

**An-Najah National University
Faculty of Graduate Studies**

**The Role of Incorporating Elements of
Material Culture in Palestinian Curriculum
for the Enhancement of Students' Reading
Comprehension from English Teachers'
Perspectives in Jenin District**

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Dedication

I humbly dedicated this thesis to:

- Allah Almighty for giving me passion and patience to accomplish this thesis...
- My sweet and loving father and mother whose affection, love, encouragement and prays of day and night make me able to get such success and honor...
- My sisters Aya and Raya whose untiring support and assistance have made possible the fruition of my efforts...
- My brothers Mohammed and Lutfi for their abundant loving and continuous encouragement...
- My beloved husband Ayham for his endless love and for encouraging me to believe in myself...
- Hard working and respected teachers, doctors and friends for their love and genuine support...

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الإقرار

أنا الموقعة أدناه، مقدمة الرسالة التي تحمل العنوان:

دور ادخال العناصر الثقافية المادية في المناهج الفلسطينية لتعزيز القراءة والاستيعاب لدى الطلاب من وجهة نظر معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية في مقاطعة جنين

The Role of Incorporating Elements of Material Culture in Palestinian Curriculum for the Enhancement of Students' Reading Comprehension from English Teachers' Perspectives in Jenin District

أقر بأن ما اشتملت عليه هذه الرسالة إنما هي نتاج جهدي الخاص، باستثناء ما تمت الإشارة إليه حيثما ورد، وان هذه الرسالة ككل، أو أي جزء منها لم يقدم من قبل لنيل أية درجة علمية أو بحث علمي أو بحثي لدى أية مؤسسة تعليمية أو بحثية أخرى.

Declaration

The undersigned hereby certifies that the work provided in this thesis unless otherwise referenced, is the researcher's own work, and has not been submitted elsewhere for any other degree or qualification.

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Date: **30/05/2021** التاريخ

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The Role of Incorporating Elements of Material culture in Palestinian Curriculum for the Enhancement of Students' Reading Comprehension from English Teachers' perspectives in Jenin District

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Abstract

This descriptive study aimed at investigating the role of incorporating elements of material culture in Palestinian curricula for both primary and secondary stages for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from the perspectives of English teachers in Jenin district. To achieve this aim, the researcher developed a questionnaire and distributed it among the participant of the study. Teacher's 'gender, academic qualification, the teaching levels and training courses on teaching culture were taken into account.

The research population consisted of (361) English language teachers, and the research sample included (190) English language teachers, (57 males and 133 females) with various academic qualifications. For data analysis, the researcher used, T-Test for Independent samples, One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). And Scheffe Post Hoc Test. The analysis suggested that the inclusion of elements of material culture in the English curricula offers a useful resource to enhance student's comprehension.

The results revealed that the respondents showed a great sense of positivity towards incorporating elements of material culture. And the results of the

hypotheses showed that there is a significant difference at ($\alpha=0.05$) between the means of the teachers' perspectives related to teaching culture and the total score of the questionnaire due to the variable of academic qualification in favour of teachers holding master degree. So, in the light of these findings, the researcher suggested that curriculum designers should enrich English curricula with adequate elements of material culture to evoke students' reading comprehension skills.

Chapter One

Introduction and Theoretical Background

Chapter One

Introduction and Theoretical Background

1.1 Introduction and Theoretical Background

We live in an age in which cultural heritage is ever-present. In fact, it addresses the significance attached to cultural aspects associated with the past. These can be material items such as old objects, manufactured and shaped with an obvious aim, or they might be distinct values provided a sense of belonging within a group (Tomaselli, 2007).

During the Palestinian–Israeli conflict from 1948 until now Israel keeps trying to obliterate the Palestinian existence to fulfill their claim that Palestine is "A Land without a people for a people without a land" this is a widely cited phrase associated with the movement to establish a homeland for the Zionist in Palestine during the 19th and the 20th centuries. Israel widens the conflict not only politically and economically but also educationally and culturally. Also, it always tries to steal the Palestinian heritage and change the names of the Palestinian villages, foods, clothes and other elements of material culture.

Therefore, the researcher's motivation for this study comes from the need to investigate various ways to enrich the Palestinian curricula via appropriate inclusion of elements of material culture especially tangible ones which include embroidered clothes and costumes, pottery, glass, straw scuttles and other handicrafts. Moreover, there should be inclusion of historic sites,

memorials and museums. This researcher draws attention to these cultural elements because material culture is not only a reflection of human behavior; it is a part of the human behavior.

This study discusses elements of material culture specifically focusing on including tangible aspects. Furthermore, this study explores the role of using these elements of material culture in teaching and learning process to enhance student's reading comprehension skills. As suggested by Apostolopoulou, A. P., Carvoeiras, L. M., & Klonari, A, (2014); culture heritage should be included in all levels of learning, not particularly as a core subject but through interdisciplinary action which can help student's awareness towards heritage.

According to a study conducted by “German Commission for UNESCO” it assumed that protecting heritage is a substantial duty for all educational institutions. So, to achieve this mission, inventive forms of learning and promoted professional training are required to increase student's awareness about their heritage through indorsing it in all schools' curricula. Actually, protecting cultural materials is as important as conserving non-material culture.

Based on the first article of the Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) it requires to ‘assure the maintenance and protection of the world's patrimony of works of art, books and monuments of history and science’. In addition, the organization encourages co-operation among all nations to exchange

publications, objects of artistic and scientific interest and other materials of information (1 Article 2(c), UNESCO Constitution 1972).

Increasing awareness towards culture becomes more and more important in learning and cultural context. Actually, Cultural heritage education contributes great potential for better engagement, involvement participation, and innovation in learning (Apostolopoulou, Carvoeiras, & Klonari, 2014).

Maintaining cultural heritage is an essential duty for educational institutions. Heritage can be both tangible (that is, heritage places and artifacts) and intangible (that is, skills, practices, values, expressions, representations, beliefs and knowledge). The researcher is concerned about the inanimate objects rather than the heritage embodied in people; because material cultural elements are essential in nourishing student's sense of connectedness with their historical and cultural experiences. Therefore, the researcher believes that tangible cultural elements encourage students to comprehend reading.

Thus, students make a better interpretation of the narrative text if they are familiar with the cultural elements more than if they are not. Moreover, in the second case students' tendency to refer to their own cultural elements, which cause a poor interpretation and understanding of the narrative text. (Steffensen, Joag-Dev, & Anderson, 1979)

As proposed by Ketchum (2006) elements of material culture is needed to fully comprehend the meaning intended by the author. Also, Oller (1995) argued that if students are familiar with cultural content and cultural elements this helps them in reconstructing the text by referring to both their personal and cultural related scripts.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

After reviewing the literature related to the topic the researcher found that the Palestinian English curricula of primary and secondary stages lacks the inclusion of enough cultural material elements that influences students' comprehension of narrative texts. Moreover, teachers spent a lot of time and effort toward teaching language and literature but culture receive the least amount of time.

1.3 Objective of the Study

This study bound to figure out the role of incorporating elements of material culture in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district during the scholastic year 2020-2021.

1.4 Questions of the Study

To achieve the purpose of the study, the researcher addresses the following questions:

1. What is the role of incorporating elements of material culture in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district? Are there any significant differences in the means of teachers' perspectives regarding teaching culture in the EFL classrooms due to their gender, academic qualification, levels teachers teach, and training courses?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

There are four main hypotheses related to the second research question.

- a. There are no significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) in the means of the total score in the teachers' perspectives regarding culture teaching due to their gender.
- b. There are no significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) in the means of the total score in the teachers' perspectives regarding culture teaching due to academic qualification teachers hold.
- c. There are no significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) in the means of the total score in the teachers' perspectives regarding culture teaching due to the level's teachers teach.
- d. There are no significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) in the means of the total score in the teachers' perspectives regarding culture teaching due to training courses teachers attended.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The significance of the study arises initially from the need to investigate the role of using different elements of material culture on student's reading comprehension skills for primary and secondary levels in Jenin district. Finocchiaro & Bonomo (1973) proposed that students can benefit from their knowledge of the foreign language when cultural topics are included, presented and discussed in the curriculum, particularly at their beginning levels of learning.

The researcher highlighted the importance of the material cultural elements and their role in enhancing students' skills and respect of their own culture and others cultures. This study might serve as a model for educationalists, curriculum designers and researchers in the field on understanding the role of using elements of material culture on student's reading comprehension skills.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

The study considers these limitations:

- 1. Locative limitation:** All primary and secondary schools in Jenin district.
- 2. Temporal limitation:** This study will be carried out in the scholastic year 2020-2021.

3. **Human limitation:** The population of the study will be consisted of all female and male English teachers from primary and secondary schools in Jenin district.
4. **Topical limitation:** To investigate the role of using elements of material culture on student's skills in reading comprehension texts in Jenin.

1.8 Definition of Terms

In order to facilitate the understanding of terms used in this study the following definitions are given:

- **Material cultural elements:** sociologically refers to as properties and objects that people use to define themselves and to reflect their culture. Also, to learn about and appreciate each other's cultures, these elements include religious sites, historical monuments, foods, clothes, weapons, artifacts and so forth. All of these properties contribute in shaping its members' cultures as well as helping them in establishing their perception of other cultures.
- **Cultural heritage:** is the expression of both tangible and intangible cultural aspects developed by certain society and transformed from one generation to the other. It includes objects, rituals, monuments, sites, beliefs and practices.

❖ Operational Definitions of Terms:

- **Language:** is a particular type of expression that allows student to communicate with the outer world and to act as a global citizen
- **Tangible culture:** refers to the surface forms of culture that are associated with a certain group of people in a given period of time.
- **Reading comprehension:** is the ability to process a text to understand what is being communicated to you.
- **English for Palestine New Edition:** is the new English curriculum which has been introduced recently for Palestinian schools. Grades from one to twelve, was designed and developed in consultation with local and international ELT experts and follows the Ministry of Education syllabus to meet the needs of the Palestinian students to study English a Palestinian syllabus which suits their identity particularly. Simultaneously, it is intended to expose the Palestinian students to global and intercultural dimensions. The courses develop students' competence in the four language skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening) and encourage students to become confident users of English.

1.9 Summary

In this chapter, the researcher showed the important parts of the study. The chapter dealt with the introduction and the theoretical background. Moreover, the researcher stated the problem of the study, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, the questions of the study, and the limitations of the study, also she presented some definition of specific terms.

Chapter Two

Review of Related Literature

Chapter Two

Review of Related Literature

2.1 Background

In order to conduct a fruitful discussion concerning the significance of incorporating cultural material in ESL/ EFL curriculum, the researcher reviewed previous studies that were carried out in the field of the contribution of culture to the process of teaching English. This section includes three parts:

1. The first part is a review of relevant theoretical literature which deals with the following topics:
 - a. Introduction
 - b. The Definition of Culture
 - c. The Dialectical Relationship Intertwining Between Language and Culture
 - d. The Merits of Incorporating Cultural Material in ESL/EFL Curriculum
2. The second part presents a number of empirical studies on culture and its integration into ESL/EFL curriculum.
3. The third part is a summary and a conclusion of the first and second parts of this chapter.

2.2 Introduction

The researcher in this review covered both available related literature and areas of research with regard to studies that dealt with the usage of cultural items to enhance students' skills especially on reading comprehension texts and to protect the cultural heritage. The researcher reviewed various existing studies that are strongly related in their content to incorporating cultural materials in ESL/EFL curricula. She included the following topics: (The definition of culture, cultural material and its effect on comprehension, the merits of incorporating cultural material in ESL/EFL curricula, visualization as a methodology to enhance students' progress).

Moreover, summaries of empirical studies on cultural materials and its integration into the Palestinian curricula were established. The researcher used two words of the same sense in compliance with the aim of the study. These concepts are aspects, and items. Therefore, whenever one of these words is mentioned in the research, the researcher supposes that it is contextually in harmony with the concept cultural material. This chapter is divided into sections in order to sharpen scholarly awareness of the nature of cultural material besides their importance in cultural knowledge.

2.3 Definition of Culture

Culture has a lot of definitions because it means different things to different people. According to Brown (2007) culture can be defined as the ideas, customs, skills, arts, and tools that characterize a certain group of people in

a given period of time. However, Philips (1995) claimed that culture cannot be seen or touched because it is merely a set of rules and instructions not solely for making material things but also for creating a world that make sense to interpret it and understand it. He assumed that the tools, weapons, houses and canoes you touch are material things produced through the application of cultural rules (products) but they themselves are not culture.

In fact, several researchers such as Kirkebak, Yun Du & Jensen (2013) and Tang (2006) noticed that regardless of the continuous effort's researchers engaged in at the present time to reach a definition for the concept culture, there is no single definition that can be agreeable to everyone. Also, Nieto (2002, p. 10) assumed that "culture is complex and intricate, it cannot be reduced to holidays, foods, or dances, although these are of course elements of cultures."

Despite the fact that there is no consensus on one definition of culture. Damen (1987:81) argued that there is a "universal agreement" on defining culture although it is subject to change over time. She believed that culture means studying all aspects of human conditions that form the whole community in which its individuals select from the available cultural choices. This agreement shows a combination between two distinct definitions of culture, the first one defined by Brooks (1975, cited in Omaggio-Hadley,1993) "the best in human life" and the second one defined by Kramsch (1995) "everything in human life". This definition has

a special importance of culture in the foreign language classroom; because it considered students as a part of the whole community.

The relatively recent studies of reviewed articles concerned with the material culture testifies to a broad realization that elements of material culture are important resources for distinct nations because they are handed down from one generation to another generation with all the individual experiences, also they are considered as a mode of activities distinguishing people of one society from another society. Although, the analysis of material cultural elements posed real challenges, historians of early modern Europe and the Atlantic world have come to appreciate them as primary sources for understanding the past.

Culture can be expressed through materials and objects used by its persons. In fact, Anthropological researchers conducted a long-term research on material culture and objectification studies to emphasize the dialectical relationship between persons and things. Persons could not be understood apart from things they make and use; and at the same time things make persons. Thus, cultural objects are an important and integral parts of human societies; they are considered as a reflection of its people and they served an effective role as means of communication, among the individuals and nations all over the world. Brown (2001) explained this fact when he made the following remarks “we look through objects to see what they disclose about history, society, nature, or culture; above all what they disclose about us”.

Besides, “Objects not only are the product of history; they are also active agents in history.” (Auslander, 2005, p.1015-1045). The author argued about the significance of objects not only as tools in human life but also as agents in history because a lot of people have not used written language as their primary way in expressing themselves. So, historians could investigate communities in human history even if they did not research the written language of those communities; they could draw greater attention to alternative styles of expression such as cultural prosperities.

According to Dema & Moeller (2012) culture consisted of three different but interrelated theoretical construct of 3Ps which are: 1. Perspectives, 2. Practices, and 3. Products of a society. The first component of culture is perspectives, such as (Meanings, attitudes, values, and ideas). The second constituent is practices, like different (Patterns of social interactions). The last part is products both tangible and intangible, such as (tools, foods, laws, music, and games).

2.4 The Dialectical Relationship Intertwining Between Language and Culture

Language and culture are bound together; and they are inseparable components. Kramsch (1993, p.3) showed the dialectical relationship between both of them. Firstly, people use language to express cultural reality (with words people express facts and ideas but also reflect their attitudes) Secondly, people use language to embody cultural reality (people give meanings to their experience through the means of communication).

Thirdly, people use language to symbolize cultural reality (people view their language as a symbol of their social).

Thus, Culture is an integral part of all languages in the world. It has several roles in facilitating the process of communication between people. In fact, cultural awareness is extremely important in teaching the English language which is the international language that people use in their social, political, economic, and religious lives.

Culture according to Brown (2007a, p.122) might be defined as: "... the ideas, customs, skills, arts, tools which characterize a given group of people in a given period of time." He (2007b) also considered culture as a "glue" that binds a group of people together. The concept of culture is general and embraces all aspects of life, it's everything humankind learned or done.

Many researchers such as Chastain (1988), advocated the idea of teaching culture of the foreign language alongside the language itself. The role of culture in foreign or second language teaching has been a critical issue that has aroused discussion in language education for a long time. Researchers have proposed distinct ways for taking consideration of culture in the language classroom. In fact, the presentation of cultural models tends to reflect educational, sociological and geopolitical perspectives of the societies.

Describing a language considers knowledge of four basic inter-related subsystems of language which are the sound, the grammar, the lexical and

the cultural system. Moreover, students can benefit from their knowledge of the foreign language when cultural topics are included, presented and discussed in the curriculum, particularly at their beginning levels of learning.

Therefore, Students' curiosity should be aroused to study another civilization because the exposure to cultural elements of the target language enhances student's comprehension of their own culture and the target culture. So, the provision of cultural insights should preferably be reflected by both teachers and students in the classroom by using objects related to the target cultural customs and artifacts. This in its turn impacts student's engagement and appreciation of foreign cultures. (Finocchiaro & Bonomo, 1973)

2.5 The Merits of Incorporating Cultural Material in ESL/EFL Curriculum

Lafayette (1988) noted that language curriculum has three basic inseparable components which are (language, literature, and culture), however, teachers spent a lot of time and effort toward teaching language and literature specifically (lexis and grammar). Nonetheless, culture received the least amount of time because teachers lack familiarity to cultural aspects and they lack the required knowledge of the way needed to teach them. Despite that, Tang (2006) indicated that culture got some more emphasis in the curriculum, in view of the fact that culture became increasingly considered as a focal element in the curriculum in foreign language education.

Wandel (2003) pointed out that textbooks should include materials enabling and tolerating distinct points of view and considerations on cultural assumptions. Cortazzi and Jin (1999) postulated that second and foreign language textbooks ought to have aspects of the target culture. These authors examine different textbooks from distinct parts of the world, and they discovered that the target culture is frequently incorporated. Moreover, they observed that English as a foreign language textbook have divergent purposes other than the educational ones in culture learning; in other words, textbooks can be a teacher, a map, a resource, a trainer, an authority, and an ideology.

Changes in curriculum are coming to both elementary and high multicultural school textbooks. Some of the dimensions of multicultural education are the integration of content, the knowledge construction process, the reduction of prejudice, and the empowerment of school culture and social structure. But the barrier of communication is a misinterpretation of observable nonverbal signs and symbols but it is possible to learn the meanings of these embedded messages (Banks, 1993a, p.25).

2.6 Empirical Studies

In this section the researcher presented a number of empirical studies on culture and its integration into ESL/EFL curriculum, and in the English language teaching process. The studies were presented chronologically:

Karimboyevna (2020) argues in the article entitled “raising language learners’ intercultural competence in EFL classroom” teachers should bear in mind the crucial role of helping learners to discover different ways of understanding culture. One of these ways is through a powerful approach that put students in the center of learning this can highly strengthen students’ ability to enrich their intercultural competence.

Also, the article shows that the way people think, talk, and write reflects and impacts the cultural backgrounds they have. In fact, we learn languages to have the ability to communicate with each other. And it has been proposed that culture should be in the heart of foreign language teaching. So, cultural knowledge is considered as a fifth language skill beside the main four skills (listening, writing, reading, and speaking); students can develop this cultural knowledge by understanding the similarities and the differences between their own culture and other cultures. Kramsch (1993) argued that culture in language learning is not an "expendable" fifth skill added to the teaching of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. It is in the background from the first day "ready to unsettle the good language learners when they expect it least, making evident the limitations of their hard-won communicative competence, challenging their ability to make sense of the world around them."

Gerfanova, Shayakhmetova & Ayapova (2018) analyzed the cultural components (texts and illustrations) in three significant English as a foreign language (EFL) textbook which are used in the language programs of

higher school of Kazakhstan. The researchers applied this study via using both content analysis and intercultural communicative approach as a methodology. The results indicated that the textbooks contain primarily topics of surface culture and excluded students' own cultural forms which are vital for understanding the target language culture. Therefore, the researchers suggested that the Kazakhstani EFL educational contexts should raise a compelling need for developing EFL textbooks which will be oriented to the target culture, international culture as well as to the students' native culture.

Brdarić (2016) carried out a study about the importance of teaching culture in the foreign language classroom. The purpose of this study is to determine to what extent culture is incorporated into the Croatian National Curriculum at the secondary school level and the EFL classroom. The researcher used two research instruments to conduct the study the first one was: the content analysis that focused specifically on the cultural content in three textbooks used in Croatian secondary schools. The second tool was a questionnaire that investigated the views and perceptions of teachers of English on intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and verifies whether their teaching is in compliance with the Croatian National Curriculum.

The results showed that the examined textbooks incorporated cultural content into the three Croatian National Curricular at the secondary school level and the EFL classroom. Moreover, the analysis of teachers' answers

from the questionnaire study showed that teachers are fully aware of the importance of intercultural communicative competence (ICC) in foreign language teaching and that they incorporate culture into their teaching.

Despite that, there is no particular focus on only British and American culture because textbooks cover other English-speaking cultures as well as non-native English-speaking countries from all around the world. Also, its significance to mention that no complete coherence of the cultural outcomes given in the Croatian National Curriculum, in other words the outcomes are still not incorporated into the operational plans of the secondary schools. But EFL teachers actually promote culture in their school practice. The researcher recommended decision makers to include culture in the EFL classroom with usage of textbooks and numerous additional materials, such as posters, movies, prose, poetry, etc., to enhance student engagement and learning.

Rihan (2015) conducted a study entitled “A cross-cultural aspects of TEFL: a case study of English for Palestine new series”. The aim of her study is to investigate the frequency of cultural aspects in “English for Palestine new series” and to what extent culture is presented in these textbooks. The researcher used content analysis and a questionnaire and interviews. The results showed that in the 6th 7th and 8th A&B textbooks social aspects get the highest frequencies while the cultural aspects get the lowest frequencies. The researcher recommended enriching the textbooks with target cultural elements and authentic material.

Moore (2015) conducted a study about Emirati students at public universities who have been exposed to teaching by faculty members giving them courses in their native language (English). The problem was those faculty members have brought with them their own cultural assumptions and language, which contrasts with those of students who characterized as of a religious and national culture. Actually, this poses challenges because of the tendency of teachers and students to use distinct cultural paradigm. In one hand, students came to classroom bringing in their own cultural beliefs and expectations; on the other hand, teachers came in with different sets of each.

In fact, an acknowledgment of various cultural assumptions from both parties is needed in order to create a fruitful, successful and efficient classroom. Besides, Badger & MacDonald (2007) ascertain that there are a lot of cultural differences between both learners and educators; therefore, taking this into consideration is essential in order to understand student's needs and to positively influence their academic progress.

Toprak & Aksoyalp (2014) attempted in their study to cast light on the issues of representation and presentation of target cultures in EFL course books written by the international publishers. Hence, the present study was conducted to accomplish the following prominent aims: (1) to explore the extent and number of the cultural representations present in course books (2) the distribution of cultural representations across different English-speaking countries (i.e., the UK, the USA, Australia, Canada, and New

Zealand). To achieve this, 17 English course books written by international publishers and used at preparatory English schools and universities in an EFL setting were examined by using a quantitative content analysis.

One of the results revealed an obvious imbalance in cultural elements, in other words, the majority of cultural elements presented in course books these course books do not contain cross-cultural material to reflect their respective cultural aspect they only contain Anglo-Saxon cultural material. The researchers recommended conducting the same investigation in different EFL countries would improve the generalizability of the study's results to broader contexts.

Yuen (2011) conducted a case study about the representation of foreign cultures represented in two English language textbooks used by Hong Kong secondary schools. The researcher aimed at investigating whether the representations of foreign cultures in these textbooks reflected the status of English as an international language. To achieve this target, the researcher categorized references to foreign cultures into four aspects: products, practices, perspectives, and persons, then he conducted a content analysis in which the texts and images related to foreign cultures were abstracted. The results showed that the representation favored the cultures of English-speaking countries, while the cultures of Africa and Asia were under-represented. So, it's recommended to redress the imbalance in cultural content and to select the content of English language textbooks.

Yamada (2010) aimed at investigating which countries were introduced and how Japan's domestic diversity was constructed in EFL textbooks for Japanese high schools. The concepts of race and ethnic relations in a global context were discussed to understand representations of individuals. The study proposed that multicultural perspective not only evoked understanding varieties of English use in Asian contexts but also helped educators and students recognize the internal diversity of Japan where multilingual and multicultural communication takes place.

Abbas (2008) conducted a study to investigate the cultural elements in the new English syllabus. Therefore, a detailed analytical survey for the contents of EFP textbooks for grades 10, 11&12 was made to describe the content of these textbooks in terms of the topics they cover and the way they are covered. For this aim, these topics were analyzed to see what international (global) and Palestinian (including Arab &Islamic) issues and dimensions they deal with. The researchers' analysis showed that each unit contains a reading passage followed by different activities including all language skills based to a great extent on the thematic, lexical and structural content of the reading material. The researcher recommended to cover and increase the Palestinian, Arab and Islamic cultural aspects in the Palestinian curriculum.

Merrouche (2006) investigated how the English language cultural component was treated in the Algerian textbooks of English used at both the Intermediate and the Secondary Levels. Moreover, an attempt was

made to investigate the teachers' understanding of culture and culture teaching, the way they actually handle it in class, and their views about its place in the course books they use. The findings revealed that the representation of the target language cultural aspect was either overlooked or inadequately considered in the textbooks, that at least half the teachers did not include it in their language lessons, despite their awareness of its relevance, and that most of the learners gave more importance to learning the linguistic components (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics) than they did on the whole display of negative attitudes towards English-speaking cultures.

Bataineih (2009) carried out a study to find out the amount of authentic cultural aspects in comparison with the unauthentic aspects inserted in the Jordanian textbooks of English at the secondary level. The researcher conducted content analysis to fulfill the previous aim. He found that these course books including merely the local cultural elements of the learners; and this impact them negatively especially when they face authentic situations in their lives. So, it's proposed to introduce both local and universal cultural elements.

Jourdain (2008) conducted a paper about the influence of student-centred approach on building connections to culture. The paper presents a model consisted of three phases; the first one is gathering data, the second phase is communicating using the target language, and the last one is discussing cultural values. The purpose of the paper is to convince teachers to adopt

the student-centred approach in incorporating cultural materials in classrooms. based on her claim teachers are merely considered as facilitators of the process of teaching in which they introduce cultural materials to the students. Cultural presentation evokes students' research abilities, comprehension of others values and communication in the target language.

After reviewing related studies, the researcher figured out that it's important for teachers to integrate powerful cultural material into their classrooms, so students will be eagerly and personally interacting with real data. Incorporating cultural material in this manner places the vast majority of responsibility for understanding and inferring meaning in the hands of the learners. This student-centered approach enables learners to begin with what they know and build their own perception of culture. The inclusion of cultural content and right pedagogy when constructing information enhances an effective and engaging learning environment for foreign language learners. Also, enriches knowledge of language; because culture and language are inseparable in the first place.

From a constructivist view of learning learners are responsible for their own learning outcomes. In fact, constructivism contributes positive impact on educational processes to improve student's ability to learn something new by themselves. In this respect, Vygotsky emphasized that children and adults are both active agents in the process of the child's development. "Development is, in this case, co-constructed." (Cole & Cole, 2001, p.37).

For the teaching-learning process it means that both the teacher and a student are seen as active agents in children's learning and acquisition of knowledge. The teacher's mediation in children's learning is important, but it is the quality of the teacher-learner involvement, which is seen as crucial in that learning (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988).

2.7 Comments on the Previous Studies

Using cultural material in teaching foreign language met the target of the educational system. Using cultural material in teaching narrative texts affected students positively by enhancing their visual competence. Cultural material accompanied by written texts could help weak readers to understand the text and to generate the intended information. In the same vein, cultural material could help learners to develop their reading comprehension by concentrating on attaining the overall meaning of the text through using both cultural material and written texts. In the related literature review, this study is exclusive in the sense that it promoted the use of cultural material in English textbooks to enhance learners' skills. It also investigated the advantages of integrating cultural material in the curriculum and in the classroom on students' reading comprehension of narrative texts.

Language learning is also culture learning. Patterns of language usage vary across cultures and reflect differences in values, norms, customs, and beliefs about social roles and relationships in each culture. To learn another language is to learn new norms, behaviors and beliefs that are appropriate

in the new culture, and thus to extend one's sociocultural competence to new environments.

Most of the previous studies and researches draw attention to the importance of incorporating and integrating cultural elements into teaching English as a foreign language. Moreover, these studies pinpoint the pivotal role of teaching culture in enhancing students' progress. Thus, they agreed that teaching culture and English language are intertwining with each other. They equip learners to master the language accurately. Among these researchers are SabirovaNazokat Karimboyevna (2020), Gerfanova, Shayakhmetova & Ayapova (2018), Helena Brdarić (2016), Moore (2015), TugbaToprak & Yasemin Aksoyalp (2014), Yuen (2011), Bataineih (2009), Sarah Jourdain (2008).

Many studies were carried out in the field of cultural elements and their incorporation into the English language curriculum. However, no studies so far have investigated the significance of presenting elements of material culture in English textbooks. In consequence, the researcher conducted this study to investigate the role of incorporating elements of material culture in the new series of the English curriculum conducted in Jenin district in the scholastic year (2020).

In this study, a great focus is given to incorporating cultural material in teaching narrative texts. It's tested that using cultural material in the teaching and learning process indicated a strong influence on students' engagement and achievement. A lot of previous results showed that

students preferred learning by using cultural material instead of learning through using only a written text. This means that, learners have positive attitudes towards using cultural material in the classroom which extremely affects their understanding of narrative texts. Therefore, the present study introduced a pivotal methodology in teaching narrative texts, to observe its role on the students' reading comprehension ability.

Chapter Three

Methodology and Procedures

Chapter Three

Methodology and Procedures

3.1 Introduction

This chapter consists of several sections which demonstrate the methodology and the steps taken to carry out the research. It presents the study population and sample, besides the procedures in order to conduct the instrument of the study. Moreover, the chapter highlights the validity and the reliability of the instrument. At last, it presents the data analysis method used.

3.2 Methodology

In this study, the researcher adopted a quantitative design based on the descriptive surveying methodology for its relevance to the nature of the study to achieve the aim of the study and to answer the study questions. The researcher used a quantitative approach measured by means of a questionnaire that was distributed among teachers. The questionnaire consisted of (25) items developed after reviewing the studies relevant to the topic in order to solicit teachers' perspectives.

3.3 Population of the Study

The population of the study consisted of all English language teachers in Jenin district who teach primary and secondary levels during the 2020/2021 academic year. The total number was (361) teachers.

3.4 Sample of the Study

The study sample consisted of (190) (57 males and 133 females) English language teachers of both genders holding different academic qualifications, attending various training courses in teaching culture in EFL classes, and teaching distinct levels of classes. The sample was chosen as a stratified random sample from the whole population. The sample represented (52.62 %) of the whole population in secondary public schools in Jenin District.

Tables (1- 4) below indicate the sample distribution in accordance with the four independent variables: gender, Academic Qualification, The teaching level and training course on teaching culture.

Table (1): Distribution of sample according to gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	57	30.0%
Female	133	70.0%
Total	190	100.0%

Table (2): Distribution of sample according to academic qualification

Academic qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Diploma	12	6.3%
Bachelor	145	76.3%
Master	33	17.4%
Total	190	100.0%

Table (3): Distribution of sample according to the teaching level

The teaching level	Frequency	Percentage
Primary level (1-10)	105	55.3%
Secondary level (11-12)	85	44.7%
Total	190	100.0%

Table (4): Distribution of sample according to training course on teaching culture

Training course on teaching culture	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	74	38.9%
No	116	61.1%
Total	190	100.0%

The researcher distributed the questionnaire electronically to the entire sample and only (190) responded to the research questionnaire.

3.5 Instrumentation of the Study

The researcher developed the questionnaire which is consisted of a set of items to solicit teachers opinions about incorporating elements of material culture in Palestinian curriculum to enhance students' comprehension skills, and the questionnaire is characterized by having specific standard answers in a way that makes it easy to collect and organize data (a five Likert scale). The researcher developed it as a tool for collecting information after reviewing the theoretical educational literature related to

the subject of the study. And a review of research papers, studies and books that investigated the study topic.

The questionnaire consisted of two sections: The first section consisted of personal information about English language teachers' gender, the academic qualification teachers hold, the levels teachers teach, and the training courses they attend. The second section consisted of (25) items to solicit teachers' perspectives about the inclusion of material cultural elements in English for Palestine textbooks.

Based on reviewing existing literature in the area of teaching culture in EFL classrooms and the merits of incorporating material cultural elements to the content of English for Palestine textbooks, the researcher developed a questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale. The scores of responses of the examinees to each item were calculated according to the five-point-scale, "Likert scale", in which Strongly agree = 5 points, agree = 4 points, Neutral = 3 points, disagree = 2 points, and Strongly disagree = 1 point. (Appendix: A)

3.6 Validity of the Instrument

To check content validity of the research questionnaire, it was given firstly to six English teachers who teach both primary and secondary levels in Jenin district. The teachers were chosen randomly, and were asked (Appendix B) to delve into the accuracy and wording of each item for the sake of avoiding misunderstanding of the items. Also, the researcher asked

the teachers to check out the appropriateness/relevance of each item of the questionnaire and to pinpoint any item that should be erased or to highlight any that should be modified.

Secondly, the questionnaire was given to a jury of experts in the field of education and English teaching from Arab American University, and Al-Quds Open University in Palestine, and asked them (Appendix C) to ratify the content of the questionnaire. The researcher took into consideration all the comments, judgments and recommendations of these teachers and jury of experts; in order to formulate the questionnaire in its final form.

The following are some examples of the comments, judgments, and recommendations from both the teachers and experts:

Deleting the comma in item number (1) and using (leads to) instead of (is conducive to) from the same item. Also, deleting the word (skills) in item number (3). Putting the dot after the parentheses in item number (2). Moreover, changing the verb tense from the past (equipped) into the present tense (equip) in item number (4) and replacing the word (learners) by the word (students) in the same item. Besides, using the article (the) in the items number (7) and the same thing in the item (25). In addition, using a consistent lexicon in item number (13) (students' cultural elements) instead of (students' cultural aspects). Correcting the spelling (centered) instead of (cantered) in item number (7). These modifications were taken into the researchers' account.

3.7 Reliability of the Research Instrument

The Cronbach Alpha coefficient was used to find out the reliability for the total scores of the questionnaire.

Table (5) shows reliability coefficients of the total score (degree) of the study.

Table (5): Reliability coefficients of the total score (degree) of the study

Domains	Number of items	Reliability coefficient
Total	25	0.82

Table (5) shows that all the reliability coefficients are high, and suitable for scientific purposes.

3.8 Procedures of the Study

The researcher carried the following steps to accomplish this study:

1. The researcher held a consulting meeting with the research supervisors to discuss the study topic and to decide the research title.
2. The researcher prepared the proposal for both the supervisors and for the Department of Teaching Methods at An Najah National University.
3. The supervisors and the Deanship of scientific research and higher studies at An Najah National University agreed to obtain the study.
4. The researcher took the agreement from the Ministry of Education in Palestine to apply the research in Jenin District.

5. The researcher got the number of both primary and secondary English language teachers from the Ministry of Education in Jenin District.
6. The researcher prepared the research instrument to be judged by English language teachers in Jenin District and by a jury of experts from Arab America University and Al- Quds Open University in Palestine.
7. The researcher used Google Forms to fill in the questionnaire data, as a link to the study tool which was sent to the teachers in the study sample through the Education Directorate in Jenin Governorate, where the distribution process began on 2/10/2020 and ended 24/10/2020.
8. The questionnaire was distributed electronically by the people of the Ministry of Education at Jenin District. The process took approximately one month.
9. To estimate the teachers' responses, the researcher used scales, depends on percentage as follows:
 - 80% and more is a very high degree.
 - 70-79.9% is a high degree.
 - 60-69.9% is a moderate degree.
 - 50-59.9% is a low degree.
 - 50 % and less is a very low degree of teachers' commitment.

3.9 Variables of the study

This research consisted of two types of variables:

❖ The Independent Variables

The variables related to the respondents who answer the questionnaire and include:

1. Gender with two categories: male and female.
2. Academic qualification with three levels: Diploma, Bachelor and Master.
3. The level teachers teach with two categories: primary and secondary.
4. Training courses teachers attended with two levels: (yes, no).

❖ The Dependent Variable

1. The total score for the research instrument (the questionnaire).
2. The degree of teachers' perspectives about including material cultural elements in English textbooks.

3.10 Statistical Analysis

To answer the questions of the study, the researcher applied statistical analysis as following:

❖ The answer to the first research question:

To answer the first research question, the researcher calculated the means, standard deviations, percentages, and frequencies.

In order to estimate the teachers' responses, the researcher used scales, depends on percentage as follows:

- 80% and more is a very high degree.
- 70-79.9% is a high degree.
- 60-69.9% is a moderate degree.
- 50-59.9% is a low degree.
- 50 % and less is a very low degree of teachers' commitment.

The answer to the second research question is divide into three parts:

1. T-Test for Independent sample to test gender and attended training courses hypotheses.

2. One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to test the levels teachers teach and academic qualification hypotheses.
3. ScheffePost Hoc Testto determine the sources of differences in the rejected hypotheses.

3.11 Summary

In short, this chapter pointed out the procedures of the study starting from the consultation with the research supervisor at An Najah National University in Palestine to obtaining the agreement on the application of the research methodology, to describing the study population and the sample of the study stating the respondents' distribution according to the study variables: gender, academic qualification, the teaching level, and training courses on teaching culture. The chapter also included a detailed description of the study design, methodology, instrument of the study and its validity and reliability. Finally, it was concluded by giving a full description of data collection and statistical analysis used in this study.

Chapter Four

Results

Chapter Four

Results

4.1 Introduction

This study aims to identify "the Role of Incorporating Elements of Material Culture in Palestinian Curriculum for the Enhancement of Students' Reading Comprehension from English Teachers' perspectives in Jenin District". In order to achieve this the researcher developed a questionnaire consisting of (25) items that were distributed to a sample consisting of (190) English language teachers. To accomplish the purpose of this study the researcher analyzed the results by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

The statistical analysis revealed the following results:

4.2 Results Related to Research Questions

4.2.1 Results Related to the First Research Question

What is the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district?

In order to answer this question, the researcher calculated the means, standard deviations, percentages, levels, and ranks of the teachers' responses to the questionnaire for the study domains and total score. Table (6) shows the results.

Table (6): Means, Standard Deviation, Percentages, Levels, Ranks of Domains, and Total Score of the Role of Incorporating Material Cultural Elements in Palestinian Curriculum for the Enhancement of Students' Reading Comprehension from English Teachers' Perspectives in Jenin District

Domains	M	SD	Percent	Level	Rank
8. I think that the cultural elements in the Palestinian English textbooks are unfamiliar to the students.	2.83	1.02	56.63	low degree	8
20. I think that textbooks present both local and target cultural material in balanced way.	3.13	0.96	62.63	Moderate	20
10. I think the Palestinian English curriculum introduces items from the western cultures in general.	3.30	0.93	66.00	Moderate	10
2. I think that the content of the Palestinian English textbooks presents visible cultural (examples, problems, and descriptions).	3.32	0.90	66.32	Moderate	2
9. I think that school textbooks lack material cultural elements.	3.32	0.98	66.32	Moderate	9
3. I teach culture not as a fifth language skill beside (speaking, reading, listening, and writing).	3.35	0.97	67.05	Moderate	3
23. I think that the cultural elements in the textbooks familiarize students with western civilizations.	3.47	0.89	69.37	Moderate	23
25. I think that cultural elements receive little attention by curriculum designers.	3.53	0.92	70.63	High	25
12. I think the Palestinian English curriculum incorporates items from the local culture.	3.54	0.83	70.84	High	12
5. I teach the Palestinian culture with connection to the Arab and western culture.	3.69	0.85	73.89	High	5
7. I think that culture presentation in EFL classrooms enhances the student-centered approach.	3.74	0.71	74.84	High	7
4. I think that material cultural elements equip students with skills related to real life situations.	3.81	0.87	76.11	High	4
21. I feel more comfortable using different material cultural elements in EFL classes.	3.81	0.74	76.11	High	21
19. I believe that it is important to teach students about (literature and fine arts) of the target culture.	3.82	0.93	76.42	High	19
1. I think that exposing both primary school and high school students to the target culture leads to mastering the foreign language.	3.84	0.79	76.84	High	1

Domains	M	SD	Percent	Level	Rank
13. I think that incorporating material cultural elements enhances students in cultural awareness.	3.85	0.75	76.95	High	13
11. I use realia (real life objects) in addition to the content of school textbooks to teach cultural related issues.	3.87	0.91	77.37	High	11
16. I think that teaching culture should be integrative part of EFL classes.	3.88	0.73	77.68	High	16
24. I think that it is essential to teach students about (artifacts, customs, and traditions) of the target culture.	3.88	0.81	77.68	High	24
17. I think that teacher-training courses should include cultural elements of the foreign language.	3.89	0.81	77.89	High	17
18. I think that the acquisition of a foreign language requires the acquisition of students in cultural knowledge of their own language.	3.89	0.75	77.89	High	18
6. I think that learning about the target culture enhances students in appreciation of their own culture.	3.97	0.76	79.37	High	6
22. I encourage students to read (articles, books, magazines, and newspaper) topics about the target culture.	3.97	0.81	79.47	High	22
14. I think that using material cultural elements in narrative texts improves students in reading comprehension skills.	4.04	0.67	80.84	very high	14
15. I think that teaching culture helps students to accept others habits.	4.07	0.72	81.37	very high	15
Total score	3.67	0.36	73.46	High	

Table (6) shows that the total score of the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district was high with a mean of (3.67) and a percentage of (73.4). This means that the teachers have a high degree of perspectives towards incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension.

4.2.2 Results Related to The Second Research Question

❖ **Results related to the first research hypothesis:** There are no significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) in the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district due to gender, teaching levels, training courses, and academic qualification. The researcher used T-Test for independent samples. Table (7) shows the results.

Table (7): T-Test for Independent Samples of the Differences of the Role of Incorporating Material Cultural Elements in Palestinian Curriculum for the Enhancement of Students' Reading Comprehension from English Teachers' Perspectives in Jenin District Due to Gender.

Gender	Frequency	Mean	S.D	D.F	T-value	Sig.*
Male	57.00	3.65	0.43	188	0.457	0.647
Female	133.00	3.68	0.33			

* Significant at ($\alpha= 0.05$).

Table (7) shows that there are no significant differences at ($\alpha= 0.05$) in the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district due to gender.

❖ **Results related to the second study hypothesis:** There are no significant differences at ($\alpha= 0.05$) in the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district due to academic qualification. The researcher used One-

Way ANOVA to test the hypothesis. Tables (8) and (9) show the frequencies, means and standard deviations of teachers' responses due to the teaching level and the results of One-Way ANOVA test respectively.

Table (8): Numbers, Means, and Standard Deviations of the Role of Incorporating Material Cultural Elements in Palestinian Curriculum for the Enhancement of Students' Reading Comprehension from English Teachers' Perspectives in Jenin District Due to Academic Qualification

Aacademic qualification	N	M	SD
Diploma	12	3.50	0.26
Bachelor	145	3.65	0.34
Master	33	3.82	0.43
Total	190	3.67	0.36

The results of the table (8) show that there are differences in the means of the responses of the study sample according to the variable of academic qualification, and in order to examine the significance of these differences, the researcher used one –way ANOVA test, as Table (9) shows the results of the test.

Table (9): One–Way ANOVA Test to Test the Differences of the Role of Incorporating Material Cultural Elements in Palestinian Curriculum for the Enhancement of Students' Reading Comprehension from English Teachers' Perspectives in Jenin District Due to Academic Qualification

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	D.F	Mean Squares	F	Sig.*
Between groups	1.159	2	0.579	4.636	0.01*
Within groups	23.365	187	0.125		
Total	24.524	189			

*Significant at ($\alpha= 0.05$).

Table (9) indicates that there are significant differences at ($\alpha= 0.05$) in the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district due to academic qualification.

However, this study result contradicted a result of a study conducted by Rihan (2015) that investigated the cross-cultural aspects of TEFL a case study of English for Palestine new series. The researcher proved that academic qualification did not affect the way teachers think about cultural material elements. While the current study indicated a significant effect of academic qualification in favour of master degree holders. Which is a great indication that the more teachers get educated the more they understand the importance of elements of material culture and their positive impact on student's reading comprehension skill.

Scheffe Post Hoc test was used to determine the source of variation in the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district due to academic qualification. Table (10) shows the results.

Table (10): Scheffe Post-Hoc Test Results of the Teachers' Level of the Differences of the Role of Incorporating Material Cultural Elements in Palestinian Curriculum for the Enhancement of Students' Reading Comprehension from English Teachers' Perspectives in Jenin District Due to Academic Qualification

(I) Academic qualification	(J) Academic qualification	Mean difference (I-J)	Sig.
Diploma	Bachelor	-0.15324-	0.355
	Master	-0.32303-*	0.027
Bachelor	Diploma	0.15324	0.355
	Master	-0.16979-*	0.047

*Significant at ($\alpha=0.05$).

It is evident from the results of the study that there are statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha=0.05$) in the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district due to academic qualification.

Where it is clear that the differences were between holders of the diploma and holders of the master in favor of holders of a master's degree, as well as that the differences were significant between holders of the bachelor's degree and holders of the master's degree in favor of holders of the master's degree.

❖ **Results related to the third study hypothesis:** There are no significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) in the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district due to teaching level.

The researcher used T-Test for independent samples in which she calculated means and standard deviations of the teachers' perspectives towards incorporating material cultural elements in the Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension. The total score of the questionnaire were calculated due to the teaching level variable. Table (11) presented the results.

Table (11): T-Test for Independent Samples of the Differences of the Role of Incorporating Material Cultural Elements in Palestinian Curriculum for the Enhancement of Students' Reading Comprehension from English Teachers' Perspectives in Jenin District Due to Teaching Level

Teaching level	Frequency	Mean	SD	D.F	T-value	Sig.*
Primary level (1-10)	105.00	3.67	0.42	188	0.206	0.836
Secondary level (11-12)	85.00	3.68	0.28			

* Significant at ($\alpha= 0.05$)

Table (11) shows that there are no significant differences at ($\alpha= 0.05$) in the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district due to teaching level.

❖ **Results related to the fourth study hypothesis:** There are no significant differences at ($\alpha= 0.05$) in the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district due to training course on teaching culture.

The researcher used T-Test for independent samples. Table (12) shows the results.

Table (12): T-Test for Independent Samples of the Differences of the Role of Incorporating Material Cultural Elements in Palestinian Curriculum for the Enhancement of Students' Reading Comprehension from English Teachers' Perspectives in Jenin District Due to Training Course on Teaching Culture

Training course on teaching culture	Frequency	Mean	SD	D.F	T-value	Sig.*
Yes	74.00	3.66	0.43	188	0.3155	0.75
No	116.00	3.68	0.31			

* Significant at ($\alpha= 0.05$)

Table (12) shows that there are no significant differences at ($\alpha= 0.05$) in the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district due to training course on teaching culture.

Chapter Five

Discussions, Conclusion, and Recommendations

Chapter Five

Discussions, conclusion, and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter is divided into three fundamental sections. The first section discussed the findings that were reached by the study questions and hypotheses. The second section shows the conclusions of the study. Finally, the third section presents the recommendations of the study proposed by the researcher taking into consideration the study results.

5.2 Discussion

5.2.1 Discussion of the Results Related to the First Research Question

The first question asked about the role of using elements of material culture on enhancing students' skills in reading comprehension texts.

The role of using elements of material culture on enhancing students' skills in reading comprehension texts was high with a mean of (3.67) and a percentage of (73.4), this means that the teachers have a high degree of perspectives towards incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension. Table (6) shows the percentages.

According to the aforementioned percentages, incorporating elements of material culture in the Palestinian curriculum affect student's reading comprehension from teacher's perspectives. In fact, this result supports

some of the previous studies related to the topic mentioned in this research which confirm that incorporating elements of material culture extremely fosters student's reading comprehension skills such as (Karimi and Nafissi, 2017) who argued that exposing EFL university students to different culturally based materials affect the degree of reading anxiety, reading comprehension self-efficacy and reading proficiency. In their research they prove that introducing culturally based materials in the syllabus impact student's reading positively; the results showed significantly less degrees of anxiety. The findings of this study proposed that educationalist, teachers, syllabus designers should take into consideration the benefits of incorporating cultural materials into curriculum.

The results related to the first question are shown in table (6) which presents the means, standard deviations, percentages, levels, and ranks of the teachers' responses to the questionnaire for the study domains and total score. A great sense of positivity from teachers toward incorporating elements of material culture in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension.

In order to estimate the teachers' responses a scale which depends on percentages was used.

Percentage	Degree
80% and more	Very high
70-79.9%	High
60-69.9%	Moderate
50-59.9%	Low
50 % and less	Very low

The findings indicate that (56.63 %) of teachers disagreed that the cultural elements in the Palestinian English textbooks are unfamiliar to the students. So, item no. (8) received low degree of agreement. Further, the items that received a moderate degree of agreement are items (20, 10, 2, 9, 3, 23), with percentages of (62.63%, 66.00%, 66.32%,66.32%,67.05%, 69.37%) respectively. Teachers are neutral in the items topics which are related to textbooks presentation of both local and target cultural material in a balanced way in the Palestinian English curriculum.

Also, almost (69%) of English language teachers are neutral to the introduction of western cultural items in the textbooks in general. Moreover, they are neutral with topics that deals with the content of the Palestinian English textbooks which presents visible cultural (examples, problems, and descriptions). Besides, school textbooks lack material cultural elements, and as a teacher I teach culture not as a fifth language skill beside (speaking, reading, listening, and writing). Finally, the cultural elements in the textbooks familiarize students with western civilizations.

The study results indicate that the items that received a high degree of agreement are items (25, 12, 5, 7, 4, 21, 19, 1, 13, 11, 16, 24, 17, 18, 6, 22) with percentages of (70.63%, 70.84%, 73.89%, 74.84%, 76.11%, 76.11%, 76.42% 76.84%, 76.95%, 77.37%, 77.68%, 77.68%,77.89%, 77.89%, 79.37%, 79.47%) respectively. Almost (70%to 79%) of all English language teachers agreed with the statements that are related to the material cultural elements and that they receive little attention by curriculum

designers, the Palestinian English curriculum incorporates items from the local culture, and that the Palestinian culture is taught with connection to the Arab and western culture, So, instead of concentrating entirely on teaching the target culture, material developer should incorporate a cross-cultural material in EFL syllabuses and classes. Also, that culture presentation in EFL classrooms enhances the student-centered approach, teachers are in favor of the statement that the material cultural elements equip students with skills related to real life situations, and that using different material cultural elements made them comfortable in EFL classes, which prove that cultural material elements are essential in EFL classrooms.

Similarly, teachers see that it is important to teach students about (literature and fine arts) of the target culture, by exposing both primary school and high school students to the target culture which leads them to mastering the foreign language. Teacher's responses indicate that incorporating material cultural elements enhances students in cultural awareness, and that using realia (real life objects) in addition to the content of school textbooks to teach cultural related issues help students to learn culture easily.

Moreover, teacher's perspectives show positive attitude towards teaching culture as an integrative part of EFL classes, and that it is essential to teach students about (artifacts, customs, and traditions) of the target culture. Besides, English teachers believe that training courses should include cultural elements of the foreign language, and that the acquisition of a

foreign language requires the acquisition of students in cultural knowledge of their own language.

The majority of the teachers believed that learning about the target culture enhances student's appreciation of their own culture, also they show their agreement with encouraging students to read (articles, books, magazines, and newspaper) topics about the target culture. The findings show that items no. (14) and (15) received the highest degree of agreement. Teachers strongly agree with using material cultural elements in narrative texts because they believe it improves students in reading comprehension skills, and that teaching culture helps students to accept others habits. According to Byram and Grundy (2003), in order for the students to be culturally sensitive, they should be allowed to absorb distinct cultural outlooks and attitudes in addition to the basic aspects of cultures.

5.2.2 Discussion of results related to the second research question

Are there any significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) in the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district due to gender, teaching levels, training courses, and academic qualification?

❖ **Discussion of results related to the first study hypothesis:** Are there any significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) in the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the

enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district due to gender?

The researcher used independent sample-Test in order to answer this question to find out the significant differences in the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district.

Table (7) demonstrates that there are no significant differences at ($\alpha= 0.05$) in the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district due to gender. This result shows that male English language teachers ($M= 3.65$, $STD= .43$) believe that there are insignificant differences at ($\alpha= 0.05$) in the inclusion of elements of material culture in Palestinian English textbooks for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension. Also, female English language teachers ($M= 3.68$, $STD= .33$) think that the inclusion of elements of material culture in Palestinian English textbooks for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension has insignificant differences at ($\alpha= 0.05$).

This result confirmed that both genders think equally about the incorporation of elements of material culture in Palestinian curriculum to enhance students' reading comprehension skills.

- ❖ **Discussion of results related to the second study hypothesis:** Are there any significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) in the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district due to academic qualification?

The researcher used One-Way ANOVA in order to test this hypothesis. To find out the significant differences in the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district.

Table (8) shows numbers, means, and standard deviations of the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district due to academic qualification.

The results of the table (9) show that there are differences in the means of the responses of the study sample according to the variable of academic qualification, and in order to examine the significance of these differences, the researcher used one –way ANOVA test.

Table (9) indicates that there are significant differences at ($\alpha= 0.05$) in the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district due to academic qualification.

Scheffe Post Hoc test was used to determine the source of variation in the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district due to academic qualification.

Table (10) shows the evident from the results of the study that there are statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha=0.05$) in the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district due to academic qualification.

Where it is clear that the differences were between holders of the diploma and holders of the master in favor of holders of a master's degree, as well as that the differences were significant between holders of the bachelor's degree and holders of the master's degree in favor of holders of the master's degree.

❖ **Discussion of results related to the third study hypothesis:** Are there any significant differences at ($\alpha= 0.05$) in the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district due to teaching level.

The researcher used independent sample T-Test in order to test this hypothesis and to find out the significant differences at ($\alpha= 0.05$) in the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the

enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district due to teaching level.

So, the researcher calculated means and standard deviations of the teachers' perspectives towards incorporating material cultural elements in the Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension. The total score of the questionnaire were calculated due to the teaching level variable.

Table (11) indicates that there are no significant differences at ($\alpha= 0.05$) in the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district due to teaching level. These results assure that English language teachers of both the primary level ($M= 3.67$, $SD= 0.42$) and teachers of the secondary level ($M = 3.68$, $SD= 0.28$) are not aware about the importance of material cultural elements and their presence in the curriculum.

- ❖ **Discussion of results related to the fourth study hypothesis:** Are there any significant differences at ($\alpha= 0.05$) in the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district due to training course on teaching culture?

The researcher used independent sample T-Test in order to test this hypothesis and to find out the significant differences at ($\alpha= 0.05$) in the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district due to teaching level.

Table (12) indicates that there are no significant differences at ($\alpha= 0.05$) in the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension from English teachers' perspectives in Jenin district due to training course on teaching culture.

These results show that English language teacher's perspectives towards attending training courses about culture are close. Even though the number of English teachers who did not attend these workshops (116.00) is higher than the number of English teachers who attend the courses (74.00). However, the mean and standard deviation of teachers attended cultural workshops are ($M= 3.66$, $SD= 0.43$) while the mean and standard deviation of teachers who did not attended cultural workshops are ($M= 3.68$, $SD= 0.31$).

5.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, it seems that there is a need for far greater exposure to the target language, because one focal aim of the Palestinian Ministry of Education is to achieve cultural awareness and to positively direct student's attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language. This will be accomplished by exposing students to elements of the target culture.

Actually, the Palestinian English curriculum becomes questionable regarding the cultural context. As proved by (Al-Ja'bari, 2010) the Palestinian English textbooks of the secondary stage do not provide enough target cultural elements. Thus, to handle this cultural-related issues teachers should be involved in culture training courses (Rihan, 2015).

Another plausible conclusion that reached from soliciting teacher's perspectives is that incorporating elements of material culture should be in a balanced way; so, no exclusion or marginalization for either the local culture or the target culture. On the contrary, by including both cultures students will be fully aware of culture-related issues. In fact, student's reading comprehension skills will be affected positively.

To sum up, the research attempted to underscore the importance of incorporating elements of material culture in the Palestinian curriculum from English language teacher's perspectives and the impact of this inclusion on student's reading comprehension. The research's results support some of the previous studies related to the study topic which

confirm that incorporating elements of material culture extremely fosters student's reading comprehension skills such as (Al-ja'bari, 2010, Rihan, 2015, Shantawi,2010).

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the results of the study the researcher recommended the following:

- **The Ministry of Education:** is advised to enrich the curriculum with target material cultural elements and to provide curriculum designers and teachers with the most recent methodologies and issues to be used in EFL classrooms. Invite native speakers to EFL classrooms. Also, create a movable culture corner in schools.
- **Curriculum designers:** are advised to take into their consideration while they generate the curriculum; the basic role of content in foreign language textbooks, in the sense that they should be based on cultural material of real-life situations. Because using material cultural elements in narrative texts improves students in reading comprehension skills.
- **Teachers:** are firstly advised to introduce cultural material elements to their students in the classroom to enhance both the local and target cultures. Secondly, to teach culture as a fifth language skill. Thirdly, to be in contact with decision makers by giving their feedback. Finally, to regularly attend training courses on how to handle cultural-related issues.

- **EFL students:** are encouraged to appreciate their culture and accept other cultures in order to become global citizens. This will occur by incorporating material cultural elements to enhance student's cultural awareness.
- **Future researchers:** are recommended to conduct comparative studies between public and private schools and to do further research in the field of the study but with different samples and in different locations.

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Appendices

Appendix A

A Questionnaire

Al-Najah National University

The Faculty of Graduate Studies TEFL Program

Department of English Teaching Methods

Dear teacher,

This questionnaire aims to investigate the perspectives of English language teachers of the role of incorporating material cultural elements in Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension. It also, aims at exploring how the material cultural elements are presented in the TEFL in the English for Palestine new series. The study is entitled: "**The Role of Incorporating Material Cultural Elements in Palestinian Curriculum for the Enhancement of Students' Reading Comprehension from English Teachers' perspectives in Jenin District**".

Please read the items bellow carefully and respond to each by placing (X) next to the answer that corresponds to your response. Your answers will be confidential.

Thank you for your co-operation

Researcher: Bara'a Inad Fuqha

Personal information:**A. Gender:**

Male () Female ()

B. Academic Qualification

1. Diploma ()

2. Bachelor ()

3. Master ()

C. The levels you teach

1. Primary level (1-10) ()

2. Secondary level (11-12) ()

D. Have you ever attended a training course on teaching culture?

Yes () No ()

Thank you for your participation

	Items	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	I think that exposing both primary school and high school students to the target culture leads to mastering the foreign language.					
2	I think that the content of the Palestinian English textbooks presents visible cultural (examples, problems, and descriptions).					
3	I teach culture not as a fifth language skill beside (speaking, reading, listening, and writing).					
4	I think that material cultural elements equip students with skills related to real life situations.					
5	I teach the Palestinian culture with connection to the Arab and western culture.					
6	I think that learning about the target culture enhances students' appreciation of their own culture.					
7	I think that culture presentation in EFL classrooms enhances the student-centered approach.					
8	I think that the cultural elements in the Palestinian English textbooks are unfamiliar to the students.					
9	I think that school textbooks lack material cultural elements.					
10	I think the Palestinian English curriculum introduces items from the western cultures in general.					
11	I use realia (real life objects) in addition to the content of school textbooks to teach cultural related issues.					
12	I think the Palestinian English curriculum incorporates items from the local culture.					
13	I think that incorporating material cultural elements enhances students' cultural competence.					
14	I think that using material cultural elements in narrative texts improves students' reading comprehension skills.					
15	I think that teaching culture helps students to accept other nations.					
16	I think that teaching culture should be integrative part of EFL.					
17	I think that teacher's training courses are important to prepare them for cross-cultural issues.					
18	I think that the acquisition of a foreign language requires the acquisition of students' cultural knowledge of their own language.					

19	I believe that it is important to teach students about (literature and fine arts) of the target culture.					
20	I think that textbooks present both local and target cultural material in balance.					
21	I feel more comfortable using distinct material cultural elements in EFL classes.					
22	I encourage students to read (articles, books, magazines, and newspaper) topics about the target culture.					
23	I think that the cultural elements in the textbooks familiarize students with western civilizations.					
24	I think that it is essential to teach students about (artifacts, customs, and traditions) of the target culture.					
25	I think that syllabus designers neglect culture presentation in the Palestinian English curriculum.					

Appendix (B)

A Request for Judging the Questionnaire (Teachers)

I am a master student of English teaching methods at An Najah National University. I am writing a thesis on the role of incorporating material cultural elements in the Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension and I have now reached the stage of judging the questionnaire. The aim of the questionnaire is to solicit the perspectives of English language teachers regarding culture.

The judgment must be done by English language teachers in Jenin District. Therefore, I send you this email with an attachment to ask your help in judging the questionnaire.

The judgment should be relevant to the accuracy and wording of each item; for the sake of avoiding misunderstanding of the items, the appropriateness and the relevance of the items and to pinpoint any items that need to be omitted or to highlight any one that need to be modified.

The names of the teachers/assessors and their position will appear in the research.

Thank you in advance,

The Researcher- Bara'a Fuqha

	The Assessor Name	The position
1	Abdulrahman Nairat	Teacher
2	Besam Alawneh	Teacher
3	Jamal Fuqha	Teacher
4	Yusra Nairat	Teacher
5	Ammar Iqteet	Teacher
6	Dalal Rabaya	Teacher

Appendix (C)

A Request for Judging the Questionnaire (The Jury of Experts)

I am a master student of English teaching methods at An Najah National University. I am writing a thesis on the role of incorporating material cultural elements in the Palestinian curriculum for the enhancement of students' reading comprehension and I have now reached the stage of judging the questionnaire. The aim of the questionnaire is to solicit the perspectives of English language teachers regarding culture.

The judgment must be done by English language teachers in Jenin District. Therefore, I send you this email with an attachment to ask your help in judging the questionnaire.

The judgment should be relevant to the accuracy and wording of each item; for the sake of avoiding misunderstanding of the items, the appropriateness and the relevance of the items and to pinpoint any items that need to be omitted or to highlight any one that need to be modified.

The names of the teachers/assessors and their position will appear in the research.

Thank you in advance,

The Researcher- Bara'a Fuqha


	The Assessor Name	The position
1	Dr Khaled Dwiekat	Associate Professor at Al- Quds Open University
2	Dr Aysar Yaseen	Associate Professor at Arab American University
3	Dr Mosaddaq Barahmeh	Associate Professor at Arab American University

Appendix (D)

Agreement from the Ministry of Education for the Application of the Research

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

<p>State of Palestine Ministry of Education Center for Educational Research and Development</p>		<p>دولة فلسطين وزارة التربية والتعليم مركز البحث والتطوير التربوي</p>
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الرقم: و ت / ١٣٣ / ١ / ٢٠٢٠
التاريخ: 29 / 9 / 2020م

لمن يهّمه الأمر

تسهيل مهمّة بحثية

يهديكُم مركز البحث والتطوير التربوي أطيب تحية، ويرجو منكم التكرم بتسهيل مهمة الباحثة:

"براءة عناد لطفي فقها"

من جامعة النجاح الوطنية للحصول على المعلومات اللازمة لإعداد دراستها بعنوان:

The Role of Incorporating Elements of Material Culture in Palestinian Curriculum for "the Enhancement of Students' Reading Comprehension from English Teachers' perspectives in Jenin District"

ملاحظات:

- تتضمن الدراسة تطبيق استبيان على كافة معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية في مديرية التربية والتعليم -جنين.
- يتولى الباحث/ة أنشطة جمع البيانات، بتنسيق مع "منسق البحث والتطوير والجودة" في المديرية.
- الاستجابة على الأدوات البحثية من قبل عينة المبحوثين طوعية.
- نظراً لظروف الجائحة يتم تطبيق أدوات البحث عبر النماذج المحوسبة دون تواصل وجاهي مع المبحوثين.

مع الاحترام،

د. محمد مطر
ب. ٩/٢٩
مدير مركز البحث والتطوير التربوي



نسخة: معالي وزير التربية والتعليم المحترم.
عطوفة وكيل الوزارة المحترم.
عطوفة الوكلاء المساعدين المحترمين.
المدير العام للتربية والتعليم جنين المحترم.

الأخ ايمن نزال -المحترم / المشرف على الدراسة- بريد إلكتروني anazzal@najah.edu

جامعة النجاح الوطنية
كلية الدراسات العليا

دور ادخال العناصر الثقافية المادية في المناهج الفلسطينية
لتعزيز القراءة والاستيعاب لدى الطلاب من وجهة نظر
معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية في مقاطعة جنين

إعداد
براءة عناد لطفي فقها

إشراف
د. أيمن نزال
د. فواز عقل

قدمت هذه الأطروحة استكمالاً لمتطلبات الحصول على درجة الماجستير في أساليب تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية في كلية الدراسات العليا، جامعة النجاح الوطنية، نابلس، فلسطين.

2021

ب
دور ادخال العناصر الثقافية المادية في المناهج الفلسطينية لتعزيز القراءة والاستيعاب لدى
الطلاب من وجهة نظر معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية في مقاطعة جنين

إعداد

براءة عناد لطفي فقها

إشراف

د. أيمن نزال

د. فواز عقل

الملخص

هدفت هذه الدراسة الوصفية الى التحقق من دور ادخال العناصر الثقافية المادية في المناهج الفلسطينية لكلا المرحلتين الأساسية والثانوية بهدف تعزيز القراءة والاستيعاب لدى الطلاب من وجهة نظر معلمين ومعلمات اللغة الإنجليزية في مقاطعة جنين. لتحقيق هذا الهدف قامت الباحثة بتطوير استبيان وتوزيعه بين المشاركين في الدراسة. واخذت الباحثة بعين الاعتبار جنس المعلم، المؤهلات الاكاديمية، المراحل التي يدرسوها، والدورات التدريبية لتعليم الثقافة.

وتألف مجتمع الدراسة من (361) معلم ومعلمة لغة انجليزية بينما تكونت عينة الدراسة من (190) معلم ومعلمة لغة انجليزية (57 ذكور و133 اناث) بمختلف المؤهلات الاكاديمية. لتحليل البيانات استخدمت الباحثة اختبارات للعينة المستقلة واختبارات لتحليل التباين الأحادي (ANOVA) بالإضافة الى اختبار Scheffe Post Hoc Test. اظهر التحليل ان تضمين العناصر الثقافية المادية في المناهج الإنجليزية يقدم مصادر مفيدة لتعزيز استيعاب الطلاب.

واظهرت النتائج ان المستجيبين كانوا ايجابيين فيما يخص ادماج العناصر الثقافية المادية. ونتائج الفرضيات أظهرت ان هناك فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية عند مستوى الدلالة ($\alpha=0.05$) بين متوسطات وجهات نظر المعلمين المتعلقة بتدريس الثقافة والدرجة الكلية للاستبانة تعزى لمتغير المؤهل العلمي يعزى الى حامي درجة الماجستير. لذلك في ضوء النتائج قامت الباحثة بتوصية مصممي المناهج لإغناء مناهج اللغة الإنجليزية بالعناصر الثقافية المادية الكافية لتحسين مهارات القراءة والاستيعاب لدى الطلاب.