

T.C.

ISTANBUL KULTUR UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

**LANGUAGE TEACHING A MEANS OF CULTURAL DIPLOMACY: A
FRAMEWORK FOR ARABIC LANGUAGE TEACHING AS A MEANS OF
PALESTINIAN CULTURAL DIPLOMACY IN 21st-CENTURY TURKEY**

Master of Arts Thesis by

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Programme: International Relations

Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Hazal PAPUÇÇULAR

DECEMBER 2021

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I devote this study to free and independent Palestine on its historical territories and with Jerusalem as its eternal capital.

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ABSTRACT

Cultural diplomacy is profoundly about promoting culture by formal and informal means and actors, for the sake of advancing international relations. As such, language – the treasure-house of culture and its vehicle of transference– and language teaching are deemed crucial means of cultural diplomacy that countries use to provide a good image and build better understanding and communication for better cooperation on bilateral and multilateral bases. In this regard, this study, with reference to the role of language teaching as a means of cultural diplomacy and the current flourishing of Arabic language teaching and learning in Turkey, presents a framework for utilizing Arabic language teaching as a means of Palestinian cultural diplomacy that advances the Palestinian cause in Turkey.

The research follows a ‘constructive structure’ –similar to Lego structure– in which recent arguments are based on the outcomes of earlier ones. Accordingly, a study of primary and secondary sources which presents a conceptual and practical background of language teaching as a means of cultural diplomacy was conducted. Besides, Data about the current endeavors of Arabic language teaching in Turkey regarding the Palestinian cause were collected by interviewing a group of Palestinian teachers and Turkish learners. The findings were applied to the Palestinian cultural traits and the Turkish stance towards the Palestinian cause, Arabs and Arabic language to draw a framework for a strategy of Palestinized Arabic language teaching in 21st-century Turkey.

The study has revealed that the richness of the Arabic language and the welcoming Turkish environment are guarantors for the success of the Palestinized Arabic language teaching in contributing to the perseverance of the Turkish public and governmental support to the Palestinian cause, and the strengthening of the Palestinian strategic depth.

Keywords: Cultural diplomacy; language teaching; the Arabic language; Arabic language teaching; Palestinian-Turkish relations; the Palestinian cause; Arab-Turkish relations.

ÖZ

Kültürel diplomasi, uluslararası ilişkileri geliştirmek adına, resmi ve gayri resmi araçlar ve aktörler aracılığıyla olabildiğince kültürü tanıtarak onun reklamını yapmakla ilgilidir. Mesela, kültürün hazinesi ve aktarım aracı olan dil ve dil öğretimi, ülkelerin iyi bir imaj sağlamak, ikili ve çok taraflı temellere dayanan daha iyi iş birliği için daha iyi bir anlayış ve iletişim kurmak amacıyla kullandıkları önemli kültürel diplomasi araçları olarak kabul edilir. Bu bağlamda, bu çalışma, kültürel diplomasinin bir aracı olarak dil öğretiminin rolüne ve Türkiye'de Arapça öğretiminin ve öğreniminin şu anki gelişimine atıfta bulunarak Arap dili öğretiminin, Türkiye’de Filistin davasını geliştiren Filistin kültürel diplomasinin bir aracı olarak kullanılmasına yönelik bir çerçeve sunmaktadır.

Araştırma, sonraki argümanların daha öncekilerin sonuçlarına dayandığı, Lego yapısına benzer bir “yapıcı yapı” izlemektedir. Bu doğrultuda, kültürel diplomasi aracı olarak dil öğretiminin kavramsal ve pratik arka planını sunan birincil ve ikincil kaynaklara yönelik bir çalışma yapılmıştır. Buna ek olarak, bir grup Filistinli öğretmen ve Türk öğrenci ile görüşmeler yapılarak Türkiye'de Arap dili öğretiminin Filistin davasına ilişkin mevcut çabaları hakkında veriler toplanmıştır. Bulgular, 21. yüzyıl Türkiye'sinde Filistinleştirilmiş Arapça öğretimi stratejisine bir çerçeve çizmek için Filistin kültürel özelliklerine ve Türklerin Filistin davasına, Araplara ve Arap diline karşı olan duruşuna uygulanmıştır.

Çalışma, Arap dilinin zenginliğinin ve Türkiye'nin misafirperver ortamının, Filistinleştirilmiş Arapça öğretiminin Türk kamuoyunun azminin ve devletin Filistin davasına desteğinin devam etmesine katkıda bulunma ve Filistin stratejik derinliğini güçlendirmedeki başarısının garantörleri olduğunu göstermiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kültürel diplomasi; dil öğretimi; Arapça dili; Arapça dil öğretimi; Filistin-Türkiye ilişkileri; Filistin davası; Arap-Türk ilişkileri.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACARA	The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority
ACTFL	The American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages
AKP	<i>Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi</i> (Justice and Development Party)
ALT	Arabic Language Teaching
CD	Cultural Diplomacy
CHP	<i>Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi</i> (Republican People's Party)
DFLP	Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine
EC	The European Commission
EU	The European Union
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ICC	Intercultural Communicative Competence
LT	Language Teaching
MENA	the Middle East and North Africa
MSA	Modern Standard Arabic
PNA	The Palestinian National Authority
PFLP	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PKK	<i>Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê</i> (The Kurdistan Workers Party)
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
UK	The United Kingdom
UN	The United Nations
UNESCO	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USA	The United States of America
USSR	The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

INTRODUCTION

Tracking the diplomatic efforts throughout history shows the evolutionary nature of diplomacy as a term and as a practice that shapes international relations. Therefore, analyzing the key factors of diplomacy, which is mainly about maintaining good relations between states in all respects and solving their disputes by peaceful means, implies that modern diplomacy comprehensively goes beyond state-to-state relations. It is due to the fact that the people are the main component of any state and their lifestyle is an important variable of the state regulation. For that, a deeper insight into diplomatic practices has become a must in which the modern concept and practice of diplomacy depends more thoroughly on means that touch the everyday life of the people. This understanding of diplomacy has created new dimensions of the diplomatic effort, and has established new concepts, such as soft power, public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy (CD).

‘Cultural diplomacy’, in this regard, is this form of diplomacy that derives its soul from soft power and its structure from public diplomacy. As such, it is an element of soft power that is directed to the public, touching specifically the main driver of their lifestyle: their culture. For this profound nature of CD, relations based on it are more stable and longer-lasting than relations built merely on political or economic interests. It is due to the fact that although culture is subject to change, it changes very slowly compared to politics that regularly changes in accordance with partisan developments in the state and the developments in global politics; and the economy which changes even faster with the fluctuations of the global market.

Addressing culture, language prevails itself as one of its most fundamental elements, and accordingly, language learning and teaching perform crucial cultural and political functions. In that sense, language is not only a tool of expressing culture, but also is its treasure-house and its main vehicle of transference to the posterity and to other communities. Hence, language is the receptacle of culture, and thus, its learning, is the key to access to the hub of its native society and the most efficient way to the acquisition

of its culture in practice. Therefore, mastering a given language does not only require learning its alphabet, vocabulary and structures; it goes beyond that to imbibing its culture and engaging with its native society. Based on that, language learning and teaching are deemed crucial means of cultural diplomacy by which a given state presents its socio-cultural aspects to others, giving them more access to its public life with the aim of reflecting its good image and building better understanding and communication for better cooperation on bilateral and multilateral bases. language teaching (LT), on that account, turns the learners to be sources of awareness about the state in their societies and unofficial native ambassadors who are aligned with its causes: advocating them in their countries.

Regarding the Palestinian cause in Turkey, Arabic language teaching (ALT) is possible to function as an efficient means of Palestinian cultural diplomacy (CD), for the richness of the language and the welcoming environment in the country. In fact, the more intellectual, political and economic weight the language has, the more attractive it becomes, and thus, the more soft-power it generates. Within this framework, the richness of Arabic language: the language of Quran (the holy book of over 2 billion of the world population), the most spreading language in the MENA region (that has a central global geopolitical position stretching over vast territories in Asia and Africa, and controlling critical trade routes), and the official language of 22 countries (with vast human and natural resources) makes it a very valuable source of soft power to Palestine (where it is the mother tongue). For that richness as well as the geographic affinity, the long-shared history and the massive-shared cultural heritage between Turkey and the Arab region (in general) and Palestine (in specific), the Arabic language in Turkey is considered more attractive, and its teaching is a more efficient means of CD for the Palestinian cause. Considering the widespread public support for the Palestinian cause and the current strong governmental stance towards the cause, this thesis deems establishing a strategy of Palestinized ALT as a means of Palestinian CD a valuable endeavor to advance the Palestinian cause in 21st-century Turkey. It is expected to contribute primarily to preserving the Turkish public and governmental support to the cause regardless of the political (democratic) developments in the country, and secondly to strengthening the Palestinian strategic depth by presenting a modal of Arab-Muslim collaboration and cooperation on a plurilingual basis.

Accordingly, this thesis, with reference to the role of LT as a means of CD and the current flourishing of Arabic language teaching and learning in Turkey, presents a framework for utilizing ALT as a means of Palestinian CD that advances the Palestinian cause. In that context, the main research question of the thesis is two-fold: how is language teaching (LT) deemed a means of cultural diplomacy (CD)? Considering the answer of this fold a framework to the following, the second fold is, how can Arabic language teaching (ALT) be a means of cultural diplomacy (CD) for the Palestinian cause in 21st-century Turkey?

To answer the research question, primary and secondary sources have been analyzed for the sake of defining cultural diplomacy, studying the role of language in culture and politics, and evaluating the utilization of LT as a means of CD by tracking previous endeavors of other countries in this regard. Based on that and with reference to the Palestinian culture and the Turkish stance towards the Palestinian cause, Arabs and Arabic language, a framework for ALT as a means of Palestinian CD will be drawn. And to test the findings and collect data about the current scene of ALT in Turkey, the researcher has interviewed 3 Palestinian teachers and 11 Turkish learners of different genders, settings and cultural backgrounds.

In accordance with that, the thesis contains three chapters. Chapter one looks at cultural diplomacy as a concept and a practice. In that sense, the concept of cultural diplomacy will be analyzed by defining both culture and diplomacy. Accordingly, the conceptual development of diplomacy and its evolution throughout history will be tracked, and an overview of culture from the perspective of international relations will be presented. Consequently, a distinct conceptual analysis of CD (formal and informal) will be presented, distinguishing it from other related terms. Eventually, a general evaluation of CD in practice will be discussed, covering its objectives, tools, activities, actors, limits, merits and the characteristics of its future success.

Chapter two analyzes the cultural and political aspects of language and LT in an attempt to prove the efficiency of LT as a means of CD. At that stage, language and LT will be defined, and their relation with culture and politics will be identified. Based on that and with reference to the outcomes of chapter one, an inclusive study of LT as a means

of CD will be presented by linking LT to the attainment of CD objectives, evaluating its role in bilateral relations, discussing its nature as a comprehensive means of CD, and analyzing its applications in CD.

Based on the findings of the previous chapters and the responses of the 3 teachers and 11 learners, chapter three will draw a framework for ALT as a means of Palestinian CD in 21st-century Turkey. Accordingly, the Palestinian cultural traits will be broadly studied as major components in the strategy of Palestinized ALT to attain the utmost results of Palestinian CD in Turkey. Then, to understand the cultural and political scenes in Turkey, the Turkish stance towards the Palestinian cause, Arabs and the Arabic language will be evaluated. Finally, the main goals of the Palestinian CD strategy of ALT in 21st-Century Turkey will be set, and the most functional approaches and instruments for its optimal wielding will be identified.

The thesis will be finalized in the conclusion section where the final results will be presented, highlighting the main characteristics of the strategy of Palestinized ALT as a means of Palestinian CD in 21st-century Turkey, identifying the bases of its efficiency and optimal utilization, presenting the indicators of its success, and delivering a general insight on the nature of its functionality.

Eventually, to have better understanding of how the researched has been conducted, the nature of the study is crucially important to be address. Firstly, this thesis is an empirical study that presents a framework for ALT as a means of Palestinian CD in 21st-century Turkey based on a comprehensive study of the efficiency of LT as a means of CD with reference to previous works and an investigation of the current Turkish scene. Secondly, the discussion in this thesis is built with a constructive structure in which recent arguments are based on the outcomes of earlier ones (similar to Lego structure). Lastly, this thesis is a cultural-based international relations study in which any political or historical arguments are taken from a cultural perspective in the first place. Therefore, any social group is looked at from a sociolinguistic dimension (not ethnical, nor political); for instance, Turks are deemed the speakers of Turkish before the Republic, Arabs are the speakers of Arabic, Turkish people are the citizens of the Republic of Turkey where Turkish is the official language, and Arab countries are the countries where Arabic is the

mother tongue. Also, whenever the Islamic world is mentioned, it refers to the countries where Islam is the primary religion, and Islam, accordingly, is dealt with from a sociocultural perspective (not an ideological nor political). Besides, social features, such as hospitality and family solidarity are deemed relative cultural characteristics that don't necessarily apply to every member of the society, but instead reflect the general tendency of the society as a whole.



CHAPTER 1. CULTURAL DIPLOMACY: A GENERAL OVERVIEW

1.0 Introduction

The term cultural diplomacy (CD) apparently is a combination of two terms—culture and diplomacy, which are both conceptually and practically vague. Therefore, this thesis, in order to present a solid definition of the compound term ‘cultural diplomacy’, will analyze its components first. Consequently, diplomacy will be analyzed first by tracking its conceptual development and evolution throughout history, and discussing its nature, principles, characteristics, elements and functions. Then, an overview of culture from the perspective of international relations will be presented in which the nature of culture will be studied and its influence on contemporary international relations will be evaluated. Based on the study of the two terms, the thesis, in this stage, will present a distinct conceptual analysis of CD (formal and informal) through distinguishing it from other related terms, including cultural soft power, public diplomacy, international cultural relations and intercultural relations. It will also present a general understanding of CD by defining its objectives, tools, activities, and actors as well as discussing its efficiency through analyzing its limits, merits and the characteristics of its future success.

1.1 Diplomacy: The Concept and the Practice

To draw a framework for CD, it is essential to understand diplomacy first through analyzing its lexis and conceptually defining its term. Besides, it is crucially important to realize the nature of diplomacy in practice by identifying its relation with foreign policy and soft power, studying the principles of its efficiency, analyzing the elements of the diplomatic activity, and identifying the practitioners and scope of diplomacy.

The capacity for diplomacy is a crucial method of measurement to states’ legitimacy in which the way of handling foreign affairs in a proper and accepted way is a core factor of a state’s sufficiency (Xu, 2017, p. 18). Accordingly, diplomatic efforts have been occupying a wide range of political relations since the very existence of human gatherings. However, ‘diplomacy’ as a term has not entered the dictionary of international relations until the late 18th century (Leira, 2016, p. 28).

Edmund Burke introduced the term ‘Diplomacy’ into English in 1796. He derived it from the French word ‘*diplomatie*’ (Tyrocity, n.d.). French generated this term from the ancient Greek ‘*diplōma*’ which referred to official documents that were folded in two and conferred a privilege to the bearer- something that resembles the modern passport. Later, it was used about any solemn documents especially those related to agreements (Marks, 2020). Another usage of the term emerged in the late 17th century and the early 18th century when the letters of privilege ‘*diploma*’, especially collections of treaties between princes, were scrutinized for authentication and collected in sets under the collective term *diplomatica*. This term was also used to refer to the science of authenticating old official documents (Leira, 2016, p. 31). The term turned to be used not only for the total body of treaties, but also for the people who were engaged in negotiating them when ‘*Core diplomatique*’ (the diplomatic body) was used to refer to the collective of ministers (Leira, 2016, p. 31). Finally, the French ‘*diplomate*’ (Diplomat or diplomatist) was used in the 18th century to refer to the person who has the authority to negotiate on behalf of a state (Marks, 2020).

The etymological background of ‘Diplomacy’ was of treaties, duplicity, secrecy and privilege. At the beginning of its appearance, though, the term held negative connotations. Since its early emergence –during the French Revolution– it was largely seen as a term of abuse associated with absolutism and aristocracy (Leira, 2016, p. 33). Diplomacy, also, was affixed to war and alliance. It was associated with the *ancient regime* as one of the key pejorative terms (Leira, 2016, p. 36). Nevertheless, calls for ‘new diplomacy’ based on trade, rather than intrigue and politics arose after the concept was coined. Around 1900, ‘new diplomacy’ was more linked to openness and cooperation, and it encountered great re-evaluation after the world wars, to become a means for peace and cooperation- focusing on evolution and reform, not on revolution and abandonment (Leira, 2016, p. 36). Regularly defined with practices, such as communication, representation and negotiation, the concept of diplomacy disposed of its negative association with war to couple more with cooperation and peacemaking (Leira, 2016, p. 36) .

Currently, ‘diplomacy’, besides its general definition as the “skill in dealing with people without upsetting them”, is mainly defined by Longman dictionary as “the job or activity of managing the relationships between countries” (LONGMAN, n.d.). The same way Oxford dictionary defines it, but with a slight addition by identifying its practitioners, as “The profession, activity, or skill of managing international relations, typically by a country's representatives abroad.” (OXFORD, n.d.).

In political science, ‘diplomacy’ is a vague term that varies according to the user and the circumstances it is used in. While Machiavelli sees it as a tool of deception to grant more powers (Berridge, 2001, p. 24), Guicciardini considers it a crucial factor of upkeeping good relations, asserting that having a good reputation is a crucial element for fruitful negotiations (Berridge, 2001, p. 43). According to Jose Calvet De Magalhaes, diplomacy is “an instrument of foreign policy for the establishment and the development of peaceful contacts between the governments of different states through the use of intermediaries mutually recognized by the respective parties.” (De Magalhaes, 1997, p. 59). Cultural Diplomacy Dictionary of the Academy for Cultural Diplomacy, moreover, defines diplomacy as “The practice of interaction among different actors to gain strategic advantage and pursue one’s self-interest.” adding that in the field of international relations, diplomacy particularly refers to “the practices of negotiations conducted between representatives of nations or organizations on matters such as making peace, trade, war, economics, culture, the environment, and human rights.” (Chakraborty, 2013, p. 38)

Based on the previous lexical analysis of the term and its various definitions, it clearly appears that diplomacy is at most a governmental strategy, its ultimate goal, besides favoring national interests, is to maintain peace between states via international law and other peaceful means (Zamorano, 2015, p. 1). It employs tact to gain strategic advantages or to reach mutually accepted solutions through negotiation that is mainly centered on the non-confrontational manner (Tyrocity, n.d.). Thus, diplomacy is perceived as a means of cooperation between allies and a tool of peaceful conflict resolution between adversaries by which states communicate, influence one another, bargain, bridge their gaps, and adjust their differences (Güleç, 2021, p. 5).

Diplomacy is a means for states to assert themselves in the international arena by achieving their goals and protecting their interests without violating the international order

or arousing the animosity of other states. Formal diplomacy is regarded as an instrument of statecraft which is used for bilateral relations between states (Kleiner, 2009, p. 1). This type of diplomacy is considered a regularized system in which states officially communicate through the exchange of ambassadors, the maintenance of embassies, participation in conferences and engaging in direct negotiations (Griffiths, O'Callaghan, & Roach, 2008, p. 81).

The failure of diplomacy, therefore, is a bad omen that most often ensures war. Nonetheless, diplomacy is useful even during the war. In other words, although it is a crucial means of soft power, it can be used smartly with hard power to achieve better outcomes (Nye, 2004, p. 147). In wartime, diplomacy is crucial in conducting the transition paths from protest to threat, dialogue to negotiation, the ultimatum to retaliation, and from conflict to peace and reconciliation (Marks, 2020). Through diplomacy, the coalitions that deter or make wars are built or tended. Diplomacy weakens the alliances of enemies and keeps potential hostile powers passive. It contrives the determination of war, and it forms, strengthens or preserves post-conflict peace. It, over the long term, strives to establish an international order in which disputes are nonviolently resolved and states are more cooperative. (Marks, 2020)

For this pivotal role diplomacy plays in war and peace, its practitioners, who are primarily but not solely diplomats, must acquire distinct skills of carrying messages, negotiating and resolving quarrels between peoples and states. They are armed with words and backed by their state or organization's power. They help leaders to build a better understanding of the attitudes and actions of foreigners and to develop tactics and strategies that will shape the behavior of the foreigners, and more particularly, the behavior of foreign governments. Consequently, the wiser diplomacy and its practitioners are used, the more successful foreign policy is (Marks, 2020).

On this account, diplomacy is a key instrument of foreign policy, but it is not necessarily synonymous with it since both are conceptually and practically different. Foreign policy is considered the substance, aims and attitudes of a state's relations with others, and diplomacy is employed to put them into effect. As such, foreign policy establishes the broad strategies, and sets tactics, and to achieve its objectives it may employ, besides diplomacy (which is mainly concerned with dialogue and negotiations),

other forms of violence, such as secret agents, subversion and even war. Diplomacy, in this regard, is an instrument of the state and the state system that substitutes force or underhanded means. It utilizes the state's comprehensive powers to adjust its differences with other states using primary 'nonviolent' tools, including international dialogue and negotiations which are mainly conducted by accredited envoys and other political leaders. However, diplomacy can be cursive that may exploit the threat to use force or to apply punitive measures (Marks, 2020; Xu, 2017, p. 21). Another key difference between diplomacy and foreign policy is that the latter is enunciated publicly, but the former is usually conducted in confidence, although in contemporary international relations, foreign policy and diplomacy's progress and results are almost made public. They both aim to further national interests. However, while safeguarding and enhancing those national interests, by all means, is the responsibility of foreign policy, strengthening the state in relation to other states by advancing the interests in its charge is the purpose of diplomacy (Marks, 2020). Accordingly, if soft power is the core means of diplomacy, foreign policy combines both soft and hard powers. Nonetheless, government policies, including its domestic and primarily foreign policies as they reinforce the state's soft power, they might squander it. Hence, hypocrite, arrogant or indifferent foreign policies are more likely to undermine soft power, and thus diplomacy. Taking the USA during Vietnam War as an example, it lost much of its soft power and could not restore it till the memories of the war receded along with the change in its policies. The same thing happened as a result of the Iraq War, which diminished much of the USA soft power plus its diplomatic efficiency (Nye, 2004, p. 14).

For efficient diplomatic interaction, the United Nations Charter set guidelines to identify the main principles and purposes of sovereign states' diplomatic behaviors. It asserts the mutual respect of sovereignty and territorial integrity, so states are expected to peacefully coexist via practicing mutual non-interference, mutual non-aggression. In this regard, states are equal, and they have the right of mutual benefit. It adds that states must settle all disputes without resorting to force or threat of force- through peaceful means in which diplomacy is based on equality and justice. It, also, emphasizes that building equitable international political and economic orders will be possible when states target peacekeeping and development (United Nations, 1945, p. 55). Those guidelines go along

with the main functions of diplomacy which include enforcing the observation of international law, the reinforcement of political, economic and cultural ties between states, enhancing the cooperation and diminishes dispute, and increasing the likelihood of peace (Anonymous, 2011, p. 2). Consequently, the more diplomacy is functional the more likely peace is promoted.

Diplomacy functions through the constituent elements of the diplomatic activity, which include the essential (that diplomatic activity cannot be conceived without): representation, information and negotiation; and the complementary: promotion, protection and extension of public services abroad. De Magalhaes considers the complementary elements as an accessory because they may or may not be present depending on various circumstances (De Magalhaes, 1997, p. 122).

Regarding the essential elements of the diplomatic activity, negotiation is the most primary. According to the French author L. Constantin, negotiation is “The set of practices that permit the peaceful composition of conflicting or diverging interests of groups or autonomous social interties” (Plaintey, 1980). De Magalhaes classifies international negotiation into two: informal and formal. For him, the main differences between both are that informal negotiation is wider in scope and compasses the different types of contacts between states to harmonize attitudes and to converge views. Formal international negotiation is usually narrower in scope and is held through certain mechanisms to reach an agreement on a specific problem in common or reciprocal interests. He adds that international negotiation, in general, can be of two types- direct negotiation that is undertaken directly by the holders of political power, and indirect negotiation (‘true diplomatic negotiation’ as he described) which is carried out by mediators. Negotiation also can be bilateral or multilateral depending on the number of negotiation parties (De Magalhaes, 1997, p. 111).

Apart from the essential elements of diplomatic activity, ‘promotion’ is the most crucial of the complementary elements. It is defined by De Magalhaes as “The set of actions undertaken by the diplomatic agent in order to create or increase a certain type of relations between the receiving state and the sending state” addressing promotion, it is necessary to underline two of its aspects: the promotion of economic relations and the promotion of cultural relations. They are very important for the fact that economic and

culture are two sectors which are very critical for any state, and the competition on them is usually very high. Therefore, he asserts that states must act more efficiently in them by attaching experts in these specialized domains to their diplomatic missions. ((De Magalhaes, 1997, p. 122).

For efficient promotion, as well, states tend to create a good image of themselves through what is called by Simon Anholt 'national branding'. The Academy for Cultural Diplomacy in their Cultural Diplomacy Dictionary defines 'national branding' as the "Practice of cultural and public diplomacy which aims to shape the image of a country, both externally and domestically, in order to attract tourism receipts, investment capital and talented workforce, expand exports, and foster the country's cultural and political standing in the world." Simon Anholt, however, is the founder of this practice, and he is the developer of the National Branding Index. This index measures global perceptions of countries in different directions, such as culture, tourism, exports, investment, governance and immigration (Chakraborty, 2013). National branding and similar practices related to public and cultural activities have become milestones in contemporary diplomacy.

What also features contemporary diplomacy is the fact that although bilateral state-to-state diplomacy remains essential, multilateral forms of diplomacy practiced by both state and non-state actors have become indispensable supplements. This development allowed non-state players to have a primary role in the current political arena. For instance, supra-national bodies (e.g., the European Union), regional and international non-governmental organizations (e.g., La Francophonie, and the International Committee of Red Cross), multinational corporations, the media, local and city governments, advocacy networks, influential individuals, and other non-state participants perform many tasks had essentially been done by states. They fight hunger, poverty, droughts and pollution, and promote education, health care and peace (Kleiner, 2009, p. 23; Mark S., 2008, p. 35).

Another development in the contemporary globe, which influences the diplomatic practice, is the 'revolution' in information and communication technology. Simply, people nowadays have easy and instant access to information, and due to modern means of communication, more people have the power to influence their societies and the policies of their governments (Melissen, 2005, p. 13). For that, 'digital diplomacy' or 'e-diplomacy' is occupying a prior position in today's international affairs. 'Digital

diplomacy' is "a new form of public diplomacy which uses the internet and new information and communication technologies as means for strengthening diplomatic relations" (Chakraborty, 2013, p. 37). It employs greater access to information, greater interaction among individuals, and greater transparency to establish more efficient public diplomacy. That is why the USA and UK have opened specific units of digital diplomacy, especially after the influential role social media played in the Arab Spring (Ibid.).

Based on the above analysis of diplomacy, the diplomatic activity that is related to the Palestinian cause according to this thesis is recommended to be conducted through both officials of the State of Palestine and non-state actors –including pro-Palestine domestic and international NGOs, corporations and individuals–. Moreover, mechanisms such as negotiation, promotion and national branding as well as digitalized and non-digitalized CD will be considered primary instruments for the ultimate utilization of the spread of the Arabic language in Turkey to promote the Palestinian cause in the country.

1.2 The Evolution of Diplomacy Throughout History

Tracking the evolution of diplomacy in this stage is crucial to understand the development of the diplomatic activity, and identify the weight of CD in the diplomatic agenda of contemporary international relations.

As mentioned before, the practice of diplomacy has been conducted since the very beginning of the communication between various gatherings of humankind. Nevertheless, the earliest recorded diplomatic documents were attributed to the great kings of the Near East. They go back to about 2850 BC when treaties held between Mesopotamian city-states were recorded. They were written in Akkadian (Babylonian) which makes it the first diplomatic language, that was used as an international tongue of the Middle East of that time (Marks, 2020). However, the first known international peace treaty was the Egyptian-Hittite peace treaty that was held between the pharaoh of Egypt and the ruler of the Hittite Empire following the battle of Kadesh (Price, 2016, p. 32).

Diplomacy had long traditions in ancient China and India. In ancient China, diplomacy was an important tradition, especially with the weakness of the Zhou Dynasty that ruled between 1050 – 256 BC. At that time, diplomacy was necessary between the rival states that vied for power and total conquest paying less attention to traditional respects of tutelage to the 'figurehead monarchy'. The warring states of the 6th century

BC needed diplomacy to establish allies, barter land and sign peace treaties. And that was the time of the development of the idealized role of the persuader or as it is known nowadays 'Diplomat' (Lewis, 1999, p. 587). In ancient India, diplomacy had a great significance. For instance, Kautilya (also known as Chanakya), the principal advisor to the founder of the Maurya Dynasty, Chandragupta Maurya, in the 3rd century BC wrote what would be considered the oldest treatise on statecraft and diplomacy, called 'Arthashastra'. In this treatise, he showed how wise kings build alliances and eliminate their adversaries in situations of mutually contesting kingdoms. Arthashastra also contains advice on how to deal with envoys of other kingdoms (Mark J. J., 2020).

Diplomacy in Europe can be traced back to the time of warring Greek city-states, where kings needed to communicate during wartime by sending emissaries and messengers. However, the emissary's mission was limited to wartime. Nonetheless, what can be loosely compared to a modern diplomat is the 'Greek proxenos'. A Proxenos is usually a privileged member of the society who enjoys cordial relations with both conflicting parties. He acts as a mediator by hosting a gathering, at his expense, to encourage communication between both parties to peacefully and sincerely sort out their differences (Blitz, 2014, p. 4). Nevertheless, unlike modern diplomats, Greek diplomats received no formal training, and had to depend largely on their oratory skills. They also did not enjoy immunity, as for examples, Athens and Sparta used to execute envoys sent by Darius I of Persia (Kurizaki, 2011, pp. 7-8). Greeks, especially during the reign of Alexander, attributed a great deal of their diplomacy to the establishment of cultural relations with native populations of conquered lands through intermingling and intermarriage. Moreover, the Ptolemaic Kingdom and Seleucid Empire usually negotiated peace treaties through marriage alliances during their wars in Near East (Carney, 1996).

Unlike Greeks, Romans did not depend much on diplomacy in administration. They invested more in their military capabilities and their diplomacy was limited to legal and commercial purposes. They maintained trade relations within provinces largely through diplomatic means. However, Romans depended greatly on military power, that – as the Greek historian Polybius described– they relied on force in all of their endeavors, believing that once they commit to a task, they are obligated to complete it (Campbell, 2002, p. 167).

Nonetheless, diplomacy was institutionalized by the Byzantines, who, unlike the ‘Romans’, did not enjoy a hegemonic influence in the region. Thus, they tended to maintain relations with their neighbors through other means than coercion. One of the means they used was awe and sublime in which they impress the visiting envoys of the neighboring states through displaying their absolute superiority, luxury and wealth. They also achieved that through announcing themselves the representatives of God on earth, so if any Christian kingdom attacked them, it would appear as if they waged war on God himself. That act is considered one of the earliest forms of deterrence (Kurizaki, 2011, p. 12). Another means was through indirect bribery that was in form of tributes or large portions of trade stocks. Besides, they used to depend on matrimonial alliances as another means of diplomacy (Hamilton, 2011, p. 22). The widely used means of diplomacy by the Byzantines, however, was the policy of dividing their neighbors through pitting them against each other. To serve this purpose effectively, ‘Skrinion Barbaron’, which could be considered one of the first intelligence agencies of the world, took charge of the mission of collecting information that was used in implementing plots against the neighboring kingdoms and states (Kurizaki, 2011, p. 14).

Similar to Byzantium, the Italian city-states were not endowed when it comes to military power, so to stand against their Ottoman counterpart, they strengthened ties among themselves through diplomatic means. Hence, the treaty of Lodi was signed for that purpose (Kurizaki, 2011, p. 15). Maritime Republics of Genoa and Venice, also, established good relations with the Ottoman Empire through the interaction between various merchants, clergymen and diplomats (Goffman, 2007). Accordingly, the states of Northern Italy in the early Renaissance, are credited for founding the early origins of modern diplomacy, especially with the establishment of the first permanent diplomatic missions (Raurke, 2001, p. 273). The Italian Peninsula, as well, was the home of many of the traditions of modern diplomacy, such as the presentation of an ambassador’s credentials to the head of the state (Chaplais, 2003).

The French diplomatic system, which is the basis of traditional diplomacy of nowadays, was an evolution to that of the Italian. In 1626, Cardinal Richelieu, who served as the prime minister to King Louis XIII, established the first-ever ministry of foreign affairs to consolidate all the functions of external affairs under one separate department

(Tariqul Islam, 2005, p. 60). The minister of foreign affairs became a member of the king's cabinet, starting from the era of King Louis XIV (Raurke, 2001, p. 282). Richelieu, more significantly, emphasized the aspect of continuity of diplomacy whether in war or peace times (Hill, 1964, p. 94). This attitude towards diplomacy led to the establishment of permanent embassies in all major capitals of Europe (Raurke, 2001, p. 282). And by the time the Thirty Years War broke out in 1618, this system of permanent embassies and resident ambassadors was adopted by entire Europe (Kurizaki, 2011, p. 19). This system contributed significantly to setting this war to an end with the signing of the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 which promoted two principles the diplomatic system now is based on (1) All states are sovereign and (2) all states are equal to each other (Cavendish, 1998). In this traditional system which was established after the Treaty of Westphalia, diplomacy was generally practiced secretly on a bilateral basis. However, there were few numbers of multilateral diplomatic efforts that were crowned by the Congress of Vienna in 1815. In this congress, representatives of several European states attended to diplomatically put an end to wars in the continent, especially after the devastation caused by the Napoleonic wars (Kurizaki, 2011, p. 29; Raurke, 2001, p. 282).

Nonetheless, a 'new diplomacy' was needed after the outbreak of WWI, which traditional diplomacy could not prevent although it could promote peace and stability in the 19th century. After WWI, however, the spotlight was not on Europe or on the empires that had fallen after the war anymore. Consequently, the priority in international relations was given to multilateral diplomacy at the expense of bilateral diplomacy, especially with the need for a more transparent system along with the rise of democracy. Also, the deepening of economic relations alongside the destructive weaponry that was brought by modern science decreased the chances of war. Therefore, nation-states tended to come together to serve their mutual interests, promote collective security and discuss disarmament. Such a new approach was the main engine to the establishment of the League of Nations (Tariqul Islam, 2005, pp. 62-63).

The League of Nations, albeit its success in establishing an international community that was able to discuss issues of global concerns, failed to stop the outbreak of WWII (Tariqul Islam, 2005, pp. 62-63). However, it was the catalyst of the flourishing of multilateral diplomacy that paved the way to the establishment of the United Nations

(UN) and other intergovernmental and non-governmental international organizations. These international organizations –besides their role in avoiding wars, facilitating technical cooperation and accelerating economic cooperation– aimed to fight hunger, promote development assistance, foster cultural relations, protect human rights and save the environment. This development shifted the concentration of diplomatic activity from merely concentrating on political issues, such as security, to focusing more on economic and social issues (Kleiner, 2009).

After WWII and as a result of the competition for world leadership, the ‘Cold War’ erupted between the USA and USSR, establishing for the emergence of ‘cold war diplomacy’. That cold war period from 1945 to 1991 was punctuated with periods of ‘détente’ (relaxation of tension) which was a great chance to practice extensive diplomacy to deescalate tension and maintain the state of de-escalation. However, mutual suspicion and mistrust were the driving forces of the Cold War which even fierced the competition between the two blocks. In that respect, the concepts of ‘nuclear diplomacy’¹ and ‘crisis diplomacy’² prevailed especially with the escalation of the Cuban Missile Criss in 1962. ‘Summit diplomacy’, which refers to the direct meeting of heads of states to handle critical issues, was another concept that emerged during that era (Tariqul Islam, 2005, p. 67; White, 2006, p. 391).

By the end of the Cold War, the bipolar system has been replaced by a multidimensional one [dominated by the US, though] that made diplomacy become global in scope (White, 2006, p. 293). Thus, the role of international practitioners has increased in issues related to economic policies, energy, environment, migration and regional conflicts (Kalin, 2011, p. 17). Globalization and globalism have become the norm of politics of that time, yet issues related to identity and culture manifested as a reactionary response, and calls to promote international cultural communication instead of enhancing the dominance of the Western culture became louder (Heywood, 2011, pp. 182-187).

¹ Refers to the interactions between nuclear-armed states in which they threaten to use nuclear weapons either to dissuade an opponent from undertaking an action (deterrence) or to persuade them to call a halt to some action that has begun (compellence) (White, 2006, p. 392).

² Refers to the sensitive communication and negotiation that a crisis necessitates in a brief and intense period during which the threat of nuclear war is thought to be increasing (White, 2006, p. 392).

The US dominance of the global arena has even augmented in the first decade of the 21st century, especially with its ‘war on terror’ after 9\11. Nevertheless, the use of military force and other coercive measures to solve the US’s dispute with the Islamic world brought a significant challenge to the role of diplomacy in international politics, and raised questions about the use of hard and soft types of power.

For the backfires the use of hard power caused, the 2nd decade of the 21st century has witnessed a shift of global politics towards soft power instruments. That was due to the previously mentioned role of non-state actors who have influenced the governments especially in issues related to human rights. Also, the dominance of social media and other digital means, which brought matters to the public and played a good role in enhancing transparency between governments and their peoples. All of that led the public to participate more in the political game, which has fostered the means of public diplomacy, and has promoted the cultural aspects of diplomacy.

Currently, issues related to the environment, climate and global pandemics are dominating contemporary diplomacy, especially with the serious damages of global warming to the environment and the fatal effects of the ongoing Covid19 pandemic on the international healthcare system. The global repercussions of these developments enforced the feeling that we have the same destiny on this Earth, and thus, calls for more international cooperation have become louder.

Given the above track of the diplomatic activity throughout history, CD manifests as a distinctive diplomatic practice, that has become more functional with eruption of the cultural war between USA and USSR as part of the Cold War. And lately, CD has been playing a more significant role in the global arena, especially with the rise of globalization, identity issues and the development of communication and information technologies. Accordingly, this thesis considers CD an essential element of contemporary international relations that is vital for building understanding and cooperation among various states on bilateral and multilateral bases, and that ultimately contributes to global peace and prosperity.

1.3 Culture from the Perspective of International Relations

Culture is one of the very arguable terms, that have different dimensions and aspects. It is a vague term that humanities scholars, socialists and anthropologists had long debates about. This thesis, however, will analyze culture from the international relations perspective, which adopts the anthropological hypothesis of culture.

To understand the concept of culture, it is important to analyze its etymological background and mention its various definitions. Looking at the etymological background of the term ‘culture’, the origin of the word goes back to the Latin ‘cultura’ which mainly means to cultivate the land (the act of preparing land for crops) (Online Etymology Dictionary, n.d.). Culture in the Cambridge Dictionary is “The way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs, of a particular group of people at a particular time” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). However, defining culture is a matter of dispute. Although the understanding of culture for humanities scholars is limited to the artistic productions that can be found in any community, such as literature, visual arts, media and the artefacts of everyday life, its definition to the anthropologists is much more comprehensive as described by Margret Mead, “We are our culture” (Yanik, 2005, p. 1). Thus, Sir Edward Burnett Tylor, the founder of anthropology, defines culture as “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (Tylor, 1871, p. 1). To the socialist George Simmel, “culture, as it were, formed intentional subjectivity that emerges out of human life and its intentions and is created by human beings as objectified contents or entities in language, religion, normative orders, legal systems, traditions, artistic artifacts, and so on” (Simmel, 1997, p. 5). The father of American Anthropology, Franz Boas, emphasizes that “culture embraces all the manifestations of social habits of a community, the reactions of the individual as affected by the habits of the group in which he lives, and the product of human activities as determined by these habits” (Boas, 1911, p. 159). Finally, Kroeber and Kluckhohn argue that “culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their

attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other as conditioning elements of further action” (Kroeber, 1952, p. 181).

Derived from the above definitions, it can be generally understood that culture is a crucial part of human life that manifests in all of its social and (necessarily) political aspects. It takes a long time to develop and is generally transmitted across generations through communication in which it is, as a social trait, taught and learnt. For that, cultures have the ability to interact (with humans and with one another), which consequently, provides culture with a significant social role in shaping human life, and a major political role in forming international relations. For more illustration, culture in its relation with humans is subject to change and influence in both directions in which culture would change and influence human behaviors, and human behavior would change and shape culture. Humankind, accordingly, is a creator and a creation of culture. Social and cultural values, on this account, play a major role in shaping human life in which cultural values, in particular, are a powerful determinant of human behavior, and thus, a major factor of human development. Along with that interaction between culture and humans, cultures themselves have the ability to change or influence one another. Such a behavior, therefore, enhances the idea that cultures are integrated in which a certain part of one culture is related, in some way, to another culture (Xu, 2017, p. 16; Yıldız, 2005, pp. 11-12). The mutual influence of different cultures, in that context, establishes a vital role of culture in international relations.

Throughout human history, culture has exercised an important influence on the fates of both individuals and nations, and with the developments of the current age of information and technology, this role has even got bigger where culture has become an essential variable in international relations. As a matter of fact, information and communication technology has accelerated the change of various cultures, which is deemed a challenge to the nature of the global cultural system that works as follow: (1) culture changes very slowly (much more slowly than ideas), (2) accordingly, identities are gently redefined (3) eventually, a major change in the compositions and boundaries of civilizations takes place. Nevertheless, the current accelerating change is considered a dramatic development in the global cultural system; it, according to Mazarr (2006) would whether make the world more homogenous or riskier –if this change was poorly managed–

(Mazarr, 1996, p. 193). Within this framework, CD manifests as a crucial instrument of the efficient management of this change (as will be further discussed in the following section.)

On the basis of Mazarr (1996) review of the literature of international relations on culture by the end of the Cold War, it manifested that the cultural factors have become predominant in international relations in which they have been the first among equals in the world's driving forces. Accordingly, the influence of culture on international relations emerges in four models. Mazarr summarizes them as follow,

Model 1 ‘Culture as equipment for life’, in which cultural attributes substantially contribute to providing human beings with the mental, moral and economic equipment for life. Based on that and according to the standards of capitalist economy, a connection between national culture and national success exists, where some cultures underwrite success better than others.

Model 2 ‘Culture as cognitive filter’, in which culture plays a major role in the process of decision making. Leaders and nations, accordingly, see issues and decisions through the prism of their cultural perception. Culture, in that context, may serve as a barrier to international understanding and negotiations due to the fact that various parties see decisions or disputes in different terms. The difference in prevailing strategic preferences of varied states, accordingly, is anchored in the state's early or formative experiences and is impacted to some extent by the state's philosophical, political, cultural, and cognitive features (Johnston, 1995, p. 34).

Model 3 ‘Culture as socioeconomic architect’, based on Francis Fukuyama’s book “Trust” who asserts that culture plays a crucial role in determining economic success through one of its traits, ‘sociability’ or ‘social trust’. Societies with ‘high trust’, having large and diverse Multinational Corporations (MNCs), are more likely to achieve economic success than societies with ‘low trust’. Accordingly, Fukuyama suggests that culture determines the level of social trust, which consequently, influences the nature of corporate structures, and which ultimately, affects the economic success of a country. (Mazarr, 1996, p. 180)

Model 4 ‘Clash of civilizations’, based on the hypothesis of Samuel Huntington, that the great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict

will not be primarily economic or ideological, yet cultural. Huntington divides the globe into seven or eight major civilizations- the Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic- Orthodox, Latin American, and the African (Huntington, 1993, p. 25), claiming that future ‘battle lines’ will be drawn along the ‘fault lines’ between these civilizations, and that a clash of civilizations will take over the global affairs (Ibid., p. 22). On this account, culture is the main framework for international relations; it is a primary foundation for state acts and the key cause of global conflict (Mazarr, 1996, p. 181).

Mazarr, however, presents what he calls an ‘Alternative Model’ which is based on the writings of Arnold Toynbee, ‘the grandfather of cultural studies’, as he proclaims. Toynbee sees that the technological and economic forces of the modern world are roots for a unifying and homogenizing trend in which culture will decline as a factor influencing global affairs. (Mazarr, 1996., p. 183) Accordingly, this trend recommends that, instead of insisting on cultural differences, it would be more productive to set common goals (based on common interest) that would enable various parties to work closely with common policies to reach these goals. This cooperative atmosphere would lead to better understanding and more respect for cultural differences, which would enhance sharing knowledge and experiences, and thus, boost confidence between different parties. In this case, mankind would unify into one single society. This scenario, if took place, would be most likely the future for humanity, rather than a clash of cultures (Mazarr, 1996., p. 195). If there could be a title to this model, it would be for sure ‘Globalization’.

Besides the previous models, this thesis suggests what can be considered a sixth model of the influence of culture on international relations. It is based on Nye’s equation (soft power = culture + political values + foreign policies) where Nye looks at culture as a means of attraction that along with legitimate and moral foreign policies (that stand for the country’s admired values), can generate the utmost of soft power. Soft power, according to him, is in co-opting others to get aligned with the interests and aspirations of a given country. The attractiveness of culture, accordingly, depends on the cultural values of this country, which are better to be universal rather than being narrow. A culture, containing universal values, makes it easier for its policies to establish common ground with others, and thus, generate more soft power (Nye, 2004, p. 11).

This thesis, therefore, will be anchored on Nye's model in dealing with culture (in general) and language (in specific) as an attractive element utilized by Palestinian CD to generate soft power for the Palestinian cause in Turkey.

Defining culture as "the set of values and practices that create meaning for a society" (Nye, 2004, p. 11), Nye classifies it into 'high culture' which appeals to elites, such as literature, art and education, and 'popular or low culture' which is centered on mass entertainment. In his model, he emphasizes the importance of 'high culture', quoting the former Secretary of State, Colin Powell, "I can think of no more valuable asset to our country than the friendship of future world leaders who have been educated here." (Nye, 2004, p. 44). He also values the efficiency of cultural contact, quoting the American writer and diplomat, George Kenan, who considered "cultural contact as a means of combating negative impressions about this country [US] that mark so much of world opinion" and who "willingly trade the entire remaining inventory of political propaganda for the results that could be achieved by such means alone." (Nye, 2004, p. 45). This thesis, accordingly, will deal with Palestinized Arabic language teaching (ALT) as a crucial part of the Palestinian high culture, that attains sufficient cultural contact with Turkish people and enhances Palestinian CD in Turkey.

Favoring high culture on low culture, Nye asserts that academic and scientific exchange greatly served the USA in fostering its soft power during the Cold War. Adding that the attraction and soft power of cultural contacts among elites contributed crucially to the US policy objectives. However, he does not underestimate the role that 'low culture' and entertainment play in enhancing soft power, especially in this modern world of mass media. He asserts that the lyrics of some popular music can have important political implications, and the behavior of sports teams or celebrities can efficiently express political messages; besides, visuals often communicate values more effectively than words (Nye, 2004, p. 45-47). Nevertheless, Nye emphasizes that popular culture does not always produce the exact desired outcomes because it is not under the direct control of the government. It even can have contradictory effects on different groups in the same country; for instance, Hollywood movies that attract young Iranians offends Iranian mullahs. Moreover, the instruments of popular culture are non-static because popular

culture depends much greater on the image that the country creates through the popularity of its policies (Nye, 2004, p. 52-53).

Given the above analysis of high and low cultures, Palestinized ALT, as a high culture practice, will utilize and refer to Palestinian popular culture in its curricula and activities, to get the fruits of both high and low cultures.

Finally, the most comprehensive influence of culture on international relations manifests in the report prepared by the Council of the European Union, in 2008. Underlining the importance of cultural interaction in the international community, they state that intercultural dialogue can bridge the gap between individuals and peoples, and can also aid in conflict prevention and reconciliation, especially in politically unstable places. They add that cultural exchanges and cooperation, notably in the audiovisual realm, can aid in the formation of partnership relationships, the strengthening of civil society's place and role, the promotion of democratization and good governance, and the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Besides, culture, as an important component of the knowledge-based economy, has significant economic potential, particularly in terms of cultural and creative industries and sustainable cultural tourism. Also, they assert that Europe's artistic, intellectual, and scientific standing in the world is largely dependent on the dynamism of its cultural creative work and cultural exchanges with third countries. Additionally, they emphasize the benefit of cultural relations between Europe and other parts of the world in developing intercultural communication and establishing common cultural projects. Ultimately, they call upon the union to maintain the promotion of its cultural and linguistic diversity (The Council of the European Union, 2008, p. 2).

Derived from the above, this thesis will deal with culture as a social and political trait that is subject to mutual influence, and that develops and transmits through communication, putting more emphasis on language as one of its main elements and as a means of cultural contact and transition. In this regard, conveying the Palestinian culture through ALT will be dealt with as an instrument of attraction and will be considered a major tool of building mutual understanding between Palestine and Turkey on the social and political bases towards reaching the mutual goal of solving the Palestinian cause in line with the universal values of justice and rights restoration.

1.4 Cultural Diplomacy

CD had not been an attractive concept to both academics and politicians for a long time, but by the new millennium, it began to take attention, especially in the discipline of international relations due to three reasons. Firstly, Joseph Nye's concept of soft power and the shift of power perception it brought about. This controversial concept established a wide range of debates on the nature of power. Consequently, more attention was paid to culture and cultural exchange for being a major component in Nye's equation. Secondly, the very rapid spread of globalization accelerated the rise of CD, as the former is not only an economic matter, but also is concerned with issues related to culture. Thirdly, the end of the Cold War turned the global political arena from bipolarity into multipolarity. This development, paved the way for the emergence of the religious conflict [or from a broader perspective 'the clash of civilizations'], especially with the tendency of states to construct and project their national image and identity. Hence, the role of culture, religion and ethnicity has become crucial regionally and globally (Xu, 2017, pp. 22-24).

Nevertheless, the conceptual efforts on CD are still in their preliminary phase. Based on the analysis of both diplomacy and culture, it appears that CD is the combination of both in which culture is promoted through diplomatic instruments, and cultural elements are utilized to facilitate and enhance diplomacy. However, as both terms, culture and diplomacy, are vague and manifold, defining CD is a controversial issue.

In this regard, three approaches to CD have been spotted in the report prepared in partnership between the University of Siena, Department of Social, Political and Cognitive Sciences, and the European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC Global). First of which, the 'public diplomacy approach', which gives the government the monopoly on both the practice and goals of CD. Secondly, 'the strategic communications approach' according to which the government is not necessarily involved, but instead it fosters a specific strategic interest [through arm's length actors]. Finally, 'cultural relations approach', which deems CD as a practice based on dialogue, collaboration and co-production that is detached from a soft power framework, changing attitude and behavior rather than influencing decision-makers (DISPOC-UNISI, 2016).

Accordingly, different definitions were given to CD. Based on the understanding of positioning CD as the largest sub-area of public diplomacy Zamorano (2015, p. 1)

defines it as “those actions of liaison between governments and people abroad, established specifically through artistic and intellectual resources and activities”. Mark S. (2009, p. 7), moreover, finds CD in “the deployment of a state’s culture in support of its foreign policy goals or diplomacy”. In line with Mark, Louis Bélanger, emphasizing the role of foreign policy, defines CD as “the activities of foreign policy that deal with culture, education, science and, to a degree, technical cooperation; in other words, those that relate to activities of the spirit” (Bélanger, 1994, p. 422).

However, Gienow-Hecht and Donfried, paying more attention to public cultural communication, assert that CD is wider than formal diplomacy, which is mainly about government-to-government communication; it contains the communication between both governments and peoples (Gienow-Hecht & Donfried, 2010, p. 13). Moreover, Cummings (2003, p. 1), in his widespread definition, underlines mutual understanding as a result of this communication, arguing that CD is “the exchange of ideas, information, values, systems, traditions, beliefs, and other aspects of culture, with the intention of fostering mutual understanding”. More comprehensively, Lenczowski, J. expresses CD as a type of public diplomacy and soft power that aims at establishing mutual understanding among nations and their peoples as well as enhancing national security, and protecting and advancing other vital national interests by using information, the exchange of ideas, art, language and other cultural aspects (Lenczowski, 2009, pp. 6-7). Nevertheless, according to the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy, CD “may best be described as a course of actions, which are based on and utilize the exchange of ideas, values, traditions and other aspects of culture or identity, whether to strengthen relationships, enhance socio-cultural cooperation, promote national interests and beyond; Cultural diplomacy can be practiced by either the public sector, private sector or civil society.” (ACD, n.d.-c).

Accordingly, this thesis previews CD as the combination of some of the aspects of public diplomacy, propaganda, soft power, international cultural relations and intercultural communication. Although these concepts profoundly compose the concept of CD, according to Xu (2017) they are not equivalents or substitutes for it³.

³ Nonetheless, it is a debatable point as there can be two types of CD- formal and informal. Xu’s comparison is mainly with formal CD. This thesis, however, will provide a clearer distinction between formal and informal CD in the end of the discussion.

CD, thus, differs from public diplomacy. According to the Dictionary of International Relations Terms- U.S. Department of State, “public diplomacy refers to government-sponsored programs intended to inform or influence public opinion in other countries; its chief instruments are publications, motion pictures, cultural exchanges, radio and television” (U.S. Department of State, 1987, p. 85). Although cultural exchange is one of the chief instruments of public diplomacy, Xu (2017) asserts that CD is not a parallel to public diplomacy. The latter is wider in its focus areas while the former is primarily focused on the cultural field of soft power. Moreover, in the way of functioning, CD depends on the reciprocity of cultural exchanges while public diplomacy favors unilateral communication and mainly addresses the masses. Consequently, albeit both aim at implementing foreign policies, protecting national interests and projecting the national brand, CD is not equivalent to public diplomacy because it is, more specifically, a practice of relations to implement cultural strategies (Xu, 2017, pp. 35-36). Furthermore, the actors involved in public diplomacy are clearly defined –the government is the main player–, but in CD (especially its informal version), the actors are less clearly defined, especially with the involvement of civil society (DISPOC-UNISI, 2016, p. 10).

Despite the fact that national branding is the core of CD (Ibid., p. 3), presenting the national image in a managed, considered and strategic manner does not make CD meant to be cultural propaganda. CD differs from propaganda in terms of its functioning; it is mainly based on the principle of dialogue, unlike propaganda which is based on monologue. Effective CD, moreover, is all about building trust (Senkić, 2017, p. 5), yet propaganda is mainly about the deception of the masses⁴. Based on (Nye, 2010, pp. 123-124)’s argument, public [and, by definition, cultural] diplomacy that devolves into propaganda not only fails to persuade, but also has the potential to undermine soft power which is mainly based on the understanding of how other people think. For Nye, the most

⁴ Which makes propaganda an inequivalent to national branding, as well. Although both use simplistic and emotionalized messages to win hearts and minds to a particular way of thinking, both are deliberate attempts at manipulation and both aim at a very specific end outcome, they differ from each other. Whereas propaganda works in an insidious way to develop emotions, nation branding is more open about its aims and the audiences are being manipulated in a fairly transparent way, without forcing the message on them. The net gain of the nation branding manipulation is also different in which if the branding works, it leads to a financial gain for the nation, and the target does not actually lose anything or have to compromise their citizenship, values, beliefs or morals (MacDonald, 2011, p. 23).

effective public and CD is two-way, so conducting them smartly requires an understanding of the role of credibility, self-criticism and the role of civil society in generating soft power.

Prior to differentiating between CD and cultural soft power, it is important to understand the term ‘soft power’ and how it interacts with CD. Nye, the coiner of the term, asserts that power is the ability to influence others to achieve your desired results. This influence can be conducted in three ways: threats of coercion, inducements and payments⁵ and attraction through soft power. Accordingly, soft power is about encouraging people to seek the outcomes you want in a way that co-opt rather than coerce them (Nye, 2010, p. 120,121). Therefore, producing soft power with means of CD necessitates producing attraction through mobilizing the values that are expressed in the culture by communicating with the publics and (to some extent) the governments of other countries. And to create attraction through CD, the content of the state’s culture, values and policies must be attractive; otherwise, CD would be counterproductive (Nye, 2010, p. 121). And since the world in contemporary international relations is highlighting cooperation rather than resorting to hard power, CD, by utilizing soft power, has gained a significant role in the international arena. CD, [in the equation of soft power], is not secondary to political or economic diplomacy, but rather functions as a substantial and necessary component of international relations (ACD, n.d.-c).

In this regard, there is a slight functional difference between cultural soft power and CD. While cultural soft power is mainly about the power of mobilizing cultural values to gain attraction, CD, in practice, is the activities and programs that are undertaken by state actors [and non-state actors, in regard to informal CD]. In other words, CD is the practice of cultural soft power that offers a path to the dissemination of the state’s cultural values (the core of cultural soft power) (Xu, 2017, p. 34).

Addressing the difference between CD and international cultural relations, Lenczowski –based on the argument of a former State Department CD practitioner, Richard T. Arndt, who stated that cultural relations grow naturally through non-governmental means including the transactions of trade and tourism, student flows,

⁵ Nye asserts that threats of coercion are used with inducements and payments in accordance to the well-known concept of stick and carrot.

communications, book circulation, migration, media access, inter-marriage and millions of daily cross-cultural encounters— suggests that CD can take place, when formal diplomats, serving national governments, try to shape and channel this natural flow to advance national interests (Lenczowski, 2009, p. 5). However, this suggestion does not discard non-state actors as cultural diplomats. Thus, it is possible to somehow consider explorers, travelers, traders, teachers, artists and anyone interacts with different cultures as ‘informal cultural diplomats’ serving the state’s national interests (ACD, n.d.-c).

Nevertheless, practicing CD is taken to be distinct from participating in international cultural relations. CD, on one hand, is always subject to political goals and its programs are directly undertaken in support of the state’s foreign policy objectives⁶, which include the achievement of mutual understanding and cooperation with other states for mutual benefits. This complexity of CD with its enormous measures makes conducting it more difficult as it relatively takes a longer time to win the hearts and minds of others. On the other hand, international cultural relations are easier to be established. They are more spontaneous as the actions of their actors could be casual or informal with no specific purpose (Xu, 2017, pp. 37-38).

Moreover, CD is not equivalent to intercultural communication. Intercultural communication is “a form of communication that aims to share information across different cultures and social groups. It is used to describe the broad range of communication processes and problems that naturally appear within an organization or social context made up of individuals from different religious, social, ethnic, and educational backgrounds” (Allwood, 1985, p. 3). Therefore, it could be conducted on a public basis, primarily aiming to understand how people from different countries and cultures act and communicate. However, [formal] CD is in the first place conducted by the government, its agencies or other organizations authorized by the state, and its function goes beyond understanding other cultures and their people’s behaviors (Xu, 2017, p. 39).

All in all, this thesis agrees with Xu (2017) about considering public diplomacy, CD, international cultural relations and intercultural communication components of the ‘macro’ cultural soft power. However, it disagrees with her assumption that CD falls in

⁶ Arndt (2005, p. 18) argues that [informal] CD can more comprehensively go for the national interest [and beyond].

the same category with public diplomacy regarding practitioners, who according to her are mainly officials of the state or organizations authorized by the state. Within this framework, this thesis asserts that CD, in regard to actors, overlaps with international cultural relations and intercultural communication as it can also be a matter of the state and its agencies, and/or the non-governmental sector (Xu, 2017, p. 39-40). On that account, this thesis finds it significant to differentiate between formal and informal CD. CD in practice can overlap with international cultural relations and intercultural communication regarding the practitioners [or actors] when they directly or indirectly serve the national interest. For more illustration, formal CD, on one hand, can be whether purely state-sponsored (serving foreign policy and is undertaken by state officials), or semi-independent, (channeled by arm's length institutes, such as British Council and Yunus Emre Institute and can serve both foreign policy and/or –more broadly– national interests.) informal CD, on the other hand, has no direct connection to the state and its foreign policy, and is channeled by independent entities (e.g., academic institutions, educational or cultural centers, and NGOs) or individuals (e.g., artists, professionals, academics, athletes, etc.) who directly or indirectly serve the national interests.

Table 1: Types of CD

Type		Actors	Target
Formal	State-sponsored	State officials	Foreign policy
	Semi-independent	Arm's length institutes (e.g., British Council)	Foreign policy and national interests
Informal		Independent bodies	National interests and beyond

1.5 Cultural Diplomacy in Practice

Just like general diplomacy, CD as a practice has been conducted for ages. This manifested in several examples of promoting national culture abroad as a means of foreign policy to achieve national interest. Across human history, people have used culture to display themselves, assert their power and understand others. According to Arndt (2005), since the 3rd millennium BC, CD –which meant as a set of rituals, ceremonies, chants, dance and language– has been a norm and basis of cooperation between large groups. For instance, The Roman Republic used to practice CD by inviting the sons of foreign ‘friendly kings’ to receive education in Rome. Also, the Sufi mystics of the early Ottoman Empire, spreading ascetic and tolerant messages across boundaries, were another example (Donelli, 2019, p. 7). Besides, the establishment of trade routes and the exchange of information and gifts between traders and government representatives can be considered an early example of CD (ACD, n.d.-c).

Nonetheless, CD was not institutionalized as an integral part of diplomatic activity until the late 19th century when specialized cultural diplomatic institutions, such as the Alliance Française (1883)⁷ and Società Dante Alighieri (1889)⁸ were established to promote their own cultures all around the world. The engagement in CD activities increased even more during the so-called ‘cultural war’ between the USA and USSR due to the Cold War in which culture was an axis of propaganda (Donelli, 2019). Part of that was the suggestion of Adam Clayton Powell Jr., that instead of sending symphonies and ballet groups abroad, the US should send jazz musicians to allow the world to see “the real Americana”⁹ (ACD, n.d.-b). However, albeit countries such as France have used the term since the late 19th century, CD was not part of the common parlance in the majority

⁷ For more than a century, the Alliance Française in Paris has been disseminating the French language and Francophone culture. It is today the largest cultural network in the world, with 1,040 locations in 136 countries. Every year, 450,000 individuals of all ages join them to study French, and over 6 million people visit their cultural events (ACD, n.d.-a).

⁸ The Dante Alighieri Society exists solely to encourage the study of Italian language and culture around the world (ACD, n.d.-a).

⁹ The Jazz Ambassador tours lasted several weeks and featured some of the best jazz musicians in the United States, including Dizzie Gillespie (1956), Louis Armstrong (1961), and Benny Goodman (1962). From Cairo streets to the heart of the USSR, American Jazz Ambassadors tried to show that their country was far from ‘culturally barbaric’ as Soviet propaganda depicted it then (ACD, n.d.-b).

of other countries until the 1990s (Donelli, 2019, p. 7). Since that time, the advancement in information and communication technology –making the world a small village–, has enabled people from different backgrounds to have greater access to each other. Hence, the attention towards CD has grown even more (ACD, n.d.-c).

The growing attention towards CD is derived from its value on different levels. Globally, the value of CD lies in its crucial role in enhancing respect and recognition of cultural diversity and heritage, encouraging global intercultural dialogue, inculcating values of justice, equality and interdependence, reinforcing the protection of human rights, and fostering peace and stability all over the globe. (ACD, n.d.-c) At the international level, regarding states interests, CD, by increasing understanding and establishing trust, obscures legitimate differences in perspective, as it allows diverse countries and cultures to discover the common values they share, and thus, establish common ground (Schneider, 2006, p. 195). This common ground, therefore, enables countries to combat stereotypes, develop mutual understanding and advance national reputation and relationships across borders (Donelli, 2019, p. 8).

In that context, the Advisory Committee on Cultural Diplomacy of The U.S. Department of State asserts in detail the distinctive significance of CD in advancing foreign policy and national interests. According to them, CD is pivotal in building long-term relationships with peoples beyond changes in governments; reaching influential members of foreign societies who cannot be reached through formal diplomatic paths; generating a good agenda for cooperation despite differences in policy; establishing a neutral platform for people-to-people interaction; serving as a flexible and universally acceptable vehicle for rapprochement with countries where diplomatic relations have been tense or nonexistent; reacquainting with countries where diplomatic relations have been strained or absent; lowering language barriers to reach out to a wide range of people, especially the youth and non-elites; actively supporting the advancement of civil society; making own citizens acquainted with the values and sensitivities of other societies in order to avoid gaffes and missteps; counterbalancing misunderstanding, hatred and terrorism; and eventually making openness and tolerance to prevail in internal foreign cultural debates (U.S. Department of State- ACCD, 2005).

To reach those ends, CD possesses several means with numerous activities. Although every element of culture is possible to be used in CD, Lenczowski lists the most regularly and intensively employed instruments as well as their various activities. They are both of high and low cultures, as follow: The arts (including the performing arts: theater, film, music and ballet, the fine arts: painting and sculpturing, and 'sui generis' art: architecture.), exhibitions (which harness a variety of other elements of culture, such as science, technology, folk and ethnic culture, commercial products, and the activities of various professions, including charitable work, as well as hobbies), exchanges (mainly, educational, scientific, and artistic; and additionally, professional, labor, sports, youth, and religious), educational programs (including establishing universities across borders, sponsoring studying programs related to the country, dispatching teachers, professors and experts, and sponsoring conferences and scholarships from and to the country), literature (through the distribution of books and the establishment of libraries abroad), language teaching, broadcasting (including radio, TV and related multimedia), gifts, listening and according respect (through think tanks that attempt to understand others' perspectives to establish common grounds), promotion of ideas (through the previous cultural instruments which can be considered vehicles or media for the transmission of cultural categories), promotion of social policy, history, and religious diplomacy (Lenczowski, 2009, pp. 12-19).

Since CD is about long-term engagement, conducting its activities cannot be just about supporting foreign policy, but it has to go beyond, to national interests and even further. Therefore, entities responsible for the implementation of the activities related to CD usually work based on the arm's length concept. Hence, they work away from the political-partisan interventions of the central government, for the sake of avoiding the instrumentalization of culture which most often negatively affect the outcomes of CD and its credibility (Schneider, 2006, p. 194; Mark S., 2009, p. 10). Accordingly, several countries adopt this model by sponsoring autonomous agencies, councils and programs to implement most of their CD activities. For instance, UK's British Council, China's Confucius Institute, Turkey's Yunus Emre Institute, US's Fulbright Program and EU's Erasmus+ Program are government-sponsored institutions and programs that follow this model;

- British Council is on the ground in over a hundred countries, working each year with millions of people, connecting them with the UK by sharing the British culture and the UK's most attractive assets- English, the arts, education, lifestyle and organizing society (ACD, n.d.-a). The council aims at furthering any charitable purposes for the public benefit that will firstly promote cultural relationships and understanding between the citizens of the UK and the peoples of other countries; secondly, widen knowledge about the United Kingdom; thirdly, develop the level of English language; fourthly, encourage cooperation between the United Kingdom and other countries on cultural, scientific, technological, and other educational bases (The British Council, 2011, p. 2).
- Confucius Institutes are public educational partnerships between colleges and universities in China and their counterparts in other countries. They are overseen by *Hanban* (Office of Chinese Language Council International) in Beijing, which is affiliated with the Chinese Ministry of Education (USGAO, 2019, p. 3). According to *Hanban* website, there are 541 institutes in 5 continents as of January 2021. The institutes' main scope of work is to provide people all over the world with the opportunity to learn the Chinese language and culture, to establish a platform for cultural exchange between China and the globe, and be a bridge that reinforces friendship and cooperation between China and the rest of the world (Hanban, 2014).
- Yunus Emre is an Institution affiliated with the Yunus Emre Foundation which was founded in 2007 to promote Turkey, the Turkish language, as well as the Turkish history, culture and art, to improve friendship between Turkey and the rest of the world and increase cultural exchange between Turkey and other countries. Yunus Emre Institute, therefore, started working in 2009, conducting several activities to promote Turkish culture and art, and represent Turkey in national and international events. As of January 2021, the institute has more than 58 cultural centers abroad (Yunus Emre Institute, 2020).
- Fulbright Program is a US government-sponsored scholarship program established in 1946. It offers grants to US citizens to go abroad and non-US citizens to come to the US to study, teach and conduct research. Its primary objectives are to foster mutual understanding between the US and partner nations, share knowledge across

communities, and improve lives around the world. The program is active in more than 160 countries with more than 390,000 students, scholars, teachers, artists and scientists benefited from it since its establishment. Lindsey Liles, Fulbright ETA to Brazil highlights the core value of the program, asserting that finding common ground with people from various cultures, languages, and lifestyles is, above all, the heart of the Fulbright Program. (U.S. Department of State- ECA, n.d.)

- ERASMUS +: The EU programme for education, training, youth and sport, which started in 2014, is an extension to the 1987-founded Erasmus student exchange program. With an overall budget of €14.7 billion, and more than 4 million mobility opportunities, including around 2 million higher education students, around 650,000 vocational education and training students, and 800,000 staff (lectures, teachers, trainers, education staff and youth workers), the program aims to encourage young people to take part in Europe democracy; support innovation, cooperation and reform; reduce unemployment, especially among young people; and promote cooperation and mobility between EU and partner countries. The program, thus, offers millions of Europeans to study, volunteer, train or gain professional experience abroad, funds sports activities, offers opportunities for participants to study worldwide, and supports language learning for all participants (EC, 2020, p. 1).

Although such entities, having an arm's length relationship with the state, are usually the main actors of CD, some other stakeholders are engaged in the process (DISPOC-UNISI, 2016, p. 3). Non-state actors have become significant players in CD activities, especially NGOs and individuals who, through wealth or new technologies, influence the international arena. Activists, artists, advocacy groups, and other NGOs are carrying out a great influence through the virtual space (Senkić, 2017, p. 10).

Digitalization, moreover, has become a new ground for public diplomacy [and necessarily CD], especially with its role in disseminating information, ideas and cultures globally. And with the advancement in information and communication technology, it has become possible to engage with foreign audiences who have diverse backgrounds, various origins, distinct values and even contradictory interests. Social media also has revolutionized the possibility of person-to-person communication, and has become a

significant tool for individuals to not only share information but also interact with a global audience. This new ground made it easy for CD to be more widely practiced by ordinary citizens and advocacy groups who use digital platforms to promote their ideas (Senkić, 2017, p 5).

Despite the fact that CD can be easily practiced by diverse actors, just like any instrument, it has limits. Firstly, it operates in the long term because it needs a relatively long period of time to take effect. Sometimes it might even yield no fruit whatsoever, though. Secondly, it cannot be effectively measured as its outcomes are qualitative, not quantitative. Thus, it is possible to track the number of programs and participants involved, but it is extremely hard to evaluate the effects of the programs on the participants. Thirdly, CD is not a panacea. It does not explain or compensate for unpopular policies, and might not change their outcomes. Therefore, a state might not be able to rely on CD to solve serious conflicts or frictions across nations. Such conflicts and frictions may even make CD more challenging (Xu, 2017, pp. 45-46; Schneider, 2006, p. 196).

On the other side of the coin, however, CD has various merits. Firstly, effective CD is significant in maintaining, enhancing and even creating trust between states. This trust along with mutual understanding leads to the second merit: effective CD is crucial for enhancing inter-state cooperation. This is not necessarily only on the state level; it has a wider range, since CD can intensify the international civic cooperation. Thirdly, effective CD plays a major role in reducing conflicts and collisions as culture has the power to solve mistrust. Accordingly, Philip Seib –based on the argument of Martin Davidson, the chief executive of the British Council, who stated that those who know us admire us, and those who admire us trust us– asserts that CD can help to allow a country's policies to gain undivided attention through eliminating mystery and debunking myths about the country and its people (Seib, 2012). Last but not least, effective CD is significant in promoting a global atmosphere of cultural diversity in which cultural heritage is protected and awareness about other cultures is more common (Xu, 2017, pp. 46-48).

Generally speaking, it obviously appears that CD is just like cultivation in which having a good harvest depends on the seed (culture and its values), soil (the target audience) and the efforts (the tools, activities and actors). Therefore, a state can get the best of its CD when it has a rich culture that is domestically valued and internationally

attractive, and is promoted through diverse activities and actors who work in harmony for the national interest, and who before all work patiently for the long-term goals.

Moreover, for the sake of gaining more success, effective CD should hold three necessary characteristics. The first of all is the previously mentioned ‘long-term approach’. It is due to the fact that bridging cultural gaps through mutual understanding and cultural exchange takes much more time than any other diplomatic practice does. The second characteristic is ‘multilevel engagement’ that CD should be practiced at different levels of engagement by different stakeholders, including non-state actors, such as NGOs, multinational corporations, cities, provinces, and regions. The last is ‘country specificity’ in which CD ought to be conducted through pluralized practices and institutional approaches. Just as every country has its own culture, they have their own approaches to CD (DISPOC-UNISI, 2016, p. 3).

Derived from the findings of the above discussion, this thesis considers ALT a means of CD for the Palestinian cause in Turkey that is practiced by either official or unofficial pro-Palestine actors who target to support the cause. Its main objectives are to establish a common ground between the two cultures and peoples that will contribute to combating stereotypes, developing mutual understanding, and increasing awareness to primarily form a public incubator for the cause, that grants more legitimacy to the government’s pro-Palestine decisions, and that enhances the public and governmental support to the cause.

CHAPTER 2. THE CULTURAL AND POLITICAL ASPECTS OF LANGUAGE AND LANGUAGE TEACHING: AN IDEAL FORMULA FOR FUNCTIONAL CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

2.0 Introduction

this chapter will analyze the cultural and political aspects of language and LT for the sake of proving the efficiency of LT as a means of CD. However, it is necessary first to have a clear understanding of the origin of human language, its nature, and its relation to thought and communication. At this stage, the focus will be laid on linking the ‘essence of uniformity’ of human languages with LT as a universal practice of social and cultural affinity. Thereupon, the cultural aspect of language will be more efficiently evaluated by studying its cultural and social characteristics. Based on that evaluation, the cultural dimension of LT will be discussed through evaluating the significance of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) in activating the LT feature of affinity. After that, the political aspect of language and LT will be studied by way of analyzing the relationship between language, power and identity as well as discussing some related issues. Then, the role of national and foreign language policies regarding these issues will be evaluated. Based on that and with reference to the outcomes of chapter one, this chapter, eventually, will present an inclusive study of LT as a means of CD by linking it to the attainment of CD objectives, evaluating its role in bilateral relations, discussing its nature as a comprehensive means of CD, and analyzing its applications in CD.

2.1 Language and Language Teaching: A General Overview

Language is an essential part of the history of the human race. One can argue that without language there would not be human communication nor human interaction; without interaction, hence, there would not be human gathering nor human cultural or political records. This, accordingly, indicates that language might be as old as human interaction, or it could have been created with the first human. Debate among scholars about the origin of language has been going on for centuries, yet with no solid evidence.

Darwin (1871, p. 56), for instance, adopting the evolutionary hypothesis of the origin of language, argues that humans first developed language through the imitation and

modification of different sounds in nature, such as animal sounds and man's own instinctive cries. Aligning with this hypothesis, some speculative theories regarding the origins of human spoken language have arisen: *Bow-wow*, *Pooh-pooh*, *Ding Dong* and *Yo-he-ho*¹⁰ (Muller, 1996, pp. 7–41). However, current scholars consider such theories irrelevant and naïve (Firth, 1964, pp. 25-26). The most prominent critic of these theories is Noam Chomsky, who discards the evolutionary hypothesis, arguing that language as a complex feature of human nature cannot evolve in such a plain manner. Instead, he claims that language must have appeared suddenly in the course of human evolution, illustrating that in the order of 100,000 years ago a mutation in the human body could have caused the installation of the language faculty –in a perfect or near-perfect form– in the mid-brain of one individual where it could have passed to the following generations of humankind (Chomsky, 1996, p. 30).

Other theories, however, refer the origin of such a unique and complex human trait to supernatural. They, accordingly, correspond with the religious interpretation in which language was due to a divine intervention as mentioned in many religious books, including the Quran. Quran in verse (2:31) describes the scene when *Allah* (God) created Adam, emphasizing that “He [*Allah*] taught Adam all the names ...”. *Imaam Al-Qanwaji* interpreting this verse asserts that the word ‘*isim*’ (= noun\name) here indicates, besides the names of objects, the names of every named thing, including all the used phrases and expressions. This, according to him, indicates that *Allah* (= God) has taught Adam all human languages (Al-Qanwaji, 1992, pp. 128-129).

Whether it evolved or was inserted, what really concerns this thesis is that human language is as original as humankind. This originality, consequently, indicates a great similarity or a kind of uniformity in the world 5000 – 7000 human languages (Kamusella, 2016, pp. 168-169). Just as Chomsky once pictured it, that if an extra-human observer looked at humans in the way a biologist looks down other organisms, this observer would be struck by the uniformity of our human languages: by the very slight variation they have between one another, and by the remarkable respects of their similarity (Chomsky, 1984,

¹⁰ *Bow-wow* refers early words to the imitations of beast or bird cries; *Pooh-pooh* claims that the first words were emotional interjections or exclamations caused by pain, pleasure, surprise, etc.; *Ding Dong* refers the first words to the human echoing of the vibrating natural resonance of things; and *Yo-he-ho* claims that the emergence of language was for a collective rhythmic labor (Muller, 1996, pp. 7–41).

p. 99). On this account, enhancing that sense of uniformity by means of language exchange could serve as a vehicle of affinity between different human communities in which language exchange bridges cultural gaps by increasing the possibility of crossing through different linguistic and cultural borders.

Nonetheless, to further prove this sense of uniformity of human languages, it is initially necessary to define language and identify its nature. Sapir (1921, p. 8) defines language as “a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of voluntarily produced symbols”. Moreover, Bloch & Trager (1942, p. 5), emphasizing its social function, define language as “a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group co-operates.”. More comprehensively, *Encyclopedia Britannica* defines it as “a system of conventional spoken, manual (signed), or written symbols by means of which humans, as members of a social group and participants in its culture, express themselves.” (Robins, 2021).

Based on the previous definitions, it appears that all languages share the same features, and accordingly, they have the same nature. They are all human, consist of (essentially vocal) and written symbols that are arbitrary created yet systematically ordered, that have links to human thought, and that possess communicational cultural and –by definition– political functions.

Initially, language is a human trait; it differs in degree from animal communication for its flexibility, complexity, precision, productivity and sheer quantity (Todd, 1987, p. 6). Unlike animals, humans are able to make infinite use of finite linguistic means (Ibid.), and they are able to understand and produce several utterances that have not been produced nor heard before (Chomsky, 1965). In this regard, productivity is the most crucial language feature, that enables language to change and grow, and thus, lives with its speakers, fulfilling their needs and aspirations (Bhoj University, n.d., p. 3). Otherwise, language would die.

Moreover, language –in the first place– is a set of vocal symbols. For linguists, speech is prior; then comes writing¹¹. However, this certainly does not mean that speech

¹¹ For the reason that writing is a relatively recent development in human societies as thousands of human communities have solely relied on speech even in modern times. This is in addition to the fact that almost all humans speak a greater deal than they write. Besides, acquiring speech is usually without conscious while learning to read and write is commonly less spontaneous and automatic (Todd, 1987, pp. 6,8).

is more important than writing. They are, in fact, more complementary than competition and both are necessary for nowadays technologically advanced society (Todd, 1987, pp. 6,8).

Besides, language is an arbitrary variable system. It is a system in which sounds, words and structures are organically interrelated to constitute a complex and organic whole. Notwithstanding, it is arbitrary. Being an arbitrary system means that, albeit languages are similar in essence, there are no two languages that behave exactly the same and each language has its own rules. Thanks to arbitrariness¹², anything could be called anything (Samaranayake, 2014, pp. 4-5). Arbitrariness, in this sense, is the main factor of linguistic variation which is the reason why humans speak different languages. As a result of language variability, LT has appeared to facilitate human communication for the fact that a speaker of one language cannot understand another language without learning. Nevertheless, the variability of languages does not change the fact that just as languages are similar in essence, the process of language learning is almost the same due to the universal characteristics of both language and language learning (Samaranayake, 2014, p6; Robins, 2021).

Given the previous analysis, it appears that all human languages possess the same essence and are at the same degree in which any human is able to learn any language. Therefore, there are no primitive or inferior languages. All languages are equally complex and all are adequate to their users' needs. In other words, the lifestyle of humans is proved not related to the level of their languages. For example, the primitive tribes that were found in Papua New Guinea and the Amazon Basin –whose way of life has not changed for ages– had languages which are as subtle, high, flexible, organized and useful as those languages found in any other part of the modern world (Todd, 1987, p. 7).

In this regard, this thesis considers the uniformity of human languages besides the ability of humans to learn any language essential principles. The researcher will use these two principles to support his assumption that LT can be utilized as a means of CD.

¹² Arbitrariness can be explained through the following example; the English word 'water' has no connection to the Turkish word '*su*' and both don't have any intrinsic relationship with the chemical compound H₂O which we all know as water. The same way, there is no reason 'He is a doctor.' to be a statement and 'Is he a doctor?' to be a question except the agreement among speakers of English to interpret them as so (Todd, 1987, pp. 6-7).

The interaction between language and thought is another critical point that needs evaluation to understand the nature of language. Robins (2021) states that different language structures determine or favor different ways of understanding and thinking about the world. He asserts that several cultures have considered the expression of thought as one of the main functions of language. Along the same lines, Brown H. D. (2007, p. 208) argues that there is a great extent of interdependence between cognitive development and linguistic development. It manifests on one hand in the different conceptualization of ideas based on the manner they are stated, and on the other in the fact that new ideas, issues, inventions and discoveries create the need for new words.

However, the extent of interdependency between language and thought is still a matter of debate (Robins, 2021). Accordingly, Chomsky believes that there is not any scientific evidence about if we think only in language. He adds that inspection indicates very obviously that humans do not necessarily think in language because they also can think in visual images, and in terms of situations and events. He illustrates that many times someone cannot express in proper words the content of their thinking. This, according to him, clearly reflects that there is a kind of nonlinguistic thought cannot be expressed in words (Chomsky, 1984, p. 97).

Nevertheless, to hold the stick in the middle, it is possible to say that someone's language limits the people who they can understand, which consequently, specifies the community they interact with. The community and the surroundings constitute the culture, which plays a crucial role in determining the way someone thinks and views the world. Therefore, this thesis highlights that to create common grounds between different communities and to build bridges between various cultures, LT is an essential means.

Mentioning the community, consequently, implies communication, which is an important function of language. Plato asserts that communication is [more efficiently] possible because of language which has the ability [to a great extent] to represent ideas and concepts (Bett, 2010, p. 569). Language makes it possible to transmit information, express feelings and emotions, influence others, and show varying degrees of friendliness or hostility towards others (Robins, 2021). For this communicative function someone, using language, can socialize and interact with other members of the community, express national or local identities as well as express symbolic or imaginative contexts (e.g.,

poetry, drama and religious expressions) (Robins, 2021). Thus, it appears that language is more complex than being a set of vocabs and grammar.

Language possesses a great level of complexity that makes its studies more divergent. Hence, the study of language is not limited to the linguistic studies of its phonology (sounds), morphology (meaningful combinations of sounds), lexis (words), syntax (meaningful combinations of words) and semantics (meaning); it additionally interdepends with different academic fields. For instance, language varieties and its social uses and interactions, are studied in sociolinguistics; its interaction with the human mind is studied in psycholinguistics, and the ways in which people teach and learn languages are studied in applied linguistics (Todd, 1987, p. 11). Notwithstanding, there are several fields that are involved in language studies. This thesis, accordingly, is classified as a kind of a combination between political science and applied linguistics.

With such complexity and divergence that language possesses, the crucial role of language learning and teaching manifests. Language learning, nowadays, has become an absolute need for hundreds of millions who voluntarily and involuntarily learn languages for several reasons. The volunteer language learners comprise adults who seek language proficiency for academic, professional, occupational, vocational training or religious purposes, and school-age children who receive second or foreign language learning at schools. Language learning, however, is a necessity and sometimes a matter of life or death for tens of millions of non-volunteer learners, who cross linguistic borders escaping traumatic experiences, such as war, drought, famine, disease, intolerable economic circumstances, ethnic cleansing, and other forms of social conflict. Nevertheless, language learning is fundamentally important for the well-being of both groups. Based on the current importance of language learning, language teaching, consequently, has been recognized important by several national and international bodies, including international organizations, governments, militaries, intelligence agencies, corporations, NGOs, education systems, health systems, immigration and refugee services, migrant workers, bilingual families, and the students themselves (Long, 2009, p. 3). In this regard, this thesis considers studying LT as a means of CD a distinctive addition to both language studies and political science in which new insights for future research would be opened.

Before getting in-depth into the cultural and political aspects of language and LT, it is necessary to differentiate between language learning and LT. According to Brown H. D. (2007, pp. 7-8), learning is “acquiring or getting in knowledge of a subject or a skill by study, experience or instruction.” Hence, learning is a “change in an individual caused by experience”. This experience is usually configured in the process of teaching, which can be defined as “showing or helping someone to learn how to do something, giving instructions, guiding in the study of something, providing with knowledge, [and] causing to know or understand.” Therefore, teaching cannot be defined apart from learning as the former is guiding and facilitating the latter in which teaching enables individuals to learn by setting the conditions for learning (Brown H. D., 2007, pp. 7-8). Based on that, the process of second or foreign language learning, which contains –besides acquiring a new language– exposing a new culture and a new way of thinking, and which requires total commitment, total involvement, and a total physical, intellectual and emotional response, cannot reach the level of fluency without LT¹³ (Brown H. D., 2007, p. 1).

In fact, the focus of this thesis on Arabic language teaching (ALT) is for its crucial role in increasing the turnout towards Arabic language learning and in bringing about cultural and political benefits for the Palestinian cause. Arabic is just like any other language, cannot be separated from the culture of its speakers. And since culture is the basis of identity (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 2009, p. 26), it enables the language to obtain a significant political role along with its cultural essence. Therefore, inserting the cultural elements of Palestine in the process of Arabic language teaching in Turkey would enable learners to not only be aware of the Palestinian culture, but also get oriented and aligned with the Palestinian cause which is deemed one of the major objectives of the Palestinian CD this thesis aspires.

2.2 Language, Language Teaching and Culture

There is no way to separate language from its culture as language is not just a group of phonological, morphological, lexical or semantical systems. It goes further in a way that makes language a social phenomenon that has been developing with human interaction to serve as a means of their cultural expression. Accordingly, acquiring a

¹³ For the great congruence and interdependence between language learning and language teaching, this thesis deals with both as two sides of one coin. Hence, whenever LT is mentioned language learning is involved, and vice versa.

language does not only require linguistic skills, but also necessitates insights into the social rules of its speakers and the broader cultural context it is used within (Al-Omari, 2012, p. 394; Byram & Risager, 1999, p. 74). In this regard, language is previewed as the road map of culture, that tells where its speakers come from and where they are going (Brown R. M., n.d.).

The cultural function of language, in fact, appears in its role in storing and transmitting culture. Language, in this regard, stores cultural experiences to be saved for the posterity in form of literature and other written records. It, consequently, acts as a vehicle that carries the cultural heritage of a human group from one generation to another. Within this framework, language is considered the national treasure-house where a country keeps its aesthetic experiences to be a source of pride to the posterity (Bhoj University, n.d., p. 17). Language, as a vehicle of culture, however, does not only transmit aesthetic experiences, but also skills, techniques, products, modes of social control, and everything else related to human experience. Thanks to the dominant role of language in the transmission of culture, people can exchange their scientific, technological, political and social experiences, which in a way or another, grants language a crucial role in enriching human cultural heritage as a whole (Robins, 2021).

The cultural aspect of language, however, would lose most of its functionality without the social trait of language. Language, on this account, operates in a social setting, and without social interaction, it would lose its meaning and significance as the main means of communication among people within the community and among various communities. Within this communicational function, language becomes the master means of cultural expression. Accordingly, language is capable to handle all references and meanings of culture for being the main instrument of communication among various groups, communities and countries (Robins, 2021; Bhoj University, n.d., p. 16). As a result, language is a major vehicle of human understanding and cooperation.

Notwithstanding, the diversity of languages can be a tool of division. Diversity in language is a consequence of one of its social aspects- variability. Language, accordingly, varies due to social factors, including the speaker (their gender, social background, geographical ethnicity, etc.), the situation and the listener (Fasold & Connor-Linton, 2006, pp. 6-7). This variability within the same language, yet lead to major differences in the

way various people communicate, and thus, it is the seed of the emergence of different languages. And with the existence of different languages, social, geographical and ethnic differences start to appear. In other words, variability is considered the engine of linguistic, social and cultural differences among various groups within the community, and thus, among different communities ((Fasold & Connor-Linton, 2006, pp. 6-7). Drawing from that, the variety of speech leads to the variety of communities, which in turn, creates various cultures, and various cultures require different ways of communication, which in the long term, set speech differences to create various languages. Within this framework, the divisive aspect of language surfaces.

This divisive aspect is due to the fact that the world is perceived in terms of categories and distinctions found in someone's native language and what is found in one language –due to cultural differences– may not be found in another (Genc & Bada, 2005, p. 74). Therefore, misunderstanding and even dispute might occupy the scene when different people –with different tongues¹⁴ and various cultural norms– behave unfamiliarly to each other (Fasold & Connor-Linton, 2006, pp. 6-7).

Surprisingly, this divisive aspect of language is not necessarily for its characteristic of variability or the variety of the cultural norms different tongues create. It is mainly due to the attitude of people in negatively previewing different languages and cultures. Hence, to absolve language of this charge, people must change their perception of different languages and cultures, and instead, they must enhance convergence and communication. As a result of that, the previously-mentioned aspect of uniformity of human languages will prevail on its aspect of division. In fact, one of the very essential means of changing people's attitudes towards different languages and cultures is LT, which sets nexuses and builds bridges between different languages and cultures, to create a macro culture of diversity, cooperation and coexistence: the ideal function of CD this thesis adopts.

The cultural essence of LT clearly manifests in its objectives and outcomes. According to the Center for Modern Languages of the Open University in Milton Keynes-England, learning a foreign language involves learning about its associated cultural products, such as art, literature, films, music, etc. It also involves looking closely at its

¹⁴ Tongues in that context can refer to languages or variants within languages (e.g., dialects, accent, registers, etc.).

cultural features: from attitudes to work, through leisure activities and religion, down to table manners and body language (Starkey, 1999, p. 160). Along the same lines, the national standards of foreign language education that are promoted by the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) assert that culture is a core element in LT. In this regard, they clearly state that students cannot truly master the language without mastering the cultural context in which it occurs. They also highlight the role of LT in bridging cultural gaps, by expecting students to change their attitude towards different languages and cultures through developing insight into the nature of language and the concept of culture, so they realize that there are multiple ways of viewing the world. Ultimately, ACTFL emphasizes the role of LT in enhancing diversity and coexistence of different languages and cultures by enabling students to participate –using a culturally appropriate way– in multilingual communities, in a variety of contexts, at home and abroad (ACTFL, 1996, p. 3).

In fact, the actual relation between LT and culture is generated in the intertwined relation between language and culture. On one hand, LT is inaccurate and incomplete without the study of culture because it will be senseless for language students if they know nothing about the speakers of the target language or the country where the language is used (Byram & Risager, 1999, p. 146). Moreover, previewing language as a system of signs –as mentioned in the definition of language– in which these signs are considered units of forms and meanings makes it impossible to learn the language by acquiring the form (linguistic signs) without the content. And since the content is always cultural-bound, any effective LT cannot but include the culture where the language stems (Doye, 1996). Accordingly, language learning is considered a direct gateway to culture in which students understand the culture on its own terms. Students, as a result, get access to the society's philosophical perspectives (meanings, attitudes, values, ideas), practices (patterns of social interaction), and products (books, tools, foods, laws, music, games) (ACTFL, 1996b, p. 43).

On the other hand, the reciprocal relationship between LT and culture grants the latter an important role in increasing the efficiency of the former: linguistically and pedagogically. Culture influences LT linguistically through affecting the semantic, pragmatic and discourse levels of the language, and pedagogically by influencing the

choice of language materials that make LT more authentic. Also, pedagogically, engaging students with the culture of the target language is considered a very efficient motivator since students prefer culturally based activities, such as roleplaying, singing, dancing, doing research about countries and people. Therefore, a lot of recent second or foreign language curricula designs and textbooks present the culture of the target language as an interdisciplinary core (Genc & Bada, 2005, pp. 73-75).

Notwithstanding, since the focus of this thesis is mainly on the influence of LT on culture and cultural relations, it is necessary to mention the multiple benefits that LT provides to bridge the cultural gaps between different peoples, communities and –more comprehensively– countries. In this regard, previewing a new culture through learning the language it represents is very crucial in handling the general rejection or ignorance of new cultures that ‘culture-bound’ individuals most often have. Such ethnocentric people are usually occupied by the idea of the supremacy of their culture, which makes it difficult for them to understand or accept other people with different points of view or different lifestyles. Therefore, LT through presenting another culture contributes to diminishing the monocultural perspective such people have and enhances their sense of ‘otherness’ in which they evaluate their culture and the target culture through observing their similarities and differences (Genc & Bada, 2005, pp. 74-75). Consequently, their cultural awareness increases and their attitude, not only towards the target culture and its society, but also towards their own culture and society improves (Genc & Bada, 2005, p. 81). LT, in that sense, helps individuals to increase the awareness of their own ‘cultural logic’ in relation to others by enhancing their recognition of otherness and of the limitations of their own cultural identity. In this way, the target language is not only a means of communication, but also gives their thoughts a second (or maybe third) voice to handle strict cultural conventions as well as stereotypes (Thanasoulas, 2001, p. 23).

Based on the crucial mutual relationship between LT and culture, Michael Byram has presented the ‘Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)’ as one of the primary requirements of mastering a foreign language. He defines it as the knowledge, skills and attitudes that enable individuals of a given culture to communicate effectively and in an appropriate manner with individuals from different cultures (Byram & Risager, 1999, pp. 168-169). Meyer (1991, p. 138), moreover, defines it as “the ability of a person to behave

adequately in a flexible manner when confronted with actions, attitudes and expectations of representatives of foreign cultures.”

ICC, on this account, is essential because it enables learners to reach the ultimate level of linguistic performance besides attaining linguistic competence¹⁵. Linguistic competence, accordingly, is the basis that contains the knowledge of the basic elements of language (sounds, vocabulary, structures). Then on the upper level, comes the communicative competence that requires adequate use of language in different communicational settings. And on top of all, comes ICC, which if learners master, they reach the semi-native level of linguistic performance (Arrahban, 2016, p. 264).

There are several objectives of ICC that generally emphasize the role of LT in strengthening the relationship between learners’ home culture and target culture. It, firstly, aims at providing learners with insights into the new language and its culture. Secondly, it positively influences their attitudes towards the target language and its culture. Thirdly, it enables them to linguistically and culturally master the use of the target language. Fourthly, it develops their ability to integrate with and adapt to new identities so they reach a high level of understanding of people with different identities. Fifthly, it handles the stereotypes that are associated with the culture of the target language (Allwood, 1990, p. 7; Byram, Gribkova, & Kerhugn, 2002, pp. 9-10).

Along with the previous objectives, (Byram M. (1997) produced his five *saviors* (formulations of the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to mediate between cultures) as essential factors for the development of ICC: *Savoir* (knowledge), *savoir comprendre/faire* (skills of interpreting and relating), *savoir apprendre* (skills of discovery and interaction), *savoir être* (attitudes), and *savoir s’engager* (critical cultural awareness). The five *saviors* together indicate the ability of the learner to reach ‘the third place’, which Kramsch (1993) identified as the vantage place from which the learner can understand and mediate between his home culture and the target culture. ‘*Savoir*’ requires knowledge about the way in which social groups and identities function, including knowledge of social processes, their illustrations and products, and knowledge about other people, how they see each other and how they interact as individuals and communities, as

¹⁵ Chomsky (1965) defines ‘linguistic performance’ as one’s language actual use while he defines ‘linguistic competence’ as what one knows about the language.

well as knowledge about auto-stereotypes¹⁶ and hetero-stereotypes¹⁷. ‘*Savoir comprendre/faire*’ is related to the ability of learners to involve the skill of mediation in interpreting texts (written or spoken) or events of another culture to explain or relate them to texts/events in their own culture in which they interpret each in light of the other. ‘*Savoir apprendre*’ requires the ability to acquire new knowledge, skills and attitudes about a culture or cultural practices and operate them in real-time communication and interaction (Byram M., 1997). The most important *saviors*, however, are *savoir être* and *savoir s’engager* because they imply the ethical and political vision of interculturalism this thesis adopts. *Savoir être*, according to Byram M. (2012), requires “attitudes of curiosity and openness as well as attitudes of readiness to suspend disbeliefs about other cultures and beliefs about one’s own” while *savoir s’engager* necessitates a critical cultural awareness which includes “the ability to evaluate –critically and on basis of explicit criteria– perspectives, practices and products in one’s own and other cultures and countries.”

Applying these five *saviors*, therefore, enhances the role of LT in creating an ideal environment for different cultures to coexist in harmony. It also supports, the previously discussed, essence of uniformity of human languages, and proves the assumption that cultural division is essentially due to the negative attitudes of the speakers of some languages towards the languages and cultures of others. In this sense, the role of LT in setting up nexuses and building bridges between different cultures is proved.

Based on Byram’s *saviors* in attaining an adequate level of cultural awareness, Safina (2014, p. 81) presents three main components of cultural knowledge: (1) Linguistic-cultural components (the knowledge of lexical items and their socio-cultural associations) (2) Sociolinguistic components (the knowledge about the language features of different social classes, generations, genders and social groups) (3) Cultural components (the knowledge of the cultural peculiarities the target language speakers have: their traditions, habits, standards of behavior and etiquettes). In more detail, Arrahban (2016 pp. 267-268) classifies the cultural knowledge LT provides into seven categories. Firstly, ‘the linguistic level’, which includes (a) cultural-linguistic symbols, such as

¹⁶ Stereotypes someone has about their own culture.

¹⁷ Stereotypes someone has about other cultures.

culturally-related words, everyday life expressions, idioms, proverbs, words of wisdom, metaphors, and similes (b) registers (intimate, casual, consultative, formal, frozen). Secondly, 'the supra-linguistic level', which comprises (a) body language, including face gestures, body moves (e.g., hand moves), visual communication (e.g., staring and winking) and body communication (e.g., kissing, hugging, and handshaking) (b) non-lexical sounds (hmm, wow, oh, etc.) (c) voice tone and intonation. Thirdly, 'real knowledge about the target culture', such as geography, climate, demography, history, public figures, etc. Fourthly, 'social norms and traditions', including traditions related to birth, marriage and death, religious practices (e.g., rituals, feasts and sermons), costumes, and social etiquettes. Fifthly, 'achievements and arts' (e.g., inventions, discoveries, literature, music, and architecture). Sixthly, 'values and trends' related to family life, child-rearing, friendship, etc., [as well as religious beliefs and social philosophies]. Seventhly, 'stereotypes about the target culture' in which the teacher aims at correcting them and investigating their formation factors with learners.

All in all, by fulfilling the aforementioned skills, attitudes and knowledge of ICC, learners will reach the level of the typical individual this thesis endeavors. they will be able to successfully interact and communicate with others in the society of the target language. They, accordingly, will be capable to decenter and take up the perspective of the members of the target society on their own culture. Hence, they will be able to anticipate and, where possible, resolve dysfunctions in communication and behavior within the society (Byram M. , 1997, p. 42). They, additionally, will develop a reflective attitude to their own culture, and thus, will be 'interculturally sensitive', in which they will be able to see the world through the eyes of others. Within this framework, they become mediators between their own culture and the target culture in which they will be able to act as 'intercultural speakers' who cross the linguistic and cultural frontiers to transfer cultural property and symbolic values (Atay, D. et. al., 2009, p. 124). In other words, they will be nexuses who bridge cultural gaps and enhance coexistence and cooperation.

Such an atmosphere of coexistence and cooperation that LT creates, sets up the best conditions for peaceful interaction between countries in which diplomacy ideally functions. On that basis, LT derives its political dimension which Byram wanted to reflect in the first place while developing the concept of ICC as part of a major project Council

of Europe held under the title of 'Language Learning for European Citizenship' (1989-1997) (Byram M. , 1996). Drawing from that, it leaves no room for doubt that language and LT, besides their role in influencing cultural relations, play a significant role in shaping international relations and politics.

2.3 Language and Language Teaching in Politics

Apparently, the political function of language is as original as the origin of human gathering. In this regard, scholars of language origins argue that language fundamentally began for political reasons. Dessalles (2000), for instance, links between the origin of language and the initial form of human social and political organization, locating language origins in the need to form 'coalitions' of a critical size. Moreover, Dunbar (1996), highlighting the crucial role of language in establishing international relations, believes that language essentially evolved as an ultra-efficient means of distinguishing allies from enemies and of grooming allies and potential allies. Drawing from that, Joseph (2006, pp. 17,20) asserts that every act of language is potentially political, and that language and languages are bound up in significant ways with the lives of the people who use them, shaping not only their culture but also their belonging.

This political essence of language is reflected on LT, as well. LT is political in the sense that it involves two languages of two different cultures (Joseph, 2006 p, 4). However, LT is not considered an explicit political education. It is rather an implicit practice of politics for the fact that its political dimension is not clearly visible but rather concealed within references to culture (Starkey, 1999, p. 156). Nevertheless, the cultural trait of LT is of great significance in setting language policies which are considered crucially important not only for the vitality of individuals and groups, but also for the formation of national identities and international relations (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 2009, p. 27).

Language policies are generally defined as a form of [national or foreign] public policy, officially planned and carried out by people in power, with the purpose to represent the exercise of the political will (Ager, 2001, pp. 5-6). Therefore, language policies are into two main categories. Language national policies, which are related to interior issues, and language foreign policies, which deal with international issues, such as international relations and international leverage.

Nationally, language policies are on three levels. The toughest of all is the strict one language policy (usually the language of the elite) that is solely used in all official communication. The authorities usually justify such a strict policy with their aim at establishing social cohesion¹⁸. Under this policy, social actors are forced to use the language of the elites if they seek to gain power in society. For more efficient management, however, the state adopts another more tolerant level of language policies in which it allows other languages, but it officially uses one language in its bureaucracy. The idealist of all is the multilingual [or more accurately plurilingual¹⁹] policy in which multi-languages harmonically coexist in a plurilingual atmosphere within public and governmental settings, creating an ideal mosaic state (Ager, 2001, pp. 177-178). Basically, language policies are ultimately decided about by people in power; they whether construct them for cohesion or division (Finsen, 2016, p. 25).

In 'Israel'²⁰, for instance, the government has an obvious approach of national language policies for division due to its discriminatory policies. Within this framework, Or & Shohamy (2015, pp. 120-121), analyzing different Hebrew and Arabic textbooks that are taught there, have discovered a great extent of the 'Israeli' official public policy in LT. They found out that Arabic textbooks for Hebrew-medium schools deal with Arabic culture in a very superficial manner, reproducing stereotypes and objectifying Arabs or describing them as oriental and traditional. In Hebrew textbooks for Arabs, however, Jewish culture is dominant and there is a systematic attempt to impose the values of the majority group on the students. In sum, both types of books, imposing the majority values and culture, aim to reduce or appropriate the Arab culture to perpetuate the unequal power relations, which ultimately comply with the 'Israeli' official public policy. Such language policies, that gets along with the apartheid practices of the occupation regime (as described

¹⁸ Which usually backfires on the integrity of diverse communities as it will be discussed in this part.

¹⁹ Multilingualism refers to the ability to speak many languages, as well as existence of multi-languages within a society; plurilingualism is "the capacity to learn more than one language, as well as the value of linguistic tolerance within individuals and countries" (Eaton, 2018).

²⁰ B'Tselem- The 'Israeli' Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied territories, in one of their reports, describes the 'Israeli' regime as an apartheid regime (B'Tselem, 2021). Another recent report of HRW describes the practices of the 'Israeli' authorities as 'apartheid crimes' (HRW, 2021).

by HRW and B'Tselem), produce a divided community, and might affect the political stability within the state²¹.

Although language policies are usually dealt with on the national scope, the advancement in technology and communication and the rise of globalization, have strongly encouraged many countries to establish language foreign policies. One of the major instruments of this type of language policy is foreign LT and learning in which countries, for the sake of getting more engaged with their surroundings and increasing their leverage on the international arena, encourage their people to learn foreign languages, and at the same time, spread the teaching of their own languages abroad.

Regarding language learning, Australia, for example, encourages its people to learn foreign languages, despite the status of English (the mother tongue in Australia) as a world language. Foreign language learning, according to The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), is a necessity for nowadays 'global citizenship' in which bilingual or plurilingual capability is the norm (ACARA, 2011, p. 33).

On the other hand, Australia utilizes the teaching of the English language abroad, more specifically in Asia, to increase its leverage in the region. The same approach towards LT has been taken by France for ages. France, driven by its colonial legacy, is extremely active in promoting the French language and culture through teaching French, especially and more intensively in its former colonies (Finsen, 2016, p. 24).

The aforementioned French model implies a critical relationship between language and power in which 'language dominance' manifests and usually leads to the rise of the 'global language' phenomenon. As Wright (2000) states, the rise and fall of *lingua franca* usually reveal the changing balance of political power (p. 19). In Europe, for instance, French, Latin and Greek have had the statue of *lingua franca* for centuries. However, because of the diminishing of their speakers' power, they have lost their position to more power-related languages (pp. 123-124). Just like the case of a more powerful group in any

²¹ The dilemma of the Knesset elections is a crystal-clear indicator. Read more in (Gur, 2021); (ACRPS, 2020).

society can force its language upon the less powerful (Romaine, 1994, p. 33), a country can use its economic, political and even military powers to enforce its language on less powerful countries. Accordingly, the major factor in determining the status of any language is that of power (Talbot et al., 2003, pp. 6-7). Generally speaking, language exists with the people who speak it; their success on the international stage brings success to their language and it fails when they fail (Crystal, 2003, p. 7). Throughout history, political and military might was the primary dynamic of language dominance. This phenomenon can be easily tracked in the rise of Greek with the victories of the armies of Alexander the Great, Latin with the legions of the Roman Empire, and Arabic with the Islamic conquests. Same with Spanish, Portuguese, French and English which have spread due to colonial policies. However, albeit establishing a language is due to military power, maintaining and spreading it has always been due to economic [and intellectual] powers (Crystal, 2003 p, 9).

This has been the case until the nineteenth and twentieth centuries when primary economic power [accompanied by intellectual superiority] has become a critical factor to establish, maintain and spread language. Hence, economic developments, supported by communication technology, have become dominant in the international arena. The emergence of multinational organizations and the growth of competitive industry and business brought an explosion in international marketing and advertising. Consequently, the power of the press and media, powered by this economic and technological progress, reached unprecedented levels. The development of technology enabled cultural products, such as records and movies, to cross national boundaries and have a worldwide impact. Moreover, this economic and technological development fostered the international intellectual and research environment, and gave scholarships and education a high profile. Accordingly, any language at the hub of such an explosion of international activity would easily establish a global status. English, therefore, has been at the right time and place to dominate (Crystal, 2003, p, 10).

With the political, economic, technological and cultural powers of the former British imperialism and the current US hegemony, English gained the utmost power to be the first language of the globe (Crystal, 2003, p, 10). The number of English speakers

(including native and non-native) is estimated between 15% to 25% of the world's population (around 1.5 billion) (van Gelderen, 2006, pp. 252-253). And, the number of non-native speakers compared to native speakers is at the ratio of about 4 to 1 and rising (House, 2008, p. 67).

English, for being a global language, has been attached to many advantages. It has been considered as an empowering tool that enables its speakers –on both the individual and the state levels– to efficiently participate in the global economy and politics, to easily access the latest technological and scientific developments, and to enhance their position in the globe. It has become the language of globalization, that has enabled people to access the “Western culture and its values of equality, freedom and democracy” (Tsui, 2005, pp. 17-18).

Notwithstanding, the dominance of English has a dark side. It is usually attached to linguistic imperialism and hegemony. The spread of English, in that sense, is previewed as a Western domination tool over the rest of the world (Tsui, 2005, p. 18). The hegemony of English, moreover, has led to disenfranchising a large part of the world population who does not have access to the language (Ginsburgh & Weber, 2011, p. 14). Those people, accordingly, would strive to adapt to and develop with the fast-changing world that English dominates (Finsen, 2016, p. 21).

Such disadvantages are associated with English for its current position as a global language. According to Crystal (2003, pp. 14-20), the existence of a global language has 3 possible dangers. First of all, ‘linguistic power’, which he relates to the power such a global language would grant to those who have it at their disposal –especially those who speak it as a mother tongue–. In this case, they are able to think and work in the language faster than others, and consequently, they are more capable to manipulate it to their own advantage at the expense of others. Accordingly, their scholarly work will be accomplished quicker, and their research will be read by the international community while the work of others will be ignored²². Secondly, ‘linguistic complacency’ which he refers to the attitude of the native speakers of such a global language towards other

²² That's why this thesis is written in English although the researcher's mother tongue is Arabic and the university is Turkish.

languages in which they will find learning other languages unnecessary. Such attitude in turn results in the alarming phenomenon of ‘linguistic triumphalism’²³. And this phenomenon, in particular, leads to the third danger, ‘linguistic death’. The dominance of one language over others results in the death of minority languages. Exactly, the same way indigenous languages were lost in North America, Brazil, Australia, Indonesia and parts of Africa. In fact, the presence of English as a global language, if continued, would lead to the death of 50% of the 6000 or so living languages within a century, as Crystal (2003) alarms.

The death of a language cannot be a transient issue. It is indeed an intellectual and social tragedy. As mentioned before, language is the repository of the history of people and is their legacy to the rest of humanity. Once their native language is dead, their identity is lost forever (Crystal, 2003, p. 20).

‘Language and identity’ is another critical issue related to language in politics. In this regard, it is strongly believed that one’s native language is the essence of their identity. Taking minorities as an example, there is a very strong relationship between minority language and cultural continuity. The loss or shift of a minority language, in that case, is considered a kind of ethnocultural attrition. It, according to Fishman (1995), “forms part of a wider process of social, cultural, and political dislocation” (May, 2008, p. 4).

Associated with the identity of its speakers, language plays a significant role as a cohesive force, yet it can be a great disruptive force when linguistic rivalry and strife dominate the scene, especially in multilingual states. For instance, language was the main trigger of the riots that took place in Belgium between French and Flemish speakers. Along the same lines, Language can be an efficient tool in hands of separationist movements. Irish language, for example, was a major factor of Irish separation from Great Britain, for its role in symbolizing Irish patriotism and independence. Language, as a result, can be a target of attack or suppression when it is associated with disaffected or rebellious groups, such as in the case of the American Indian language in the US, Welsh in the UK, and Basque in Spain after the Spanish Civil War of the 1930s (Robins, 2021).

²³ It is the danger of celebrating the success of one language at the expense of other languages.

Away from this disruption, still, language is the most potent force of national integration. A nation, within this framework, is defined as “a people linked by birth, language, and culture and belonging to a particular place” (Joseph, 2006, p. 22). Accordingly, language is one of the major unification factors of any nation.

As a matter of fact, having a unified language is a matter of strength as it forms one identity, but enforcing such one language on minorities would, in most cases, be counterproductive. For instance, maintaining Hebrew in ‘Israel’ as the official language of the [linguistically and culturally divided entity] that consists of different Jewish groups of various origins and tongues has [partly] succeeded to build a [de facto] state [against its rejecting surrounding] (Joseph, 2006, p. 23). Notwithstanding, such strict and subjective monolingual policies in a multilingual environment raised many questions in ‘Israel’ regarding other languages and identities such as Arabic (for Palestinians and Syrians within the state), Yiddish (for Haredim), Russian (for immigrants from the former Soviet countries), Amharic (for Falasha), Ladino (for Sephardim) and other minority languages. This linguistic and cultural division, albeit of imposing Hebrew, has contributed to the current identity dilemma and the ongoing political maze²⁴ ‘Israel’ is trapped in.

Such disruption, related to language and identity, is not only on the level of the national unity but also regarding the supranational integral entities, such as in the case of the former USSR. One of the major factors of the dissolution of the USSR was the dominance of the Russian political and cultural ideology in which russification was the major language policy, that was mainly about imposing the Russian language on the peoples of other Soviet republics. Hence after the independence and in reaction to such exclusionary policy, these republics reestablished their own native languages at the expense of Russian which paid the consequences of the USSR strict monolingual policies. To track the dramatic diversion from Russian to native languages, Ukraine is an ideal example. In 1988 (before the fall of the USSR), 67.5% of Ukrainian families used Russian as a means of daily communication while 16.5% used Ukrainian; and regarding education, 72% of parents in Kyiv preferred to send their children to Russian-language schools.

²⁴ Refer to (Gur, 2021) and (ACRPS, 2020).

Nevertheless, this tendency towards Russian has rapidly diminished just after the independence of Ukraine. The Ukrainian language has become more preferable, so in just three years (1988-1991) in Kyiv, the number of parents opting for Russian-language education has dropped from 72% to 28%, with 58% of them preferring Ukrainian-language-based schools (Larocco & Silva, 1996, p. 77).

In general, the policy of one language dominating within a diverse entity –whether it is a state or supranational entity– is usually counterproductive. For that, to get off the dilemma of language dominance and identity, the essence of uniformity of human languages must replace language intolerance. To have such a positive attitude towards language differences, LT –and consequently language learning– are major tools. They build bridges of understanding between different nations, converge their views, and strengthen their integration to form a comprehensive identity that allows them to coexist in harmony.

For instance, the EU, integrating 27 member states, has adopted a plurilingual policy where LT and learning were at the hub. EU in this regard has encouraged the learning of at least two languages by all schoolchildren and has provided funds for minority languages (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 2009, p. 36). In this political context of Europe, LT, according to Trim, (1997, p. 5), aimed at facilitating the free movement of information, ideas and people within Europe; developing a common European intercultural identity by building up mutual understanding and acceptance of cultural and linguistic diversities in multilingual and multicultural Europe; and on the individual level, developing individuals to be active agents in a participatory, pluralist and democratic society, with a positive attitude towards other people and their cultures, and free from prejudice, intolerance, and xenophobia²⁵. Apparently, the EU's model of plurilingualism –with the existence of a stable economic and geopolitical atmosphere–, has relatively contributed, to a good extent, to bridging the cultural gaps among several long-conflicting European nations and in keeping the union in existence till the present time.

²⁵ Nonetheless, Given the rising far right-wing ideologies and Islamophobia, the EU might have not succeeded enough to develop such individuals.

What has relatively succeeded in Europe (with all its complexities) can, to a good extent, succeed in the international arena. Thus, to preserve world peace, plurilingualism has become one of the main features of the modern world. Such insight made language play a crucial role in the political, social, economic, and educational spheres of any nation (Larocco & Silva, 1996, p. 73). Accordingly, in such a multilingual world where diversity, coexistence, and cooperation are the norms, language exchange has become a great need. Therefore, many countries nowadays, in order to ensure the efficiency of their international communication, establish language foreign policies in which foreign language learning at home and native LT abroad are major tools of international relations. This thesis, within this framework, considers native LT abroad a significant means of CD, that enables a country to strengthen its relations with its counterparts and to promote its presence and influence on the international stage.

2.4 Language Teaching a Means of Cultural Diplomacy

Language, being a major component of culture, vitally influences politics. This very political function of language promotes it to be an essential factor in defining international relations. and based on that strong relationship between language and the changing balance of political power, countries utilize every aspect of their military, economic, diplomatic and intellectual powers to promote their languages in their surroundings and in the international arena. One of the very significant engagements of language into politics is using it as a strategy of CD.

Factually, language, as a means of cultural communication and transition, is a major instrument of cultural interaction between different peoples and countries. For that, Lenczowski (2009) has defined language as one of the important aspects of culture that essentially influence CD. In fact, CD or any practice of cultural interaction would be very limited without language, as it is the vehicle by which other cultural traits are transmitted. Moreover, the principal role of language in CD manifests in its nature as a major means of the exchange of ideas. It, accordingly, contributes to the achievement of the major CD objectives of building understanding and facilitating cooperation between different nations and peoples.

LT, on that basis, is a very fundamental means of CD that activates the language's feature of affinity, by crossing linguistic and cultural borders to build bridges between different cultures and communities. Through LT, bridges of understanding are built to converge the views of different nations, and strengthen their cooperation and integration in a way that facilitates their coexistence in harmony. Such a harmonic atmosphere of plurilingualism and cultural diversity, LT clears the way for, is the idealist catalyst of CD as a universal practice. LT –in enhancing diversity, cooperation and coexistence– manifests as the most functional means to achieve the universal objectives of CD: fostering the respect and recognition of cultural diversity and heritage, enhancing global intercultural dialogue, inculcating values of justice, equality, and interdependence, reinforcing the protection of human rights, and establishing global peace and stability. In this context, LT, as a process of cultural harmonization, favors consolidating integration over insisting on cultural differences. Accordingly, it corresponds to the values of CD, which are concentrated on working on the common goals through creating a cooperative atmosphere of understanding and respecting cultural differences, the sharing of knowledge and experience, and the building of trust between different nations, to ultimately, replace clash of civilizations with the global integration.

In fact, the strong relationship between LT and CD manifests in the very intimate relationship between language and culture. Since language is the national treasure-house where cultural experience is stored in and the vehicle that transmits cultural elements (such as the esthetic experience, skills, techniques, products, modes of social control), fully acquiring a given language (linguistically, socially and culturally) is just like possessing the roadmap of the culture it reflects and of the community it represents. Language, in this framework, is a major means of cultural expression that is capable to handle all cultural references and cultural meanings of a certain nation. Therefore, acquiring the language of a given country via LT is the shortest way towards reaching its social and political hub, which consequently, allows communication and experience sharing with its diverse groups. Such a feature of LT, accordingly, enables it to be a major means of human understanding and cooperation, and thus, a principal means of CD.

By evaluating the relationship between LT and culture, it appears that the complete acquisition of a language does not occur with the gaining of linguistic knowledge and skills only; it, more necessarily, requires insight into its cultural context and social system. LT, in this regard, is considered a means of CD that provides full access to culture in which LT operates as a key that gives others access to both high (elite) and low (popular) cultures. Although being part of education makes it an essential component of high culture, LT also paves the way to access to other components of low culture, including movies, music, dances, foods, games, etc. Moreover, LT, through facilitating communication with the target society, gives access to its philosophical perspectives (meanings, attitudes, values, ideas), practices (patterns of social interaction, such as traditions and etiquettes) and products (such as books, tools and laws). Within this framework, LT as a means of CD possesses the powers of reaching both the elites (who are expected to be future leaders) and the masses, especially young people (who form the most influential electoral power in any democracy).

LT, through ICC, contributes to habilitating the most proper individuals, who are able to create the idealist environment for functional CD. According to Byram's model, ICC provides individuals with the knowledge, attitudes and skills that enable them to create an ideal environment for functional CD: knowledge about the target culture's social groups, productions, practices and processes of interaction; attitudes of curiosity and openness towards others, and readiness to evaluate and modify different cultural values and beliefs as well as the willingness to interact and engage with a high sense of otherness; and skills of interpreting and relating that enable them to identify and explain varying cultural perspectives and mediate between different cultures. ICC also provide individuals with critical cultural awareness that makes them capable to properly evaluate the perspectives and practices of the target culture and those of their own culture (Byram M. , 1997). Individuals with such knowledge, attitudes and skills will be able to successfully interact and communicate with others with high 'intercultural sensitivity' in which they can take up the perspective of others and see through their eyes. They will also be able to behave as 'intercultural speakers' who can transfer cultural properties and symbolic values between different cultures. Such individuals, accordingly, will act as bridges between different cultures, and will be able to create an environment of mutual respect, coexistence

and cooperation. Such an environment is the idealist to achieve the objectives of CD which are mainly about developing mutual understanding, establishing trust, bridging cultural gaps, combating stereotypes, and facilitating cooperation on the public and state levels (by advancing the national reputation and enhancing the good relations with the public – the electoral power that creates governments–.)

With the habilitation of such ‘nexus individuals’ and the creation of such an environment of coexistence and cooperation, LT is, moreover, an essential means of CD that attains cultural integration between different communities and peoples. The, previously mentioned, approach of the EU in utilizing LT to tighten its integration is a good example of that. The EU has used LT with the purpose to facilitate the free movement of information, ideas and people through Europe. Besides, they have utilized the outcomes of ICC in an attempt to develop individuals who are free from prejudice, intolerance and xenophobia, and who are active agents in the European pluralist, participatory and democratic environment. With such an environment and such individuals, they have aspired to develop a common European intercultural identity. It seems they’ve relatively succeeded to preserve their integration for a fairly good time. Nevertheless, recent Brexit and the rise of far right-wing ideologies are considered partial failures due to the mishandling of racism and xenophobia issues and for other economic and geopolitical challenges. Apart from that partial failure, the policy of plurilingualism that was based on LT played a crucial role in strengthening the integration of the EU.

Furthermore, LT, in preserving national identities and creating new identities, crucially develops diplomats and mediators, whom governments depend on to progress their foreign policy goals and national interests in other countries. For instance, Russia, through Russkiy Mir Foundation, dedicates LT to preserving the Russian language and promoting Russian national consciousness among its diaspora communities (Klyueva & Mikhaylova, 2017, p. 132). Russian language, within this framework, is strategically used, as a significant mark of self-identification and belonging, to build and solidify Russian culture, foster pro-Russia attitudes and establish a Russian cultural identity (Ibid., pp. 137-138). Russia, using LT, aims at investing in its diasporas to act as mediators and advocates, spreading awareness about the country, popularizing its history and philosophy, and

forming a positive public opinion about it in the countries where they reside in (Ibid., p. 132).

Along with the aforementioned, LT additionally involves the acquisition of a 'second identity' that allows language learners to see things through the cultural perspective of the target language community and thus act as mediators and advocates to progress the policies and interests of the language's native country. The creation of a new identity is at the heart of acculturation (culture learning) that LT provides in which the reorientation of the learner's thoughts and feelings towards the target culture takes place (Brown H. D., 2007, p. 194). Creating such individuals, oriented and aligned to the language's native country, manifests as a crucial contribution of LT towards the flourishing of its CD. Accordingly, they act in their countries as unofficial native diplomats who contribute to fostering the vision and policies of the language's native country in their own countries. In this regard, Russia uses LT as a strategic CD effort to foster a pro-Russian identity beyond its borders, not only within its diasporas but also within foreign individuals (Klyueva & Mikhaylova, 2017, p. 127). Russia, creating such an identity, targets having native representatives of its culture and policies abroad who would be more convincing to their own peoples and governments. With the efforts of such individuals, Russian culture would be more efficiently disseminated, and Russia's intellectual and political leverage, as an arm of its soft power, would be more strongly enhanced.

Mentioning soft power, the promotion of language through LT is a significant strategy of attraction countries use for more influential soft power, and thus, more functional CD. In this regard, if soft power, as Nye (2010) defines, is to persuade people to want the same outcomes as yours, LT, through habilitating language learners who are oriented and aligned to the vision and policies of the target language's native country, will manifest as a very crucial means of soft power. In that context, countries prioritize the promotion of their native languages via LT in order to foster their global leverage and political influence. Similar to the aforementioned example of Russia's utilizing LT as an instrument of soft power, China, the rising superpower, links the dissemination of the

Chinese language, via Confucius Institutes, to the acquisition of global power and influence (Wheeler, 2014, pp. 51-52).

Factually, the efficiency of LT, as an instrument of soft power that establishes influential CD, is mainly based on the attractiveness of the language itself in terms of the culture, values and policies it reflects. In other words, the more intellectual, economic and political power the language holds, the more influential soft power LT generates. Likewise, the more tempting language is, the more functional CD LT produces. LT, then, becomes a means of CD that does not only capture people's hearts but also their minds. In this regard, Spain attributes much of its soft power to the promotion of the Spanish language which carries a high status as the second most spoken native language in the globe with over 450 million native speakers, and which widely spreads as the official language in 22 countries and is conferred a special status in 20 other countries; this is in addition to its major role as a bridge language for institutions and trade. (Rivas, 2015, pp. 140-141). More obvious examples are English and French, though. The widespread of English and French as the most spoken foreign languages greatly contributes to the extent and efficiency of the soft power that LT generates for their countries of origin²⁶ (Nye, 2004, pp. 75-76). Along the same lines, this thesis finds the teaching of Palestinized Arabic²⁷ a great source of soft power that contributes to the success of the Palestinian CD.

Since CD is a component of the macro cultural soft power, LT, in this regard, is at the heart of the ultimate utilization of CD to achieve different goals that serve foreign policies and national interests. For instance, countries such as Russia and the UK use LT for promotion, national branding and trust-building. Russia, through Russian LT, targets the popularization of the Russian language and culture, attempting to change its unfavorable image, which was inherited from the Soviet Union (Klyueva & Mikhaylova, 2017, p. 127). Moreover, the UK according to the British Council, considers English LT a valuable means of the dissemination of British values and sharing the UK's ways of living (British Council, n.d.). Through promoting the UK's values and ways of living, English LT is used to build an image of a 'trustworthy' country and a 'fair player' that

²⁶ The US and the Commonwealth in the case of English, and France in the case of French.

²⁷ Refers to Arabic with a Palestinian context in regard to culture and with reference to Palestinian dialect.

turns it to be an attractive and secure place to different people all over the world. Accordingly, a 2013-report entitled ‘Trust Pays’ asserts that those who are involved in cultural relations –including activities of English LT– with the UK have greater trust in its citizens (British Council, 2012, p. 3). For British Council, English LT is a critical component of trust-building that leads to the growth of trade, and thus, the prosperity of the country (British Council, 2013, p. 4).

The promotion of language and culture by means of LT is a significant instrument of CD that brings economic benefits. In the case of the UK, Neil Kinnock, a Chair British Council and an ex-EU Commission Vice-President stated in 2006 that the English LT sector earned nearly £1.3 billion for the UK in invisible exports (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 2009, p. 26). That is without mentioning the indirect contributions the English language brings to the UK’s economy. In this regard, it is estimated that “the economic benefit of the use of English in both international trade with English-speaking countries and in the domestic UK economy is £405 billion.” (British Council, 2013, p. 15). Notwithstanding, the most obvious example of using LT in promoting trade and foreign investment in China. Chinese government, in order to remove the linguistic and cultural barriers that hinder direct foreign investment, has established a vast global strategy of Chinese LT, and assigned its implementation to the 1987-founded the Chinese Language Council International (*Hanban*), which later, in 2004, launched the Confucius Institutes Project for the same purpose (Pan, 2013, p. 25). For instance, China uses the teaching of Chinese in Africa as a commodity of ‘knowledge-based economy’ –which African countries seek to obtain for their development– to open new markets in the continent and benefit from its cheap labor (Wheeler, 2014, pp. 52-53).

The advantages of LT as a means of CD do not stop at the economic gains; they go beyond that to the consolidation of intellectual and political leverage. For instance, the intellectual leverage of China has drastically developed due to the efforts of Chinese universities in promoting the Chinese language and culture as part of the Confucius Institutes Project. Chinese universities, participating in the venture, could expand their contacts and exchanges with foreign academic institutes. Consequently, the number of

foreign students studying there has rapidly increased²⁸ to give Chinese universities a better international image (Pan, 2013, p. 28), which, in turn, has been reflected on their international intellectual influence, and thus, has positively impacted China's intellectual leverage. A more obvious example of using language and LT to gain intellectual leverage is the UK, which utilizes the English language to grow and maintain its position as an intellectual superpower (British Council, 2013, pp. 3-4). Such tendency, in today's highly networked world, does not influence its intellectual leverage alone, it additionally enhances its political leverage (Ibid., p. 8).

With the economic and intellectual gains LT provides, political leverage comes to crown LT contributions as a means of CD. In this regard, the UK considers the distribution of English language as a political tool by which it influences politics in other countries. The UK promotes its values through the dissemination of English language to become admired or even emulated as a role model by the peoples of other countries (Wilkinson, 2013, p. 9). Another example is China which, in its quest for power and influence on the international arena, utilizes its strategy of disseminating Chinese language and culture via means of LT to promote its position as a reliable alternative to the West in developing countries, such as African countries (Wheeler, 2014, pp. 51,60).

The significance of LT as a means of CD lies in its nature as a two-way street in which native LT abroad attracts foreign LT at home. Indeed, the awareness about other countries through studying their languages has become a global trend in which LT as a means of CD has been granted another dimension. In a current networked world, monolingualism is a defect. Plurilingualism, hence, is a necessity to develop the 21st-century's crucially important trait of 'global citizenship'. Therefore, a deficit of foreign language in a given country will have serious implications on its diplomatic relations, national security and defense (Chen & Breivik, 2013, p. 8). In this context, the Australian government, in order to strengthen its international relations in the 21st century, aimed, in a decade time, to have 40% of high school students studying a foreign language. Considering the 21st century the Asian century, Australia concentrates its efforts in this

²⁸ According to the Ministry of Education the number of international students majoring in Chinese language at Chinese universities between 2006-2010 had a giant leap, jumping from 98,700 to 165,680 (Pan, 2013, p. 28).

regard to its Asian neighbors, encouraging language learners to focus on learning Asian Languages –more specifically Chinese, Japanese, Indonesian and Korean– (Ang, Tambiah, & Mar, 2015, pp. 47-49). In a related move, the US, for the sake of fostering its global leadership and national security, strongly urges its citizens to study foreign languages that enable them to enhance their understanding and appreciation of different nations and cultures (CED, 2006, p. 7). As Colin Powell, former Secretary of State, stated “to solve most of the major problems facing our country today –from wiping out terrorism to minimizing global environmental problems to eliminating the scourge of AIDS– will require every young person to learn more about other regions, cultures, and languages” (CED, 2006, p. 13).

Being a two-way street, LT, additionally, manifests as an efficient means of CD that greatly impacts bilateral international relations. LT, in establishing an environment of diversity, cooperation and coexistence, sets up the best conditions for peaceful interaction between different countries. LT, through ICC, is a vital means to habilitate mediators and culturally sensitive diplomats, whose efforts are principal for strong bilateral relations. Therefore, the more language exchange programs are between different countries, the stronger bilateral relations they have. In this regard, LT is a strategy used by different countries to positively influence their bilateral relations with their counterparts. For instance, Russia is keen on establishing Russian LT programs in China, which is considered an intimate partner. Hence, by way of illustration, up until 2013, statistics indicate that Russian as a foreign language in China is taught in 414 universities, and Russian language and literature is taught in 137 universities of the country (Ganshina & Tsvyk, 2016, p. 1286). Moreover, the Russian Cultural Centre, using LT, cooperates with different bodies in China to promote the expansion of bilateral cultural, educational, scientific, technological and commercial relations between the two countries (Ibid., p. 1287). And as a sign of good relations, the two countries conduct mutual language activities such as the Year of Russian Language in China and the Year of Chinese Language in Russia, which in 2009 and 2010, for example, had led to the opening of 5 Centers of Russian Language in China and 5 Confucius Institutes in Russia (Ibid.).

More specifically, governments, in order to set up long-lasting relations, use LT as a strategy of CD to establish direct channels with the publics of their counterparts. Through LT programs, they provide people with sufficient cultural knowledge that exceeds the linguistic level to raise their awareness about their cultural properties, including geography, history, social norms and traditions, achievements and arts, as well as values and trends. Such knowledge allows people to be more familiar with the culture of the country and its people, which in turn, generates a good image and enhances trust-building between the two peoples and governments. LT, providing such knowledge, highlights cultural similarities between the two communities, and thus, establishes common ground that contributes to setting up a concrete basis of cooperation between the two countries. It, moreover, contributes to the enhancement of cultural awareness about the country and its people via highlighting the cultural differences between the two communities, which in turn is considered an effective strategy to wipe stereotypes, and consequently, reinforce mutual understanding.

In fact, the significance of LT as a means of CD directed to the public is that it primarily influences young people, who are considered the leaders of the future and the most efficient electoral power that defines the political orientations of the country. In this context, a country like China, in order to establish solid relations with Kenya, utilizes the dissemination of Chinese language and culture through LT to shape the perception of the next generation of Kenyan leaders to the Chinese existence in their country in specific and Africa as a whole (Wheeler, 2014, p. 60).

Regarding bilateral relations, besides enhancing relations between friendly countries like Russia and China, LT plays a crucial role as a means of CD that brings disputing countries together. The development of relations between Germany and France is a classical case in this regard. The signing of the 1945 peace agreement could not end the hereditary enmity between the French and the German, which was caused by the long history of conflict, bloodshed and wars. The only breakthrough that was made to relatively end prejudice between the two peoples was the signing of *Élysée Treaty*, in 1963 (Bölling, n.d.). The treaty was a big shift in relations, for its focus on cultural exchange and its emphasis on LT as a means for that sake. Thanks to the emphasis of this treaty on LT in

facilitating cultural exchange and cooperation, France and Germany, since then, have been tightly linked with special relations and currently maintain close diplomatic relations (France Diplomacy, n.d.).

And as a matter of fact, the strategy of LT in CD for enhancing bilateral relations is just as efficient with every country, whether it was developed or developing, a superpower or a third-world's. Hence, as it has worked with China to build cordial and meaningful relations with Kenya (Wheeler, 2014, p. 52), it could work with Mexico in the US. Within this framework, Rivas (2015, p. 142) argues that Mexico can utilize Spanish language and its teaching in the US as a soft power strategy embedded within 'national cultural industries' (e.g., radio, TV and the press); and as a means of communication to build better understanding with North Americans through cooperation and exchange, especially in business and tourism sectors; and finally, as a sign of identity to gain a positive presence and ideological influence in important social sectors. Based on that, he calls for the Mexican government to use the attractiveness of the Spanish-American language and culture to wield influence in the US as part of its 'retroactive soft power'. Such strategy, according to him, would give Mexico a relative monopoly of the production of Spanish contents made for both public and highbrow cultural circles, the opportunity to provide teachers of Spanish as a second language, and above all, the ability to influence the social perceptions and ideological views of the Spanish speakers who are deemed a strong electoral power in the US (Rivas, 2015, pp. 142-143). This thesis, accordingly, finds a great similarity between the case of Mexico in utilizing Spanish LT in the US as a source of soft power and a means of CD, and the case of using Arabic LT as a means of CD for the Palestinian cause in Turkey.

LT is a comprehensive means of CD, that utilizes and/or introduces directly or indirectly all other means of CD. LT, by introducing the cultural knowledge of a given culture, contributes to the promotion of its ideas and social policies as well as facilitates the presentation of the country's history, and its philosophical, ideological and religious views. Also, within LT curricula, literature and arts are extensively presented, whether explicitly in reading and listening materials or implicitly in audio-visual materials as well as in extracurricular activities and events, such as exhibitions, celebrations, theater,

competitions, ceremonies, etc. Moreover, LT is always the initial and the most essential activity of educational programs and exchanges. For instance, establishing academic institutions abroad must require LT programs, and the first activity international scholarship programs always conduct with foreign students is teaching them the language of the sponsored country. Teacher and student exchanges are at the heart of the LT process, as well. Furthermore, within the process of LT and as a result of it, individuals are able to browse various broadcastings, including radio, TV and other related multimedia. Moreover, LT is a vital means of CD that facilitates listening and according respect through paving the way to communication and understanding for establishing common ground. Such common ground is usually established by the teachers and students who act as mediators between different cultures and peoples. Those mediators are the ones who facilitate and conduct any other activities related to cultural diplomacy.

As with any other CD strategy, LT, for the sake of ultimate implementation, is preferably be subject to arm's length policy and/or assigned to independent bodies and entities. Accordingly, governments usually assign the task of language and culture promotion via LT to cultural institutions, such as British Council, AMIDEAST, and Yunus Emre Institute. Academic institutions, such as universities are also strongly involved in this endeavor, acting [partly] as unofficial cultural diplomats, such as in the case of Chinese universities participating in the project of Confucius Institutes (Pan, 2013, pp. 27-28). In fact, governments are not necessarily the only actors, as independent academic institutions and other NGOs are also involved in the process of language and culture promotion through LT. Their efforts are considered part of the informal CD that is conducted for the sake of national interests. For instance, the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) attempts to compensate for the modest presence of the Mexican government in the field of Spanish LT in North America by establishing LT facilities in Los Angeles, Chicago, San Antonio and Quebec (Rivas, 2015, p. 141).

The efforts of such cultural and academic institutions as part of CD are focused on providing language courses, supporting the establishment of LT and literature departments at partner universities, developing language curricula, training language teachers,

implementing student and teacher mobility programs, and holding different language events, such as competitions, seminars, and open days.

And within this framework, teachers are considered significant informal cultural diplomats who promote interaction between cultures through LT, reflecting not only linguistic aspects but also socio-cultural ones. They do a privileged practice of CD through mediating between different cultures in which they present language as a space of communication and interaction to establish friendship and harmony (Moutinho & de Almeida Filho, 2015, pp. 85,87). Accordingly, their efforts are of the most vibrant for the efficiency of LT as a means of CD, due to the fact that students look up to them as considerable representatives of the target culture and its society. Hence, the most responsibility of allowing students to admire the language and its culture, and thus the success of LT as a means of CD, is on their shoulders. Consequently, teacher training and teacher mobility programs are most necessarily at the top priority of the LT strategy of CD.

And for more influential CD through LT, teachers' efforts must be supported by efficient culturally-based language curricula. Textbooks and other teaching materials, within this framework, are preferred to reinforce the outcomes of ICC by providing sufficient cultural knowledge, promoting critical thinking, fostering otherness, diversity and coexistence, diminishing stereotypes, and avoiding propaganda (Or & Shohamy, 2015, pp. 121-122).

In fact, regular textbooks and teaching materials, as well as face-to-face classes are not the only facilities teachers can use to conduct LT as a means of CD. Digitalization is another important arena governments, NGOs and individuals actively invest in as an international platform to utilize LT in their efforts of digital CD. With the advancement of information and communication technologies and, more urgently, due to the shutdown of educational and training institutions that COVID-19 crisis imposed, virtual classes and digital platforms have become major means not only to keep the progress of the educational process, but also to enhance and ease the reaching to knowledge all around the globe. Accordingly, websites, applications and social media platforms are extensively used in the efforts of utilizing LT as a means of CD. Within this framework, arm's length

foundations and institutions have their own websites and applications that present different language learning materials for both teachers and students²⁹.

Individuals and influencers on social media have their own distinctive efforts to utilize LT in the endeavor of digital CD. Such social media channels and pages, for the sake of attracting a bigger number of viewers, combine between the presentation of linguistic and cultural contents. Some of these LT shows are broadcasted on public broadcast channels by young and attractive individuals (usually ladies) who speak the native language of the target audience. For instance, ‘Learn Russian with Nastya Svib’ on RT Arabic YouTube channel³⁰, and ‘2 Words in Turkish’ on TRT Arabic YouTube channel³¹ teach Russian and Turkish languages to Arab audiences through presenting vocabulary and expressions in communicative and cultural contexts. Besides, there are a lot of individuals who have their own YouTube channels where they present the same linguistic and cultural content using different interactive approaches. For example, ‘Ms. V’³² presents Chinese LT material in her channel that is mainly made for cultural content to address Arabic audiences. Another example is ‘Hamra Turkey’³³ who uses the same approach to present Turkish cultural and linguistic contents.

Finally, it manifests that LT is uniquely an ideal means of CD that is comprehensive, authentic and practical. It is just like any CD strategy operates in the long-term, and is preferably conducted by different stakeholders including non-state actors. Therefore, it must not be monopolized by the official sector or limited to foreign policy objectives. Instead, it must be dealt with patiently as an ongoing national strategy that targets enhancing understanding and communication with different peoples to create common grounds and bases of cooperation between different countries, and to ultimately foster coexistence in harmony within a diverse world.

²⁹ E.g., BBC Learning English (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/>), Learn English Online- British Council (<https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/>), Aljazeera Learning Arabic (<https://learning.aljazeera.net/en>), Learn Turkish Online- Yunus Emre Institute (<https://turkce.yee.org.tr/en/>).

³⁰ Can be retrieved on (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MSiWCXUjX7A>).

³¹ Can be retrieved on (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FH0L_2QaP4Y).

³² Can be retrieved on (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCsSnAL4-3sPZCpsl2pCGVsg/featured>).

³³ Can be retrieved on (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBuAG7TmmlFqDmfXGIJDSBw/featured>).

CHAPTER 3. A FRAMEWORK FOR ARABIC LANGUAGE TEACHING AS A MEANS OF PALESTINIAN CULTURAL DIPLOMACY IN 21st-CENTURY TURKEY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter is to draw a framework for ALT as a means of Palestinian CD in 21st-century Turkey based on the findings of the previous chapters and the study of the Palestinian cultural traits and the Turkish stance towards the Palestinian cause, Arabs and the Arabic language. Initially, the Palestinian cultural traits (features, products and values as well as the postulates of the Palestinian cause) will be broadly studied by displaying their attractiveness and significance as major components in the strategy of ALT to attain the utmost results of Palestinian CD in Turkey. After that, the Turkish stance towards the Palestinian cause, the Arabic language and Arabs will be evaluated: historically, religiously, culturally and politically. Besides, the interdependence and interconnectivity of the Turkish stance towards those three issues will be shown and their role in understanding the cultural and political environments in Turkey will be studied. Ultimately, by identifying the Palestinian cultural traits and analyzing the contemporary Turkish scene, this chapter, based on the outcomes of the previous chapter, will try to set the main goals of the Palestinian CD strategy of ALT in 21st-Century Turkey, and identify the most functional approaches and instruments for its optimal wielding. To investigate the current scene of ALT in Turkey and evaluate the thesis findings, this chapter also comprises the responses of the interviewed 11 Turkish learners and 3 Palestinian teachers.

3.1 The Palestinian Cultural Traits in Arabic Language Teaching as a Means of Palestinian Cultural Diplomacy

To reflect the essence of language as the parcel of culture and to fulfil LT main aim of bridging cultural gaps, Palestinized ALT requires presenting every Palestinian cultural trait. Accordingly, it is essential for ALT as a means of Palestinian CD to immerse learners into the Palestinian lifestyle through presenting the major Palestinian cultural features, including its values, beliefs and social traditions, as well as the most attractive Palestinian cultural products. Additionally, Palestinian cultural values (e.g., resistance, diversity, coexistence), as well as the postulates of the Palestinian cause (e.g., universality

and the Arab-Muslim depth) are also needed within Palestinized ALT endeavors for the sake of providing a complete understanding of the case of Palestine.

In fact, the richness of the Palestinian culture enables it to be a functional means of attraction³⁴ within ALT as a means of Palestinian CD. For that, Palestinized ALT, expressing the Palestinian rich cultural features and products, could be an efficient means of Palestinian CD that captures the minds and hearts of the learners, allowing them to see things through the Palestinian cultural perspective and well-equipping them with necessary insights into the Palestinian cause. They, then, would be more capable to become intercultural speakers for Palestine and unofficial native ambassadors for its cause.

To cover the Palestinian cultural features, ALT is required to focus on reflecting the Palestinian values and social traditions. Addressing Palestinian values Nowarah (2020) asserts that the most notable of them are family solidarity and hospitality. Family solidarity is highly regarded in the Palestinian community in which Palestinians maintain strong bonds with the members of both their immediate and distant families. Hospitality is another value (generally inherited from the Arab culture) that Palestinians cherish the most. Palestinians are famed for being warm and hospitable, and their homes are always filled with a variety of sweets and foods as well as Arabic coffee to welcome unexpected visitors (Nowarah, 2020). Regarding social traditions, the elders and children are of high importance. Palestinians afford the elders a great deal of respect³⁵ (Abu-Ghazaleh, 2008, p. 181). Childbirth is an event of celebration³⁶ in the Palestinian society, and proper child-rearing and education is a high familial responsibility that is shared among the extended family members (Schulz & Hammer, 2003, p. 58). Additionally, marriage and death ceremonies are essential components of social traditions that are supposed to be included in the process of ALT. Marriage ceremonies in Palestine is a socioreligious trait, as it includes the presentation of *mahr* (dowry) and the signing of the marriage contract. Both

³⁴ Attraction is the main generator of cultural soft power.

³⁵ Important familial social events are usually held at the eldest member's home.

³⁶ It is usually celebrated on the 7th day after the childbirth with an animal sacrifice, called *aqiqah*, in which most of the meat is given to the needy and a portion goes for a ritual meal, known as *walimah* (Newby, 2002, p. 31).

engagement and wedding parties are attended by extended family members and friends³⁷ (Monger, 2004, p. 209). Death ceremonies is a socioreligious trait, as well, in which Palestinians follow religious traditions during the funeral and in burying the dead. Flowers and cards are also sent to the funeral house which usually lasts for three days (Newby, 2002, pp. 63-64). Moreover, various Palestinian feasts and national days, such as Eid al-Adha, Eid al-Fitr, Land Day, etc. are supposed to be shed light on in Palestinized ALT.

And for more intimate attraction, ALT is also better to dive deep into the Palestinian culture by presenting its diverse products: food, costumes, handicrafts, architecture, music, dances, literature, films, and art.

ALT, in this regard, is supposed to deliver the Palestinian flavor through the presentation of its cuisine, which according to Nowarah (2020) is a mosaic of different cuisines brought by the civilizations that settled in the area. It follows the Mediterranean diet; however, it has been influenced by different cuisines, including Levantine-Egyptian Arab, Turkish, Persian and [to some extent] European's (Nasser, 2001; Kalla, 2016, p. 9). It is filled with spices and herbs, which were frequently transported from around the world through Palestine (Kalla, 2016, p. 18). It is also very appropriate for vegetarians as 60% of it is made up of vegetarian dishes (Ibid., p. 11), such as *Fattoush* (crunchy toasted pita mixed with salad and za'atar), *Tabula* (bulgur mixed with tomatoes and parsley), *Mana'eesh* (coated flatbreads), *Falafel* (fried grounded chickpeas), and *Humus* (grounded chickpeas and tahini). Palestine is also famous for its healthy breakfast that contains eggs, *za'atar* (thyme), olive oil, cucumbers, yoghurt, cheese, bread, and tea (Nowarah, 2020). Furthermore, there are several main dishes on the Palestinian menu, including *Maqloubah* (meat\chicken in rice mixed with vegetables), *Musakhan* (chicken and nuts on layered bread), *Sumaghiyyeh* (chard cooked with sumac, grains and meat), *Sayyadiyeh* (lemon marinated white fish served on cumin onion rice), *Maftoul* (hand-rolled semolina balls cooked with caraway and chicken), *Waraq al-'inib* (stuffed rolled grapes leaves), *Malfouf* (stuffed cabbage rolls with caraway and garlic), *Mahashi* (mostly stuffed zucchinis and

³⁷ During marriage ceremonies the groom usually presents the bride with gifts of gold, and the guests present them with gifts of cash, known as *nukut*. In the end, all join together in dancing and singing.

eggplants). The most popular delights in Palestine are *Knafeh* (sweet cheese pastries) and *Baqlawwa* (rolled pastries with nuts)³⁸.

Palestinian costumes and wearing styles are expected to be major components of any ALT activities, as well. This includes Palestinian *Thobe* and embroidery for women; *Kuffiyah* and other men wears for men. Palestinian *Thobe* is a loose long-sleeve black or white dress filled with various embroidery styles (cross-stitch and couching stitch in different colors). Historically, different styles of embroidery were used to indicate different regions, economic status and marital status (Saca I., 2006, pp. 19-23; Nowarah, 2020). However, such significances have lost their importance nowadays (Saca I. , 2006, p. 37), and recently, embroidery motifs, patterns and fabrics have been used with different clothes by various Palestinian heritage foundations and fashion houses³⁹ (Ibid., p. 41). Regarding men clothing, *Kuffiyah* (a traditional Arab headdress) and its style (white and black patterns) are the most common Palestinian men wearing styles. Traditionally, Palestinian men used to wear *qamis* (undergarment) with *shirwal* (baggy pants) and *qumbaz* (a coat) or *abaya* (cloak)⁴⁰ (Ibid., pp. 33-35).

And to provide a holistic picture of Palestine, ALT is required to present the Palestinian handicrafts and architecture. For hundreds of years, Palestinians have been producing various handicrafts; the most prominent of them are the aforementioned embroidery as well as weaving, glass-making, pottery-making, soap-making and olive wood carving (Karmi, 2015, p. 104). Regarding architecture, Palestine is home to various architecture styles due to its religious and geopolitical significance. Its cultural heritage contains sites that go back to Roman times with various temples, cathedrals, monasteries and churches. Nonetheless, Islamic architecture, Umayyad (661-750), Mamluk (1250-1517) and Ottoman (1517-1917), has contributed greatly to the cultural heritage of Palestine (Fanack, 2011). The most prominent heritage sites in Palestine are the Old City of Jerusalem (including Al-Aqsa Mosque and Church of the Resurrection), Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, the Sanctuary of Abraham in Hebron, Ancient Jericho, Mount

³⁸ The recipes of the following dishes are all located in (Kalla, 2016).

³⁹ It is also used with various home items, such as cushions, address books, tissue boxes, tables and wall pictures (Fanack, 2011). Also, refer to (<https://www.palicroots.com/>) for recent Palestinian fashion styles.

⁴⁰ Such clothes are worn nowadays on special cultural occasions (Nowarah, 2020).

Gerizim and the Old Town of Nablus, and Tell Umm Amer and the Great Omari Mosque in the Gaza Strip (UNESCO, 2021; Archiqoo, 2021).

Besides, presenting the Palestinian melodies and dances would give ALT a unique Palestinian festive atmosphere. Traditionally, there are several Palestinian singing styles, such as *qasida*, *mawwal*, *ataba*, *zajal*, *mayjana*, *daluna* and *zalghutah* (Kanaaneh et al., 2013, pp. 18, 39); most of them are common rhythms and melodies in the Levant (or Great Syria) region (Ibid, p. 38). They are usually played with diverse musical instruments, most distinctively *oud*, (a pear-shaped guitar-like instrument) *rebab* (a small violin-like instrument), *shebabe* (a wooden flute-like instrument), *darbuka* (a bowl-shaped drum), and *qanun* (a stringed board instrument). Recently – since the late 90s–, rap and hip hop [besides other signing styles] have shown up in Palestine. Bands, such as DAM (Da Arabian MCs) from Lod and MWR from Acre, have used rap and hip hop to address various social and political issues (Tawil-Souri, 2012, p. 149). Music in Palestine is usually accompanied by dancing, especially at wedding parties and other celebrations. The most common Palestinian folk dances, in this regard, are *Dabke* and *Dihiye*. *Dabke* is a group dance, marked by performers jumping, stamping and moving in synchronization (SUNY Brockport, 2013) while *Dihiye* is a Palestinian Bedouin dance that is also ingroup and synchronized in which performers move their heads, shoulders and knees and clap their hands (Aljazeera, 2017).

Palestinian films are of the most significant cultural products that store and promote the Palestinian aesthetic experience. Therefore, they are deemed fundamental in ALT for the Palestinian cause. Palestinian cinema is a rich resource of the Palestinian lifestyle, history and culture. There are several Palestinian films that could be part of ALT, including *Atash* (thirst), *Arna's Children*, Hanni Abu Assad's *Paradise Now*, and Michel Khleifi's *Fertile Memories* (Gertz et al., 2010, pp. 270-271).

Nonetheless, Palestinian literature is the biggest store of the Palestinian aesthetic experience. Accordingly, it is supposed to be a crucial component in ALT as a means of Palestinian CD. Palestinian literature, in this context, is expected to be essential in attracting learners, and its value lies in providing them with the 'third place' where they could embrace the Palestinian culture and promote it in their communities. In this regard,

ALT is supposed to present the works of Palestinian intellectuals (e.g., Edward Saeed and May Ziadeh), novelists (e.g., Ghassan Kanafani), and poets (e.g., Ibrahim Tuqan, Abd al-Rahim Mahmoud, Fadwa Tuqan, Mahmoud Darwish and Samih al-Qasim) (Rubenberg, 2010, pp. 260, 807; Aruri, 2010, pp. 1111-1116). Those individuals are considered the cultural spokespeople for the Palestinian cause. In their words, they have provided the most attractive description of Palestine “the mother of beginnings, the mother of ends,” as Darwish depicts it. Their words are great and striking as they picture extraordinary Palestine, and preserve its rich culture (Aruri, 2010, p. 1111).

Another store of the Palestinian aesthetic experience that is expected to be part of Palestinized ALT is art in which shedding light on would enable the learners to picture the Palestinian society and its cultural experience. Palestinian art is of several types; the most prominent of which is caricature and graffiti (street art). Whenever Palestinian caricature is mentioned Naji Al-Ali and his cartoon character *Hanzala*⁴¹ (bitterness) are always on the top of the list (Rubenberg, 2010, p. 17). For graffiti, the painting of *Hanzala* besides the Palestinian flag, [the map of historical Palestine], the Dome of the Rock and the key are symbols that fill walls in Palestine. Palestinian street artists use such symbols to send political messages by depicting the Palestinian struggle and the resilience of the Palestinian people (Alım, 2020, p. 64).

As a matter of fact, such symbols plus other cultural themes clearly reflect the political essence of the Palestinian culture. The flag, the map, the key, the Dome of the Rock, the *Kuffiyah* and etc., all refer to *Nakba* (the Palestinian catastrophe of 1948), to refugee camps, and to siege, checkpoints or occupation (Tawil-Souri, 2012, p. 138). The fact that the majority of the Palestinians after 1948 are forced to live as refugees in exile or in clusters surrounded by walls and checkpoints enforced politics into the Palestinian cultural expression in a way that shows the intertwining between aesthetics and politics, as Edward Said asserted (Tawil-Souri, 2012, p. 144). According to Tawil-Souri (2012), repression, obstruction, control, surveillance and silencing –the Palestinians are subjected to– foster the role of the Palestinian cultural expression as a form of resistance that serves

⁴¹ Hanzala is a small barefoot poor boy, giving his back to the picture, watching in silence the scene unfolding in front of him, with his hands behind his back.

“multiple political functions: a mnemonic device, an elegiac operation, a testimony, a form of self-identification, a voice for mobilization- for Palestinians and other audiences.” Such a case is, as Edward Said described, an implicit relationship between the Palestinian cultural expression of all forms and politics.

This intimate relationship between the political and cultural expression can be monitored in the works of the Palestinian intellectuals, including the poetry of Mahmoud Darwish, the literature of Ghassan Kanafani, and the cartoons of Naji Al-Ali. It obviously appears in the Palestinian folk songs, *dabke* dance, embroidery, the *Kuffiyah*⁴² and other cultural products (Tawil-Souri, 2012, p. 144). It is almost everywhere in the Palestinian literature, music and cinema, especially in those that were produced after 1948 which serve as a collective expression of the Palestinians’ loss, memory, exile, unsettled identity, resistance and struggle. This relationship is also in the themes of longing to the land of Palestine, the brutality of the occupation and the resistance of the steadfast Palestinians that have occupied the Palestinian aesthetic scene (Aruri, 2010, pp. 1111-1112; Motti, 1993, p. 4). It is in the Palestinian art, especially street art which is deemed as an empowerment instrument, for its ability to install the determination of resistance in the Palestinian collective consciousness (Alim, 2020, p. 74). It is also expressed in the Palestinian costumes, such as embroidery, Thobe⁴³ and *Kuffiyah*⁴⁴.

Furthermore, Palestinian cultural expression derives its political function from preserving the Palestinian identity against the ‘Israeli’ policies of erasure (ethnic cleansing) and Judaization. The ‘Israeli’ regime’s policies of systematic erasure against the Palestinian identity have reached the extent that once drove Edward Said to complain that “so much of our [Palestinian] history has been occluded,” and that “we [the Palestinians] are invisible people” (Said, 2003, p. 20 cited in Tawil-Souri, 2012, p. 142). The ‘Israeli’ regimes policies of erasure are being practiced against the Palestinians wherever they are on the Land of Palestine. In the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, during

⁴² Which was worn by Palestinian rebels in the Great Arab [Palestinian] Revolt in 1936-1939 (Swedenburg, 2010, p. 82).

⁴³ Palestinian embroidery and Thobe are deemed as symbols of the Palestinian identity and as national symbols of resistance (Fanack, 2011; Nowarah, 2020).

⁴⁴ *Kuffiyah* has served as a symbol of Palestinian nationalism (Swedenburg, 2010, p. 82), that the late Palestinian president Yasser Arafat was seldom seen without it (Walker & Gowers, 2003, p. 16).

the direct 'Israeli' occupation (1967-1991), Palestinians were prohibited to express anything considered nationalist whether by drawing and graffiti or through any other local media productions (Tawil-Souri, 2012, p. 142). Moreover, such erasure and Judaization policies have been used against the 1948-Palestinians⁴⁵ who are treated as strangers in their land⁴⁶. Favoring Jews and the Jewish identity, the 'Israeli' occupation regime imposes repressive measures on them, restricting them from expressing their [Palestinian] affiliation (Saleh, 2019). These repressive measures have even aggravated with setting the Jewish state law in which the 'Israeli' regime deems 'Israel' as a state constructed for Jews and by Jews, and thus, non-Jews (especially Arabs) do not share the same privileges (Ghanem & Shihadeh, 2010, p. 1084).

Factually, the erasure of the Palestinians and the Judaization of the land are at the essence of the occupation regime of 'Israel' since the establishment of the state. In 1948, 'Israel' occupied 78% of the land, depriving the Palestinians of their right of the land ownership by putting 96% of this occupied land at the state's disposal; after 1967, it occupied the rest of the land in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip where it built 160 settlements, attaching them to separation walls, barriers and checkpoints, plus controlling most of the water resources everywhere in the occupied territories. Additionally, the occupation state, while depriving Palestinian refugees of their right to return, gave citizenship to 3.29 million Jews who immigrated to Palestine between 1948 and 2019 (Saleh, 2021a, p. 29). Most of the Judaization and ethnic cleansing practices, however, are concentrated in Jerusalem. Until the present time, the 'Israeli' regime has confiscated 86% of the city and filled it with Jews, trying to encircle Al-Aqsa Mosque⁴⁷, paving the way for its complete takeover (Ibid.).

Within the efforts of erasing the Palestinian identity, the 'Israeli' regime, according to the Palestinians, practices what can be described as a systematic appropriation of the Palestinian culture. Such 'cultural appropriation', according to Elia (2018), comes in an attempt to legitimize the existence of the state, showing it as a local

⁴⁵ The Palestinian Arabs who remained on the land of Palestine after the declaration of 'Israel' in 1948, who currently live under the rule of the 'Israeli' regime and carry the 'Israeli' passport.

⁴⁶ For instance, Arabic was delisted as one of the official languages of 'Israel', in July 2018 (Mandel, 2018).

⁴⁷ About 220 thousand Jews were settled in East Jerusalem (Saleh, 2021a, p. 30).

entity, in an attempt to hide its reality as an implanted occupation. It is an attempt to occupy the Palestinian identity along with usurping the land, as Aljazeera (2019) asserts. In that context, Abu-Sitta (2019) accuses the Zionist movement of trying to hide its reality of being outside the history and geography of the land⁴⁸ by seizing the land and its people's minds, and by usurping the history and identity of Palestine. Accordingly, the Palestinians accuse the 'Israeli regime' of falsely Israelizing the Palestinian food, costumes and heritage sites. In this regard, they emphasize that the 'Israeli' authorities pride 'Israeli' cuisine on original Palestinian dishes, such as *Falafel*, *Humus*, *Shakshuka* (Fried tomatoes and eggs)⁴⁹, *Maqloubah*, *Dawali* (stuffed grapes leaves roll), *Musakhan*, *Emjadara*, seafood⁵⁰, *Knafeh*, *Harisa*⁵¹ and etc., and serve them to tourists as *Kushier* (Jewish) food⁵². Besides, Saca M., (2019) accuses Elal ('Israel' Airlines) flight attendees of wearing Palestinian embroidery as an 'Israeli' traditional style; she also asserts that the Palestinian Thobe is registered as an 'Israeli' costume and is worn by the wives of 'Israeli' officials as so. In a similar practice, Amin (2019) asserts that the 'Israeli' designer Gabi Ben Hayim designed a *Kuffiyah* using the colors of the 'Israeli' flag with the star of David, and that an 'Israeli' model once wore *Kuffiyah* in a beauty competition. Moreover, Palestinians accuse the 'Israeli' authorities of registering *Dihyie* dance in the UNESCO as Jewish Heritage (Aljazeera, 2019), and that, since 2001, they have registered 9 Palestinian sites in UNESCO global heritage list, including Masada, ancient Acre, Beersheba and the village of Bayt Jibrin (Aljazeera, 2019).

Against such fierce 'identity erasure' and 'cultural appropriation' –as described by Palestinians–, the crucial role of ALT, within the Palestinian CD endeavors, manifests as a means of resistance that aims to enhance Palestinian cultural expression, promote the Palestinian culture and publicize the Palestinian narrative of the cause. In this regard, ALT

⁴⁸ According to the Palestinian poet Tamim al-Barghouti, the Zionist occupation has no culture to present to its community. They collected different peoples from all around the world to establish a state in Palestine, neglecting the reality that they have had no unified culture or identity for 2000 years (al-Barghouti, 2019).

⁴⁹ According to Aljazeera (2019), *Shakshuka* won an award amongst the best 10 breakfast meals in the world as a Jewish dish.

⁵⁰ Rajaei Dohdar, a Palestinian Chef, "Israel tried to market Palestinian sea food as Israeli traditional food." (Dohdar, 2019).

⁵¹ Fidaa Abu Hamdiya, Author of *Pop Palestine Cuisine*, "Israeli Chefs promote *Harisa* under the name of *Semolina* cake as an Israeli delight." (Abu Hamdiya, 2019).

⁵² On a website called 'Yalla Basta' (<https://www.yallabasta.com/>) which is obviously a Palestinian phrase, as well.

is considered a strong means of resistance that teaches new generations [of Arabic learners] the Palestinian cause: its history, geography, heritage, and demography (Abu-Sitta, 2019). In this regard, Palestinized ALT is expected to provide learners with adequate knowledge about the resilience of the Palestinian people (by showing examples of steadfastness and struggle), acquaint them with the values of resistance (that Palestinians live with) and provide them with a better understanding of the case of Palestine. It is, moreover, required to generate more solidarity with the Palestinian cause by showing the right picture of the Palestinians as freedom fighters, not terrorists (as the 'Israeli' regime's propaganda label them), and by highlighting the cause as universal and just.

To maintain this role, it is necessary for ALT to disseminate the values of resistance, *sumud* (steadfastness) and intifada, that are very attached to the Palestinian culture. In fact, these values have been part of the Palestinian culture since the very beginning of the cause, even before the occupation of Palestine in 1948: through the 1920 Jerusalem uprising, the 1921 Jaffa uprising, the 1929 *al-Buraq* uprising, the resistance of the *Jihaddiyyah* movement led by Ezziden al-Qassam, the Palestinian Revolt of 1936-1939, and the 1948 Qastal battle⁵³ (Saleh, 2021a, p. 22; Qumsiyeh, 2011, p. 229). They have remained with the Palestinians post-1948 through their battles against the occupation, loss, desperation, erasure, violence and crises (Tawil-Souri, 2009, p. 182). They have reached the peak during the first (1987-1993) and second (2000-2005) intifadas (Nasrallah, 2013, p. 56) in which intifada has become a way of life, manifesting in the determination of the Palestinians to resist the oppressive policies of the occupation and to maintain social unity and cohesion, as Qumsiyeh (2011, pp. 151-152) asserts. According to Shihabi (2006, pp. 59-60), they fuel the Palestinian high spirit that reveals itself in the absence of their panic during shelling, and their ability to psychologically circumscribe dangerous zones as well as in their sufficient awareness in public debates and gatherings, and their widespread involvement in funerals [and protests]. These values, for Qumsiyeh (2011, p. 245), are the source of the willingness of the Palestinians to sacrifice with no

⁵³ In January 1948, Abd al-Qadir al-Husayni led Palestinians in the Holy War Army (Jaysh al-Jihad al-Muqaddas) at the final crucial battle, sacrificing his soul for the sake of Palestine and establishing himself as a great and courageous leader against the Zionist forces (Rubenberg, 2010, pp. 574-575).

fear, making anything else much easier to accomplish and enabling them to achieve greater victories.

The Palestinian cultural traits of resistance and intifada are of great influence in mobilizing people inside and outside Palestine. Therefore, promoting them from the Palestinian perspective is of great priority for the Palestinian CD objective and activity, including the activities of ALT. Within this framework, ALT is better to present these cultural traits from various perspectives, showing the roots of the cause, exposing the violations of the 'Israeli' authorities, and highlighting the Palestinian steadfastness and struggle. Based on that, learners are supposed to know the Palestinian narrative of the roots of the Palestinian cause through learning about the Zionist false claims of Palestine, the international complicity against the Palestinians, the tremendous support to the Zionist project, the Nakba of 1948, the massacres committed by the Zionist gangs against unarmed innocent Palestinians, as well as the continuous ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians⁵⁴. Regarding the violations of the 'Israeli' authorities, learners are supposed to see the 'Israeli' regime from the Palestinian perspective as a racist, apartheid and settler-colonial regime⁵⁵. And as for the Palestinian struggle, learners need to get familiar with the heroes and martyrs of Palestine, the bravery of the children of stones, the struggle of the Palestinian detainees in the 'Israeli' prisons, the Gaza steadfastness against the blockade, the struggle of the people of Jerusalem against ethnic cleansing, the heroism of the Palestinian worshipers in defending *Al-Aqsa* Mosque, the sacrifices of the Palestinian women –standing side by side with men in defense of the Palestinian honor–, the struggle of the Palestinian fishermen –fighting against waves and 'Israeli' military boats and frigates to feed their families–, the efforts of the Palestinian journalist –incurring the

⁵⁴ Read more about the Zionist false claims in (Moughrabi, 2010, p. 1095), (Al-Ju'beh, 2008, p. 208) & (Saleh, 2020, pp. 1-2); the international complicity against the Palestinians in (Saleh, 2021a, pp. 19-23); the tremendous support to the Zionist project (Maira, 2018, p. 4), (Barghouti, 2020, p. 40), (Blankfort, 2010, pp. 1538-1539) & (Lockman, 2010, p. 1678); Nakba in (Saleh, 2021a, pp. 23-25); and ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians in (Barghouti, 2020, pp. 4, 14), ('Abd al-Hay, 2020) & (Saleh, 2019).

⁵⁵ Read more about the violations of 'Israeli' regime against the Palestinians in (Qumsiyeh, 2011, p. 32), the 'Israeli' regime's racism in ('Abd al-Hay, 2020); the 'Israeli' regime's apartheid policies in (B'Tselem, 2021, pp. 2-6), (HRW, 2021) & (Barghouti, 2020, p. 11); and the reality of the settler-colonial regime of 'Israel' in (Saleh, 2021a, p. 25), (Barghouti, 2020, p. 13), (Nasrallah, 2013, p. 65), (Parry, 2011, p. 11) & (Degani, 2016).

danger to let the Palestinian voice reach the world—, and the nobility of the peace activists—sacrificing their times, efforts and sometimes souls in solidarity with the Palestinians—⁵⁶.

Nonetheless, in reference to the previous discussion in chapter 2, it is important to emphasize that such political topics are recommended to be addressed implicitly through extracurricular cultural activities, such as concerts, plays, performances, films, open days, seminars, debates, discussions and extra research. Along the same lines, the literature of resistance can be a rich source of acquainting learners with the values of resistance and intifada without going through any political sensitivity by presenting literature of resistance within the curriculum or encouraging learners to read external literary works. For instance, students shall read the novels of Ghassan Kanafani, and the poems of Mahmoud Darwish, Samih al-Qasim, Abd El Rahim Mahmoud, Ibrahim Tuqan, etc. Values of resistance and intifada, as well, can be implicitly shown in Palestinized ALT through the art of resistance, such as the cartoons of Naji Al-Ali and the graffiti works of various Palestinian artists.

It is also worth noting that the success of ALT in presenting Palestinian cultural traits of resistance and intifada—as an effort within the Palestinian cultural soft power—requires valuing these traits by the Palestinian representatives at home and abroad⁵⁷. Accordingly, the Palestinian official rhetoric and endeavors are supposed to fall in line with the sacrifices and resistance of the Palestinian people with the purpose of establishing efficient Palestinian smart power⁵⁸. Hence, for the sake of functional Palestinian smart

⁵⁶ Read more about Martyrs of Palestine- Abd al-Qadir al-Husayni in (Rubenberg, 2010, pp. 574-575), Yassir Arafat in (Muslih, 2010, pp. 95-103), and Ahmad Yasin in (Rubenberg, 2010, pp. 1643-1644); More details about children of stones in (Bishara, 2010, p. 623) & (Saleh, 2021a, p. 38); the Palestinian detainees in (Hanieh, 2010, pp. 1179-1184) & (Qumsiyeh, 2011, pp. 195-197); Gaza steadfastness in (Farsakh, 2010, pp. 418-427), (Qumsiyeh, 2011, pp. 202-203) & (Fassetta et al. , 2020, p. 12); ethnic cleansing in Jerusalem in (Dumper, 2010, pp. 731-750) & (Qumsiyeh, 2011, p. 202); the violations of the 'Israeli' settlers and authorities at *Al-Aqsa* Mosque in (Rubenberg, 2010, pp. 74-75) & (Andrews, 2021); the struggle of Palestinian women in (Rubenberg, 2010, pp. 321, 599), (Hajjar, 2010, p. 671) & (Hanieh, 2010, p. 1182); the suffering of Palestinian fishermen in (Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, 2010) & (Dalloul, 2021); the struggle of Palestinian journalists in (Aljazeera, 2021); the solidarity of peace activists in (Qumsiyeh, 2011, pp. 172-205).

⁵⁷ As aforementioned, soft power is better generated when its resources are valued by the state's domestic and foreign policies (Nye, 2004, p. 11).

⁵⁸ Smart power = Soft power + Hard power (Nye, 2004, p. 147).

power, the reevaluation of Oslo Accord⁵⁹, the ending of security cooperation with the 'Israeli' authorities⁶⁰, the reformation of PLO to include all the Palestinian factions⁶¹, the restoration of the Palestinian unity⁶², the establishment of a strategy of resistance in all forms⁶³, the activation of Palestinian formal and informal diplomacy⁶⁴, and the establishment of international legal procedures against the 'Israeli' regime are issues to be considered in the Palestinian agenda of self-determination and national liberation. In that context, ALT as a means of Palestinian CD would be more realistic and more convincing when conducted within a comprehensive Palestinian strategy that correlates with the Palestinian sacrifices and aspirations.

Moreover, to go in harmony with the Palestinian cultural trait of resistance and intifada, it is crucial for ALT to be within the advocacy endeavors of the Palestinian cause that concentrate on maintaining international solidarity rather than begging sympathy. In this regard, the Palestinian cause in ALT is better to manifest as a national liberation cause in preference to being a humanitarian issue. Within this framework, ALT as a Palestinian CD activity is supposed to hit minds with facts instead of being too emotional. Thus, it is necessary for Palestinian CD, including Palestinized ALT, to show creativity more than poverty; steadfastness, not only suffering; and life, not death.

Diversity and coexistence are other Palestinian cultural values that are required to be reflected in ALT as a means of Palestinian CD. Palestine is a country of different faces; it houses different religions, cultures and histories (Kalla, 2016, p. 10). The land of

⁵⁹ Oslo is deemed for many Palestinians a betrayal of their national struggle for self-determination. It relegated the PNA to the degree of a collaborator, and it compromised on the Palestinian rights including the right of return and the rights of the 1948-Palestinians. It, also renounced 78% of historic Palestine and dismembered its territories (Maira, 2018, pp. 11-12).

⁶⁰ Security cooperation, by gathering information and running after whoever is suspected to resist the occupation, is a stab in the back of the Palestinian resistance (Al-Zaytouna Centre, 2009).

⁶¹ Through ending the monopoly of *Fatah*, building national partnership, and establishing constitutional democracy within the body of PLO (Saleh, 2021b).

⁶² By ending the political division between *Fatah* and *Hamas* (Saleh, 2021a, p. 46), and establishing a Palestinian strategy to counter the 'Israeli' regime's geographic (West Bank, Gaza Strip, 48-Palestine, asylum) and social (urban, peasant, Bedouin) division attempts (Maira, 2018, p. 12; Saleh, 2019).

⁶³ According to the United Nations (UN) General Assembly Resolution 3246 (XXIX) of 29 November 1974, the peoples' struggle for liberation from colonial and foreign domination and alien subjugation is legitimized (Mitri, 2016, p. 151).

⁶⁴ The capability of the PNA ministry of foreign affairs and its embassies is limited (Awad, 2015, p. 22), and politicians are not the only players in the Palestinian diplomacy, for it compromises different aspects-social, cultural and athletic (Ibid., p. 29).

Palestine and its population have been affected by different peoples who once settled, conquered, occupied or just passed through its territories, including the Canaanites, the Philistines, the Jebusites, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Egyptians, the Aramaeans, the Greeks, the Romans, the Byzantines, the Arabs, the Turks, the Crusaders, and the Kurds (Al-Ju'beh, 2008, p. 7). Furthermore, Palestine under the Muslim Ottoman rule was a safe haven for people of different faiths where Muslims, Christians and Jews lived in harmony (Nassar, 2011, pp. 135-136) and participated in building the civilization of the empire (Saleh, 2021a, p. 12; Gürpınar, 2014, p. 95). Also, in the PNA territories, Christians and Jews enjoy the same rights as Muslims. Christians enjoy the complete freedom to practicing their faith whether in the West Bank or the Gaza Strip. They have the full right to participate in politics; for instance, 6 seats of the 1996 Palestinian Legislative Council were reserved to Christians (Seitz, 2010, p. 367). In the Gaza Strip, Hamas extends its hands to them and considers them partners in the struggle for liberation (Baconi, 2018, p. 95). Moreover, Palestinian Jews are equally treated as their Muslim and Christian brothers and sisters. Samaritan Jews, for example, have Palestinian passports and are designated a seat in the Palestinian Legislative Council (Rubenberg, 2010, p. 1288). Besides, Neturei Karta orthodox Jews who consider themselves Palestinians under the Zionist occupation (Barghouti, 2010, pp. 51-52) are on the same boat with other Palestinians in fighting against the occupation state, in which their Rabbi Moshe Hirsch once served in the PLO cabinet under the leadership of Yassir Arafat (Rubenberg, 2010, p. 987).

In fact, the values of diversity and coexistence in ALT cannot be fully attractive without the existence of political pluralism, democracy and freedom within the Palestinian community. Although political pluralism does already exist within the Palestinian body – which contains different factions carrying various ideologies: nationalist liberal *Fatah*, Islamist *Hamas* and ‘Islamic *Jihad*’, and nationalist socialist PFLP and DFLP –, democracy does not fully exist within the institutions of the Palestinian Authority (PA) in spite of the two general free and fair elections of 1996 and 2004-2006 (Shihabi, 2006, pp. 68-70). Such an issue has even worsened in presence of a democratic crisis in Palestine since 2007 when the Palestinian division between the leading factions *Hamas* and *Fatah* took place. Palestinians, in that context, are better to restore democracy, to stand strong

against the occupation and to strengthen their cause. Accordingly, establishing social harmony within the Palestinian community based on democratic values of justice, equality and freedom would strengthen their position against the brutality of the occupation (Berrada, 2019, p. 94), and revitalizing Palestinian democratic institutions would enable them to gain the respect and [solidarity] of the world community (Awad, 2015, p. 36). Therefore, Palestinian factions are better to return to democratic dialogue in order to rearrange the Palestinian institutions and develop a roadmap for the liberation of Palestine (Ibid., p. 95). Within this framework, establishing freedoms, activating the Palestinian legislative council and developing a functional judicial system are of great importance. Ultimately, the implementation of these measures would enable the values of diversity and coexistence within Palestinized ALT to be fully functional and fully attractive.

Along with values of diversity and coexistence, the universality of the just cause of Palestine, being one of its postulates, is supposed to occupy a major part of ALT as a means of Palestinian CD. According to the Palestinian Ambassador to the UK Zomlot (2021), it is very essential to assert that the Palestinian cause is a universal just cause against an apartheid, colonial-settler and occupation regime that exploits religion for racist colonial purposes⁶⁵. For that, the Palestinian struggle is neither ethnic nor religious⁶⁶; it is a struggle that goes for justice –the concern of all humans and religions–: “Justice to end the theft of land, the denial of rights and the negations of a nation.” Based on that, Palestinized ALT is required to emphasize the values of justice, explain the Palestinian rights, expose the ‘Israeli’ regime’s violations, and call upon every human of every race and religion to stand for the Palestinian cause.

Notwithstanding, Arabs and Muslims are intimately connected to Palestine and its cause more than any ethnicity or religion. This makes the Arab and Muslim depth another postulate of the cause ALT as a means of Palestinian CD is supposed to reflect. Regarding the Arab depth, culturally, Arabic is the first language of Palestine, and a great

⁶⁵ Refer to the Jewish Nation State Law that was passed by the Knesset in the summer of 2018, which affirms that the Jewish people are the only ones to have the right of the national self-determination in ‘Israel’. Besides, this law has abolished the official character of the Arabic language which poses a great threat to the Arab identity of 1948-Palestinians (Saleh, 2019).

⁶⁶ As Mr. Zomlot emphasizes, “many of the [Palestinian] leaders are Christians, and many of the vocal voices for the freedom of Palestine are Jews” (Zomlot, 2021).

deal of the Palestinian culture is derived from the Arab culture (Nowarah, 2020). Such Arab cultural identity applies to all Palestinians, including Christians who consider themselves purely Arab⁶⁷, and Palestinian Jews who got greatly affected by the Palestinian Arab culture⁶⁸. Historically, Palestine is a Canaanite Arab land before all. It was first called the 'Land of Canaan' as the Canaanites, who came from the Arab Peninsula 4500 years ago, first settled there. Most of the Palestinians nowadays are the descendants of the Canaanite Arab tribes and the Philistines, who enter-married with one another (Saleh, 2021a, p. 13). For the Muslim depth, Islam is the biggest religion in Palestine, and historically, Palestine was part of the Muslim Caliphate for more than 1300 years. Hence, the Islamic culture contributes greatly to the Palestinian lifestyle. Politically, the fact that Palestine had been taken from the Ottoman Empire by Britain before it was given to the Zionist movement (Afyoncu, 2018), makes liberating Palestine, primarily, a duty of all Muslims. Based on that, ALT as a means of Palestinian CD in Muslim countries (including Turkey) is supposed to emphasize in its curricula and activities the importance of Palestine as an Arab-Muslim land. ALT, in this regard, is supposed to be a voice of mobilization to the Arabs and Muslims, to collaborate for the sake of liberating Palestine.

Additionally, it is not a secret that the occupation of Palestine was meant to divide the two wings of the great Arab and Muslim worlds in Asia and Africa. And consequently, to keep the stability and growth of the 'Israeli' occupation, the fragmentation and weakness of Arab and Muslim countries have to be assured (Saleh, 2021a, p. 17). Therefore, enhancing the collaboration and cooperation among Arabs and Muslims is very crucial for the liberation of Palestine, and thus, it is more significant for the Palestinian CD to highlight the values of collaboration and cooperation among Arabs and Muslims and consider it a top priority. Within this framework, elevating the level of collaboration and cooperation between Turkey and Arab countries through enhancing Turkish-Arab cultural relations is deemed a major goal of ALT as a means of Palestinian CD in the country.

⁶⁷ For instance, George Habash, one of the historical leaders of the Palestinian nationalist movement, was Christian. He was a co-founder of the Arab Nationalist Movement, and in 1967 he founded the nationalist PFLP (Baumgarten, 2010, p. 475).

⁶⁸ For example, Samaritan Jews who live on Mount Gerizim speak Arabic besides Samaritan Hebrew (Rubenberg, 2010, p. 1288).

3.2 The Turkish Stance Towards the Palestinian Cause, Arabs and the Arabic Language

Referring to the interviews that were conducted for this thesis⁶⁹, all the interviewed learners asserted that the Palestinian cause, Arabs and the Arabic language are interconnected and interdependent issues in Turkey, yet with varying degrees. The Palestinian cause comes first; then the Arabic language; and Arabs come last. However, the Turkish stance towards the Palestinian cause, albeit being positive most of the time, is influenced by the Turkish general view of Arabs and the Arabic language. In that sense, one of the interviewees, for instance, assured that most of ‘pro-Israel’ people in her surrounding are usually racist or hostile against Arabs and they most often have a negative view of the Arabic language (Personal Correspondence via email, October 29, 2021).

Discussing the Turkish stance towards the Palestinian cause shows that throughout the different phases of the Palestinian cause representation in the Turkish arena, the Turkish public and governmental stances towards the Palestinian cause, have essentially been influenced by various historical, religious, socio-cultural and political factors.

The Turkish strong commitment to the Palestinian cause, nevertheless, is mainly influenced by historical, religious and sociocultural factors. Factually, one of the very early events of the Palestinian cause was on Turkish soil, in Istanbul. It was when Herzl (the founder of the Zionist Movement) offered the Ottoman government to rescue the empire from its desperate financial crises in return for Palestine. [For religious motives], however, the Ottoman Sultan, Abdulhamid II firmly refused that tempting offer and ordered the restriction of foreign Jew’s immigration and land purchase in Palestine (Lockman, 2010, p. 1665). The Ottomans’ religious commitment to Palestine as one of the holiest places for Muslims⁷⁰ was additionally nourished by a strong historical bond between the Turkish people and the land of Palestine⁷¹ along with the cultural and social bonds.

⁶⁹ The participants collective responses are referred to as (Personal Correspondence via email, October 27 - November 01, 2021).

⁷⁰ The land of the prophets, the center of the abode of Islam, the land of Gathering and Resurrection. It is also where *Al-Aqsa* Mosque is located. *Al-Aqsa* Mosque is the first Qibla (direction of Muslim prayer), the second place of worship consecrated to God (*Allah*) on earth, the third holiest place in Islam, and the place where the prophet Mohammed elevated to heavens in *Al-Isra*’ and *Miraj* journey (Saleh, 2021a, p. 10).

⁷¹ This historical bound lasted for 401 years from 1516 to 1917 (Afyoncu, 2018).

Even after the fall of the Ottoman Empire and the establishment of the Turkish Republic, these historical, religious and sociocultural commitments towards the cause have relatively maintained their momentum. For instance, Bilgiç & Bilgiç (2019, pp. 5-6), analyzing the articles written by the Turkish government officials and the ruling Republican People's Party (CHP) members in *Ulus* newspaper⁷² in the era between the end of WWII and the final months of 1948, found out that the vote of the CHP government in 1948 against the UN's partition plan of Palestine was greatly influenced by Islamic solidarity feelings. The religious affinity and the 'brotherly ties' between the Palestinians and the Turkish people were still vivid despite the political separation⁷³. In fact, such a stance towards the Palestinian cause, in the secular rhetoric –let alone the Islamic–, is still valid till the present time. For example, on May 18, 2021, the CHP headquarters in Istanbul, in protest against the 'Israeli bloody actions in Palestine' (as they described), hang up on its main building a flag of Palestine along with the following statement "those who remain silent against oppression are the dumb devils" (Cumhuriyet, 2021), which is known in the Turkish society as one of the sayings of the Prophet Mohammed (Soylu, 2021).

More specifically, the religious sensitivity of Jerusalem has been, for a long time, the cornerstone of the Turkish public's concern and the Turkish government's foreign policy towards the Palestinian cause (Aras, 2009). For instance, in a protest against the attacks of the 'Israeli' settlers and authorities on the Palestinians in East Jerusalem and the threat of their eviction from the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of the city, on May 9, 2021, thousands of Turkish protesters gathered outside the 'Israeli' embassy in Ankara, chanting that *Al-Aqsa* Mosque in Jerusalem is a redline and calling for Muslims to defend the holy sites and support the residents of Jerusalem (Daily Sabah, 2021a). Along with this public support and in line with the Ottoman legacy, the foreign policy of the current Justice and Development Party (AKP) government towards Palestine and 'Israel' has been greatly influenced by the religious commitment towards the Islamic holy sites and the socio-cultural sentiments towards the Palestinians. In this regard, Abdullah Gul, the former

⁷² *Ulus* was the leading newspaper of the Kemalist CHP, between 1923 and 1950.

⁷³ As described by Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, a prominent journalist and a CHP deputy who would later represent Turkey at the UN Conciliation Commission for Palestine (Bilgiç & Bilgiç, 2019, p. 7).

Turkish foreign minister and president, asserted that Turkey, which still possesses the title deeds of the Palestinian lands, cannot but be an active player in the Palestinian arena (Aras, 2009).

The current Turkish governmental commitment towards the cause, however, is not only for religious, historical or sentimental factors but also for political ones (regionally and domestically.) Regionally, Turkey seeks to expand the religious scope of its diplomacy for the sake of presenting an alternative contemporary Islamic political model to the religious regime in Iran ('Abd al-Hay, 2021, p. 6). Within this framework, the Palestinian cause is instrumental for Turkey in approaching the Arab and Muslim publics, in which supporting the cause is the means of Turkish governments to strengthen their legitimacy in the Arab and Muslim worlds (Bayraktar, 2019, p. 42). On the domestic scope, supporting the Palestinian cause is a valuable means, for the ruling AKP and various Turkish political parties, to mobilize people and gain more public support, especially from the right constituents (Ibid., p. 42).

Generally speaking, the Palestinian cause is so sensitive for the Turkish public as a whole, regardless of their ideological or political leanings (Aras, 2009). Accordingly, supporting Palestine is one of the very rare issues Turkish political parties unanimously agree on. For instance, all five Turkish political parties in the Parliament condemned, in a joint declaration issued on May 9, 2021, the attacks of the 'Israeli' forces in *Al-Aqsa* Mosque (Daily Sabah, 2021b).

Although the Turkish public has always been in a great commitment to the Palestinian cause, political circumstances, on some occasions, were not in favor of the cause. In this regard, the Turkish governmental rapprochements with the 'Israeli' regime throughout history were mainly for compelling foreign and domestic political circumstances and most often without the consent of the majority of the Turkish people. Accordingly, the alliance Turkey had to establish with the US post-WWII—for its concerns from the USSR's interest in the Turkish Straits—, obliged it to be the first Muslim-majority country to recognize the state of 'Israel', in 1949. The alliance with the US and the concerns from the USSR, furthermore, were the main drivers of the development of Turkish-'Israeli' relations throughout the Cold War era. Such relations, however, were not

consistent; they went up and down according to domestic and foreign political factors. Nevertheless, the domestic factor, during the era between the 1960s and 1990s, played a major role in deciding about the Turkish-‘Israeli’ relations, especially with the presence of the consequent military interventions. Within this framework, most of the ups in the relations were for political calculations following these military interventions, without the consent of the majority of the people (Dahl & Slutzky, 2006). The golden age of the Turkish-‘Israeli’ relations, the 1990s (Uzer, 2017) came in accordance with that equation when domestic and foreign political conditions were in favor of ‘Israel’. Domestically, strong military leaders of that time tried to use the relations with ‘Israel’ as an anchor to protect secularism in the country, as Bayraktar (2019, pp. 21, 25) puts it. And internationally, the signing of Oslo Accords in 1993 as well as the Turkish-‘Israeli’ cooperation against the blacklisted terrorist organization, the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in Syria, Iraq and Turkish territories pushed the Turkish-‘Israeli’ relations forward (Uzer, 2017).

Derived from the above, this thesis asserts that ALT as a means of Palestinian CD directed to the public in current Turkey would not face any difficulties in establishing a good image of Palestine. Therefore, the main goal here is for tightening the ties between the two peoples and enhancing the good image of Palestine through spreading awareness, setting common ground and correcting stereotypes (if any), to eventually, contribute to establishing a public incubator for the cause that keeps the support of the government in spark regardless of the ruling party. Accordingly, to address the Turkish people as a whole, given the cultural polarization between conservatives and seculars, it is critically important to avoid ideological or political issues, and thus, it is crucial, for instance, to address the importance of Palestine as a Muslim holy land from a cultural perspective rather than debating it from an ideological or political point of view. Similarly, and for the sake of enhancing Arab-Turkish relations on a wider public scope (which would serve the Palestinian cause since both are major parts of the Palestinian strategic depth), the Arabic language is recommended to be previewed primarily as a language of communication rather than being dealt with as a solely religion-affiliated language.

As a matter of fact, strong relations between Turkey and Arab countries, as aforementioned, is significant for the Palestinian cause. Accordingly, evaluating the Turkish stance towards Arabs and looking at the possibilities of tightening Arab-Turkish relations is fundamental for Palestinized ALT. Regrettably, unlike the stance towards Palestine, the Turkish general trends towards Arabs (especially in the secular community) are not much positive although they have had a long history together, have shared plenty of sociocultural features, and currently, are in a great need to get closer for strategic geopolitical and economic gains.

With reference to history, the interaction between Arabs and Turks (the ancestors of the majority of the Turkish people) goes back to the 7th century when Arabs conquered the Turkic region. Although their relationship was not so friendly in the beginning, Arabs and Turks could form an alliance against the Chinese in the Battle of Talas in 751. That battle was a turning point that enabled the two peoples to develop a good connection. Over time, the relationship between Arabs and Turks got more and more intimate, especially in the 8th century when the Turkic peoples in Turkistan embraced Islam in multitudes following their princes who adopted the religion. This relationship became even stronger during the Abbasids time when Turks occupied high army and state positions, paving the way for almost all Turks to adopt Islam. Their relations however reached the peak when the leadership in most of the Islamic territories, including the Arab region, was moved to Turks: the Seljuks, the Mamluks and the Ottomans (Şaban, 2016a, p. 28; Ekıncı, 2015). Throughout that time, Arabs and Turks established strong religious and sociocultural bonds, especially during the Ottoman era.

In most of the Ottoman time under the umbrella of the Caliphate, Arabs and Turks were living together: both were loyal to the Sultan and the empire, sharing all military and civil positions, and enjoying the same rights (Saleh, 2018). Ottomans paid esteem to Arabs, considering them the people of the Prophet Mohammed, and the speakers of the language of the Quran. Arabs, to Ottomans, were ‘brothers in religion’, and they often called them “qavm najib al-Arab” (the noble Arab tribe) (Ekıncı, 2015). The Arab-Turk relations of that time were shaped by mutual cooperation against imperialism under the spiritual authority of the Caliph (Küçükcan, 2010, p. 8). Within such an atmosphere,

therefore, intermarriages between both peoples, and moving between one another territories were very common in which some of nowadays Arabic speakers are of Turkish descendants, and a considerable number of people in Anatolia have Arab roots (Ekıncı, 2015). Throughout this time and within such a political and social atmosphere, Arabs and Turks have shared a great deal of cultural heritage, traditions, and sociocultural values, temperaments and etiquettes as well as linguistic elements (Hökelekli, 2016, p. 392).

Notwithstanding, Arab-Turk relations have severely worsened during the last decades of the 19th century and the early 20th century, for the nationalist trends that arose on both sides (Güleç, 2021, p. 28). After WWI, slogans about the Arab betrayal spread in Turkey, and ideas about Turk colonization were promoted in Arab countries (Ekıncı, 2015). During the republican time, Turkey, for adapting westernization and secularization in an attempt to build a new identity for the state and the people, diverted its interests closer to the West and farther from the Middle East, including the Arab region (Güleç, 2021, pp. 26-27). The alienation between the two sides was further deepened during the Cold War era when Turkey, falling in line with the agenda of its Western allies, established whether indifferent or unfriendly foreign policy towards Arabs [who during that time were in conflict with the Western-supported newly-born state of 'Israel'] (Küçükcan, 2010, p. 9). Unfortunately, such circumstances drew a negative image about Arabs, as traitors and backward, in the Turkish collective mind (Ibid., p. 8-9), that have been in presence even during the 21st century⁷⁴.

For the best of both, the end of the Cold War brought the development of Arab-Turkish relations in which Turkey reshaped its foreign policy towards regional countries, including Arab countries. A new model of relationship based on mutual understanding, mutual respect and trust-building was set by Turkey (Güleç, 2021, p. 27), to challenge its traditional policy of regional isolationism through participating actively in various regional issues (Ibid., p. 47). By the beginning of the 21st century, Turkish Foreign Minister, Ismail Cem (1997-2002), started a more 'regional focused' understanding with the Middle East, replacing the Turkish security-oriented policy towards the region with a

⁷⁴ A survey conducted in 2008 shows that only one third (33.2%) of the Turkish people have a positive attitude towards Arabs while 39.1% have a negative attitude, 20.7% have neutral attitude and 7.0% are undecided (Küçükcan, 2010, p. 14).

more approaching one, that, for instance, set Turkey closer to Iran and Syria, and shook the pillars of Turkish-‘Israeli’ relations (Bayraktar, 2019, p. 27).

As a continuation to Cem’s policy but with a different perspective, Ahmet Davutoglu established the ‘Neo-Ottomanism’ strategy that was based on the newer national identity of Turkey and powered by its historical, cultural and religious ties with its neighboring regions, including the Arab region. Using soft power Turkey developed various principles such as ‘zero problems with neighbors’, ‘rhythmic diplomacy’, ‘strategic depth’, and ‘region-based foreign policy’ (Aydin, 2019, p. 374). Later on, President Erdogan has developed Davutoglu’s strategy into a new strategic vision, ‘Turkish Gaullism’, that has been based on ‘Neo-Ottomanism’ and inspired by the ‘Kemalist’ principles of autonomy and national pride. Based on Turkish smart power, the current Erdogan’s vision seeks for more strategic autonomy vis-à-vis the West, and introduces Turkey as a regional power (Haugom, 2019, p. 210). This new approach of Turkish foreign policy in the 21st century turned the Arab region in the Turkish political mentality from a threatening region into a region of opportunities. This approach, as well, was translated into closer Arab-Turkish relations, manifesting in more cooperation agreements, stronger strategic alliances, more high-level mutual visits and expansion of trade volume (Küçükcan, 2010, p. 20). Nevertheless, the Turkish-Arab relations are still strained, especially with Egypt and Gulf Countries, albeit the great potential of cooperation on different levels: geopolitics, economy and culture (Reuters, 2021). In that context, establishing relations on ‘a win-win basis’, as described by President Erdogan, is likely the best possible current choice for utilizing such opportunities of cooperation at the maximum level (Ibid.).

Away from politics, although the current Turkish public view of Arabs is still negative, a good percentage of the younger generation [especially in the conservative community] have a more positive image (Küçükcan, 2010, p. 15). Therefore, with more communication and interaction between Arab and Turkish younger generations –in the existence of stable political and economic atmospheres–, the future image of Arabs in Turkey is possible to be enhanced, which ALT as a means of Palestinian CD in Turkey is better to build on. In fact, the more Turkey and Arab countries are closer the stronger they

become and (as previously discussed) the stronger position the Palestinian cause gains. Within this framework, encouraging Arab-Turkish affinity on the cultural and popular levels is supposed to be a major goal of ALT as a means of Palestinian CD. ALT in Turkey, accordingly, would be an important effort towards tightening the popular and cultural bonds between Turkey and the Arab world for better cooperation in the interests of the Palestinian cause.

On that basis, evaluating the Turkish stance towards the Arabic language and following up its learning and teaching efforts is fundamental to building a successful Palestinian CD strategy of ALT in Turkey.

For the good of this strategy, the current public stance towards the Arabic language is promising (more specifically in the conservative community) as the previously mentioned survey has shown and as the contributing interviewees in this thesis asserted. Almost half of the people in the survey (49.5%) showed their willingness to learn Arabic, and more than half of them (52%) supported the view that the Arabic language is possible to be the medium of instruction in a university in Turkey (Küçükcan, 2010, p. 17) which was translated into action with the opening of several Arabic-based programs in diverse public and private universities, including Marmara University, 29 May University, Istanbul Aydin University, etc. This is also what the interviewed learners (who all are young people) reflected by showing great enthusiasm towards learning the language. For example, one interviewee, who apparently has a religious background, highlighted her admiration of the language, saying “it is the language of our book [Quran]” (Personal Correspondence via email, October 30, 2021), and another interviewee –from a secular background– showed great love to the language for her appreciation of Arabic music (Personal Correspondence via email, October 29, 2021). Furthermore, Arabic calligraphy is very positively viewed in Turkey, that it is described as ‘the Nobel script’ as Kalou (2016, p. 33) asserts.

As a matter of fact, Arabic derives this high status among the Turkish public from being the language of the Quran as well as from the strong historical and cultural ties Turkish people have had with the language and its speakers. Such historical and cultural factors manifest in the big number of shared vocabularies between Turkish and Arabic. It

is estimated that nowadays spoken and written Turkish contains 6463 words of Arabic origin⁷⁵, and about 2000 Turkish words are used in Arabic spoken dialects⁷⁶ (Şaban, 2016a, p. 29). Additionally, the Turkish interest in the language is also generated from the global status it occupies as one of the UN official languages⁷⁷ and the native language of more than 350 million⁷⁸ people in 22 countries. This is in addition to the geopolitical importance of Arab countries to Turkey and the developing economic, commercial, cultural and political relations they have with one another (Qaddom, 2016, p. 12; Civelek & Qaddom, 2016, p. 53).

Historically, Arabic was most often viewed as a merely religion-affiliated language among Turkish speakers. The most notable first interaction between Turks and the Arabic language was when they embraced Islam in the reign of the Qarakhanids (932-1212) who first used Arabic script in written Turkish. During the Seljuks era, with Persian being the language of instruction at schools, Arabic was only taught for religious purposes (to understand Quran and other Islamic references) (Suçin, 2016a, p. 18). The Ottomans showed a great interest in the language to the extent that they used it as the language of instruction in their traditional schools (1299-1773), and as a second language besides the Ottoman language in their modern public schools (1773-1923). However, in both schools, students learned Arabic syntax and morphology, not for communication but for the sake of understanding the subject-related textbooks and the Islamic references. In early Republican time (1930-1950), ALT went through a period of stagnation, and did not revive until the 1950s, yet for religious purposes as it was always been taught. Since then and until the end of the 20th century, Arabic was only taught in Imam and Hatip Schools as a sub-material within religious subjects such as the illustration of Quran and Hadith (Sayings of the Prophet Mohammed), Islamic Fiqh (jurisprudence), etc. It was also taught at universities in faculties of theology and departments of Arabic language and literature (Suçin, 2016a, p. 18-20). Generally speaking, Turkish speakers, throughout history, dealt

⁷⁵ The Arabic expressions in Turkish are not limited to religious expressions but include expressions used in different contexts- cultural, political, economic and social (Civelek & Qaddom, 2016, p. 53).

⁷⁶ Such as, “برغل” (burgul), “فنجان” (fincan=cup), “بخشیش” (bakış=tips), “باشا” (paşa=Sir), “طابور” (tabur=queue), “بصمة” (basma=fingerprint), “جزمة” (gizma=shows), etc. (Abash & Atali, 2019, pp. 83-84).

⁷⁷ As shown on the UN website (<https://www.un.org/en>).

⁷⁸ According to current statistics this number has reached more than 420 million (World Population Review, 2021).

with Arabic most often as a medium language to learn and understand Quran, but rarely tend to acquire the language to understand and communicate with Arabs. However, the early 21st century development of Arab-Turkish relations in different fields has changed the view of Arabic in Turkey (Şaban, 2016b, p. 165).

The affinity between Arab and Turkish peoples in different fields in the 21st century contributed to the flourishing of ALT in Turkey as never before. Currently, ALT is not limited to Imam and Hatip schools or Arabic and theology departments of universities; it has been expanded to take place in language centers, institutes, and academies that spread all over the country. The numbers of students who are eager to learn Arabic are doubling, student expeditions to Arab countries are on the rise, and recently, Arabic is being taught for specific purposes: commercial, economic, diplomatic, etc. And starting from the school year of 2016-2017, the Turkish Ministry of Education has set Arabic as an elective language course for elementary students (2nd – 4th grades) after a similar previous decision for preparatory and high school students (5th – 12th grades) (Qaddom, 2016, pp. 11-12). In the higher education stage, besides several private universities, 7 public universities contain Arabic language and literature departments, 4 of them provide Master's and PhD degrees⁷⁹ (Suçin, 2016a, pp. 22-24). At theology faculties, students are required to do a preparation year of Arabic language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) before getting accepted; besides, Arabic is the instruction language in 30% of the BA courses there (Ibid., p. 25). Moreover, the Turkish government, in cooperation with the private sector, has established different activities and projects to develop ALT in Turkey, including holding Arabic language competitions⁸⁰, founding Arabic speaking TV channels, sending students to further their Arabic studies in Arab countries, providing Arabic language teacher training courses, publishing Arabic language and literature journal articles⁸¹, holding book fairs, conferences, seminars and workshops

⁷⁹ In 2016 alone 638 Master's thesis and 236 PhD dissertations have been issued at these universities (Uzunoglu, 2016, p. 153).

⁸⁰ The competitions have been held annually since 2010 in which Imam and Hatip students compete in different fields related to Arabic language, including poetry, calligraphy, public speaking, etc.

⁸¹ Especially on Istanbul Journal of Oriental Studies (<http://www.iudergi.com/tr/index.php/edebiyatsarkiyat>), Nusha Journal of Oriental Studies (<http://www.doguedebiyati.com/nusha.htm>) and Journal of Oriental Studies (<http://www.doguedebiyati.com/doguarastirmalari.htm>).

related to the Arabic language, and recruiting native Arabic language teachers⁸² (Civelek & Qaddom, 2020, pp. 27-33).

Referring to the previous evaluation, interdependence and interconnectivity of the Turkish stance towards the Palestinian cause, the Arabic language and Arabs clearly manifest. It also has been shown in the responses of all of the interviewed learners. Therefore, establishing ALT for the Palestinian cause in Turkey seems to advance the Turkish stance towards the three issues as it would benefit them collectively and mutually. To illustrate more, those in Turkey who have a positive image about Palestine would be attracted to learn Palestinized Arabic language (one of the interviewees asserted, that her interest in Palestine has made her more interested in learning Arabic⁸³), and those who are eager to study the Arabic language, within the process of Palestinized ALT, would know more about Palestine and get more aligned to its cause⁸⁴. Both individuals, moreover, would have a better image of Arabs, and would establish a more solid basis of understanding with them since they would be able to communicate with them in their mother tongue (Arabic). On that account, all of the interviewed learners emphasized the importance of learning Arabic in building understanding with Arabs in which they could know them closely and could get directly in touch with them. Eventually, such communication and understanding would pave the way for more cooperation in favor of the Palestinian cause. Accordingly, one of the interviewees assured that by learning Arabic Turkish individuals could share their thoughts and efforts in advocating the Palestinian cause with their Arab counterparts (Personal Correspondence via email, November 1, 2021).

Based on the above discussion, it clearly manifests that 21st-century Turkey is the most prosperous time of ALT, and thus, it is the best time with the best circumstances to build a successful Palestinian CD strategy of ALT in the country. Within this framework,

⁸² According to Council of Higher Education (YÖK) the total number of Arab instructors at Turkish universities until 2015/2016 was 542 (including 19 professors, 22 associated professors, and 166 assistant professors).

⁸³ Personal Correspondence via email, October 29, 2021.

⁸⁴ This is what all of the interviewed learners asserted; although the Palestinian cause was not enough mentioned in the Arabic learning they received, their communication with Palestinians enabled them to better understand the cause.

Palestinized ALT would help modify the traditional thought about the Arabic language as a religious subject, contribute to advancing Arabic as a language of communication between Turkish people and Palestinians (in specific)/ Turkish people and Arabs (in general), and ultimately, enhance the public and governmental support to the cause.

3.3 Palestinized Arabic Language Teaching a Strategy of Palestinian Cultural Diplomacy in 21st-Century Turkey

As aforementioned, the ultimate goal of the Palestinian CD in Turkey is to build a public incubator for the cause that contains all the spectrums of the Turkish society, regardless their ideological or political leanings. Therefore, to contribute to achieving that goal, ALT as a means of Palestinian CD is required to habilitate individuals who are able to advance the Palestinian cause in Turkey. ALT, in this regard, is supposed to provide them with sufficient awareness, that enables them to establish common ground with Palestinians and reflect a good image of Palestine and its people in the Turkish society, to eventually, contribute to keeping the Turkish public and governmental support to the Palestinian cause in spark regardless of the domestic (democratic) political developments in the country.

In that context, Palestinized ALT is expected to provide learners with the needed knowledge, attitudes and skills as well as critical cultural awareness that enable them to mediate between the Palestinian and Turkish communities by evaluating the Palestinian cultural perspectives and practices compared to the Turkish's. Hence, they would be aware of various Palestinian sociocultural elements, including Palestinian social groups, the Palestinian cultural values (e.g., family solidarity and hospitality), and different Palestinian social traditions on diverse occasions, such as marriage, birth or death as well as various feasts and national days. They would also be familiar with Palestinian cultural products, including food, costumes, handicrafts, architecture, music, dances, literature, films, and art. Additionally, they would be able to form a sufficient understanding of the Palestinian lifestyle by evaluating Palestinian diverse cultural traits, including the values of resistance, steadfastness, intifada, diversity and coexistence. Such knowledge, therefore, would immerse them into the Palestinian culture and would stimulate their curiosity about anything Palestinian in which they would be open to interact and engage with the Palestinians with 'intercultural sensitivity' and a high sense of otherness. ALT,

accordingly, would enable them to identify and adopt the Palestinian perspective by seeing through Palestinian eyes, and would make them capable to explain this perspective to the Turkish society, acting as ‘intercultural speakers’ and mediators. Eventually, ALT, by habilitating such individuals, would be a valuable means of Palestinian CD in 21st-century Turkey, that bridges cultural gaps, combats stereotypes and establishes trust between the two peoples, and consequently, creates an environment of mutual understanding, mutual respect, coexistence and cooperation on both, public and state levels.

Within this framework, correcting misconceptions and abolishing stereotypes about the Palestinian cause is an important step towards building understanding and trust between Turkey and Palestine. Therefore, ALT is required to publicize the Palestinian narrative, correcting any misconception about the cause in current Turkey (implicitly similar to any political-related topics, as previously discussed). One misconception, for instance, is that the Palestinian cause is a Middle-Eastern issue that Turkey should avoid. To correct that, ALT is expected to show the aforementioned importance of the cause for the Turkish regional and global position. In that context, ALT, as well, is better to correct any misunderstanding about the Palestinian struggle by showing the real face of the ‘Israeli’ regime, from the Palestinian perspective, as a racist settler-colonial apartheid regime that built its glory over the bodies of innocent Palestinians and the remains of their houses and villages (as previously discussed based on international humanitarian reports). Besides, ALT is required to refute any stereotypes the counter propaganda machine spreads around the world, where Turkey is not an exception. For example, ALT as a means of Palestinian CD in Turkey is necessary to handle the picture that Zionist-influenced mainstream media depicts the Palestinians with (as uncivilized savages), and their resistance (as inexplicable barbaric terrorism) (Qumsiyeh, 2011, pp. 227-228). Another counter propaganda ALT in Turkey is required to refute is that Palestine was barely inhabited, and that Palestinians sold the land to the Jews, so they do not have the right to reclaim it (Saleh, 2020, p. 1). To refute that, ALT is expected to reflect the deep rooting of the Palestinians in the land⁸⁵. In response to that, as well, ALT is recommended to

⁸⁵ The relation between the Palestinians and their land once was metaphorically described by the fact-finding mission dispatched to Palestine after the Basel Zionist Congress in 1897, as follow “the bride is beautiful, but it is married to another man” (Saleh, 2020, p. 2).

present facts about the Jews land purchases that, according to Saleh (2020, p.7), did not exceed 1% of the land, and took place under harsh conditions. To refute that propaganda, moreover, it is necessary for ALT to show the struggle and sacrifices of the Palestinians since 1920, and expose the massacres committed by the Zionist gangs against them until 1948 as well as the continuous human rights violations the Israeli occupation forces are committing against them until the present time.

For the sake of building understanding and trust, as well, direct communication between the learners and Palestinians in the Palestinian dialect is necessary. Therefore, teaching the Palestinian spoken dialect besides Modern Standard Arabic (MSA)⁸⁶ is supposed to be an essential part of ALT as a means of Palestinian CD. However, it is recommended to teach the dialect at advanced levels, as some of the interviewed learners implied. According to Sirhan (2014, p. 88), Palestinian dialect is part of the Syro-Lebanese [or Levantine] family of dialects; it is primarily spoken by over 9.5 million Palestinians, in Palestine, the occupied territories, [and diaspora]. It is, according to Suçin (2016b, p. 123), one of the preferred dialects among the learners of Arabic in Turkey. It is a spoken dialect, so learners need to basically acquire it orally through listening and speaking. Hence, to contain the Palestinian dialect in ALT curricula and activities, it is essential to use a material that reflects everyday life in Palestine. In that context, Palestinian folk tales and Palestinian drama are recommended as very rich resources of the dialect. Folk tales are of different contexts and settings, and are a fun way to learn the dialect as they are mainly told for entertainment⁸⁷ (Sirhan, 2014, p. 48). Drama is also fun and entertaining, and contains a massive register of the Palestinian dialect that addresses various settings and contexts.

Furthermore, for the sake of trust-building and attraction, ALT as a means of Palestinian CD in Turkey is required to provide a good national image of Palestine by

⁸⁶ There is a considerable difference between MSA and varying Arabic spoken dialects. The spoken dialects (including Palestinian) are widely spread and are used in everyday life settings while MSA is predominantly written and is the language of religion, culture, formal education, reportage and formal media (Sirhan, 2014, p. 78).

⁸⁷ Refer to (Sirhan, 2014, pp. 228-240) & (Muhawi & Kanaana, 1989) for some popular examples of Palestinian folk tales.

utilizing the tools of national branding⁸⁸. Iriqat (2019, p. 204) defines national image as the “cognitive representation that a person holds of a given country [and its people]”. Therefore, to positively brand a country, the elements of national (or competitive) identity: people, culture, investments, policy, brands, and tourism, plus history need to be highlighted by providing a good narrative of an attractive national story within a macro soft power endeavor (Iriqat, 2019, p. 203-204; Anholt, 2007).

Applying that to the case of Palestine, it manifests that the current image of the Palestinians in the world, including Turkey⁸⁹, is, as Iriqat (2019, p. 214) asserts, of refugees, jobless and poor victims. Nonetheless, to alter this attitude about the Palestinians and enhance the reputation of Palestine, ALT needs to strengthen the magnetic power of Palestine by providing a nice national story based on its attractive cultural elements (such as cuisine, fashion, literature, art, etc.) as well as its history, religion, accomplishments, human capital, industry, agriculture, products, etc. As aforementioned, the most attractive image ALT could show about Palestine –in Turkey and the globe– is that of resilience, not suffering; creativity, not poverty; and life, not death. Such an image could be shown by highlighting various elements of the Palestinian competitive identity, including the human capital of Palestine who succeeded, with their resilience and creativity, to penetrate the international borders. According to Iriqat (2019, p. 214), they could be the aforementioned leaders of the national liberation movement, children heroes, poets, intellectuals, singers and musicians, Athletes, Artists or any other brave and creative Palestinians. That positive image, as well, could be generated through focusing on the religious holy identity of Palestine (especially in Turkey, as previously discussed). This holy identity is rooted in the land and is a source of pride to the majority of the Palestinians (Muslims and Christians) (Iriqat, 2019, p. 213). Also, the Palestinian popular culture, including its tasty food, stylish wear, *Dabke* dance, amazing hospitality, etc., could be a distinguished element in the attractive image of Palestine Palestinized ALT in Turkey is

⁸⁸ Nation branding is an efficient instrument of attraction; it is a process by which a nation’s images can be created, monitored, evaluated, and proactively managed in order to improve or enhance the country’s reputation among a target international audience (Gudjonsson, 2005 cited in Iriqat, 2019, p. 205).

⁸⁹ One of the interviewed teachers from Gaza mentioned that her Turkish students had stereotypes about the Palestinian society as poor, illiterate and powerless to the extent that some of them offered to send her money. She confirmed that with communication and interaction many of these stereotypes were corrected (Personal Correspondence via email, October 29, 2021).

expected to highlight (Iriqat, 2019, p. 214). Moreover, such an attractive image could be shown by focusing on Palestinized ALT itself as a face to the excellent Palestinian education, which has proved its proficiency inside and outside Palestine. Such proficiency is shown in the low illiteracy rates in Palestine (2.5%)⁹⁰, and also in the developed higher education system in the Palestinian territories. Higher education, in specific, is a positive image of Palestine in which “hosting 13 universities in this turbulent atmosphere and providing state of the art academic and educational services is something to promote for Palestine” (Iriqat, 2019, p. 215).

As a matter of fact, the success of the strategy of ALT as a means of Palestinian CD in Turkey depends greatly on understanding the Turkish cultural and historical traditions, and on integrating its activities with them (Schneider, 2003, pp. 4-5, 7). In other words, ALT as a means of Palestinian CD in Turkey is more functional when it addresses the common ground between the two peoples. Thanks to the centuries-long joint history, Turkish and Palestinian peoples have strong cultural and social bonds (Tr-MFA, n.d.), which are reflected in the vast common ground both share. In this regard, ALT in Turkey is better to spotlight the multiple similarities between Palestinian and Turkish popular cultures, that manifest in different cultural elements, including what the 10 out of the 11 interviewed learners assured: the cultural products (e.g., cuisine, clothes and music), and the social traditions and etiquettes, such as hospitality, family solidarity and cleansing – which are mainly reinforced by the shared Islamic culture–. These similarities, moreover, can be spotted in the Palestinian dialect, which has several Turkish words, such as “أوضة” (oda=room), “بورداية” (perde=curtain), “بالطو” (palto=coat), “بلكي” (belki=maybe), “جمرك” (Gümrük=customs), “تمام” (tamam=OK), “دولاب” (dolap=closet), etc.

More specifically, the Palestinian values of resistance and intifada, and the Turkish values of independence are of the most significant similar cultural traits ALT as a means of Palestinian CD in Turkey is supposed to place emphasis on. Values of independence, as highlighted by the founder of the Turkish Republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, reveal themselves in the willingness to sacrifice for the dignity and honor of independence and

⁹⁰ As shown in the recent stats of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) (<https://pcbs.gov.ps/site/512/default.aspx?lang=en&ItemID=4062>).

freedom every Turkish citizen possesses. The desire to sacrifice for independence, according to Atatürk, delivers comfort and peace to the nation and draws its picture of an honorable nation in the globe; “hence, either independence or death” as he asserted. Values of independence are also in the sweetness of suffering for the sake of independence and freedom. This suffering, according to him, must be taken by the Turkish nation as a lesson to value the honor and glory that independence and freedom bring (T.C.KTB, n.d.). Within this framework, Palestinized ALT in Turkey is required to reflect these values to the sacrifices of the Palestinian people for their dignity and freedom on their long way of intifada and resistance. Accordingly, Palestinized ALT is better to draw similarities between the braveness of the Palestinians in their struggle against the occupation and the heroism of the Turkish soldiers in defending Istanbul against the Allies forces in the Gallipoli campaign (the Battle of *Çanakkale*); between the struggle of Turkish women during the war of independence and the struggle of Palestinian women in defending the Palestinian honor; between the heroism of *Sütçü İmam* in defending the honor of Turkish women and the sacrifices of the Palestinian freedom fighters defending the honor of the nation; between the revolt of the people of *Maraş* against the French occupation and the several revolts of the Palestinian people against the British and Zionist occupations. Such comparison, as well, is better to comprise recent events, including drawing similarities between the sacrifices of the Turkish people facing tanks with bare hands during the 15 July 2016 military coup attempt and the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip standing against ‘Israeli’ heavy-armed soldiers and massive war-machine during the event of the Great March of Return (30 March 2018 and December 2019); between the heroism of Omer Halisdemir who sacrificed his life to thwart the coup attempt and the sacrifices of the Palestinian freedom fighters against the occupation; between the story of Turkish 15-year-old boy, Eren Bülbül who was killed by the terrorist-blacklisted organization PKK and the stories of Mohammad al-Durrah, Fares Auda and other Palestinian children martyrs who were killed by the ‘Israeli’ forces in occupied Palestine.

In accordance with building common ground between Turkey and Palestine, ALT as a means of Palestinian CD in Turkey is also required to highlight the symbols of unity between the two peoples. The most prominent example, in that context, is the symbolism of the *Mavi Marmara* Ship where 10 Turkish citizens sacrificed their lives and many

others suffered from varying causalities in an attempt to break the Gaza Blockade (Turkish National Commission of Inquiry, 2011, pp. 17-26). This event is supposed to be a symbol of the Palestinian-Turkish unity (on popular basis) in which the Turkish values of justice have met with the Palestinian values of steadfastness, to build a strong bond between the two peoples and emphasize the Turkish commitment to the Palestinian cause.

Within the strategy of ALT as a means of Palestinian CD in 21st-century Turkey, establishing understanding, communication and cooperation, building common ground and trust, and highlighting symbols of unity as well as providing a good image of Palestine in Turkey, all aims at maintaining Palestinian-Turkish cultural and public ties, and ultimately, enhancing the Turkish public incubator of the Palestinian cause. Most of that job, accordingly, is supposed to be done by the learners themselves who are expected to be oriented and aligned to the Palestinian cause. Hence, they would act as mediators between the Palestinian and Turkish communities, and would be unofficial native ambassadors and representatives of the cause in Turkey. They would be predominantly young people who are counted on as the future leaders of Turkey and who would form the most efficient electoral power, who as well, are expected to be the most active group of the Turkish society, that could widely reach to other groups. With such individuals, the strong support to the Palestinian cause in Turkey would be preserved as far as possible and as long as democracy is safeguarded, no matter what political developments would take place in the country. These individuals, moreover, would keep the Palestinian-Turkish relations as strong and long-lasting as possible for the best of both countries.

In support of the above argument, the interviewed Palestinian teachers and Turkish learners asserted that although the current ALT in Turkey does not include enough material about the Palestinian cause⁹¹, it enabled the learners to communicate better with Palestinians, and thus, they could understand the cause better. Accordingly, 10 out of the 11 learners confirmed that learning Arabic helped them to communicate better with Palestinians through taking lessons with Palestinian teachers, making a lot of Palestinian friends and following Palestine-affiliated media platforms (such as Aljazeera as one of

⁹¹ All of the 3 teachers and 6 learners asserted that the curricula they dealt with did not include anything about Palestine or its cause. The other 5 learners mentioned that the cause was dealt with very rarely in extracurricular activities that were chosen by some teachers.

them mentioned⁹²). All teachers highlighted the significance of human communication in creating a strong bond; for instance, one teacher mentioned that she used to give her learners real examples from her personal life, and they used to teach her some Turkish words and laugh when she pronounced them incorrectly (Personal Correspondence via email, October 29, 2021). Human communication was also shown in the interviewed learners' responses, highlighting their interaction with their Palestinian friends. One interviewee mentioned that her friends in Jerusalem used to send her photos of *Al-Aqsa* Mosque, and they once sent her a photo with her name written on a piece of paper in front of the Dome of the Rock Mosque which had a great influence on her, as she explained (Personal Correspondence via email, October 30, 2021). Communication between teachers and learners about the Palestinian cause is not only in class but also online; all teachers asserted that they interact with their students on social media in support of the Palestinian cause, and 2 out of 3 teachers mentioned that they encourage their students to follow the news of Palestine. As a result of that communication and interaction, all the learners assured that they could know more about Palestine, the Palestinian society and its culture, and accordingly, they were able to understand the Palestinian cause better. 5 learners highlighted that through the interaction with the Palestinian cause in Arabic, they could correct some of the stereotypes they had while the other 6 respondents asserted that they had no stereotypes about Palestine. Accordingly, 8 learners emphasized that learning Arabic helped them to get more aligned with the Palestinian cause, and another one assured it made him understand it better while the other two stated that they were already aligned with the cause even before learning Arabic. All of them, hence, highlighted the influence of learning Arabic in enhancing their role as native ambassadors for the cause in Turkey in which it fostered their willingness to be mediators between the Palestinian and Turkish societies, made them more capable to explain the cause to the people around them (one learner stated that he reports the news of Palestine he learns from Arabic platforms to the people around him⁹³, another one assured the importance of interaction with the Palestinians to better understand and explain the cause to others⁹⁴, and a third

⁹² Personal Correspondence via email, November 01, 2021.

⁹³ Personal Correspondence via email, October 29, 2021.

⁹⁴ Personal Correspondence via email, October 30, 2021.

confirmed the usefulness of Arabic that has enabled her to read more sources than the people around her to better explain the cause to them⁹⁵), and to advocate it in their surrounding (one learner assured that following the news of Palestine in Arabic enabled her to use social media to support the Palestinian cause more influentially⁹⁶; another one asserted that Turkish individuals with good knowledge of Arabic could report live news of Palestine faster than Turkish news corporations⁹⁷; and a third emphasized that learning Arabic made her more engaged with the cause in which she is now an active participant in the rallies that take place in Turkey for Palestine and Jerusalem⁹⁸).

As previously discussed, the strategy of Palestinized ALT as a means of CD is a 2-way street in which ALT in Turkey would attract learning the Turkish language in Palestine, which in turn, would advance Turkish CD there. Factually, the Turkish Yunus Emre Institute is already active in Palestine since 2014 where it holds different cultural activities, including delivering Turkish language courses. The Turkish cultural institute already has two branches in Jerusalem and Ramallah, and cooperates with various universities in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank in their efforts of Teaching the Turkish language. According to the director of the Institute's Jerusalem Branch, Ibrahim Furkan Ozdemir, over 5000 Palestinians took Turkish language courses in the institute in the period between 2014-2018. Palestinian students, as he asserted, learn the Turkish language for several reasons, including studying at Turkish universities, doing trade with Turkey, working in tourism between the 2 countries, or simply for admiring Turkey and its language. The cultural activities they hold, according to him, have influenced tourism between Turkey and Palestine in which the numbers of tourists between the two countries are on the rise (Boyras & Furat, 2018).

Within this framework, Palestinized ALT, in enhancing communication and cooperation between the two countries, manifests as a booster to the efforts of Yunus Emre Institute in Palestine. Hence, with Palestinized ALT in nowadays Turkey, the number of Palestinians studying at Turkish universities, doing trade there or visiting for tourism

⁹⁵ Personal Correspondence via email, October 29, 2021.

⁹⁶ Personal Correspondence via email, October 30, 2021.

⁹⁷ Personal Correspondence via email, November 01, 2021.

⁹⁸ Personal Correspondence via email, October 30, 2021.

would increase, which consequently, would advance Turkish leverage in Palestine, and maintain its role in the Palestinian cause. The advance Turkish role in the Palestinian cause, accordingly, would positively influence the Turkish strategy of approaching Arab and Muslim populations in which supporting the Palestinian cause would reinforce the Turkish legitimacy in the Arab and Muslim worlds, and thus, foster its regional and international position (as previously discussed).

For the best of Turkey, moreover, Palestinized ALT as a 2-way street would positively influence the bilateral relations between Turkey and Arab countries, which would turn in benefit to the Turkish regional cultural, economic and political aspirations. In this regard, habilitating Turkish officials, intellectuals and entrepreneurs who have a good command of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) in general and Palestinian Arabic in specific⁹⁹ would enable Turkey to access the social and political hubs of the Arab world. With such individuals, Turkey would maintain better understanding with Arab communities, and thus, develop better communication and cooperation with Arab countries, which in turn would be for the benefit of the Palestinian cause.

The good understanding, communication and cooperation between Turkey and the Arab world would, therefore, reinforce the good image of Turkey among the Arab populations, and positively influence its intellectual leverage in the region. This, accordingly, would increase the attractiveness of Turkish culture in which the turnout of Arabs towards Turkish language learning and Turkish drama¹⁰⁰ would increase. ALT in Turkey, as well, would top up the numbers of Arab students at Turkish universities, and ultimately, enhance Turkish cultural soft power in the region.

All of that, consequently, would bring economic developments to both in which maintaining trust-building between Turkey and Arab countries would promote the already good view of Turkey in the Arab eyes¹⁰¹ and would enhance its image as a trustworthy

⁹⁹ The Palestinian dialect as a Levantine (or Syro-Lebanese) dialect is understood everywhere in the Arab world, and is also very respected for its affiliation with the Palestinian cause that is widely supported among the Arab public.

¹⁰⁰ There is a relation of positivity between watching Turkish drama and learning Turkish language (Abash & Atali, 2019, p. 156).

¹⁰¹ Turkish foreign policy is the most preferable to the Arab populations as the figures of Arab Center Washington D.C. (2021, p. 18) show.

country. Such an image, therefore, would turn Turkey into a more attractive and secure place, and would increase the Arab trust in its citizens. Hence, for the prosperity of both, the already good trade exchange rates between Turkey and Arab countries¹⁰² would jump. Besides, the linguistic and cultural barriers that hinder investment between Turkey and Arab countries would be removed, to advance the economic growth of both.

In addition to the intellectual leverage and economic benefits, ALT in Turkey would facilitate, it would also enhance the Turkish political leverage as a rising power in the region. Accordingly, Turkey, utilizing the Arabic language (the language of Quran), would be able to approach more aligned Muslim publics and to some extent governments (especially in the democratic Muslim state), presenting itself as a good Islamic model, and a reliable regional power.

In fact, the good relationship between Turkey (the regional power) and Arab countries is of crucial importance to the Palestinian cause as both are essential parts of its strategic depth. For that, the strategy of ALT as a means of Palestinian CD is strongly recommended to contribute to strengthening Turkish-Arab relations.

Nevertheless, the aforementioned historical and political events in the late 19th century and the early 20th century, have depicted Arabs with a negative image in the eyes of Turkish people, and hence, have caused a decades-long lack of communication and understanding between both peoples. This lack of communication and understanding, have even worsened that unfavorable image about Arabs in the Turkish collective mind, as it has been traced in Turkish historiography, cinema and mass media. Although Arabs were sometimes presented in a good way in history books (as combatant, hospitable, generous, true to their word, protective of their relatives and the weak) and in cinema (as sincere, warm and trustworthy, especially in the roles of *Arap Bacı*¹⁰³), they have primarily been labelled with a negative image. In history textbooks, Arabs have generally been portrayed as traitorous, dirty, filthy, male-dominant, disrespectful of women's rights, nomadic, Bedouin, prone to blood feuds, plunderers, authoritarian and oppressors

¹⁰² Trade exchange between Turkey and Arab countries in 2019 (before Covid-19 crisis) have reached high rates with \$171B export volume, and \$202B import volume (CNN Arabic, 2020).

¹⁰³ Nonetheless, the role of *Arap Bacı* itself has usually been presented as a black housemaid with broken Turkish!

(Küçükcan, 2010, p. 10). Turkish cinema has depicted Arabs as traitors when addressing the WWI events, and it has most often represented them with the image of the oil-rich businessmen and arms traders who have usually been presented as unmannered, alcoholic, lustful, criminal and fraudulent (Ibid., p. 11). Additionally, the dominant view of Arab societies in mass media, especially during the 90s, has been of negative, reactionary, conservative, authoritarian and repressive (Ibid., p. 13).

Such negative depiction of Arabs as well as the lack of communication and understanding during that time have caused a big cultural gap that ALT in 21st-century Turkey is required to bridge, as much as possible. For that, it is necessary for ALT to enhance communication and understanding between the Turkish people and Arabs. With understanding and communication between both, a more authentic image of Arabs in the Turkish collective mind would be drawn.

In accordance with that, ALT in Turkey is possible to contribute to changing the unfavorable image about Arabs, by highlighting similarities, abolishing stereotypes, setting up communication, building trust and maintaining cooperation. Highlighting the aforementioned cultural, historical and linguistic similarities between Arabs and Turkish people in ALT curricula and activities would establish wide common ground between the two communities, and thus, construct a strong basis of mutual understanding. The mutual understanding between the two communities could be fostered, as well, by making Turkish learners more familiar with the differences between the two societies, which consequently, would abolish any stereotypes they have about Arabs. Stereotypes, as previously discussed, are usually generated due to the lack of communication. In this regard, Turkish learners, by acquiring the Arabic language and maintaining communication with the Arab community, would be able to draw a real-life and more authentic image of Arabs which would help them to correct any stereotypes they have. Hence, acting as ‘intercultural speakers’, they would reflect the real image of the Arab community to Turkish people and vice versa, which then, would contribute to building mutual trust between the two communities, and thus, maintain cooperation on both public and state levels.

On that account, all the interviewed learners assured that learning Arabic enabled them to build better understanding and trust with Arabs, and establish more cooperation with them. Learning Arabic, accordingly, enabled them to know more about the Arab culture (e.g., their thoughts, traditions, literature), have more knowledge about their life, follow their news, witness their conditions closely through communication and travelling to Arab countries, and see things through their perspective. As a result of this close communication in the Arabic language, 8 of them asserted that they could correct some stereotypes they or people around them had about Arabs while one was hesitant, another said ‘no’, and a third assured the importance of close interaction besides learning Arabic to better correct stereotypes. Moreover, 10 learners emphasized that they could discover plenty of similarities between Turkish and Arab cultures; besides, 10 learners could communicate better with Arabs, and also 10 of them assured that learning Arabic enabled them to build more trust with Arabs (one interviewee stated that through communication he knew Arabs better and loved them more¹⁰⁴, another assured that communication between cultures establishes a common culture that fosters trust among them¹⁰⁵, and a third stated that understanding what people say always helps in trusting them¹⁰⁶). Eventually, 10 of the interviewed learners assured that learning Arabic enabled them to cooperate with their Arab counterparts in different fields (social, cultural and political) especially regarding the advocacy of the Palestinian cause.

Strong LT-influenced collaboration and cooperation between Turkey and Arab countries could be a role model that fosters collaboration and cooperation in the Muslim world (the strategic depth of the Palestinian cause) on a plurilingual basis. In other words, Teaching Arabic (the common language of all Muslim countries) as a *lingua franca* everywhere in the Muslim world besides teaching various languages of different Muslim countries (such as Turkish, Persian, Urdu, Indonesian, Malay, etc.) in every Muslim country could establish a strong basis of plurilingualism in the Muslim world that would enhance communication and cooperation amongst them. With such a plurilingual environment, the possibility of cultural integration between different Muslim

¹⁰⁴ Personal Correspondence via email, November 01, 2021.

¹⁰⁵ Personal Correspondence via email, October 30, 2021.

¹⁰⁶ Personal Correspondence via email, October 29, 2021.

communities would be higher. Referring to the aforementioned plurilingual approach of the EU, plurilingualism in the Muslim world would facilitate the free movement of information, ideas and people as well as habilitate individuals who are free from any prejudice, intolerance or xenophobia, and establishe a common intellectual identity of a supreme community that is pluralist, participatory and democratic, and that stands for the shared values. This eventually, would pave the way to a stronger political alliance between their countries based on shared interests and for common causes, including the Palestinian cause (the central cause).

Derived from the above, ALT in Turkey manifests as a brilliantly efficient strategy of Palestinian CD; its fruits are possible to be reaped not only in Turkey but also all around the Muslim world. Therefore, this thesis strongly emphasizes concerting all the Palestinian official and unofficial efforts for the utmost wielding of that strategy.

3.4 Wielding Arabic Language Teaching as a Means of Cultural Diplomacy for the Palestinian Cause in Turkey

The intellectual, economic and political weight of the Arabic language, within Turkey and on a global scale, turns ALT to be a very efficient generator of soft power that attains the best functionality of Palestinian CD in the country. Moreover, the comprehensiveness of LT as a means of CD, which directly or indirectly comprises the other means within its activities, maintains ALT momentum as an influential means of Palestinian CD. Accordingly, it is crucially important for Palestinian official and unofficial CD bodies to utilize the attractiveness of the Arabic language in Turkey and the comprehensiveness of ALT, for the sake of enhancing the public incubator of the cause in the country. Therefore, Palestinizing ALT contents, fostering partnerships and student/teacher mobility and exchanges, and activating ALT on digital platforms (that can reach a great variety of the Turkish society) could greatly contribute to the utmost wielding of ALT as a means of Palestinian CD in 21st-century Turkey.

In this regard, the strategy of ALT as a means of Palestinian CD is better to be implemented through arm's length institutions and/or independent bodies and entities. In this regard, the State of Palestine is supposed to assign the task of Palestinized ALT in Turkey to a Palestinian cultural institution, similar to British Council, AMIDEAST, etc., that can work in cooperation with the Turkish Yunus Emre Institute on language and

culture exchange programs. In this regard, 2 out of 3 interviewed teachers and 8 out of 11 interviewed learners supported the idea of having a place in Turkey that presents Palestinized Arabic language. Nevertheless, the limitation of the capability of the Palestinian formal diplomacy (Awad, 2015, p. 22) and the fact that CD is not a monopoly to the Palestinian official sector, turn Palestinian unofficial institutes, NGOs and universities into major actors in that venture.

In fact, the official and unofficial Palestinian cultural, educational and academic institutions could crucially advance Palestinized ALT in Turkey through different activities, such as providing Palestinized ALT courses, providing Arabic language departments at partner universities with Palestinized ALT material, developing Palestinized ALT curricula, training Palestinian language teachers, implementing student and teacher mobility programs, and holding different language events related to Palestine (e.g., competitions, seminars, open days, book fairs, etc.)

In that context, Palestinized Arabic language content (built on ICC criteria) is deemed of great significance for the best wielding of ALT as a means of Palestinian CD in Turkey. However, the serious shortage of ALT material that suits international learners (Fassetta et al., 2020, p. 127) –let alone the availability of Palestinized ALT material for Turkish learners, as the interviewees assured– puts more responsibility on the Palestinian representatives in Turkey to provide innovative and engaging Palestinized ALT material that suits Turkish learners. It is essential for such Palestinized ALT material to reinforce the outcomes of ICC –in habilitating the best individuals and setting up the best environment for more functional Palestinian CD– by providing sufficient cultural knowledge, establishing common ground, providing an attractive image, diminishing stereotypes, setting up understanding and enhancing trust-building as well as promoting critical thinking, and fostering otherness, diversity and coexistence. For that, Palestinian cultural, educational and academic institutes could develop Turkey-affiliated Palestinized ALT curricula that contain Palestinian culture and teaches Palestinian dialect (2 out of 3 interviewed teachers and 9 out of 11 interviewed learners supported this venture). They also could cooperate with other ALT institutions in Turkey to add Palestinian content to their curricula and activities.

Additionally, the optimal wielding of ALT as a means of CD for the Palestinian cause requires establishing partnerships and facilitating student\teacher exchanges between Palestine and Turkey (all of the interviewed teachers and learners supported language learning exchanges between Turkey and Palestine). Partnerships could be on different levels: between Palestinian and Turkish arm's length or unofficial cultural and educational institutions, or between academic institutions, including universities, colleges and schools. Based on those partnerships, various programs could be implemented, including teacher and student mobility and exchange programs.

In this regard, training Palestinian teachers to be qualified to teach Arabic to speakers of Turkish is of great need for the success of Palestinized ALT programs in Turkey. Those teachers would act as unofficial Palestinian cultural diplomats who would be looked up to by students as representatives of Palestine and the Palestinian culture (2 out of 3 teachers assured that). They would also act as mediators between the Palestinian and Turkish cultures in which they would present the Arabic language as a space of communication and interaction, that establishes a stronger friendship and better harmony between the two peoples. In that context, 2 interviewed teachers assured they encourage their students to communicate with Palestinians; all of them present the Palestinian culture to their students (one of the teachers used to send them real videos of her mother's cooking, and photos of her traditional clothes¹⁰⁷); enrich their students' knowledge of Palestine, and help them to better understand the Palestinian cause (For instance, the same teacher who is from Gaza mentioned that, during some of the online classes, her students could hear the sounds of children crying during Israeli bombardment and their chanting when Palestinian rockets were launched, which according to her could make them sense the steadfastness of the people of Gaza¹⁰⁸). Moreover, all of the teachers assured that they could correct some of the stereotypes their students used to have about Palestine; besides, all of them asserted that they try to explain the Palestinian cause to their students, and build bridges of communication between the Turkish and Palestinian societies.

¹⁰⁷ Personal Correspondence via email, October 29, 2021.

¹⁰⁸ Personal Correspondence via email, October 29, 2021.

Moreover, to build a wider space of communication and interaction, Turkish student mobility programs to Palestine are strongly recommended. Accordingly, students, accessing the hub of the Palestinian society and immersing themselves into the Palestinian culture, would be able to form a wholistic real-life image of the Palestinian people and their lifestyle. Hence, they would build a better understanding of the Palestinian culture, which in turn, would enable them to be better intercultural speakers and mediators between the Palestinian and Turkish communities, and also, unofficial native diplomats, who would emphasize the existence of the Palestinian cause as one of the major causes in Turkey. Nonetheless, mobility to Palestine might face severe restrictions due to the isolation policies of the 'Israeli' occupation against the Palestinians (as one of the interviewed learners asserted, "mobility would be in one way because sending students to Palestine is difficult"¹⁰⁹), especially in the Gaza Strip and Jerusalem. Hence, fetching digital alternatives is of great need.

Digitalization, that penetrates the physical barriers of the 'Israeli' regime, manifests as an efficient instrument of wielding ALT as a means of Palestinian CD in Turkey through facilitating virtual mobility and distance learning. In response to physical immobility, digital platforms can facilitate 'virtual mobility' where Turkish learners would be able to freely communicate, interact and establish 'virtual relationships' with their counterparts in Palestine (Fassetta et al., 2017, p. 137). Moreover, digitalization could make language distance learning possible by the means of websites, applications and social media platforms. In this regard, the Palestinian entities responsible for ALT in Turkey are required to invest in establishing digital platforms of Palestinized ALT¹¹⁰ where classes could be provided and materials could be presented to both teachers and students. Moreover, they are recommended to sponsor individuals and influencers on social media (e.g., YouTube, Facebook, Instagram)¹¹¹. Such individuals would be able to attract a greater number of Turkish audiences by hosting Palestinized ALT shows. Using

¹⁰⁹ Personal Correspondence via email, October 30, 2021.

¹¹⁰ The websites of IUG Arabic Center (<http://palarabic.iugaza.edu.ps/>), Sebil Center (<https://www.sebilcenter.com/>), The Excellence Center (<https://excellencecenter.org/study-arabic-in-palestine/>) and Hona Al-Quds platform (<https://www.honaalquds.org/>) could be good examples of Palestinized ALT virtual platforms.

¹¹¹ Maha (<https://www.youtube.com/user/LearnArabicwithMaha>) could be a good role model of utilizing ALT on social media to promote Palestine.

Turkish as a bridge language, they would, more specifically, draw the attention of Turkish young people to both the Arabic language and Palestine by presenting Palestinian linguistic and cultural contents in an attractive and interactive way. Digitalizing Palestinized ALT, eventually, would enable Turkish learners to keep up with the Arabic language, stay attached to the Palestinian culture, and follow up live events in Palestine on the ground.

All in all, wielding ALT as a means of Palestinian CD in 21st-century Turkey is supposed to be an ongoing strategic process that requires concerted efforts of various Palestinian official and unofficial stakeholders as well as time, patience and dedication. And to reap the best of its fruits, it is necessary to be conducted within the Palestinian cultural soft power endeavours in which its attractiveness and efficiency rely on the commitment of the Palestinian domestic and foreign policies to the values it calls for (e.g., diversity, coexistence, intifada, resistance, etc.) Eventually, wielding ALT as a means of CD for the Palestinian cause in the current Turkish arena is better to fall in line with the Turkish contemporary cultural and political environment, to efficiently reach all ideological and political variants of the society. Such approach, additionally, would help in achieving the ultimate goal of the Palestinian CD in the country that is primarily about enhancing the public incubator of the Palestinian cause and keeping the governmental support in spark regardless of the political changes –as far as possible and as long as democracy is safeguarded–.

CONCLUSION

Throughout history, diplomacy, as a genuine practice of international relations, went through many phases. Associated with the *ancient regime* it was previewed as a term related to absolutism and aristocracy, and a practice based on intrigues, war and alliance. New diplomacy, nevertheless, has changed that traditional perception of diplomacy to associate it more with openness, cooperation and peacemaking. Within this new atmosphere, CD has arisen in three approaches: ‘public diplomacy approach’, which goes under the foreign policy goals and practices; ‘the strategic communications approach’, which is for strategic interests and practiced in accordance with the arm’s length concept; and ‘cultural relations approach’, which is detached from political aims and is practiced in a popular basis. These approaches are of the three dimensions of the current CD, that functions holistically combining them all. Affected by the old version of diplomacy and affixed more to the public diplomacy approach, CD is possible to be attributed to colonialism, imperialism and hegemony. It has been practiced by several countries in their power quest, including France, the UK, the USA and China. In that context, LT as a means of CD is exploited to foster language imperialism and hegemony, functioning as a tool of dominance, that leads to the disfranchising of the people who do not have access to the dominant language and the death of minority languages.

Apart from that dark side of CD, ALT as a means of CD in this thesis is more attributed to new diplomacy, that comprises the instruments of formal and informal CD, and that combines between the strategic communication approach and the cultural relations approach. It enhances diversity, cooperation and coexistence, and facilitates the building of bridges of communication and understanding based on the essence of uniformity of human language, the universality of LT and the concept of plurilingualism.

In relation to Turkey and Palestine, ALT as a means of CD is a two-way street that strengthens bilateral relations, advances the interests of both countries and maintains a strong bond between the two peoples and governments. It enables the two peoples and

countries to discover and extend common ground by bridging cultural gaps, combating stereotypes, developing mutual understanding and respect, fostering communication, maintaining trust-building and enhancing cooperation. And in regard to the Palestinian cause in Turkey, ALT as a means of Palestinian CD is a valuable instrument of spreading awareness about Palestine and its cause and drawing a good image of Palestine and its people, to ultimately contribute to preserving the Turkish public incubator of the cause and keeping the Turkish public and governmental support in spark regardless the partisan developments in power.

Accordingly, reaching the utmost functionality of that endeavor depends profoundly on building a strategy of Palestinized ALT as a means of Palestinian CD in Turkey that works in accordance with the ICC standards, and that enables learners to reach the semi-native level of linguistic performance. ICC, accordingly, will provide Turkish learners with the necessary knowledge, attitudes and skills that are crucial for the creation of an ideal environment for functional Palestinian CD in Turkey. Within the framework of ICC-based Palestinized ALT, learners will be familiar with the Palestinian culture and society through being acquainted with the Palestinian cultural features, traditions, values and products as well as the postulates of the cause. They will have the attitudes of curiosity (to know more about Palestine and the Palestinian cause), openness towards the Palestinian people, readiness to evaluate and modify different Palestinian and Turkish cultural values and beliefs, and the willingness to interact with Palestinians and engage in the Palestinian society with a high sense of otherness and intercultural sensitivity. Moreover, they will acquire the skills of interpreting and relating as well as enjoying sufficient critical cultural awareness, that are necessary for enhancing their role as intercultural speakers by which they will be able to explain the Palestinian cultural perspective to the Turkish society and mediate between the Palestinian and Turkish cultures and societies. With such knowledge, attitudes and skills learners will reach the level of linguistic performance that enables them to master the use of the Arabic language, fully acquire the Palestinian culture, and reach the hub of the Palestinian society. Consequently, they will act as bridges strengthening the ties between the Palestinian and Turkish societies, and unofficial native ambassadors and representatives for the Palestinian cause in Turkey. And for being mainly young people –who are counted on to

be the future leaders and are the most efficient electoral power –, they will be able to efficiently contribute to preserving the strong Turkish popular and governmental support to the Palestinian cause.

Moreover, for a more functional strategy of Palestinized ALT as a means of Palestinian CD in Turkey, the richness of Arabic as both a religion-affiliated language and a language of communication is extremely needed. Being the language of the Quran (the holiest book in Islam) and the language of the prophet Mohammed and his companions who established a 14-century historical and civilizational heritage, the Arabic language is greatly respected and its learning is widely desired by a great population of the +2 billion Muslims, including the Turkish 79.8 million Muslims (99.20% of the country's population)¹¹². Besides, the Arabic script is currently used for writing several languages in the Muslim world, including Persian, Urdu, Pashto, etc. However, the weight of Arabic is not only derived from being a religion-affiliated language, but also from being the language of communication to a population of 420 million who live in 22 countries with a central geopolitical location in one of the most political and economic influential regions in the world, 'MENA' (where Turkey is an important regional power). Its political weight as well is derived from being one of the six official languages of the UN.

However, ALT that is only based on Arabic being solely a religion-affiliated language cannot achieve the objectives of CD, and usually get the language involved in ideological disputes, especially in the culturally-polarized Turkey. In that context, ALT that is for merely understanding Islamic references hinders the real function of LT which is mainly about communication. Therefore, without real communication between Turkish learners and Palestinians, ALT will not gain its full functionality as a means of Palestinian CD in Turkey. For the worse, it will get involved in the ongoing ideological and political dispute between seculars and conservatives, which is already the case of ALT in Turkey, given the criticism of the secular community to the current widespread of the Arabic language in the country. In this regard, teaching Arabic as a language of communication for the Palestinian cause contributes to changing this perception of Arabic, and helps in

¹¹² According to <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/muslim-population-by-country> the population of Muslims has reached over 2 billion in 2021, %4.60 of them are in Turkey.

promoting ALT in a wider range of the Turkish society, and thus, enhances the role of ALT as an efficient means of Palestinian CD that reaches the majority of Turkish people regardless their political or ideological leanings.

In fact, the great Turkish public and governmental alignment with the Palestinian cause besides the richness of Arabic and the growing desire for its learning in 21st-century Turkey create a more welcoming environment, that guarantees the success of ALT as a means of Palestinian CD in Turkey. The indicators of this foreseen success also appear in the responses of the interviewed Palestinian teachers and Turkish learners who asserted that although current ALT does not have enough content related to Palestine or the Palestinian cause, their communication with Palestinians in Arabic has enabled them to gain more awareness about Palestine and get more aligned with the Palestinian cause. Therefore, If ALT without enough Palestinian content succeeded to generate solidarity with the Palestinian cause, Palestinized ALT –which presents the Palestinian cultural features and products, focuses on the postulates of the Palestinian cause and creates an attractive image of Palestine– would be a greater success on a wider range.

Another indicator of the success of Palestinized ALT in advancing the Palestinian cause in Turkey is that it is a comprehensive means of CD, that is on one hand part of elite (or high) culture, and on the other is able to utilize different means of popular culture. Being a high culture element, ALT appeals to the elites who are more likely the future entrepreneurs and leaders of Turkey. On that account, its influence is much deeper and longer-lasting than other elements of popular culture, for its efficiency in addresses minds with facts more than fetching temporary emotions. Nonetheless, the efficiency of ALT is not limited to elite culture, it goes further to comprehensively utilize other elements of popular culture, such as movies, music, and other mass entertainment products. Such comprehensiveness in comprising elements of elite and popular cultures allows ALT to attain the greatest soft power any means of CD are possible to reach. The comprehensiveness of ALT as a means of CD also manifests in the wide range of its activities, settings, instruments and actors. Its activities vary (curricular and extracurricular), and are possible to be held on different platforms (digitalized and non-digitalized) with a variety of instruments (e.g., textbooks, mobile apps, websites, etc.).

They comprise regular classes, competitions, roleplaying, debates, performances, book fairs, etc. The actors of ALT as a means of CD vary, as well. They can be formal or informal individuals and entities: individuals such as diplomats, teachers, digital influencers, etc. and entities, such as arm's length institutes, academic institutions, educational or cultural centers, and NGOs.

Along with the functional comprehensiveness of ALT as a means of Palestinian CD in Turkey, the fruits of this brilliantly efficient Palestinian strategy are not only reaped in Turkey and Palestine, but also all around the Arab and Muslim worlds. With reference to the Arab-Muslim depth postulate of the Palestinian cause, contributing to strengthening Arab-Turkish relations is considered a major objective of Palestinized ALT as a means of Palestinian CD. By highlighting similarities, abolishing stereotypes, setting up communication, building trust and maintaining cooperation, ALT is possible to contribute to tightening the cultural, political and economic relations between Turkey and the Arab world, which in turn, will be for better collaboration and cooperation in advocating the Palestinian cause. This LT-influenced affinity, collaboration and cooperation between Turkey and Arab countries is expected to be a role model for other countries in the Muslim world (the strategic depth of Palestine), fostering their alliance on a plurilingual basis for their common interests and shared causes (including the Palestinian cause).

Overall, the strategy of Palestinized ALT as a means of Palestinian CD in 21st-century Turkey, within this collective framework, maintains its efficiency in small steps (slowly but surely), operating as a cog in the machine of Palestinian diplomacy, that in turn, works along with other political and economic instruments of Palestinian smart power. Accordingly, ALT cannot work alone; it must be accompanied with other diplomatic endeavors, and fall within a Palestinian macro-effort that contains other political and economic instruments, and that goes along with the general foreign and domestic policies, serving the Palestinian national interests, gaining solidarity with the Palestinian cause and falling in line with the Palestinian values, sacrifices and aspirations. ALT, on that account, is an ongoing long-term CD strategy, that requires dedication, time and patience as well as the collaboration and cooperation of different official and unofficial stakeholders.

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