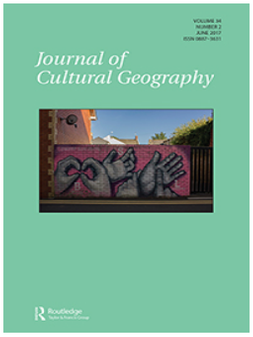

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Tracing deaf youth geographies and mobilities in Turkey: insights from a vocational high school

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ABSTRACT

This article provides a description of the social geographies articulated by a group of deaf students who are enrolled at a semi-residential vocational high school for the deaf in Turkey. Using the mobilities paradigm as a theoretical and analytical framework, the study focuses on the social and spatial practices of nine deaf young women who are residential students at a vocational high school in Istanbul. The article elaborates on their modes, tools, aptitudes and ideas of social movement, often in comparison with their non-residential and male deaf peers. It also presents a reading of this vocational high school as a system of mobilities that regulates the social navigation practices of its students, as well as a field of possibilities where competing cultural and political ideologies on the mobilities of deaf, young and female actors in Turkey are materialized. Data for this study come from in-depth interviews with students, participant observations and informational interviews that the author conducted with the administrators of this school in 2012.

KEYWORDS Mobilities; deaf schools; sign language; youth; gender; Turkey

Particularly since the 2010s, deaf people in Turkey have been experiencing a pronounced expansion in their geographies of social participation and authorship. This shift was triggered by a series of events, such as (1) the increasing government concern for disability rights and accessibility issues for full membership in the *European Union (EU)*, (2) the signing of *United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities* (UNCRPD), (3) the growing interest in Turkish Sign Language (TID) and deaf people among Turkish scholars and the general population and (4) the widespread adoption of mobile technologies and social media among deaf communities (in Turkey and other countries), which not only allowed for more fluid patterns of social interaction (Padden 2007), but also improved international Deaf encounters (Ilkbasaran 2015b). That said, these geographies are articulated within larger cultural, institutional and material ecologies, and are impacted by existing social divides with respect to access (i.e. age, gender,

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socioeconomic status). In that sense, it is imperative for contemporary descriptions of deaf people's geographies to be framed by social theories that acknowledge the extent of technological mediation in our lives, while providing a dynamic yet situated conceptualization of diversely embodied agencies. In this article, I will be primarily using the mobilities paradigm (Creswell 2006, Kaufmann 2002, Sheller and Urry 2006) as an analytical framework in my description of a group of young deaf women's geographies at a vocational high school in Turkey.

Residential schools for the deaf have historically played a critical role in the lives of deaf people globally. They represent places of deaf becoming – as signing and visual people, but also as the initial sites of oppression and struggle (Ladd 2003). Academic work that describes the social lives of young deaf students and the range of their geographies around deaf schools and their dormitories is relatively scarce (Lane 1999, Valentine and Skelton 2003). One place where these narratives can be found is sign language performances where deaf people traditionally express their stories of oppression and struggle as a part of their empowerment process (Humphries 2008). Poetry and storytelling – particularly in American Sign Language for the United States – have functioned as forms of cultural transmission and historical documentation similar to oral cultures (Bahan 2006), while the invention of film liberated these narratives from the constraint of physical time and place, contributing immensely to their preservation (Krentz 2006). Similarly, autobiographical narratives on this topic can now be found in online videos (YouTube, Facebook, or Gallaudet University's Visual Library[1]) where Deaf people share their personal stories in different national sign languages.

Deaf people cope with hearing-centric social structures and landscapes on a daily basis. With the exception of some villages where deaf communities of a significant size evolve across several generations (Meir *et al.* 2010), the dominant human civilization and material culture is largely designed to align with the sensibilities, capacities and intentions of speaking-hearing bodies. The extent of deaf people's agencies depends on both their vernacular tactics in navigating these sociotechnical environments, as well as their ability to rewrite these social spaces legibly (via authorship and production) and better align them with their own sensory and cultural orientations (Ahmed 2006, Ihde 2009, Bauman and Murray 2010). With his formulation of "complex embodiment", Siebers (2010) views disability as a social location where intersectional identities (of age, gender, class, race or disability) come together and uniquely interact with social structures in the practice of everyday life. As Siebers suggests, individual epistemologies offer us complex subject positionalities through which we can view and critique prevalent social structures and ideologies. In that respect, my investigation of the mobilities and geographies of Turkish deaf youth is enriched by the demographic diversity of my deaf participants and their intersectional identities.

The practice of mobilities often comes with restrictions (Hannam *et al.* 2006). Deaf schools create both mobilities and fixities for their students. Schools shape their current mobilities based on their physical locations and the social connections that they provide, as well as via institutional regulations, recurring activities and architectural structures. Furthermore, they shape the future mobilities and geographies of their students through the literacies, skills and networks that these students acquire at these institutions. This article thus aims to describe the social geographies and mobilities of a group of young deaf women in Turkey, and explore how their spatial practices intersect with broader discursive, socioeconomic, institutional and material ecologies.

Theoretical framework: mobilities paradigm and Deaf geographies

The primacy of mobility as a unit of social analysis has been theorized in great detail since the turn of the century (Urry 2000, 2007, Kaufmann 2002, 2011, Cresswell 2006, 2010, 2013, Sheller and Urry 2006, Blommaert 2010). Responding to social life being increasingly mediated and amplified by technologies in late modern life, the mobilities paradigm and the field of mobility studies emerged mainly at the intersection of urban sociology, human geography, feminist geography, transportation studies and migration studies. Since then, dimensions of mobility as a construct and the affordances of mobility-based research have both been explored and critiqued. In its theoretical and analytical framework, this study borrows a collection of elements from this line of work and considers them within the scope of both Deaf studies and Deaf geographies.

Urry (2007) makes a productive analytical distinction between four types of human travel based on the medium of experience: *corporeal, imaginative, communicative* and *virtual*. These interdependent modes of human travel intersect with the mobilities that are generated in the creation, production, distribution and consumption of material artifacts. According to Urry, the spatial and temporal distribution of people, activities and objects are regulated via "mobility systems", which refer to both the means of physical human transportation (i.e. the pedestrian-system, the rail-system) and the technologies that organize various modes of travel (i.e. the telephone-system, networked computer-systems). Important to note here is that both Urry's own work and the studies that come out of this field typically foreground the physical movement of people and objects over other types of travel, and we typically see physical contact framed as the driving force of sustained social networks (Larsen, Axhausen and Urry 2006). While this may be the case, such a paradigm can also be used to provide a thick multimodal description of the physical, cognitive, linguistic

and virtual geographies articulated and imagined by an individual or a particular group.

Kaufmann (2002) further expands the notion of mobilities to include potential as well as actualized forms of mobility, by introducing the concept of *motility*: the capacity to be mobile.[2] This view understands motility as an agent of change and a form of capital, and rather proposes the study of conditions and processes that equip agents with the aptitudes required in the types of movement that they aspire (Flamm and Kaufmann 2006). Bringing mobilities research into greater alignment with phenomenology in its conceptualization of structure and agency, Kaufmann (2011) theorizes mobility in three analytical dimensions: *field of possibilities* (infrastructure, physical space, institutions and conditions of access), *aptitude for movement* (motility, considering physical, financial, cognitive, linguistic or aspirational conditions and skills) and actual *movement* (of people, ideas, objects and information in physical space). It is this quality of motility as a potential form of social capital and its emphasis in the conditions and skills around agency that I will explore with respect to the present study.

A more recent intervention affecting mobility studies has been the reemphasis on the relations of power and space, as well as the role of discourse in shaping mobilities and subjectivities, by revisiting it from a Foucauldian perspective (Jensen 2011, Manderscheid *et al.* 2014, Endres *et al.* 2016). While we see this sensibility in Urry's work to a certain extent, in governmentality being a drive for the structuring of mobilities, the recent critique is that only a few studies in the field have directly engaged with discourses that legitimize particular technologies of power, knowledge and biopolitics. This is changing and perhaps less so in the context of border- and migration-related work around mobilities.[3]

The understanding that social spaces are contested and created via discourse is certainly not new to Deaf studies. Both the discourse of Deaf empowerment and the field of Deaf studies consider sign language (attitudes, practices and affordances) central to the Deaf community's claiming of an alternative Deaf self and culture, as well as their navigation and archiving of social life (Humphries 1996). Narratives on how Deaf people claim Deaf spaces through communicative exchanges in sign language during face-to-face gatherings are many (Bahan 2006). It has also been acknowledged that these spatial and cultural practices are diversely shaped based on one's geographical location, class, profession, ethnicity and race (Padden and Humphries 1988, 2005).

Lane (1992) draws from Foucault (1975) to highlight the ways in which educational and medical institutions for the deaf have historically and systematically claimed authority over making critical decisions regarding the lives of deaf people. Bauman (2004) brings this together with Derrida's (1974) critique of "phonocentrism" inherent in human civilizations to elaborate on

Humphries' (1975) concept of "audism", the oppression and discrimination experienced by deaf people based on hearing ability. Similarly, Gulliver (2009) studies the spatial narratives of deaf people in the UK and their production of deaf spaces as sites of Foulcaudian resistance in a hearing world. Some practical applications of this line of critique have been made in the fields of Design and Architecture via the *DeafSpace* project that began in 2005[4] (Bauman 2014), and the broader *Deaf Gain* movement (Bauman and Murray 2010, 2014, Hauser *et al.* 2010). In these projects, deaf people's sensibilities are put to the benefit of the society at large, such that while deaf people become professionals and authors in redesigning various domains of life, and also become active agents in a political economy. Similarly Harold (2013) brings the *phonocentrism* and *audism* critiques to social and cultural geography, arguing that the dominant hearing/aural ontology in these fields should be complemented by an equally legitimate deaf visuo-spatial ontologies, in order to provide a more critical and inclusive reading of the urban landscape.

Similar to mobility studies, Deaf studies scholars have also traditionally foregrounded corporeal modes of social navigation and interaction, and studied deaf spaces in built environments. However, as the nature of human material landscape and social interaction changed over the years, so have the scope of studies concerning deaf people's social and cultural practices. Today, considering the ubiquity of information and communication technologies (ICTs) and social media in our lives, a significant dimension of deaf people's cultural and spatial practices would be missed if we do not look beyond face-to-face interactions. Consequently, there is a line of research investigating deaf people's everyday use of communication technologies (Zazove *et al.* 2004, Power, Power, and Horstmanshof 2007, Okuyama 2013, Maiorana-Basas and Pagliaro 2014). Another line of work looks at the role that deaf people's virtual or technologically mediated social interactions play in the production of deaf spaces: Valentine and Skelton's (2008) study of the interactions between online and offline Deaf spaces in the UK, or Kusters' (2009, 2012, and this issue) work that looks at the production of Deaf spaces on the move in Mumbai, as deaf people navigate the city and commute via mobile phones for increased and real-time connectivity. There is also growing interest in how deaf people's social ties and networks are maintained through interactions in digital spaces (Cuculick 2014, Kurz and Cuculick 2015, Ilkbasaran 2015b, Friedner and Kusters 2015, Kožuh *et al.* 2016). Finally, we are now at a point where academic authorship regarding deaf people's social practices is beginning to be claimed by deaf scholars themselves – particularly from the field of anthropology – offering alternative intersectional deaf ontologies and epistemologies (Kusters, De Meulder and O'Brian forthcoming).

To summarize, there are three main aspects of spatial practice considered within mobility studies that I find valuable to highlight in the study of deaf

people's geographies: (1) the conceptualization of travel beyond the physical realm that includes cognitive, linguistic and virtual spaces, (2) the consideration of aptitudes, conditions and processes that are involved in one's capacity to be mobile across domains and (3) the relationship of these spatial practices to dominant discourses, biopolitics and economies that structure critical institutions of human regulation. Bringing these three points together with Siebers' (2010) emphasis on *intersectionality* and "complex embodiment", I consider the education system as a system of mobilities, such that the governance, discipline and regulation of particularly abled or gendered subjects are materialized and contested at educational institutions. *How are the mobilities of a deaf individual or group tied to prevalent national and international discourses and economies around educational practices, particularly concerning the education of deaf people? How do various medical and educational institutions regulate and inform the present and future spatial distribution of young deaf people? Which other intersectional identities or demographics tend to widen a deaf person's horizon of social geographies in a given society? How does a deaf person come to be aware of the scope of their potential future geographies, or know how to go about shaping them?* In particular, considering the Turkish deaf education system as a system of mobilities, I look at how competing ideologies, political economies and regulations that concern young women and deaf people in Turkey, are materialized at a semi-residential vocational high school for the deaf in Istanbul, and ultimately inform their social geographies.

Participants

This article is largely based on data collected in 2012 for my dissertation study (Ilkbasaran 2015a) investigating the social and communicative practices of young deaf people Turkey, working closely with 18 high school students and 15 young adults, along with a virtual ethnography on Facebook. In the present study, I elaborate on the spatial practices of a smaller subset of these participants, focusing on nine deaf and hard of hearing women enrolled at a vocational high school for the deaf in İstanbul, who were also residents of the school's dormitory for girls.

Schooling for deaf and hard of hearing children in Turkey has been traditionally carried out at deaf schools (44 primary/secondary and 21 vocational high schools), some of which also offer boarding for those who do not have deaf schools in their hometowns. While deaf children from smaller towns may attend residential schools as early as primary school, more deaf high school students reside in dormitories away from home due to the relative scarcity of high schools for the deaf. This vocational high school offers three programs for its students: Information Technologies, Clothing Production and Culinary Services. At the time of the study there were a total of 24 female

students from different parts of Turkey staying at this school's dormitory for girls, and 9 of them were interviewed. Male and non-residential participants of the larger study will also be mentioned occasionally, in order to provide comparisons and contrasts as necessary.

The ages of the nine residential students interviewed ranged from 15 to 18 (μ: 17), and they came from 7 different cities across three regions in Turkey. Five of them identified as "deaf", and the remaining four identified as "hard of hearing", although they all reported not having functional hearing to understand speech. They were all born deaf, except for one, who was deafened when she was two and a half years old. All participants were exposed to Turkish Sign Language (TID) when they entered primary school for the deaf ($n = 8$, range: 6–11, μ: 7.25), except for one student who was mainstreamed at a hearing school first and only learned TID from her older deaf brother when she was 12. A detailed breakdown of participants' parental demographics can be seen in Table 1 below. Only one participant had a deaf father, but he was not fluent in TID. Seven participants had at least one deaf sibling. Administrators of the school indicated that majority of students at this school came from lower income families.

Materials and procedures

The findings of this article are based largely on the in-depth interviews that I conducted with the participants described above, as well as my participant observations and interactions with teachers and administrators at this high school during the last two weeks of their 2012–2013 school year. As a hearing woman who grew up in Turkey, I am a native speaker of Turkish and have acquired conversational fluency in TID during my academic interactions with deaf people of different age groups and from different regions of Turkey since 2001.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted in TID, at times accompanied by spoken Turkish depending on the student's language preferences. Each interview took about an hour and was filmed on a digital HD

Table 1. Distribution of parental demographics: hearing status, communication method with their deaf child and education level ($n = 9$).

		Mothers	Fathers
Parental hearing status	*Hearing*	9 (100%)	8 (89%)
	Deaf	0 (0%)	1 (11%)
Communication method with deaf child	*Uses TID*	4 (44%)	2 (22%)
	Uses gesture or limited TID	3 (33%)	4 (44%)
	Uses oral & written language	2 (22%)	n/a
Parental education level	*No schooling*	2 (22%)	2 (22%)
	Primary school degree	5 (56%)	2 (22%)
	Secondary school degree	0 (0%)	1 (11%)
	n/a	2 (22%)	4 (44%)

camcorder, except for one student who did not want to be filmed. Interview topics covered the students' language background, face-to-face and distance communication practices at home and at school, their access to and use of ICTs with friends and family, as well as their routine social practices at or outside of school. Towards the end of each interview, the students were also asked to identify and mark the cities that they have visited in Turkey on a black and white print out of a map of Turkey. For each city, they were also asked to specify the purpose, year and duration of their visits, along with the means of transportation that they used to get there, as well as who accompanied them.

Apart from the interviews, I joined the students at the cafeteria during lunch, as well as in the courtyard during recess, where I got to interact with them less formally. With the permission of administrators, I also visited the dormitory where residential students live. During my half-hour visit, a few of the students that I interviewed gave me a tour of their rooms and other shared areas. Finally, I conducted several informal informational interviews with the administrators and teachers of the school, focusing on their concerns regarding the quality of education, instructional methods, as well as the use of technology in the classroom.

This study was possible upon obtaining an Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from the University of California San Diego, an approval from the Turkish Ministry of Education to conduct research at several vocational high schools for the deaf in Turkey, the signed/written consent from the participants, as well as a written consent from the head of the dormitory as the official institutional guardian of the students.

Tracing social practice across mobilities

In this section, I will elaborate on the mobilities and social geographies of the deaf high school students detailed above, grouped under four interdependent modes of human travel outlined by Urry: corporeal, communicative, virtual and imaginative. I will then complicate this picture by detailing how these mobilities and related capabilities intersect with larger cultural, socioeconomic, institutional and material ecologies.

Corporeal mobilities

By *corporeal mobilities*, Urry refers to the physical relocation of people. Deaf schools are one of the most critical systems of mobility for deaf children, and are typically the main engines of everyday corporeal mobilities for deaf people until adulthood. Deaf schools generate daily mobilities for deaf students between home and school, as well as temporary mobilities via school trips or sports and dance competitions. In the case of vocational high schools, mandatory internships arranged by schools provide deaf students an introduction

to future professional mobilities of adulthood. The social skills, literacies and networks that are acquired at these institutions also largely determine deaf people's future geographies.

For deaf children in Turkey who have access to educational or rehabilitation services, everyday corporeal mobilities take place between their homes, their schools and other institutions where they can get additional services, like medical evaluations or speech therapy. School placements of deaf children in Turkey are determined by specialists at the Counseling and Research Centers (RAM),[5] who direct parents to an educational institution and provide additional services that they see appropriate for a particular child. Unlike the larger cities of Istanbul, Ankara or Izmir, where multiple counseling and educational institutions offer a range of services, many cities in Eastern or rural parts of Turkey lack such resources. As a result, deaf children from rural areas often separate from their families as early as primary school to stay at dormitories in a bigger city, only to relocate to a dorm elsewhere for high school, leaving behind most of their friends (Ilkbasaran 2013).

Currently, there are about 5000 deaf and hard of hearing students enrolled in the deaf education system in Turkey – primary through high school – and almost twice as many are mainstreamed following a new trend in the education of deaf people (TOHAD 2015). All deaf-only high schools in Turkey are vocational high schools. According to latest statistics, there are 21 "special education vocational high schools" serving 2088 deaf and hard of hearing students (1221 male: 867 female) across the nation (RTMNE 2016). One of the schools listed only has students with orthopedic disabilities, while another two serve both groups. Education at these institutions is co-ed, but dormitories either serve girls ($n = 5$) or boys ($n = 12$), except for two schools that have a dorm for boys and girls, and the remaining two are without dorms (see Figure 1). For this reason, residential students often end up changing cities for their high school education and deaf siblings of the opposite sex end up in different cities.[6]

Parents of deaf girls can be especially reluctant to send their children to school, due to a combination of fear for their safety and a lack of interest in the role of schooling in their daughters' future. The gender divide in access to education is a problem that affects the Turkish population at large, and girls with disabilities are exceptionally disadvantaged in that they can be over-protected and under-invested in by their parents. In a recent study conducted by Alat and Alat (2011) in the Black Sea region of Turkey, where school enrollment rates for girls are the lowest, some of the key obstacles were identified as poverty, concern for girls' chastity, use of girl's labor at home, early (child) marriages, conservatism and preference for Koran schools with boarding schools, and low expectations from educated women's employment[7]. One male deaf participant from an Eastern rural town reported that his two older deaf sisters were never sent to school and

Figure 1. Distribution of vocational high schools for the deaf in Turkey for the 2015–2016 school year, by the sex of residential students accepted.

grew up with very limited communication with their parents. Cases like these not only result in significant corporeal fixities for deaf girls, but also contribute to the lack of linguistic and communicative input, which restricts their language and cognitive development, and further limits their communicative and imaginative mobilities.

At this school, young deaf women staying at the dormitory typically spend their entire day for roughly nine months of the year within the school premises. Access to the schoolyard is permitted during recess and after school hours. The courtyard has a cement floor, a couple of benches to sit on, a few trees, and a basketball court. During recess and after hours, students scatter around the school chatting, go online around a laptop, or play sports: either table tennis indoors, or volleyball or basketball outside.

Here is how an 18-year-old (10th grade) residential student from a rural town in eastern Turkey describes a typical school day:

> In the morning, they wake us up around 7 … but if I get up at 7, I get ready and wait for everyone else. So I usually I stay in bed until 7:30. Then I get up, get clean, brush my teeth, get dressed and wait until breakfast. When breakfast is finished friends start coming in, we say "good morning!" to each other and chat … [she clarifies her sign for "good morning!" and asks me the TID signs that I know for it.]. Classes begin at 9 … teachers come, we chat, that's all … [I ask about after school] … At 3:10, classes are over. So we go change, go out and play some volleyball, you know, out of boredom. We want to be out in the schoolyard; that is allowed. But sometimes I go take a nap, or take a bath, stuff like that [I ask if they are allowed to go to the supermarket nearby, after school] … No, that is only for Saturdays and Sundays, we are not allowed to go during the week … but you know the students who go home everyday? Sometimes I give them money and ask them to buy different kinds of food for me, so they bring it here before they leave for home … [I ask

about what they do after dinner] … after dinner we go back up to the dorm … we chat, watch television … and we usually go to bed around 10–11 pm …

The dorm is located on the second floor of the school building. The staircase leading to the dorm is separated from the rest of the school by a see-through iron gate that is locked most of the day, except for a few hours after school. Students do not have the key to this gate, and they depend on their dorm supervisors to get in and out, who are young hearing women in their mid-twenties. Although there is a doorbell at the gate, it tends to break – just as it did during my visit – causing the students to be temporarily locked out of the dorm inside the school building. When this happens, they text their friends who are inside the dorm, or the supervisor directly. Students find this very frustrating, as it can sometimes take a while for them to get the attention of the supervisors.

The only routine physical access that most students have to life outside of school is brief visits to a nearby supermarket or department store over the weekends. However, many students come from lower income families and they cannot buy much with their allowances. Some students stated that they would rather stay in their dorm rooms, instead of going out to the store and feeling tempted and frustrated. According to one participant, they used to spend more time outside of school over the weekends in the past, like going to the movies as a group, but following some recent incidents the administration took away some of their privileges. "It used to be much better, now we are really bored … " she stated.

Students whose parents live a few hours away or those with guardians in Istanbul get to spend some weekends with family. These guardians are either older siblings or aunts and uncles, who migrated to Istanbul for educational or employment reasons. In these cases, the guardians come to the school building at the end of the week to pick up the student. These students consider themselves among the lucky few that can get out to enjoy some family time, travel in the city, and sometimes, even arrange to meet with their classmates outside of school. However, many of them reported that just like the school administrators, their caretakers are often more protective than their own parents, not letting them out on their own to meet with their friends. Students mentioned that they have much more freedom to move independently in their hometowns, when they are back home during the long breaks to stay with their parents. When they are in Istanbul, their physical mobility is tied to those of their relatives, only going out together to visit neighbors or other family members in town. Otherwise, their guardians act out of responsibility and fear that something might happen to them under their watch.

Beyond being educational destinations, deaf institutions offer other opportunities of physical travel to their students. Almost all students listed school

trips as the primary means through which they got to see Istanbul as well as travel to other parts of Turkey. This was particularly true for those with low-income families from rural towns, who have neither the means nor the time to go on such trips. Traveling to key national historic sites and attending national sports or folkloric dance competitions were the primary reasons for school trips. For these trips they typically take the bus, which is cheaper and also allows them to see more places on the way to their destinations. Deaf students who join sports and traditional Turkish dance clubs at their schools also attend competitions, both within and outside of their cities. Some of these competitions are specifically for deaf children, while at others deaf and hearing children of particular age groups compete. Occasionally, schools for the deaf partner up with mainstream schools for their teams to practice together. Deaf students who are members of sports and dance clubs seem to be more advantaged, both in having more opportunities to travel as well as meeting peers of diverse backgrounds with similar interests. Some of these encounters, especially those with deaf peers in other schools and cities, lead to friendships that are sustained via social media and other online communication tools. In fact, some of these students grow up to become national deaf athletes and travel internationally to meet and interact with deaf people from other countries. However, it is worth noting that there is a serious asymmetry in the gender distribution of registered national deaf athletes (6:1) and those who compete internationally (3:1), favoring men (Yaprak Kemaloglu 2010, Ilkbasaran 2015b).

Communicative mobilities

Being skilled in languages allows us to give meaning to the organization of social life that we are a part of, as well as extending our perceptions and intentions further across time and space. In Urry's paradigm, *communicative travel* refers to one's experience of travel while communicating with another person, or the geographies articulated via language. As a cultural artifact and a dynamic archive, languages evolve in response to the social practices and needs of their users, with the intentions of increasing human agency in the practice of everyday life (Bakhtin 1986). Through linguistic exchange we have access to the experiences, memories, perspectives and aspirations of others. These alternative viewpoints offer different interpretations of our complex social landscape, allowing us to form a more comprehensive sense of the sociotechnical ecology that we are a part of. Moreover, as we materialize our intentions and aspirations in language acts, we become active political agents in the critique, authoring and reshaping the social and material organization of life. In that sense, language repertoires not only capture the many dimensions of a community's cultural heritage, but also serve as one of the most basic forms of human agency (Austin 1975, Blommaert and Dong

2010). It is imperative to understand that all of this applies to all forms of deaf people's communicative exchanges, which are very diverse.

The communicative geographies of deaf and hard of hearing people are complex, and experienced in a wide variety of interactive and cultural spaces, mediated by a wide variety of technologies. Deaf people may be able to sign, speak or have limited hearing (with or without assistive technologies), or read and write to different extents. They may be communicating with hearing people who can sign at various levels, or with hearing non-signers (via textual or gestural means). Young deaf people could be communicating with deaf peers from within or outside of their school, city or country. Deaf people, therefore, experience not only one form of communicative mobility, but many – each one dependent on different media, skills and physical abilities.

Born largely to hearing non-signer parents with whom they have very limited communication, deaf children flourish linguistically and socially at deaf schools when they encounter deaf peers. Most deaf children in Turkey first encounter TID after the age of six, when they enter primary schools for the deaf and interact with older deaf students. Among my participants, the average age of schooling and TID exposure was 7, past the critical period of language acquisition (0–5) for normal cognitive and linguistic development (Mayberry 2007, Humphries *et al.* 2012). The consensus among my participants was that it took them roughly three years to acquire enough proficiency to fully express themselves in TID. So they were almost 10 years old by the time that they could comfortably communicate in TID. All participants identified TID as their preferred means of daily communication with peers, while they used a combination of strategies with teachers and administrators (i.e. lip reading, speaking, gesturing, signing and writing).

In Turkey, deaf adults are not typically employed at deaf schools as teachers, teacher-aids or administrators. That is likely why the TID used at these institutions is somewhat disconnected from the TID variants used by the Turkish Deaf community at large. The connection seems to be provided by either the deaf students with signing deaf adults in their family, or older high school students who have more direct access to the deaf adult community in Turkey. It is often the older male students who learn TID variants at Deaf clubs from adults, and teach them to their younger deaf peers at school. Another opportunity for deaf students to encounter regional TID variants is when they travel for sports or dance competitions, as mentioned in the previous section. These interactions also potentially contribute to the expansion and evolution of TID geographies, especially regarding sports terminology (Ilkbasaran 2015b).

Students reported that with a few exceptions, their teachers were not fluent in TİD to fully communicate with them or to use it for instruction. There are three main reasons behind this. First of all, the majority of teachers at

vocational high schools for the deaf in Turkey are trained only in their subject areas and not in Special or Deaf Education. Subject teachers are randomly appointed to deaf high schools, where they stay until they are reappointed to mainstream schools. Several teachers at this school voiced their frustrations and discouragement regarding the lack of professional training and educational materials in TID in particular subject areas. Second, even those who receive training in Deaf education are offered TID only as one single semester course at the very end of their four-year programs. There were weekly introductory level TID classes offered to teachers at this school, taught by a deaf adult, to which only some teachers volunteered to attend after school. Third, there are no deaf adults or hearing native signers teaching at deaf schools, who can serve as language models and communication aids in the classroom. There was one deaf secretary employed at this school, who is occasionally recruited at times of conflict. It is important to note that despite this serious communication gap, there are no sign language interpreters employed at deaf schools in Turkey either. Students stated that when available, the better hearing Turkish-TID bilingual students often bridge this communication gap and function as teacher-aids. Starting with elementary school, this language barrier between the teachers and the students significantly impairs the quality of instruction and communicative geographies at deaf schools. According to school administration, most parents are minimally educated, are often busy at work, and know little about deaf education. Thus, parents do not create much pressure over the teachers or the administration regarding the quality of education that their deaf children receive at these institutions. Due to language deprivation during early childhood, limited teacher–student communication in the classroom, and lower expectations in their academic achievement, most deaf students in Turkey acquire a high school degree without having acquired basic textual literacy skills, let alone the proficiency to "read to learn" (Ilkbasaran 2015a). Consequently, the intellectual and subject domains that young deaf people explore and navigate are also limited compared to their hearing peers in the country.

Low-education and low-income parents are more limited in providing access to assistive and communicative technologies for their deaf children. Many students reported not being able to use their hearing aids for long periods of time, because they either required new batteries or repair. Their parents were not able to help for a combination of reasons: they did not have the financial means, enough time because of working long hours, or the necessary textual or information literacy to go about solving such problems. Several students mentioned their older deaf or hearing siblings stepping in to fix these problems on behalf of their parents. Similarly, parental income affects both the deaf students' access to mobile phones and the Internet services that can be afforded with these devices. This will be explored

further in the "Virtual mobilities" section, as it intersects with mobile and virtual connectivity.

Coming back to the residential students, most of whom rarely leave the premises of the school building except for holidays and school trips, their experience of social navigation seems to take the form of peer-to-peer communication more than corporeal relocation. Their primary pastime activity is chatting with one another face-to-face, followed by via textual and multimedia based communication technologies, which will be explored further in the following sections.

Imaginative mobilities

One does not necessarily have to move physically to experience being somewhere other than the here and now. *Imaginative travel*, according to Urry's paradigm, has to do with the sense of being displaced while interacting with a range of visual media, be it text, images, video or simply one's own memory or imagination. Typical vehicles for such travel can be books, photographs, television, or more recently the Internet. For deaf people, sign language videos that are authored by deaf people and circulated online via social media platforms are a great source of imaginative travel, since they provide direct access to the content without the language barrier. The main difference between imaginative travel and virtual travel that will be discussed in the next section, is that while the latter typically assumes active engagement and interaction with other people and places in digital space, the former does not. Here, we will be looking at the extent of access that the residential students have to these instruments of travel stated above, the frequencies of their engagement, and their preferences regarding content. In addition, I will also discuss their desired travel destinations here, both as their present imaginative mobilities, but also as cues for their current affiliations and future corporeal mobilities.

Book-reading rates are exceptionally low in Turkey compared to European countries. According to Aydin and Guloglu's (2012) analysis based on the "2005–2006 Household Budget Survey" of the Turkish Statistical Institute (TSI), only 11% of the respondents in 17,310 households declared reading or purchasing books as a leisure time activity. The same analysis also concludes that the top three factors that inform this practice are income, education and gender, respectively. Moreover, a recent OECD (2016) report based on empirical research states that Turkey's national average literacy score is significantly below the OECD average and almost half of the Turkish population reads at or below Level 1. In addition to these troubling statistics, decades of research from around the world show a significant divide between the textual literacy skills of deaf and hearing children (Spencer and Marschark 2010). Many studies across decades report deaf people's average reading level to be around 4th grade for the United States

(Traxler 2000), and several other countries (Lederberg *et al.* 2013). The situation appears to be even worse among Turkish deaf readers (Kargin *et al.* 2012, Miller *et al.* 2015, Ilkbasaran 2015a). None of the deaf students in this study mentioned reading on a regular basis. For many, book reading was a forced and failed activity in elementary school, discontinued as soon as the academic requirement ceased to exist. Several indicated that their textual literacy skills used to be better in elementary school, when they continued to receive Turkish language instruction and the sign language competencies of their teachers were relatively higher. They reported feeling overwhelmed by the length and complexity of texts even when they were page-long scripts in plain non-technical Turkish. All considered, and minus a few exceptions, this population does not appear to experience a sense of travel by reading books.

Turkish newspapers make considerable use of photographs and images, thus are more accessible to less literate populations than books. That said, with the exception of one participant, newspaper reading was not a common practice among this group. Overall, more of the non-residential male participants reported reading newspapers than the female participants, more online than paper, and focusing mainly on the sports section. This was due to the visual nature and the relative simplicity in the language used in reporting sports news, coupled with their personal interests, prior knowledge and literacies concerning the subject. The sports websites these young deaf men follow also include videos of actual games, providing them the opportunity to experience a sense of imaginative travel from one game to the other, primarily of soccer, parallel with its national popularity.

At the dormitory, watching television is one of the most popular activities. Students spend the majority of their television time watching Turkish soap operas, most of which are dramas. Saturating prime time television in Turkey, these dramas reflect and to a certain extent reinforce Turkish social norms and values, as well as portraying typical class struggles and dynamics that low-income students can relate to, deaf or hearing. Although these series are not accompanied by captions in Turkish, their slow pace and predictable plots make them easier to follow by deaf people, even without captions or interpreting.[8] It is possible that the highly gestural aspect of Turkish culture also makes them easier to understand. Because these series are a big part of the popular culture in Turkey, following them also provides access to a collective consciousness and cultural geography. We can contrast this with captioned American TV series and foreign films that were also available at another channel, but were not necessarily preferred by deaf high school students, because they were often culturally less accessible.

At the time of the interviews, there were only two news segments on Turkish television with simultaneous TID interpreting. Residential students could not watch either of them live: the morning news was early when the

students were getting ready for school, and they were still at school for the afternoon news. Although the latter is archived online, none of the students mentioned trying to locate these segments, partially due to their limitations in access to computers, which will be covered in more detail in the upcoming section. As for mainstream evening news that lacks captions or sign language interpretations, the students were even less interested. This disinterest was in part due to content, and in part to their reluctance to keep asking their hearing dorm supervisors to interpret for them. Their primary source of information about the world appeared to be their friends and family, either face-to-face or from a distance.

In 2012, when I conducted these interviews, videos authored in TİD were not prevalent on the Internet or social media. At the time, only the administrators of Deaf-run rights and sports organizations, along with a few community leaders had put together several videos and shared them on Facebook. Only a few of deaf high school students were aware of these videos, and even fewer had actually encountered them. By the end of 2014, there were at least fifteen Facebook pages authored by Turkish deaf people who regularly shared original content in TID.[9]

Another aspect of imaginative travel is one's imagined future mobilities. The last question that I asked my participants during the interviews was "Where would you like to travel to, if you could go anywhere?" The majority of places listed as desired destinations were in Turkey. The answers ranged from simply "nowhere!" to coastal vacation towns in Turkey, to Europe, or all the way to Canada and the United States. Europe was often used as an umbrella term without any specifics. Below is an excerpt from my interview with one of the residential students from a rural town in eastern Turkey.

…

Author:	So where would you like to go, if you could go anywhere?
Student:	Europe!
A:	Europe is a big place. Do you know where in Europe you want to see? Which country?
S:	I don't know their names, like that.
A:	Do you have any relatives who live there?
S:	No, none! I just want to go and travel around, by myself.
A:	Do you have anyone in your family who has been there?
S:	My older brother, he did.
A:	Where in Europe, do you know? Germany perhaps?
S:	No. He went to Europe, I don't know more. Europe is beautiful.

…

A:	So when you go to Europe, for example, what would you do other than travel around? Would you like to meet other deaf people there?
S:	No, not really. There's no point. I can't understand their signs anyways … I've been used to Turkish deaf people and Turkish sign.

…

As this example illustrates, desired destinations reflect past interactions with friends and family members, as well as their norms, habits, and values. Among those from more religious families, Mecca was one of the most desired destinations. Although several of them did not actually know where Mecca was located geographically, they cared about what it represented symbolically. It was imagined as a travel destination because visiting Mecca is one of the five pillars of Islam, making it a highly valued practice among their family or community. In that sense, this imagined destination was motivated by their values and belief systems, as well as identity work to a certain extent.

Virtual mobilities

As our social interaction becomes increasingly mediated by technologies that extend beyond our bodies, a wider range of skills are required from individuals to navigate and participate effectively in these shifting sociotechnical landscapes. Urry describes *virtual travel* as an individual's navigation in virtual space, interacting with things, places and people, without the need for physical relocation. Such travel requires up-to-date technological infrastructure, a critical mass participating in these virtual platforms, having access to devices that are portals to these virtual domains, having the relevant literacies that are required to navigate these tools and virtual spaces, as well as the motivation to engage with others at a distance. While virtual travel can be perceived as an opportunity to overcome structural or material barriers, it is also argued that existing social divides (i.e. age, gender, socioeconomic status, urbanization and disability) are often reinforced by these emerging ICTs and online social platforms (OECD 2001, Gorski and Clark 2002, Yildiz 2010, Uğuz 2011, Polat 2012).

In the residential context where corporeal mobilities of deaf students are significantly limited, one way to reach beyond the boundaries of the school building is via the Internet. As a high school offering Information Technologies among its four degrees, this institution has well-equipped computer labs with Internet access. That said, the free Internet provided by the Ministry of Education is highly restricted, such that many social media platforms, gaming sites and other websites are blocked. In addition, when I conducted my research, the after-hours computer access privileges of residential students had been taken away. Laptops were allowed in the dormitory, however a majority of students could not afford personal computers. Only two girls out of nine owned laptops with webcams, while another two occasionally borrowed their non-residential peers' laptops. Two girls with guardians in Istanbul stated that they looked forward to weekends when they could have access to their relatives' computers and webcams. One significant drawback of living in dormitories was the students' inability to share resources with family, especially with regards to technologies that act as portals to wider geographies of social participation. Their virtual mobilities were largely limited to personal

smartphones if they had one, and to their parents' financial situation with respect to the services they can access.

Seven of nine participants owned smart mobile phones (6 Nokia: 1 Samsung). However, five of them either did not have Internet packages on their phones, or kept their data services off due to high costs. Cheaper Internet packages do not include 3G services and this limits their use of video chat in sign language. They turned on their 3G for emergencies and when textual communication failed, or earlier in the month when they still had credits in their accounts. They instead used their phones primarily for texting, along with taking photographs and videos. We see that despite the capacity of the devices they owned, cheap cell phone packages limit the extent of their virtual exploration and communication with one another. That said, almost every participant had their smartphone in their pocket or next to them during the interviews, frequently pulling them out to text message with their friends at school or (occasionally) family members. The two participants without phones either could not afford one, or their fathers did not allow them to have a phone before they were 18. Despite the students' difficulty in textual literacy in Turkish, texting was still reported as the most popular means of keeping in touch with peers and family.

This brings us to the use of social media, which was the primary online activity among the residential students. All except one student declared having Facebook accounts, with contacts ranging from 5 to 342. Their contacts were predominantly deaf peers – classmates from current and past schools – as well as a few hearing family members. A few of these friends were those encountered at school trips to sports or dance competitions in other cities. The longevity of these new distant connections appeared to be informed by the ease of long-distance communication, as well as the likelihood of future meetings. Their frequency of navigating Facebook depended largely on their access to Internet devices and services, ranging from "always on" to "only over the weekends when I am at my aunt's". Facebook was primarily used for text-based chat and to "share" images and videos authored by others. During the time of the interviews MSN was still available[10] and the preferred means for video chat using sign language. The students consistently had fewer contacts on MSN than they did on Facebook, limiting the former to their closer ties, most of whom were deaf peers from their current or past schools.

Discussion

One benefit of the ubiquity of smart mobile technologies is the liberation of people from "spatial fixity" (Urry 2007), such that social participation and sustained connectivity no longer requires physical human co-presence in fixed locations. This shift can be observed especially among young people

who are early adopters of such technologies. Similarly, it offers great opportunities for deaf people who have historically depended on physical Deaf spaces (Deaf schools, Deaf clubs, Deaf events) to connect with one another and to socialize (Padden 2007). But what does all this mean for younger deaf women in Turkey who live in dormitories at vocational high schools? In light of this study, below is a summary of key findings organized by factors that play a role in the extent of their mobilities and their geographies of social participation.

Language

On average deaf women in this study began acquiring sign language at the age of 6 from their older peers at elementary schools for the deaf. This is past the critical early years of language acquisition, which has a negative impact on their language, cognitive and literacy development throughout their lives, limiting their geographies of social participation. Residential deaf high school students in the study had little or no direct contact with the wider Turkish deaf community, except for occasional sports and dance events for the deaf. Their teachers are not trained or fluent in TID, and there are no TID interpreters or deaf adult signers of TID hired either to aid communication or instruction. This creates a huge language barrier between the students and teachers, and consequently the course content. Nevertheless, students primarily use TID among themselves and gain better access to: (1) knowledge about the culture and society in which they live, (2) critical information regarding the Turkish and global deaf communities, (3) subject specific knowledge to help them navigate new intellectual domains and (4) professional knowledge and skills that are valuable for their future employment.

Literacies

Having poor *textual literacy* skills in Turkish due to problems in deaf education significantly constrained young deaf people's (particularly deaf women's): (1) ability to access any written information, including: textbooks, newspapers, captions on television, websites and social media, (2) the depth of their daily communicative mobilities via texting, (3) their experience of imaginative travel via reading, (4) imagined future mobilities be it corporeal travel to physical destinations or professional goals and (5) their future social mobility by limiting their possibilities of employment and thus their income. Similarly, textual and technological literacies of their parents back home shape their ease of communication from a distance. *Cultural literacy,* on the other hand, seems to play a role in the kinds of programs they watch on television, as well as their interests in foreign places as future travel destinations. *Technological literacy* appears to be of least concern to this group, as they successfully navigate tools and virtual spaces, as long as they have access to the technology.

Socioeconomic status

The low income and long work hours of the parents of deaf students largely determine: (1) the technologies they own (i.e. hearing aids, mobile phones, laptops), as well as the quality of connectivity and services that they get using these technologies (i.e. Internet, 3G), (2) their willingness to go out of the dormitory when allowed, based on their ability to purchase goods at the market, (3) the frequency of their visits to families back home and (4) how they spend their time during weekends and holidays (socializing with friends vs. helping with family business).

Gender

Dominant patriarchal social norms, moral values, and resulting protective attitudes concerning young women in Turkey: (1) make it less likely for their parents to send them to high school, (2) shape the geographic distribution of educational institutions and dormitories that young deaf women can reside in, (3) inform the regulations at these dormitories and how administrators respond to disciplinary events with respect to student mobilities and (4) constrain their guardians' attitudes towards their navigation of Istanbul independently to meet with their deaf peers outside of school.

Affiliation with sports and dance teams

Residential students who were members of their school's sports or dance teams were the ones who had traveled the most across Turkey. Furthermore, they could technically join Deaf sports clubs upon graduation and continue playing with local or national adult deaf teams. This would not only provide them the opportunity to meet other deaf people around a shared activity, but also if they are successful, the chance to extend their mobilities even outside of Turkey. However, this intersects with gender, considering that the male to female ratio among registered deaf athletes in Turkey is only 6–1.

Sharing of resources and collaboration

Young deaf women staying at the dormitory capitalized on the resources of their network, sharing and collaborating as much as possible to extend their geographies further. Their ability to share depended on a range of variables, from personality traits to the collective capital of their social networks, or mere physical distance to resources. Demonstrating a kind of information literacy, some students were more skilled in recruiting resources than others (i.e. borrowing laptops, ordering food from outside school, requesting dorm supervisors to interpret TV shows or news, asking me to teach them American Sign Language). Students who spent their weekends with their guardians had more access to technologies, knowledge and skills that allowed them to navigate and participate in a wider range of geographies, be it physical, intellectual or virtual.

Conclusion

As demonstrated in this article, social spaces of young deaf women in Turkey who are residential high school students are an intricate multimodal patchwork of mobilities and fixities that are technologically and culturally mediated. Overall, their social geographies appear to be much more constrained than their non-residential, male or hearing peers. Mobilities of young deaf women are largely shaped by cultural norms and educational traditions regarding the governance of young women and of deaf people, as evidenced by the assumptions of hearing parents, state agencies and administrators as to what they are capable of and which geographies they can inhabit. The geographic distribution of educational institutions and dormitories that deaf women can access, as well as the restrictive spatial regulations at these institutions, are also partially driven by these factors. Within the confines of residential schools, deaf women's daily physical geographies are strictly monitored and circumscribed, often leaving them feeling bored and somewhat stuck. However, it is also via these institutions that these young women get to see beyond their local towns, meet face-to-face with their deaf peers from around the country, and to occasionally travel in the country via school trips. Their daily communicative geographies (online and offline) are limited to interactions with their classmates – old and new – and with close family members for the most part. This is largely due to the communication barrier with their teachers, limitations in their language and textual literacy skills, or lack of assistive and communication technologies/services – as a result of either national or school policy, parental socioeconomic and educational level, or personal preference. This also impedes their access to larger knowledge and information flows, their chance to navigate in the larger hearing Turkish society or national and international deaf spaces. The latter is why many of them look forward to the summer or holidays, when they can go home and move more freely in their neighborhoods. Similarly, those who get to spend their weekends with guardians in Istanbul had more opportunities to navigate the city, to interact with individuals outside their immediate circle, or to share material, intellectual and emotional resources, which contributes to their wellbeing and expands their geographies.

While they present certain corporeal, virtual or imaginative restrictions, schools for the deaf are still a great resource for deaf children and youth in Turkey, in acquiring literacies, networks and vernacular tactics for social navigation to become more competent and adaptable agents in civic life. The vernacular tactics mentioned here are similar to what Valentine and Skelton (2003) refer to as *resources of resilience*, which deaf children and youth begin to acquire at deaf schools. In contrast to those who are mainstreamed, deaf children attending deaf schools have regular conversational partners with whom they can communicate effortlessly. In addition to Turkish Sign

Language skills, they acquire a range of *aptitudes for movement* from each other: they learn more efficient ways to access information and services, to use new technologies creatively to bypass their financial or linguistic shortcomings, or to navigate a hearing dominant world. However, more of those tools and resources reside with the larger Turkish deaf community outside, which day students, older male deaf youth, and deaf athletes appear to have more access to.

The primary goal of education is to equip individuals with aptitudes for lifelong learning, so that they become capable and adaptable agents navigating and authoring civic life. In Turkey, high schools are the main institutions of vocational training for deaf people, since college admission is close to impossible for them due to literacy and accessibility problems. Consequently, their professional geographies are also relatively narrow and contingent upon the few programs offered at these high schools. Nevertheless, starting with internships and professional networks, these schools present the ultimate opportunity for deaf people's future employment and income in adult life, a key form capital for a range of mobilities.

One of the key questions facing Turkey still is "how to increase the mobility of deaf people". In performing the governance of deaf bodies, the Turkish state is invested in following international agreements to better serve its citizens with disabilities, partially with the incentive that this brings larger socio-economic and political benefits. New mobilities created for deaf people represent extended mobilities and benefits for the Turkish population at large. That said, although there is slow progress, the counseling and education system still fails to meet the linguistic and educational needs of the deaf population (Kubuş, İlkbaşaran and Gilchrist 2016). The political economy of recent Turkish education reforms largely favored investments on technological infrastructure and a lean toward conservative homogeneity rather than on professional training, curriculum development or policy revisions based on the actual needs of students. The state also has a charity-based protectionist approach to disability (Bezmez and Yardımcı 2010), which is somewhat aligned with the pity culture around people with disabilities in Turkey.

This study explored the geographies of young deaf women in Turkey, by situating the research in the institutional context of a semi-residential vocational high school in İstanbul and employing a critical mobilities paradigm to its analysis. Without a doubt, more studies on other groups of intersectional deaf subjects using a range of methods are necessary to further investigate how geographies of deaf people are diversely imagined, contested and actualized in Turkey and elsewhere. Finally, as a hearing scholar I see future collaborations with deaf adults who have the first hand experience of being deaf in Turkey, and the mastery of TID, critical for engaging in deeper conversations with the deaf community to better contextualize and document these geographies.

Notes

1. See Gallaudet University's Visual Library: http://videolibrary.gallaudet.edu/.
2. In this intervention, Kaufmann (2002) is informed by Lévy (2000), who differentiates between three aspects of mobility: "possibility, competence, and capital", as well as Remy (2000) who sees mobility as "an appropriable resource" (pp. 37–38).
3. See the 2013 special issue "Regimes of Mobility: Imaginaries and Relationalities of Power" in the *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*.
4. See DeafSpace project: http://www.gallaudet.edu/campus_design/deafspace.html.
5. According to the Ministry of Education website, currently there are 230 Counseling and Research Centers (Turkish: Rehberlik ve Araştırma Merkezleri-RAM) in almost every city in Turkey. A full list of institutions can be accessed here: http://orgm.meb.gov.tr/butce/SORGU001Liste.asp.
6. In İstanbul, there is one more vocational high school for the deaf with a dormitory for boys. Although I had originally planned to conduct my study at both institutions, my request was turned down at the second institution despite my research permit from the Ministry of Education. This unfortunately limited my ability to make comparisons between male and female residential deaf students.
7. Among the population 15 years and older in Turkey, the 2015 employment rates were 26.7% and 64.8%, while the labor force participation rates were 30.3% and 71.1% for women and men respectively (TUIK 2016).
8. About a year after the interviews that took place in 2012, Kanal-D launched its new website (engelsiz.kanald.com.tr), where all Turkish TV series were made accessible, through Turkish captions and TİD interpreting for the deaf and audio descriptions for the blind. Several other Turkish TV channels soon followed this practice, like TRT (http://engelsiztrt.tv) and Show TV.
9. For a more detailed analysis of the content and language choice on Facebook pages/channels authored by Deaf people in Turkey, see Ilkbasaran (2015b).
10. MSN was discontinued in April 2013, and based on my conversations with deaf people in Turkey, Skype was the preferred video chat platform among the community as of 2015.

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include the effects of late sign language acquisition in deaf people, the literacies and communicative practices of deaf youth, the history of deaf education, and sign language planning and policy in Turkey.

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