and their complementary skills to support each other. The following tells the story of my second observational visit to the school.

Collaborative learning

On this occasion I find that Nilhan has moved to another school and that Lek and Durkan are eagerly awaiting me. They explain that they are best friends and want to read with me together. As they check through the school’s collection of dual language

books, Durkan spots *The Giant Turnip* (Barkow, 2001a) and his eyes light up ‘I read that! It gets bigger!’ Durkan tells me he can read ‘a little bit’ in Turkish. The boys agree that they will take turns at reading, but that they will help each other out as necessary.

The session was intended to last twenty minutes as their teacher knew they were both likely to find the reading demanding. They were bubbling with excitement and so highly motivated that, in the event, they read for well over an hour.

As a researcher I had strong reservations about working with the children in a language I don’t know, unaccompanied by a speaker of Turkish. As I studied the recording after the session I realised that, in this particular instance, my being a non-Turkish speaker was a bonus. The children did not see me as a teacher. I wasn’t going to tell them whether they got it right or wrong. They knew Turkish, they were the experts and they were going to explain things to me. In the same way as the young bilingual children in Kenner’s study (2004) revealed their understanding of their two languages by teaching them to other children, so Lek and Durkan revealed theirs to me as they worked together to understand the text and answer my questions.

The collaboration between two friends revealed the many different ways in which the children were making meaning from the text, negotiating with each other in two languages, using all their decoding skills, background knowledge and any clues they could get from the book as well as their knowledge of traditional tales to understand the story. The long session, during which the children read the whole book, enabled me to focus closely on the strategies they were using.

Reading the words – in Turkish

Lek starts to read first and Durkan whispers support (in brackets).

Lek reads: *Kocaman ... Sal...* (Durkan: *Şalgam*).. *Şal...gam*. Durkan corrects Lek’s pronunciation from *salgam* to *şalgam* (pronounced *shalgam*). The title of the book: *The Giant Turnip*).

Lek reads: *Bayeram* (Durkan corrects: *bayan*) *bayan Honeywood'un sınıfında oku... oku* (Durkan: *okuyan*) *çocuklar her yıl okulum bahçesinde sebze ve meyva yetis...* (Durkan: *yetiştirirler*)...

Lek and Durkan together: *yetistirirle*.

(Every year the children in Miss Honeywood's class grow some fruit and vegetables in the school garden) (Barkow, 2001:1)

Like Lek, Durkan has attended Turkish classes some time ago. He appears to have a more confident grasp of grapho-phonetic correspondence in Turkish than Lek. From the evidence of this and similar extracts Durkan is able both to supply words that Lek is struggling to read (such as *okuyan* and *yetiştirirle*) and to correct his pronunciation (of *Şalgam*, for example). He intervenes in a similar way on page 5. When Lek reads: *Yazda çocuklar bitki...bitki* (Durkan corrects: *bitkileri*) *bitkileri besleyip suladılar. Ve tüm yaban otları söktüler* (In the summer the children fed and watered the plants. And pulled out all the weeds), Durkan corrects his pronunciation of *suladılar* and reads the last two words of the text alongside him.

In the following examples it is Lek who helps Durkan to read the word *toprağı* (the soil).

Durkan reads: *İkbaharın başlarında, çocuklar topra.. topra* (Lek offers: *toprağı*) *toprağı, kazarak ve tırmıklayarak hazırladılar* (In early spring the children prepared the ground by digging and raking the soil.) (p3)

The children, and Lek in particular, read very carefully, confident with some words, painstakingly decoding others, but as they progress through the book their confidence and speed of reading increases. They alternate and a pattern emerges: whoever chips in to support, continues so that the extract often ends with both children reading together. Sometimes the combined efforts of both children are needed to work out a long word, such as *atlattıkan* (p8). It is clear that both children know their Turkish phonics well and they are proud of their skill.

Reading the words – in English

The children take turns to read the pages and whoever starts in Turkish also reads the English. Lek reads fluently with no miscues. Durkan's reading is hesitant but correct,

except on page 3 where he reads: 'In early Spring, the children pre.. prepared the ground by digging and raking the soil'. He works out 'prepared' for himself but his pronunciation of 'raking' suggests he is not familiar with the word and Lek corrects him. Later, on page 5 he misreads another word, also suggesting lack of familiarity with the meaning and, again, Lek corrects him. He reads 'When Miss Honeywood has recorded (Lek corrects: recovered) recovered from the shock, she asked how are we going to get the turnip out?'

From the evidence of this session both children have good phonic knowledge and can decode text confidently in English at the level of the picture books used.

The meaning of words

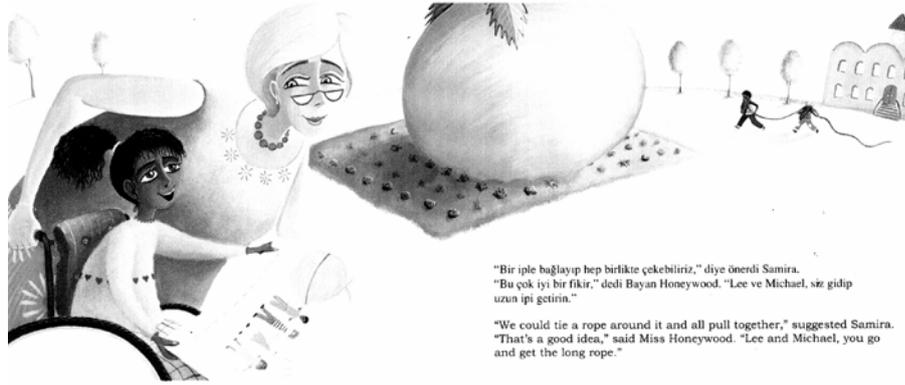
As a non-Turkish speaker I can never be sure, when a child cannot explain a word in English, whether the issue is a lack of knowledge in Turkish or in English. The transcript of Lek and Durkan reading together reveals some interesting strategies for dealing with words they find difficult to explain in English.

When Durkan is speaking in English, there are numerous instances where he uses the word 'thing' as in the following extract.

Bir iple bağlıp hep birlikte çekebiliriz, diye önerdi Samira. Bu çok iyi bir fikir, dedi Bayan Honeywood. Lee ve Michael siz gidip uzun, gidip uzun, ipi getirin (We could tie a rope around it and all pull together, suggested Samira. That's a good idea, said Mrs Honeywood, Lee and Michael, go and get the long rope.) (p12)

He has read the Turkish text and is using the illustration and both texts to explain to me in English:

'He gets a rope ... and then the ... first he says *thing*, let's get a rope and then the teacher says 'nice thinking' and then *thing*, they get the rope ... Lee and Michael ... they get the *thing*, a good rope.'



The Giant Turnip (Barkow, 2001a: 11-12)

The illustration represents two children carrying a rope from the school building towards the enormous turnip which is partly visible. Durkan starts to describe the picture. He is struggling to tell me in English what the first sentence of dialogue means (*Bir iple bağlayıp hep birlikte çekebiliriz* – we could tie a rope around it and pull it together) and summarises it as ‘thing’. He is then able to translate correctly for me (‘nice thinking’) the comment made by the teacher (in the text *Bu çok iyi bir fikir*, that’s a good idea). He uses ‘thing’ again twice in the sentence, not so much to replace a word or phrase, because he clearly knows the word ‘rope’ which occurs twice in the English text, but seemingly to provide thinking time.

There are several other examples of this use of ‘thing’. Durkan uses the same tactic when explaining what is happening on page 14. The Turkish text is *Biz erkeklerden daha güçlüyüz* (we’re stronger than the boys), which Durkan explains as ‘They’re saying, they’re saying like *thing*, we’ll be better than the boys’.

There are other instances where ‘thing’ seems to be filling in a vocabulary lack, for example when Durkan is describing a picture that shows weeds in a wheelbarrow (p5): ‘the weeds inside the *thing*’.

Lek is generally more confident in speaking in English and there is only one instance in this transcript of him using ‘thing’. On page 4 the Turkish text reads:

Daha sonra, yine ilkbaharda, kırağı tehlikesi geçtikten sonra tohumları ektiler (Later in the spring, when there was no danger of frost, they

planted the seeds). He uses it in very much the same way as Durkan, both to gain time and to fill in a gap: 'it's about *thing*, they're putting these *things*.'

When it comes to assessing difficulties with Turkish it is essential for a Turkish speaker to be able to question the children and evaluate responses and retellings. As noted before, when they have read the Turkish text and been asked to explain it in English, both children have a tendency either to describe the picture or tell what they know of the story. In many instances the explanations make fairly minimal reference to the Turkish text, but it is not easy to determine whether this is because of a lack of understanding of the Turkish or a difficulty in expressing the meaning in English. Translation is a sophisticated skill that does not necessarily come easily to children who have little occasion to practise it. The data above suggest that the use of 'thing' could well be a tactic to gain thinking time.

Durkan seems more fluent in Turkish and is more confident at decoding text. However the following example suggests that his difficulties in understanding and expressing himself may not be restricted to English. After reading:

Çocuklar yaz tatillerinden döndüklerinde sebze ve meyvaların büyüdüğünü gördüler (when the children came back, after their summer holiday, they found that all the fruit and vegetables had grown). (p6)

Durkan tries to explain the meaning and then admits 'I don't really know'.

Lek seems more fluent in English but may have greater difficulty in understanding the Turkish. When asked, after reading a passage in Turkish, to explain its meaning, his most common approach is to launch into a very fluent account of the story as he knows it, rather than to explain or paraphrase the meaning of the Turkish or indeed the English text.

‘Connectives and stuff’: understanding the structure of words and sentences

Where my status as a non-speaker of Turkish is a bonus is when the children, working together to understand the structure of the languages they know, take on the role of teacher to explain to me how Turkish works and how they make sense of the text in two languages. As they explore the structure of words in Turkish and word order within the sentence, Lek takes the lead. The following discussion shows Lek and Durkan exploring the morphology of two key words in the Turkish text. They have just read page 7 together:

Ama şalgamı görünce gözlerine inanamadılar! Bir zürafadan daha uzun ve bir filden daha genişti (But when they saw the turnip, they could hardly believe their eyes! It was taller than a giraffe, and wider than an elephant.)

In answer to a question, both children respond together and try to explain the significance of the suffix *-den* (*bir filden daha*: -er than an elephant, in this case ‘wider’). They tell me that elephant is *fil*, or is it *filden*? They argue: ‘*fil* is not, *filden* is not, I think ... *fil* is an elephant’. Lek explores the word:

‘*fil* is an elephant, but *filden* is like, it can be flower or another big elephant, or another big one.’ Durkan agrees that *filden* means bigger. Lek muses: ‘*filde*, smaller, but *filde*, you add *-en* and it gets bigger’.

Once again Durkan agrees and then he tells me that *zürafada* means giraffe. Lek picks up on this and considers how this relates to his explanations about the *fil* and *filden*: ‘you add *-an* and it makes it bigger. If you spell *zürafada*, that’s just a giraffe, but if you add *-an*, it makes it like, more popular, it’s like there’s more giraffes’. Durkan intervenes to suggest that this addition means bigger and Lek expands: ‘if you have, like, connectives and stuff, it makes the word bigger’.

Turkish is an agglutinative language and its morphological structure is very different from English. Lek has not made any direct comparisons between the two, but he has connected the grammar he has learned in English lessons in school with his understanding of the meaning of the suffixes on *fild-en* and *zürafa-dan*. Durkan comments on the fact that Turkish can have some very long words. Lek’s explanation

of this suggests that, although he is struggling to express it, he understands that Turkish words have a core and that the suffixes establish the precise meaning of the word in the context of the sentence. Both children have an awareness of this but have an, as yet, limited understanding of the exact meaning of the various suffixes: Lek's reference to *zuraçada* (on the giraffe) is not relevant to the meaning in this context. Lek explains: 'Because, like, because it's not, they're not big, 'cos some people just add, like ... connectives to it, to make it, like, more interesting. Then it makes it better.' In this instance, he seems to be referring to his literacy lessons in English in which he would have been introduced to technical vocabulary like connectives.

In the following extract, Lek takes on the role of teacher and explains the passage to me using a word-for-word translation. The Turkish text on page 9 reads:

Ben biliyorum, dedi Kieran, bir helikopterle çekerek çıkartabiliriz ('I know, we could get a helicopter to pull it out,' said Kieran").

Lek explains:

'That means I (pointing to *ben*) and that means *biliyorum*, that know, and *dedi* is words and *Kieran* is like, a name for Kieran, and *helikopter* is helicopter and *çekerek* I think it is could and this one is (the last word, *çıkartabiliriz*) is pulled'.

Although he does not explicitly comment on the differences in word order, Lek is carefully looking for ways of matching the Turkish and English texts. While he has expressed his agreement with Lek, Durkan has not directly contributed to this analysis or commented on word order.

Understanding the whole text

Although he has carried out some close analyses of the text, Lek prefers to use a range of clues as well as his understanding of key words in the text. Both children use, in varying degrees, the English text, the illustrations and their own wider knowledge of the conventions of picture books as well as the traditional story of *The Enormous Turnip*. Sometimes, in my role as the person who does not understand Turkish, I ask the children if they would explain to me a passage they have just read. This triggers complex discussions and a use of many different strategies.

As the children read '*Bayan Honeywood un sınıfında okuyan çocuklar her yıl okulum bahçesinde sebze ve meyva yetiştirirler*' (p1) they struggle with the last word. Lek suggests that it means 'catch up' and Durkan agrees (they are almost correct, but, in this context, it actually means 'to grow').

I probably look sceptical as this word does not seem to match the English translation, and Lek offers 'It says every year the children they, in Miss Honeywood, in her class, every day they pick fruit and vegetables in the school garden'. Durkan again agrees and Lek refers to the English text and reads 'Every year the children in Miss Honeywood's class grow some fruit and vegetables in the school garden'. However, neither child comments on the difference between the English text and the translation offered by Lek. The latter suggests that he has understood most of the sentence and probably used his knowledge of the story. However his interpretation implies that he has misunderstood the verb, that long difficult word at the end of the sentence, which means 'grow' but which Lek has translated first as 'catch up' and then as 'pick'. I am interested that he has been content with his approximate translation and not used the English text to refer back to the meaning of the Turkish.

Clues on the page: the two texts and the pictures

In the extract above, the English explanation of the Turkish text offered by the children was very close to the English translation, although the latter was not used to check for accuracy.

Lek makes greater use of both texts (as well as the illustration) in his reading of page 5. After reading the Turkish text '*Yazda çocuklar bitkileri besleyip suladılar. Ve tüm yaban otları söktüler*' he explains that it means 'In this the spring the children fed and watered the plants and they pulled the weeds, the roots out, they pulled the roots out ... the weeds inside the thing'. In this interpretation he uses part of a sentence from the English text which reads 'in the summer the children fed and watered the plants. And pulled out all the weeds', and refers to it to correct his original suggestion that the children were pulling out the roots, although he fails to notice that the English version refers to summer. The last phrase in his explanation comes from his interpretation of the illustration which shows weeds in a wheelbarrow.

Lek makes little further use of the parallel texts until page 16. Durkan reads the Turkish: '*Ama şalgam yine, şalgam yine kımıldamadı*' (But the turnip still would not move) and both children struggle to read the last word. Durkan works it out and exclaims triumphantly 'It never moved!' Lek tries to explain the problem by using the illustration, but seems to have some trouble interpreting it: 'I think it's stuck under the... this... this... grey thing'. He agrees when I suggest that the grey thing is the ground. He rolls the word *kımıldamadı* around in his mouth and reflects 'but the turnip still didn't, never moved', then checks the English and reads with satisfaction 'but the turnip still would not move'.

Durkan does not find it easy to explain to me in English what he has just read in Turkish and rarely refers to the English text for support, except in the two following examples. He reads the text on page 6 with enthusiasm and confidence and just a little help from Lek with the last two words.

'Çocuklar yaz tatillerinden döndüklerinde... döndüklerinde, sebze ve meyvaların büyü... büyüdü .. büyüdüğünü gördüler' (When the children came back, after their summer holiday, they found all the fruit and vegetables had grown).

In response to my usual question, Durkan tries to explain 'The children ... I think it was called the hot...'

Lek intervenes: 'It's not hot, it's, like, the season.' I ask if he means 'summer' and Durkan agrees 'summer, yeah.' I ask again 'what do you think it's saying?' Durkan reflects for a while 'I don't really know'.

I suggest he looks at the English text and he starts reading 'When the children came back after their summer ...' He leaps with excitement 'Yeah! It was their holiday' and reads on confidently.

Durkan read the Turkish on page 10 with some help from Lek: *Veya bir vinçle onu kaldıra kaldırabiliriz diye önerdi Ta... Ta...* (Lek: 'He said that wrong') *önerdi* (Lek: 'Yeah, that's it') *Tarik* (Or we could get a crane to lift it, suggested Tariq). In the following conversation Lek and Durkan are trying to make sense of the sentence. Lek suggests '*Tarak* (comb) is something like you do your hair' and Durkan offers an

alternative, cued by the illustration of a mechanical digger: '*Tarak* is something like there's a machine and it goes (makes tapping noise on the table) ... like that'. After a discussion about the meaning of *kaldırabiliriz* which Lek works out means 'to pick up' Durkan solves the Tarik mystery by referring to the English text 'I think he's called Tarik'.

However, later in the book, where the English text reads:

and it wobbled this way and that and then it slowly moved. They pulled even harder and at last the turnip rolled out of its hole and onto the grass.

The class cheered and danced around with joy.

Durkan, by reading the Turkish and using clues from the picture, has made sense of the text and paraphrases it: 'When the turnip came up they started dancing. They, it says, they pulled it more harder'.

Clues beyond the page - knowledge of stories

Knowledge of the nature of a text and the cultural features that locate it in a tradition provide powerful supports for reading and interpreting as they enable the reader to make predictions (Meek, 1988). Young children learning to read through well loved folk tales and popular picture books use their knowledge of the text and the cues from the illustrations to support their developing skills. So much so that many children learn favourite texts by heart and can lead a casual listener to think they are fluent readers. Evidence from the transcript suggests that the children's knowledge of the traditional story of The Enormous Turnip sometimes gets in the way of their interpreting the actual text on the page. This is most noticeable with Lek.

The illustrations and the names of children who feature in the story (Samira, Tarik, Kate) indicate that the version told here has transposed the tale to the garden of a school in an ethnically mixed part of Britain. In passing, it provides lessons on how to plant seeds and care for vegetables. The strategies involved in pulling the turnip out of the ground reflect an urban, technologically sophisticated society, as opposed to the old-fashioned, rural society that is the usual context for this folk tale. But the basic structure of the tale is the same.

Early on in the book, while looking at page 3 where the illustration shows children preparing the ground (and there is no sign or mention of a turnip), Lek and Durkan get very excited and both talk at the same time to tell me what is going to happen. Lek exclaims 'And that big thing! It's going to grow, the turnip!' and Durkan cuts in with 'And the people can't get out, and there's lots of people trying to pull it out, and when it pulled, they say 'hurray!' then they eat, I think'.

Later in the story, in the part of the text that tells of the turnip becoming wider than an elephant, Lek reads the Turkish but, rather than explain the meaning to me, he is inspired by a picture of the turnip that fills the entire page and struggles to explain in greater detail:

When the turnip got bigger, the people didn't know that they put too much weed inside it, and it got bigger and bigger and nobody couldn't pulled it, that's why, that's why the people came and needs a lot of help to pull it and, who pulled it, when everybody pulled it, all those people pulled it and it... it, all that hard work and people pulled it, they get to eat the turnip.

Later still Lek and Durkan argue about how the story will end. Lek suggests 'I think it will finish when they pull it out' but Durkan disagrees 'No! I think they eat it!'

While Durkan attempts to paraphrase and predict, it is clear that Lek loves the opportunity to move into story telling mode. After reading page 5 which shows the turnip seed being planted and watered, and weeds pulled out, Durkan predicts 'I bet they forgot one and then the thing going to get bigger!' But Lek launches into his own personalised narrative:

Once I went to this place in the garden and there was a big, there was a big turnip, and we couldn't get it out and, at the bottom there was roots, and at the bottom there was a hole, so somebody got under. Me and, me and my cousin and my other cousin and we was trying to get the turnip out, and somebody has to go under and take the root out. And I done it and I, when I went under, I saw the root, I just pushed it, then my cousin

and my other cousin got the spades and the, and pushed it a little bit and then I just punched and the turnip came out.

Whenever I ask the children about the meaning of bits of the story, what I get in response is often neither a translation nor a paraphrase of the text, but a much fuller account that draws from all the resources the children have found in the text and from their knowledge of the cultural context.

Discussion

I had opportunities to observe several of the children reading over a period of a few months, but the session with Lek and Durkan has been chosen for this chapter because they were representative of the group and the session encapsulated most of the features observed. The snapshot of the session was revealing for me, in my role as observer of children as experts and collaborative learners.

Texts that teach

The work of Meek has demonstrated how good quality children's picture books actively support inexperienced readers. Lek and Durkan use the illustrations, predict from their knowledge of traditional tales and are supported by appropriate language structures. The culture of shared classroom texts also supports the readers. Lek and Durkan have a knowledge and love of the traditional stories that they have encountered in their classroom and this propels them on to make hypotheses about what will happen and look for further textual clues. While the children have generally sound strategies for decoding words in both languages, their still imperfect knowledge of the two languages means they are still much in need of the support offered by an interesting, relevant and well structured text.

The additional clue in the texts provided by a second language turns the whole reading task into a complex linguistic and cultural puzzle which the children find challenging but enjoyable. As they compare and contrast, the process begins to lead them into an understanding of the ways in which their two languages differ. Of all the children in this study, they are the ones who comment most on this.

Culture and identity

The use of translated stories breaks down barriers between cultures (Meek, 2001) as it introduces children to many different story traditions. These help teachers to create a multicultural space in their classroom where children can recognise themselves in the teaching resources used. They provide the safe space that Creese *et al* (2006) describe in their study of complementary schools in which children can explore and develop a multicultural identity as they find opportunities for discussion and the sharing of experience. However, the strong bias in commercially published dual language books towards the western European folk tale tradition can make it difficult to find texts that reflect the cultures of all the children. The books the children chose to read to me did not reflect Turkish culture and their attraction for the children was the availability of the Turkish text.

Creese *et al* have referred to children developing their identity as learners. The children in this part of the study had been identified as ‘not good readers’. The way in which they struggled in varying degrees with the texts is much in evidence in the transcripts. In the encounters I had with the Turkish children, what was striking was the way in which they were redefining themselves. From admitting to not being good readers, especially in Turkish (Lek: ‘I’m not really good at reading Turkish’), by the time Lek and Durkan met with me for the long session with *The Giant Turnip* book, they were operating in quite a different mode: they were cracking a puzzle, they were highly motivated; they were punching the air and shouting ‘Yeah!’ when they understood something that challenged them. However daunting the task, they were working on it together, succeeding most of the time in cracking the code, and learning was becoming fun. Their current teacher had given them an opportunity to read in Turkish and my presence and interest turned them into experts. The strength of their commitment was evident in the session recorded above in their wish to go on reading long after they should have returned to their class.

Meek tells us how children draw on the whole of their culture when reading and writing ‘if we let them’ (1988:38). While behaving and sounding exactly like the London-born children that they are, there is evidence in the following extract that the children are drawing on the whole of their culture. Lek and Durkan read together:

Ayçiçeği, bezelye, ve şalgam yetiştirmeğe ..(they struggle with this)

Durkan: *karar verdiler.*

(They decided to grow sunflowers, peas and turnips.)

The reference to the turnip reminds the children of a Turkish drink which they describe to me:

RS: So what does that mean then?

Lek: It's a turnip and sometimes Turkish people turn the turnip, they do something with another fruit, I don't know and they just put it together and they squeeze it and...

Durkan: A drink.

RS: You make a drink with it?

Durkan: And they put, children can drink it but, it's a little bit hot, it's a little bit...

RS: Is it strong?

Durkan: No, it's a little bit like...

Lek: It's a little bit thing, like, it's bad.

RS: Is it bitter?

Durkan: No, it's hot.

RS: Spicy?

Lek: Spicy.

RS: Spicy hot.

Durkan: Oh, I know and it's red.

Lek: They get, they put it in the machine, like four turnips and they squeeze and it, it turns, it goes in a special machine, so they can take the germs and things out, and sometimes they clean it and put in a factory and then they take it to shops, then people get buy it.

Durkan: Sometimes it ain't hot.

Lek: Sometimes it's sweet, for children. But the hot ones are for ... Yes, I did, the hot one, I drank. It's so hot!

I later find out that the children are referring to *Şalgam suy*, a spicy drink made from pickled turnip juice.

As the dinner hour approaches, Lek starts to tell me about the Turkish books he has at home and sometimes reads with his mother. Durkan explains that he doesn't have many books but sometimes reads with Lek when he goes to his house. But there is competition there from a playstation game in Turkish, featuring a scenario played out in Istanbul.

The children then proceed to tell me how I could learn Turkish. Lek suggests:

First you would have to, like, go to Turkey and you have, like, listen to people and like, learn the words. You go to Turkey and if they know English they'll tell you the Turkish. And then, they'll say it in English what it is. Or you could go to Turkish school and learn. To adult school. Or you can just listen to people so you can learn Turkish.

And Durkan adds 'And you could get a bodyguard to tell you everything'.

Suddenly Lek boasts of all the rhymes that his grandmother knows. 'My Granma, my Grandmother teached me that and she knows 108 of them. At Turkey everybody knows different songs with hands. I just know 10.' He jumps up. Durkan hesitates, he's not sure he knows them. Lek demonstrates and the session ends in a very lively performance of several intricate hand clapping songs.