گۆڤاری کوردستانیی بۆ لێکۆڵینەوەی ستراتییجیی

A Representation of the Kurdish History

in Two Greek and Turkish

Websites: A Critical Discourse Analysis-Based Study

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Abstract

Political states attempt to disseminate ideologies that are in line with their domestic and foreign policies. They use language as a powerful tool to achieve their goal since language is not free from ideologies and by using it in various texts they aim to construct certain social, political and cultural institutions to back their policies and to suggest people think in ways they want. Turkey has been highly sensitive to Middle Eastern issues, specifically to those related to the Kurdish cause. This paper, based on critical discourse analysis (CDA), analyzes the discursive moves employed by English-language Turkish Hurriyet Daily News and Greek City Times websites regarding the recent addition of a lesson about the Kurds, their history and homeland
to the history and geography book in French high school curriculum.

Key words: Kurds, language, history, ideology, CDA

Introduction

At the heart of the French introduction of a lesson on Kurdistan history to its high school history syllabus is the association of this move to terrorism on the part of Turkey. Any mentioning of the name Kurdistan faces strong opposition from Turkey, a country that rejects the formation of any autonomous region for the Kurds in Turkey and neighboring countries, where the Kurds historically reside, let alone an independent Kurdistan that would break away geographical areas from Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria. Among these countries, Turkey dominates a more sizable portion of Kurdish land and population. Around 23 percent of Turkey, 20 percent of Iraq, 9 percent of Syria and 15 percent of Iran's population are Kurds (Yildiz & Muller, 2008). Therefore, Turkey regards the creation of an independent Kurdistan in any of the above-mentioned countries as the demise of modern Turkey, which was itself born out of the ashes of the Ottoman Empire in the aftermath of WWI.

Language plays an important role in nation-building. Arguably, "common institutions, a widely acknowledged body of rights and duties for all members of the community, a common culture and a civic ideology," common aspirations and a shared language are necessary to the concept of nationhood (McDowall, 2004, pp. 2-3). Governments educate generations of their nations in their mother language to construct their national identity. People may enjoy different identities throughout their lives and they are "constantly constructed and reconstructed as people interact with each other" while national identity is fairly constant (Paltridge, 2006, p. 38). The language people speak and write is seen as a fundamental part of their identities. "Language both shapes and reflects the identities of individuals but also of regions and of whole cultures" and language differences often result in differences in national character (Robson & Stockwell, 2005, p. 4). Being aware of the facts about the importance of language in building national identity, the countries, where the Kurds historically have lived, have tried to discourage the use of the Kurdish Language.

Historical background

Kurds and Kurdistan

The Kurds are Indo-European people and are believed to have settled in modern-day Kurdish region since 4000 years ago although there are records of some cave inhabitants lived in the area 10000 BC. (Izady, M. 1992 as cited in Yildiz, 2005a). Based on the available archeological evidence people lived between 6000 and 5400 BC in the Kurdish mountainous regions and shared a distinct 'Halaf' culture whose boundaries are similar to the area today referred to as Kurdistan (Yildiz, 2005a).

In modern times, the Kurdish tribes were an important element in the Sassanian Empire. They had some clashes with the Arab armies when they conquered Mesopotamia in 637. Initially they confronted the Muslim armies between 639 and 644 but later the Kurdish chiefs one by one gave up to the Arab armies and became followers of the new religion (McDowall, 2004) and the name 'Kurd' was used around this period, in the seventh century (Yildiz & Muller, 2008). In a period of more than one century, the Kurds were able to establish three dynasties –the Shaddadids (951-1075); the Marwanids (984- 1083); and the Hasanwayhids (959-1014) although these dynasties didn't think of their political identity as either Kurdish or Turkish rather they relied on family ties and religion (McDowall, 2004; Gunter, 2011).

During the Saljuq era, the name 'Kurdistan' appeared in 12th century when they created a province with that name in modern-day Iran (Yildiz & Muller, 2008). Many Kurdish leaders were replaced by Turkish ones in this era. More and more Turkic bands entered the region and the Kurds found themselves displaced in northern Mesopotamia and in Azerbaijan (McDowall, 2004).

In around the 11th century, the Abbasid caliphs and the Saljuqs tried to recruit the Kurds into their armies, though the relations between Turks and Kurds remained highly explosive even up to the end of the 12th century. Kurdish military groups actively participated in campaigns and established military camps and colonies in the Islamic empire. They achieved senior military positions in the Islamic army arguably the most famous Kurdish officer was Saladin who defeated the Crusaders and established

the Ayyubid dynasty in Egypt, Syria and Iraq. He and many of his fellow warriors had never lived in Kurdistan and their political identity was not recognized as Kurdish but rather as soldiers of Islam. Saljuq military forces defeated Armenia and Byzantine at Malazgirt in 1071, which marked the end of the Kurdish dynasties and governorates as the Saljuqs administered the new province of Kurdistan through Turkmen officers. From 1217 to 1230 the Khwarazmians began invading the region and in 1231 more fearful Mongol raiders came to the region. A century and a half after them, in 1393, Tamerlane showed up. His son sacked Diyarbakir, Mardin, Tur Abdin and Hasan Kayf and in 1401 Tamerlaine sacked Erbil, Mosul, and Jazira bin Umar (McDowall, 2004). In 1511, a war between the Ottoman and the Safavid empires broke out at Chaldiran, north-east of Lake Van, and this spot, formally established at the treaty of Zuhab in 1639, became the boundary between the two empires until modern times. It essentially divided Kurdish region into two regions under the control of the two empires (Gunter, 2011; McDowall, 2004).

Kurdish in Turkey and other Middle Eastern Countries

After the emergence of modern republic of Turkey, the Turks in 1923 accepted Zia Gokalp's ideas on Turkish identity, that the nation comes out of a "specific culture" and consequently all those living inside Turkey belonged to Turkish identity. The new state started deporting and settling Turks in the areas of Kurdistan under her control to Turkicize the region (McDowall, 2004). In 1924, the use of the Kurdish language was prohibited in all official domains. The Kurds suffered forced assimilation into the new Turkish national identity and "all reference to Kurdistan was excised from official materials" (Yildiz & Muller, 2008, p 15). A report by the Inspector General of the first Inspectorate (covering the vilayets of Bitlis, Diyarbakir, Van, Hakkari, Mus, Mardin, Urfa and Siirt) urged the Turkish State to establish Turkish-language boarding schools for Kurdish children to annihilate any trace of Kurdish culture. The state had intended to genocide the Kurds. They were called 'Mountain Turks' and foreigners were not allowed to travel to east of Euphrates from 1930s up to 1965 (McDowall, 2004). According to Yildiz (2005a) after the military coup in 1980, the Kurdish identity was suppressed to the point that the use of Kurdish was forbidden. The new 1982 constitution annulled the "limited liberal developments" that had been incorporated into the 1961 Turkish constitution and the use of the Kurdish language was again prohibited (Yildiz & Muller, 2008). Even today Kurdish "cannot be used for writing anything, but since 1991 it can be used in speaking and singing!" (Wardhaugh, 2006, p. 359).

The state of the Kurdish language in Syria is not better than that of the Kurdish language in Turkey. The Kurds in Syria have faced injustice at the hands of the ruling Syrian Arab Socialist Party. Following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, Syria was administered by the French Mandate during which Kurdish cultural organization and expression was permitted. However, with the end of French mandate and the lack of any guarantees for the Kurdish minority rights, Kurdish teaching and learning was made illegal (Yildiz, 2005a). The restrictions are not limited to the Kurdish language. The Kurds are not permitted to express their cultural identity and all publications in Kurdish and celebrations of Kurdish festivals are similarly curtailed (Yildiz & Muller, 2008).

Iran has formulated a legally less strict policy towards the Kurdish language. Based on Article 3 (14) and 19 of 1979 constitution, all Iranians are equal and thus enjoy equal rights but Farsi is the only official language in the country. Despite the presence of Kurdish broadcasting TV and radio stations, in reality the government enforces a discriminatory policy against the Kurds. They are denied of high government posts and public schools education in Kurdish (Yildiz & Taysi, 2007). Neither did the Kurds in Iran enjoy a more generous policy towards their language during the former regime. Following the CIA-sponsored coup against Mossadegh and bringing back Shah to power, the ruler of Iran made Farsi the exclusive language of government and politics, and all forms of printed material (Yildiz & Taysi, 2007). Thus the Kurdish language was unofficially forbidden.

The Kurds and their language in Iraq have experienced a relatively different history. The 1970 March manifesto between the Kurds and Iraq acknowledged some Kurdish demands among them declaring Kurdish alongside Arabic as an official language in areas where the majority of population was Kurdish and a second language throughout Iraq. Moreover, the state would reinforce Kurdish education and culture and all officials in Kurdish areas would be Kurds, or spoke Kurdish. Act No. 33 of 1974 describes Kurdish and Arabic as the official languages and languages of education but those who lived outside of the three governorates, many in and around Kirkuk, were subjected to right abuses including language rights. However, article 4 of the current Iraqi constitution declares both Arabic and Kurdish as official (Yildiz, 2007).

Emergence of modern Turkish Republic and relation with the Kurds

With the demise of the Ottoman Empire after World Word I, the Kurds under its control were divided into three newly-born countries, namely Turkey, Syria, and Iraq. In Turkey the Kurds faced injustice and they were denied establishing a Kurdish state. In 1916, Britain and France reached Sykes-Picot agreement, which was the result of secret negotiations between the two states. Russia, Italy, and Greece were to have been rewarded with territory for cooperation. Russian Bolsheviks revealed details of the agreement and withdrew from the plan and the Cossack territories, the Caucasus, Armenia, Georgia, and Kurdistan were assigned to British influence. As a result Kurdish territory was partitioned between areas of influence and subordinated to Allied interest in both Syria and Mesopotamia (McDowall, 2004; Yildiz, 2005a).

In 1919 the British persuaded representatives of the Kurds and the Armenians to sign a Kurdish-Armenian declaration of solidarity against the return of the Turkish rule as Mustafa Kemal, the Turkish leader, started negotiations with Russian Bolsheviks gave rise to British concerns about Mosul vilayet. In 1920 the peace treaty of Severs between the allied forces and reluctant Turkey was signed, which would have reduced the Ottoman Empire territory to only a small rump section of Anatolia (Gunter, 2011). The treaty provided for all racial and religious minorities within the Ottoman Empire. Articles 62 and 64 addressed specifically the Kurdish issue and paved the way for the formation of an independent Kurdish state (McDowall, 2004; Yildiz, 2005a; Yildiz, 2007). However, the Kurds couldn't take advantage of the opportunity due to their internal divisions (Gunter, 2011) and the nationalist Young Turks and their leader saw the treaty as a compromise of Turkish territory and rejected it. The Turkish war of independence broke out in 1920 and continued to 1922 during which the balance of power shifted from the British to Turkish forces. The Turkish republic was declared. Turkish forces were stationed in east Armenian and Kurdish regions and they established a military presence even in Rawanduz. Concerned about strategic interests in Mesopotamia and Mosul vilayet, Britain and Allies of WWI started a new round of negotiations with newly-born Turkish republic, which resulted in the treaty of Lausanne in 1923. The new treaty replaced the still-born treaty of Severs and sidelined the Kurds' right to self-determination. It also recognized Turkish sovereignty over part of Kurdistan now within modern Turkey (Yildiz, 2005a). This change occurred because Mustafa Kemal Ataturk was successful in building a new country out of the ashes of the defeated Ottoman Empire (Gunter, 2011).

During the early history of the modern republic if Turkey, the Kurds staged three revolts, all of which were brutally crushed: Sheikh Said (1925); Ararat (1927-1930); and Dersim (1936-1938). Following these revolts, the Turkish state began a process of assimilation and exile and there was an attempt to erase the very name of the Kurds and whatever related to their cultural, social, educational traditions and centers. Tekiyes (Sufi fraternities) and Madrasahs (religious schools) were all shut down. During this period, the term mountain Kurds served to refer to the Kurds in Turkey (Gunter, 2011). Hundreds of thousands Kurds were resettled during the revolts of the 1920s and 1930s. Thousands more abandoned their land as a result of agricultural mechanization of Kurdistan in the 1950s and went west-ward where they could find jobs more easily (McDowall, 2004).

Mass resettlement and Turkification process of the 1920s and the 1930s caused deep socio-economic changes throughout the century. Many Kurds tended to live in close proximity with each other which, in turn, resulted in the establishment of centers for Kurdish identity across Turkey. Thus a sense of nationalism began to rise in these centers and other Kurdish cities due to economic deprivation, social injustice, physical displacement and ideas of ethnic identity. These all led to the creation of necessary conditions for revolt in the late 1970s. The intellectuals played a great role in awakening Kurdish feeling and raised the issue of Kurdishness particularly among those Kurds who were intended to assimilate in mostly Turkish-populated areas. They started broadcasting in Kurdish from Cairo to Yerevan. However, the most noticeable impetus to the revival of Kurdish nationalism was the Iraqi Revolution of 1958. Events in Iraq had direct impacts on the Kurds in Iraq and affected the Kurds in Turkey indirectly. Following a demonstration in 1959, forty nine Kurdish intellectuals were arrested and then Turkish president, prime minster, and the security police wanted them hanged (McDowall, 2004).

The Kurds did not enjoy the freedom to express their nationalism and identity in the new republic of Turkey. They faced Turkification, deportation, mass dislocation and resettlement in central and western parts of the country. Following the 1960 military coup, in 1961 a new constitution was introduced which was about pluralism and civil liberties. The second coup in 1971 put some

limits on liberal articles of the constitution and those who came to power after the third coup introduced a new constitution "which striped away most of the liberties which had escaped the 1971 revision" (McDowall, 2004, p. 416). In 1967 the government issued a decree which wrote "it is illegal and forbidden to introduce to, or distribute in, the country, materials in Kurdish of foreign origin in any form published, recorded, taped or material in similar form" (as cited in McDowall, 2004, p. 410). In 1982 Turkish minister for education stated folk music in east and south-east of the country might be used for ethnic or separatist purposes and must be sung in Turkish. In an attempt to expunge Kurdish culture, the Turkish government introduced Law 2932 in 1983 to prohibit the use of Kurdish. The government went further by banning all trace of Kurdish identity. Under Law 1587, Kurdish parents were not allowed to give their children Kurdish names as they "contradict the national culture, morality and traditions and insult the public [and] cannot be legally registered on birth certificates" (as cited in McDowall, 2004, p. 427). By 1986 a great number of Kurdish villages – 2842 out of 3524 – had been renamed to stifle Kurdish identity. In 1990 the Turkish state issued a decree called Kararname 413 so as to give sweeping powers to the governor-general to shut down any publisher throughout the country that publish events in the east to "ensure people remained ignorant of developments" (Ibid, p. 429). Based on the decree people could face forcible resettlement to anywhere the Ministry of Interior would determine. However, in spring 1991 the Turkish President, Turgut Ozal, asked the Assembly to repeal Law 2932, which had been introduced in 1983, to allow people to use Kurdish in its spoken form but not in "broadcasts, publications and education" (Ibid, p. 431). In December 1991, the first Kurdish language newspaper was permitted to publish. Some other Kurdish organs started to publish in Kurdish but they faced constant harassment by state authorities. They were charged and their issues were confiscated or banned (Ibid).

Kurdish Identity and Turkish Response

Being carved up after World War I, the Kurdish inhabited territories became peripheries of newly established states in the Middle East that were highly centralized and authoritarian and adopted policies that did not recognize Kurdish identity and rights. Since then the Kurds have launched a number of rebellions in Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey in defense of their national rights and against the repressive policies of those states on their identity and culture. They have had no choice but to turn to violent means to derail the nationalist projects that the states pursued, although they have achieved little in military conflicts with far superior military forces (Gunes, 2019).

In the 1970s, many Kurds, disillusioned by right wing parties and even leftist groups to address the Kurdish issue in Turkey, were drawn to organizations with a specifically Kurdish agenda. Arguably, the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) was the most successful one partially due to the support provided by the Syrian government. The PKK commenced armed struggle in 1984. The PKK methods were violent and the state's response was violent too. State security operations were not limited to attacks of the PKK itself but included "extra-judicial killings of non-combatants, torture of civilians and the destruction of Kurdish villages" under the name of counter-terrorism measures. Under State of Emergency Legislation, declared by the Turkish Parliament on 19 July 1987, Turkish judicial system compromised the government behavior to commit chronic abuses against what they called 'terrorist' targets and to silence pro-Kurdish press, publishers, associations, and cultural initiatives. The government characterized activities in the southeast as terrorist activities inspired by Kurdish separatism and thus justified the state repression of Kurdish identity and pro-Kurdish expression (Yildiz & Muller, 2008).

Turkish hostility towards Kurdish identity within the country's boarders is deep-rooted and the state's treatment of the Kurds cannot be separated from it. The Kurds have been subject to severe human rights violations which are not resulted purely from insufficient legislative practices. They are an "external expression of deep-seated ideological precepts in turkey which value the integrity of the state above the liberties of the group or individual," and which regard any attempts from the Kurds to express their identity as separatism. They are persecuted and harassed when they assert their Kurdishness (Yildiz, 2005b, p. 35).

Prior to 1991 and throughout the conflict period, pro-Kurdish politicians advocated that the Kurdish issue be addressed within the domestic political system and through national political parties, which adopted leftist ideologies. After 1991 Kurdish politicians began forming Kurdish parties although they were routinely subject to dissolution proceedings and their members consistently faced judicial harassment. During the same period human rights defenders, pro-Kurdish politicians and sections of

the media were killed by the security forces (Yildiz & Muller, 2008). A militarized, secular, mono-ethnic conception of national identity has been the backbone of the new Turkish republic which has resulted in a relatively repressive state, a poor human rights record and considerable hostility towards the Kurds (Yildiz, 2005b). Throughout the twentieth century thousands of people, mainly Kurds, have died as a result of armed conflicts in the Kurdish regions. This was accompanied by mass killings, village destruction, abuse, humiliation, ill-treatment and torture at the hands of security forces (Yildiz & Muller, 2008).

Theoretical Background

3.1 Discourse and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Discourse is rather an elastic term and used "differently by different researchers and also in different academic cultures" (Wodak, 2002, p. 8). Some researchers make a distinction between 'text' and 'discourse.' Cook, taking into account the difference between the two, defines discourse as "a stretch of language in use, taking on meaning in context for its users, and perceived by them as purposeful, meaningful, and connected" (1994, p. 25). Others use the term discourse to refer to any instance of language-in-use, whether spoken or written (Gee, 2011; Kaplan, 2002).

CDA considers language use as "social practice". Social nature of communication in a linguistic community has been regarded as a key aspect of discourse. In fact, CDA practitioners stress contextual aspects of meaning determined by social relations and identities of the participants in communication. Using language, people and institutions become engaged in social practices (Cook, 1994; Bloor & Bloor, 2007) and actors on whom political, social, historical, cultural, and linguistic practice conditions are imposed without being aware of the rules of the game (Wodak, 2002). CDA must be able to identify these practices and the assumptions made by them which reflect the ideological basis of the discourse (Bloor & Bloor, 2007) since CDA approach is particularly concerned with how language is used and abused for the exercise of 'socio-political power' and how producing texts is related to issues of ideology and social belief (Widdowson, 2007). It assumes that texts are based on "recurring discursive practices" which are themselves based on "social practice" through which ideologies are produced, reproduced and disseminated. CDA goal is thus to uncover the ways in which discourse and ideology are intertwined (Johnstone, 2008).

3.2 Ideology, naming and diction

Ideology refers to "a set of beliefs or attitudes shared by members of a particular social group" (Bloor & Bloor, 2007, p. 10). It is social forums and processes to circulate symbolic forms in the social world (Thompsom as cited in Wodak 2002). Ideology presents "the perspective of a particular interest" in a way that "the relationship between proposition and fact is not transparent" (Fairclough, 2010, p. 46). Ideological positions could be hidden and by "making hidden assumptions visible, critical analysis challenges the practice that powerful members of society take their words as 'self- evident truth' and dismiss the words of others as irrelevant" (Woods, 2006, p. 50).

Texts, to express their meaning, depend on their use in appropriate contexts (Verdonk, 2002). We have to recognize the importance of cultural contexts within which texts operate. Texts are "crated within a particular culture, and operate within the value system of that culture" (Reah, 1998, p. 58). Texts are of high significance for critical discourse analysts since they are not free of ideologies and thus unobjective. They maintain social realities and are inseparable from them (Threadgold 1989 as cited in Paltridge 2006). Social and discursive practices are enshrined in texts (Johnstone, 2008) thus ideologies exist in texts. Ideology is present in the forms and content of texts but it is not possible to read off ideologies from texts (Fairclough, 2010).

Ideology is located both in structures and in events (Fairclough, 2010) and it is not just "an abstract system of thought but becomes actualized in a variety of material forms" (Althusseras as cited in Wilson). It is obviously materialized in language and features of "language and discourse may be ideologically invested." Word choice as well as presuppositions, implicature, metaphors,

and coherence and all aspects of meaning are ideologically significant (Fairclough, 2010). This shows the necessity of detecting and investigating the connection between textual structures and social contexts in which they occur.

Linguistic choices used to produce discourse are of high importance from a critical point of view. Every choice is strategic and is actually a choice about how the world is seen, divided up and why a choice is favored over others is not unplanned but has "an epistemological agenda" (Johnstone, 2008). Grammatical and lexical choices made by people are not random; they are rather ideologically burdened and the way language users use and interpret words is based on their understanding of the world and their perception of social reality (Bloor & Bloor, 2007). A typical example is political discourse constructed for public consumption in which words are selected in a strategic and tactical fashion to direct its audience to certain thoughts, beliefs, and, ultimately actions (Johnstone, 2008).

Choices of words used to name and describe persons or groups of people can be used to present specific ideas about them. Reah (1998) believes that the naming strategies adopted by a text to describe groups have a direct effect on the ideological slant of the text. Describing a disadvantaged group using belittling, demeaning or derogatory terms or names can help to promote the belief that the group itself is to blame for its disadvantage and it is possible to cause offence by adopting wrong terms to describe people. Therefore, naming can be manipulated to create very specific effects and is a very useful device in promoting a particular response from an audience. It can be used to promote attitudes towards particular social groups to create a particular ideology. It is indeed a powerful tool for establishing an ideological stance. Beliefs and prejudices of a society can be reinforced by using specific word choices and names that support an existing belief system. The use of 'mountain Turks' to describe the Kurds by Turkish authorities after the fall of the Ottoman Empire is a textbook example of derogatory terms used to deny the Kurds as a nation of the fundamental right to exist.

Ideologies and assumptions behind words and structures are usually hidden and undetected and as a result they get naturalized. Naturalization gives the state of common sense to particular ideological representations and makes them opaque and invisible (Fairclough, 2010). Consequently, a vast majority of readers would agree with the assumptions and hidden ideologies and would not challenge them simply because they are expressed in the word choice not overtly. CDA is thus tasked with detecting and challenging social orders and practices that are considered naturalized, in fact, naturalized "when one way of seeing and interpreting the world becomes so common (and so frequently constructed in discourse) that it is accepted as the only way" (Woods, 2006, p. XIV).

Data Analysis

As mentioned in the previous sections, this paper, based on two of CDA approaches namely naming and lexical choice, analyzes one news report from each of the English-language websites of Hurriyet Daily News from Turkey and Greek City Times from Greece, respectively. Both news reports are about the introduction of the Kurdish issue to the book of history and geography by the French Directorate of Education.

 4.1 Data from the Turkish website

The title misleads the reader by claiming the French textbook teaches students about the PKK, while the book teaches about Kurdistan. The same claim is repeated in lines 2 and 4. In line 4 'separatist' is used to describe both the YPG and the PKK, while none of them seeks independence from Syria and Turkey respectively. The website assumes these two separate organizations as the same, while the first one was founded in 2011 and has fought ISIS and the latter in 1978 and has stood for the Kurdish rights in that part of Kurdistan ruled by Turkey.

In line 6, the website accuses France of supporting terrorism without presenting any proof. It seems the accusation is based on the fact that France has introduced a short history of the Kurds and their homeland, Kurdistan, to a high school history and

geography book. The website goes further by stating 'Turkey's national security' is threatened by teaching French students a short history of Kurdistan and its people.

In line 8, the website suggests that there is not any relationship between the YPG and the Syrian Kurds and takes it for granted that the PKK and the YPG are the same organization, while they are not.

In line 10, France is accused of taking 'anti-Turkey' policies and distorting 'historical truths' without any elaboration on those truths. The website also reiterates that France backs terrorism without providing any evidence.

In line 11, the Turkish website claims that 'the official policy of France supports 'terrorist propaganda', referring to the history of Kurdistan in the French textbook.

In line 12, the website labels the YPG delegation received by the French President as 'representatives of the terrorist organization.'

In line 15, the website brings up 'France's plans to establish a terrorist state' without clarifying what it means by 'a terrorist state.'

The website, in lines 17-19, calls Turkish military invasion of Kurdish inhabitant north Syria, which has been carried out without respecting for international laws, 'counter-terrorism operations' and even claims the Turkish government has respected 'Syrian territorial integrity.' The website does not shed light on how a full-scale invasion of predominantly Kurdish areas of Syria could be translated into respect for 'Syrian territorial integrity.'

In line 20, the website uses 'the distorted presentation of ideological dogmas' to refer to mentioning the Kurds as a stateless nation in the textbook. It is obfuscating the Kurdish issue in Turkey and the Middle East.

In lines 23-25, the website refers to Turkish military invasion of north Syria as 'anti-terrorist operations across its border,' while the people across the border are mainly Kurds, who oppose 'Turkish expansionism' and intend to establish an autonomous region. The website names the region 'a terror corridor' to justify the three major Turkish military operations since 2016. Another aim of the operations, as the website claims, is to 'enable peaceful settlement by locals,' while the majority of indigenous people in north Syria close to the Turkish border are Kurds and they have been settled there long before the Turkish operations. The website tries to divert readers' attention away from the fact that Turkish army and its radical allied groups are changing the demography of north Syria populated mostly by the Kurds.

In lines 26-28, the website holds the PKK the sole 'responsible for the deaths of 40,000 people' to disclaim all Turkish state responsibility for the killings. The website does not mention regular bombardments of Iraqi Kurdistan, which have led to the death of hundreds of civilians in the past three decades. Furthermore, the website alleges that 'the PYG is the PKK's Syrian offshoot,' an allegation for which the Turkish state has failed to prove and has been dismissed by the international community.

4.2 Data from the Greek website

The title uses the phrase 'an independent Kurdistan' which denotes the existence of a Kurdistan, a name that the Turkish state has strongly opposed since its creation in 1923. As of today, there has been no independent Kurdistan. However, the website acknowledges the Kurds' right to enjoy establishing their independent state, which Turkey has undeniably opposed.

In line 3, turkey has been accused of 'expansionism' and that reminds people of the old days when the Ottoman Empire ruled what is called today Turkey and many parts of the Middle East, where the Kurds have traditionally resided and been deprived of their civil rights for more than a century. In line 2, the website uses 'genocide against the Kurds' to direct readers' attention to the violent action carried out by the Turkish army in Turkey and by its proxies in Syria against the Kurds. The website gives hope to the Kurds, much to Turkish dismay, that they will ultimately form an independent homeland by using 'Kurdistan,' in line 3, which Turkey calls it 'a terrorist state.'

In line 4, the website mentions the French Directorate of Education will introduce materials about 'the Kurdish issues,' while the

Turkish state uses 'terrorist propaganda' to describe those materials.

In line 6, the website uses the name 'Kurdistan' to refer to the geographical region where the Kurds live. This name denotes distinctiveness from neighboring countries and the website implies that a state called Kurdistan has the legitimate right to exist. 'A nation without a state' suggests that the Kurds must assert their fundamental right of creating their own independent state.

In line 9, the website refers to the Kurdish fight for their basic right as 'resistance' while it is labeled as terrorist activity by the Turkish government. The author of the report reiterates the Kurds' inalienable right to achieve national independence from Turkey and the Middle Eastern states that have controlled Kurdistan since it was carved up after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire following WWI.

In line 10, the website using the phrase 'the largest people in the world without a state' directs the reader's attention to the Kurdish issue, which cannot be resolved unless they enjoy an independent state of their own. It brings to the reader's mind the fact that the Kurds have been deprived of the basic right of establishing their own independent state and 'a population of 40 millions' deserves much more than remaining under the continued foreign occupation.

In line 12, the website portrays the Kurds as a nation under the domination of other countries by using 'fighting for independence' implying their right for independence – a right that the Kurds have fought for since almost a century ago, as the website points out. In lines 13 and 14 one can conclude that Kurdistan has been carved up between a group of countries, each of which 'oppose Kurdish efforts' to establish an independent Kurdish homeland.

In lines 15 and 16, one can see 'the Saddam regime and the collapse of Syria.' The first name of the former Iraqi leader, Saddam Hussein, is used, suggesting the state was in the hands of person and thus a dictatorship. And it was legitimate to overthrow the regime and create an independent state for a long suffered nation. The website, using a quote from the French textbook, considers Syria a failed state, where millions of people have been killed, injured, or displaced and Syrian collapse will restore 'hopes for an independent Kurdistan.' In lines 17 and 18, the website quotes 'the current conflicts in the Middle East will allow the establishment of a Kurdish state.' The Turkish state and the Turkish website regard such a forthcoming state a terrorist one and are strongly opposed to.

In lines 19 to 23, the website presents a positive image of the Kurds on the international arena by pointing to 'the role of the Kurdish forces in the elimination of ISIS,' which is recognized as a terrorist group by the international community. However, Turkey launches attacks on the Kurdish forces as they have created a safe haven in north Syria bordering Turkey.

In line 26, the website uses the phrase 'the Turkish occupation of northern Syria.' The word 'occupation' undermines the legitimacy of the Turkish military presence in northern Syria predominantly populated by the Kurds. The same word in lines 28 and 29 negatively represents the Turkish army suggesting the Turkish army is behind the oppression and persecution inflicted to civilian Kurds living in Afrin and the surrounding area. Moreover, it is implied that the Turkish army has occupied the entire region to hand it over to 'radical jihadist groups.'

In line 30, the Greek news outlet states, according to the French book, the groups that were given the control of the predominantly Kurdish areas of Syria by Turkish army 'grab and steal whatever they find in front of them.' They have 'seized many Kurdish homes and businesses' and kidnap people for ransom. They commit mass killings. All these can be considered as blatant violations of human rights and even war crimes. All these groups are supported by the Turkish army.

In line 33, the Kurds native to the region 'had to leave' and are new 'homeless' and dislocated, thanks to atrocities committed by Turkish backed militia groups.

In line 34, according to the Greek website, the French book shows Erdogan, the Turkish President, aimed to 'eliminate the existence of the Kurds on the border with Turkey.' Erdogan's position is line with his hatred for the Kurds, as he had said 'the only good Kurd is a dead Kurd' (as cited in Bolton, 2020, p. 186).

Discussion and Conclusion

The findings illustrated in the previous section in terms of presenting the Kurds and their homeland, Kurdistan, in the two websites showed there were differences. The differences in lexical items to refer to the same thing, event or place in a variety of ways allowed for the expression of different attitudes and viewpoints. They expressed dissimilar modes of thinking and social practices and carried distinct socio-political values and beliefs, which were most of the time at odds. Thus the websites focused on ideological representations of reality and how the reality of cultural and political constructs should be seen by their readers.

The Greek website repeated used the theme of Kurdish state-building by using phrases such as 'Kurdish state' and 'independent Kurdistan.' Kurdistan, which denotes a country populated mainly by the Kurds, was used six times throughout the news story and 'Kurdish state' once. A number of other words and phrases about the Kurds which either have positive connotations or highlight the plight of the Kurds were used. They include Kurdish 'resistance', 'elimination of ISIS' by the Kurdish forces, 'ongoing genocide against Kurds in Syria and Turkey', mass-killings', 'eliminate the existence of the Kurds on the border with Turkey', 'homeless', 'a nation without a state.' In contrast a list of highly negative expressions regarding the Turkish state and its associate armed forces has been used. Words and phrases such as 'Turkish expansionism', 'Turkish occupation', Turkish relationship with 'radical jihadist groups' and 'armed militias', 'grab and steal' Kurdish belongings, 'seized many Kurdish homes and businesses', 'kidnapping people for ransom', and committing 'dozens of mass killings.'

The Turkish website, on the other hand, put forth several allegations including the PKK following a 'separatist ideology', France supporting terrorism and basing its foreign policy on 'anti-Turkey rhetoric', distorting 'historical truths' and having 'plans to establish a terrorist state.' The website labels presenting the Kurdish issue in the French textbook as 'distorted presentation of ideological dogmas and political interests' which 'poses a serious danger to future generations.' It places no responsibility for 'the deaths of 40.000 people', killed in armed clashes between Turkish military forces and the PKK on the Turkish state and solely attributes it to the PKK.

The Greek website gave a relatively balanced coverage of the news. It cited more than twelve direct quotations from the book in question and elaborates on the news in light of those quotations in an attempt to avoid compromising its impartiality. The Turkish website avoided using the term Kurdistan and associated the Kurdish aspiration to build a state of their own to the PKK. However the term dates back to centuries ago, much older than 1978 when the PKK was founded. The Turkish website tried to control its readers' general opinion in one way or another to its benefits. It suggested the reader accept the politically hostile atmosphere prevailing Turkey in terms of the Kurdish cause. It attempted to naturalize the inequality and injustice prevalent in Turkish political arena by denying the Kurds the right to express their socio-political demands and guarantees the continuation of bias against the Kurds. Lexical choices in the Turkish website appear to be ideologically motivated and focus readers' attention to those ideologies that act against the interests of the Kurds, oppressed and deprived of their basic political, economic and social rights in the modern republic of Turkey.

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