Preface by the Series Editors

The decision of Kluwer Academic Publishers to launch both a new journal and a new book series on language policy recognizes the growing importance attached to the field. Language policy has come to be significant not just in newly independent states but also in well-established ones. We define language policy as having three interrelated aspects: practices, ideologies, and management. It may be inferred from studying the systematic choices of linguistic items or varieties as part of the language practices of a community, or from the language beliefs and ideologies about language use current in a social group. Or it may be made explicit in language management (which we define as efforts by people or institutions that possess or that claim authority to modify the language practices or ideologies of others). Because it is an ongoing process in continuous interaction with a great range of other factors (social, political, religious and so on) in a society, its study comes to have even wider significance. To study a society or state without considering its language policy, or to study language policy without taking into account its full social context, leads to an impoverished understanding.

    In the book series and the journal, we will therefore seek and publish scholarly and scientific analysis of cases and issues and development of theories that take into account careful empirical study, whether qualitative or quantitative and thorough reasoning. While recognizing that most scholars in the field have firm opinions about controversial language policy issues, we will discourage polemic. The books and articles we publish will cover the full scope of language policy, whether at the largest or smallest social or institutional or political level. Because language acquisition policy, especially as it effects the decisions about which languages to use for instruction and which to teach, is such a fundamental and universal aspect of language policy, we will aim for full coverage of language education questions.

    We therefore welcome the present volume as the first in the book series because it helps make clear not just our major concerns with policy in context but also the critical role of decisions about language education as an integral component of language policy. There are of course many special local features concerning Arab minority language education in Israel, but the topic allows the authors to explore the complex general relationships between the design and implementation of a school policy for teaching and using languages and the rich

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sociolinguistic, social, political, religious, attitudinal, and economic contexts in which the policy exists, offering thus a model of much wider significance, especially to the many countries in which ethnic and language conflict exists. It shows how in a democratic society, compromises may develop that, which not satisfying all interests, permit limiting conflict while allowing for continued tension for improvement.

The book by Amara and Mar'i sets forth a number of intriguing paradoxes. In spite of the continued political struggle between Arabs and Jews in the Middle East, Israel is one of the few non-Arab countries where there is state-supported mother tongue instruction for Arabic speakers throughout primary and secondary school and in teacher training institutions. Israel is also among comparatively few states in the world that offer this amount of instruction in a home language of a minority.

At the same time, as this study makes clear, there remain important problems in the design and implementation of the system. In part, no doubt, this reflects the general difficulty of developing an appropriate policy for a community that is ethnically or linguistically different from the majority. The issue of ethnic or religious (or ethnic-religious) definitions adopted by polities sets up challenges for recognition of appropriate civic status for minority groups. It is a controversial issue not just in Israel (where the matter is exacerbated by the continuing conflict between Israel and the surrounding Arabic-speaking countries) but potentially wherever one group is singled out for recognition in national constitutions or ideologies.

The ambiguities in the nominal recognition of Arabic as an official language of Israel are clearly analyzed in the book. Robert Cooper has distinguished three meanings of official language: statutory, working, and symbolic. The preservation of the status of Arabic (first recognized as a statutory but limited working official language by the British Military Government which took over after the defeat of the Turks in World War I) as a statutory official language after the 1948 independence of Israel has had only weak implementation as a working language, with the major exception of the school system described here. This situation is starting to be challenged by an Israeli Arabic movement for civil equality, concerned at signs of declining proficiency in Arabic and increasing use of Hebrew among Israeli Arabs, but the issue is clouded in the meantime by the continued political crisis.

Focusing as it does on the Israeli education system and its language policy, and also on the place of the Arabic language, the book makes clear how the policy is not at all autonomous, but must be seen in the full Israeli sociolinguistic, political, economic, religious and cultural context. The situation of Arabic in Israel today is unique as it needs to survive and compete in a

trilingual struggle with Hebrew, the language of the hegemonic majority and the national language, with the higher status of statutory, working and symbolic backing, and with English, a global language the knowledge of which is a condition for entrance into higher education and to economic success. While Arabic is maintaining its role in the home and local community, and serves as a major mark of identity, the lack of external recognition is contributing to a loss of status and use. The volume asks then whether and how the educational system might contribute to resisting shift away from Arabic.

The authors of this book, both graduates of Bar-Ilan University, have been studying Arab language education in Israel for some years. Abd Mar'i has a doctorate in Hebrew literature, and teaches at Beit Berl College. He was responsible for a major study of the teaching of Arabic in the Arab community. Muhammad Amara teaches in the departments of English and political studies at Bar-Ilan University and also at Beit Berl College. He has conducted a number of studies dealing with the sociolinguistics of the Arabic language as it used in Israel and with language and identity and recently published a book entitled *Politics and Sociolinguistic Reflexes: Palestinian Border Villages*. Their book draws on research each has conducted, including a larger study of Israeli language education as a whole. Because they are committed and activist members of the community studied, while at the same time academically qualified researchers accepted by mainstream society, they have both the perspective and tools to undertake the challenging task set by the topic of the book. We are pleased that their book launches the Kluwer series on language policy.

Elana Shohamy   Bernard Spolsky

Preface

In the last three years a number of eye-catching events related to Arab-Jewish cleavage took place in Israel. In 1998 the Jewish citizens of the state celebrated 50 years to "the establishment of the state, Jewish independence and the realization of the Zionist dream" (Gavizon and Abu-Rayya, 1999: 9). In contrast, the Arab citizens of the state mourned fifty years to the *Nakba.*[1] Another event in the same year, called by the Arabs 'Black Sunday", was a violent confrontation between thousands of Arab inhabitants of Um-el-Fahm and Israeli police forces. The recent events, in September and October 2000, between Arab demonstrators and Israeli police forces led to the killing of 13 Arabs and dozens of wounded. With a quick look at Israeli newspapers the following picture emerges: Arabs started to develop a perception that the country treats them as enemies rather than citizens, and many Israeli Jews indicate that Arabs do not only demonstrate and protest, but they also want to shake the pillars of the Jewish state.

The above examples express well the intensity of the Jewish-Arab cleavage in Israel. The Israeli reality points to a number of deep divisions among the population (such as between Sephardi-Ashkenazi, Orthodox-secular, men-women, Arab-Jew), most of which, in our opinion, are progressively decreasing as time passes. The Arab-Jewish divide is the deepest of all, and there is still no solution. In spite of its intensity, it does not enjoy a centrality whether in public debates or in the academy. This subject comes on the agenda after sharp tensions between Arabs and Jews.

In this book we will explore in more detail some aspects of the Arab-Jewish cleavage, which raise fundamental questions regarding the place of the Arabs and Arab language education in the Jewish State. More specifically, the aim of this book is to describe and analyze language education in the Arab society in Israel from the establishment of the state in 1948 until today. For this purpose internal processes which are embedded within the Arab population itself, such as the socio-economic condition of the population, the diglossic situation in the Arabic language, and the wide use of Hebrew among Arabic speakers, and

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[1] The literal translation is "catastrophe". This term describes the drastic change that occurred in the status and situation of the Palestinians as a result of the 1948 War, whether in their demographic dispersion or the transformations in their political and socio-economical situation.

external factors such as the policy of control and inspection of the Ministry of Education over the Arab education system in general and on language education in particular, the dominance of Hebrew, and the definition and perception of Israel as a Jewish State were examined, together with their influence on language education and learning achievements. A comprehensive examination was made of Arabic, Hebrew and English. Also examined was the teaching of French in a number of community schools.

The principal questions focused on are:

1. What are the characteristics of Arab language education in Israel? What are the principal factors which fashion it?

2. What are the considerations which guide those who make decisions in the forming of the language education policy (E.g., formulation of goals, choice of learning materials, etc.) among the Arab population?

3. Why are the achievements of the Arab students in language education so low? What are the principal and secondary factors that bring about these results?

4. What status does the Arabic language have in Israel? What significance does this have for language education?

5. What issues are on the agenda and what are the problems which hinder the progress of language teaching? How can Arab language education be improved?

Since the subject of the research is complex and covers a broad area, we have used a number of research methods in order to gather the relevant data. These include:

1. *Examining teaching programs.* We examined study programs in the three main languages which are taught in the Arab schools. We made a comparison between the new programs and earlier ones.

2. *Examination of textbooks in the three principal languages.* We looked at contents, structure and style of earlier readers compared with those used now.

3. *Conducting interviews.* We interviewed the inspectors of the three principal languages and language teachers in elementary, junior high and high schools. The interviews examined the declared goals of the language education from the point of view of the planning level (the decision makers), the teachers' implementation, the current problems and possible solutions.

4. *Questionnaires.* We surveyed the attitudes and perceptions of high school and college students about the various languages and their speakers, and also the degree of fluency of the students in the languages, the way the language is used and interest in the communications media. The sample included 999 Arabs from all significant geographical areas in Israel: the Little Triangle, Galilee and Haifa District, the Negev, mixed cities, and Druze villages.

5. *Archives:* Since there is not much published literature on the subject, we used archives such as the Beit Berl Archives, and the State Archives in

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1. LANGUAGE, IDENTITY AND POLICY

There is a close connection between language, identity and policy. Language is not only a means of communication but is also a system of signs and symbols. Language conveys content and at the same time is itself content. People transmit and express with their language not only thoughts, feelings, aspirations and expectations, but at the same time they express and define who they are and how they wish to be seen by others. To put it another way, language is not just a tool for transmitting values, norms and feelings, but is, in and of itself, a partner in this process. Language is an important means of socialization of the individual and the collective. Therefore, our view of language is broad, and we examine it as an open system which influences and is influenced by nonlinguistic factors. The use of one language or another can allude to differences which exist not only in the language but also in the social structure on the one hand, and our perception of others and ourselves on the other hand.

Spolsky and Shohamy (1999a: 41) propose a useful distinction between three things: language practices, language ideology and language policy.[1] Language practices are the actual use of the linguistic repertoire; that is to say the choices among language varieties and languages available to a community. Language ideology is expressed mainly in the perceptions concerning language and its use. Policy is the means by which the government or other public bodies seek to influence or to change elements in the language itself, in language use or in the

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[1] The concept of language policy is relatively new. On its area and linkage to other areas see the finely detailed introduction by Spolsky and Shohamy (1999a). Spolsky and Shohamy examine the subject by using as a framework the question used by Cooper (1984) on the subject of language spread: "Who plans what for whom and why?"

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status of a language. Language policy is thus the effort to change or influence language practices. Language policy tries to change the status of the language structure, its acquisition or its study within the country or its spread to other countries. Language policy can be expressed in official documents. For example, it could be anchored in the constitution, or in a language law, or in a government document or in an administrative regulation (Spolsky and Shohamy, 1999b: 43).[2] In order to carry out the policy a body or several bodies are needed – whether it is the government, institutes, groups or individuals. In our case the Israeli establishment is the relevant and most influential body for setting language education policy in the Arab community in Israel.

There are various reasons for establishing a language policy. Spolsky and Shohamy (1999a: 52) say, "One seemingly simple approach to finding a rationale for a language policy might be to assert some absolute linguistic rights [of the various groups]..." Of course there are countries in the world which are more tolerant of diversity than others according to the point of view of the dominant group on the one hand and the point of view of the citizenry on the other. For example, Switzerland is a good example of a country which recognizes the language rights of four official languages (French, German, Italian and Romansh) which form the principal ethnic groups in the country. On the other hand, liberal France recognizes French as the only official language despite the fact that there are many groups living there who speak other languages (for example, the language of the periphery like Breton and Occitan and of the Arabic-speaking immigrants from North Africa who are citizens of France and who are estimated to number millions). Turkey is another example of a country which is seen by the world as oppressing the Kurdish people in all areas including language. The Kurdish population in Turkey is estimated to be about 15 million (almost 20% of the total population of Turkey) and their Kurdish language is not recognized as an official language in schools. From this we learn that language policy can express language ideology.

Another reason for a language policy is to enable access to information and to cultural knowledge. The study of English, and to a lesser extent, other world languages, is intended to provide access to knowledge, especially in technology and science.

An additional important reason for a language policy is economic. In the reality of the 21st century the economies of the world are connected to each other, and therefore there is motivation to learn the languages of countries economically powerful, especially English.[3] Language in this sense is perceived

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[2] French is possibly the best example. See Ager (1999).

[3] Many studies show today the latent economic value in the fluency of immigrants in the language of their new country (for example: Arcand 1996; Chiswick and Miller 1994; Coulmas 1991).

as a national asset like the other assets and natural resources of the country (Brecht et al. 1995).

In addition to the reasons presented above, which are pragmatic and practical, there are reasons connected with symbols, or to be more exact, with identity. In this case the goal of the language policy is to gain greater prestige for the national language and to strengthen its linkage to the nation. In the case of liberation and nationalist movements, the flag and the language are the most useful symbols for emphasizing the linkage to the nation and the aspiration for independence (Fishman et al. 1968; Fishman et al. 1985).

Four examples will clarify this issue. After the defeat of Turkey in World War I, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk aspired to bring about far-reaching changes within the country in order to modernize it. The first aspects of the change were realized in language. First of all, the Arabic alphabet was replaced by the Latin alphabet, sending a clear message of breaking with the East and joining the West. A second step was to purify Turkish from Arabic and Persian elements representing the Islamic world.

When the independence of Pakistan from India was decided in 1947, it was proclaimed that Urdu would be one of the main official languages of the country. In practice the linguistic differences between Urdu and Hindi were minimal. The Pakistanis use the Perso-Arabic alphabet and at the same time increased the use of Arabic and Persian elements in their language. In this way, a language change strengthened a political partition.

A third example is the Zionist Movement. Its motto was "Hebrew, speak Hebrew!" (Haramati, 1997). This expressed aspiration for a change from the old Diasporan identity. In this context Shohamy claims (1996, 250):

> From the ideological point of view the Hebrew language fulfills a central function in the State of Israel as a result of its association with Zionism, the movement for the return of the Jews to their land and for the creation of a new and independent nation. With the return of the Jews to the Land of Israel, there was a strong movement for the revival of the Hebrew language and its establishment as a living language. The revival of the Hebrew language – its change from a written language which was used mainly for prayer, to a spoken language used in all areas of life – performed a central function in the creation of the new nation.

The final example is the Arab world. With the rise of national consciousness in the Arab world at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, two main language alternatives stood before the various states in the Arab world. One was that each country should raise its local vernacular into a standardized norm, and the other was to modernize the classical language. The first possibility signaled national separation and the development of new and different national entities. The second possibility would crystallize anew what was shared by the

Arab peoples (what was called Pan-Arabism). The second possibility won out
over the first linguistically (Suleiman 1997), but the political issue remains open.

There is a close connection between the three components. The ideology of
the state influences language ideology and thus language policy. In Israel, Jews
are the dominant group. The definition and perception of Israel as a Jewish-
Zionistic State finds expression in many areas of life, including language.[4] In the
view of Shohamy (1996: 251) the language policy of the State of Israel is
motivated more by ideology than by needs. Before the rise of the state, from an
official point of view (on the level of policy) the three languages of Palestine
were English, Arabic and Hebrew, listed in that order. In practice, Arabic was
the most widespread, with English used for government and Hebrew used only
within the Jewish community. After the establishment of Israel, the Jews sought
to change the language dominance and practice. The first step that the new state
took was the removing of English from the list of official languages. This
theoretically left Hebrew and Arabic as the two official languages. However, as
we will see later, Israeli law gives preference to Hebrew over Arabic.

2. THE LINGUISTIC HEGEMONY IN ISRAEL AND THE PLACE OF ARABIC

From the Arab conquest in the 7th century of the Common Era, Arabic became
the dominant language in Palestine. At the same time other languages fulfilled
important functions. In Ottoman Palestine Turkish was the official language of
the government, and it was learned by local people who came in contact with the
Turkish officials or who served as officials (Ayish et al. 1983). A not
insignificant number of European languages (such as French, Italian, German,
Russian, Greek) had a religious status and also other languages were studied in
order to communicate with the Christian pilgrims (Gonzales, 1992). European
missionaries set up schools in the large cities such as Bethlehem, Jerusalem,
Jaffa and Nazareth and taught English, Italian, German, Spanish and Russian
(Maoz, 1975). Multilingualism was especially common in these large cities. For
example, in Jerusalem at the end of the 19th century, in addition to Arabic other
languages used included Turkish, Greek, Yiddish, English, German, Latin and
Aramaic. Many people, especially those living in cities, were bilingual or
multilingual (Spolsky & Cooper, 1991).

The end of the Ottoman rule in Palestine in 1917 brought about far-reaching
changes in all areas including language. The British Mandate[5] in Palestine

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[4] This will be discussed at length in Chapter 2.
[5] Following the end of World War I, Palestine was placed for an interim period under the
British Mandate, which formally began in 1922. The British Mandate was a turbulent

strengthened the status of Hebrew, by then established as the revived language of the Jewish community, and it became an official language alongside Arabic and English. In private schools Arabic, French and Italian were also taught.

During the British Mandatory period in Palestine English was the main language of government. However, in spite of the fact that the communities, Arab and Jewish, had separate school systems, there was language contact, generally with the Jews learning Arabic. English served both the Arab and Jewish communities as a language of wider communication.

However, after the establishment of Israel, the sociolinguistic landscape has changed tremendously. Spolsky and Shohamy (1999a: 5-6) describe in general the language practices in the Israel of today as follows:

> Most Israelis understand and speak Hebrew. The exceptions are older Arabs and recent immigrants, and of course the tourists and foreign workers. Most Israeli Palestinian Arabs speak Arabic as their first language and use it at home and in their towns and villages, but they use Hebrew at work and in other settings. Recent immigrants still use their immigrant languages in the home and the immediate neighborhood. Many longer-settled immigrants speak their own languages occasionally in homes and the community settings. Code switching is common among all the groups. Among *haredi* (ultra-Orthodox) Jews, Hasidim (members of sects, created originally in the late eighteenth century in Eastern Europe, who from tight enclaves around a prestigious religious leader or Rebbe) especially but also some Ashkenazim (Jews from Germany and Poland and their descendants) continue to use Yiddish in education and other settings. Tourists and foreign workers use their own languages and when they cannot use them or Hebrew, try English as a substitute. Most government business and economic life is conducted in Hebrew, except in some localities. Most schooling is conducted in Hebrew. The two exceptions are the Israeli schools in the Arab sector which use Arabic and the Hasidic *haredi* schools, which encourage their pupils to switch from Hebrew to Yiddish. Many people use English.

Hebrew is the dominant language in the country and Arabic is an important language only for the Arab minority and hardly plays any central role in the national public sphere. This was not the case before the establishment of the state. This change is correlated with the political and demographic change. The Jews became a majority and sovereign in the part of divided Palestine, and they sought to make the dominant identity of Israel, if not the sole one, a Jewish one, and Hebrew became a dominant language of the country.

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period marked by incessant violence between Palestinians and Jews both of whom opposed the Mandate. The Mandate on Palestine ended on May 15, 1948 and the establishment of Israel ensued.

CHAPTER 2

THE ARABS IN ISRAEL:

Internal and Regional Developments

The point of departure here is the impact of non-linguistic forces on Arab language education. A first source of explanation is the political transformations and their impacts on the Arabs in Israel. Language education policies will be understood against this background. In this chapter we will examine the socio-political circumstances over the last five decades which have influenced the Arab society in Israel. An understanding of the characteristics of Arab society in general and the collective identity of Arabs as citizens of the State of Israel in particular requires an examination of three related subjects: Israel and its policy towards the Arab minority, internal developments in the Arab society itself and regional developments and their influence on the Arabs in Israel.

1. THE JEWISH STATE AND THE ARAB MINORITY

The Israeli-Arab/Palestinian conflict and the concept of the State of Israel and its definition as a Jewish-Zionist State constitute two important components that determine the character of the relations between the Arab minority and the Jewish majority in the State of Israel. These relations are wrapped in tension and persistent friction.

A concern for security resulting from the continuing Arab-Israeli conflict was decisive in setting the relations between the two peoples. The foundation laid after the establishment of the state was that, since the Arabs in Israel are a national minority belonging to the Arab world with which they identify emotionally and physically, they constitute a security risk to Israel. As long as no

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solution to this conflict is found they will continue to be a security risk (Reiter, 1996). In the light of this conception, Arabs are perceived as citizens whose loyalty to the state is "questionable and a factor with a latent potential of danger to its Zionist character (in the best case) or to its very existence (in the worst case)" (Benziman & Mansur, 1992: 211).

Security arguments brought about the relief of Arabs[1] in Israel from the obligation to do military service and strengthened the notion of "conflict of loyalties" (Reiter, 1996) or "dual loyalty" (Landau, 1971). According to these assumptions the loyalty of Arabs in Israel leans more to the Arab people. Though the question of loyalty exempted the Arabs from serving in the Israeli Defense Forces, it at the same time justified the authorities in discriminating against them, for there are many benefits that are granted only to those who have served in the army. Arabs are not eligible for these benefits.

The security issue was not the factor which fixed the position and set the status of the Arabs in Israel, but it was an important support. An even more fundamental component is built into the definition of Israel as a Jewish State, as expressly declared in the Declaration of Independence. Many laws have been passed in order to strengthen the concept and definition of Israel as a State of the Jewish people.

Without doubt the intensive concern with the constant security problems prevented a deep and genuine discussion of the substance and identity of Israel, and relegated the relations between the minority and the majority into a secondary concern. Decision makers in Israel did not expressly set a policy to be taken towards the Arabs in Israel, neither for the medium range nor for the long range. Decisions were made under the pressure of events (Benziman & Mansur, 1992). But these events were isolated and scattered. Therefore there was no active pressure on decision makers to take a definitive stance on the subject. In general, solutions were *ad hoc*. For example, after strikes or violent demonstrations, and especially after the first Land Day in 1976,[2] decisions were taken concerning the expropriation of lands.

Landau (1993) points to this lack of a general policy. The government of the day postponed the confrontation with the problems of the minority because of the ongoing conflict and because of the increasing internal tensions among Jews. Nissan (1986) goes even further in his arguments and claims that the policy of the various governments in Israel bypassed "the Arab problem" and did not deal

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[1] The exceptions are Druze Arabs whose service in the Israeli army is compulsory, and some Bedouin Arabs who serve on a voluntary basis.

[2] The Israeli policy of confiscating Arab Lands in the Galilee prompted the Palestinians in Israel to protest against this policy. On March 30, 1976 violent clashes took place between Palestinians in Israel and the Israeli police, following an official declaration that the government intends to confiscate Arab lands for establishing Jewish settlements. Six Palestinians were killed and several were wounded. This day came to be known as the Land Day, which is remembered and celebrated annually by the Palestinians in Israel.

with it directly. The main purpose in bypassing it was to reduce the points of friction with the population, and this, according to Nissan, even "necessarily reduces 'the full and complete realization of Zionism' as Ben-Gurion demanded in his time" (ibid. 164).

It should not be understood from what has been said above that no improvement has occurred or that changes have not been brought about in the situation of the Arabs in the State of Israel in the course of time. In the past decade in particular, a substantial change has occurred in the awareness of the leaders in Israel of the need to reduce the gaps between the minority and the majority. This has found expression in the change of policies and in the taking of tangible steps to reduce social and economic gaps.[3] The changes that were made were modest and limited to certain areas, and there has been no substantial change in the status of Arabs in Israel. Israeli Jews continue to take precedence over Arabs in the various areas of life.

Many researchers speak of the intensive processes of democratization that Israeli society has undergone and is undergoing constantly. When they speak of democratization, do they refer only to equality in concrete material things (such as financial allocations and economic resources)? Or to broader principal requirements such as symbols? A state which defines itself as the state of a single ethnic group surely violates the basic principles of democracy and equality for all, as is reflected openly in the exclusive immigration laws (e.g. the Law of Return) and the goals for use of the country's land. Equality would seem to be impossible in principle as long as the State does not modify its character as a Jewish State.

Israel is not the only country in the world that has a conflict like this, but the security problem adds uniqueness to the case. In this context Rouhana says (1997: 56) "When strict security measures are to be taken by any state, it is likely that some of the measures will violate democratic values and the rule of law." Israel used military government[4] law as a means to control the Arab population (Lustick, 1980).

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[3] A number of examples can give an indication of the changes which have occurred: The interruption of the expropriation of lands (mainly in the Little Triangle and in the Galilee); relaxation of the legitimacy of many buildings built illegally; decrease in the gaps between local authorities; cancellation of the discrimination against Arabs in children's allowances; integration of Arab academics in the government service; allocation of budgets in a meaningful way for education and health, roads, building and housing; establishment of funds for prizes granted to Arab writers for creativity and the awarding of the Israel Prize to Arabs. On the political level the Arabs served as a key bloc in Rabin's second term of office, and political agreements were even signed with the two Arab parties.

[4] Israeli Military Government (1948-1966) was assigned to base the land area of Israel in the territories that had an Arab majority in the years 1948-1949, to thwart the possibility that local Arabs would assist military activity prompted by the neighboring Arab states, to

Security provided an excuse for many things. One was expropriation of Arab land, and the eviction of villages and towns of all their people. Another is discrimination against Arabs in the allocation of resources and payments such as National Insurance for children (until recently) and tuition in institutions of higher education.

2. INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS

Having examined central matters in the policy of Israel towards the Arab minority, we will examine the internal developments that occurred in the Arab population itself. Changes occurred mainly in three areas: demography, socio-economy and education. We will attempt in the following to show how Israeli policy influenced the developments in these areas.

2.1 Demography

On 29 November 1947 the United Nations Assembly decided to divide Mandatory Palestine into two states: one Jewish and the other, Arab. The population within the boundaries of the designated Jewish State was estimated at 866,000: 514,000 Jews and almost 352,000 Arabs. Towards the end of 1947 in Mandatory Palestine there were 1,970,000 people, two thirds Arab and one third Jewish (Cohen 1948; Gilbert 1989; Kaiman 1984).

With the intensity of battles between the Jews on one side and the Palestinians and Arab armies on the other, many Palestinians were driven out or escaped with their lives from their homes, a large part to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and the rest to neighboring Arab countries, mainly Jordan, Lebanon and Syria (Nazzal et. al, 1974).

Jewish policy was a major contributor to the fleeing of the Palestinian population (Morris, 1991). Towards the end of the war of 1948 only 156,000 Palestinians remained in the Jewish State (Al-Haj & Rosenfeld 1990). Those who stayed were for the most part villagers. Some 80% lived in villages in three principal areas: Galilee, the Little Triangle[5] and the Negev (Kanaana 1975). As a result of the 1948 war the urban Palestinian population had (about 200,000)

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oversee the movements of Arabs in sensitive regions, to restrain any hostile nationalist Arab organization, and to see to the rapid and effective punishment of security offenders.
[5] The Little Triangle is a geographic term and reality that was coined only after the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. It is located between the West Bank of the Jordan River and the Coast region. In the cease-fire of Rhodes Agreement, Jordan handed over the area to Israel. Its borders were dictated by military events and political agreements. The population of the Little Triangle is about 200,000, about 20% of the total population of Palestinians in Israel.

almost disappeared and only 6% remained (Lustick, 1980). In addition, about 20% became "internal refugees"[6] after they were forced by Israeli authorities to move to other settlements in Israel because of the destruction of their villages during and after the war (Al-Haj 1988a). Evacuees were not permitted to return because their villages and towns were taken over by Jewish settlers (Ozacky-Lazar 1993).[7] Mustafa Kabaha and Barazilai (1996) report that the third generation of internal refugees is integrating well in the new places of living, despite the fact that they express a desire to return to their original villages.

In addition to this Israel has confiscated much land from the Palestinians since the establishment of the state, and especially in the 1950s. This influenced the employment structure of the Palestinians, as we shall discuss below.

Except for the results of the war and the confiscation of the lands of the Palestinians in Israel, especially in the 1950s, particularly in the Little Triangle and Galilee, the Arabs in those regions in Israel have not undergone any drastic demographic changes since then. However, considerable changes are occurring in the demography of the Bedouins in the Negev. Continuing a policy that began in Ottoman times of moving Bedouin from nomadic to sedentary living, Israel has expropriated lands that belong to them in an attempt to settle them in permanent settlements (Alafenish 1987; Falah, 1989). The struggle between the Bedouins and the government continues to this day.

The Arabs in Israel constitute 16 percent of the total population, numbering approximately 1,038,400[8] (Israeli Statistical Almanac, 1999). The increase in the population is a result of the birth rate, which was on the average 4.4% per year from 1948 to 1988 (Israeli Statistical Almanac, 1989: 39). Beginning with the 1960s until today there has been a gradual and continuing decline in the birth

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[6] These are Palestinians who remained in Israel and were forced by Israeli authorities to move to new settlements in Israel since most of their villages were demolished during and immediately after the war, or the Israeli authorities evacuated them for security considerations and promised to allow them to return back. However, the evacuees were not allowed to come back, since their settlements were occupied by Israeli Jewish settlers.

[7] The well-known cases are the villages Ikrit and Bar' am. These villages, next to the Lebanese border, were evacuated in the middle of the 1948 war by the Israeli army. The Israeli authorities promised to let them return when the war was over. However, until today the villagers have not been permitted to return, and for about 50 years they have been waging a public and legal struggle for their return to their villages, but so far in vain.

[8] In Israeli statistics East Jerusalem is included as part of the Arab population in the State of Israel. The Arab population of East Jerusalem, which includes the Old City and the inhabited areas outside it, numbers 180,00 people. East Jerusalem is not included in describing Arab language education, not only for political reasons, but because linguistically and in terms of language education it has more to do with the West Bank than the Arabs in Israel.

CHAPTER 3

THE LINGUISTIC REPERTOIRE:

Sociolinguistic and Political Aspects

1. INTRODUCTION

In 1914 there were 600,000 Palestinians in Palestine and in 1947, towards the end of the British Mandate, the estimate was 1,294,00 (Gilbert, 1989: 3). The growth of the Palestinian population was accompanied by the impressive progress of their educational system. In the beginning of the 1920s, there were 30,681 Palestinian students in all stages of education. During the next 27 years their number increased by 500% and reached 150,000 students (Al-Haj, 1996). The drastic growth in the number of students in the Palestinian education system enhanced the status of Arabic among the Arabs, since the literate people in the language increased tremendously.

In 1922 the British Mandate recognized three official languages in Mandatory Palestine: English, Arabic and Hebrew in that order.

English was extensively taught in Palestinian schools and in colleges for teachers' training, and sometimes more hours were assigned to English than to Arabic. English served as the main means of communication between the local population and the officials of the British Mandate. Learning English sprang mainly from instrumental considerations. As to Hebrew, the Palestinians did not learn Hebrew during the British mandate, in contrast to Jews who studied some Arabic in their schools since the 19th century.

In addition to English (taught both in public and private schools), the private schools taught other European languages such as French, German, and Spanish.

When the State of Israel was established in 1948, the linguistic repertoire of the Palestinian citizens of Israel became progressively more complex and diverse, and the status of the languages in it changed. Hebrew and Arabic

became the two official languages of the state, and English took on the status of a foreign language (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1. Hebrew, Arabic and English as reported by people over age 15. (Source: Resident Census 1983).

Language	Mono-Linguals	First language	Second	Total
Hebrew	945,450	931,445	312,080	2,188,975
Arabic	242,325	155,075	270,410	667,810
English	6,530	28,150	165,100	199,780

The last time that data were collected concerning language was in the Resident Census taken in 1983 (Central Office for Statistics, 1985). Despite the great changes which have occurred since then (over a million Russian and Ethiopian immigrants have entered) and the limitations of the census, it can be seen clearly that Hebrew is in first place, with Arabic in second place and English in third place.

Spolsky and Shohamy (1999b) estimate that two million people in Israel have functional competence in Arabic. Arabic is the mother tongue of a million Arabs in Israel and the mother tongue of tens of thousands of Mizrahi Jews who emigrated from Arab-speaking countries in the early years of the State. In addition, a number of Israeli Jews studied Arabic in formal frameworks (school or army) or picked it up at home.

From 1948, Palestinian Arab school pupils in Israel studied the Hebrew language as a required course, starting from third grade. Benor (1950), the first director of Arab education in the Ministry of Education, claimed that "Hebrew has been brought into the program of study not by an order from above but by the firm demand of the Arabs themselves." In fact, the teaching of Hebrew to Arab-speaking pupils was a decision of the committee that decided to maintain Arabic as language of instruction. It was a vital interest of the Israeli government that Arab students should learn Hebrew and that they should be exposed to the culture and heritage of the Jewish people in order that they might exercise the Israeli citizenship they had received (Al-Haj, 1996).

Arabic remained an official language of the State of Israel just as it had been an official language under the British Mandate. Koplewitz (1992: 32) points out that the State of Israel removed English from the list of official languages, but it did not change the status of Arabic. But the domains of official use are limited, just as they were limited in the original King's-Order-in-Council of the British Mandatory Government. Arabic is used in a number of official areas. Coins, paper money and postage stamps use both Hebrew and Arabic. It is possible to use Arabic in the courts, and the laws legislated by the Knesset are published in Hebrew, and later in Arabic. Arab members of the Knesset may speak in Arabic, provided they advise the Speaker in time to arrange for interpretation. All Arab

schools use Arabic as the language of instruction. In addition, the Israel Broadcasting Service maintains a radio program in Arabic in addition to Hebrew and other foreign languages throughout most of the day (Network D) and broadcasts one and a half hours (on the average) of television in Arabic every day.

In 1952, there was an attempt to make Hebrew the exclusive language of the state; but this proposal was rejected by a majority of the members of the Knesset (Koplewitz (1992). In the debate in the Knesset, the Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, said:

> We negate the assumption that one must forbid the Arab citizens the use of the Arabic language if they wish to use it anywhere, including the Knesset. The clear policy of Israel is to teach and impart knowledge of Hebrew to all the inhabitants, including the Arab minority. The Arab children want to learn Hebrew, but we will not forbid them the use of their language in any way, even not in the Knesset...... Yet the State must see to it that Hebrew be not only an official language, but must provide the means for imparting the knowledge of Hebrew to immigrants and to all residents of Israel, without depriving the Arab minority of the right to its own language (Proceedings of the Knesset, 1952, vol. 12: 2550; quoted in Fisherman (1972: 9-10).

This was not the last attempt. A similar move in the Knesset in 1980 failed. The idea of making Hebrew the sole official language is put forward from time to time. In 1998 Knesset member Michael Kleiner (previously of the Gesher faction in the Likud, and today of the United National Party) brought up the idea in the media.

However, despite the fact that Arabic enjoys the status of an official language, Hebrew is clearly the preferred language in Israel. One can see this in two laws: The citizenship law of 1951 (Paragraph 5a) requires "some knowledge of the Hebrew language" as a condition for acquiring citizenship, while no such requirement is made for "some knowledge of Arabic." (Ben-Rafael, 1994; Hallel & Spolsky, 1993); The Chamber of Advocates Law of 1961 (Paragraph 26 [3]) requires "sufficient knowledge of Hebrew" in order to be registered as a law clerk (Ben-Rafael, 1994; Koplewitz, 1992). De facto, Hebrew is without doubt the dominant language in most public domains.

Thus, while Arabic is the medium of instruction in the Arab schools in Israel, other languages have important places. Arabic is the medium of instruction in all courses, the mother tongue of students and teachers alike, and the principal literacy and literary goal. Hebrew is studied as a second language from 3rd grade on, recognized as the language of the state (Winter, 1981), and studied for instrumental purposes. English, as a major international language, is taught as a foreign language from 4th grade on, and earlier where the school accedes to parental pressures. In addition, French is studied in a number of private religious schools as a second foreign language.

2. ARABIC

2.1 Arabic in the World

A review of the general status of the Arabic language will help understand the place of Arabic in Israel.

For the most part Arabic dialects are classified according to geographical area: North African countries, Egypt, Persian Gulf States and the Middle East countries (Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine) (Ferguson, 1959). There is also a division according to demographic groups and settlement types – urban versus rural, sedentary versus nomads (Bedouins) (Al-Husri, 1976: 42f.). The various dialects used in Arab countries serve not only for communication, but carry a high degree of sociolinguistic weight, for the dialect characteristic of a specific population shares its social, political and economic status and emphasizes its uniqueness and emotional attachment.[1]

The Arabs in Israel speak the Palestinian dialect — which has within it groups of sub-dialects (Galilee, Little Triangle and Negev). While related to the dialects of surrounding countries, it is different from them and even more different from the dialects of Egypt and North Africa.

In twenty-three countries of the Middle East (all except Turkey and Iran) and North Africa in the Arab league for whom Arabic is an official language (Suleiman, 1999). In four countries (Israel, Chad, Somalia, and Djibouti), Arabic is an official language alongside other languages. Beyond this, Arabic has a special status in Islamic countries such as Malaysia and Indonesia as the language of the Koran.

Arabic serves as a language of communication in a large number of Arab and Muslim countries, and it is also recognized as an official language in international organizations such as the Arab League, the African Unity Organization, the Islamic Congress, the Muslim Organization for Education, and Science and Culture (Hijazi, 1992: 102f.) In 1970 Arabic was recognized as an official language in UNESCO and afterwards in the United Nations, and in the International Food and Agriculture Organization. The penetration of Arabic into these organizations has contributed directly to the strengthening of its status as an important language in the international community alongside the European languages.

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[1] The Egyptian and Syrian dialects, for example, enjoy prestige in the Arab world today, among other reasons because of the special political and historical backgrounds of the two countries.

2.2 Diglossia in Arabic

Arabic is considered an archetype of the linguistic situation known as diglossia (Ferguson, 1959). There exist simultaneously two linguistic systems, a written language and a spoken language (Brosh, 1996: 64) showing great differences both in form and symbolic values.[2] Understanding a piece of literature requires a large and different vocabulary from that of the spoken variety. It is common to define the Arabic language as two languages – literary and spoken, but a division into three is also sustainable[3] (Blau, 1976; Brosh, 1996: 65):

1. *Standard Arabic*. This variety is used in formal settings, at school, on television, and for university lectures, to mention just a few examples. In terms of phonology, this variety should not, at least in principle, depart from Classical Arabic. However, since this variety is learned through schooling as a second language and not acquired naturally through use at home, traces of the mother dialect are discernible when it is spoken. In phonology, it is quite similar to Classical Arabic, except for the lack of inflectional systems in nouns and verbs, which makes a difference in pronouncing the end of words. In terms of syntax, there is no difference between Standard Arabic and Classical Arabic except the lack of an inflectional system. Its lexical items are drawn from Classical Arabic, but it attempts to avoid archaic forms and to use items which are shared by the Spoken Variety and Educated Spoken Arabic. The use of foreign items in this variety is rare; they are used only where there is no alternative. However, there is no use of expressions, sentences, or segments of foreign languages as is the case in the Spoken Variety and Educated Spoken Arabic.

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[2] The spoken language and the written language are distinct in three main features: In dependence on context, in stability and in the degree of linguistic control (Schlesinger, 1996).

[3] Meiseles (1975) suggested another division of Arabic into four linguistic variants:
a. Standard Arabic, i.e., the classic literary language.
b. Sub-standard Arabic – the linguistic type of contemporary Arabic which characterizes the ambition of speakers or writers in general to restore the literary language. However, for whatever reasons, mostly non-linguistic (such as spontaneous speaking or writing, lack of sufficient knowledge of the norms of literary Arabic, pressure from native dialects or foreign languages, speaking or writing in less formal situations, convenience or negligence, etc.) deviations from the norms of literary Arabic have appeared and a mixture of dialect bases to a great extent.
c. The superior spoken Arabic – described by Cadora (Cadora, 1975: 134) as the semi-formal Arabic which is the common spoken language of the learned.
d. The local Arabic dialects – a regional language, and every region develops local dialects of its own.

CHAPTER 4

POLICY AND TEACHING ARABIC AS A MOTHER TONGUE

1. A HISTORICAL REVIEW

1.1 The Ottoman Period[1] until 1917

Teaching of Classical Arabic in the 19th century was limited. Robinson (1841) estimated that no more than 3% of the Arab population was literate. There were in Jerusalem in 1846 seven Muslim *maktab* (elementary schools attached to mosques) and a secondary *madrasa* adjoining *Al-Haram Al-Sharif* (Noble Sanctuary) (Spolsky and Cooper 1991:42). In the late 1870s, there were reported to be 341 pupils in Muslim schools. The schools started by the various Christian churches generally taught Classical Arabic alongside their favored metropolitan language.

Government teaching of Arabic in Palestine started in the second half of the 19th century when the Ottoman government passed a law for elementary and high school education (Yousuf, 1956: 93). Study in the elementary schools lasted four years. The language of instruction for the Muslim population was Turkish, the

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[1] The Ottoman period in the Arab countries began in 1518 when the Turkish Ottoman under the Sultan Selim I conquered all the Arab countries. During the Ottoman period Palestine was the southern part of the province of Syria. The Ottoman period in the Arab countries was characterized by stagnation, ignorance, and backwardness. The Ottoman period lasted four centuries till 1918 with the defeat of the Ottoman Turkish Empire at the hands of the Allies in the First World War. Palestine then was put under the British Mandate.

student's second language (Al-'Amaira, 1976; Al-Amir 1997: 46).[2] At the beginning of the 20th century, Arab intellectuals in the country protested against this policy and demanded that Arabic be taught. After demonstrations and strikes, the government agreed in 1913 to make substantial changes in the program in the elementary schools. The principal change was to make Arabic the language of instruction on condition that Turkish would remain the second language (Al-Haj, 1996: 31). It was agreed to set up new high schools in which the language of instruction was Arabic. Turkish remained as the official language (Al-Haj, ibid.). To do this, textbooks had to be translated from Turkish to Arabic, or imported.

Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire had a status of protected minorities *(ahl al-dhimah)*, and were permitted to establish private schools, and choose their own language of instruction. Almost none of them used Turkish (Al-Husri, 1946: 13). The Jewish schools taught originally in Yiddish and later some started to teach in Hebrew. Many Christian schools taught in Arabic, and a good proportion of their pupils were Muslims. The institutions that taught Arabic made an important contribution to the revitalization of Arabic and to the maintenance of its existence during the period of Ottoman rule in the country.

In Ottoman Palestine in 1914 Tibawi (1956: 235) reports that there were three types of schools. There were 95 Government schools in which the language of instruction was Turkish and study was free of charge. There were 379 Muslim Arab schools in which the teaching was done in Arabic but for which parents had to pay tuition. Many of the 170 foreign missionary schools also taught Arabic as well as using it as medium of instruction.

In the four hundred years of Turkish rule in the country, the policy pursued had the effect of turning Arabic into a marginal language. This policy was disastrous for Arabic, and it reached in this period the lowest point ever known in the history of the Arabs. Many words of Turkish origin entered Arabic and the vast majority of the people were illiterate (Al-Amir, 1997: 45).

1.2 The Mandate Period (1917-1948)

When the British established Mandatory rule in Palestine, its educational policy was dominated by two principles. First, it wished to make the Mandate self-funding, and keep expenditure on matters such as education to a minimum. Second, it accepted the language policy laid down by the League of Nations whereby English, Arabic and Hebrew were recognized as official languages.

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[2]Al-'Amaira (Ibid.) points out that in 1869 the Ottoman government passed the law of education with the following principal articles: Turkish is the official language of instruction in the government schools; high school students are required to study French; the educational council is responsible for examining the competence of the teachers.

With the paucity of Government support for Arab schools (there was no secondary education in the villages, and few girls were educated), the position of Arabic improved considerably during the period of British rule. Applying a policy used in other colonies, the British were satisfied with primary education in the local language, only expecting the elite who reached secondary education to gain enough English to serve as junior government officials. The Mandatory establishment did not relate to education as a means for social and political change. Its policy was based on maintaining the status quo (Al-Haj 1996: 38). The British were satisfied that education for the Arab population stressed religious studies and universal values as long as it avoided any nationalism (Miller, 1985: 93).

The study of Arabic during the period of the Mandate was similar to the study of Arabic in neighboring Arab countries. The principle that guided the teachers in teaching it was that Arabic is a diglossic language and requires as many lessons as possible (Al-'Amaira, 1976: 24.) The teaching did not focus on reading books and newspapers or on writing letters, but rather on the teaching of calligraphic writing, learned expression and rhetoric. In this view the classical language is an ornament to be proud of and not an effective tool for communication between people.

The teachers of Arabic were for the most part men of religion or pupils in the conservative religious school, forbidden to stray from the ways of teaching accepted since the Middle Ages. There was no balance in the program between the literary courses and modern secular studies (Shalmon, 1968: 703).

From an examination of the textbooks up till the 1920s it appears that readings were based on classical literary texts in which rhetoric and elaborate style were dominant. Other books dealt with the teaching of the composition and grammar. Special attention was given to studying the Koran and to memorizing chapters from it.

After the 1920s, textbooks started to show Western influence. A reader *Al-Jadid* (The New) was published which included, among other things, pieces that were light in content and suitable for students at the various levels from the linguistic point of view. For literature in the elementary school, schools used books that were published in Egypt and included in addition to classical literature, modern literature, Arab history, and selections from the fields of science and theology.[3] In the high schools the students used a reader *Al-Wasit* (The Mediator) that included an abridged history of Arabic literature and selections of poetry and prose.

In the final years of the Mandate, a group of Palestinian teachers wrote a series of readers for the elementary school under the title *Mukhtarat Al-Nusus Al-'Arabiyya* (A Selection of Arabic Texts) that contained poetry and prose of all the periods. The linguistic material is simple and graded, the poems included in

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[3] For example, the series *Al-Mutala 'a Al-'Arabiyyaa* (The Arabic Reader).

it are written in a language suitable to the ages of the children. The prose is phrased in the ordinary modern language, which does not require excessive explanations. [4]

In the high schools the teachers used texts from the reader *Mukhtarat al-Nusus al-'Arabiyya* (a selection of Arabic texts) designated for high school students and in which a clear preference was given to prose over poetry; it also includes academic texts. Another popular book was the Egyptian anthology *Al-Muntakhab min Adab al-'Arab* (a selection from Arabic literature), edited by two preeminent Arab authors Taha Hussein and Ahmad Amin with an emphasis on poetry.

Most of the textbooks of teaching Arabic used during the period were conservative, focusing on the classical language, with little regards for the needs of modern life and the problems of diglossia.

2. AFTER THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ISRAEL

In a memorandum that was sent by the education department to the Jewish Agency and to the National Council the problem of organizing education in the Arab sector during the transition period was raised. The memorandum summarizes debate in the years 1944-1946, presents issues to be discussed at a committee meeting on the problems of education in the anticipated State on January 5, 1948 (Labor Party Archives, 1948). Two central issues concerned language policy. It was proposed that the language of instruction in the Arab primary school would be Arabic, and permission would be given to each school to add one more language, either Hebrew or English. In Arab high schools and in Arab teacher training institutes the language of instruction would be Arabic, and in addition to this written Arabic and English would be studied in them. A second question was about the expression of nationalist and anti-Jewish sentiment in the textbooks (mainly Arabic and history). The memorandum said that despite the desire not to touch the existing situation nor to introduce radical changes in the transition period, it was unthinkable that in the Jewish state there would be textbooks written in an anti-Jewish sentiment. The common textbooks must therefore be checked immediately. To do this, it was appropriate that Jewish educators supervise the Arab education during the transition period in order to remove any anti-state elements. Jewish inspectors were to be brought

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[4] In addition to this reader the teachers had available readers from Egypt and Lebanon, considerable parts of which were devoted to a description of the homeland and encouraging pride in the Arab nation. These readers described life in the city and village which is not relevant to the conventional patterns of life in Palestine.

into the Arab schools and the Arabic elements that are close to Jews were to be strengthened.

In the session of the committee for education problems of January 26, 1948 the language of instruction in schools was discussed again (Labor Party Archives, 1948: 31-33). The following policy was passed: "In every school in which the majority of the children are Arab the language of instruction will be Arabic. And vice versa- in every school in which the majority of the children are Jewish the language of instruction will be Hebrew. One of the two languages is a required course."

In another session of the committee on February 2, 1948 (ibid. 34), an alternative formulation was proposed: "The right of Arabic as the language of instruction will be assured in schools in which the Arab parents call for it." In this session the following decision was passed: "In every school in which the majority of the children are Arab the language of instruction is Arabic, and there is a requirement to study Hebrew, which is the language of the State and vice versa, wherever the majority of the children are Jewish and the language of instruction is Hebrew, there is a requirement to study Arabic." There is no reference to the concept of mother tongue in the discussions of the committee.

The final version of the policy was adopted a day before the establishment of the State. The agreed language, submitted by Y. Gurfinkel, chairman of the committee for education problems, on May 13, 1948 (ibid. 36) was as follows:

> The government will guarantee sufficient primary and high school education for the Arab minorities and the Jews (in the Jewish and Arab State – Y. Gurfinkel) to everyone in his language and in accordance with his cultural tradition. The right of every minority to maintain its schools for the study of its language, while fulfilling the requirements for general education as would be set by the government, without being negated or cancelled; foreign educational institutions would continue in their activities on the basis of existing rights.

These decisions assured the right of the mother tongue of every minority to serve in instruction in the schools. At its moment of birth, then, the Jewish State proclaimed the right of the Arabic-speaking minorities to education in its own language.

The rest of this chapter traces the development of the Arabic curriculum over the next half-century.

2.1 The Old Curriculum (1948-1967)

After the establishment of Israel in 1948 there was no new curriculum or textbooks for teaching Arabic to Arab students for at least two years, and teachers continued to teach using the textbooks from the Mandate period (Shalmon, 1968: 720; Al-Haj 1996: 100f.). In January 1949 the Ministry of

CHAPTER 5

POLICY AND TEACHING HEBREW AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

The education committee in the days immediately before the declaration of the State of Israel in 1948 made a far-reaching decision, as we have described in the last chapter, to maintain Arabic as the medium of instruction in schools where the majority of pupils were Arabs. It also decided that the Arab minority should learn Hebrew, a decision strengthened over time by the fact that Hebrew is the dominant language used in the wider society. This chapter will trace the development of Hebrew language teaching in the Arab schools, and describe and evaluate this teaching over the years. It will look again, as in the last chapter, at the tensions produced by the challenges of the Arab minority in an ideologically Jewish State and of speakers of Arabic under a Hebrew hegemony.

1. STAGES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEACHING OF HEBREW

1.1 First Stage: After the Establishment of the State (1948-1971)

The language of instruction in the Arab high schools during the Mandate period was English and Arabic for the most part. During this period the Arabs did not study Hebrew at all.[1] The members of the committee for educational problems

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[1] Koplewitz (1992: 39) says that "in the period of the British Mandate (1918-1948) Hebrew was not studied at all in the Palestine Arab schools. An attempt was made in 1919 to teach Arab students Hebrew in one of the villages in the Galilee. But after four years

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meeting in the pre-State period had many doubts about taking the decision to teach Hebrew to the Arab minority. Early discussion assumed bilingualism, but not necessarily in Arabic and Hebrew. A memorandum, referring to the period 1944-1945, drawn up by the department of education for the Jewish Agency and the National Council that included proposals for organizing the education for the two populations, Jewish and Arab in the Jewish State proposed that the language of instruction in the State elementary schools with Arab pupils should be Arabic, with an option to choose either Hebrew or English as an additional language. In Arab high schools and institutes for Arab teacher training, Arabic would continue as medium of instruction and students were to also learn both Hebrew and English. The Hebrew curriculum, the selection of teachers and the choice of textbooks were to be made by those appointed in charge of Arabic education (Labor Party Archives, 1948: 4).

Discussion of the issue continued at the committee session mentioned on Monday, 12.1.48 in Tel Aviv, at which meeting M. Avigal said (Page 12):

> Concerning the study of Arabic and Hebrew among the two peoples, I believe that as time passes the requirement to study Arabic will be established among us. I do not know from what age, perhaps in the higher grades of elementary school, and obviously – also the requirement to know Hebrew as language of the State in the Arab sector, although I would not establish this now at the beginning.

At a meeting a week later, Batya Rosenstein suggested (Ibid.: 22) that Hebrew should be a requirement also in the elementary schools, beginning from grade 4 or 5. This was the basis for the decision taken in the summary session of the education committee in Tel Aviv on May 13, 1948: In Paragraph 6 (p. 34) it was established that "The mother tongue of the majority of the students in the school will be introduced as the language of instruction. As for the required study of the second language – learning Hebrew is a requirement for Arabs." It should be noted that the requirement for teaching Arabic in Hebrew schools was not made until nearly 40 years, and has still not been implemented (Spolsky and Shohamy, 1999a, Chapter 6).

1.1.1 The Debate on the Subject of Imparting Hebrew to the Arabs

The teaching of Hebrew to Arab students began in the country immediately after the establishment of the State. It was required, for four to five hours a week, in all Arab elementary schools from 4th grade, in the high schools and also in the teacher training institutes. The policy was not easily accepted by either the

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the national leadership of the Palestinian Arabs gave an order to put an end to the study of Hebrew, and to the best of my knowledge they did not repeat the attempt."

Jewish or the Arab public, and debate continued in the newspapers. Four main positions emerged (Cohen, 1968: 663).

Opposition to the policy of teaching Hebrew to Arabs came from both Jews and Arabs. Right-wing Jews claimed that Arabs who knew Hebrew would constitute a danger to the security of the State, extreme left-wingers opposed the teaching for of its denial of bi-nationalism and some religious Jews opposed teaching the Holy Language to gentiles. Arabs who opposed the teaching of Hebrew were fearful for the fate of the Arabic language, a holy language to Muslims, the major symbol of the Arab nation and the most important factor uniting the Arab world. The study of Hebrew, they felt, would lead to assimilation of Arab youth in the Israeli society and its culture, and would distance it from traditional Arab culture and from the Arab nation.

Another group of Jews and Arabs took a more extreme position and supported the teaching of all courses in the school in Hebrew in order to solve the problem of the Arab minority in Israel. They saw assimilation as a fitting solution to the integration of the Arabs in the life of the State. Imparting the Hebrew language was the key to this assimilation process.

A third group favored teaching Hebrew for practical and pedagogical reasons. Arabic-medium education in Israel faced two serious problems at its start, the dearth of good teachers and the lack of suitable textbooks (Benor, 1951: 8). In the opinion of both Jewish and Arab educators it would be possible to overcome these two problems by training teachers in Hebrew and using the same textbooks for both sectors.

A fourth group believed that teaching of Hebrew in Arab educational institutions constituted a means of nurturing Israeli citizenship, permitting the active participation of the Arabs in the life of Israeli society and assuring loyalty to the laws of the land and its institutions (Cohen, 1968: 666).

The final decision may be seen as a pragmatic compromise: maintaining Arabic as medium of instruction, but requiring Hebrew as a second language.

1.1.2 Hebrew Teaching Goals

The teaching of Hebrew is an integral part of the curriculum in all Arab educational institutions in Israel (Cohen, ibid.: 667). Despite its importance the topic was pushed aside by other more urgent needs. Building the Arab educational sector began in 1948 from scratch. There were serious shortages of buildings and of trained educated teachers. At the same time, the number of pupils was growing rapidly as a result of the introduction of compulsory education for girls as well as boys, the demand for schooling which had not been satisfied during the British Mandate, and the opening of new schools (Koplewitz, 1973).

Between 1948 and 1958 three changes in the curriculum were made with the goal of providing knowledge of the Hebrew people and its culture, establishing a

means for direct contact with Hebrew speakers in writing and in speech, and nurturing Israeli citizenship (Shalmon, 1957: 95).   These goals emphasize political aims, ignore pedagogical issues and show little sensitivity to the feelings of the learners. Those who designed the curriculum for teaching Hebrew emphasize the Jewish character of the State of Israel and wanted to foster Israelization among the Arab minority in order to strengthen loyalty to the State.

The 1959 curriculum for the Government elementary school set three weekly hours for teaching Hebrew. A high school curriculum was not published until ten years later. A curriculum for the Hebrew language and its literature in the high school for Arabs grades 9-12 (Ministry of Education, 1968: 17) included goals, teaching methods and division of the material according to grades.

The high school curriculum was intended:

a. To develop in the Arab student a basic, precise and comprehensive knowledge of the Hebrew language, with the ability to understand written Hebrew and with effective control of the language in writing and in speech for practical and cultural needs.

b. To allow the Arab student to recognize the culture of Israel and its values in the past and in the present, thus facilitating the understanding of the social life and culture of the Jewish population in the State of Israel.

The teaching of Hebrew thus was intended to serve first as a tool for social communication in order to integrate Arabs in Israel into the life of the State, and the second, "to open the gates to the culture of Israel." The goal was clearly weakening Arab national values and identity and instead the teachers of Hebrew "should implant the love for the State of Israel and the values of Israeli thinking" (State Archives, 145/1223/c; quoted in Al-Haj 1996: 107).

This policy is essentially a reflection of the policy set out by Yadlin in 1976 (Formulation of goals for Arab education). Sami Mar'i (1978: 53) commented:

> It seems that the Yadlin document not only attempts to reduce and blur the national identity of the Arabs in Israel, but it also tries to erase their culture and to impose upon them the values and the moral principles accepted by the Jewish Israeli society, principally by means of the educational system which is subject to Government supervision. Nothing is left but to wonder what remains in the culture after one uproots from it the "social ethic", the values which determine personal relations, the "family values" and the bond between the individual and the society.

The inspector of Arab schools in the Ministry of Education in the 1960s, (Cohen, 1968: 665f.), reinforces this in his discussion of the content of the Hebrew textbooks for Arab schools:

> From the practical point of view a language should not be taught just like that, but it should be taught with a particular content. Teaching Hebrew to Arab children in Israel requires imparting as an adjunct knowledge of the patterns and values of the Hebrew-Israeli culture. That is, Israeli

citizenship in the broad meaning of the term. Hebrew will then be a
didactic-educational goal. The recommended supplementary studies of
Hebrew will be mainly of two types: 1. Knowledge of the Jewish people,
its past and its culture, the new Israeli society, its values, foundations, rules
and problems. 2. Conventions of democratic behavior as training for active
participation in the social and political life in Israel.

Knowledge of Jewish culture (Bible, rabbinical literature, selected paragraphs
from Ethics of Our Fathers and selected legends) came to dominate the
curriculum in the high school and play an important part in the junior high
school.

The Arab student has two problems with this curricular emphasis. First, the
material is written in an archaic language distant from the world of the student,
with vocabulary not used in colloquial Hebrew. Second, the Arab student feels
that he is learning more about Judaism than he is learning about his own religion.
This imbalance increases the feeling of alienation among the students, who
regularly ask their teachers why they must study the Bible. One Palestinian
teacher reported:

> There are students who openly declare that they do not want to study
> Hebrew from an ideological point of view in the light of the political
> milieu prevailing in the country. These students see Hebrew as the
> language of an enemy. The religious female students strongly oppose the
> male students using Hebrew in current speech because of nationalist
> reasons in order to prevent the assimilation of the Arabs into the Jewish
> society. There was a student who was absent from the Hebrew lessons
> throughout an entire year. When the teacher entered, he left the
> classroom. There are students who identify with him and respect his
> decision, but they do not have the courage to leave the classroom
> because of the matriculation examination (Interviewee #3).[2]

An elementary school teacher, on the other hand, when asked, "Have you ever
run into a situation in which students expressed bitterness and objection to
learning Hebrew?" answered, "I have never run into this issue. In my estimation
the students in elementary school are not yet familiar with the study of the
language, and they are not as mature as the students in high school. There the
students can ask why they are learning Hebrew." (Interviewee #4)[3]

Criticism soon arose over the curriculum. In the 1970s, Koplewitz (1974:
328) pointed out that "the claim has been made that the program is biased
disproportionately against knowing Arab culture because the children learn more
Bible than Koran, more of the history of Israel than of Arab history, and there is
no place in the Arab school for the poems of Bialik, the stories of Shalom

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[2] The interview was carried out in April 1998 by Abd Al-Rahman Mar'i.
[3] The interview was carried out in April 1998 by Abd Al-Rahman Mar'i