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way. This also meets with Alptekin (2002) views which explain how “it is obvious that in order to successfully function in a culturally diverse environment, our learners need to develop intercultural communicative competence”.

- ◆ As for questions 7 & 8, there were special efforts made to establish a strong link between the global issues introduced and the Palestinian character and there are many examples which have been stated through the presented analyses that proved such attitude.

All of the above mentioned points show that the curriculum authors tried to adhere to the pre-stated plan in the outline and achieved its goals and objectives. There was a strong effort made to combine the global issues being introduced with the Palestinian issues which emphasize the Palestinian identity, land, struggle, culture and beliefs and as the Outline stated “Cross cultural competence can be fostered by meaningful and long term interactions with others with different world views, life experiences, languages and cultures.” “English Language National Team, (1999)”.

As a result, it could be said that the content of English for Palestine for these studied grades offered a good opportunity for the students to learn the English language through opening windows for them to the world and its most important issues but at the same time helped in strengthening their Palestinian identity and image so that these books can be called as was planned an English which is for Palestine.

## Recommendations:

It is evident that real efforts were made by the authors of *English for Palestine* to cover Palestinian and Arab and Islamic cultural aspects; nevertheless, more could have been done in this respect especially regarding the Arab and Islamic features. Future modifications should take this into consideration. i. e. increases these dimensions in the curriculum.

## Recommendations for Future Studies:

More studies can possibly be conducted to examine the books of the other grades to see how these issues were handled in these books as well. These studies could also focus more on Islamic and Arabic cultural dimensions in addition to Palestinian issues.

- C. There were links between the world issues and Palestinian issues. Thus, we can conclude that there was a reasonable combination between the global topics and the national issues which helped to reflect the identity of the students.

## Results of the Study:

Some important conclusions can be drawn from the detailed content survey and analysis for the textbooks of the two grades which are the scope of this study. ***These conclusions completely answer the questions of the study in the following manner.***

- ◆ As for questions 1, 2 & 3, it was clear from the content survey and analysis for the books of grades 11 and 12 that the curriculum largely covered Palestinian, cultural aspects and to some extent Arab and Islamic features. This shows that the curriculum makers committed themselves to the pre-stated plan in the outline and achieved its goals and objectives in making the new curriculum display the local Palestinian culture and issues. The planners wanted to help in shaping the right identity of the students. Thus, English for Palestine came as a major change from the previously used series of English textbooks (PETRA) where the Palestinian identity was not reflected or presented.
- ◆ As for questions 4, 5, & 6, the intercultural dimensions that were introduced helped to orient the students in these aspects and to create intercultural communication and understanding. Furthermore, it is manifested that there was a carefully planned policy in the choice of the global issues being introduced so that they will not be remote from the student's interests or understanding and suitable for his age, environment and values. This agrees with Crystal (2003) and Jenkins 2000, 2006 who pointed out that learners should be prepared for intercultural communication since English is a global language. It also agrees with Bachman (1990) who said that there is much more to learning a language than the language skills and that English language books should include the vital component of cultural knowledge and awareness. It also coincides with the Council of Europe 2001 who stressed that all English language learners need to be prepared for future encounters with speakers of varieties of English that differ from their own. Simultaneously, the textbooks of English for Palestine for these grades succeeded in stressing the national identity of the students by introducing the local culture in a very clear and positive

modern world of business and population explosion. Stress and its causes and dangerous effects is another very useful topic. These topics are written carefully so that they contain no points or ideas that contradict our values or provoke any sort of cultural misunderstanding.

The pictures and images used in the book were chosen carefully to suit the cultural strategies of the curriculum textbooks. The cover page of the two textbooks carried a picture for Al-Aqsa Mosque. There are pictures also for Palestinians; one is for late President Arafat p.92 and the other for Abdalameed Shoman. Other pictures for Jerusalem including Palestinian tapestry are there on p. 101.

The literary material that the reader (literature part) contains is also well-chosen and stresses themes and values that are much related to our religious and social values and are universal as well such as: the value of freedom (The Dove & The Bet), These values are very important to teach to the Palestinian students who are seeking to get their freedom. The tragic aspects of war are presented in the poem titled (War). Another good poem titled (The Road Not Taken) shows the importance of taking initiatives and being original and creative in your thinking. These qualities are very valuable in shaping the character of young Palestinians. The poem (If) gives advice from a father to a son which applies to our society as well. Finally, Shakespeare's King Lear gives ethical lessons. It teaches love and respect to one's parents and shows the cruelty of ingratitude especially to parents. This abides with the Islamic values which call for the importance of caring for our aging parents and being merciful and respectful to them remembering how they worked hard to bring us up when we were young and helpless.

## **Conclusion:**

- A.** There were four units which discussed Palestinian issues exclusively. This helped to make the book reflect Palestinian cultural dimensions and to make it reflect to some extent the student's cultural identity and at the same time make the students see themselves as part of the world community.
- B.** The textbooks introduced new global useful information which included a lot of intercultural aspects that would orient the students in these aspects and create intercultural communication and understanding.

today” Here we see how the Islamic dimension is presented in addition to the Palestinian image This text helps as an entrance to the second expository text which gives a historical background to the origins of democracy and how people over the ages fought to gain freedom and democracy. It also talked about the Palestinian society as well “It is important to note that democracy and democratic institutions in Palestine extend fully to all parts of society. Women and men have equal rights, and minority groups are as much a part of the democratic process as everybody else. All have the right to elect and be elected.” A third example is unit (3) which is about recycling. It uses in a newspaper announcement from Gaza municipality which talks about recycling of items.

Cultural aspects are also emphasized in unit (6) which talks about Sameera Barakat, the Palestinian student who studies abroad and gives advice to first year Palestinian students about time management and the importance of time organizing. ‘If you are feeling shy or homesick or depressed, don’t just hide away. Be ready to smile and talk. Meet people through clubs, sports or the student’s union.” In a similar way, unit (10) talks about another Arab student studying abroad. She also gives some cultural tips about the differences between cultures to help students avoid problems caused by cultural differences.” We often see how wide cultural gaps are by looking at real life situations such as the following. These things generally cause little misunderstandings. Sometimes they can cause anger and even real damage to relationships.” Another text in the unit talks about the dos and don’ts in American culture by listing some cross cultural tips. This certainly helps students to understand foreign culture and link it and compare it to the Palestinian culture. One other passage in the same unit gives information about Palestinian culture and the importance of preserving it. “It is essential for Palestinians to keep their heritage alive and in good health. In the first place, it is a vital part of the national identity. And in these times nothing is more important than defending this.” This gives the students the ability to feel proud about their culture and also teaches them how to talk about their culture.

The other units in the book introduce important subjects that are closely related to the students’ interests and benefit such as: banking information which is good for introducing banking vocabulary as well. Another topic is modern satellite communication which is of interest to all people as we are in the era of advanced communication technology. Other topics are the

Omar Ibn Al-Khattab and his justice and the second is a historical survey about the fight for democracy around the world.

The reader in the workbook introduces a good selection of literary works that include some poems, short stories and a play for Shakespeare.

### **Content Analysis:**

Some remarks can be drawn from the content survey. There are *(four)* units out of twelve that talk directly about Palestinian and Arab issues or characters in relation to world issues. This represents approximately 34% of the syllabus. These are units *four, five and nine*. As for unit four, it talks about the side effects of some projects and uses the Aswan project and Lake Hula as examples. Unit five talks about Abdul Al-Hameed Shoman who established the Arab Bank and his struggle with the Israeli occupation. “When I made up my mind to start this bank, I chose not to give it my name, nor the name of my home village of Beit Hanina, nor the name of my homeland of Palestine But instead the name of the Arab nation. And so, I called it The Arab Bank” Unit nine talks about key Palestinians figures and their efforts in extending bridges to the western world. These chosen figures are: late President Arafat, Edward Saeed & Hisham Sharabi. “After the 1948 disaster, a million Palestinians lost everything and were forced into a Diaspora that spread round the planet. For many years, the Palestinian catastrophe and cause then received little attention or understanding from the world”. In another part of the unit it says: “Sadly neither Arafat, nor Saed nor Sharabi lived long enough to see the end of the Diaspora” These units help to present the Palestinian struggle for freedom and their efforts to make the west understand their case.

There are also some units which talk partially about Palestinian figures and issues. Unit *(10)* is a good example. It is about how people from different cultures can interact. It teaches students how to communicate with other cultures. At the same time, it teaches them how to preserve their own culture. “It is essential for Palestinians to keep their heritage alive and in good health.” Another example is unit *(12)* which is on democracy. It talks about the justice of Caliph Omar Ibn Al-Kattab. Two famous stories that prove his justice are narrated in an exercise about reported speech “Caliph Omar believed totally in honesty, equality, and justice and in his own role of serving the people. These are the qualities of good government that we still stand for

## **Conclusion:**

- A.** All of these topics and information about Palestinian issues helped to give the book some Palestinian dimensions and helped to make the book close to the students' identity. The material about Palestine is suitable but rather insufficient. It could have been more effective in quality and quantity.
- B.** The textbooks introduced new global useful information but simultaneously and intelligently established links between these issues and Palestinian issues. Thus, we can conclude that there was a good coverage for the intercultural global topics and a relatively suitable display for the topics reflecting the national cultural identity of the students.

## **Content Survey and Analysis for Grade (12) Textbooks:**

### **Content Survey:**

As in grade 11, the units in the student's textbook are divided into two parts. The first is to be used for all streams and the second for the literary and scientific streams. There is also a reader (literary texts) in the workbook.

The topics that the textbooks deal with are very inclusive. They present a wide variety of issues. Unit one talks about oil industry and a global issue in the call for better consumption of this important source of energy. Unit two discusses a very important issue which is population peak and how to deal with it. Unit three is again global and deals with the recycling of waste items. Unit four deals with big projects that had some unfavorable side effects e.g. Aswan project in Egypt and Lake Hula. Unit five is about money matters. This includes information about banking and an essay on Abdul Hameed Shoman and the history of the Arab bank. Unit six is about time organization especially for first year college students. Unit seven gives information about stress and how to deal with it. Unit eight is about how work in the modern world strongly depends on telecommunications. Unit nine talks about Palestinians around the world and their efforts to build bridges to the world. Yaser Arafat, Edward Saeed and Hisham Sharabi are used as examples. Unit ten talks about cultures and cross cultural communication through various cultures. Unit eleven discusses a very interesting and useful topic for students i.e. satellite communication. Unit twelve is about democracy. The first text is about Caliph

the students able to communicate information about their own national issues. This is something that will motivate the students to learn and remember these new words.

There are other units which talked partially and indirectly about Arab and Palestinian issues, e.g. Ibn Batuta's biography was given in the activities in the unit on travel. Nablus and Jericho were used as entries from the internet.

The world issues are dealt with in many units as well. Unit eight introduces the students to very important world issues such as global warming and looking for energy alternatives. This helps to increase the students' knowledge about serious world problems. Unit ten deals with a very useful subject which is the world of the internet. It introduces very important information and vocabulary about computers and the web. This is a very vital topic nowadays and students are very interested in more knowledge about communication technology which is constantly developing. Unit eleven talks about the shortage of water in the Dead Sea mainly and in other places as well.

From the previous list and analysis it gets clear that the issues discussed in the units are carefully chosen and relevant to the students' thinking and interests. It can also be noticed that the content of these units does not clash or contradict with our values. These units enhance the students' understanding of world issues such as computer technology environmental issues and economics. Furthermore, these units teach good values such as: doing volunteer work, team spirit, as well as research skills through getting advantage of the internet in looking for knowledge.

The pictures and images used in these books were chosen carefully to suit the cultural strategies of the curriculum textbooks. The cover page of the two textbooks carried a picture for Jerusalem and another for a Palestinian girl.

The novel *Silas Marner* which is put in the workbook carries very important messages to the students. It teaches them good values On top of these is that human feelings are more valuable than materialistic values and that justice will prevail in the end.

These units talk about Palestine and Palestinians in relation to world issues. ***This list will help give details and information about how this is achieved:***

- Unit three: talks about a Palestinian American student who came to study in Palestine for one year and at the same time tour Palestine and know her relatives in Ramallah and Nablus. This method allows for some comparisons in educational and cultural issues in Palestine and abroad. This makes the students understand about educational systems around the world not only in Palestine. Furthermore, the expository passage in the same unit is about how development in technology will develop education in Palestine and other developing countries. “With an army of highly qualified universities, technical and vocational graduates, Palestine will soon be taking its own place in the global knowledge-based economy.”
- Unit four gives a detailed passage about problems of world economy and free trade and uses Palestinian economy as one example for these issues.” In this situation, some people argue for ‘protectionism’ to keep local industries and jobs- particularly in a fragile economy like Palestine’s.”
- Unit seven talks about the Olympics and uses one of the Palestinian athletic competitors to talk about. This introduces a very popular topic for youth and increases their awareness in athletics.
- Unit twelve talks about volunteer work and uses Palestinian students repainting their school in the summer as an example. Another Passage in the unit talks about some skilled Palestinians participating in the TOKTEN Program (Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals). This draws the attention of the students to the spirit of the Palestinians abroad who are ready to come and help in the development of their country Palestine The unit also gives an idea about Palestinians in Diaspora. “After the ‘brain drain’ that Palestine suffered from since 1948, hundreds of volunteers like Mariam are bringing an important ‘brain gain’. Together with millions of other Palestinians, they are helping to build the new Palestine.”

All these units provide very useful vocabulary about key Palestinian issues e.g.: Palestinian Diaspora, brain drain, emigration etc. This will make

were some poems a short story and a play. These were placed in parts at the end of each unit.

As for the topics which grade eleven textbooks introduced they were varied in the following manner.

Unit one is about travel. It introduced information and vocabulary related to this topic. Unit two talks about some diseases which have disappeared by mass vaccination but unfortunately about others which appeared like AIDS. Unit three talks about how education in Palestine is developing. Unit four is about business including an article on Palestinian economy. Unit five is about problems of teenagers especially those related to stress. Unit six talks about road accidents and gives advice on this important topic. Unit seven is about the history of the Olympics and about a Palestinian athlete participating in the Olympics. Unit eight introduces a first aid manual and a reading passage on Bermuda Triangle. Unit nine is about two topics. One is about global warming as a serious environmental threat and the other is about finding other sources of energy as oil substitutes. Unit ten talks about surfing the internet and gives a history for the development of man's attempts to store information starting from pictograms and getting into microchips. Unit eleven discusses the shrinking of the Dead Sea and the shortage of water in the world and gives suggested solutions. Finally, unit twelve talks about voluntary work and introduces (TOKTEN) program which aims at stopping the brain drain in Palestine and other places and encourages expatriates to come and serve their countries.

There is a reader in the Workbook. It is a literature component which includes some poems and a novel for George Eliot titled *Silas Marner*. At the end of each unit, there is a chapter from the novel and some comprehension activities related to the given extract.

### **Content Analysis:**

There are some essential remarks that can be drawn from the content survey for the textbooks' material for grade eleven. Below is an analysis for these points.

- ◆ There are (4) units out of twelve that talk almost directly about Palestinian issues. This represents 33 % of the syllabus. These are units: 3, 4, 7, & 12.

- The themes are to be appropriate to the age and experience of the age group concerned.
- Progression is to be from topics appealing to children to those appropriate to teenagers.

The study attempted to examine through the close analysis of the curriculum of grades 11 & 12 whether this outlook was really reflected and achieved in the curriculum and to what extent.

## **Detailed Content Analysis for English for Palestine Textbooks for Grades 11 & 12:**

In this part of the study, a detailed analytical survey for the contents of EFP textbooks for grades, 11&12 was made. The aim of this survey was to describe the content of these textbooks in terms of the topics they cover and the way they are covered. For this purpose, these topics were analyzed to see what global, intercultural and on the other hand, Palestinian (including Arab & Islamic) cultural dimensions they deal with. Throughout this analysis, the core issue of the research was examined which is how the Palestinian identity on one hand and the global intercultural issues on the other were introduced in the content of these textbooks.

## **Content Survey and Analysis for Grade (11) Textbooks:**

### **Content Survey:**

For grades 11 & 12, the strategy used in the design of the material of the units was to introduce texts of a vocational nature in the first part of the unit and texts of academic nature in the second part of the unit. This was done as the books in these two grades are to be used for all streams, vocational, literary and scientific. So the first part of the unit introduced material for all three streams, while the second part introduced a more developed and academic piece of reading and writing activities for the literary and scientific streams only. There was always a thematic link maintained between the contents of the two parts.

The workbooks for these two grades included a reader containing some literary works which included some poetry, short stories, a play and a novel. In the workbook for grade eleven, there was a novel while in grade 12 there

*for teaching English as a foreign language in Palestine is based on the following:*

1. Internationalism is the hallmark of modern education.
2. Linguistic and cultural diversity are the means to internationalism.
3. Linguistic and cultural diversity enhance the mental capacity and improve the communication ability. This leads to improving employment opportunities.
4. Cross cultural competence can be fostered by meaningful and long term interactions with others with different world views, life experiences, languages and cultures. “English Language National Team, (1999)”. The researcher used this outline which stated these landmarks as a tool for the study by which he tried to evaluate the content of the new curriculum. The study tried to see if the new English syllabus achieved what the planners have intended and to what extent.

## **Content Analysis for English for Palestine Textbooks:**

The method that was followed in studying the cultural issues in English for Palestine for grades 11 & 12 is content survey and analysis. To start this process, “the general outlook to the syllabus content as is stated by the “English Language National Team, 1999 was examined. *It stated that they wanted the curriculum to achieve the following:*

- The thematic content in the syllabus is to cover aspects of the national target, and global cultural heritage.
- It should be closely related to the immediate environment of the student (home and school) as well as the global environment.
- The themes should not only be informative and interesting but they should also motivate the students to seek further information from sources accessible to them.
- The situations are to reflect real-life contexts and should be relevant to the students' lives.
- The syllabus material is to be graded to meet the cognitive, moral and social development of the students.
- The themes are to be appealing to both sexes.

by the English language specialists in the national team. The curriculum was also compared and contrasted with other syllabi in approximately similar teaching and learning conditions. The analysis for the syllabus was done to give answers to the proposed questions of the study.

## **The Instrument of the Study:**

The researcher used the outline for the new English curriculum which was issued by the Ministry of Education/ General Administration of Curricula titled English, Language Curriculum for Public Schools in Palestine, Grades 1-12. (1999) as the main tool of the study. This outline was prepared by The English Language National Team which consisted of a good number of educators who are specialists in the field of English teaching and the design of curriculum. In this outline, the team stated the general and specific goals & objectives for the first EFL curriculum for Palestinian schools. The outline stated also the suggested themes and topics for the curriculum for all grades as well as the methodology to be used. The study attempted to see if the curriculum achieved what it planned to do in this outline in relation to the scopes suggested for the study.

## **Reliability and Validity of the instrument:**

The Outline which is used by the researcher as the instrument of the study was prepared by specialists in curriculum design who constitute “The English Language National Team” These specialists spent more than two years working on this important educational document in order to lay the ground for the national and foreign team who were supposed later to carry out the huge task of composing the material for the curriculum. This outline was constantly evaluated for validity and reliability by the team itself and later by the next team who worked on the curriculum composition.

## **A Study for the Various Cultural Dimensions in English for Palestine:**

This research focuses on the study of the cultural & intercultural elements in the content new English syllabus. To address this topic, the researcher studied what the planners of the new curriculum wrote about this issue. In their outline for the curriculum, *the team members state that “the rationale*

critical perspectives to understand other cultures. (Windschit, Edward R. & Luster, Bravmann Stephanie 2000. *Cultures of Curriculum* Lawrence Erlbaum Assoc.)

Moreover, Krashen says “So what is better, the classroom or the real world?” Quite simply, the role of the second or foreign language classroom is to bring a student to a point where he can begin to use the outside world for further second language acquisition. This means we have to provide students with enough comprehensible input to bring their second language competence to the point where they can begin to understand language heard ‘on the outside’ .... In other words, all second language classes are transitional (Krashen, 1989). Crystal (2003) also points out that learners should be prepared for intercultural communication since English is a global language. All English language learners need to be prepared for future encounters with speakers of varieties of English that differ from their own (Jenkins, 2000, 2006). One way to prepare learners is to expose them to different varieties of English. In addition, teachers should focus on teaching both strategic and intercultural competence skills. With these skills, learners should be able to talk about the socio-cultural norms of their own cultures. (Alpetekin 2002, El-Sayed 1991)

Finally, the English Language National Team, (1999) in the *English, Language Curriculum for Public Schools in Palestine, Grades 1-12.*) Says “effective cross- cultural communication is possible only with a good understanding of the other cultures.” Acting on this belief, educators should establish goals that emphasize cultural awareness.

Given these opinions which show the importance of combining cultural aspects in the curriculum, this study tries to examine if the new Palestinian curriculum addresses these issues and to what extent it succeeded in conveying local, national, international and intercultural components as well.

## **The Methodology Used in the Study:**

The study methodology used in the research was the descriptive and analytical approach .The syllabus for grades eleven and twelve was surveyed and examined closely. It was studied extensively and its contents were described and analyzed in the light of the outline that was prepared for the curriculum

to communicate with native speakers of English but also with non- native speakers of English which is why EFL learners are typically learners of English as an international, or rather intercultural, communication Kreiger (2005). Thus the target language becomes a tool to be used in with people from all over the world where communication in English takes place in fields such as science technology, business, art, entertainment and tourism. According to Alptekin (2002), “it is obvious that in order to successfully function in a culturally diverse environment, our learners need to develop intercultural communicative competence”.

Thus, learning English will definitely mean that students and teachers need to broaden their multicultural awareness. How these values should not conflict with one’s own values, Gee (1998) explains that “the language teacher in guiding the learner to new perspectives and new identities is trampling with fundamentals of human identity. Therefore the language learner must implement the intercultural approach in a very tactful, skillful and conscious way. Kramsch also writes “breaking down stereotypes is not just realizing that people are not the way one thought they were or that deep down we are all the same. It is understanding that we are irreducibly unique and different and that I could have been you or you could have been me, given different circumstances” (1995,3)

Hence, English curriculum planners and educators argue that exposure to cultural aspects whether local or international is essential for widening the scope of the students’ minds about their own culture. The English curriculum should address local and national dimensions as well as international ones. “Building on preparation of the classroom environment and curriculum content, the processes of curriculum planning, implementation, and assessment of student learning must be given rigorous attention in classrooms that use intercultural approaches.” (Bennett, 1999; Davidman & Davidman, 1997; De Gaetano, Williams, & Volk, 1998; Goodwin, 1997; Robles de Melendez & Ostertag, 1997; Sapon Shevin, 1999; Timms, 1996;

On the same issue, some educators believe that intercultural approaches readies students for a workplace that includes colleagues of various ethnic backgrounds and prepares for competition in a global market as well. It encourages learning from others’ perspectives, appreciation for one’s own cultural identity, preservation of cultural traditions, and the development of

The reason behind focusing the study on these specific grades is that the books for these grades are very rich with reading material in various fields in the nature of expository texts. This gave the authors a lot of space to include various cultural components.

## **Literature Review:**

### **Culture and English Language Curriculum:**

Educators and Language teaching experts share the opinion that cultural aspects are an integral part of the English teaching process. These days, it is a widely known fact that teaching and learning a foreign language cannot be reduced to the direct teaching of linguistic skills like phonology, morphology, vocabulary and syntax. The cotemporary models of communicative competence show that there is much more to learning a language than the language skills and they include the vital component of cultural knowledge and awareness. (Bachman 1990; Council of Europe 2001). In other words, learning a language well usually requires knowing something about the culture of that language. Communication that lacks appropriate cultural content often results in humorous incidents, or worse, it may become the source of serious miscommunication and misunderstanding.

Gumperz (1982) also adds “when we consider interaction between a native and a foreign speaker, it becomes evident that a further dimension has to be added. For when people with different cultural experiences wish to communicate, they cannot assume that what they wish to say can be accommodated within the language and meanings of the native speaker of the language.” Moran and Harries 1982 also comment on the differences between individual culture and group or groups cultures.

Furthermore, Kramsch, (1993) states that culture “is always in the background right from day one in learning languages ready to unsettle the good language learners when they expect it least, making evident the limitations of their hard won competence, challenging their ability to make sense of the world around them.” In an EFL class, students are usually monolingual and they learn English while living in their own country they have little access to the target culture and therefore a limited ability to become culturally competent. Importantly, their aim for learning English is not only

## The Significance of the Study:

The study's significance stems from the important aspects which it will investigate and analyze as it gives an idea about the content of the Palestinian English syllabus particularly the grades which are the subject of the study. Furthermore, the study analyzes the syllabus with the focus on the scopes subject for the study. It attempts to evaluate the syllabus and pinpoint the strong points and highlight any weaknesses or points that need to be modified and reconsidered.

The study is also an attempt to provide data for those in charge of evaluating the syllabus to undertake any modifications or improvements which prove to be necessary especially that the syllabus is in the process of getting feedback from the field for possible modifications. Such studies help in giving support for this important national academic project which in turn will enhance its effectiveness and quality.

## Definition of Terms:

- ♦ **Culture:** *Here are some definitions for culture:*
  - The attitudes and behavior that are characteristic of a particular social group or organization. (*Moreman, 1988*)
  - The integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior that depends upon the capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations. (*Merriam- Webster Dictionary*)
  - The customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group. (*Merriam-Webster Dictionary*)
- ♦ **Intercultural:** It is relating to, involving, or representing different cultures. (*Merriam- Webster Dictionary*)
- ♦ **Global:** Affecting or including the whole world (*Longman Dictionary*)

## Limitations of the Study:

The study was limited to examining the content of the new Palestinian English Curriculum *English for Palestine* for grades eleven & twelve. It was restricted mainly to examining the cultural /intercultural aspects in these books.

- **Values:** the syllabus also aims at stressing and teaching the good values that our students should know and believe in and these values should be in line with the human values and with the Arab and Islamic value system.“

## Objectives of the Study:

The research attempted to study the new Palestinian English curriculum for grades eleven and twelve. It aimed at surveying the content of this curriculum to see if it achieved what it aspired to do according to the plan of the curriculum makers which is stated in their outline document in relation to the scopes suggested for the study. It also attempted to give further data for curriculum specialists to evaluate the new curriculum and give suggestions for modifications and improvement.

## Research Questions:

*The study tried to investigate and answer the following questions:*

1. What is the nature of the cultural components in the new English curriculum for grades 11 &12?
2. Where and how does the syllabus display the Palestinian culture?
3. Is this display sufficient, effective and done in an appropriate naturally - integrated way that helps in shaping the right Palestinian character?
4. Where and how does the syllabus display intercultural issues and global concerns and themes?
5. Is this display sufficient, insufficient or exaggerated?
6. Is it beneficial and done in the correct way?
7. To what extent is this exposure to the international and foreign culture informative and widening for the students' thinking?
8. Do the intercultural issues presented overwhelm the picture of the syllabus and weaken, undermine or even offend or distort the image of the Palestinian cultural identity or do they maintain a reasonable harmony with the Palestinian cultural dimensions presented?

## Introduction and Theoretical Background:

### The First English Language Curriculum: English for Palestine:

One of the big achievements in English teaching in Palestine recently has been the introduction of the first English school curriculum for Palestinian students titled *English for Palestine (EFP)*. The curriculum can be briefly described as a modern communicative English course that has been specially designed and written for the schools of Palestine. The twelve levels of the course systematically develop competence in the four language skills and encourage students to become confident users of English.

According to the Palestinian educators who designed the outline for the new curriculum, *English for Palestine (EFP)* came as a fulfillment for the following needs:

- ◆ “To meet the needs of the Palestinian students.
- ◆ To develop the curriculum to meet the latest developments in English teaching.
- ◆ To introduce English from first grade rather than from the fifth like before.”

(English Language National Team, (1999) English, Language Curriculum for Public Schools in Palestine, Grades 1-12.)

Moreover and according to the same previous reference, the core curriculum objectives that these educators tried to achieve are the following domains:

- **Communicative Competence:** This is the main goal of the syllabus as the focus is on helping our students reach an acceptable degree of mastery in using the language as a tool for communication.
- **Cultural awareness:** The syllabus is to offer a good cultural package which includes a variety of cultural dimensions whether local or intercultural.
- **Study and thinking skills:** The material presented should help the students develop the required study skills and enhance the different levels of thinking ranging from simple ones to high analytical thinking skills.

## ***Abstract:***

English for Palestine, the new English curriculum which has been introduced recently for grades one to twelve, was designed to meet the needs of the Palestinian students to study English according to the latest theories and applications in the field of English language teaching. It sought to realize the needs of the Palestinian students for a Palestinian syllabus which suits their identity particularly. Simultaneously, it intended to expose the Palestinian students to global and intercultural dimensions.

This research highlighted and investigated these important issues in the new English syllabus. It attempted to examine the cultural and intercultural dimensions that the Palestinian new syllabus presented. It also tried to discover how these different cultural dimensions in the syllabus were handled and presented. It mainly concentrated on the textbooks of grades eleven and twelve. The method of the study was descriptive and analytical. It depended on the survey and analysis for the contents of the textbooks for these grades.

The results of the study showed that the books were very rich in these various cultural aspects and that these various dimensions were interwoven and interrelated. These books successfully explored vital global and intercultural issues to a great extent but simultaneously they succeeded in placing a reasonable degree of focus and display for the Palestinian cultural identity. Thus, the study showed that the authors of these books succeeded to some extent in applying the strategy of the planners which stated the importance of creating local and global cultural awareness among the learners as well as highlighting the Palestinian cultural identity.

## ملخص:

إن منهاج اللغة الإنجليزية الجديد قد صمم ليلبي حاجات الطلاب الفلسطينيين لدراسة اللغة الإنجليزية وفق أحدث النظريات والتطبيقات في مجال تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية. وكذلك ليستجيب لحاجات الطلاب الفلسطينيين لمنهاج يناسبهم ويتناسب مع هويتهم الخاصة، وفي ذات الوقت فإن محتوى المنهاج يهدف الى تعريف الطالب بموضوعات ذات صبغة عالمية وثقافية متنوعة.

هدفت هذه الدراسة الى القاء الضوء على الابعاد الثقافية المختلفة في المنهاج الفلسطيني الجديد للغة الإنجليزية، وذلك بفحص تلك الأبعاد التي تضمنها هذا المنهاج وكيف تم عرضها ومعالجتها، وركزت الدراسة على منهاج الصفين الحادي عشر والثاني عشر، واعتمدت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي التحليلي حيث تم استعراض وتحليل محتوى المنهاج الفلسطيني للغة الإنجليزية لهذه الصفوف تحليلاً شاملاً ومستفيضاً. وقد أوضحت نتائج الدراسة أن المنهاج الجديد كان غنياً جداً في عرض هذه الأبعاد الثقافية المتنوعة، وأنها جاءت مترابطة ومتداخلة ومنسجمة مع بعضها البعض، حيث قدم المنهاج آفاقاً عالمية وثقافية متعددة، ولكنه في ذات الوقت نجح الى حد ما في إبراز الهوية الثقافية الفلسطينية الخاصة، وبذلك يكون واضعو المنهاج قد التزموا الى حد معقول بالمعايير والمضامين والاستراتيجية التي حددها التربويون المختصون الذين وضعوا الأسس التربوية لهذا المنهاج بشأن أهمية أن يخلق المنهاج وعياً ثقافياً محلياً وعالمياً لدى الدارسين، وفي ذات الوقت يبرز الهوية الثقافية الفلسطينية.

# **Palestinian and Global Cultural Dimensions in English for Palestine Textbooks for Grades 11 & 12**

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