



**Arab American University- Ramallah  
Faculty of  
Intercultural Communication and Literature  
Program**

**Cultural Representations in the Palestinian School  
Curriculum Through the Arabic Language  
Curriculum for Basic Grades: Second, Third, and  
Fourth, Year 2016**

By

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**This thesis was Submitted in Partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the Master's degree in  
Intercultural Communication and Literature  
program  
May /2021**

**Cultural Representations in the Palestinian School Curriculum  
Through the Arabic Language Curriculum for Basic Grades:  
SECOND, THIRD, AND FOURTH**

By  
VIVIAN AZAR

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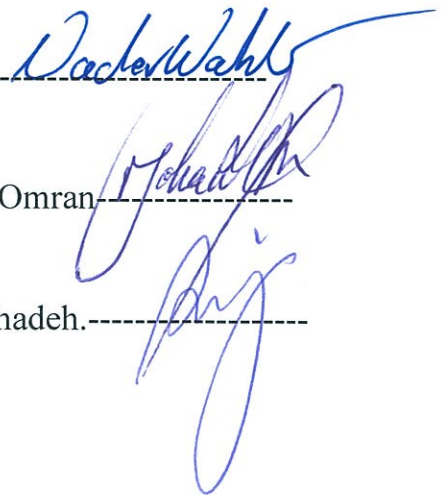
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## **Declaration**

I, the undersigned and the presenter of this thesis with the title:

**Cultural Representations in the Palestinian School Curriculum  
Through the Arabic Language Curriculum for Basic Grades:  
Second, Third, and Fourth, Year 2016.**

Declare that the work provided in it, unless otherwise referenced, is the researcher's own work. I also certify that this thesis does not contain any material published before and has not been submitted elsewhere for any other degree or qualification.

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Date:

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

First of all, thanks to the Lord, who led me to fulfill this achievement, which was a dream, and finally became real.

This research would not have been possible without the support and guidance of two people who are; Dr. Nader Wahbeh and Mr. Malik Rimawi, whom with their encouragement, supervision, invaluable advice, and insightful criticism, they guided the whole study throughout the right direction and supported me to achieve it. They kept emphasizing that they were not just inspiring teachers, whom I learned a lot from, but two friends that I am proud of and very fortunate to have them.

Finally, but most importantly, I would like to express my deepest and everlasting gratitude to my family, for their continuous support, patience, and endless belief in me. Without their tremendous understanding and encouragement in the past few years, it would be impossible for me to complete my study.

My appreciation also goes out to Dr. Amjad Shehadeh who is a great teacher and to the learning opportunity that I received at the Arab American University, which added a lot to me on various levels.

**Vivian Azar**

## ABSTRACT

School curricula are an important tool in determining the present of education and the future of culture, a culture that is formed from human experiences throughout history. In this context, the current study aimed to identify "the nature of the cultural representations included in the Palestinian school curriculum for basic grades: second, third and fourth." To investigate the nature of these representations, the study divided the subject into two questions focused on the nature of the cultural representations and their forms of representation in the school curriculum.

The importance of this study lied in the analysis and study of the Palestinian curriculum, which forms the basis of education in Palestine, and which, despite its modernity, is still in the process of formation and always suffers from changes and improvised modifications. An analysis based on the socio-cultural perspective to investigate the nature of the cultural representations contained in it, which constitute an important tool in the formation of children's understanding of the culture of their community.

The study followed the content analysis methodology in interpreting and coding the textual materials in the school curriculum, which includes reading texts, graphics, images, and language exercises. The study used the model of Adaskou's et Al. based on Vygotsky's theory to answer the first question in the study, while Jerome Brunner's principles were used to answer the second one.

The study reached a set of results that centered on the existence of a large variation in the forms of cultural representations included in the Palestinian curricula for the three basic classes that were adopted in the study. Results showed that the most present cultural dimension among the representations is the social dimension, and the

least is the aesthetic dimension. There were a large number of texts that were devoid of any cultural dimension in them. In addition to their lack of contextual and perspective principles, which could have provided deep learning that creates its permanence and connection to life and is open to interpretation from different points of view.

In light of the results, the research came out with a set of recommendations that call for a comprehensive review of Arabic language textbooks based on socio-cultural theory and conducting other studies; in order to understand the dynamics and role of textbooks in shaping students' understanding of their culture and their roles that constitute their self and cognitive identity. Furthermore, empowering teachers with different teaching tools that enable them to open up advanced horizons and advanced directions in employing education and finally calling on cultural institutions in civil society to activate their role more in the cultural aspect in order to fill the gap in this field.

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## Chapter I

### THE PROBLEM

#### Introduction

This research studied the cultural representations in the Palestinian Arabic language curriculum based on the socio-cultural theory. The study adopted Adaskou, Britten, and Fahsi's framework of cultural representations (Adaskou et al, 1990),<sup>1</sup> mainly the aesthetic, social, semantic, and practical representations, as well as Bruner's (1996), the contextual, and the perspectival principles that are embedded in the basic grade levels second, third and fourth.

The relationship between education and culture is interrelated, interactive, and socially contextual where the society forms the context of their interaction together. According to Vygotsky, L.S. (1978) an empowered society is one in which education is built on a practical and interactive critical education that effectively and vividly reflects and revives culture through its school curricula. From this perspective, the curriculum represents the basis of such reciprocal relationship between education and culture. It defines the type of culture that is interrelated in education through its selection of specific texts, sources, symbols, and meanings. It also defines the role of education in the reproduction of culture and the way it is presented to children.

In human formations, there is a fundamental indication that the individual is an integral part of the social contract. He/she lives in a system that has its own structure. In such a social structure, we cannot imagine a child develop as a conscious person unless it is visualized within the sociocultural contexts that are filled with material,

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<sup>1</sup> K. Adaskou, D. Britten, and B. Fahsi are all members of the Moroccan Ministry of Education's English Textbook Project. Kheira Adaskou, head of the project since 1986, studied English in Rabat and Canterbury before teaching in secondary school and has been an inspector for seven years. Badia Fahsi took a degree in English from the American University of Beirut, and after extensive secondary teaching experience became an inspector of English four years ago. Donard Britten has taught English in various countries and has worked in Morocco since 1984.

cultural and theoretical tools, and resources in its various practical and sentimental forms. Therefore, the human mind is culturally constructed, and determined by the quality of resources and learning activities applied during his/her life span. Based on Cole's (1998) cultural psychology, "the human mind emerges from the work people do together, this work is mediated by culture and considered as something culturally built, shared and distributed" (p. 166). This highlights the importance of the cultural tools and resources used by humans while engaging in an activity in a particular setting. Cole adds that the use of "physical and symbolic tools" by humans for regulating their interaction with others and with the natural world have constructed their psychological processes, awareness, and values, which are according to Cole the foundation of the historical and cultural school of thought, (ibid, 1998).

Based on such joint work between individuals and human groups, common factors and patterns are formed and distributed between human societies and according to Hamed, (2008، حامد) different tools, means and methods are constructed due to human engagement in activities within a specific situation and context. In such contexts, specific cultural identities of the generations emerge, and are determined by the mother culture that relate to language, history, and common destiny.

Cultural products and associated practices are intertwined with the educational process. In contrast to the behavioral and cognitive schools in education, the cultural perspective of education emphasizes on the ability of human beings to construct tools based on their interactions with the surrounding environment to control them in favor of their needs. Retrospectively, these tools have contributed to changing human conditions, and impacted on the formation of their consciousness, intellectual practices, and psychological behavior in reaction to the situations happening around them. Therefore, learning, based on such perspective is a complex contextual process that

embodies cognitive, emotional, mental, and physical components centered around ideas, objects and tools and embedded in places that have history from which they have emerged (Larin, 2002, p268).

In the Palestinian context, education is one of the necessary means that show the orientations of the Palestinian society and its aspirations. Hence, the need for the cultural dimension and related values are important to support the fundamental constants and principles that relate to the historical and strategic depth of the Arab nation, considering the current reality experienced by the Palestinian people from the Israeli occupation and the obliteration of the Palestinian identity, and the attack on the values, principles, and intellectual approaches that the Palestinian People believe in. In such a context, there is an urgent need for this cultural study and its theoretical and practical philosophy, because it is situated within a field of knowledge that addresses issues related to cultural practices and its relationship with authority and power, thus trying to advance the modern society and restructure its social construct (2007، يعلي).

In this perspective, curriculum is considered the cultural and social window on which the aspirations of the Palestinian people are praised under the Israeli occupation. Despite the intensified crisis in Palestine caused by the Israeli occupation over its people cultural identity, the Palestinian Ministry of Education decided to set special curricula in Palestinian schools, representing the constants of the Palestinian people and visualize the cultural realities and values in such a way that control the challenges and regulate the contemporary variables and their effects on the educational, social and intellectual system in Palestine. This orientation appeared in the introduction to each of the Palestinian curriculum books by the Ministry of Education, where it is mentioned that:

“According to a vision governed by a framework based on reaching a Palestinian society possessing values, science, culture and

technology, and meeting the requirements to make the realization of this vision a reality. So that the product is an expression of a combination that fulfills the cognitive, educational and intellectual requirements.”<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the curriculum is among the most important cultural regulating tools that attempt to organize and control the educational work and processes, similar to the notion of “computerism” that was criticized by Jerome Bruner (1996) in which the mind and thus all the educational process is represented as input, process and output controlled by screens and software, and the end goal in such a process is to control, explain and predict. This study however advocates for the second notion of the mind and the curriculum, the “cultural” orientation, in which education is the main embodiment of all the manners and behaviors that individuals perform in their various social activities including the spiritual, cognitive, emotional, and physical aspects that the Palestinian people believe in. In this perspective, the curriculum is no longer seen as description, interpretation, prediction, and control, rather as achieving more understanding in order to change reality (2003 مينا).

This study focuses on the cultural representations in the curriculum and the kind of values and meanings they transform to students. The cultural representations in the curriculum overlap with the overall philosophy of culture, and they stem from the expression of values, beliefs, concepts, images, backgrounds, and referrals that the individual believes in. According to Hamdawi (2018 حمداوي), these values will be embedded and stored emotionally and subconsciously, and eventually will be used and acted upon by the individual in the appropriate contexts. Therefore, the effectiveness of the cultural representations in educational practices become significant, especially in

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<sup>1</sup> A presentation on the first page of all approved books signed by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, the Palestinian Curriculum Center.

the process of socialization and preparation of students in the basic stages of their schooling. The cultural representations are evident in many of the Palestinian curriculum, more specifically in the Arabic language textbooks, because the language is a basic component of identity. This study was based on this theoretical perspective and aimed at examining the representations of culture in the Palestinian school curriculum through the Arabic language curriculum for the basic grades: Second, third and fourth.

### **Statement of the Problem and Justifications of the Research**

The quality of the cultural manifestations used in school curricula determines the quality of education and thinking which, in turns, determine the learners' learning and their values (Bruner; 1999). Accordingly, the curriculum culture is seen as a tool that determines both the present of education and the future of culture.

From the aforementioned relationships between culture, education and curriculum, and within the approach in which education depends on culture in building and making meanings and that culture is the basis for education to build values and meanings, and from the perspective that the curriculum is the official choice of culture that is presented to children and forms the formal context of their learning, this study raises the question of the nature of the cultural representations included in the Palestinian curriculum and its value manifestations. It explores how cultural values are aesthetic, sociological, semantic, and pragmatic based on Adaskou, Britten, and Fashi's (1990) framework. It also discusses the manifestation of the contextual, and the perspectival principles based on Bruner's framework (1996). The problem of the research can be divided into the following two parts:

*A specialized problem:* Even though this study did not investigate students' cultural understandings as a result of their exposure to the curriculum, the long experience of the researcher in the field of curriculum development and teacher training in the Palestinian context, together with the kind of research that was conducted in the field on the Palestinian curriculum suggested lack of knowledge and awareness by teachers and educators about the influence of the cultural representations in the Palestinian school curricula and their value manifestations on students' meaning making and understandings. Concerns about students' alienation from their own culture and identity have been expressed by many researchers (exp. Assad, 2000; Barakat, 2007; Baramki, 2010; Brown, 2003) as result of the long years of control of foreign agendas on the curriculum starting from the Ottoman rule, the British Mandate, and finally the current Israeli occupation. Such concerns have been intensified even after the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority and the Ministry of Education in 1994 based on Oslo agreement with the Israelis due to the nature of the educational system and its curriculum that according to many scholars adopted the traditional education models which emphasised the transmission modes of teaching (Al-Ramahi & Davies, 2002; Moughrabi, 2001; Al-Jerbawi's, 2003). These studies and others raised many questions about what cultural representations and values are included and what are excluded from the Palestinian curriculum, which according to Moughrabi (2001) a controversy that "serve as proxies for wider questions of power relations in society" p. 5.

Such concerns necessitate the current study which analysed the aesthetic, sociological, semantic, and pragmatic cultural representations, and its contextual, and perspectival forms in the Arabic Language curriculum for basic grades:

second, third and fourth in order to clarify the role the school curriculum plays in achieving educational goals and in organizing the cultural information.

*An academic problem:* Represented by the lack of studies on the kind of cultural representation in the Palestinian textbooks. Most of those reviewed focused on the EFL textbooks and how the Palestinian culture is represented compared to other cultures. Other studies in the Palestinian context took the perspective of gender and politics as a unit of analysis rather than the cultural components of Adaskou and Bruner. These results indicate the necessity for conducting more studies in the Palestinian context and from more local perspective rather than comparative in order to understand the dynamics of cultural representations manifested in the textbooks on the students' meaning making of culture and identity.

*The justification of the current research* is based on the following assumptions and information:

a- The researcher's good knowledge of the content of the Palestinian curricula, especially the Arabic language curriculum for the lower basic stage, and based on her experience in working on designing learning objects for over two years, in addition to her 13 years of experience in working directly with teachers through professional development programs related to the subject, has led to the assumption that there is a need to study the kind of cultural representations offered to our students in the Arabic language textbook. The study of cultural representation is justified especially when we consider the important role of the curriculum as a mediator of the social and cultural dimensions in the classroom and the creation of students' cultural awareness and attitudes, as well as their individual and social relationships and their interests.

b- The researcher's previous experiences in conducting research about the kind of discourse included in the curriculum had also led to the conclusion that there is a need to search for a framework that would help in analyzing the cultural representations in the curriculum from a socio-cultural perspective. Two frameworks that were highlighted during the researcher's study in her master program was related to Adaskou and his colleague (Adaskou et al, 1990) and Bruner (1996). Therefore, this study may contribute to the field of curriculum evaluation in adopting such frameworks for analysis.

c- According to the researcher's knowledge accumulated through her engagement in the field of research, it seems that there is a lack of previous studies that deal with cultural representations in the Palestinian school curricula, especially in the Arabic language for the basic grades: second, third and fourth. However, there is a need to conduct a systematic literature review to confirm such an assumption, which may justify conducting the current research.

According to the aforementioned justifications, the analysis of the cultural representations presented in the curriculum will shed light on the socio-cultural issues the generation is facing within the various existing conflicts, as well as the overall cultural representation in the educational process as a whole.

### **Research Questions**

The main objectives on which the study is based on is represented by the following main question:

“What are the cultural representations included in the Palestinian school curriculum through the Arabic language curriculum for the basic grades: second, third and fourth?”

This main question is subdivided into the following two sub-questions:

- 1- What is the nature of the following cultural representations: the aesthetic, sociological, semantic, and pragmatic (Adaskou et al, 1990) that are embedded in the Palestinian school curriculum through the Arabic language curriculum for the basic grades: second, third and fourth?
- 2- What are the forms of the following cultural representations; the contextual, and the perspectival (Bruner,1996) that are embedded in the Palestinian school curriculum through the Arabic language curriculum for the basic grades: second, third and fourth?

These main questions are closely associated to the value manifestations in the curriculum of the Arabic language, as it is a fundamental component of the Palestinian identity in the organization of human ideas from birth until maturity. In addition, the research questions explore the values and foundations that are included in the Palestinian school curriculum that ensure the effectiveness of aesthetic, sociological, semantic, and pragmatic dimensions of cultural representations (Adaskou et al, 1990), and the diversification in the cultural formation of emerging minds. The research also looks at the different forms of cultural representations; the contextual, and the perspectival forms based on Bruner's (1996) principles. This comes in line with the content of the educational process in dealing with students and preparing them to produce their ideas, the role of culture in reviewing the behaviors and issuing the right judgement when dealing with cultural variable and alternatives, and finally the role of the Ministry of Education in the implementation of the educational system and schoolwork goals. All of this in its entirety represents the main milestone on which this research was held.

## **Context of the Study**

### ***Historical Background***

Before Oslo agreement between the Palestinians and the Israelis in 1913, the Israeli occupation was controlling the educational system among other sectors related to the Palestinians. Back then, the Jordanian curriculum was the official curriculum adopted in the West Bank, while the Egyptian curriculum was official curriculum used in Gaza Strip and both were severely censored by the Israeli occupation. In the basis of a formal agreement between UNESCO and the newly established Ministry of Education of the Palestinian Authority (PA), the first curriculum center was established and began its work in October 1995 with a team of researchers, educational academics, and teachers to design the first Palestinian curriculum. The team produced a blueprint containing the basic Benchmarks that would lead a unified Palestinian curriculum (Nasser. R. and Nasser, I. (2008).

Afterwards, new Palestinian textbooks for each subject matter were introduced for the first time in 2000 and went through different stages of development based on several local and international critiques (exp. Al-Ramahi and Davis,2002; Rihan, 2001; Mazawi, 2011, Moughrabi, 2001).

### ***The Palestinian Arabic Curriculum***

The Palestinians produced their own curricula for the first time in 2000 in a form of textbooks and is based on general benchmarks that was produced in 1994 and focuses on knowledge, skills, values, and included practical applied knowledge that is translated through lessons and activities in the body of the textbook. As for the educational stages, the Palestinian Ministry of Education approved a mandatory basic

education for ten years, which is divided into a primary stage with a period of four years and an elementary stage with a period of six years, (Ministry of Education, 1998).

The goals of the Palestinian Arabic curricula as mentioned in its General Benchmark Document (Ministry of Education, 1998) are to deepen the ties between the generations of society, strengthen the affiliation to Palestine as a nation, people, civilization, history, and the need to defend it, confront the occupiers and refute their colonial methods. As well as strengthen the relationship with the Palestinian and Arabic heritage, reinforce the origins of communication with the human cultural dimension that believes in the convergence of civilizations and does not collide with them. In addition, the curriculum as mentioned in the document aims to enrich students with positive trends and values and fight negative values, rely on in building the nation's personality, develop a feeling of conscience, enrich imagination, refine feelings, infuse the spirit of respect between family members, and serve the society to promote good citizenship and democratic values by establishing awareness and preserving rights, protect the environment and reduce pollution.

Moreover, the curriculum according to the Benchmark Document aims to meet the society's various educational needs, train students on self-learning by developing their abilities to investigate, extrapolate and explore, employ resources and references to refine their talents, develop the ability to listening, dialogue and critical scientific thinking based on understanding, conscious analysis and objectivity, develop verbal and intellectual wealth in communication, follow technological developments, enhance the functional aspect of the Arabic language and its fields, nurture talents in literature and

practical knowledge, refine the skill seeing the beauty in things and ideas, and finally employ modern technologies.

## Research Objectives

The premise of this study is based on the socio-cultural framework in understanding culture and its manifestations in individuals meaning making (Bruner, 1996), and brings together culture and education in collective, and emerging relationship. It focuses on the cultural representations in the Palestinian school curricula taking the Arabic language curriculum for the basic grades: second, third and fourth as a unit of analysis. It adopts Adaskou's et al, (1990) classification of cultural representation (*aesthetic, sociological, semantic, and pragmatic*) that are found in that Arabic language curriculum and the contextual and perspectival principles of cultural forms based on Bruner (1996). Figure 1 represents the research objectives.

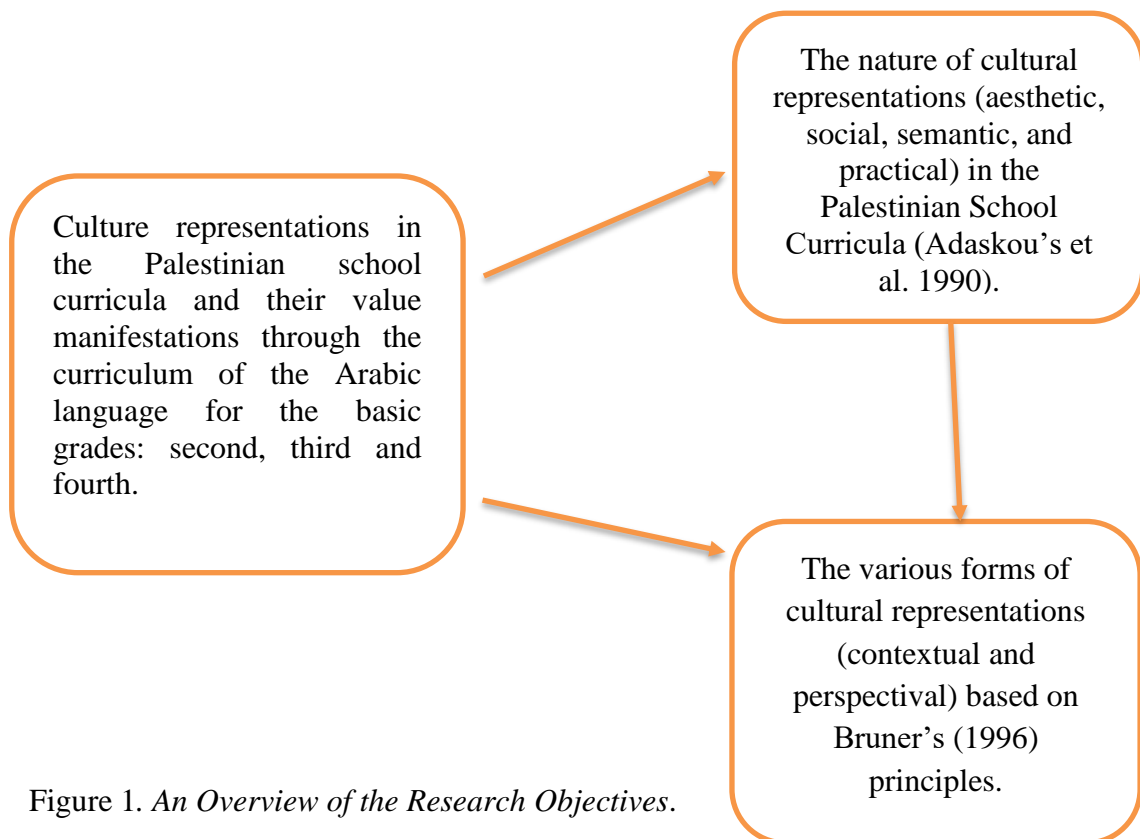


Figure 1. *An Overview of the Research Objectives.*

*The research seeks to achieve the following objectives:*

- 1- Knowing the cultural representations in the Palestinian school curricula through the curriculum of the Arabic language for the basic grades: second, third and fourth, and related issues that lead in their entirety to achieving educational goals and strengthening the foundations of social education. This is linked to the main question of the study mentioned above.
- 2- Analyzing the foundations of the nature of cultural representations (aesthetic, sociological, semantic, and pragmatic) included in the Palestinian school curriculum and revealing this in light of the Arabic language curriculum for the basic grades: second, third and fourth. This relates to the first sub-question of the research.
- 3- Discussing the role of the cultural representations based on Bruner's two principles (the contextual and the perspectival) included in the Palestinian school curriculum, this is related to the second sub-question of the research.

### **Significance of the Study**

The importance of the study can be classified according to the following dimensions:

- 1- Contributing to the Knowledge Base: Opening for new ways of analyzing the curriculum from a socio-cultural perspective, by analyzing the culture representation and values manifested in the curriculum and the way such representation is organized in the curriculum to meet the current needs and future aspirations of the Palestinian people. The study deals with education as a process of meaning making and the way the cultural representations are

internalized through interaction with people and their experiences that are distributed in different cultural resources and products.

- 2- Contributing to the Scientific methodology: Providing a new system of curriculum evaluation based on scientific analysis of social and cultural dimensions, and therefore a new way of developing the curriculum and organizing its contents in an integrative and comprehensive goals and objectives.
- 3- Contributing to the contextual approach in curriculum design: The study deals with the Palestinian curriculum, that forms the basis of the education in Palestine, which despite its modernity, it is still in the process of formation and always suffers from changes and improvised modifications that are not based on scientific research or theoretical studies. The study covers the area of knowledge and the political life needs related to the Palestinian educational reality and context. It is also based on the historical cultural approach, which represents the opposite of the behavioral and programming approaches that prevail in the field of the Palestinian education through which education is seen as a modification of behavior through changes in the stimulus and response that is a simple and automated approach or a software approach that relies on processing information.

## **Limitations of the Study**

The study was applied in accordance with the following limitations:

- 1- The study was limited to researching the cultural representations contained in the Palestinian school curricula specifically in the Arabic Language Curriculum for the basic grades: second, third and fourth published in (2016).
- 2- The study was limited to some literature studies that dealt with specific aspects of the topic due to the lack of studies in this field and for this elementary stage.
- 3- Temporal limitations: The study was conducted within the scholastic year 2020-2021.
- 4- Conceptual: The study looked at the cultural representations only from Adaskou et al (1990) and Bruner's (1996) conceptual framework and dimensions.
- 5- Procedural: The study focused on the analysis of text and its meaning and did not study how such texts are translated into action by teachers and students.

## Chapter II

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

This chapter discusses the theoretical background related to the study, followed by a review of the literature.

#### Theoretical Framework

This study stems from the cognitive, cultural, historical, and social constructivist theory, which considers culture as a major context and a fundamental foundation to form the human mind and their awareness.

##### *The Cognitive-Cultural Theory*

From a cognitive perspective, Bruner (1996) <sup>1</sup>asserts that the nature of the human mind is part of its culture, and that humans learn through their engagement in groups and its working tools and communication styles. This implies that the nature of the human being as a “learner” is conditional to his/her presence in a cultural context shared with a social group that provides them with the living and learning experiences. Bruner also explained that humans make meaning<sup>2</sup> of their lives and the world around them through symbolic, iconic, and enactive representations common among the

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<sup>1</sup> Jerome Bruner (1915–2016). An American psychologist and educator who developed theories on perception, learning, memory, and other aspects of cognition in young children that had a strong influence on the American educational system and helped launch the field of cognitive psychology.

<sup>2</sup>Bruner in his book *Acts of Meaning* (1990) focused on how students make meaning of what they learn through their active cognitive efforts of interpreting situations, events, objects, or discourses, in the light of their previous knowledge and experience. This activity depends on students' identity and socio-cultural background.

members of a cultural group and adds: “even though these meanings exist in the individual’s minds, but their origins and their significances are concentrated in the culture in which these meanings were created” (ibid, 1996, p57).

According to this aspiration, culture includes in its totality the various products of tools, resources and activities produced by the group through historical experience and are known as “cultural products .(كول، 2002) They embody the basic support system for communication and work within the necessary milieu for the growth of individuals and groups in the society.

### ***The Socio-Cultural Theory***

The study also derives its theoretical and methodological approaches from the achievements of the social constructivist theory of the Geneva School or the New Piaget’s (Dois, Mugny et al, 1974-1948) who developed Piaget's ideas and focused on the study of the social context for understanding children's learning and development (Nabozuka and Empson, 2010). It also focuses on the achievements and methodologies of the historical cultural theory that was developed based on the contributions of the Russian scientist Lev Vygotsky<sup>1</sup>, who emphasized on the importance of the socio-cultural context for growth, development and education, where he considered that the development of children is determined by “the biological and environmental factors up to the age of two years and then influenced by the quality of products and the cultural tools and then follows the line of culture” (ibid, 2010, p.272).

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<sup>1</sup>Lev Vygotsky (1934-1896) was a Soviet psychologist, known for his work on psychological development in children. He published on a diverse range of subjects, and from multiple views as his perspective changed over the years. He is known for his concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD). Also influential are his works on the relationship between language and thought, the development of language, and a general theory of development through actions and relationships in a socio-cultural environment. He died at an early (aged 37). Topel (1998).

Vygotsky also emphasizes that children's learning and development is determined by the quality of the tools and resources to which they are exposed, and he described them as psychological tools, which are transformed through the processes of introduction, transport, and activity from external cultural instruments into internal psychological tools. These tools or products are classified into physical tools; which are the tools of work; sign tools, which are the icons embedded in culture; symbolic tools which are the language in its conceptual and metaphysical form (philosophy and literature), and finally the social tools, which are the forms of the social activity.

### ***The Relationship between Culture and Education***

#### ***The functionalist perspective of education***

Many cultural theorists have argued that education is considered a transmission tool through which the cultural heritage and products are preserved and fulfilled. For example, Kapur argued that “educational aspects and cultural aspects are imparted to an individual through their families, communities and the educational institutions” (Kapur, 2018). In this sense, education has a functional role, as it is looked at as a consciously organized process that aims to bring about changes in the behavior of individuals and groups according to the cultural system in which they live and believe in. The interacting value of education and its relationship to culture are highlighted in preserving ones "being" and strengthening the social system upon which the identity of individuals and groups are built.

Siah (1997،صباح) asserts that education helps to acquire a culture that contributes to the acquisition of skills and capabilities compatible with civilized societal culture. He adds :

“There is no education without transmitting a historical cultural heritage with a live, interactive content, and there is no continuity of culture if it is not enriched by the educational process and entrenched in the minds of the younger generations.” (Siah, 1997, p.71)

From this perspective, the school curriculum should reflect the philosophical foundations of the culture and that is through its short and long-term goals. The school curricula embody the values, principles, concepts and ideas and the means and methods of communicating them to students, thus enriching their cultural intellectual experiences, and increasing their cumulative interactions throughout history and time.

In addition to the transfer of knowledge between generations the curricula also contribute to raising the children’s social role thus preserving the foundations of identity and its components considering the fluctuations and contemporary changes, and promoting ways of attitudes, values, and methods in accordance with the culture foundations the society seeks to express.

A set of elements are taken into consideration when building the curricula such as the society, learner, teacher, philosophy of education, life aspects such as language, values and communication, attention to the lifestyles of the people of the countryside, cities and desert, social classes in various professions, in addition to expressing innovations, novelties, inventions, industries, resources and specializations. According to Oform (2016): “each of these factors has link to the culture, as nothing can be done in education without recourse to the culture of the society on which hinge their demands and aspirations”.

***The collective and emergent perspective of education***

On the contrary to the functional perspective of the curriculum, the collective perspective is based on Vygotsky's proposition that culture itself is the product of the social life and the social activity of human beings. In that perspective, V.V. Davydov (2004 (دافيدوف)) asserts that "the activity of life is that which lies beyond consciousness, therefore, if the issue of cultural development of behavior specifically emerges, it directly introduces us to the social level of cultural development" (p. 191).

In this perspective, many theorists emphasize that culture is a product of human interactions with cultural activities and tools and is constructed through the interactions of individuals in social activities. Michael Cole for example believes that "culture represents and forms the living environment and the necessary condition in which human growth takes place, where an individual's own lifestyle is formed through it." (Cole, 2002). Cole also adds that culture is "the total sum of products or" tools "that the human community has produced through its historical experience. Thus, culture and its products or (tools) is the history brought down to the present, which affirms Vygotsky and Alexander Luria's socio-cultural theory of education and learning (Vygotsky, Luria, Lumentiv (Cole, 2002, p172). Therefore, the use of these tools achieves an external function, which is to modify the environment, and an internal function, which is to transform general human experiences inherent in cultural tools and to use them for internal psychological and mental capabilities and functions.

Hence, education and the curriculum have a transformative role rather than functional, as new cultures and identities emerge, therefore, the role is much more dynamic and complex than the functional perspective explained earlier. This study adopts such a collective, emergent, and dynamic relationship between education and culture, and focuses on the tools that individuals use, more specifically "language" as a cultural tool

to understanding how they make meaning from their daily interactions in various contexts such as schools and curricula.

### ***Cultural Representation Theory***

This section explains how culture is either embodied or transformed through education and curriculum based on the following two classification systems:

#### ***Marx W. Wartofsky's classification<sup>1</sup>***

Wartofsky categorized cultural representations manifested in cultural tools and language into three levels or what he calls artifacts: primary artifacts, which are material objects that are used directly in production, such as needles, plates, axes, words, writing instruments; secondary artifacts, which consist of means and methods of using primary products so that they play a central role in preserving and transmitting ways of action and belief, such as food recipes, visual symbols, and transient forms of bodily gesture, such as ritual performance, utterance- in hunting rituals, dances, chants or songs and traditional beliefs and norms. Lastly, tertiary artifacts which constitute the imaginative way of thinking in which one perceives and experience the world and includes role play, reflective thinking, contemplation, reverie, aesthetics, artistic work, poems, and novels, also includes socio-political visions, scientific paradigms. (Cole, 2002, p189).

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<sup>1</sup> Marx W. Wartofsky (1928–1997) was an American philosopher, specializing in historical epistemology. He is well known as both a dialectical and a rigorous thinker of enormous breadth, who introduced the project of historical epistemology and focused on the role of models, representation, artifacts, and social practices in the construction of theories in science, art, medicine, huma development and other fields.

*Adaskou's (et al.) classification system*

Adaskou and his colleagues classify cultural representation into four senses: the *aesthetic sense* which includes: media, literature, film and music, and all senses that are related to the metaphors, imagery, and symbols; the *sociological sense* which includes the organizations and nature of family, of home life, of interpersonal relations, material conditions, work and leisure, customs, and institutions.

While *the semantic sense* is related to the system of conceptualization of language in association with culture and are related to the concepts and values included in the cultural language, conditioning all our perceptions and our thought processes, time and space relations, emotional states, colors.

Finally, *the pragmatic* or sociolinguistic sense which means the background knowledge, social skills, and paralinguistic that make possible successful communication, or in other words the social activities and rituals, social skills, cultural events, symbols, and forms of cultural and social communication (Adaskou's et al. 1990).

Both Wartofksy and Adasko's et al. classifications are based on Vygotsky's classification of cultural representations (see table 1); that is, physical tools, psychological tools, symbolic tools, and social tools. These classifications are also similar to Jerome Bruner (1915-2016) cultural development of human activities and learning: the enactive (action, movement, skills), the iconic (example: drawings; graphs, etc.), and the symbolic (language, numbers, etc.).

**Table 1.**

*A comparison between Vygotsky and Adaskou's et al., model in the analysis of culture.*

<b>Cultural representations according to Vygotsky's classification and historical cultural theory</b>	<b>The meanings of culture were calculated. by Adaskou et al.</b>
Physical tools which are tools for work and life use.	The pragmatic or sociolinguistic sense which means (the background knowledge, social skills, and paralinguistic that make possible successful communication)
Symbolic tools which mean the language in its conceptual and metaphysical form (Philosophy and literature)	The semantic sense which is related to the system of conceptualization. of language in association with culture, which means (the concepts and values included in the cultural language)
Signs tools, which are the icons included in the culture such as images, maps, and logarithms.	The aesthetic sense which includes. (the media, literature, film, and music), which means in other words (the metaphors, imagery, and symbols).
Social tools which mean all forms of social activity.	The sociological sense which includes (the organizations and nature of family, of home life, of interpersonal relations, material conditions, work, and leisure, customs and institutions)

Therefore, the study is based on content analysis of the curricula to search for the cultural experiences contained within it, by looking at the texts, images, questions, requirements, activities, maps, models, guidelines, and assessments in the Arabic language textbooks to reveal the resources and the cultural products contained therein, in addition to searching for the four

meanings described by (Adaskou et al., and Vygotsky) in terms of their nature and the embedded values they carry.

### ***Bruner's Classification of Culture***

Bruner (1996) emphasized that the individual's growth is inseparable from its cultural context. Since then, the field of cognitive psychology took a new dimension towards a socio-cultural perspective. According to Bruner, in order to understand individuals' cognition and learning, one needs to study *the context* through which such individuals interact with, adapt, and set their tools to understand the world.

Bruner also theorized that since cognitive development is contextual, learning must then be *perspectival* and *constructivist* in nature, rather than universal as in the learning and cognitive development of Piaget's theory. Hence Bruner's principles of "cognitive-cultural" psychology emerged as field to support that of Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory, and many scholars have followed these principles in their work to understand individuals' cognitive development.

In its second part, the study looked at the cultural representations in the curriculum through Jerome Bruner's principles (Bruner,1996): *the contextual, and the perspectival*. According to Bruner (1996), education should take into consideration these two principles in order to help learners "to better adapt to the world in which they find themselves, and to help them in the process of changing it as required. (Ibid, p. 20). These principles are explained separately hence forth.

### ***The Contextual Principle***

Many scholars have worked within Bruner's contextual principle of learning. For example, Michael Cole (2002) used the term "situation" as in the sense of Bruner's

“context” to explain that learning is situational, that is, one does not test things or make judgments about them in isolation from other things and facts, and that one should understand how to “weave together” the texts and actions in order to understand human’s behavior and learning. Cole explains: “We cannot view the action or event as a single act unrelated to others, but rather as an act within its framework, and its context.” (p.207).

Context, then, enables us to see the parts in its natural existence and in its relational framework. It allows education and learning to explore the existing relationships between things and possible relationships, presenting them in a holistic, relational, and dynamic form, and allowing them to be viewed holistically as interacting and changing objects and relationships.

Brown, Collins and Duguid (1989) emphasized on the importance of the context in understanding human’s behavior and noted that learning in school or outside are alike in progressing through cooperative social interaction and through the social construction of knowledge, through the contextual or realistic nature of learning, and the social common perception in the formation of understanding.

Similarly, Falk and Dierking (2002) adopted Bruner’s contextual principle in trying to understand how a “*worthwhile*” experience develop during students (and visitors to cultural museums) interactions with texts and objects. After their intensive observations inside classroom settings and museums, Falk and Dierking came out with a model called “the contextual model of learning” that is based on the following three components: Learning has a *personal component*, that is, learning must related to students’ personal memories and daily lives; learning also has a *social component*, that is, one learn with and

from others; and finally, learning has a *material component*, that is learning is connected to objects and materials that are experienced in action. This means that the personal, social, and material contexts are what shape and define the learning experience on the one hand, and on the other hand, confirms that the three contexts overlap and intertwine with each other. These three contexts and their levels are discussed further in the methodology.

Depending on what was mentioned previously, context can be defined as the texture that includes events and facts related to a specific place and time in which people interact in specific situations, through which education is provided in a coherent and life-related, socially, culturally, and cognitive manner, to lead to a deeper understanding and learning related to life.

### ***The Perspectival Principle***

Bruner explained this principle as “the meaning of any fact, proposition, or encounter relative to the perspective or frame of reference in terms of which it is construed” (Bruner,1996, p13). This means that the meanings of facts, or their understanding, is linked to a specific perspective on which the meaning is constructed and understood, which means the plurality of meanings and ways of understanding them. He also mentioned that “understanding something in one way does not preclude understanding it in other ways (ibid, 14).

Bruner’s definitions of his perspectival principal lead to the notion that knowledge and learning are relative in nature, that is, there is no universal right and wrong judgments on things. Hence, plurality of perspectives are not just cognitive foundations, rather cultural trends. The implications of such principle are in favor of the plurality perspectives rather than the monolithic, single standard system of right and

wrong. This principle also advocates for person's tolerance and acceptance of the opinions of others.

This principle also confirms the “dynamic” dimension of culture as presented by Khalafi, (2012) where he explains that culture “cannot be viewed as a static essence, rather it is a continuous act of building and demolishing” (p.65).

Based on Bruner’s two principles, the role of education according to him is to help young learners to the tools of meaning making and reality construction to better adapt to the world and to help them in the process of changing it as required, (Bruner, 1996).

Figure 2 summarizes Bruner’s two principles and their meaning.

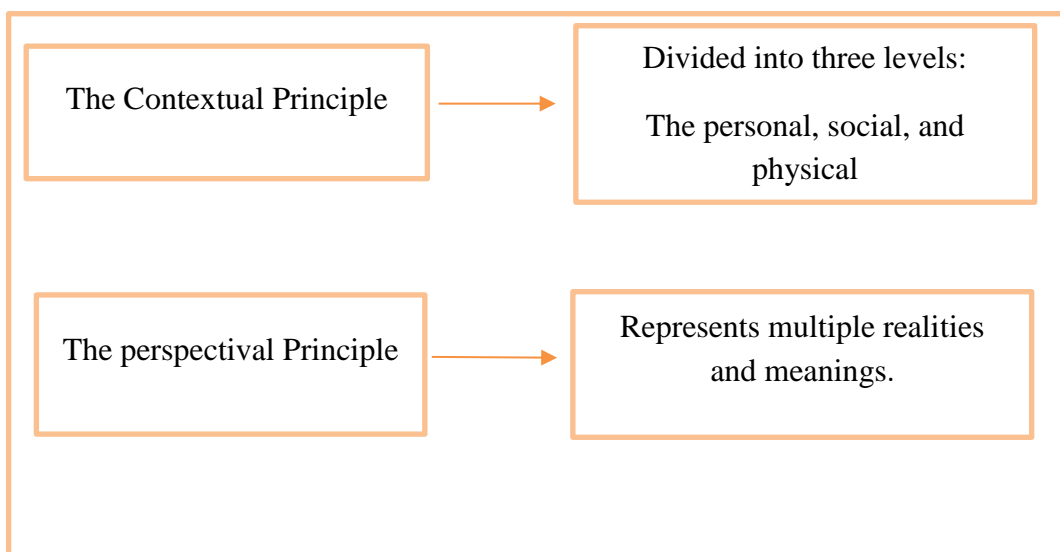


Figure 2. *An overview of Bruner’s cultural representation principles.*

In summary, the study examines the content of the curricula based on Adasko’s et al. framework and explores the weight of each of these four meanings; the aesthetic, semantic, pragmatic, and sociological; and its methodological manifestations, its significance, and its cultural meaning. In

addition, the study examines the cultural representations in the curriculum based on Bruner's contextual and perspectival principles.

## **Literature Review**

Several studies have dealt with the subject of culture and its relation to education in general and its different manifestations in the curriculum. Most of these studies were focused on the cultural representations in the English as Foreign Language (EFL) textbooks such as in the studies of Pratiwi (2017); Rajabi and Ketabi (2012), Mofidi and Hashemi, (2019); Lessard- Clouston, (2016); El Shawa, (2011); Rashidi and Meihami (2016), and others which will be discussed further in the sections below. However, most of the research studies that were conducted on the Arabic Language textbooks in Palestine specifically focused on issues such as the *gender representation* as in the study of Al-Jarbawi (2003) and Al-Asali (2008); and the study of the Independent Commission for Human Rights (2019). Other studies analyzed the curriculum from a *political perspective*, such as the studies of Al-Moughrabi (2001) and Mazawi (2011). Based on the researcher knowledge, the studies that looked at the cultural representation from a *social cultural perspective* in the Palestinian curriculum textbooks are rare, which adds to the significance of this study.

### ***Cultural Representation in English EFL Textbooks***

#### ***Based on Adaskou's et al. Model***

Pratiwi (2017) studied the cultural representations of the Indonesian English Language Teaching (ELT) textbooks using Adaskou's et al. (1990) classification: the aesthetic, the sociological, the semantic and the pragmatic senses. The study was qualitative in nature, where the researcher analyzed three English course books entitled

“WERB” and three other course books entitled “Bright” for a multicultural Junior High School whose students speak different languages in an attempt to see how the textbooks integrate the multi socio-cultural backgrounds in the school in relation to food, drinks, places, art, traditional ceremony, social behavior, beliefs and values, history, and persons. The researcher adopted Cortazzi and Jin’s (1999)<sup>1</sup> categories of culture in textbooks. Results showed that both WERB and Bright textbooks are highly represented by the *source culture* (learner’s own culture) rather than the *target culture* (the US and the UK and other English-speaking countries) or the *international culture*. Furthermore, results showed that both WERB and Bright text help students to promote cultural awareness and intercultural competence .

In a similar but small-scale research, Rajabi and Ketabi (2012) University of Isfahan in Iran, studied the cultural representations in four English language textbooks currently used in Iran by adopting Adaskou’s et al. (1990) cultural dimensions portrayed in these textbooks; the aesthetic, social, semantic, and pragmatic dimensions. Findings showed that teaching English is becoming much more “*target source*” (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999) oriented and localized and that the use of local materials as contents for the selected four textbooks comes in harmony with the cultural contexts of English-speaking countries. Furthermore, the study showed that the English language educators support the embodiment of cultural contexts in the English learning education.

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<sup>1</sup> Cortazzi and Jin (1999: 204-210) distinguish between three main categories of cultural focus in textbooks: a) textbooks based on *target culture(s)*, such as the US, the UK or other English-speaking countries; b) textbooks based on *source culture*, which is the learners’ own culture; c) textbooks reflecting *international cultures* with the view that the target language is used as an international language.

In another study, Mofidi and Hashemi (2019) Kharazmi University of Tabriz, investigated the cultural representation in the visuals found in a recently developed EFL textbooks. The researchers utilized the content analysis approach Adaskou et al, (1990). Results showed that the *international* and *source* cultures are highly presented in the developed textbooks, whereas *target* culture has received little attention. Furthermore, the manifestation of the social dimension outweighed the aesthetic cultural dimension in the visuals of these textbooks. The researchers concluded that the EFL series proved to be beneficial in promoting intercultural awareness and communicating the different and various cultures among its audience.

Lessard-Clouston, (2016) conducted a longitudinal meta-analyses study of 52 empirical studies published during 1996 to 2015 and concerned with cultural representations in the US second and/or foreign language (L2/FL). The study adopted Adaskou's et al. model in analyzing a wide range of topics and themes appeared in these studies such as teaching materials, methods, learning, assessments, instructional approaches, and the use of technology in the learning and teaching process, in addition to highlighting a shift from a focus on "culture" to "cross-cultural" or "inter-cultural ." Finding have shown that the empirical research on L2/FL cultural representations has started to gain teachers and educational researchers' attention just recently, particularly in middle and high schools, indicating that there is more recent attention by researchers the importance of exposing the American children to a more open, multicultural representations in the textbooks and in teachers' pedagogies.

Similarly, Rashidi and Meihami (2016) Shiraz University, Islamic Republic of Iran, analyzed the "hidden curriculum" in the content of the English Language Teaching

(ELT) textbooks in the “inner, outer, and expanding circle”<sup>1</sup> countries, using several frameworks of cultural representations among them Adaskou’s et al. framework. Results showed that there was more focus on the aesthetic cultural element in the ELT textbooks of different concentric circles compared to other countries in the other circles, while less focus on the socio and multiculturalism which may cause learners in these concentric circles to be less interculturally literate.

In the Palestinian context, El Shawa, (2011) studied the cultural content of the English for Palestine Secondary Stage (Grade 11 and 12) textbooks in order to reveal to what extent the selected textbooks contain Palestinian and non-Palestinian cultural activities in its products, practices and perspectives. The researcher adopted Adaskou’s et al. model in her analysis and concluded that the English for Palestine Secondary Stage Textbooks proved to reflect the cultural elements within the different activities mentioned in these textbooks, however, it introduced the products of the *target* culture more than the Palestinian (*source*) culture, while the practices and perspectives of the Palestinian culture were introduced more than for the target culture. Results also showed that the presentation of the Palestinian culture in comparison with other cultures is quite poor, that is; there was absence of specific phrases and expressions that introduce Palestine to the world and focus more on expressions

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<sup>1</sup> Kachru (1985) three concentric circle model was used in this study. The inner circle countries refer to those countries where English is used as the primary language, such as the USA, Britain, Canada, and so forth. The outer/middle circle denotes those countries where English usage has some colonial history such as India, Bangladesh, Ghana, and so forth. The expanding country circle includes countries where English is spoken but where it does not necessarily have a colonial history.

related to Islamic topics that allow Palestinian youth to introduce their religion to the world.

In summary, the aforementioned literature review of cultural representations showed that most of the studies focused on comparing EFL textbooks with those of other countries, and rarely focused on the meaning and consequences of such analysis on the local perspective, and how it contributes to individuals' learning and understanding of their cultural identity, attitudes and thinking toward other cultures and the world.

### ***Applying Bruner's Model in Learning and Development***

Khudair and Khalaf (2015), conducted a study based on Bruner's theory of cognitive learning to find out its effect on Iraqi students' representation of culture and artistic concepts in their fine art course at Babylon University. The study was experimental in nature where the sample of 80 students from both genders was divided into two groups; the experimental group that studied art using different representation of Bruner's theory and the control group where its students studied art without using this theory. Results showed that the students of the experimental groups excelled on their motivation in considering socio cultural issues in their work compared to those in the control group.

In a similar study, Chusnah (2018، الحسنى) studied the effect of applying the Constructivist theory of Bruner, on writing skills for Indonesian seventh grade students. The study was descriptive in nature and used data collection tools such as the observation, the interviews and documents collected related to activities students did during the study. Results showed that the application of the Constructivist learning theory of Jerome Bruner can develop students' writing ability and facilitate them to

construct their ideas related to culture and society. The study recommended in using Bruner's theory to raise students' awareness of their context and personal experiences within a more socio-cultural perspective.

In a similar perspective, Halloluwa et. al (2011), University of Colombo, in Sri Lanka, studied the effect of providing an automated interactive learning tool called Smart Interactive Comprehensive Learning Aid (SICLA) for children who can learn and acquire knowledge with minimum teacher support on students' learning using Bruner's three modes of representation: enactive representation (action based), iconic representation (image based), and symbolic representation (language based). The study concluded that children could educate themselves with minimum supervision from their teacher. Such results according to the authors could be used help children learn with minimal support from their parents or teachers.

Another study based on Bruner's theory was conducted by Zuliana, Retnowati, Widjajanti (2019) in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, to explore how elementary school students build their mathematical knowledge based on Bruner's theory (enactive, iconic and symbolic stage). Results showed that students can construct mathematical concepts using Bruner's theory principle, and their previous knowledge to construct new knowledge. While elementary school teachers should build situations in such a way that students can engage actively and interactively in mathematics learning process. It can be done by thinking of appropriate concrete level situations toward formal abstract mathematics.

In summary, the aforementioned literature review of Bruner's studies showed that most of the studies focused on using Bruner's theory of

constructivist and the three stages of it, to enhance learning of arts, math and writing skills. Studies agreed on the effectiveness of using this theory in education and its positive impact on students' learning and progress.

### ***The Palestinian Curriculum from Different Perspectives***

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, research on the Palestinian Arabic textbooks has focused more on cultural representations in terms of gender social rights, and much more on how it represents the political issue related to the Israeli occupation.

As in relation to gender, the Independent Commission for Human Rights "Board of Grievances" (2019، العسالي), in Ramallah- Palestine, conducted a study aimed to find out the extent to which the Palestinian curriculum content considers the gender system and the equal distribution of careers between males and females. The study used the content analysis methodology to analyze books of the first part of the Palestinian curriculum from the first to the ninth grade focusing on the nature of the lesson titles, units, and topics and the nature of the activities, skills, language exercises and the visual effects used within them. A questionnaire and tables were built and used as the study tool. Results showed that the content of the books related to gender was random and not systematic, and the stereotype that reflects women indicates the ambiguity of the educational philosophy on which the choice of subjects is based. The study recommended the necessity of adopting gender-specific criteria to develop the content of the books, taking into account balance and fairness in the distribution of careers between the two sexes and finally strengthening the principle of true partnership between all parties.

In another study, The Association of National Institutions for Development in partnership with the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation (2013، العسالي), in Ramallah-

Palestine, investigated the extent the equality issue between genders in the contents of the books of grades 1-4 take. Results showed a big gap between the roles of each of the two genders, and an inequality between their presence in the curriculum, besides the difference in terms of quality and quantity was in favor of the male gender. The study recommended on developing a clear and systematic educational vision for building or developing school curricula that take into consideration the gender system.

Similarly, Al-Jerbawi's (2003), conducted a study aimed at identifying forms of discrimination against women in the Arabic language, civic education, science, and mathematics textbooks for the first and sixth grades, in which concluded that the textbooks ignored the real capabilities of women and dealt with the issue of women in a superficial manner.

From a more political perspective, Moghrabi (2001) studied the attempt by extremist Israeli groups to frame the issue of content in Palestinian textbooks that was first published in 2000 in a manner that is consistent with their overall political agenda of discrediting the Palestinian Authority. It also explores the Israeli and Palestinian debates about what historical narratives should be included in textbooks and what images of the "Other" these texts should present. The researcher used alternative ways of examining the content of these texts based on literature review in the field of education. Results showed that the new Palestinian school textbooks "make a special effort to promote tolerance, openness, and democratic values" (p.20). The study recommended that the curriculum should not emphasize teaching students' facts as they are the only truth, but more to help them to become critical thinkers and decision makers. Students according to the author should be taught to different strategies in

learning such as debates and use evidence-based research and statistics to make their arguments critically and scientifically.

In a similar study, Mazawi (2011) examined the debates over the Palestinian school textbooks produced by the Palestinian Authority from the year 2000 onward, by situating them over a larger geopolitical and social perspective. The study concluded that the Palestinian textbooks are “underpinned by circumvolved histories, associated with empires long Gone with the Wind” (p. 181), with regimes and social class power configurations that was scattered under the continuous decolonization and economic flows. Based on such controversy, the author at the end questioned about “Which Palestine should we teach?” and how the curriculum should emphasize on the emergent aspirations of the Palestinians as well as on pedagogic engagements beyond what the textbooks offer.

## **Conclusion**

Literature review confirmed that there is a great relationship between language teaching books and culture, as they cannot be separated from each other. However, studies of both local and international textbooks indicated that even though the reviewed studies adopted Adaskou’s et al. as model of analysis, researchers in these studies focused on the EFL textbooks and how culture is integrated in terms of “target” vs. “source” cultures. Moreover, the only study based on the researcher knowledge that adopted Adaskou’s et al. model in the Palestinian context was that for Al Shawa (2011) and concluded that the “target culture” was introduced more heavily in the analyzed textbooks than the Palestinian culture in addition to the absence of the specific phrases and expressions that introduce Palestine to the world. Other studies in the Palestinian context took the perspective of gender and politics as a unit of analysis rather than other

components similar to Adaskou's. These results indicate the necessity for conducting more studies in the Palestinian context and from more local perspective rather than comparative in order to understand the dynamics of cultural representations manifested in the textbooks on the students' meaning making of culture and identity.

## **Chapter III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

This research is content analytical in nature and aims at clarifying the cultural representations in the Arabic language curriculum for the basic grades: second, third and fourth. It adopts Adaskou's et al, (1990) classification of cultural representation (*aesthetic, sociological, semiotic, and pragmatic*) that are found in those Arabic language curricula and the various forms of such representations based on Bruner's (1996) *the contextual and the perspectival principles*. This chapter delve deep into the research design, methodology and the analysis procedure that are followed to come out with answers to the research questions.

#### **Research Design**

The study is quantitative in nature (Goertzen, 2017), and follows the content analysis approach (Klaus, 2004) in interpreting and coding the textual materials in the curriculum, including text, graphics, and images.

Neuman (1997) defines content analysis as "the technique for gathering and analyzing the content of the text" (p.272-273). The content refers to themes, symbols, meanings, words, messages, or statements contained in texts in their direct or indirect form. As for the text, it is anything that creates a connection with the other, whether it is a written or visual one, such as books, newspapers, magazines, advertisements, letters, films, pictures.

The relevant text about culture was highlighted, coded, and analyzed against Adaskou's et al. (1990) cultural representations (aesthetic, sociological, semantic and pragmatic senses) to answer the first question of the study, and then against Bruner's

principles; the contextual and the perspectival principles to answer the second question of the study.

### **Procedures of the study**

The researcher chose the research sample consisting of the six books in their two parts for the second, third and fourth basic grades of the Arabic language to examine the cultural representations in the Palestinian curriculum books. The study conducted the following steps to answer the research questions.

First, the researcher extracted the indicators that are relevant to both Adaskou's et al. and Bruner's classifications and principles of cultural representations in the text.

second, the research identified and highlighted all the texts and images that deemed relevant to cultural representations and were given codes based on the indicators of both Adaskou et al. and Bruner's classifications (mentioned in table 2 and table 3).

Third, focus group discussions with experts in the field of education and another one with teachers were followed on randomly selected text and analyzed against Adaskou's and Bruner's indicators for two times and validity coefficient was conducted, then necessary adjustments were made in light of the discussion and comments.

### **Data analysis**

The researcher depended on the textbooks' content ideas as the unit of analysis. The texts from reading passages and images were used for content

analysis to answer the first question of the research related to the nature of cultural representations of Adaskou et al. (the semantic, pragmatic, sociological, and aesthetic). On the other hand, exercises that follow each text of the textbooks have also been used as materials for analysis to answer the second research question related to the forms of cultural representations according to Jerome Bruner (1996), namely (contextual and perspectival).

### *Adaskou's et al. Cultural Representations*

The study has adopted a systematic and gradual analytical approach. Six textbooks were analyzed, where each textbook contained 15 units, hence a total of 90 units in the textbooks of all three elementary classes were analyzed. First, the researcher used the literature review to identify indicators for each of Adaskou's et al. cultural representations; that is the semantic, pragmatic, sociological, and aesthetic. Then the researcher sequentially analyzed and coded the fourth-grade texts and images against those indicators and used tables to present the data. These tables were divided into four columns. The first column contained "the title of the lesson", the second one entitled "description of the text", the third: the field classifying the text and the fourth; the type of cultural presentation contained in the text based on their indicators (Appendixes, A, B, C, D, E). A different table of 5 columns was used for a quantitative analysis; the first column contained the title of the lesson, and the other four columns entitled by one of the four cultural representations of Adaskou's model, (Appendixes, F, G, H, I). The text in each textbook was read and a tick was put in the box under its relevant cultural representation. The total number of ticks were counted and converted into numbers and presented in another table for comparison and discussion.

Based on the literature, the researcher identified indicators related to the four senses of Adaskou's et al. (1990) cultural representation and were used for coding and analyzing the textbooks. These indicators are summarized in the following table:

**Table 2.**

*Adasko's et al. Classification of Cultural Representations and its Indicators*

<b>Adasko's et al Classifications of Culture</b>	<b>Indicators for Text Analysis When the text presents, describes or mentions the following topics:</b>
<b>Pragmatic</b>	Professions Social norms and standards Developing craftsmanship Professional and social practices Methods of communication between in a specific context.
<b>Sociological</b>	Family life, patterns, roles, tasks, and relationships Social life, relationships, social activities, and roles Institutions, types and functions, structures, and systems Occasions, connotations, and rituals.
<b>Semantic</b>	The language used and its significations. Dressing, architecture, signs, and colors as semantic and communicative patterns. Food, table, rituals, and acts of worship as areas of expression and communication. Daily and ritual practices and normative and non-normative social actions (acceptable and forbidden). Places and times in their relationship to events and occasions.

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**Aesthetic<sup>1</sup>**

Significations of the title and its relationship to the content of the text (aesthetic distance and horizon of anticipation).

Textual identity; literary genres and textual plurality, in terms of a narrative text, an essay or a report, a theatrical, poetic, or an argumentative text.

Dramatic structure: the dramatic structure, the dramatic moment, tension, contrast, conflict, and points of view.

Text endings; their types, and the explicit and implicit meaning.

Text structure and its elements; the form of the structure in terms of (similarity and difference), coding, depiction, and textual elements of the text, for example, the elements of the narrative text: characters, plot, time, place ... the poetic text: rhythm, photography and music, the argumentative text: introduction, proofs and results).

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### ***Bruner's Cultural Representations***

Bruner's theory (1996) was also used to analyze the forms of cultural representations in the curriculum by focusing on the analysis of the textbooks' language exercises, for the three grades of the Arabic language textbooks. Similar to the procedure followed for analyzing Adaskou's cultural representations in the textbooks, the researcher also used the literature review to identify indicators for each of Bruner's (1996) principles for cultural representations; that is the contextual and the perspectival. The researcher adopted Falk and Dercking's (2002) contextual model of learning which is divided into three levels, the personal, social, and the physical, where the personal

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<sup>1</sup> The aesthetic sense is included in all previous senses and represents its purpose and essence, as it is a kind of striving to raise it to the level of perfection and creativity.

level included the learner's personal reference, his/her contextual experiences and interests, social skills, and current understanding of what is presented, while the social context refers to other people who are presented in the context, the interaction of the learner with them, as well as to the social and cultural features associated with the topics, exhibits and tools. Whereas, the physical context includes the physical aspects of the classroom environment, including architectural features, organizational structure, materials, tools, and definitions .

Therefore, the research checked Bruner's principles against the following indicators found in the literature: (see table 3 below):

**Table 3.**

*Bruner's Principles of Cultural Classifications and its Indicators*

<b>Bruner's Principles of Cultural Classifications</b>	<b>Indicators for Text Analysis</b>
The <i>contextual</i> principle	When the text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Is related to student's personal interests, memories, daily lives, and skills.</li> <li>b) Provides social engagement where the one learns with and from others.</li> <li>c) Contains material component where learning is connected to objects and materials that are experienced in action.</li> </ul>
The <i>perspectival</i> principle	When the text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Adopts the principle of relativity of meaning and do not adhere to the duality of right and wrong.</li> <li>b) explores topics from different points of views and from different perspectives.</li> </ul>

- 
- c) diversifies cultural tools and resources in building different ways of understanding, such as using different resources in introducing topics.
  - d) employs multiple methods of understanding, producing, and representing meaning (Bruner's representations of meaning- the symbolic, the iconic, and the actual)
- 

### **Validity and Reliability**

Validity was achieved by studying the validity of the indicators compared to with the literature review, and by conducting focus group discussions with experts to check that these indicators are valid.

To check for reliability, two other experts in the field of education analyzed the data separately in two rounds. In the first round, each expert analyzed selected text from the textbooks against Adaskou et al. and Bruner's indicators, and both versions of the results were compared and contrasted with those of the researcher and the agreement between the analysis was fairly high (80% for the first expert's analysis, 83% for the second expert's analysis). Afterwards, several discussion meetings were held with the experts to discuss the indicators and checking those segments in the text that deemed relevant to those indicators in order to reach common understanding of the analysis. A second round of analysis was held by the two experts and the agreement between the analysis of the two experts with those of the researcher raised to 90% and 92% respectively. The differences in analysis concentrated on the Adaskou's aesthetic and semantic dimensions, and on Bruner's perspectival principle, which were finally resolved by consensus based on further consultation of the data. This procedure was followed to insure the analysis reliability. Finally, Cohen's kappa coefficient ( $\kappa$ ) for inter-rater reliability was calculated and found to be 0.80 which indicate a good value of agreement between experts.

## About the Researcher

In the present study, the researcher conducted the data collection and the analysis. Thus, several measures were followed to ensure the validity of the study such as expert or “peer” debriefing after the analysis of each textbook, expert negotiations to reach consensus, and so forth. Such measures helped to minimize bias; however, bias elimination was impossible due to the researchers’ background and her prior experiences in the field of cultural studies. Therefore, it is crucial that the reader knows about the researcher’s background in relation to science in general, and in NOS specifically.

The researcher earned a Bachelor degree in elementary education and worked as a teacher for early childhood stage for 13 years, also earned a degree in drama in education and works nowadays as a researcher and a drama trainer for teachers who works with students in all stages. She worked in the field of designing education for the Palestinian curriculum for the primary stages (1-6) and supervised teacher professional development programs to enable them to apply them in class, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Continuing Education at Birzeit University and UNICEF.

The researcher believes that there is no truth when it comes to knowledge production as it is totally a human construction. However, the researcher realizes the very efforts in academia to socially negotiate and criticize individual subjectivities through different venues of communication.

The researcher believes that the Palestinian textbooks should mirror the cultural dimensions and context the Palestinian are living in. Therefore, elements cultures based on Adaskou’s et al. and Bruner should be explicitly and reflectively emphasized in the new Palestinian curriculum.

## Chapter IV

### RESULTS

#### Introduction

This research studied the cultural representations in the Palestinian Arabic language curriculum based on the socio-cultural theory. The study adopted Adaskou's framework of cultural representations (Adaskou et al, 1990), mainly the aesthetic, sociological, semantic and pragmatic representations, as well as Bruner's (1996) contextual, and the perspectival principles that are embedded in the basic grade level second, third and fourth. The results are presented according to each research question separately.

*Question 1: Adaskou's et al. (1990)  
Cultural Representations Embedded in the  
Palestinian Second, Third, and Fourth  
Arabic Language Textbooks*

This section presents the cultural representations that are embedded in the Arabic language curriculum according to Adaskou's et al. classification (1990) by analyzing main ideas in the texts and images in each textbook. An overview of the content in the Grade Four textbook and results of the analysis related to it are presented first, followed by the Second and Third Grades.

#### *An Overview for the Fourth Grade Textbook Content*

The Arabic language curriculum for the fourth-grade textbook entitled لغتنا الجميلة "Our Beautiful Language" consists of two parts with fifteen lessons in each. The internal structure of each unit consists of listening text نص الاستماع, images, reading text,

language exercises, writing, spelling dictation, writing essay and poems (see Figure 3 below).

### الإسلام

١- اقرأ الكلمات الآتية، وتلاحظ لفظ (ال) الشَّرِيف:

الطفال
المواهب
الصحافة
الفن

نستنتج:

اللام القصرية: هي التي تكتب وتلفظ.

اللام الشمسية: هي التي تكتب ولا تلفظ، ويكون الحرف بعدها مشدداً.

٢- نُدخِل (ال) على الكلمات الآتية، ونقرأ:

بيت، جبل، حفل، شجاعة، وزدة، طير، طين، كلب.

٣- تكتب ما يملئ عيني: (تؤخذ من دليل المعلم).

### التعبير:

تعد ترتيب كلمات كل سطر، يتكون جملة مفيدة وتكتبها في دفتر:

١- ترميز، هنا، مشهورة، أمثال، ثقلمة.

٢- إعلامية، نخبة، كتف، أمتيت؟

٣- كبراً، الأطفال، هنا، يتجود.

٤- الأطفال، أهدم، ترميز، لهم، شمر، جعلني.

### الكتابة:

١- تكتب ما يأتي في الفراغ:

لكل واحد منا قدرات، وله مواهب، تختلف من إنسان إلى آخر، ولا تتركز على القدرات وتلك المواهب إلا إذا وجدت من يكتشفها، ويلاحظها، ويهتم بها.

٢- تكتب ما يأتي في دفتر التمثيل:

سألها صديق ذات مرة: كيف أصبحت نجمة إعلامية قالت: الفضل في كثير منة لثقتي بحسان التي اكتشفت مواهبتي، وقد شعنت ذلك أن أدخل كتلة الصحافة والإعلام، وأخرج فيها، ونحني للأطفال جعلني أهدم ترميز لهم، ومن الخير لكل منا أن نترس ما نجب، ونعمل فيما نجب.

٣- تكتب ما يأتي بخط التمثيل:

لكل واحد منا قدرات، وله مواهب.

٧- تسأل عمتا تحتة تحط بأحد أسماء الاشفيهام الآتية، كما في المثال: (أين، متى، من، كيف، لماذا، كم):

المثال: يفرغ الخبز الساعة الظهيرة صباحاً.

أ- ولذ مشموة ذويهي؟

ب- عتاً للبعوضة؟

ج- يلمظ الحباب؟

د- أمتيت نخبة إعلامية؟

هـ- لحت الرياضة؟

و- أهدت إلى المدرسة ما يذا.

٨- تصوغ فلاة أسئلة حول الجملة الآتية، باستخدام أسماء الاشفيهام (من، ماذا، متى):

اكتشفت المعلمة مواهبها مبراً.

أ- من \_\_\_\_\_؟

ب- ماذا \_\_\_\_\_؟

ج- متى \_\_\_\_\_؟

### نحيب شقوية:

١- كتف تترك القدرات والمواهب عند الناس؟

٢- من التي اكتشفت نوجهها؟

٣- أين تعلمت؟

٤- ماذا أجادت هنا، عندما سألها صديق: كتف أمتيت نخبة إعلامية؟

٥- ما الذي جعل هنا ترميز ترميز الأطفال؟

### تفكر:

١- الأطفال ينادون هنا: (ماما هنا)، فعلام نذل ذلك؟

٢- يمتاع الإنسان لكن يندع إلى أسماء كثيره. أمتي انتي منها.

### التدريبات اللغوية:

١- فصل بين الكلمة ومعناها:

أ- تترز	سجل
ب- يهتلم	مشهورة
ج- يشمر	يكتفي
	تلمظ

Figure 3. Examples of Activities in the Arabic Language Textbook, Grade 4.

The first lesson in part one of the textbook as shown in figure 4 below, entitled “*Gratitude Goes to my Teacher*” presents a conversation between a teacher and one of her students. The text emphasizes on the teacher’s role as a facilitator and enabler towards developing her student’s abilities and how she helps the students in general in discovering their talents and realizing their capabilities.

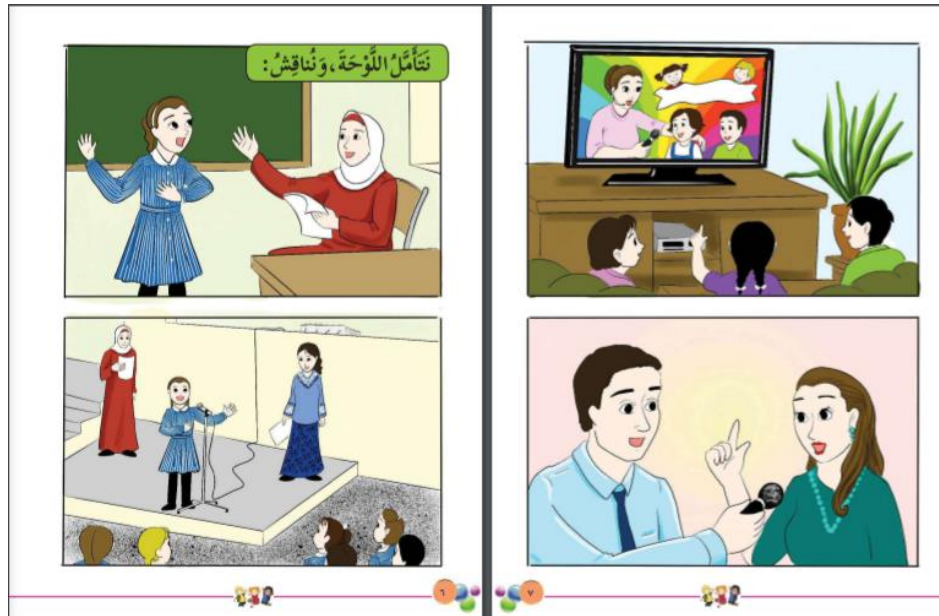


Figure 4. Visual text of lesson: "Gratitude Goes to my Teacher," Lesson 1, Part 1, Grade 4

The second lesson as shown in the picture below, "The Fish and Freedom", is a text based on a story that revolves around a fish going through a crisis, and how a group of birds and other animals try to help get it out from such a crisis.

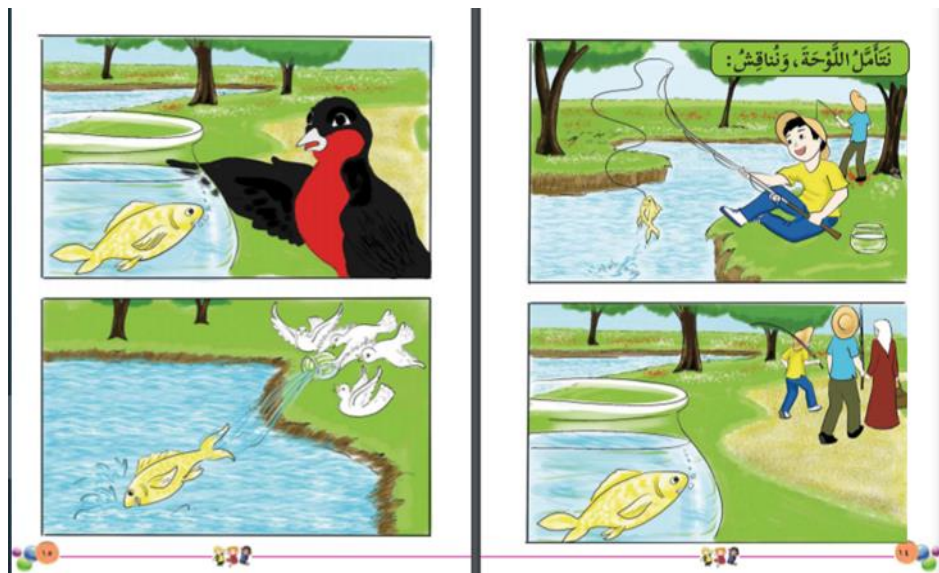


Figure 5. Visuals from Lesson: "The Fish and Freedom," Lesson 2, Part 1, Grade 4

The third lesson entitled "O Symbol of Generosity and Resilience" (figure 6) is a four- paragraph passage describing the narrator's relationship with an olive tree and how it provides him with some of his basic needs.



Figure 6. Visuals from Lesson: "O Symbol of Generosity and Resilience," Lesson 3, Part 1,

Grade 4

"Zahrat Al Hannoun" (the Anemone Flower) is the title of the fourth lesson which constitutes a text that narrates an imaginary journey of a child who flies with his butterflies and overcomes the Israeli segregation Wall (see figure 7). The lesson focuses on how problematic the Wall to the Palestinian daily lives and the wide range of lands it captures behind it.

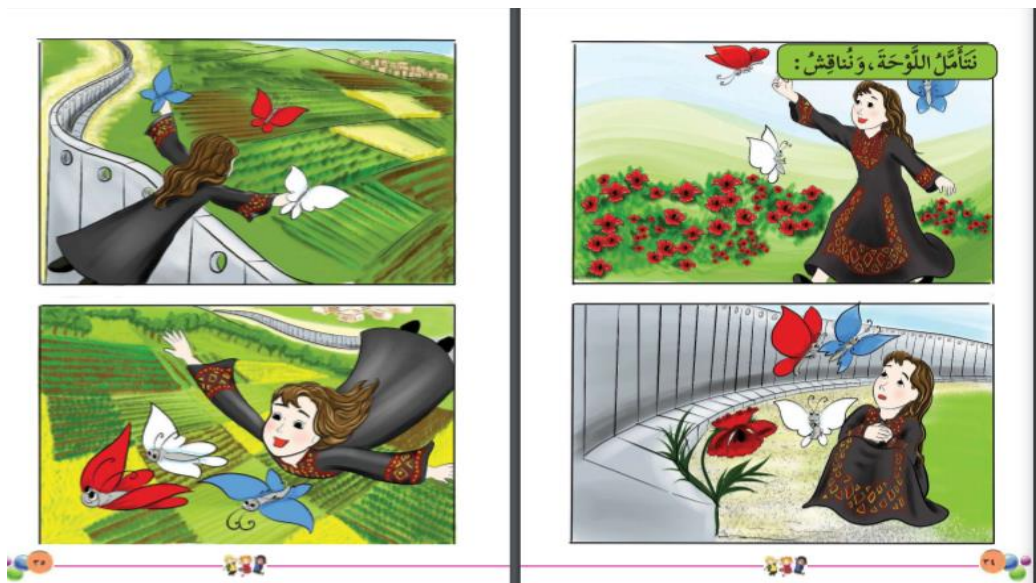


Figure 7. Visuals from Lesson: "Zahrat Al Hannoun," Lesson 4, Part 1, Grade 4

The fifth text as shown below entitled, "*A Tour in Jerusalem's Markets*", is a text that uses a straightforward and simple anecdotal approach to describe the old markets of Jerusalem, through a tour in which a grandfather takes his grandson to it.

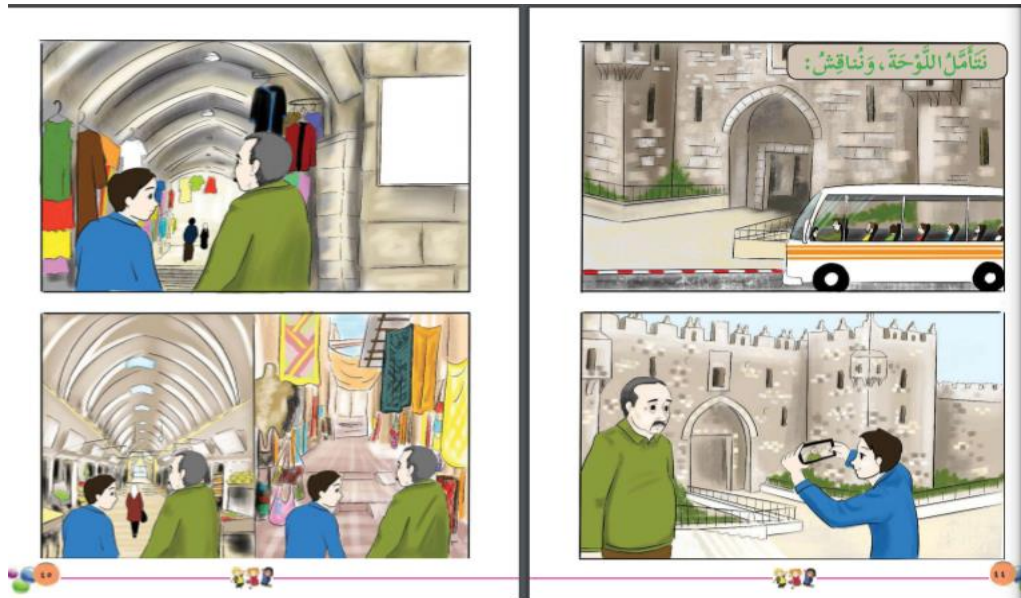


Figure 8. Visuals from Lesson: "*A Tour in Jerusalem's Markets*," Lesson 5, Part 1.

### ***Content Analysis of the Cultural Representations in the Fourth-Grade Textbook***

Results of Adaskou's et al. semantic, pragmatic, sociological, and aesthetic representations in the aforementioned five lessons of the Fourth-Grade textbook are presented here separately.

#### ***The Semantic Representations***

The images and text in the first lesson "*Gratitude Goes to my Teacher*", included semantic elements and indicators (see Appendix, J). In the images, objects were used such as a microphone, a television, a blackboard, and school bags. Also, physical signals and movements were shown by "children's hands." Linguistic symbols

appeared in the billboard that showed the name of the school and on the television picture that shows “children's period on television.” On the other hand, the text analysis showed opposite signs, which is related to the semantic dimension, such as, “a teacher and a student,” “a program presenter and a journalist,” “Mother Haya (as a TV presenter) and Haya the student.”

Result showed that images in this lesson were to reflect the text in more than one way, which provided the possibility of the presence of the semantic sense; that is, the images provide the reader with the opportunity to interpret the story differently and draw different meanings of them, however, the written text directly present the idea to the reader which is related to the teacher’s role in developing his/her student’s abilities.

In the second lesson, “*the Fish and the Freedom*”, the semantic indicators appeared through the symmetry relation between the images and the text of the unit lesson. And through the visual text presented as one image is full of signs, and colors as semantic and communicative patterns. Furthermore, there is a linguistic correspondence between freedom and predicament, the fish and the sea, the pigeons and the sky but has not been delved into.

Images of the third lesson “*O Symbol of Generosity and Resilience*” shows a diversity of rituals and social activities related to the olive tree (the main topic of this lesson), which gave multiple semantic dimensions (see Appendix, K). For example, the olive tree is a tree but was connected to the “shade”, “fire”, “cleanliness”, and “food”. The clothes of the characters in the pictures are also filled with signs that are related to rituals as well. The text also contains a semantic structure that begins with the word (when), which represents the text as a conditional temporal structure (i.e., when I am hungry- it is my food, when I get tired- it is my shadow and so forth). However, the text

was emptied from its semiotic *energy* through the content that adopted the structural and propagandistic rhetorical approach.

In the fourth lesson "*Zahrat Al Hannoun*" (the Anemone Flower), the visual text reflects a blurriness regarding the purpose of the story, as it contains the elements of the story verbatim such as Laila (the name of the girl the story), the butterflies, the anemone flower, and the apartheid wall. Also, there is no employment of colors that can add to the text. Although there are some places mentioned in the text such as "before the wall and after it, Haifa and Layla's home", however, there is a lack of clarity for the reader on the significant of these places and times in their relationship to the events of the story.

In the fifth lesson "*A Tour of Jerusalem's Markets*", the pictorial text employs spatial, architectural, and ritual symbols related to activities of buying, selling, and displaying goods, while the reading text contains spatial and temporal data related to the city of Jerusalem and its markets.

From the above analysis it is clear that the semantic representation presented through the pictorial texts is weak as they are not presented in an attractive way that encourages students to think about the proposed relationships, signs, colors, and their significations, as they delivered their messages in a direct way .

As for the reading texts, the focus was on the language use and its significations without delving deep into meaning making. They also contained rituals and social actions but in a limited way. Finally, they have largely lacked the linkage between events in temporal and spatial data.

### *The Pragmatic Representation*

In the lesson “*Gratitude Goes to my Teacher*”, a group of professions appeared in the text, such as presenter, journalist, and teacher, represented by situations, purposes, and written descriptions. There is also a mention of skills such as preparing, training, and delivering materials. However, they remained at the level of presenting tools without explaining or activating them. Moreover, these professions were presented abstractly without referring to social practices or the way they create interactions between people in the society.

In the second lesson “*the Fish and the Freedom*”, one profession about fishing was mentioned, without mentioning the related fishing tools. Even though there was a specific context, which is the sea, and specific characters, however, the context and the characters have no real and clear interaction between them. There was a character who has the ability to help and the other who waits for this help and lacks self-efficacy.

In lesson “*O Symbol of Generosity and Resilience*”, there is a presentation of tools, but without any description for them and for social practices and rituals related to the presented activities “bathing, lighting the stove, sitting around the table, and so forth”.

In “*Zahrat Al Hannoun*” there is no mention of the pragmatic sense except for the action of flying which is an imaginative one.

The fifth lesson “*A Tour of Jerusalem’s Markets*” present a range of professions and businesses that are related to memory and history, through narration, tour and photography and through the relationship of the grandson and the grandfather.

From the above analysis, it is clear there are many professions that were mentioned in some text, but they remained at the level of naming them without being introduced by their tools or their relationship to societal practices or the way they were

developed. All of these professions are presented in a single pattern without clarifying their connection with people's lives, customs, and rituals. Overall, much of the texts lacked the pragmatic sense as an important dimension of cultural representation.

### ***The Sociological Representation***

In the lesson "*Gratitude Goes to my Teacher*", the text presented a number of social roles related to the profession mentioned (such as the teacher, the student, the journalist, and the presenter). Institutions such as home and school, and media organizations were also mentioned. In addition, life activities such as viewing, interviewing, and learning were mentioned. However, the text did not delve deep into the introduction of roles, nor with the definition and functions the mentioned institutions, nor the essence of activities. The text however encouraged children to explore these professions by concluding: "*It is good for each of us to study what we love and do what we love.*"

In the lesson "*The fish and the Freedom*" the text used symbolic representations and resembled "freedom" and "exile" with the image of the fish in the vessel. At the level of roles and activities, the text gave an active role "to others" (the birds) who helped the fish to get free, while limiting the role of fish's role as helpless and waiting for help of others to gain its freedom. Such a text has many social and practical connotations, one of which is the denial of self-efficacy in facing crisis.

Both lessons, the "*O Symbol of Generosity and Resilience*" and "*Zahrat Al Hannoun*" lacked the sociological representation although some roles and rituals appeared in the first and was associated with the olive tree.

The lesson "*A tour of Jerusalem's markets*" presents family life and relationships within it, such as the relationship of a grandson with his grandfather and

the role of the later in guiding and awareness regarding the importance the historical and religious places.

To conclude, the sociological representation is one of the most common representations found in many texts. It appears in the representation of the family and the relationships between its members, but it is presented with stereotypical roles and missions. Social institutions and historical ones are also included but by mentioning their names as places without addressing their roles and their relationship with the society. There is also a mention of some occasions and rituals, but it is presented superficially.

### ***The Aesthetic Representation***

“*Gratitude Goes to my Teacher*”, is an intense and direct title that directly reflects the content of the text, which is represented by its last paragraph when the student said: “gratitude goes to my teacher who discovered my talent”. This ending deprives the text from the aesthetic dimension of multiple expectations and opportunity for reflections. Furthermore, the structure of the text is closer to the structure of the story, however, it lacks main dramatic elements such as a conflicting event or a climax. The closed weakened the aesthetic structure of the text and made it closer to the journalistic story.

The lesson “*The fish and the Freedom*” is a brief, fictional narrative, direct to the point and does not include any aesthetic dimension. There are main story elements available such as characters, tension, and climax, however, the ending of the text is closed and does not open the opportunity for thinking and taking actions (the story ended with the pigeons rescuing the fish that thanked them for their help in gaining its freedom).

Similarly, the "*O Symbol of Generosity and Resilience*" lesson is weak with its aesthetic dimension. The title is written as a slogan or a speech, and the textual identity is confused and closer to a speech or a monologue rather than a dialogical with multiple voices. The text ended in the form of a ready-made rhetorical sentence closed in an unexpected way which prevented the readers from thinking about its content.

Contrary the previous lesson, the title of the lesson "*Zahrat Al Hannoun*" is condensed and creates an aesthetic dimension as it slightly breaks the reader's expectation. The structure of the text is simple narrative and contained a dialogue, but it did not evolve to include the elements of the dramatic structure. The text ends with a ready-made rhetorical sentence; "We will definitely come back", which has an implicit and confusing meaning that cannot be understood directly by all students.

Finally, the title of the lesson "*A Tour of Jerusalem's Markets*" expresses the text directly. The text is a narrative form that tells a story which has no event or crisis and remains at the level of narrating and describing. It ends up with a traditional, closed ending by the phrase "how great our grandfathers were in building the walls of Jerusalem and saving for hundreds of years" which is a direct invitation to the new generation to do the same.

Similar results can be found in the rest of the lessons in grade four textbooks in its two parts, which can be found in (Appendixes A, B, C, D, E). In general, the text was presented to students in the form of short narrative stories that are based on different symbols. Through the symbolism of animals and inanimate objects, these symbols are used to transfer and pass down different information to the students. For example, the main character in the "The Brave Firefighter" lesson and the "The Cricket and the Ant" and in the "A Drop of Water telling its Story" Lessons (see Table A in Appendix A) are the elephant, the insect, and the drop of water, respectively.

The pragmatic sense in these lessons appears as well as its importance as a societal value and its association with skills and tools. For example, the pragmatic dimension in “The Brave Firefighter” lesson was connected to the body of the elephant, specifically its trunk which was employed in order to extinguish the fire and help others, while in the second lesson, “The Cricket and the Ant” lesson, it was the ant that had the practical skill of saving food, and in the cricket with its singing ability. A hidden message related to a cultural value can easily be derived by the reader when these two practical skills are placed against each other, as it is in the text, where one was acknowledged as more superior to the other, creating an unfair comparison between the two skills.

The third text, “A Drop of Water telling its Story”, presented an absolute and monolithic approach to the cycle of water in nature, however, the text in the following lesson, “Hasna’s Doll” (see Table A in Appendix A) hold many cultural representations as it employs the semiotics, sociological, pragmatic, and aesthetic dimensions. This lesson is presented in the form of a simple narrative text that combines literary and realistic forms. This text acts as an exemplary model for an integrated text. It has a semiotic structure in the encounters between the past and the present, between the homeland and life abroad, between childhood and old ages, between telling and receiving. It includes childhood sentiments through the puppet, that represents what one carries from childhood, especially connotations of innocence and play, and the abandoned doll which also added cultural dimensions related to the usurped homeland. More analysis of lessons in the targeted textbooks are shown in (Appendixes, A, B, C, D, E) and will be discussed in chapter 5.

***A Quantitative Content Analysis of the  
Cultural Representations in the Second and Third  
Arabic Language Textbooks***

The quantitative analysis of Adaskou's et al. cultural dimensions in the second and third grade textbooks with its two parts are presented in (Appendix, F, G, H, I). In this section, we present the results of such analysis for the second grade (Table 4), followed by a quantitative comparison of the total cultural presentations in the second and third textbooks.

**Table 4.**

*A Quantitative Analysis of the Cultural Representations in the Second Grade Arabic Language Textbook with its Two Parts Based on Adaskou's et al. Classification.*

The Cultural Dimensions	Part	Part	Total	%*
	One	Two		
Aesthetic Sense	2	2	4	13
Semantic Sense	3	1	4	13
Sociological Sense	5	5	10	33
Pragmatic Sense	6	4	10	33
Texts Free from Cultural Representations	3	4	7	23

\* The percentage is calculated out of the 30 analyzed texts in both parts of the textbooks.

Results in table 4 show that the number representing the aesthetic and the semiotic dimensions in both parts of grade two textbook is relatively low (4 each in total, which is 13%) compared to the number representing the social and the pragmatic dimensions (10 each in total, which is 33%). Results also show that the number of analyzed text that does not include any of Adaskou's cultural dimensions is relatively high.

**Table 5.**

*A Quantitative Analysis of the Cultural Representations in the Third Grade Arabic Language Textbook with its Two Parts Based on Adaskou's et al. Classification.*

Cultural Representations	Part One	Part Two	Total	%*
Aesthetic Sense	3	2	5	17
Semiotic Sense	3	3	6	20
Sociological Sense	5	4	9	30
Pragmatic Sense	3	4	7	23
Texts Free from Cultural Representations	6	5	11	37

\* The percentage is calculated out of the 30 analyzed texts in both parts of the textbooks.

Regarding the third-grade textbooks, results in table 5 show that the social and pragmatic dimensions are relatively high (30% & 23% respectively) compared to the semiotic and aesthetic dimensions (20% & 17% respectively). It worth noting that the aesthetic and semiotic dimensions have increased compared to those in the second-grade textbooks.

**Table 6.**

*A Quantitative Analysis of the Cultural Representations in the Fourth Grade Arabic Language Textbook with its two Parts Based on Adaskou's et al. Classification.*

Cultural Representations	Part One	Part Two	Total	%*
Aesthetic Sense	3	3	6	20
Semiotic Sense	4	3	7	23
Sociological Sense	3	6	9	30
Pragmatic Sense	7	0	7	23
Texts Free from Cultural Representations	3	7	10	33

\* The percentage is calculated out of the 30 analyzed texts in both parts of the textbooks.

The aforementioned increase in the aesthetic and semiotic dimensions can also be seen in the text of the fourth-grade textbooks (see table 6) however, there percentages are still considered low compared to the other two dimensions, especially when it compared to the social dimension.

A summary of the total percentages of the cultural dimensions in the three textbooks (the second, the third and the fourth grades) are compared in table 7 below.

**Table 7.**

*A Quantitative Analysis of the Cultural Representations in Grades 2,3 and 4 Arabic Language Textbook with its Tow Parts Based on Adaskou's et al. Classification.*

The Cultural Dimensions	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4
Aesthetic Sense	15 %	13 %	12 %
Semiotic Sense	20 %	17 %	16 %
Sociological Sense	33 %	30 %	30 %
Pragmatic Sense	33 %	23 %	23 %
Texts Free from Cultural Representations	23 %	37 %	33 %

Results show that the higher the grade level, the less cultural representations are expressed in the textbooks. One can notice the high percentage of social dimensions in three textbooks compared to the other three dimensions, and the low percentages of the aesthetic and the semiotic dimensions in all grade levels.

These results and its implications will be discussed further in chapter 5.

*Question 2: Bruner's (1996) Cultural Representations  
Embedded in the Palestinian Second, Third, and Fourth  
Arabic Language Textbooks*

This section shows the results related to question two of the study, the cultural representations; the contextual, and the perspectival, (Bruner,1996) that are embedded in the Palestinian school curriculum through the Arabic language curriculum for the basic grades: second, third and fourth. It is worth reminding that only the activities and the exercises of the textbooks were the unit of analysis as it contains the same titles of the activities that were repeated or copied from the first grade passing through the second and the third one. The only difference between them is in the number of

sentences that were added in each exercise of each grade. Exercises were analyzed according to the indicators listed in (Table 3.)

In addition to the texts and images that were analyzed to answer the first question of this study, the Arabic textbooks also contain a set of activities and language exercises with titles that are arranged in specific topics and follow the same pattern as follows: “We answer orally”, “we think”, “language exercises”, “match the word with its meaning”, “we ask about what is underlined”, “we formulate three questions based on the following sentence”, “writing”. Under the heading of writing, three forms are included: “we write what follows in the empty space”, “we copy what comes in the copy book”, “we write the following in the copy script”. The curriculum contains other questions and exercises that follow a different pattern such as: “we read the following words and we acknowledge the word”, “we rearrange the words of each line to form a useful sentence”. Some units included poems entitled as “We sing”.

In the following section, results of the second question of the study which is related to the manifestation of Bruner’s principles (the contextual, and the perspectival) in the activities, exercises, and questions of the second, third and fourth grade textbooks are shown based on each principle separately.

### ***The Contextual Principle***

Before getting into the results, it is worth reminding that any text, activity or exercise was considered contextual when it includes materials and resources that are relevant to the students’ interests and skills, and is embedded in a historical context, and finally, related to human and social experiences (see Table 3 for more information).

Analysis of the pattern of exercises, activities, and questions in the three textbooks shows that the approach of teaching language in these textbooks is based on

teaching the letter and language forms. Such an approach in curriculum development comes against the contextual principle, as learning is presented in isolation from historical contexts or social human conditions.

Furthermore, results indicate that the textbooks follow a quantitative path that depends on the increase in the size of the texts and number of activities and sentences rather than a qualitative path that follows the development of students and stimulate their growth with activities and tasks that include higher challenges. In particular, the two activities entitled “*answer orally*” and “*think*” remained the same regardless of the grade level, and the answer required from the students on those two activities remains at the level of retrieving information that is already found in the text, and all what the student have to do is to search for the answer from the paragraphs of the lesson and reread them.

For example, in fourth-grade lesson “*The Fish and the Freedom*” a story is presented about a boy who caught a small fish and put it in a glass bowl. The boy forgot the bowl and left the shore with his family. A nightingale came and said to her, “What is wrong with you, fish?” the fish answers and the conversation continues till the bird released the fish back to the see (p. 14). Following this text came the questions about the text entitled “answer orally” and were presented as follows: What did the boy forget on the beach? What is the problem that faced the fish? How the nightingale helped the fish to get out of the bowl? Who helped the nightingale to save the fish? (P. 15) As for what came under the title “*Think*”: We imagine that other animal than the nightingale came to the fish. What could happen to her? And what values do we learn from the story?

The same type of questions can be found in the two parts of the third-grade textbook. For example, the first lesson entitled “*Gold of the Earth*”, is a story of two

brothers who shared their father's wealth. One of them chose gold and the other chose the land. After three years the brother who took the gold has lost it, and the one who took land has invested it and gained a wealth (part one, p.6). Some of the questions mentioned in “we answer orally” part was: what did the little brother choose? When the big brother returned back to his young one? The answers to these questions are mentioned in the text. The same in the “think” activity where there was a question “if you were in the young’s brother place what would you choose and why?” (Ibid, p. 7). This seems more a guessing question which is quite not related to student’s personal interests or daily lives at this age. It can be inferred that this question cannot provide any social engagement between students and prevent them from building their own understanding, especially that are direct conclusions regarding the winner and the loser without deep questioning or understanding.

The first lesson in second grade “freedom is more beautiful” (part one, p.6) presents a story of a free bird felt hungry and went looking for food and a prisoned nightingale who has plenty of food in its cage. A couple of the questions proposed in “we answer orally” exercise was as follows: what did the bird feel? what was there in the cage? While in the “think” exercise, students were asked this question, which is better the life of the nightingale or the life of the bird and why? (Ibid, p. 7). The required answers for the lesson’s questions are informational answers based on retrieving the passages of the text without reflecting on the overall structure. The activities isolated the text’s information from its overall context, which led to an abstract and fragmented information treatment that does not see the text in its overall textual context, nor in its social context, nor in the students' personal context.

Similar results can be inferred from the questions under “think” exercises as thinking is a contextual cultural process, where it cannot be meaningful and useful

except within contextual conditions. In addition, the activities related to this section also had no link to the lived social context or to the interests of the students. For example, including a question asking the students to think what would happen if other animals were present near the fish makes the answer closer to useless guessing instead of putting students in a focused and intense thinking process that requires them to employ skills and abilities to formulate dialogues, develop hypotheses, research, and make decisions.

In another example found in the “we express” section, lesson three, grade three part one, there is an activity that asks students to rearrange the words to form a sentence; (Wael, intelligence, games, likes) (p.32), and under the same title in lesson ten grade two there is a task that asks students to rearrange sentences to form a story (ibid, p.101). Such activities are out of context, and do not require any knowledge, research or thinking effort or provide any meaningful language, which means that it is a non-contextual knowledge, fixed and static, and is not related to students' experiences or life skills, and provides a language far from the social condition or human experience in it.

### ***The perspectival principle***

Analysis of the textbooks for the perspective principle was based on indicators that helps to find out how exercises or activities were built, whether they adopt the principle of relativity of meaning and avoid the adherence of duality of right and wrong or not. Whether they include multiple perspective of thinking and enable students to employ multiple methods of understanding, producing, and representing meaning by using different cultural tools and resources to build or express their own perspectives or not.

This means that meanings of the facts and the process of understanding them is not linked to a specific perspective or based to construct one meaning but it is the multiplicity of meanings that produce multiple methods and perspectives. As Bruner noted, "Understanding anything in a particular way does not prevent us from understanding it in different ways ...". (Ibid, p11).

This confirms the principle of relativity of meanings given to a phenomenon and its multiplicity which is not only an epistemological issue, but rather a social issue related to tolerance, plurality, and acceptance of the other, and it is a communicative issue that establishes a productive dialogue based on differences that enriches the collective identity.

By looking at the texts contained in the lessons of the second to fourth-grade textbook, we noticed that there is almost a pattern that ends up with a say, wisdom, and moral or religious sentences. Ending the lessons with such a pattern indicates a monological perspective that leads to a one understanding and one meaning that students should accept, recite and no dialogism is tolerated.

For example, in the third grade's book in the lesson entitled "The Bird that Builds its Nest" Sana (a character in the lesson) asks her mother "who taught the bird to build its nest that way" and the answer from the mother at the end of the lesson was "God Almighty, is the Guide, and is the Provider." In another example, the second-grade textbook lesson about "cleanliness," The mother "Om Omar" (one of the characters in the lesson) thanked the children who cleaned the public playground before playing and said "We must keep our neighborhood clean" which was the ending of the lesson. In a similar example, the lesson "O symbol of giving and resilience," in the fourth-grade textbook ends with "may God bless you, you blessed tree, symbol of giving and resilience."

This way of teaching establishes for a culture that excludes the activeness of an individual towards oneself and one's culture. Not only this does not allow culture to somewhat affect the individual, but it also deprives individuals from influencing and changing culture. This means that it provides itself as a culture of a mechanism that controls people and provides itself with the ability to persist and continue. With that, Lahaboub (2019) assures that "it is unreasonable for these students within this approach to express any critical or cognitive resistance, including a threat to the value of power possessed by each teacher and the knowledge within a social culture" (p. 155).

By looking at the language exercises entitled "answer orally", it is easily noticeable the dominance of simple questions that is directly related to the information presented in the text. In the lesson "Gratitude goes to my teacher", most of the questions are related to what is mentioned in the text. For example, the questions "who discovered Haya's talent? Where does she work?" are questions that does not carry perspectival dimensions or establish for a plurality of meanings. This means that the following questions should contain constructive tasks that include different perspectives and points of view, but what follows remains within the same level.

A question in the same lesson was: "Is there a person who does not have talents or capabilities?" which has only one answer (either yes or no). According to the perspectival principal these sorts of questions appeal to the duality of right and wrong, which prevent students from expressing their talents and desires to develop certain self-abilities and multiplicity of different points of view, actions, and perspectives. In addition, these kinds of questions, which reoccur in most of the reviewed lessons would prevent the opportunity to explore the topic and employ multiple methods of understanding, producing, and representing meaning using Bruner's forms of

representations (the symbolic, the practical and the iconic) which are one of the indicators that was used to analyze the perspectival dimension.

Questions under the title “*Think*”, are the closest to achieving the perspectival principle, but still did not reach this principle on a high level, as they kept asking about a personal opinion limited to a specific case. For example, in the lesson “The Fish and Freedom”, in the fourth grade, there was a question, "Imagine that an animal other than the nightingale has come to the fish, what could happen?" and in the second grade (p. 89) “if you were in Samira’s place, will you go back to work in your village or in the city and why?” and in the same way a question was posed in the third grade (p. 57) “ if one of us caught a bird and put it in a cage, what will happen to its chicks?” So, the form of the question and the nature of the task do not lead to a deep imagination or thinking, because it is only a verbal task, and the imaginary process is abstract and indeterminate.

This pattern is evident in all questions and activities of part (think), as they are all just questions that requires answering them orally or verbally, and do not differ fundamentally from the questions of (answer orally.) They are at its highest-level questions about personal opinion but in an informative form, such as “In your opinion: How do we preserve the olive tree?” Within the questions that follow the lesson, “The Symbol of Giving and Resilience,” (p. 25), What does the wall represent to Laila? And how do we remove the wall? (p.35), after the lesson of “The “Zahrat Al Hannoun”. And what do you think of the ant refusing to give the cricket food? (P. 95). What do you think of the father disciplining his son with the stick? (P. 123) .

Another type of questions which also formed a patten in the analyzed textbooks were those which aimed at training students to pose questions; however, students are restricted to choose their answers from a list of words that are presented in the



varied experiences, and provide them with possibilities of questioning, reproducing, or building their learning in a constructive way and from different perspectives.

It is obvious that all the six grade textbooks were built within the same structure, directly related to the text with no evidence or inferences to diversity in point of views, nor in the resources and multiplicity of methods to generate different meanings and perspectives.

Overall, the type of the questions posed in these textbooks require answers based on recitation, which denies learning from the perspectival dimensions, and deprives students from expressing, developing dialogues or practical practices, and emphasize on the traditional structure of learning.

From looking at the structure of the language exercises there are titles such as (we hear and answer, and we answer orally) that show a direct link between the question and the answer, and a direct sequence between the acts of hearing and responding. This indicates that introducing the exercises this way does not see the organic and cultural path between the two processes.

This approach that links the two processes of hearing and responding as a title is based on the fact that the entire learning process occurs just for the process of hearing, and that the hearing process represents a process of understanding and comprehension, and the response process comes to confirm the occurrence of learning and represents an evaluation of it. This type of learning represents, from the cultural theory point of view, mere routine actions that do not include any depth of learning, but rather is a mere repetition of what is heard. Repetition that occurs without a contextual framework that establishes an act of real engagement by students, which leads to the absence of students' effectiveness, and presents language as if it was just words that builds up a culture based on acceptance and transmission only.

Building the language exercises for textbooks from the first grade to the fourth, in the form that was previously explained, deprives education from its constructive dimension. As for the questions that were included under the title “We think”, are questions that require one direct answer through going back to the text, and answer it in a verbal form, whether written or spoken. This type of answers has deprived education from the practical dimensions that employ real actions and real tools that could make education a constructive, productive, and meaningful process. Some examples for these questions from the fourth grade ‘s textbook part one, “children call Haya, “Mama Haya” So what does that indicate? A person needs many things to be creative, name two of them. (p. 7). Imagine that an animal other than the nightingale came to the fish. What could happen? (P. 15). What message do we send to our people in Jerusalem, to support their steadfastness and their challenge against the occupation? (p. 45).

From the above, it becomes clear that education should be related to the learner's self, employ his intention, will and purpose, and be meaningful to him as a human being, not just a mere subject, and to find a context for interacting with others. This requires building the curriculum in the form of tasks and not just questions. Tasks related to the student himself that activate his physical and practical abilities, and thus achieve the conditions and standards of constructivism.

As for the indication that the learning processes are based on the interaction of the learner in developing his ability of thinking and expressing, could be examined through the title of “the composition”. Which was in the form, “We rearrange the words of each line to form a useful sentence such as: fish, in, live, water.” Fourth grade, Part one (P. 20), or cross out the extra word to form a useful sentence: He maintains the cleanliness / warmth of his teeth, (p. 39), or “We form Two sentences for each word,

and then put words together: Al-Aqsa Mosque, markets, summer, church, spices.” (p. 50-51)

This form, which is based on rearranging scattered words to form a known and consumed sentence or striking out a word, or giving an example for students to imitate unconsciously, is a type of education that does not include any level of construction due to its loss of all dimensions of constructivism. It provides ready-made examples and expressions and excludes educated individuals and their effectiveness because it is devoid of significance and meaning. Furthermore, it does not achieve any level of action and practice, which means that the curricula are located at a low level of constructive education and do not achieve the standards of engagement, interaction and dialogue necessary to build learning that contributes to building effective people.

## **Chapter V**

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **Introduction**

Overall, results show that the second, third and fourth Arabic language textbooks varies in their manifestation of Adaskou's et al. cultural representations; the semantic, sociological, pragmatic, and aesthetic dimension, however, the social dimension of culture outweighs the other three dimensions in all these textbooks. Results show that the least cultural dimension found in most of the lessons was the aesthetic. Such an imbalance balance cultural representation in the textbooks deprived the text from offering deep experiences and different interpretations, and instead presented fabricated, contrived, and sometimes superficial texts to serve language forms and structures. In that sense, and based on the results, one can infer that the analyzed Arabic language textbooks are not culturally representative, neither at the level of content that is responsible for creating educated students, nor at the level of approach that works to establish future developments. These results will be discussed further in this chapter .

#### **Imbalanced Cultural Representations**

##### ***The Sociological Dimension and Depicted Roles***

Even though the dominant cultural representation was the social dimension, results show that the text sends conflicting messages about individuals' roles and relationships which is a major indicator of the social dimension based on Adaskou's et al. (1990) classifications. For example, the lessons "The Gratitude Goes to my Teacher" and "The Fish and the Freedom" in grade four textbooks converge in their depiction of

roles and relationship. Even though there is an emphasis on the importance of helping others in times of crises, the context of the story however frames the fish as helpless creature that has no active role in changing its conditions. Similarly, in the "Gratitude Goes to My Teacher" lesson, even though the main idea of discovering one's capabilities, the title reflects a conflicting idea that all the credit goes to the role of the teacher and disregards the role of the self in choosing one's destiny after one's discovery of his or her capabilities and interests. Such a discrepancy in the social messages about roles in both lessons; messages of lack of agency in both the fish and the student demonstrates a lack of harmony in the socio-cultural vision of the content and the mission of the curriculum .

#### ***A Sociological Dimension in an Absence of the Pragmatic Sense***

Results show that the social dimension in the textbooks outweighs the practical dimension. In both the "O Symbol of Generosity and Resilience" and "The Tour in Jerusalem Markets" lessons found in the fourth-grade textbook, there were information related to professional and occupational fields, but in a descriptive manner rather than linking them to practical activities related to these places. One can acknowledge that the texts focus on teaching students' new words and expanding their vocabulary in terms of synonyms and definitions, however, both lessons lack the signifying meanings of these words in relation to practice .

This sense of isolation may contribute to the lack establishes a constructive culture (oratorical or rhetorical) that lacks practical senses tools for action and change. Practice within socio-cultural dimension stimulates new visions and meanings, thus focusing on the sociological and neglecting pragmatic senses, will cause a defect in the work of the curricula. This can be clearly visualized when applying Wartofsky's (Cole,

2002) classification, where what is strongly present in the curricula are the secondary artifacts, which mean recipes and descriptions of doing things, while they are absent in a pragmatic sense, according to Wartofsky, such artifacts can shape the way we see the actual world, and imagination and creativity are able to cause disruption, the disruption that Wartofsky said leads to changing existing practices.

Few lessons in the textbooks were considered a good example of embodying the practical dimension within the text. For example, in “The Brave Firefighter,” lesson, the pragmatic sense was connected to a body organ, which is the elephant trunk that was employed in order to extinguish the fire and help others. The elephant showed the animals a practical skill associated with its trunk that they did not know about. Similarly, in the “The Cricket and the Ant”, the skill set of the ant was illustrated through its collection and storing of food for the winter season and the cricket’s skill was its singing abilities. However, these two practical skills were placed against each other, where one was acknowledged as more superior to the other, creating an unfair comparison between them.

### ***A Sociological Dimension in the Absence of the Aesthetic and Semantic Sense***

Results have shown that the texts have a great deal of direct practical purposes, where preaching, counseling, and advising is evident thought each text rather than including aesthetic dimensions. The neglect of the aesthetic and the semantic senses makes education fall in the trap of superficial and direct presentation of reality. It also limits student growth to ideological determinants, making them lack the energy of imagination, the energy that Herbert Marcuse as mentioned by (بومنير، 2010) described as the monetary value of imagination. The value of that energy is embodied in the idea that the imagination is the only mental capacity that remains free towards the principle

of reality because of its ability to produce images that remind us of freedom and revitalize human life. That is because it does not depend on what is and what exists, but rather what may be and what can be seen in the future. With that, imagination depicts what has not yet been achieved or what has not been satisfied.

This means that the cultural meaning of the texts is not about the issues they address in the form of direct quotations and statements, but rather that the deep meaning of the texts is linked to their compositional structures, their narrative levels, their semantic structures, and their aesthetic dimensions in terms of figures of speech, metaphors, rhythm, and imagination, which is what the analyzed curriculum texts lack.

An exception is found in “Hasna’s Doll” lesson (see Appendix, M), where results shows that it employed the semantic, sociological, pragmatic, and aesthetic dimensions, and it is presented in the form of a simple narrative text that combines literary and realistic forms. This text acts as an exemplary model for an integrated text that is to be emulated and it exemplifies that it does not require great diligence to choose texts similar to it. It has a semantic structure in the encounters between the past and the present, between the homeland and life abroad, between childhood and old age, between telling and receiving. It includes childhood sentiments through the puppet since the puppet represents what one carries from childhood, especially connotations of innocence and play, and the abandoned doll which also added senses related to the usurped homeland. The text of “Hasna’s Doll”, represents a different text on the level of structure and form, as it includes a specific national and humanitarian content linking the intensity of the story (relayed by the grandmother) and the significance of the abandoned doll and what it means for the grandchildren in terms of the idea of an abandoned doll and the story around the grandmother and her memory. With that, the diversity of meanings, structures, and purposes creates tools that Vygotsky called

cultural tools that represent the mediation that changes thinking and fuels the imagination .

***A Curriculum lacks Contextuality and Perspective.***

Results indicates that the lessons talk about things, culture, and language, but they do not really work on cultivating the ideas in the minds of the students. The direct practical purposes, and close ended lessons, loaded with preaching and advising, in addition to the direct questions and activities that requires the students to retrieve information, all are indicative of the shortcoming of the text in helping students explore the topics, and build their own perspectives and understandings. In addition, the lack of contextuality in the text makes knowledge universal and may lead to conflicting discourse. For instance, in "My Country is Most Valuable", the concept "homeland" is detached from any experience that would resonate with the students. Furthermore, the text "Daydreams" (see Appendix N) starts with a title about dreams without really delving into children's experiences in exploring their dreams. This makes the lessons lose the deep senses of the human experience within a contextual dimension. With that, Bruner argues that :

"Teaching a language requires more than reading, listening, and watching. Teaching language requires action, learning how to accomplish things through words, and this means that the child not only learns what he or she says or reads only, but learns how to say it, to whom, and under what circumstances". (Smith, 2020, p. 186).

What Bruner entails is that texts constructed and fabricated to present topics without including real and relevant contexts that tackle these topics makes learning a merely abstract act that cannot stimulate creative thinking and construct ideas. Thus, presenting the topics without addressing the actions towards them makes them appear as random and dull topics that do not require any imaginary or conscious activity. This

means that it also makes it lose its educational effectiveness on both the linguistic and cultural levels.

Another example of conflicting messages because the decontextualized text is found in the “The Real Warmth”, is based on a child who is purchasing a coat for a beggar, in which true warmth is distinguished by what is obtained when helping others. It showcased a serious problem, which is poverty and child homelessness, where the author presented a very simplified solution to the issue through the concept of charity, as if charity is the solution that fulfills the material need of the poor and the moral satisfaction of the rich. The researcher referred to such texts as “anti-cultural”, where the text includes social content that proposes social values and ideas, but with negative meanings and connotations that advances social life through concepts of conflict and competition for survival, or customs and values that do not fit with the values of humanity and the necessities of the Palestinian liberation project.

Bruner argued, “The absence of context makes texts lack the communication connection with the student” and therefore language learning is deeply connected with context. He also indicated that “there is evidence that a student who can understand the context can also understand important aspects of linguistic grammar .” (Smith, 2020).

## Chapter VI

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Conclusion

This research studied the cultural representations in the Palestinian Arabic language curriculum based on the socio-cultural theory. The study adopted Adaskou's framework of cultural representations (Adaskou et al, 1990), mainly the aesthetic, sociological, semantic and pragmatic representations, as well as Bruner's (1996) contextual, and perspectival principles that are embedded in the basic grade level second, third and fourth. The ideas in texts, questions and images were analyzed based on specific indicators related to both Adaskou et al and Bruner's dimensions, both validity and inter-rater reliability were conducted.

Previous studies in cultural representations in textbooks concentrated on gender issues (e.g., Al-Jarbawi, 2003 & Al-Asali, 2008) and on political perspectives (e.g., Al-Moughrabi, 2001 & Mazawi, 2011), and used Adaskou's et al. representations to compare EFL textbooks using Kachru (1985) the three concentric circle model, or used Cortazzi & Jin (1999) categories, (source vs. target vs. international culture) in analyzing EFL textbooks (e.g. Pratiwi, 2017, Rajabi and Ketabi, 2012). On the other hand, this study focused on the meaning and consequences of such analysis on the local perspective, rather than comparative, in order to understand the dynamics of cultural representations manifested in the textbooks on the students' meaning making of culture and identity.

Results show that the Arabic Languages Textbooks for grades two, three and four have an imbalance cultural representation according to Adaskou et al. (1990) and Bruner's (1996) classifications and dimensions, where the social dimension of culture

outweighs the semantic, programmatic, and authentic dimensions of Adaskou et al., and lacks the contextual and perspectival dimensions of Bruner. In addition, even though the dominant cultural representation was the social dimension, results show that the text sends conflicting messages about individuals' roles and relationships. Such scarcity and imbalances in cultural representations may have implications on the connotations and discourses offered to the Palestinian students.

In addition, results show that the content, exercises, activities, and images in the targeted textbooks present one form of text, that is, the descriptive, preaching text or the humorous and satirical text, which establishes one form of meaning and educational purpose. The text is also based on a uniform structure devoid of narrative plots and textual richness that includes the plurality of literary genres such as poetry, story, drama, graphic stories, children's literature, essay, debates, and argumentative texts.

What emerges from the analysis of those texts is the constant use of a single textual form in the curricula, a form that led to the primacy of the social ideology over the aesthetic, pragmatic, and semantic representation. This prevents students from entering into a state of learning intertwined with the diverse cultural context rich in cultural resources and products. It also prevents them from entering a state of active production of meanings. Thus, the analyzed texts are of the type that present reality directly and do not open one's thoughts into imagination and interpretation.

The importance of having a balance representation of cultural dimensions in the school curriculum and textbooks is to raise students' awareness of their surroundings in terms of both human and material elements and help them build relationships with them. Furthermore, such a balance representation will help students feel a sense of belonging with their surrounding rather than feeling estranged. This comes with Bruner's (1996) assertion regarding meaningful learning. He explains:

“Education and pedagogy should be regarded as means that helps young individuals to learn to use meaning-making tools, and build truth and realism, which helps them build their own perspective and better fit in the world where they find themselves”. (p. 85)

Therefore, it is important to increase the degree of the different cultural representations in the Arabic Palestinian textbooks. According to Adaskou et al. (1990), the lack of the semantic and aesthetic sense in the Arabic language textbooks such as the media, cinema, music, and literature, close the prospects for students to learn the language’s beauty, and the ways they express themselves and their synthetic uses of speech, and deprives them from the cultural signs with others around them. Furthermore, the lack of semantic cultural representations in the analyzed textbooks deprive students from the experiences of understanding the sociocultural dynamics in the society they live in, as Ferdinand de Saussure defines it as “the science that studies the life of signs within society” (تشاندر، 2008). De Saussure also asserts that understanding signs and their inferences from multiple perspectives add to the educational quality of the context and to students cognitive learning.

This analysis describes the model that governed the structure of the Arabic language curriculum book in its entirety, and in terms of its cultural connotations, its educational and cognitive consequences, and the examples it dealt with. It did so at the level of texts with regards to their structure, activities, and the nature of their questions and their content, and their comparison with educational trends based on cultural theory and psychology as well as directions in the fields of language and culture. Taking that into consideration, it can be seen that the Palestinian textbooks were built on a pattern of abstract approaches made up of extemporized texts that do not include real experiences nor imaginary textual structures that open education to active contexts, whether imagined or real.

Concerning the lack of contextual dimension in the curriculum, the texts and their foundations were built in a repetitive, abstract manner without connections to life and its social and political dimensions. This caused the educational text to lose its relatability when it comes to the context of life and the human conditions within it. This isolation of education from life and its real experiences and skills turned it into a series of linguistic exercises and games based heavily on retrieval and preservation on the one hand, and guesswork on the other. The search for one abstract answer that is defined by the teacher as the only correct one, also implies an authoritarian educational system with the teacher and textbooks have the truth regardless of the context.

Such a decontextualization in the textbooks provided an abstract knowledge separated from life, where activities and questions search for information and content that governed by the principle of right and wrong, without taking into consideration the relationships between things, ideas, words, history, and characters. It also deprives learning from its synthetic and analytical dimension (Khalafi, 2012) as well as preventing students from developing their own intellectual, mental, and exploratory capabilities. It does also establish a stable static culture based on fixed contents and meanings related to what things are, rather on how they are generated and transformed in context.

According to Bruner (1996), the absence the contextual and perspectival dimensions in education, and in our case the textbooks, will eventually and on the long run establish a culture that is based on proven information that indoctrinates the thinking of new generations, while the act of their memorization and recitation will further emphasize them. Paulo Freire (1972) called against such “banking model” of education, a model that is based on direct transmission and repetition of knowledge and

mere routine actions without any learning in deep “praxis” which is a terminology that refers to the knowledge that is constructed by students themselves through actions.

Bakhtin’s theory (1996 (تودوروف،)) also applies in this context by its basic principle which says that: “It is impossible to perceive the existence of any object separately from its relationship with others.” (p. 175). The analyzed textbooks that contain a closed and one true ending deprives students from the “dialogical model of learning”, this model which Bakhtin introduce by saying “We examine our reflections and thoughts and understand them through the awareness of other people.” (p.176). that is, opportunities for opening real dialogue, argumentation, and discussion among students, and emphasize on the “monological model,” that flashes an alarming consequence for the future of education in Palestine that lacks critical thinking, reflection, criticism and accountability of speech genres.

### **Recommendations**

Recommendations are related to the main question of which focused on the nature of the cultural representations: that are embedded in the Palestinian school curriculum through the Arabic language curriculum for the basic grades: second, third and fourth based on Adaskou et al (1996) and Bruner’s (1990) cultural dimensions. The absence of the contextual, and perspectival dimensions of culture as wells their aesthetic, pragmatic, and semiotic representations according to Bruner (1990) and Adaskou et al (1996) may participate in students’ alienation from deep cultural identities as denounces their energy for creativity, production, reflection, exploration and accountability. Based on the study results and discussion, the following recommendations are becoming imperative:

- 1- An immediate action towards a comprehensive revision of the Palestinian Arabic language textbooks is highly recommended. Such revision should be based on a critical socio-cultural perspective that takes into consideration the different representations of cultural based on Adaskou et al. and Bruner's models.
- 2- Another important recommendation is related to classroom pedagogies and teachers' practices. It is vital for the Arabic language teachers to understand and be aware of the consequences of a textbook that is heavily relied on indoctrinations and lacks the aesthetic, pragmatic, semiotic, contextual, and perspectival dimensions. Therefore, courses and professional development programs for Arabic Language Textbooks (and other subjects) needs to adopt such a critical dimension of analysis and help teachers to build their own pedagogies to overcome the shortcomings of the curriculum, believing that the teacher is the active agent of change with his/her students rather than the curriculum by itself.
- 3- From a research perspective, the results of this research are not conclusive, and restricted to the targeted textbooks. It is recommended that other studies need to be conducted on both the Arabic and English language curriculum which adopts a socio-cultural perspective related to Adaskou et al. and Bruner's cultural dimensions in order to understand the dynamics and role of the current Palestinian textbooks in shaping students' understanding of their culture, roles and identity.
- 4- Finally, students, as human beings who internalize culture within the framework of their growth and build themselves and their identities, need to understand that real education is a process of decoding and reconnecting, which

is representation and reenactment, and every process of meaning is a process of creativity and a process of creation. It is recommended from the cultural institutions of the civil society to enrich their libraries and activities with programs that take into consideration the embodiment of cultural representations from multiple perspectives. Activities such as story and novel critical analysis, group reading and discussion activities for national and international literature, as well as invitation to authors are becoming so vital and supportive to the public educational system.

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## APPENDIX A

## Analysis Table for Lessons 6 to 10 in Fourth Grade, Part ne, Textbook

**Table A.**

Title Lesson	Text Description	Text Classification	Type of Cultural Content of the Text
<b>Lesson (6)</b> Hassna's Doll	<p>The text consists of 100 to 120 words. It also consists of a large image in which two groups of people appear, where each group is in a different place from the other, thus expressing two different perspectives and two different times. That was illustrated through a distant image and an image of closer proximity to the reader.</p> <p>In the two pictures, there is a structure and meaning that aims to present the image of a grandmother around her grandchildren, telling them the story of her childhood and her experience</p>	<p>The text has a semiotic title as entails the purpose and the name of the character, which creates a meaningful relationship between them. The text is based on a narrative structure that combines what is realistic and the literary in a simple but suggestive narrative approach. The story also revolves around a child-related concept and about a simple object that is the doll that is left behind in the occupied homeland. The text includes a set of relationships between the grandmother and her grandchildren as a narrator and as listeners and</p>	<p>A multi-dimensional text with aesthetic, historical, social, and semiotic senses. A simple text, but compared to other texts, it is a uniquely good text because it has the aesthetic, semiotic, historical and practical cultural senses within a complex structure. Thus, the text presents an aesthetic sense and semiotic sense regarding the doll and the connotations of leaving the doll in the homeland. It also has historical, national, and social dimensions by showing the intensity of the</p>

	<p>with the Nakba as well as the story of her doll that was left behind in the usurped homeland. The second picture represents an embodiment of a moment in the memory of the grandmother and the memory of the homeland, where the grandmother's childhood, the doll, and the homeland were all together in a time that is a time before the Nakba. But the structure of the two images at the level of form and content do not work to present these meanings, neither in terms of design nor in terms of colors and drawing. Therefore, the characters of the story appear as if they are distorted. (The pictures of this lesson can be put as a model on the problems of the image in terms of design, shape, and color. (54-055)</p>	<p>between the refugee camp today and the narration of past memories that include the homeland. There is also the relationship between the old grandmother narrator and the child who lost the doll, and between the homeland and the first memory, which was expressed in a direct or indirect narrative form through detailed descriptions, dialogue, and simple but deep narrative structures that possess the ability to interpret and suggest (suggestive).</p>	<p>occupation and the Nakba, and this appeared by leaving the doll alone. The pragmatic sense is prevalent through the text by emphasizing on the importance of national memory and the ways it is transmitted and exchanged through stories of grandparents relayed to grandchildren. The end of the story concludes by the grandparents calling their grandchildren to continue making the knitted doll.</p>
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<p><b>Lesson (7)</b></p> <p><b>My Will is the Secret to My Success</b></p>	<p>The text of the lesson consists of 120 words and 3 pictures that reflect a mirror image of the text. The pictures translate the text literally, which leads to analogous relations that embody the idea of literal transmission and cancel the imaginary and creative distance between the text and the visual text and distort students' concepts of drawing and painting as art in relation to the visible and the readable.</p>	<p>The text consists of a straightforward and simple narrative structure, in which the narrator tells the story of a child as if it were intended to convey to the reader a cliché quote represented by the title of the lesson. There is a discrepancy between the title that appears to be said by the child who is the main character of the story, "My will is the secret of my success" and the narration of the story that is told by another person, other than the child, which confuses the reader.</p> <p>The story expressively offers two moral lessons based on two ideas, the idea of talent and how to insist on practicing it and not giving up, even if the talented individual is exposed to a health disorder. The second idea is an idea related to traffic rules and traffic accidents.</p>	<p>The text focuses on the practical sense associated with the talent of drawing and its tools such as feather pens and colors, and it largely lacks aesthetic, semiotic, and sociological senses.</p>
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<p><b>Lesson (8) The Brave Firefighter</b></p>	<p>The text consists of 100-120 words and one picture that describe the story of the lesson. The text consists of 120 to 150 words and 3 pictures presented in an unorganized and non-sequential manner that are overlapping with each other, giving the student a small space to explore the events of the story and the series of the pictures.</p>	<p>The text consists of a simple and straightforward narrative structure in terms of its structure and plot. It addresses great values such as helping others and not judging others on their differences. However, the story is relayed in a very simplified plot and in a direct manner. The images were also placed in a way that can be rearranged to reflect the text in more than one way, which provides the possibility of a semiotic sense.</p>	<p>The text included a simple semiotic sense that appeared through the pictures and includes a direct and descriptive dimension of practical skills such as using an organ of the body to help others as a response to the judgment of others to the animal that owns a different organ from them. In addition, the pragmatic sense and value manifestations were present, such as helping others in times of distress.</p>
<p><b>Lesson (9) A Drop of Water telling its story</b></p>	<p>The lesson text consists of 100 to 120 words and 5 pictures, four of which focus on different forms of water, and the fifth is of a child sitting on a balcony looking at drops of water falling in front of him.</p>	<p>The text constitutes a story of a drop of water that tells its true story, in which it shows the water cycle in nature. However, it is presented in the form of one scientific and direct scenario that appeared as the absolute truth.</p>	<p>The imaginary text included a path for a drop of water in nature, that is, it presented only one absolute approach to the drop of water, and thus closed other paths that could have stimulated thinking. On a sociological sense, this relates to the multiple possible paths</p>

		<p>The story must reflect a human condition, so when a drop of water told its story, it projected a sense of inanimateness on humanity.</p> <p>If the reader imagined the journey a drop undergoes, it would open the reader's capabilities to the real world. It would also open the text to new and multiple interpretations of the different paths of the water droplet, beyond the idea of informational narration, or it could have ended with an imaginary question.</p>	<p>for human beings in society, which allows for integration and differences that enriches and creates pluralism. With that, the text could not be presented as a realistic literature.</p>
<p><b>Lesson 10 (The Cricket and the Ant)</b></p>	<p>The lesson consists of 120 words and an image that as if contains more than a picture of two characters, the cricket and the ant. The painting tells the story of the lesson.</p>	<p>The narrative text consists of aesthetic and semiotic senses that provided important values, but it created an unfair comparison that offended other elements, which became an important part of contemporary life, such as music</p>	<p>The fictional text included two aesthetic senses represented by the narrative plot, the characters, and the semiotic represented by the semantic levels in the story and the signs and</p>

		<p>and wanderlust. The text puts values against each other, such as work with pleasure, where one is productive and the other is counterproductive, and this is a problem with knowledge and values together.</p>	<p>dualities such as work and diligence versus laziness and pleasure.</p> <p>However, the text lacks a sociological sense, as it sets social values against each other, and it led the story towards an absolute rule at its end. When the ant refused to help the cricket, it is as if it decided that those who do not work, should not eat, and hence, die.</p> <p>It is not necessary to glorify the call to diligence and work at the expense of the idea of solidarity with others by calling to execute them because of their preference for pleasure over work.</p>
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## APPENDIX B

### Analysis Table for Lessons 11 to 15 in Fourth Grade, Part One, Textbook

**Table B**

Title Lesson	Text Description	Text Classification	Type of Cultural Content of the Text
<b>Lesson 11 (Letter without a Messenger)</b>	The text consists of 120 words and two pictures on the topic of the lesson, which provides an analysis between the ancient and modern methods of communication.	The text consists of a simple informative narration that provides a simple comparison between the methods of communicating via letters in the past and the use of emails in modern times. It represents old times through the postman and modern times through e-mail exchanges, as well as the character of the mother who reminisced the old ways of communication and the child who seems to be practicing the modern mode of communication.	The text included the semiotic sense through the dichotomy of the past and the present represented by the old and new generation and modern and old means of communication. The text also employs the pragmatic sense that describes the subject of communication with others in two ways, the postman and e-mail communication, as well as the comparison between the sender and the receiver and the feelings that connect them.
<b>Lesson (12) My Country is the Most Valuable</b>	The text consists of 100 words and 4 pictures portraying the main character represented by an	The text consists of three simple narrative paragraphs that present an important topic directly related to Palestinians, which is the subject of leaving the homeland. Each	The text partly included a simple, deep, and straightforward aesthetic sense in terms of the simple fictional plot that is very different from the literary, linguistic, or graphic form. It also

	<p>image of a man who appears in each picture in a different position.</p>	<p>paragraph of the lesson presents a new picture or shift in the lesson and unjustified arguments that are not convincing to the reader. The first paragraph links Jude's desire to leave the homeland in order to achieve his dream and his future, as if the homeland is an inappropriate place to realize one's dreams and achieve youth aspirations. The second paragraph justifies Jude's desire to return to his homeland that is due to an illness that he suffered and did not find anyone to visit him at the time, as if illness was the only motivation for returning to the homeland. As for the last paragraph, it presents an immediate conclusion and a very romantic picture of Jude's return and his decision to stay in the homeland using the wealth that he was able to achieve from living abroad, as if life outside the homeland is much easier than inside.</p>	<p>included a simple semiotic structure represented by the duality of alienation and homeland, conflict outside the homeland, and the need for parents in difficult moments, which makes the text transiently employ the sociological sense.</p>
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<p><b>Lesson (13)</b> <b>Daydreams</b></p>	<p>The text consists of 120 words and 4 pictures scattered randomly, non-sequentially, and overlapping, giving the student a small space to explore the events of the story and the series of pictures.</p>	<p>The text presented a simple one-perspective, romantic scenario for a person who imagines a dream linked to his life, starting from working hard in his profession and then creating a wealth that leads to building a house, marrying a beautiful girl, having a child, and raising the child with good morals. The text was attached to scattered images, which provided the possibility of a semiotic sense.</p>	<p>The text included simple and primary semiotic senses through the images associated with it, which were presented inconsistently with the text of the story. It also included a simple and descriptive pragmatic sense because of the practical skills represented by elementary occupations not suitable for the current era, such as harvesting honey, grazing livestock, agriculture, and plowing the land. All these were associated with a dream described at the end of the text because of a small movement, as if the text tells the student that daydreaming ends with failure.</p>
<p><b>Lesson (14)</b> <b>My Helping Nature</b></p>	<p>The text of the lesson consists of 150 words and 3 pictures indicating two main contradictory actions, one of which is hanging a</p>	<p>The text consists of a conversational narrative structure based on the idea of doing positive actions that benefit people, such as placing a lamp in a dark road, whereas the idea of negative action would be disturbing others, such as the idea of breaking the glass of a lamp.</p>	<p>The text included simple semiotic and sociological senses associated with the values of aid, social solidarity, and religious belief that are used towards having a positive and beneficial role in society and its defense. The semiotic sense was shown by representations</p>

	lamp and the other is breaking the lamp.	But what the text presented as a response to the negative action does not lead to a radical solution towards the problem, as people proposed the idea of refraining from hanging the lamp as a solution to the problem of breaking it. Thus, the solution is quick and not constructive, as it was better to present positive and creative solutions.	of good deeds and bad deeds, and linking them to the pragmatic and linguistic sense, where each of them was represented by a simple example. The sociological sense appeared in the relationship between the owner of the lamp and others who pass in front of his house, where the lamp provides them with light on the road as a form of social cooperation.
<b>Lesson (15) O How Beautiful the Sky</b>	The text consists of 100 to 120 words and one large image of a woman and a child looking at the sky in which the moon appears full and appears to be the subject of the dialogue.	The text consists of a simple narrative structure of a dialogue between a child and her mother, where the topic of the dialogue is the sky. It appears from the text that it aims to provide information about the sky and the planets and about astronomy in a way that is very distant from any senses of cultural representations related to the topic of the lesson.	The text includes a direct dialogue between a mother and her daughter and aims to list simple and direct information about the moon, planets, and stars, only, without including any of the cultural representations such as aesthetic, semiotic, sociological, or pragmatic senses.

## APPENDIX C

## Analysis Table for Lessons 1 to 5 in Fourth Grade, Part Two, Textbook

Table C

Lesson Title	Lesson Description	Lesson Classification	Lesson Cultural Content
<p><b>Lesson (1)</b> <b>A Wedding in our Village</b></p>	<p>The lesson consists of a text whose words range from 100 to 150 words. It also has 4 pictures that translate the contents in the text.</p>	<p>The lesson includes, through text and images, scenes and descriptions of a folk wedding in what is called (the groom's evening). It talks about the stage, the groom's dance, Dabkeh, and the act of congratulating the groom and his family.</p> <p>The lesson provides an absolute and singular description of one form of Palestinian wedding, which is presented by a child who accompanies his father to a wedding. He mentions the stage, lighting, and loudspeakers, and the entry of the groom who is carried on people's shoulders and the Dabkeh band with girdles and the kufiya. This is a form of a narrative description</p>	<p>The lesson in terms of its content, structure, and form of expression is a text that is part of the cultural description of a social occasion and an important part of societal traditions, making it a cultural text with cultural representation.</p>

		without aesthetic senses with an exaggeration in terms of what is considered popular and traditional. There is also a strange mix between the traditional and the modern, such as modern technological forms used including the stage and lighting, which reflects a state of contradiction between originality and modernity.	
<b>Lesson (2) This Sun</b>	The lesson consists of a text of 100 to 120 words in addition to 4 pictures.	The lesson in terms of the content of the text provides structural knowledge, which lacks the cultural, semiotic, and aesthetic senses. It is an informational text that gives information about the sun in a very simple way. There is a huge simplification of comparisons and simplicity in metaphorical expressions, where it makes a comparison between water and the sun and describes it as a ball and a loaf. The lesson ends with a vision or a religious saying,	This text lacks cultural content because it is based on non-scientific information and does not contain any aesthetic sense and it makes very simple comparisons. It is concluded by a metaphysical end, that is, outside the cultural, and thus deviated from the cultural context.

		and the images lack content and an aesthetic sense, and the colors are dim.	
<b>Lesson (3) Be like a Bird</b>	The lesson consists of a text of 100 to 120 words with 7 pictures that precede the text, 4 of which represent acts of predation.	From its title, images, and content, the text invites children to obtain livelihood in the same manner of leopards and birds, where the text provides a description of the process of each of the leopard and the bird in obtaining their food through a conversation between the child and his father. The father teaches the child to be proactive as a leopard in obtaining his livelihood with his hands and active in doing so as a bird. The text employs a father-son dialogue on human life to present concepts such as the one who sows will harvest, but through an approach to life in the forest based on conflict and predation.	It is an anti-social text, because it presents the social in the sense of what was present before humanity, whether through pictures or text.  It is an anti-cultural text that is tailored towards wilderness, where it presents values that represent randomness in life, outside of the human condition, looking at human life as a life based on predation and power.
<b>Lesson (4) The Real Warmth</b>	The text consists of 100 to 150 words preceded by 5 pictures that present the events of the text and	The text has a very simple story structure, which is based on the idea of compassion and helping others to obtain internal warmth.	It is a classic or traditional social text that approaches an important social issue with simple solutions. It has a restrictive

	<p>its contents. It is a narrative text that tells the story of a mother who buys a coat for her son, and the child wears it, but he sees a child suffering from a cold and asks his mother to buy a coat for the other child, then he feels real warmth.</p>		<p>ending that suggests a false complacency, which is that life is based only on compassion. The lesson also presents the topic of poverty with material deficiency related to external appearance.</p>
<p><b>Lesson (5) We Lived Because of our Hope</b></p>	<p>The lesson consists of a text of 100 to 150 words and 4 pictures that directly reflect the text. The text tries to present an approach to the duality of despair and hope, but it links between despair and listening to others (those who are frustrated), as well as between hope and being diligent.</p>	<p>The text employs a sociological sense, but it presents values that are contradictory to the desired social cultural concepts. The text is based on the fictional form, without aesthetic or semiotic senses.</p>	<p>The lesson in terms of its cultural content includes the sociological sense through the duality of hope and despair, and the simple semiotic sense through an approach between hearing and watching. As for the aesthetic sense, it appears through the story structure that is devoid of the depth of the plot.</p>

### APPENDIX D

#### Analysis Table for Lessons 6 to 10 in Fourth Grade, Part two Textbook

**Table D**

Lesson Title	Lesson Description	Lesson Classification	Lesson Cultural Content
<b>Lesson (6) The Reward of giving</b>	The text consists of 100-120 words and it is preceded by 4 pictures to reflect the content.	The text is based on a rich man that provides aid to the poor by placing a financial reward under a stone on the road, that acts as an obstacle, problem, or harm on the public road. The lesson is based on the idea of giving on the part of a generous and wealthy person and a poor person committing a humane action (the person who removed the harm from the road). The text is concluded with religious content that confirms that the reward for good is good. That is, the text presents almsgiving as a social solution with a religious dimension.	The text has a sociological sense that is based on a religious aspect, and is devoid of aesthetic, semiotic, and pragmatic representation.  If the pragmatic sense is looked at in the act of removing the stone from the road, then it is important to acknowledge that is employed not for a practical purpose but as a preaching way to reach a religious conclusion.
<b>Lesson (7) A Beautiful Dream</b>	The text consists of 100 to 150 words and is preceded by four pictures that reflect the text.	The text talks about a child's dream of going into space and landing on the surface of the moon and ends with the hand of his mother who awakens him.  The lesson unfolds as a dream that ends with a saying	The text is scientific and information-related, which is presented in a sociological and narrative form, devoid of the semiotic, practical, and aesthetic

		that calls for determination and perseverance for the dream to turn into reality.	senses. It presents major issues of knowledge and development in the form of a child's dream.
<b>Lesson (8) From Wisdoms of Fathers</b>	The text consists of 100 to 120 words and is preceded by 4 pictures.	The story revolves around the concept of wisdom, which is based on a man and his son going for a walk. It presents the duality of abuse and respect, through a child grappling with the echo of his voice, to discover that the echo is a similar response to his behavior. The text ends with wisdom of life, an echo of our sayings and behaviors.	A social text with a classic story structure.  (Note: Most of the texts are based on a son and his father and always end with a sermon or a wisdom dictated by the father to the son, and culminate with a traditional saying or a value or a religious text). Even if the characters are not a father and a son, there is always a wise and diligent man. They are mostly social texts that reflect the patriarchal cultural structure represented by the father, the grandfather, the wise, and the grandchildren.

<p><b>Lesson (9) Al Kufiya</b></p>	<p>The text consists of 100 to 120 words and 4 pictures that focus heavily on the Kufiya.</p>	<p>The text is about the story of the kufiya and its symbolism that is told by the grandfather to his grandchildren. The kufiya is presented as a symbol of masculinity and elegance and with that, the grandchildren announce that they will wear it. The text is based on the kufiya and its masculine and patriotic symbolism as well as how children tend to imitate adults, and that appeared in the phrase (We will wear it like you grandpa).</p>	<p>It is a social text with patriarchal, masculine dimensions, especially given that many pioneering and patriotic women have taken the kufiya as a cover for their head, such as Dalal al-Mughrabi.</p>
<p><b>Lesson (10) The First Car</b></p>	<p>The text consists of 100 to 120 words and 4 pictures.</p>	<p>The text talks about the invention of the car and its development in a socio-historical context. The text and its picture address the idea of development and reflects some of its stages, and in the images, it includes difference and diversity in development.</p>	<p>The text is semiotic because it provides connotations and differences in images and in the text, which are indications of stages. There is also a practical and inventive dimension, where the text talks about the ability of humans to invent and develop things. The text also includes sociological senses and historical contexts.</p>

### APPENDIX E

#### Analysis Table for Lessons 11 to 15 in Fourth Grade, Part two Textbook

**Table E.**

Lesson Title	Lesson Description	Lesson Classification	Lesson Cultural Content
<b>Lesson (11)</b> <b>Great Corruption</b>	The text consists of 100 to 120 words and 4 pictures that reflect the story with a simple semiotic sense.	The text tells the story of a girl who applies to a job she deserves, but instead, it goes to another due to connections and nepotism. The text demonstrates an expression of corruption policies, and it ends it with a solution to submit a complaint to the Anti-Corruption Commission.	The text is purely social with political dimensions, and deals with the issue of efficiency, justice, and corruption in a very simple way, in a simple narrative form that is devoid of plot and on stereotyped and unconvincing characters.
<b>Lesson (12)</b> <b>Do not Rush</b>	The text consists of 120 words and is preceded by 4 pictures that tell the story of the text.	The text tells of a well-known international story about a person who is sitting beside another that is sharing his candy box, where the person thinks it is his box instead. It is revealed in the end that it is not for him but actually for the one who was sharing the candy. He was surprised by the distress he showed and the welcoming of the other, even though the box was for the other.	The content of the text reflects the concepts of the self and selfishness on one hand. On the other hand, it tackles the idea of sharing, inviting others, and hospitality. The author ignored all these concepts and instead focused on the issue of judgment, non-judgment, rushing, and not rushing. It is presented in the form of

			<p>a saying (Do not rush to judge others). The text employs a sociological sense as it presents important social issues and values, but it did not focus on it, but presented it in the form of inspiring stories. The text is social with an aesthetic sense.</p>
<b>Lesson (13) The Music of Nature</b>	Text of 100 to 120 words and it is preceded with 4 pictures that tell the story.	The text presents an imagined story about nature and the music in it, where a grandfather emphasizes that music is everywhere, and people only have to enjoy it. This conclusion is presented in the form of a firm and authoritarian saying.	A simple social text with a simplified structure devoid of the aesthetic sense. It reflects a parental relationship and the images are a literal translation of the text, meaning they do not carry any semiotic sense.
<b>Lesson (14) Be Honest</b>	Text consists of 120 to 150 words and 4 pictures that perfectly reflect the text.	The text tells a story that is based on the idea of heritage. The content is that of a mother who recommends her young son to be honest. While participating in a commercial trip, the caravan is plundered by thieves. The thieves' leader is surprised by the young man's sincerity, so he becomes honest,	A social text with traditional non-contextual values as the mother always instructs her son to be honest. The story makes honesty seem as a magical and the sole solution to all situations. The text is sociological, authoritarian, and is based

		declares his repentance, and returns all the stolen items.	on direct dictation with a narrative structure built to arrive directly at the topic at hand (be honest).
<b>Lesson (15)</b> <b>The Neighbor Before the House</b>	A text of 120 words and 4 images presenting the story of the text.	The text tells the story of selling a house in which its owner asks for twice the price because of the good neighbor who lives next to him. The good neighbor hears the story and pays his neighbor the price of the house, asking him not to sell his house and he will stay next to him.	The text deals with the issue of neighborhood in a fabricated fictional style that is not realistic and is devoid of excitement or an aesthetic sense. A social text presenting the concept of neighborhood unrealistically and ending it with a sermon.

## APPENDIX F

## A Quantitative Analysis for Lessons in Second Grade Part One Textbook

Table F

Text Title	Aesthetic Sense	Semantic Sense	Sociological Sense	Pragmatic Sense
<b>Freedom is More Beautiful</b>	-	✓	-	-
<b>The Little Painter</b>	-	-	-	✓
<b>The Bird Returns</b>	-	-	✓	-
<b>Earth</b>	-	✓	✓	✓
<b>The Crow and The Jar</b>	✓	-	-	✓
<b>The Dairy Factory</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Goha and his Ten Donkeys</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Traffic Day</b>	-	-	✓	✓
<b>The Lamb and the Wolf</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>The Village Doctor</b>	-	-	✓	-
<b>The Lion and the Mouse</b>	✓	-	-	-
<b>The Hunter</b>	-	-	-	✓
<b>The Young Researchers</b>	-	-	-	✓
<b>The Smart Rooster</b>	-	✓	-	-
<b>Cleanliness</b>	-	-	✓	-

## APPENDIX G

A Quantitative Analysis for Lessons in Second Grade Part Two Textbook

Table G

Text Title	Aesthetic sense	Semantic sense	Sociological sense	Pragmatic sense
A Homeland Lives in us	-	-	-	✓
The Tiger and the Lumberjack	-	-	-	-
We Build and Build	-	-	✓	✓
The Sparrow and the Snake	✓	-	-	-
In the City of Hebron	-	-	-	-
A New Morning	-	-	-	-
Peasant's Ruse	-	-	-	-
Palestinian Children Day	-	-	-	✓
Omar and the Boy	-	-	✓	-
I Have a Dream	-	-	-	✓
My Beloved Father	-	-	✓	-
The Babbling Parrot	-	-	✓	-
Saeed and the Falcon	✓	✓	-	-
At the Grocery Store	-	-	✓	-
Fables of the People	-	-	-	✓

## APPENDIX H

## A Quantitative Analysis for Lessons in Third Grade Part One Textbook

Table H

<b>Text Title</b>	<b>Aesthetic Sense</b>	<b>Semantic Sense</b>	<b>Sociological Sense</b>	<b>Pragmatic Sense</b>
<b>Earth's Gold</b>	-	✓	✓	-
<b>The Tortoise and the Hare</b>	✓	✓	✓	-
<b>The Intelligence of a Mouse</b>	✓	-	-	-
<b>Our Village is Clean</b>	-	-	✓	✓
<b>Dina and the Moon</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>The Bird Builds its Nest</b>	-	-	✓	✓
<b>My Library is my Friend</b>	-	-	✓	-
<b>The Wise Man's Shoes</b>	✓	-	✓	-
<b>The Baker</b>	-	-	-	✓
<b>The Consequence of Greed</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>The Mermaid</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>The Wolf and the Heron</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>The Little Pony</b>	-	✓	-	-
<b>Innocence</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Baraa' and the Fables of Juha</b>	-	-	-	-

## APPENDIX I

## A Quantitative Analysis for Lessons in Third Grade Part Two Textbook

Table I

<b>Text Title</b>	<b>Aesthetic Sense</b>	<b>Semantic Sense</b>	<b>Sociological Sense</b>	<b>Pragmatic Sense</b>
<b>Haifa and the Gull</b>	-	✓	-	-
<b>Arbor Day</b>	-	-	✓	✓
<b>The Shepherd and the Wolf</b>	✓	-	✓	-
<b>I Like to Be</b>	-	-	✓	-
<b>Of Our Morals</b>	-	-	✓	-
<b>In the Port of Gaza</b>	-	-	-	✓
<b>The Crow and the Fox</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>The Innovative Little One</b>	-	-	-	✓
<b>The Intelligence of Judge Iyas</b>	✓	-	-	-
<b>In the Zoo</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>My Country's Wheat</b>	-	-	-	✓
<b>The Lion's Doctor</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>A Visit to the City of Grapes</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>A Friend in Time of Need</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>The First Sacrifice in Islam</b>	-	-	-	-

APPENDIX J

The visual text of lesson “Gratitude Goes to my Teacher”.



APPENDIX K

The visual Text of lesson “O Symbol of Generosity and Resilience”.



## APPENDIX L

## Models of the Activities Related to Arabic Language Textbook

### الإملاء

١- تقرأ الكلمات الآتية، وتلاحظ لفظ (ال) التعريف:

الفتحة
التفاز
المواهب
الصحافة
الأطفال

نستنتج:

اللام القمرية: هي التي تكتب وتلفظ.

اللام الشمسية: هي التي تكتب ولا تلفظ، ويكون الحرف بعدها مشدداً.

٢- نُدخل (ال) على الكلمات الآتية، ونقرأ:

بيت، جمل، حقل، شجاعة، وردة، طير، طاب، كلب.

٣- نكتب ما يملأ علينا: (تأخذ من دليل المعلم).

### التعبير

نعيد ترتيب كلمات كل سطر؛ لتكون جملة مفيدة ونكتبها في الدفتر:

- ١- برامج، هيا، مشهورة، أطفال، مقدمة.
- ٢- إعلامية، نجمة، كيف، أصبحت؟
- ٣- صحراء، الأطفال، هيا، يجون.
- ٤- الأطفال، أقدم، برامج، لهم، حتى، جعلني.

### الكتابة

١- نكتب ما يأتي في الفراغ:

لكل واحد منا قدرات، وله مواهب، تختلف من إنسان إلى آخر، ولا تتركز هيو القدرات وتلك المواهب إلا إذا وجدت من يكتشفها، ويصاها، ويهتم بها.

٢- ننسخ ما يأتي في دفتر النسخ:

سألها صحيفي ذات مرة: كيف أصبحت نجمة إعلامية؟ قالت: الفضل في كثير منه ليعلمي مناسن التي اكتشفت موهبتي، وقد شجعتي ذلك أن أدخل كتبة الصحافة والإعلام، وأخرج فيها، وشجتي للأطفال جعلني أقدم برامج لهم، ومن الخير لكل منا أن ندرس ما نحب، ونعمل فيما نحب.

٣- نكتب ما يأتي بخط النسخ:

لكل واحد منا قدرات، وله مواهب.

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٢- نسأل عما تحته خط بأحد أسماء الاستفهام الآتية، كما في المثال: (أين، متى، من، كيف، لماذا، كم):

متى يُفزع الجرس؟ أ- ولد محمود ذروبي؟ ب- عينا للوعودة؟ ج- يُفطر الصائم؟ د- أصبحت نجمة إعلامية؟ هـ- نجح الرياضة؟ و- أذهب إلى المدرسة؟	المثال: يُفزع الجرس الساعة الثانية صباحاً. ولد الشاعر محمود ذروبي في قرية الزبوة. للوعودة بنت عتي. يُفطر الصائم بعد أذان المغرب. هيا أصبحت نجمة إعلامية. نجح الرياضة؛ لأنها تقوي أجسامنا. أذهب إلى المدرسة مائياً.
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٣- تصوغ ثلاثة أسئلة حول الجملة الآتية، باستخدام أسماء الاستفهام (من، ماذا، متى):

اكتشفت المعلمة مواهب هيا مبكرًا.

- أ- من \_\_\_\_\_؟
- ب- ماذا \_\_\_\_\_؟
- ج- متى \_\_\_\_\_؟

### نحيب شفويًا

- ١- كيف تتركز القدرات والمواهب عند الناس؟
- ٢- من التي اكتشفت موهبة هيا؟
- ٣- أين تعمل هيا؟
- ٤- ماذا أجات هيا، عندما سألها صحيفي: كيف أصبحت نجمة إعلامية؟
- ٥- ما الذي جعل هيا تقدم برامج للأطفال؟

### نفكر:

- ١- الأطفال ينادون هيا: (ماما هيا)، فعلام يندئ ذلك؟
- ٢- يحتاج الإنسان لكي يندع إلى أشياء كثيرة، أستى التي منها.

### التدريبات اللغوية:

١- نصل بين الكلمة ومعناها:

أ- تتركز	شغل
ب- يهتم	مشهورة
ج- يتركز	يغني
د- يهتم	تظهر

## APPENDIX M

Hasna's Doll text

## دُمِيَّةٌ حَسَنَةٌ



جَلَسَتِ الحَاجَّةُ حَسَنَةُ وَحَوْلَهَا أَحْفَادُهَا فِي مُخَيَّمِ عَيْنِ الحُلُوةِ فِي لُبْنَانَ، فَقَالَ لَهَا حَفِيدُهَا مُحَمَّدٌ: حَدِّثْنَا عَنِ النَّكْبَةِ يَا جَدَّتِي، فَانْحَدَرَتْ مِنْ عَيْنِهَا دُمْعَةٌ، وَقَالَتْ: كُنْتُ حِينئِذٍ بِنْتٌ تَسْعُ سِنِينَ، وَالْفَصْلُ رَبِيعٌ، فَخَرَجْتُ مَعَ صَدِيقَاتِي إِلَى بِيَارَةِ جَمِيلَةٍ فِي يَافَا، وَعِنْدَمَا تَعَبْنَا مِنَ اللَّعِبِ، جَلَسْنَا تَحْتَ شَجَرَةٍ بُرْتُقَالٍ كَبِيرَةٍ، فَقَالَتْ صَدِيقَتِي فَاطِمَةُ: هَيَّا نَصْنَعِ دُمِيَّةً مِنَ القُمَاشِ.

وَيَنِمَا كُنَّا نَصْنَعُ الدُمِيَّةَ، سَمِعْنَا انفجاراتٍ كَثِيرَةً قَامَتْ بِهَا العِصَابَاتُ الصَّهْبُونِيَّةُ أَثْنَاءَ هُجُومِهَا عَلَى المَدِينَةِ، وَسَمِعْنَا صِيحَاً مِنْ كُلِّ مَكَانٍ، وَجَاءَ أَهْلُنَا يَبْحَثُونَ عَنَّا، فَجَدَّ بَنِي أَبِي بِسُرْعَةٍ، فَأَخَذْتُ أَصِيحُ: أَبِي، أَبِي، دُمِيَّتِي دُمِيَّتِي!! وَلَكِنَّ أَبِي مَضَى بِي مُسْرِعاً إِلَى الجِهَةِ الشَّرْقِيَّةِ مِنَ المَدِينَةِ.

وَجَاءَ بِنَا أَبِي إِلَى هُنَا، وَلَمْ يَخْطُرْ بِبَالِي أَنَّ غُرْبَتَنَا سَتَطُولُ إِلَى هَذَا الحَدِّ، وَمَا زِلْتُ أَنْتَظِرُ اليَوْمَ الَّذِي أَعُودُ فِيهِ؛ لِأَكْمِلَ صُنْعَ الدُمِيَّةِ تَحْتَ البُرْتُقَالَةِ، وَيَأْذِنَ اللّهُ سَنَعُودُ حَتْمًا، وَإِنْ طَالَ الزَّمَنُ.



## APPENDIX N

## Daydream Text



## أَحْلَامُ الْيَقَظَةِ

نَقْرَأُ: 

حَكَّتْ لِي جَدَّتِي أَنَّ رَجُلًا كَانَ يَزِيدُ عِنْدَهُ الْعَسَلُ، فَيَفْرَعُهُ فِي جَرَوْ،  
يُعَلِّقُهَا فِي بَيْتِهِ، وَبَيْنَمَا كَانَ مُسْتَلْقِيًا وَالْجِرَّةَ مُعَلَّقَةً فَوْقَ رَأْسِهِ، تَذَكَّرَ غَلَاءَ  
الْعَسَلِ، فَقَالَ فِي نَفْسِهِ: أبيعُ هَذِهِ الْجِرَّةَ بِدِينَارٍ، وَأشْتَرِي بِهِ عَشْرَ عَنَزَاتٍ،  
ثُمَّ يَحْمِلُنَّ، وَيَلِدْنَ، وَيَعْدُ خَمْسِ سَنَوَاتٍ، سَيُصْبِحُ عِنْدِي أَلْفُ عَنَزَةٍ.

بَعْدَهَا أبيعُ الْعَنَزَاتِ، فَأشْتَرِي بِأَثْمَانِهَا مِئَةَ بَقَرَةٍ، وَكثِيرًا مِنَ الْبُدُورِ،  
أَزْرَعُهَا، وَأَحْرُثُ الْأَرْضَ، وَيَعْدُ خَمْسِ سَنَوَاتٍ أُخْرَى يُصْبِحُ عِنْدِي كَثِيرٌ  
مِنَ الْبَقَرِ وَالزَّرْعِ، ثُمَّ أبيعُ بَعْضًا مِنَ الْبَقَرِ وَالزَّرْعِ، وَأُبْنِي بَيْتًا جَمِيلًا،  
وَأَتَزَوِّجُ امْرَأَةً جَمِيلَةً ذَاتَ حَسَبٍ، تَلِدُ لِي ابْنًا، أَعْمَلُ عَلَى تَرْبِيَّتِهِ وَتَأْدِيبِهِ؛  
كَيْ يُصْبِحَ فِي الْمُسْتَقْبَلِ رَجُلًا يُعْتَمَدُ عَلَيْهِ، فَإِنْ عَصَى أَمْرِي، ضَرَبْتُهُ  
بِالْعَصَا هَكَذَا، وَرَفَعَ الْعَصَا يُشِيرُ بِهَا، فَأَصَابَتِ الْجِرَّةَ، فَاثْبَتَتْ، فَسَاحَ  
الْعَسَلُ عَلَى رَأْسِهِ وَوَجْهِهِ وَثِيَابِهِ.

## ملخص الدراسة

تعد المناهج المدرسية أداة مهمة في تحديد حاضر التعليم ومستقبل الثقافة، تلك الثقافة التي تتشكل من الخبرات الإنسانية عبر التاريخ، وتعد إحدى أهم المحددات والسياقات لنمو الأطفال وتطورهم الذهني النفسي والاجتماعي ومؤشر لنوعية التوجهات الفكرية والقيمية التي سيكتسبونها عبر رحلة تعلمهم المدرسي. في هذا السياق تهدف الدراسة الحالية الى التعرف على "طبيعة التمثيلات الثقافية المتضمنة في المناهج الفلسطينية المدرسي للصفوف الأساسية: الثاني والثالث والرابع." وللبحث في طبيعة هذه التمثيلات قَسَمَت الدراسة الموضوع الى سؤالين تركزا حول طبيعة التمثيلات الثقافية وأشكال تمثيلها في المنهج المدرسي.

تكمن أهمية هذه الدراسة في تحليل ودراسة المنهج الفلسطيني الذي يشكل أساس التعليم في فلسطين، والذي بالرغم من حداثة إلا أنه ما زال في طور التكوين ويعاني دائماً من التغيرات والتعديلات المرتجاة، تحليلاً يستند إلى المنظور الثقافي الاجتماعي للبحث في طبيعة التمثيلات الثقافية المتضمنة فيه والتي تشكل أداة مهمة في تكوين فهم الأطفال لثقافة مجتمعاتهم واستخدامها والتفاعل مع أفرادها.

اتبعت الدراسة منهجية تحليل المحتوى في تفسير وترميز المواد النصية في المنهج المدرسي والتي تتضمن النصوص القرائية والرسومات والصور والتدريبات اللغوية. وقد استخدمت الدراسة نموذج اداسكو وآخرون مستندة في ذلك على نظرية فيجوتسكي للإجابة على السؤال الأول في الدراسة وكذلك مبادئ جيروم برونر للإجابة على السؤال الثاني فيها.

توصلت الدراسة إلى مجموعة من النتائج التي تركزت حول وجود تباين كبير في أشكال التمثيلات الثقافية المتضمنة في المناهج الفلسطينية للصفوف الأساسية الثلاث التي اعتمدت في الدراسة حيث أظهرت النتائج أن البعد الثقافي الأكثر تواجداً بين التمثيلات هو البعد الاجتماعي، بينما وجد أن الأقل تواجداً بين التمثيلات هو البعد الجمالي، كما أن هناك عدد كبير من النصوص التي كانت تخلو من أي بعد ثقافي فيها. وكذلك إفتقارها لمبدأي السياقية والمنظورية التي كان من الممكن أن توفرنا تعلم عميق يخلق ديمومته وارتباطه بالحياة وقابل للتفسير والتأويل من وجهات نظر مختلفة.

في ضوء النتائج خرج البحث بمجموعة من التوصيات التي تدعو إلى مراجعة شاملة لكتب اللغة العربية المدرسية مستندة في ذلك على النظرية الاجتماعية الثقافية وإجراء دراسات أخرى من أجل فهم ديناميكية ودور الكتب المدرسية في تشكيل فهم الطلاب لثقافتهم وأدوارهم التي تشكل هويتهم

الذاتية والمعرفية. وكذلك تمكن المعلمين/ين من أدوات تدريسية مختلفة تمكنهم من فتح آفاق وتوجهات متطورة في توظيف التعليم وأخيرا دعوة المؤسسات الثقافية في المجتمع المدني إلى تفعيل دورها بشكل أكبر في الجانب الثقافي من أجل سد الثغرة في هذا الحقل.