

The Politics of English as a Foreign Language
The Case of Turkey

by

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ABSTRACT

The contemporary construction of English as a global language and of its learning as an essential investment securing a worldwide valued literacy and cultural capital required for access to and success in various spheres of communities within and beyond national borders is among the discursive practices of a neoliberal project of governmentality promoting market societies of mobile and enterprising individuals. I suggest that the most distinctive nature of this contemporary discourse is that it is accompanied not only by an unprecedented commodification but also diversification and arguably democratization of the media whereby foreign language skills are acquired. The processes of learning English as Foreign Language (EFL) are now extended into transnational experiences including au pair and work and travel programs that have blurred the borders between hitherto distinct spheres of education, work, care, travel, immigration and tourism. I claim that this involves complex networks of alliances formed, not only on the background of current hegemonic economic interests of some Anglophone countries, but also through various, and often historically grounded, political and cultural logics of other collective and individual subjects, including non-native English speaking countries and people themselves. Therefore, understanding the global spread of EFL in contemporary era requires a governmentality analysis of various polices, practices and technologies which sought to define peoples' identities, connections and memberships through foreign languages across time and space. This thesis seeks to undertake such an analysis with reference to Turkey where the promotion of foreign languages in general and of English in particular constitutes a paradoxical case given the absence of a colonial past and the prominence of Turkish nationalist discourses.

PREFACE

The late spring/early summer of 1980 was not only a time when Turkey was about to face a dramatic historical change in its politics and economics. It was also a time when many eleven-year-old Turkish children were at a critical crossroad of their lives. They were expected to score well in the centrally administered selective school tests and thus become eligible for admission to one of Turkey's prestigious foreign or public schools, where they could develop Western language skills. Children from high-income families were better equipped for the challenge thanks to the competitive skills they had developed by attending private tutoring centers or hiring individual tutors. Moreover, their families could afford the high tuition fees for the private foreign schools in Turkey as long as they scored high enough. This was, however, clearly beyond the imagination of the other children, whose only viable option was to get admitted to an equally prestigious but free public school.

I know their stories because I was one of them. My family was not rich and therefore could not afford extracurricular tutorials. Since they did not have any formal schooling beyond the elementary level, they could not give me extra tutorials at home. They assumed that sitting in the national selective examination of private foreign schools would prepare me, both methodologically and emotionally, to succeed in the subsequent national selective examination of public schools and thus get an economy class ticket for upward social mobility. Things did not work as planned, however, and I ended up with scores that made me eligible for admission to a private French medium foreign school.

My family sold whatever little they owned to pay the school fees but were financially exhausted at the end of my second year. Nevertheless I managed to continue studying there with the help of a scholarship granted by the school administration.

I don't know what the other children, with whom I started the journey, were doing in the late spring/early summer of 1993. However, I remember very well that I was standing at another important crossroad, after which I began reading my little story from a totally different perspective. I was puzzled by a simple but challenging question. One of my classmates at Manchester University, where I was then doing graduate studies, asked me why there were so many schools and universities in Turkey instructing in English and why Turkish people were so obsessed about learning and/or studying in a foreign language. He was problematizing a practice that I had always considered natural.

His question resonated years later when I overheard a young Turkish man, who sounded like a university student searching a summer job in Istanbul, but looking down on the teenage boys and girls working at local McDonalds restaurants. I remember him saying: "Why would I work at such a place in my own country? But if this was in New York, then, it is a different story. I would not mind working at a McDonalds in New York, because I would then improve my English". I don't know what kind of career that young Turkish man ended up with. One thing I know, however, is that he was talking and acting like a distant relative of mine, who always dreamed of living in a Western country. She was poor, unemployed and trying to break this vicious circle to get a better life. Her high school diploma and Basic English, which she acquired at a regular public school and then

vainly tried to improve at a private tutoring center in Turkey, were not enough to bring her the kind of career she was dreaming of. She eventually went to the UK as an au pair to improve her English, got a college diploma there and eventually married an older British man she met over her summer vacation in Turkey. When I met her last time she was working for HSBC in the UK. This is when my little story began meeting and conversing with a bigger picture. And this is when I began developing an academic interest in studying and reporting this conversation.

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I am grateful to all the people who inspired me to consider the topic of this research as worthy of academic inquiry. My ultimate source of inspiration, however, is Professor William Walters. It was only when I took his course on governmentality at Carleton University that I came to know and appreciate the contributions – actual and potential- of this perspective to the discipline of political science. It was his distinct scholarship that got my attention to the political relevance and significance of problematizing and deconstructing what is presented as apolitical, natural and/or universal.

I am the only one to be blamed for the possible shortcomings of this thesis. I only wish I had a chance to live in Ottawa throughout my PhD programme. The necessity to live in St. John's, NL as a wife and mother deprived me from the much-needed regular exchanges with my own academic community at Carleton University. I am grateful to Professor William Walters and Professor Rianne Mahon for their continuous support that lessened my sense of academic isolation and kept me going. If this thesis is worthy of any praise, it is thanks to their outstanding co-supervision that made it possible in the first place. I am also grateful to Professor Bruce Curtis for his contributions as a committee member.

If I was able to handle being a student, wife, mother and many others throughout these years, it is thanks to all the great people who helped me through in their respective capacities. My mother, who visited us twice from Turkey and the sister-like friends I met in St. John's, provided us the much-needed part-time help in the care of our baby son over the last two years. It was mostly thanks to such help that I could leave my small family in St. John's and go to Ottawa for short periods of time. If the occasional meetings I had with my co-supervisors at Carleton University greatly contributed to my academic progress, it was the warm welcome and hospitality of my dear friends- and more particularly of Stephanie Cochrane and her lovely family- that filled me with energy and enthusiasm each time I had a chance to visit Ottawa. I am also grateful to Don and Linda Thom for their friendship and support. Don's careful editing service deserves particular acknowledgement in this context.

There is, however, only one family whose support was not limited to occasional encounters. My own small family is the only one which endured the hardships of this long marathon with me since the very beginning. I am most grateful to Ayhan, my husband since 2003, and to Ali Kerem, our dear little son since 2007, for their unconditional love and support. It is to them that I dedicate this thesis.

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INTRODUCTION

According to Ethnologue (2005), an encyclopedic reference work cataloging the world's 6,912 known living languages, only 308 million people are native English speakers. With over 500 million people speaking it as a second language and 750 million as a foreign language, however, English is considered as the most widely spoken language in the world. As the British Council clearly puts it, what makes the dominance of English even more significant is the fact that demand from the rest of the world population is increasing. According to Graddol, two billion people, a third of the entire human population, will be learning English by 2010-2015 (Graddol, 2006:14).

Moreover, English stands as the most popular language in an interestingly wide spectrum of the world regions, including the European Union, which now operates in 23 official languages. According to the European Commission's 2005 Communication, English is the most commonly used language in the European Union with 13 % of EU citizens speaking it as their mother tongue and 34 % as a foreign language. Moreover, there is a growing tendency for "foreign language learning" to mean simply "learning English" among the EU citizens (COM 2005). In a 2006 Report, the European Commission notes that English is the dominant foreign language in primary education and that the number of young English learners is steadily increasing in the EU. In anticipation of the implications of increasing popularity of English among the youth, the European Commission even developed and adopted an Action Plan as early as 2003 in order to

promote language learning and linguistic diversity in the EU (European Commission 2003).

The rather well documented global spread of English language is accompanied by a parallel, but less noticed, development which revolutionized the way foreign languages are taught and learned. English language is now the object of an increasingly profitable global business offering innovative options which extend beyond formal schooling, making the overall experience of acquiring foreign language skills highly flexible and arguably more inclusive. Moreover, the extension of such options into cultural exchange schemes, such as au pair and Work & Travel programs, increasingly blurred the distinction between hitherto distinct spheres of education, work, travel, care and immigration, with important implications for questions of national and global politics.

In a more nuanced approach to all these contemporary phenomena, this thesis argues that the commodification of English and the diversification of the media whereby it is acquired as a foreign language cannot simply be treated as transformations taking place due to the imposition of economic interests of powerful Anglophone states over the rest of the world. I claim that they are characteristics of a new form of governmentality based on neoliberal rationalities but maintained by constantly negotiated and thus flexible networks of alliances among various transnational, local and individual subjects motivated by different economic, political and cultural logics.

This research seeks to demonstrate that the role of local logics and agency, both collective and individual, in the global spread of English and the increasing popularity of alternative media for learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is actually more significant than what conventional approaches would tend to suggest. Drawing attention to the historical roots of Turkish people's interest and increasing agency in learning prestigious, and often foreign, languages, I urge a more nuanced analysis where the global spread of English is not associated only with the technologies of domination used by English speaking powers motivated by neoliberal and / or neo-imperial rationalities. I claim that we also need to take into account the technologies of the self which get people willingly to submit themselves to various governmentality projects which define their identities, connections and memberships with respect to their knowledge of one foreign language or another across time and space. I argue that the contemporary interest of Turkish people in learning English as a foreign language despite the absence of a colonial past and the prominence of nationalist discourses in Turkey constitutes a paradoxical and therefore interesting case to investigate in this context.

Given the practical difficulty of conducting interviews, archival research and discourse analysis to explore various rationalities with which all Ottoman subjects and Republican Turkish citizens learned foreign languages throughout history I decided to limit the scope of this thesis to a focus on collective stakeholders such as the state and the market. I reviewed primary and secondary sources concerning educational and other neighboring policies and practices of Ottoman and Republican Turkish governments. I also tried to identify the changes in the rationalities of national and transnational actors involved in

the teaching of EFL and in its promotion as a global language. I reviewed reports, policy documents and promotional materials used in the marketing of various media of EFL learning. I also conducted interviews with a sample group of representatives of foreign language teaching business in Turkey.

The conceptual premises of this thesis are based on the notions of literacy and cultural capital as modern western constructs that are often used to define people's identities, memberships and status in contemporary societies with reference to their knowledge of their respective standardized national languages. I suggest that the knowledge of various prestigious foreign languages had a similar defining power in Ottoman and Republican Turkish societies. I claim that the acquisition of such linguistic knowledge thus constituted a sphere for governmental practices that were driven by various political rationalities and resulted in or from reconfigurations in the hierarchies of powers within and across Ottoman and Republican Turkish borders throughout history. I examine some of these governmental practices to identify the projects of governmentality which characterized different eras in Ottoman and Republican Turkish history and to explore how communities within and across borders were thereby objectified.

This thesis is organized in six chapters. The first chapter sets the conceptual and theoretical background. It begins with a discussion of the key concepts of language, literacy and cultural capital. It suggests that, with the exception of the first, these are modern western constructs that define people's identities, connections and memberships typically in terms of their proficiency in their respective standardized national languages

and thereby justify different political projects of inclusion or exclusion such as nation-building. The first chapter also provides an overview of scholarly debates on the contemporary global spread of English. It then discusses Benedict Anderson's analysis of the role of standardized print languages in the imaginary construction of modern nation states and some recent studies which seek to use such analysis in a more nuanced understanding of the global spread of English.

I argue that contemporary construction of English as a global language essential for access and success can be seen as one of the discursive practices constitutive of a neoliberal governmentality project that defines people's worth in terms of their proficiency in that particular foreign language rather than in their native tongues and thereby inspires them to reconfigure their imagined communities beyond the borders of their nation-states.

The first chapter concludes by claiming that Foucauldian governmentality perspective offers an innovative framework not only for analyzing the global spread of EFL in contemporary era but also for understanding how various other foreign languages had been used in variably constituting and governing people across time and space. I suggest that a governmentality analysis of the promotion of various foreign languages during Ottoman and Republican Turkish eras offers unique insights in this context, especially when we consider the absence of a colonial past and the prominence of nationalist discourses in Turkish history.

The second chapter contextualizes the research with a historical overview and analysis of Ottoman Empire to provide a background to the rather paradoxical popularity of English in its political successor, the Republic of Turkey. It points out that social status in Turkish society has often been defined in terms of the knowledge of prestigious foreign languages, which changed from one era to another. It then discusses the educational changes of different periods in Ottoman history against a general political, cultural and economic background. It explores the role of community system and capitulations in creating educational inequalities among different religious groups which constituted the Ottoman society. I suggest that these differential educational arrangements of the Ottoman community system and the Capitulations worked to advantage some religious groups over others depending on which civilization and language were considered prestigious at a given time.

As long as the Muslim civilization in general and Ottoman Empire in particular had a more defining power in the hierarchy of the world order, the knowledge of Arab, Persian and Ottoman Turkish languages was considered as a source of prestige and status. However, when this hierarchy changed in favor of European powers from the eighteenth century onwards, the knowledge of the West and of its languages began to be constructed as a valuable asset easily convertible to wealth and status. The Ottoman community system then unintentionally began granting non-Muslim subjects educational and ultimately economic and social superiority over their Muslim/Turkish counterparts, because the former could easily acquire Western language skills through such schooling. Thereafter, education became a sphere subject to political intervention and reform by

Ottoman rulers who then constituted themselves as father kings compelled to intervene to establish justice among all their children. Although this intervention may be interpreted as being driven by the Islamic imperative to terminate the subordination of Muslim subjects to their non-Muslim fellows, I suggest that it fundamentally corresponds to a shift in *raison d'Etat* whereby the Ottoman rulers became increasingly more concerned with the well-being and happiness of their governed. Moreover, Ottoman rulers also had material and secular political rationalities, including the making of the Ottoman Empire as a modern world power. This involved the constitution of the processes whereby Western languages were acquired as spheres for governmental practices seeking to cultivate the cadres competent to execute the modernization reforms. However, considerations of increasing Western encroachment stealing the hearts and minds of Ottoman youth through educational activity prompted Ottoman rulers to change their modernization strategy from adoption to adaptation of Western models from the nineteenth century onwards. This change corresponds to a constitution of the Ottoman state as the moral guardian of its subjects through various governmental practices. The latter included educational reforms designed to minimize the ideological risks of western language acquisition and constitutional reforms seeking to increase the happiness and thus loyalty of Ottoman subjects by granting them a kind of proto-citizenship.

The third chapter focuses on the Republican Turkey examining educational changes first in the context of the nation building project of Kemalist cadres and then the frequently interrupted multi-party democratization process of the 1960s and 1970s. It argues that the Kemalist regime's project to create a modern nation state involved the construction of an

imagined community around linguistic Turkishness for the citizens of the new polity and the definition of literacy in terms of the knowledge of a standard Turkish language. The third chapter suggests that the new Turkish remained, at least initially, like a foreign language for many Turkish citizens due to the Latin script and extreme linguistic purification. This meant that Republican elites could acquire and consolidate their prestige, status and power over ordinary people through their ownership and command of that new language.

The third chapter also points out that despite the demotion of Arabic and Persian, other foreign languages, notably those of Western European countries, continued to be deemed prestigious in Turkish society. Similarly, modernism continued to be the axis of Republican reforms but with an emphasis gradually shifting from Europe to the US, with the latter deemed both as a role model and best provider of the expertise needed for the techno-modernization drive of the post war era. This involved the construction of the knowledge of English language as a valuable cultural capital and the introduction, sometimes through state initiative and foreign aid, of prestigious schools and universities teaching or instructing in that language.

I note that the regulation of admission to universities and prestigious schools through the introduction of centrally administered national entrance exams worked to exclude some students from the anticipated benefits of acquiring foreign language skills through formal schooling and paved the ground for the emergence of locally developed alternative media to learn foreign languages as a big sector. In the meantime, migratory movements from

countryside to major urban centers, first Turkish and then European, broadened the imagination and aspirations of Turkish people making their reception of such alternative media of foreign language learning more positive.

I conclude the third chapter by noting that educational reforms together with some other interventions in the imaginary processes of Turkish people were governmental practices resulting in different sets of objectivizations of the governed. I claim that through these reforms and interventions Republican rulers constituted themselves as enlightened teachers of illiterate masses who need first to develop an identity around linguistic Turkishness and then acquire technical and Western language skills to contribute to the techno-modernization of their country.

The fourth chapter analyses the educational changes of the post-1980 period in the context of privatization and trade liberalization policies, which further exposed Turkish people to European but most notably American goods, cultures and languages. I suggest that such exposure helped Turkish youth develop aspirations for working, studying and living across borders. While English continued to be the most popular foreign language, the processes of acquisition began to be constituted as an economic sector as the private sector assumed an increasing role in the teaching of foreign languages skills within and beyond formal schooling by establishing private schools, universities and tutoring centers. However, the neoliberal discourses and practices of the post-1980s were such that job markets began requiring unusually diverse sets of skills that were not easily acquired within the temporal or spatial confines of available educational institutions.

Ideal neo-liberal subjects were expected to be not only proficient in English, the new global language, but also mobile and enterprising individuals who could adapt to multicultural environments. The fourth chapter concludes by pointing out that such discursive practices prepared the ground for the subsequent popularity of other alternative media of foreign language learning that involve transnational experiences and direct exposure to source cultures.

The fifth chapter analyzes the making of EFL learning the sphere of an innovative and competitive global industry, with particular reference to the changes in the underlying rationalities as well as technical / pedagogical developments of the post-second world war era. It discusses how the introduction of interactive multimedia devices and technologies and the adoption of cognitive communicative approach transformed the technical and pedagogic foundations of foreign language learning in contemporary era. It demonstrates that these transformations were accompanied by changes in the political rationalities of Anglophone individuals and/or collectivities involved in teaching EFL. These rationalities changed from religious missionary / civil visionary concerns into rather materialistic ones, corresponding to the projects of governmentality characterizing each period under discussion. I suggest that the contemporary commodification of English and the diversification of the media whereby EFL skills are acquired constitute the manifestations of another project of governmentality - one that is driven by neoliberal rationalities and innovative techniques. In this context I analyze the increasing prominence of standardized language proficiency tests such as TOEFL as innovative techniques of neoliberal governmentality seeking to govern people at a distance.

The fifth chapter also discusses the construction and promotion of au pair and work and travel programs as markets offering alternative media to acquire not only good English skills but also a whole range of other skills deemed essential for success in a neo-liberal world order that celebrates mobility and enterprise. Drawing on the interviews conducted with representatives of EFL business in Turkey, the fifth chapter also explores the networks of alliances among various individual and collective agencies, local and transnational, underlying the workings of the global EFL industry in the Turkish context. It seeks to reveal the kind of rationalities with which individuals and collectivities in Turkey might have become involved in such networks of alliances. I suggest that the Turkish youth welcomed such alternative media not only because they were more affordable but that they also promised salvation from dependency on or emotional indebtedness to the state or the family which historically dominated the processes of identity formation and the terms of social mobility in Turkish society.

However, these programs could not have been so popular without the approval of families or of the state, each motivated by a complex web of cultural, economic and political rationalities. I note that while families were convinced by the construction of au pairing as the right option for their daughters, work and travel programs recruited mostly from among young men in Turkey. Similarly, the Turkish state refrained from aggressively regulating such cultural exchange markets deemed useful in cultivating the kind of mobile and enterprising individuals which formal schooling failed to produce. Moreover, in the light of the most recent changes in the UK visa regulations that made au

pairing categorically impossible for Turkish citizens and impaired the admission of potential EFL students to language schools in the UK, I suggest that the agency of collectivities such as the state still has more defining power than those of enterprising individuals. Similarly, the lack of universal regulations seeking to minimize the vulnerability of au pairs and work and travel participants in hosting countries does not mean that the ground is left to the agency of freely moving and enterprising individuals. On the contrary, those who are excluded from the benefits of elite schooling are left at the mercy of individual states of destination that freely change their immigration policies according to their own sets of economic and political rationalities.

The sixth chapter summarizes the main arguments of this research. It concludes with the claim that neoliberal rationality owes its prominence in contemporary era to the artistic and increasingly innovative use of technologies of domination in intersection with technologies of the self. It suggests that the global spread of EFL constitutes a very interesting case in this respect but remains still largely understudied in political science scholarship.

CHAPTER 1

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL BAKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

The contribution of political science to the debates on the role of language in contemporary political processes is surprisingly limited. It seems as if political scientists are not interested in the “complex questions of a potential transformation in the role of language and print in how post national political communities are imagined” (Ives 2006). This lack of interest is particularly evident in the body of literature studying the global spread of English, almost confirming Brutt-Griffler’s controversial contention that political terminology is not particularly apt from a linguistic standpoint and that political theory should leave ‘global English’ to applied linguistics (Brutt-Griffler 2002 cited in Ives 2006). This thesis is an attempt to challenge such contentions on the background of a conceptual and theoretical framework that I will outline in this first chapter. I will suggest that the global spread of English in contemporary era constitutes an interesting case for understanding how people are constituted and governed through numerous discursive and governmental practices, including those which define what counts as a prestigious language and how it can be learned.

This chapter will begin with a brief overview of how language is theorized in Western schools of thought, comparing and contrasting various perspectives on the links binding language, power and policymaking. It will continue with a discussion of the concepts of

literacy and cultural capital as western modern constructs that are conceived to analyze various ways and practices in which the proficiency of the governed in his/her standardized national language is used to generate and sustain social, economic and political exclusion and inequalities.

I will also provide an overview of the literature on the global spread of English and draw attention to the lack of a nuanced discussion of this contemporary phenomenon in political science scholarship. This will be followed by a discussion of Benedict Anderson's analysis of the role of standardized print languages in the imaginary construction of modern nation states and some recent studies which seek to provide his analysis in a more nuanced understanding of the global spread of English. This discussion will also help to subsequently situate the specificity of the case of Turkey where the knowledge of various foreign languages have paradoxically been central to the processes of imagining communal identities.

Drawing on Foucauldian literature, the final section of this chapter suggests that the contemporary construction of English as a global language and the promotion of its learning beyond the time and space compression of formal schooling are part of a project of governmentality, one that is driven by neoliberal rationalities promoting a market society of mobile and enterprising individuals and collectivities. I argue that this project of neoliberal governmentality also involves a re-conceptualization of the notions of literacy, cultural capital and imagined communities in terms of the knowledge of English as a Foreign Language. I suggest that a governmentality perspective helps us to better

understand that such re-conceptualization is not specific to contemporary neoliberal era. There had been other temporal and spatial contexts, such as in Ottoman and Republican Turkey, where identities, connections and memberships were defined on the basis of proficiency in various other foreign languages.

1.2 Theorizing Language in Politics

Language has been variably theorized in Western schools of thought. While liberalism presented language primarily as a vehicle for transferring ideas from one brain to another, republicanism and especially German Romanticism viewed it as an integral part of culture, identity, power, and conceptions of the world (Ives 2006). A similar division is also evident among the perspectives taken in the current research on the link between language and policy making. In contrast to structuralists and positivists who present language as a reflection of a preexisting social world, some critical perspectives, such as critical discourse analysis, language ideology and critical language testing, seek to explore the role of language in the production and reproduction of social inequalities and thereby to counter hegemonic power relations. Drawing upon the work of social theorists, such as Bourdieu, Foucault and Habermas, these critical perspectives view language as “a set of resources and practices to which individuals have differential access” and stress that “research should bring to light the overt and covert mechanisms deployed in order to determine the value of certain linguistic practices thereby defining what counts as good, correct or appropriate language” (Milani, 2008:32).

I agree that the processes whereby linguistic skills are acquired inevitably involve different levels and forms of submission to some kind of authority that may be engaged in producing and reproducing inequalities. I suggest, however, that the acquisition of second or foreign language skills is a more complex undertaking and therefore requires a more nuanced analysis of underlying power relations. I argue that both the learners of foreign languages and the authorities to whom they are submitted are acting with rationalities that vary across time and space and thus involve them in a dynamic network of alliances with a broad range of other actors. Therefore, analyzing grand schemes such as linguistic globalization requires using analytical perspectives that take the dynamic nature of such rationalities, alliances and agencies into account.

As Milani (2008) suggests, critical discourse analysis, language ideology and critical language testing each offers useful analytical tools to explore particular aspect of this dynamic nature, but the complexity of contemporary processes requires taking a multidisciplinary approach where all three critical perspectives inform one another. In his analysis of language testing for citizenship debate which took place in Sweden in 2002, Milani argues that “the linguistic tools developed by critical discourse analysis, informed by the semiotic model of how language ideologies tie images of languages to the conceptualizations of the speakers of those languages, and the notion of language tests as rites of institution will be useful to shed light on the intersections between texts, discourses and ideologies at work in a specific historical moment” (Milani, 2008:35).

Such an informed analysis has indeed the potential to provide a more nuanced understanding of policy responses to increasing human mobility around the world and more particularly in European countries where discourses of migration began evolving around debates on language testing for citizenship. The findings of my research, which I will discuss in subsequent chapters, confirm that linguistic skills have almost always played a crucial role in defining one's membership and status in a given community. Therefore, the increasing prominence of language testing for citizenship does not come as a surprise for those who are familiar with the history of the link between language and identity.

As I will demonstrate in the fifth chapter, however, testing of foreign language proficiency has become a requirement even for those who are motivated to learn that language without immediate or obvious aspirations for long term / permanent membership in the communities of destination. What is ironic is that this process is also accompanied by a commodification of linguistic skills “entailing the conceptualization and representation of language competence as a set of bounded, marketable communicative skills, often devoid of symbolic functions, that can be advertised, bought and sold” (Milani, 2008: 34-5). Therefore, analyzing grand schemes such as the so-called global spread of English requires taking into account the contested, dynamic and sometimes inconsistent nature of rationalities mobilizing the individuals and collectivities involved in the acquisition of foreign language skills and the ways political communities are variably imagined around ownership or command of language.

1.3. Literacy and Cultural Capital

Any account of the role of language in contemporary political processes would be incomplete without developing a nuanced understanding of literacy. An overview of the early history of teaching literacy and language is particularly instructive in this context because it helps us to avoid anachronisms by showing that being literate had been variably defined over time and space and that formal schooling has not always been the dominant or only model for teaching literacy, however defined. Such an exercise is also a reminder that the modern western conception of literacy which emphasizes one's reading and writing skills in his or her standardized national language is a rather new construct the promotion of which is justified through various contemporary governmental rationalities such as nation building.

Most accounts of literacy are characterized by eurocentrism and therefore serve to reinforce the modern understanding of the notion. They often focus on its evolution in Europe from medieval era onwards without taking into account parallel yet different developments around the world. Houston (1988)'s account is a prominent example of this. Yet, at the same time, it encourages the reader to think of literacy as a notion that has been defined variably across time if not space.

Houston (1988) argues that it would be best to think not of literacy but of literacies and of a variety of ways in which the products of a culture can be acquired and transmitted. Drawing on his examination of the history of literacy in early modern Europe from 1500

to 1800, he notes that formal schooling constituted one of the many ways literacy was acquired and that literacy was used for a number of purposes including, but not limited to, economic advancement.

Houston (1988) points out that primary orality was the defining character of early medieval European culture because formal schooling and therefore reading and writing were strictly limited to a few professionals. He suggests, however, that this was not problematised in most of Europe until the mid-eighteenth century when the word illiterate appeared in dictionaries as a negative conception to refer to those who did not know Latin. He notes that the increasing state intervention in everyday life during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries resulted in educational changes in Europe. While the demand for trained officials required expanding secondary and higher schools, the imperative to deal with such highly educated state bureaucracy on a daily basis forced even ordinary people to seek formal education and acquire literacy in official languages. Literacy was acquired in different ways: While some chose self-training or hired private tutors, others submitted themselves to the institutionalized disciplinary processes of religious orders and/or emerging public school systems (Weber, 1976; Houston 1988).

It was the public school system, however, that proved to be decisive in the consolidation of the definition of literacy as the ability to speak, read and write in a given official language. Eugene Weber's classic study about the modernization of rural France in the context of nation building project of the Third Republic regime provides useful insights in this respect. Weber (1976) notes that the Third Republic in France inherited a

linguistically diverse population about a quarter of which spoke no French, because earlier regimes did not consider linguistic diversity as a barrier to administrative unity. The Third Republic, however, was more concerned with political / ideological unity which required mutual understanding between the ruler and the ruled. The new regime thus got engaged in linguistic unification and decreed the teaching of French language to all, a project that took longer than thought.

Economic imperatives constitute another important force behind the educational drive of this era in Europe. The emergence of industrial sectors and the expansion of both internal and overseas trade required ordinary but literate people who could handle market transactions. In educational terms, this corresponded to an increase in the demand for vocational education at the expense of more elitist classical, humanist curricula. In linguistic terms, this triggered the decline of Latin and its replacement by different European vernaculars (Houston 1988). As I noted earlier in the discussion of Anderson's (1983) analysis of nations as imagined political communities, the invention and spread of printing made books more affordable and accessible, bonding increasing numbers of people around the imaginary processes offered by print capitalism. Yet, censorship by ecclesiastical and secular authorities as well as language barriers restricted what could be read and thus imagined. Moreover, the standardization of languages and the expansion of mass schooling in the nineteenth century brought new dynamics to the power relations underlying such restrictions. Collin's (1991) critical analysis of literacy in standard language as a hegemonic practice provides important insights in this context.

The analysis offered by Collins (1991) draws on a Foucauldian reading of the role of examination in the institutionalization of discursive practices concerning literacy since the nineteenth century and the history of school literacy in England and North America. He notes that the rise of examination and document accumulation as mechanisms of discipline providing knowledge and control over populations transformed schooling in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This process was further extended with the development of mass schooling in the nineteenth century and the expansion of literacy in standardized languages.

The progression from non-schooling (and perceived social disorder) to schooling (seen as the inculcation of a moral order as well as a transmitter of useful, controllable knowledge) ... involved a defining of normal or acceptable literacy versus other, unacceptable, non-normal forms of literacy. We see in this history a transformation of literacy from plurality of scriptal practices embedded in a common place working-class structure of political dissent, to a unified conception and execution, centered on the school, with deviations from the school norm attributed to deficiencies and deviations in working-class homes, communities and minds. The end result of this process is what Jenny Cook-Gumperz (1986) has aptly called school literacy- a universalistic literacy, context independent and functionally general, evaluated by tests under prior assumptions of differential achievement. This literacy has slowly become the norm for all literacy.” (Collins, 1991: pp.231-2).

According to Collins (1991) one of the reasons why literacy in the standard language acquired such prominence is the role these languages played in the political process of nation building since the eighteenth century or the imaginary construction of nations as political communities, a process discussed in the previous section of this chapter. Another reason equally relevant for this thesis is the perceived link between literacy, schooling and the ideal of individual social mobility. Collins (1991) notes that this perception is not new and dates back, at least as far as North America is concerned, to the nineteenth century, a time frame that was characterized, in Graff (1979)'s words, by a “moral

economy of literacy". This was a period when literacy was "officially valued as a means to broad social and cultural participation but more particularly as a putative means to higher-status employment" and acquired "through an emerging system of differentiated educational institutions" (Collins 1991:p.235).

This perceived link with social mobility continued granting literacy in standardized languages almost a hegemonic status throughout the twentieth century. However, the old concern with "moral uplift and civic participation has been replaced by a more basic concern with technical adequacy. We are now confronted with a technocratic economy of literacy in which a persisting stratification of skills coexists with an ideology of literacy as a technical capacity and marketplace worth" (Collins, 1991: p.235)

Collins (1991) agrees that this historical evolution of the social definition and organization of literacy seem to confirm that we are facing an instance of Bourdieu's symbolic domination (1977) and Gramsci's hegemony (1971). He argues, however, that neither of these notions specifies the workings of the complex series of mechanisms by which consensus about what counts as valuable literacy is achieved and relations of hegemony or domination maintained.

I suggest that there are various contemporary transformations challenging the hegemonic status of literacy in standardized languages, which are neither addressed in Collins' account nor anticipated by those he criticizes. Such shortcomings are at least partially overcome by more recent research that has shifted the focus from reinforcing to disputing

literacy as a monolith and has reflected on the implications of various contemporary developments¹. For instance, conceptualizing literacy as situated social practice, Gallego and Hollingsworth (2000) introduced the notion of multiple literacies. Martin Jones and Jones (2000) reintroduced the concept of community to examine multilingual literacies. Hawisher and Selfe (2000a) explored the development of new literacies and identities in the distinct global environment of World Wide Web.

More recently, Lotherington (2007) suggested that “the conceptual and epistemological grounds of literacy are being stretched as the encoded worlds we navigate increasingly interpenetrate multicultural, multilingual, and multimodal contexts” (Lotherington, 2007, p.891). He noted that even those who have the conventional reading, writing, listening and speaking skills of English, the language dominating on line exchanges, may find themselves lost when using today’s information and communication technologies that have created new literacies.

These four skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking), which have arguably formed the very cornerstone of ELT in the past, are inadequate descriptions of language use in Internet encounters, where the borders between orality and literacy have disintegrated and new conventions have emerged. Transmission education is simply not applicable to learning in the Information Age, where much of the responsibility for learning has been downloaded onto the learner (Lotherington 2007: pp.896 & 903)

¹ It is important to note that literacy is still largely defined in terms of individual rather than social / collective knowledge and practices. An interesting exception is the notion of distributed literacy coined by Curtis (2008) in his discussion of textually mediated politics of French communities in the British North American colony of Lower Canada in the first decades of the nineteenth century. By demonstrating that individuals lacking the technical capacity to read and write can instead be involved in collective literary practices through delegation and still assert their own interests, Curtis draws attention to the benefits of seeing literacy in terms of embedded social practices. His notion of distributed literacy “shifts attention to the tactics and strategies involved in literacy as historically dynamic practice” (Curtis, 2008, 244)

As I will suggest later in this thesis, the emergence of alternative media of learning EFL is another indicative of this process where learners are given not only greater responsibility for learning but also more agency in the networks of alliances defining what type of literacy counts as valuable in contemporary era.

Another important conceptual and analytical tool used to theorize the perceived connection between linguistic competences on the one hand and success and access on the other is the notion of linguistic capital, which was developed as part of the cultural capital first introduced by Pierre Bourdieu and his colleagues in the 1960s. Bourdieu's research on the factors making the children of school teachers perform better than those of bankers in the French educational system led him to develop his influential arguments about cultural capital and its role in social reproduction. His research also provided useful insights about the processes whereby different forms of capital are acquired and converted into one another.

Bourdieu (1997) argued that capital can present itself in three fundamental guises: "as economic capital, which is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights; as cultural capital, which is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of educational qualifications; and as social capital which is made up of social obligations (connections) and convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital" (p.47). Economic capital has been central to scholarly discussions in a number of disciplines but

does not constitute the primary concern of this thesis by itself. Instead I am interested in exploring the dynamics underlying the definition and acquisition of different forms of capital, but more particularly of cultural capital, as well as their conversion into one another as a political process in the context of the global spread of EFL. As such, I agree with Isin (2002) who suggests that it is the “regimes guiding the transformation of different forms of capital that generate different trajectories of becoming political” and that the moment of being political for an individual is the one when he or she appropriates different forms of capital inscribed in available tactics, strategies, technologies, and conducts in order to pursue various projects (Isin 2002: 40 &38).

Bourdieu (1986, 1997) argued that cultural capital exists in three forms. In the embodied state, i.e. in the form of long lasting dispositions of the mind and body, the cultural capital can be a valued skill or competence acquired through education or training. In the objectified state, i.e. in the form of cultural goods, such as paintings, books and instruments, cultural capital becomes a material object the use or consumption of which requires having some amount of embodied cultural capital in the first place. In the institutionalized state, i.e. in the form of educational qualifications, it makes the embodied cultural capital of those holding such qualifications subject to objective evaluation. Bourdieu noted that its institutionalized state makes it possible for cultural capital to realize itself in the market with conversions into economic and social capital (Bourdieu 1986: 248).

In a more recent research, Bourdieu (1999) defines the state as “the culmination of a process of concentration of different species of capital … (This) leads to the emergence of a specific, properly statist capital which enables the state to exercise power over the different fields and over the different particular species of capital, and especially over the rates of conversion (and thereby over the relations of force between their respective holders. It follows that the construction of the state proceeds apace with the construction a field of power, defined as the space of play within which the holders of capital struggle in particular for power over the state” (Bourdieu, 1999: 57-8)

In their analysis of the French context, Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) argued that cultural capital, which the students inherit from their families in the form of cultural habits and dispositions, plays a more decisive role in their school success and thus increase their chances for a better life in the future. They suggested that, very much like economic capital, cultural capital can, generate profits and be potentially subject to monopolization by certain individuals and classes. For Bourdieu (1977) modern educational institutions play a significant role in such monopolization because their pedagogical intervention through standards of assessment often results in further widening rather than closing the cultural capital gap that already exists between children of different classes at the beginning of their schooling. He therefore maintained that modern educational institutions “tend to channel individuals towards class destinations that largely (but not wholly) mirror their class origins. As such, he vociferously challenged the widespread view of modern schooling as a mobility engine that promotes or demotes people through

the class structure simply on the basis of their talents and efforts” (Lareau & Weininger, 2007).

The relevance of Bourdieu’s work for this thesis lies more particularly in his conceptualization of linguistic capital as an essential component of cultural capital predisposing students to academic success. Although Bourdieu does not provide a clear definition of linguistic capital, some recent studies moved to fill the gap. For instance, Morrison and Lui’s (2000) analysis of postcolonial Hong Kong defines linguistic capital as, “fluency in, and comfort with, a high-status world-wide language which is used by groups who possess economic, social, cultural, and political power and status in local and global society”. They argue that “schools, through their medium of instruction, are implicated in the reproduction and production of advantage in society and that linguistic capital is both the medium and outcome of the pursuit of enhanced life chances (Morrison & Lui 2000: 473).

What is presumably the most important aspect of the ambiguity about what Bourdieu meant or what we should understand from linguistic capital is that we are dealing with a notion that lends itself to definitions that may vary across time and space. More precisely, when we change the spatial and temporal axis of Bourdieu’s discussion to contemporary global world order, it is no longer the French language but English that seems to assume the role of linguistic capital promising success and access to its native as well as non-native speakers.

Although Bourdieu did not offer a clear definition of the notion, there is widespread agreement among commentators that he saw linguistic capital as helping to reproduce class inequalities. He is often interpreted as arguing that the children of privileged classes already have some linguistic capital predisposing them to academic success, but that the lack of such capital marginalizes the lower classes during their schooling². This particular reading of his work led some to argue that what Bourdieu concluded for the French context cannot be generalized. Dumais (2002), for instance, suggested that in France language and high culture are more a vehicle of social distinction than in other countries such as Britain and the United States and that a lack of linguistic capital may be of more consequence in France than elsewhere.

As I will argue in the rest of this chapter, the increasing construction of proficiency in English as an essential requirement for academic and professional advancement around the world and the emergence of alternative media of acquiring foreign language skills outside of home and school premises, brought a new dimension to the notion of linguistic capital and arguably more flexibility and inclusiveness to the terms by which it is acquired and converted. The following section overviews the debates on the global spread of English to provide a conceptual and theoretical background to my argument,

² Some commentators have recently suggested, however, that Bourdieu's work dating back to the 1970s are "frequently misinterpreted as arguing (at least implicitly) that social reproduction works in the form of a closed loop, with objectively unequal social structural positions generating more or less 'legitimate' cultural skills and dispositions that, in turn, regenerate the same basic socioeconomic inequalities. The label was reproduction theorist. Truth to be told, Bourdieu was a sociologist of shifting configurations of power. Bourdieuian fields are 'spaces' of ongoing historical contestation temporarily objectified in the form of hierarchical positions (occupied, for example, by agents or institutions)" (Pauille, Heerikhuizen & Emirbayer, forthcoming 2010).

which I will continue to develop empirically in the next few chapters. Before concluding this section, however, I will briefly highlight how social capital, another form of capital to which Bourdieu drew our attention, is becoming increasingly implicated not only in the global spread of English but also in the promotion of alternative media of learning EFL, especially those involving transnational experiences and exposures to and interactions with source culture(s) of that language.

Developing social capital has become an increasingly important rationale underlying the transnational mobility of students in contemporary era. After examining a number of research projects on students' gains after participating in semester abroad programs, Guruz (2008) concludes: "The quest for a better education, for a better life has always been the major rationale on the part of the students for seeking education abroad: this is still the case. However, networking has recently emerged as an almost equally powerful rationale" (Guruz 2008:238)³. Similarly, in her examination of the perceived efficacy of the semester abroad experience Armstrong and Harbon (2009) concludes that "students pursue education abroad because it provides a sense of adventure but also because it provides them with an opportunity to network while preparing them for life and work in a globalized world. Students are realizing that semesters abroad give them an added advantage because their professional profiles become more attractive for employers worldwide. They are in fact building their social and cultural capital" (Armstrong and Harbon 2009:13-4).

³ Recent research on voluntary tourism provides interesting insights about the role of different motivations in engaging the western youth in different transnational experiences blurring the borders between tourism, education, and care. For an interesting sample of such research see Vrasti (2007, 2009).

1.4 The Global Spread of English

The literature on the global spread of English is generally divided between two approaches. The position of mainstream linguists has been to consider their discipline as apolitical with some of them studying language as a freestanding system and others associating the study of language with the individual and the psychology rather than the group and the sociology. Accordingly, their evaluation of the global spread of English has often been of a technical nature that carefully avoids any direct political discussion. Critical linguists, however, argue that English language is imposed through a complex ideological process of dominant discourses linked to the pursuit of Anglo-Saxon self-interest. They draw upon Critical Theory, especially Habermas' theory of communicative action, which presents contemporary capitalism as a set of economic and political systems that colonize people's lives, through the mediation of money and language respectively. The work of Foucault, who sought to uncover the historical construction of certain discourses as linguistic tools of persuasion ensuring modern forms of power and that of Bourdieu, who examined how elites protect the cultural capital that accrues to them through knowledge and use of the standard language, have also been influential in the arguments of critical linguists (Wright 2004).

Gramsci's notion of hegemony, which refers to a process in which a ruling class succeed in persuading other classes of society to accept its own moral, political and cultural values as good for all without exercising coercion and might, constitutes another theme frequently encountered in the arguments of critical linguists. The notion of hegemony is

said to explain the global spread of English because it is apparently taking place through consensus among a broad range of actors including non-native English speaking groups and countries.

Based on these premises, some critical linguists, like Phillipson (1992), describe the global spread of English as a form of imperialism in which those dominated are manipulated to see it as a win-win situation that should, therefore, not be resisted. Another critical linguist, Pennycook (1994) opposes the optimistic view that the global spread of English is a natural, neutral and beneficial process for all. Drawing attention to the significance of discursive practices, he argues that EFL learning helps to legitimate the contemporary world order by positively changing the learners' otherwise or hitherto antagonistic relations with and perceptions of various processes, such as capitalism.

Mainstream linguists like Canagarajah (1999) and Brutt-Griffler (2002), however, object to the presentation of those who choose to use English in the processes of globalization as eternally manipulated victims. According to Canagarajah (1999) there is still hope for democratizing globalization and the appropriation of English by those with such aspirations may well contribute to the realization of this ideal. Similarly, Holborow (1999) argues that some non-native English speaking countries consciously choose to use English to realize their own projects that may sometimes contradict and undermine hegemonic interests of English speaking centers. He also criticizes Pennycook (1994) for overestimating the role of discursive practices and not paying enough attention to socio-politico-economic dynamics that constitute equally and sometimes even more important

dimensions of power formation. In a position consistent with that of Holborow, Wright (2004) argues that force, money and discourse all play important roles in the constitution of power relations. She suggests that postmodern discursive model often neglects the agency of those who choose to enter and be part of the processes underlying the global spread of English:

To see those who want to be part of global networks, structures and flows as completely hoodwinked by hegemonic manipulation from the heartland of capitalism denies agency to the vast majority. It is difficult to accept that the individual subject is never competent and that their motivations and rationales do not sometimes develop from a dispassionate assessment of the opportunities open to them and the constraints operating on them (Wright, 2004: 170-1).

Wright (2004) suggests that we cannot read the global spread of English in contemporary era as a coincidental simultaneity of top-down and bottom-up movements acting with mere ideological rationalities. She acknowledges that such a reading is possible for understanding the spread and acquisition of national languages in the context of the nation building projects of the 19th and 20th centuries. Referring to the contemporary European context where authorities introduce national and regional legislations to promote linguistic diversity but still fail to counter the increasing prominence of English, Wright suggests that the success of that lingua franca relies on factors largely outside the control of governments and language industries. “Whether or not the desire to learn English is the product of hegemonic processes or the outcome of rational choice it will be impossible to deflect people’s determination by legislation and policy. The Europeans have already demonstrated that” (Wright 2004: 169-70).

Wright (2004) also addresses the challenging question of why non-native English speaking people are so motivated to learn English. She suggests that English is perceived as the medium that allows individuals to transcend their group membership in an increasingly post-national system. Although she does not go as far as to explore the actual or potential role of foreign language acquisition in the processes of imagining identities and political communities, her remarks suggest that she is aware of the analytical benefits of revisiting the notion of imagination in understanding the global spread of English. Her nuanced analysis also seeks to understand the implications of the global spread of English for the status of that language as a source of cultural capital. She notes that Fishman's (1996) description of the current process as the democratization of a formerly elitist resource seems to be optimistic given that the speakers and learners of English are not yet the masses of the non-English speaking world but its elites and would be elites. However, drawing on Grin's arguments (1999), she acknowledges that English is no longer the exclusive cultural capital of the few but is rather becoming a banal and unremarkable skill like literacy, especially in the European context where English language competence has began to be considered as only one of the numerous requirements for access and success in the new global world order.

As I will argue in the rest of this thesis, the emergence of alternative media that made the processes of acquiring foreign language skills in general and of EFL in particular flexible and arguably more inclusive played an important role in this process. Cultural exchange schemes such as au pair and work & travel programs not only rendered the learning of EFL more affordable, but also promised to equip their participants with additional skills

deemed essential to become ideal and successful neoliberal subjects. The connections between the global spread of English and the neoliberalism will be discussed in the last section of this chapter. The next section, however, will examine how changes in our understanding and practices of literacy and cultural capital in contemporary era possibly impact the processes of imagination which help to define our identities, connections and memberships within and beyond national borders.

1.5 Imagined communities

In his analysis of the origin and spread of nationalism, Benedict Anderson (1983) defines the nation as an “imagined political community”, which is imagined as “both inherently limited and sovereign”. He explores the way the invention of printing technology in the capitalist world paved the ground for the standardization of particular vernacular languages around which nation-states, in turn, were conceived as imagined communities (Anderson 1983:6). According to Anderson, the discovery of other great civilizations in the course of the sixteenth century forced Europeans to acknowledge the human pluralism surrounding them and to change their ideas about language. The status of old sacred languages such as Latin, Greek, and Hebrew became increasingly challenged in the face of rivalry from vernaculars that finally began to be considered “equally worthy of study and admiration” and thus managed to reach wider audiences of reading classes through the products of print capitalism such as monolingual and bilingual dictionaries. The expansion of state bureaucracy, along with the rise of commercial and industrial sectors in the mid-nineteenth century, expanded European reading classes to include

other individuals and groups such as officials, professionals, and commercial and industrial bourgeoisies. Anderson argues that the rise of this latter group in Europe has to be understood in its relationship to vernacular print-capitalism. “The bourgeoisie did come visualize in a general way the existence of thousands and thousands like themselves through print-language. Thus, in world-historical terms, bourgeoisies were the first classes to achieve solidarities on an essentially imagined basis” (Anderson 1983: 74).

As I will discuss in the subsequent chapter, the non-Muslim communities of the Ottoman society constitute the Ottoman equivalent of European commercial and industrialist bourgeoisies. Their knowledge of Western languages and their both earlier and easier access to printing technologies and books of European origin not only brought them wealth, status and power but also helped them develop loyalties to, and solidarities with, communities other than those of the Ottoman Empire. Prompted by increasingly evident and potentially disintegrative educational inequalities among its ethnically and religiously diverse subjects, Ottoman rulers began undertaking reforms including the introduction of compulsory Turkish courses into the curriculum of schools attended by non-Turkish and non-Muslim subjects of the Ottoman Empire.

Although Anderson (1983) draws parallels between Ottomans and Habsburgs, which switched the language of Austria-Hungary from Latin to German in the early 1780s to connect all parts of the empire, I suggest that the Ottoman rulers were driven by a more complex set of internal and external imperatives and political rationalities. Moreover, Ottoman Turkish, which was eventually introduced into the curriculum of non-

Turkish/non-Muslim subjects as a compulsory subject, was a multilingual construct that was less intelligible to Turkish people due to its heavy borrowings from other languages. As such, Ottoman Turkish was not the equivalent of the German language that replaced Latin in the Austrian-Hungarian context. It is also important to note that although late Ottoman reformers were the first to see the role Turkish language could potentially play in creating an imagined community for all subjects, the construction of a Turkish nation around linguistic Turkishness was significantly accomplished much later and only by their Republican successors. What makes the case of Turkey even more specific is that, even during and after the constitution of the Turkish nation state as a community imagined around linguistic Turkishness and despite the absence of a colonial past, prestigious western languages continued to play an important role in the imaginary processes whereby identities, connections and memberships are defined in the Turkish society.

Anderson notes that the replacement of Latin by any vernacular in the mid-nineteenth century, promised enormous advantages to those who already used that print-language, and appeared correspondingly menacing to those who did not (1983:76). As I will try to demonstrate throughout this thesis, similar processes of exclusion or inclusion, which brought disadvantages or advantages and provoked various responses such as resistance, alliance and appropriation, are also manifest today in the context of the global spread of English. Moreover, the notion of imagination, which was central to Anderson's analysis of nations as imagined political communities, is still relevant with its potential to offer a nuanced understanding of the transformations and challenges these communities are

currently going through. As Appadurai (2008) claims, the world we live in today is characterized by a new role for imagination in social life.

The image, the imagined, and the imaginary- these are all terms that direct us to something critical and new in global cultural processes; *the imagination as a social practice*. No longer mere fantasy (opium for the masses whose real work is elsewhere), no longer elite pastime (thus not relevant to the lives of the ordinary people), and no longer mere contemplation (irrelevant for new forms of desire and subjectivity), the imagination has become an organized field of social practices, a form of work (in the sense of both labor and culturally organized practice), and a form of negotiation between sites of agency (individuals) and globally defined fields of possibility. The imagination is now central to all forms of agency, is itself a social fact, and is the key component of the new global order (Appadurai, 2008:50).

Although they generally acknowledge the importance and centrality of imagination in today's world, political scientists do not seem to be interested in exploring the potential benefits of the notion of imagined communities to analyze the global spread of English in contemporary era. I turn therefore to Pavlenko and Norton (2007), applied linguists, who reintroduced the concept as an analytical tool to better understand the relationship between second language learning and identity, drawing on postmodernist focus on language as the locus of social organization, power, and individual consciousness, and as a form of symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1991).

Pavlenko and Norton's discussion of the role of imagination in second language learning draws on three complementary sources: Anderson's (1991) view of nation-states as imagined communities, Wenger's (1998) view of imagination as a form of engagement with communities of practice, and Markus and Nurius's (1986) view of possible selves as the link between motivation and behavior. According to Pavlenko and Norton, Anderson's analysis presents imagination as a social process, emphasizing the fact that

those in power often do the imagining for the rest of their fellow citizens, offering them certain identity options and leaving other options “unimaginable”. She notes that Wenger’s situated learning theory provides a complementary perspective to that of Anderson, presenting imagination as both an individual and social process. In Wenger’s view, she stresses, imagination is a distinct form of belonging to a particular community of practice and a way in which “we can locate ourselves in the world and history, and include in our identities other meanings, other possibilities, other perspectives” (Wenger, 1998:178 cited in Pavlenko and Norton 2007). Markus and Nurius’ psychological theory of possible selves, Pavlenko and Norton note, represents “individuals’ ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become, and what they are afraid of becoming” (Pavlenko and Norton, 2007, p.670).

Pavlenko and Norton (2007) point out how languages and identities linked to them lose and acquire value in the linguistic marketplace through the work of imagination. They seek to demonstrate how nation-states may shape the imagination of their citizens and how language learners’ actual and desired memberships in various imagined communities affect their learning trajectories, influencing their agency, motivation, investment, and resistance in the learning of English. Her analysis exemplifies these influences with regard to five identity clusters: postcolonial, global, ethnic, multilingual, and gendered identities.

As I suggested earlier, the role of standardized vernaculars in the construction of nations as imagined communities is widely discussed in political science literature. The role of colonial languages in constructing new imagined communities in postcolonial contexts is another subject that has drawn significant scholarly attention. Given the historical and geographical pervasiveness of British imperialism and the growing discourse of globalization in contemporary era, the English language stands out as the most prominent of all colonial languages now implicated in the process of reimagining national identities in postcolonial contexts. As Pavlenko and Norton point out, however, the position taken by postcolonial nations and subjects vis-à-vis the language of their former colonizers varies from one context to another. “While some countries may renounce English as a language of colonialism, others may take a neutral stance, neither privileging nor discouraging English, and yet others may choose to appropriate and indigenize English, constructing national identities simultaneously through and in opposition to English (Pavlenko and Norton 2007, p.672).

Those countries for which English is not a native or postcolonial language, but that still heavily promote its learning among their people, offer even more interesting vantage points for exploring the links binding language with many important contemporary political processes. Yet, political scientists remain highly indifferent to the political rationalities and implications of the promotion of the learning of English as a foreign language (EFL) in these countries that constitute a highly heterogeneous sample to study. Most of the time, their political rationality is summarized in terms of their desire to “align themselves with the Western powers and gain an entry into the global market” (Pavlenko

and Norton 2007: pp.672-3). Yet the internal diversity of this category requires taking a contextual analysis of individual cases for a more nuanced understanding of how and why EFL is being promoted and welcomed. As I will argue in the following chapters, the popularity of EFL in Turkey despite the absence of a colonial past and the prominence of nationalist discourses, constitutes a paradoxical and therefore interesting example in this context. In this section, however, I will briefly discuss the similarly interesting case of East European and Central Asian countries, where English has become the most prominent second or foreign language since the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

The demotion of the former Big Brother as a source of inspiration had far reaching implications in the economic, cultural and social dynamics of these former Soviet Republics. They aimed “to refashion themselves as democratic and capitalist [and this involved] language education reform, which has eliminated or severely limited Russian as a primary foreign or second language and established English as key to national prosperity and global cooperation. While Russian, the language of the Big Brother, was often ridiculed and resisted, English is now receiving a warm welcome, and former teachers of Russian are being retrained as teachers of English” (Pavlenko and Norton 2007: p.673). As I will discuss later, however, English is not the only language through which people of this region construct their new imagined communities. In line with Turkey’s vested interest in promoting itself as a new brother caring for ethnically and linguistically Turkish people of Central Asia, Turkish entrepreneurs undertake massive educational investments in the former Soviet Union republics. The schools and universities they establish teach both Turkish and English to the youth of the region,

helping them to construct multiple imagined identities which involve a sense of belonging not only to a global world order but also to a wider Turkish community.

It is interesting that the Turkish entrepreneurs undertaking these educational investments are often associated with an Islamic brotherhood which was banned, like many others, during the early Republican era, in the context of the reforms seeking to replace the religious community system of the Ottoman Empire with a secular nation-state. Their subsequent emergence as educational entrepreneurs involved in the promotion of the Turkish and English languages in a neighboring region of strategic significance to Turkey and the world at large is a very interesting case offering insights into the mutually constitutive and negotiated nature of power relations in contemporary era. Their case shows us that the global spread of English is a process that is too complex to be qualified as being imposed by an Anglophone hegemonic power. Rather it is made possible through the network of alliances among a very broad range of actors acting with very diverse motivations and rationales. This example also helps us to see that even those who were once considered unacceptable, dangerous, or inferior due to the kind of imagined communities they were initially associated with, may end up getting actively involved in the promotion of alternative imagined communities in an attempt to correct their images and create new ones. The transmission of Turkish culture and language to the youth of Central Asia through such newly established Turkish schools and universities help their hitherto demonized founders to construct themselves as patriotic citizens of Turkey in the eyes of Turkish secular forces who are inclined to perceive them as a threat to the survival of the secular Republic. With the same token, their involvement in the promotion

of English among the nationals of former Soviet Union help them to refashion their international image as modern and global civil society actors and thus eligible for accommodation and cooperation in the eyes of Westerners and more particularly of Americans.

As Pavlenko and Norton note (2007), the ethnicity and multilingualism of EFL learners are among the major identity clusters influencing their learning process, as well as their perception in English speaking countries. Drawing on a number of studies focusing on the experience of EFL learners in various English-speaking countries, Pavlenko and Norton make the following remarks:

English language learners ... are often positioned within a deficit framework that limits the kinds of identities and communities that can be imagined by and for these learners. In English-speaking countries, in particular, those who have learned English as a second, third, or fourth language are often seen as non-native speakers, limited English proficiency students, inter-language speakers, or language learners. It is noted that a powerful – and ever-present- discourse in North America equates bilingualism and non-native speaker status with disability and cognitive impairment (Pavlenko and Norton 2007: p.676)

The studies concerned with the influence of gendered identities in the learning of EFL often focus on the experiences of women seeking liberation from the confines of their patriarchal societies. For instance, it is noted that in Japan English teaching and translation are the kinds of jobs that are sanctioned for “ladies” and that despite low wages, most young Japanese women still remain motivated to learn English and work in these sectors because they perceive it as a venue for self-empowerment (Kobayashi, 2002; McMahill, 1997, 2001). As I will discuss in the fourth and fifth chapters of this thesis, the expansion of the media to learn EFL to include cultural exchange schemes

such as work and travel programs and care markets such as au pairing, provides additional vantage points for observing the gender dimension of imagining identities and communities through the teaching/learning of foreign languages. At first sight, the construction of au pairing as an option for young women and of work and travel scheme for young men by agents recruiting from Turkey as a strategy to speak to the cultural norms of a still largely patriarchal society reminds us the sanction of English teaching and translation as a ladylike profession in Japan. Yet, what motivates Turkish youth to choose and their families to approve such alternative media for learning English is a more complex question that I will try to discuss in subsequent chapters of this thesis.

1.6 Neoliberal Governmentality and English

The construction of fluency in English as a kind of literacy or linguistic capital essential for economic and social advancement and the introduction of various new media for learning English beyond the time-space compression of formal schooling offers an interesting vantage point for analyzing the neoliberal discourses underlying the power relations of our time. In this section, I will first review a number of studies that examined the neoliberal discourses underlying the global spread of English in contemporary era. I will then suggest that a governmentality perspective is a particularly useful analytical approach to explore the political rationalities and technologies with which states promoted and people learned various languages in different historical and spatial contexts.

Chun (2008) explores how an Intensive English Program (IEP) featuring English for Academic Purposes (EAP) at a US university functions as a discursive space of neoliberalism. He finds that the EAP content of the program offered to prospective international students involves the teaching of a particular form of communication skill known as emotional intelligence, which is deemed essential for success in workplace. For Chun this corresponds to the promotion of the neoliberal idea that success is a function of a number of organically conceived skills and that people should not blame historical, social, economic and cultural constraints for their own failure in life. Accordingly, individuals have to be their own entrepreneurs and actively seek to acquire the kind of skills that would make them more marketable.

Chun (2008) presents interesting examples confirming how such neoliberal ideas are promoted through subtle yet powerful discursive practices. One of the exercises retrieved from the IEP textbooks he examined, for instance, asks students to measure their emotional intelligence by responding to hypothetical scenarios that involve evaluating (future) parenting skills, and several work situations in which students are given roles as manager and team leader. He stresses that “the adjacent ideologies of family and corporate values in the same exercise does not seem to be coincidental in that from the viewpoint of ‘emotional intelligence’ communicative skills, managing wayward children is no different than managing wayward workers. In the neoliberal world, in becoming an entrepreneur of oneself, one can become an entrepreneur over others” (Chun 2008:7). This point is particularly relevant for the discussion of this thesis because, as I will elaborate in subsequent chapters, au pair programs involving babysitting the children of

Western families are now constructed as alternative media to acquire not only prestigious foreign language skills but also a number of other communication skills deemed essential for success in labor markets.

The neoliberal idea that the individual is an unfinished product in need of continuous improvement legitimizes the involvement of experts such as mentors or personal advisors in the realization of the individual's full potential. Therefore it is no surprise that the brochures used in the marketing of IEPs among prospective international students also promote the idea of individual coaching as an essential requirement for success during and even after academic life (Chun 2008). As I will discuss later in this thesis, this resonates with Turkey's experience of cram schooling and international educational counseling, where people are provided individual coaching services for realizing their potential in their pursuit of academic success and / or finding the best way to improve their English skills.

In another equally interesting analysis, Park (2010) examines how the success stories of Korean English language learners are covered in the Korean conservative press. He finds out that successful learners' competence in English is not presented as rooted in their social provenance or institutional privileges, but imagined as deeply grounded in their subjective human qualities. For Park this corresponds to the 'naturalization of competence' that serves as a key link between the figure of the successful learner and the image of the neoliberal self.

Language is increasingly seen as detachable from its speakers' socially grounded identities such as gender, ethnicity or social class, instead being treated as a commodifiable resource (Cameron 200, 2002; Heller 2003) or acquirable skill (Urciuoli 2008), and various structuralist relations or class-based systems of exclusion that may work to restrict access of certain groups to valued linguistic capital tend to be downplayed. Under the changing conditions of the neoliberal labor market, naturalization of competence is not simply a way in which people conceptualize the relationship between language and identity, but a mode of rationalizing the structure of neoliberal competition. This suggests that in the struggle over linguistic resources, naturalization of competence functions as an important element in the justification and reproduction of the neoliberal subject (Park, 2010:24-5).

As suggested by these case studies, the analytical tools of governmentality perspective are increasingly used to decipher the workings of various contemporary transformations, such as the global spread of EFL, by drawing attention to the increasingly innovative intersection of technologies of domination and technologies of the self. In order to grasp a better understanding of the actual and potential benefits of this approach, I will now focus on discussing the ideas and arguments developed by Michel Foucault in this respect.

Foucault (1991) noted that we live in an era of governmentality, a notion first discovered in the eighteenth century, when 'population' emerged as a problem, and 'statistics' was developed as a technology enabling the state to identify, quantify and address this problem. This era, according to Foucault, was not one where the old notions of sovereignty, discipline and government were no longer relevant or significant, but a rather new phase where these notions were reconciled in such a way that the well being and happiness of the population have become the main target and concern of the state. He

claimed that it was its governmentalization process that enabled the modern state to survive and constantly set and reset its limits since the eighteenth century.

Foucault examined the genesis of governmentality by taking the notion of ‘government’ as his guideline and by analyzing the emergence of different ‘arts of government’ in Western societies over the last four centuries. He identified the disappearance of Roman Empire and the signing of Westphalia Treaty as significant historical realities that triggered the development of a new *raison d’État* and therefore a shift “from an art of governing, whose principles were derived from the traditional virtues or common skills, to an art of governing that finds the principles of its rationality and the specific domain of its application in the state” (Foucault, 2007: 364-5). He argued that this shift also corresponded to a forced change in the long-held assumptions about where and how long a sovereignty was to exist and to the development of “a new historical perception … that is no longer focused on the end of time and the unification of all particular sovereignties in the empire of the last days. It opens onto an indefinite time in which states have to struggle against each other to ensure their own survival” (Foucault, 2007:365).

Foucault acknowledged that rivalry has always existed among European dynasties and sovereignties. He suggested, however, that relations between European states after the end of the sixteenth century were perceived in the form of competition rather than rivalry. It was this new competitive dynamic in their relations that ultimately urged them to seek ways of ensuring not only their indefinite survival, but also competitiveness in the new equilibrium of European space. As I will discuss later in this thesis, the introduction of a

public Ottoman education system and the establishment of prestigious interdenominational public schools offering foreign language courses from the eighteenth century onwards corresponds to a change in Ottoman rulers' art of government in the face of an encroaching Western competition. The shift from lack of interest to extensive involvement in education suggests the beginning of a new kind of concern over population and thus the governmentalization of the Ottoman state.

Referring to the implications of the emergence of a new competitive dynamic in the relations among European states, Foucault identifies a change in the conception of *raison d'État* that initially required the state to be organized only by reference to itself.

Thus, *raison d'État* ... takes shape in two great assemblages of political knowledge and technology: a military-diplomatic technology that consists in securing and developing the state's forces through a system of alliances and the organization of an armed apparatus. The other assemblage is that of a "police" ... that is to say, the set of means for bringing about the internal growth of the state's forces. At this time, 'police' was conceived as a sort of 'technology of state forces'" (Foucault, 2007: 365-7)

Gordon (1991: 10) notes that the notion of police, as understood in the historical context examined by Foucault, can arguably be best translated into English as "policy". However, Foucault provides a fairly articulated account of what police meant in different historical periods. He notes that the notion evolved over time to refer to a set of means for bringing more than the internal growth of the state forces. According to Foucault, this conceptual expansion is best reflected in by Justi (1756) who defined the police as a "set of laws and regulations that concern the interior of a state, which endeavor to strengthen and increase its power, to make a good use of its forces and to procure the happiness of its subjects" by administering various economic sources and sectors such as "commerce, finances,

agriculture, mining, woods, forests etc in view of the fact that the happiness of the state depends on the wisdom with which all these things are administered”. Accordingly, it was the population-wealth couple that constituted the privileged object of the new governmental reason in the period of mercantilism and cameralism making commerce, town, regulation and discipline the most characteristic elements of police practice (Foucault, 2007)

Economic problems, however, especially those related to the circulation of grain, led to the realization that the relationship between populations and resources can no longer be managed through the principles of mercantilism. Therefore governmental reason underwent another transformation in the eighteenth century, but this time in response to “economy” that emerged as a new domain and that, according to physiocrats, had its own scientific laws requiring the state to devise novel ways of handling things and people. Foucault argued that this new generation of economists introduced us to some of the fundamental lines of modern and contemporary governmentality (Foucault, 2007).

What made the governmentalization of the state possible was the modern state’s ability to combine its totalizing power with the Christian pastoral power, which was salvation-oriented, oblative, individualizing, coextensive and continuous with life, and linked with a production of truth of the individual himself. The confessional practices, which have been central to the production of such truth throughout Christianity, have also changed in this context. Foucault (1981) notes that “confession now plays a part in justice, medicine, education, family, relationships, and love relations, in the most ordinary affairs of

everyday life, and in the most solemn rites... One confesses in public and in private, to one's parents, one's educators, one's doctors, to those one loves" (p.59). What is presumably even more significant, however, is that confessional practices do no longer require or involve renunciation of self:

Throughout Christianity there is a correlation between disclosure of the self, dramatic or verbalized, and the renunciation of self. My hypothesis from looking at these two techniques is that it is the second one, verbalization, which becomes the more important. From the eighteenth century to the present, the techniques of verbalization have been reinserted in a different context by the so-called human sciences in order to use them without renunciation of the self but to constitute, positively, a new self. To use these techniques without renouncing oneself constitutes a decisive break (Foucault, 1988: 48-9)

Therefore, Foucault's notion of modern power is not necessarily repressive, dominating and negating the capacities of individuals, but rather a specific and innovative mode of action upon the action of others seeking the creation, shaping and utilization of human beings as subjects. It was a question of the government of men by other men, where the former have to be free for the exercise of power to be possible in the first place. The object of his analysis was, therefore, not 'power' itself, but 'power relations' seeking the 'conduct of the conduct' of free subjects.

Foucault notes that the focus of modern pastoral power was on the development of knowledge of man on two roles: one, globalizing and quantitative, concerning the population; the other, analytical, concerning the individual. His research "attempted a history of the organization of that knowledge with respect to both domination and the self". In this context he first examined "the technologies of power, which determine the conduct of individuals and submit them to certain ends or domination". His later research

focused on “the technologies of the self, which permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality”. Foucault suggested that governmentality was the “contact between the technologies of domination of others and those of the self” (Foucault, 1988). This attention to the contact between these two different types of technologies makes governmentality perspective particularly useful for analyzing the increasing commodification, diversification and arguably democratization of the processes whereby EFL skills are acquired in contemporary era. As I will explore in subsequent chapters, the alternative media to acquire EFL skills could presumably not have become so popular if those who failed to develop English proficiency through formal schooling had not confessed and disclosed their desire to fix their failures to themselves, to their families, to their friends and to strangers including educational counselors who are implicated in various technologies of power.

The role of confession as a ‘technology of the self’ fostering and governing specific subjectivities through educational guidance is not widely studied in political science. One of the few exceptions is Fejes’(2008) governmentality analysis of Swedish policies on lifelong learning. Fejes notes that Swedish practices of educational guidance which were previously motivated by liberal mentalities are now implicated in a neoliberal governmentality. He elaborates his argument by drawing attention to what he considers to be an essential difference between liberalism and neoliberalism:

Usually we reason about liberalism and neo-liberalism in terms of political ideologies, political parties, or as economic theories. However, (they) can also refer to as a mode of governing at a particular time. Today, in a time of neoliberal governmentality, we can see how governing is practiced through alliances between different authorities, which seek to regulate the economy, social life, and the life of the individual (Hultqvist and Petersson, 1995) as a contrast to the natural and spontaneous order of Hayekian liberalism (Peters, 2001). Thus freedom has been re-conceptualized. One could say that neo-liberalism promotes a specific form of freedom as a way of integrating the self-conduct of the governed into the practices of government. (Fejes 2008; 654)

Most accounts of the governmentality perspective compare and contrast liberalism and neoliberalism with respect to their conceptualization of the domain of government and the notion of freedom. It is noted that liberal forms of government see the society, in other words the social domain to be governed, as “a natural one that is sensitive to excessive intervention” (Barry et. al, 1996: 9-10) and one that consists of “free and market exchanging individuals of natural and private-interest-motivated conduct”(Burchell, 1996: 23). Neoliberalism, however, sees society as an artificial, invented government apparatus which “has become an economically and socially costly obstacle to the economic performance upon which it depends and leads inexorably to an uncontrollable growth of the State. (Therefore) one could describe neoliberalism as promoting what might be called an autonomization of society through the invention and proliferation of new quasi-economic models of action for the independent conduct of its activities.” (Burchell, 1996:27). It is even suggested that “neoliberalism does not seek to govern through ‘society’, but through the regulated choices of individual citizens, now construed as subjects of choices and aspirations to self-actualization and self-fulfillment” (Rose, 1996:41).

Another set of tools which makes a governmentality perspective particularly useful for this thesis is related to its programmatic and discursive characters. Miller and Rose (1990s) note that the imperative of evaluation to uncover the factors leading to success or failure is integral to the programmatic character of governmentality and that it is this character that gives governmentality an internal optimism that reality can be reformed. Accordingly, what matters is not the failure per se, but the impetus it gives for the propagation of new programs to improve the performance.

Miller and Rose (1990) also suggest that discursive character of governmentality is not simply about a field in which political rationalities are articulated, but also a technology of thought, requiring attention to the particular technical devices of writing, listing, numbering and computing that render a realm into discourse as a knowable, calculable and administrable object.

To understand modern forms of rule, we suggest, requires an investigation not merely of grand political schema, or economic ambitions, nor even of general slogans such as ‘state control’, nationalization, the free market and the like, but of apparently humble and mundane mechanisms which appear to make it possible to govern: techniques of notation, computation and calculation; procedures of examination and assessment; the invention of devices such as surveys and presentational forms such as tables; the standardization of systems for training and the inculcation of habits; the inauguration of professional specialisms and vocabularies; building design and architectural forms- the list is heterogeneous and is, in principle, unlimited” (Miller and Rose, 1990, 8)

According to Miller and Rose (1990) these indirect mechanisms of rule correspond to what they call ‘government at a distance’. This latter, they note, is about acting upon events, places and people that are unfamiliar and a long way away. In other words, it is about dominating through the exercise of a form of intellectual mastery, which is made

possible by those at a centre having information about populations and events distant from them. Nevertheless, ‘government at a distance’ is achieved not through the direct imposition of a form of conduct by force but through a delicate affiliation of a loose assemblage of agents and agencies into a functioning network. This network is established, not because those who are involved are bound with institutional ties and dependencies, but because they are made, through truth discourses, into aligning subjects. In this context, Miller and Rose note that modern governmentality’s action at a distance mechanisms have come to rely in crucial respects upon ‘expertise’: the social authority ascribed to particular agents and forms of judgment on the basis of their claims to possess specialized truths and rare powers. As I will discuss in the fifth chapter, language proficiency tests which play a crucial role in the admission of international students to English medium universities constitute an interesting case of governing at a distance mechanisms implicated in neoliberal governmentality of contemporary era.

Dean (1999) uses the governmentality perspective to explore different variants of neoliberalism and to claim that some variants, such as the ones pursued in English speaking world at the end of the twentieth century, have a reflexive character which folds the objectives of neoliberalism upon liberal rule itself. His discussion of how the reflexive governments seek to ensure the operation of the market and the realization of its essence by constructing the market as educator in the sound rules of conduct is particularly worth noting. Dean (1999) examines how the form of support for the unemployed in Australia changed when the Conservative Government took power in 1996 from the Labor Government. He notes that Labor Government’s support was in the

form of promised access to benefits and services in return for compliance with the demand that the unemployed practiced their ‘freedom’ as active job seekers. In Dean’s words, the state was then constituted by a promise: “we will assist you to practice your freedom as long as you practice it our way” (Dean, 1999, 160). When the Conservative Government came into power, however, the national state shifted from organizing and facilitating access to services and expertise to establishing and coordinating markets in such services and expertise. The new ethos was characterized as “if you require guidance and training in the practice of your freedom you must first exercise your freedom as a consumer of employment services to gain access to such guidance and training” (p.161). According to Dean, this corresponds to a kind of circular paradox in which it is necessary to exercise freedom- as a consumer- in order to gain the support and guidance that will allow you to exercise freedom- as a worker. Although manifested in more subtle ways, a similar paradox is also a characteristic of the reflexive and market-oriented global neo-liberal governmentality underlying the regulation of potential EFL learners’ transnational mobility. As I will discuss in the fifth chapter, the UK Home Office’s recent decision to require proficiency test results from visa applicants, including those who are willing to come to the UK to learn English, and the implicit channeling of these groups to the consumption/use of market solutions that would make them fit for the challenge is indicative of the reflexive nature of neoliberal governmentality.

The governmentality perspective enables us not only to rigorously understand but also effectively criticize neo-liberalism without necessarily falling into the trap of the oversimplifications characterizing most of other critical frameworks. Lemke (2002), who

offers a neo-Marxist praise of governmentality as a critique of neo-liberalism, points out the ways the governmentality perspective explores how neo-liberal rationality functions as a ‘politics of truth’, producing new forms of knowledge and inventing new notions and concepts that contribute to the government of new domains of regulation and intervention. For Lemke the governmentality perspective makes more visible the depth of processes of domination and exploitation underlying neo-liberalism both at national and global spheres.

The governmentality perspective also allows us to see how crises in Western societies are being handled. In his mapping of the transition from societies of discipline to societies of control, Deleuze (1992) notes that the latter underwent a crisis that paved the ground for the emergence of new forces that were gradually instituted and which accelerated after World War II. The crisis manifested itself in almost all the environments of enclosure and discipline such as prisons, hospitals, factories, schools, and families and urged those in charge to call for reform. The result was a transition to a society of control, which, according to Deleuze (1992), is not necessarily tougher than its predecessor because each was characterized by confrontation between liberating and enslaving forces: “For example, in the crisis of the hospital as environment of enclosure, neighborhood clinics, hospices, and day care could at first express new freedom, but they could participate as well in mechanisms of control that are equal to the harshest of confinements” (Deleuze 1992: 4). As I will demonstrate in the fourth and fifth chapters of this thesis, first local cram schools and then other alternative media, such as cultural exchange schemes, were constructed as responses to the crisis (failure) of the enclosed spaces of public / private

formal schooling model in Turkey in providing good English language skills. By the same token, au pair programs, which were constructed as alternative market solutions for acquiring English proficiency, helped to alleviate the crises of the families and social policies of western societies with regard to the care of young children. However freeing they may appear, they each have their own mechanisms of control and confinement.

Deleuze describes the society of control as one in which the corporation replaced the factory and argues that this had significant implications for our lives: “In the disciplinary societies, one was always starting again (from school to the barracks, from the barracks to the factory) while in the societies of control one is never finished with anything. The family, the school, the army, the factory are no longer the distinct analogical spaces that converge towards an owner- state or private power- but coded figures – deformable and transformable- of a single corporation that now has only stockholders”(Deleuze 1992:4-6). Again, the emergence of alternative media to learn EFL, one after another, is indicative of a society of control characterized by the pervasive involvement of a corporation in all spheres of our lives on the grounds that we are unfinished products in need of continuous intervention and improvement.

Although the governmentality perspective provides an innovative framework for studying complex and multileveled systems of power in diverse global spaces, the research on governmentality often focused on the investigation of social, economic and political spaces within the spatial boundaries of the nation state. The research focus shifted to the governmentalization of extended spaces since Fraser (2003) introduced the term of

globalized governmentality. However novel it was in Foucauldian literature, the concept still had its own limitations because it did not pay much attention to earlier attempts to constitute and govern spaces extending beyond nations states. More recently, Larner and Walters (2004) coined the notion of global governmentality “to push Foucauldian studies of governance ‘outside’ the nation-state and onto new theoretical and political territories and to encompass earlier attempts to govern extended social and economic spaces. What (they) understand by global governmentality includes not just studies of today’s ‘globalism’, but the political rationalities and technologies of imperialism, internationalism, cosmopolitanism and much else besides” (Larner and Walters, 2004:2)

The advantages of using governmentality perspective in explaining political rationalities and practices of earlier periods are presumably best demonstrated by Veyne (1997) who elaborated on how Foucault “revolutionized history” by “substituting a philosophy of relations for a philosophy of objects taken as end or as cause”:

The Foucault-style genealogy-history does not ignore society, the economy, and so on, but it structures the material … by practices, by what people precisely do. Explaining history and making it explicit consists in first perceiving it whole, in relating the so-called natural objects to the specifically dated and exceptional practices that objectivized the objects, and in explaining the practices not on the basis of a unique motive force but on the basis of all the neighboring practices in which they are anchored. These practices come from the countless transformations of historical reality. (Accordingly), there is no such thing as the governed. There are only multiple objectivizations (“population”, “fauna”, “subjects under law”), correlatives of heterogeneous practices”. (Veyne, 1997: 81).

I suggest that such innovative historical methodology is particularly useful for explaining the contemporary global spread of English by focusing on the practices that variably constituted the governed by constructing different languages as prestigious across time

and space. The following chapters will examine the history of foreign language acquisition in Turkey by focusing on the practices of Ottoman and Republican rulers and thereby provide a nuanced understanding of Turkish people's current interest in and active agency for learning EFL.

1.7. Conclusions

This chapter discussed how the notions of language, literacy, linguistic capital and imagined communities are conceptualized in the literature with particular reference to different spatial and historical contexts but more particularly in the West over the last few centuries. As such it sought to provide a background for a more nuanced analysis of contemporary global spread of English, one that is informed of earlier and similar processes where the knowledge of a given prestigious language (native, second or foreign) was constructed as the basis of access to, membership of and success in various imagined communities. I argue that such notions are now being redefined, a process legitimized and practiced through neoliberal rationalities and technologies respectively and that the dynamics underlying such reconceptualization can best be deciphered by using the analytical tools of governmentality perspective, even for non-Western contexts one of which will be widely discussed in subsequent chapters of this thesis.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF OTTOMAN TURKEY

2.1 Introduction

Knowledge of a foreign language, either through folk or elitist bilingualism⁴, has historically been considered as one of the main qualities that bring high status to the individual in Turkish society. The link between language, prestige and power is presumably best illustrated by the famous Turkish proverb “the one who knows one language counts as one, whereas the one who knows two as two”.

This chapter will provide an historical overview designed to put Turkish people’s interest in foreign language skills in context and thus to better understand the national political and cultural logic of the contemporary demand for new EFL learning schemes. It will argue that power in Turkish society has historically been in the hands of those who owned, or claimed ownership of, a linguistically denominated cultural capital. It will suggest that the knowledge of foreign languages had a significant role in defining identities, memberships and connections with various spheres and spaces of communities within and across Ottoman borders and thus constituted a sphere for governmental

⁴ Elitist bilingualism has been described as “the privilege of middle-class, well-educated members of most societies”, whereas folk bilingualism results from the conditions of “ethnic groups within a single state who have to become bilingual involuntarily, in order to survive. The distinction is a crucial one, as it shows that whilst the first group uses the education system which they control to seek bilingualism, the second group has bilingualism foisted upon it by an education system which is controlled by others (Harding and Riley 1986: 24 cited in Karahan, 2005)

practices resulting in / from reconfigurations in territory, population and authority throughout the history. It will seek to demonstrate the evolution of the political rationalities underlying these governmental practices from religious to more secular / material foundations.

The chapter will begin by setting the linguistic background of the political evolution of Turkish nomadic tribes of Asia into a multiethnic Empire where Turkishness (and Turkish language) was submerged under an implicit Muslim Ottoman identity. It will then offer an overview of the Ottoman Empire in the eve of the modernization reforms of the nineteenth century, with particular reference to educational and other structures that not only led to linguistic assimilation but also to elitist bilingualism or multilingualism. This will be followed by a discussion of the reforms of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, focusing on the evolution of the Ottoman educational system and the linguistic, cultural and power logics and implications of this educational change.

2.2 Overview of Ottoman Empire

A quick look at the history of the Turks, the founding ethnicity of the Ottoman Empire, reveals that they were basically nomadic tribes. There was a continuous contact between their language and others throughout their westward expansion from China and Central Asia. Some of the civilizations the Turks encountered during their westward expansion had particularly important and long lasting influences on their language and society. Their encounter with and acceptance of Islam from the eighth century onwards exposed

the Turkish language to the influence of Persian and Arabic. At the time of Seljuks, who, in the eleventh century, established the first Turkish Empire on the mainland known as Anatolia, the official language was Persian, whereas the military and the majority of the public used the Turkish language. The members of the Seljuk dynasty spoke both Turkish and Persian but also used Latin in their political affairs with Europe and neighboring Byzantine Empire. While Arabic, the language of the Koran, was used for religious purposes, scientific and literary production was mostly in Persian. The graduates of Seljuk medreses (institutions of higher education) were usually bilingual or multilingual and thus could speak one or more of the prestigious languages of that era (Karahan, 2005).

One of the most interesting texts dating back to the early post-conversion era is the Cyclopedic Dictionary of Turkish Languages written by Mahmut of Kashgar in 1072-1074 to teach Turkish to Arabic speaking people. It is interesting because it is indicative of the way Seljuk and then Ottoman empires, for many centuries, pragmatically promoted bilingualism among their ethnically and religiously diverse subjects for their cross-cultural assimilation and integration. This is not to say, however, that the state imposed Turkish language on its subjects. Even those conquered peoples who adopted Islam did not forsake their traditional languages (Hanioglu, 2008: 36). Ironically, it was the very ruling ethnic group, the Turks, who ended up by forgetting their own origins and becoming illiterate in their own languages (Karahan, 2005).

The exposure to Islamic culture and languages such as Arabic and Persian reached a peak after the foundation of the Ottoman Empire in 1280. Persian served as the literary language of the cultured upper middle class during the first three centuries. Moreover, even when the state eventually constructed Ottoman Turkish (Osmanlica) as the central language of bureaucracy and ceremony, the latter scarcely sounded like Turkish because of the heavy borrowings from other languages, including mainly Arabic and Persian. Osmanlica was unintelligible to an uneducated native speaker of Turkish. It was often more comprehensible to non-Turkish intellectuals than to Turks (Hanioglu, 2008).⁵

It is suggested that the gradual degradation of the status of Turkish language followed a parallel course with the expansion of the Ottoman Empire. According to Karal (1994), for instance, the influence of Arabic and Persian grew from 1453 until 1517 and the superiority of these languages over Turkish was fully established during 1517-1718 period. Moreover, partly due to the multiethnic nature of an increasingly expanding Empire, but mostly because of the Islamic influence, Turkishness became submerged under a constructed Muslim Ottoman identity to such an extent that “in the Imperial society of the Ottomans the ethnic term Turk was little used, and then chiefly in a rather derogatory sense, to designate the Turcoman nomads or, later, the ignorant and uncouth Turkish speaking peasants of the Anatolian villages. To apply it to an Ottoman gentleman of Constantinople (*Istanbul*) would have been an insult” (Lewis, 2002:1-2) Accordingly,

⁵ Osmanlica borrowed words not only from the subject peoples of the empire, but also from the languages of its neighbors, such as Italian (especially the Venetian dialect). Spanish influence, though never as strong as Italian, also grew, especially after the migration of Iberian Sephardic Jews to the empire in the aftermath of their expulsion from Spain in 1492.(Hanioglu, 2008: 34)

the elites residing in the administrative and religious centres distinguished themselves from the common people mainly by the sophistication of their language. This created a ‘diaglossic situation’ (Konig, 1990) where one could talk about two different sets of languages: Osmanlica as the language of the cosmopolitan ruling elite on the one hand, and the languages of the Turks and other ethnic groups, on the other⁶. This can be interpreted as “as a significant sign of duality between the rulers and ruled, or a sign of social status between the two groups” (Colak, 2004:78).

However, it is important to note that the Ottoman society was not formed of classes in the modern sense of the notion. Bernard Lewis notes that “far more important than the ruling class – if indeed such a thing can be identified- was the ruling elite; the small, associated groups of men who, in conjunction with the sovereign authority itself, effectively controlled the day-to-day working of the apparatus of power. There were several of these administrative, religious, and military elite groups, defined not primarily by economic class, but by training, function, and method of recruitment” (Lewis, 1999: 485). Tekeli (1983) also draws attention to the educational foundations of this divide in Turkish society. He notes that formal education in the Ottoman Empire focused on the training of military and religious elites leaving the education of the rest of the population to their respective families, ethnic groups, professional associations, religious / spiritual / charity organizations etc.

⁶ Ottoman sultans sometimes addressed the minorities in their respective languages and used foreign languages in their diplomatic correspondence with European states through translation services...provided mainly by the members of minority groups (Eraydin Virtanen 2003: 5)

The effects of this educational duality were multiplied by the lack of a common/standard language of instruction. While most of the formal educational institutions designed to train the upper stratum of the society used Arabic or Osmanlica, the language of instruction for the rest of the population ranged from folk Turkish to basic Koranic Arabic and a wide spectrum of ethnic community languages. So like many of its contemporaries, the Ottoman Empire lacked a concern for and involvement in public education for its entire population and did not have a standard language, which could be universally used for instruction.⁷ The imperative to or incentives for getting involved in creating a public education and a standard national language were yet to emerge.

It is however important to note that some Ottoman rulers, such as Sultan Celebi Mehmed and Sultan Murad II, had taken initiatives to create an organized Turkish language as early as fifteenth century. It is said that Sultan Murad II, for instance, issued a decree for all translators and interpreters all over the Empire to use a simple and refined Turkish in their works. Moreover, the introduction of the practice of recording imperial history and genealogy provided the ground for the development of a written Ottoman Turkish. Although the language of these historical texts was initially simple, fluent and Turkish, it has subsequently become more complicated with heavy borrowings from Arabic and Persian.

⁷ For many centuries, Turkish was not taught at any level of general education in the Ottoman Empire, with the exception of Enderun (Palace School), which, as we will discuss in the rest of this chapter, was not initially open to Turkish subjects.

This linguistic and educational panorama of the Ottoman Empire did not constitute a real problem until the early eighteenth century when the Ottoman Empire began to lose its military, economic and political superiority to the European powers. Before we examine how this was problematized and addressed during the reform period of the late Ottoman era, it is instructive to provide a broader picture of the empire for a better understanding of the overall context.

At the end of the eighteenth century, the almost five-century-old Ottoman Empire was still one of the major world powers. It controlled parts of Asia, Africa and Europe, but with increasing difficulty in the face of European imperial competition for geopolitical and economic power on the one hand and the lack of central control over imperial provinces on the other. Despite the lack of reliable demographic data, the population of the Ottoman Empire has been estimated at some 30 million people (Issawi, 1977: 155-6) of various ethnic, religious and linguistic backgrounds, making the empire probably the most cosmopolitan state at that time. Karahan (2005) notes that the Ottoman society consisted of 47 ethnic groups, most of which were either Muslim or belonged to one of the 22 non-Islamic faith groups.

While the westward expansion of the Ottoman Empire is known to have provoked many in Europe to engage in an intellectual offensive against Turks, even those who expressed the harshest criticism praised the harmonious and unified governing system of the Ottomans. Martin Luther, for instance is reported to have spoken “with appreciation of the subtle worldly rule of the Turks” and the Italian satirist and theoretician of raison

d'État Trajano Boccalini for asserting that this sovereign polity, quite aloof from Christian natural life and arranged entirely differently, "brought to light and exemplified what the political thought of the Renaissance had always been striving after: an artificial construction which had been consciously and purposively built up, a state mechanism which was arranged like a clock, and which made use of the various species and strengths and qualities of men as its springs and wheels" (cited in Meinecke and Stark 1997: 86)

The Ottoman Empire had a largely agrarian society with 80 percent of the population estimated to live in rural areas⁸. Moreover, the overwhelming majority was considered illiterate (Hanioglu, 2008). It is important to note, however, that there is little information about the degree of literacy among the Ottoman Turks, especially for the periods when the Ottoman power was at its apex. Referring to the reports of some contemporary foreign and Ottoman travelers of the 16th and 17th centuries respectively, Somel (2001) assumes that at least one fourth of the urban population could read and write in Turkish and knew at least those Arabic verses of the Koran pertaining to prayer. As far as the late Ottoman population is concerned the statistics suggest even higher rates of literacy. Karpat (1984) for instance, claims that only 46 % of the total population was illiterate during the late Ottoman era. He explains why his rates are higher than generally assumed as follows:

The reason for this can be found, at least in part, in the structure of the Ottoman educational system. The system consisted in the second half of the nineteenth century of both government-financed and controlled "modern" schools and traditional classrooms supported by vakifs (pious foundations). The latter were

⁸ The first comprehensive modern Ottoman census did not take place until 1831. Therefore the Ottoman rulers did not have much quantitative and qualitative data about their subjects well until the mid-nineteenth century (Hanioglu, 2008)

essentially religious schools and could be found even in villages; they taught children how to read and write, and a person graduating from one of these schools could be called literate... Thus the question of literacy rate must be explored with due consideration for the specific educational conditions and the prevailing definition of a “literate” person in the Ottoman state at a given time (Karpat 1984: 58).

The Ottoman Empire was highly decentralized with the central government having almost no control over the provinces, where a quasi-autonomous administration by local dynasts and notables reigned. These two groups constantly increased their power and resisted administrative reforms intended to increase the control of central government over the periphery.

The Ottoman society was stratified in various respects. An important stratification was between the ruling class and the taxable subjects (*re’aya*). The former consisted of three subgroups: Islamic scholars (*ulema*), the bureaucracy, and the army which was composed of the infantry (Janissaries) and the cavalry (*Sipahi*).

The most widely acknowledged organizing principle of traditional Ottoman society, however, was religious. Accordingly, the society was basically stratified into religious groups forming the so-called “millet” (communal) system, whereby each recognized faith group was allowed to manage its own affairs autonomously as long as they guaranteed public order and the payment of taxes (Jung and Piccoli, 2001). Each of these millets was represented through the leader of its respective religious hierarchy, which was in turn answerable to the central government.

Muslims were not a monolithic group, yet constituted a clear majority vis-à-vis Christians, Jews and other non-Muslim groups. They were also considered as the dominant millet, by virtue of the ruling dynasty's religious affiliation with Islam and the title of caliph (religious leader of Muslims) the Ottoman Sultans had used since 1517 when they took control of Muslim holy cities. As the following sections of the chapter will explore, however, those classifications suggesting an inherent hierarchy among different groups of the society became obsolete in the late Ottoman era mostly due to the new avenues for upward social mobility offered by the reforms and educational changes of the nineteenth century.

The traditional millet system assigned different economic, social and political roles to Muslim and non-Muslims. In the nineteenth century, the traditional agrarian wing of the millet system consisted mainly of Muslims, whilst the capitalist sector was made up mostly of non-Muslims (Karpat, 1972: 260).

One reason behind this division was the close association of landownership with military service. As the non-Muslim millets were traditionally excluded from the right to carry arms, they were not able to acquire land in exchange for military service. Thus the economic attention of non-Muslims was directed rather to trade and finance. Another reason goes back to the autonomy rights that the millet system provided, which opened early channels of trade and communication between Christian communities and European states. (Jung and Piccoli, 2001: 50)

It is, however, important to note that the educational arrangements of the traditional millet system also contributed to making non-Muslim subjects of the Empire better able to develop such channels of trade and communication with the West. Non-Muslims were both willing and actively engaged in learning European languages in community or foreign schools, whereas Muslim subjects could not even develop adequate mother

tongue literacies in their respective educational settings. Thus, it is important to understand that the traditional millet system did not necessarily benefit those who were deemed religiously and ethnically closer to the ruling dynasty. Such an understanding, however, requires undertaking a more nuanced analysis of Ottoman society, and paying more attention to hitherto underestimated multiplicity of the ways by which upward social mobility can be achieved.

Until the late 18th century, the Ottoman state's involvement in education was extremely limited and did not extend beyond a preoccupation with the training of its own military and administrative cadres. The education of the subjects, Muslim or non-Muslim, was left to their respective religious communities, which offered an instruction about their own religions and usually in their local languages. Luk (2006) notes that, until 1776, there were three categories of schools in the Ottoman Empire. The first category included two groups of schools: the so-called millet / community schools and foreign schools involved in the education of non-Muslim subjects and foreigners. The second category included mektebs and medresses, which provided a predominantly religious education to the Muslim subjects of the Ottoman Empire. The third category was the so-called Palace School (Enderun), which sought to train qualified and loyal military leaders and high level civil administrators needed in the capital and the provinces of the empire. Unlike most of the educational institutions in the first two categories, who survived until well after the establishment of the Republican Turkey, Enderun had a rather limited life time, which we will overview briefly later in this section.

The history of community schools in the Ottoman Empire dates back to the conquest of Istanbul by the Ottomans in 1453 and evolved on the principles of the millet system. Accordingly, Catholic and Orthodox people of Istanbul could continue worshipping in their churches and establish their own schools to give religious and literacy education to their respective communities. These schools typically sought to cultivate their students according to their respective religious and moral values. They also offered instruction in their respective languages and a number of non-religious courses including those on the grammar and syntax of European languages.

The fact that non-Muslim community schools were producing more literate and learned graduates than their Muslim counterparts remained unnoticed until the late eighteenth century when Ottoman administrators found themselves challenged and even threatened in the face of a web of domestic and foreign educational competition. However, as we will discuss in the rest of this chapter, non-Muslim community schools did not create the kind of concern and reaction, which foreign schools caused in the late Ottoman era. As noted by Fortna (2001) state bureaucrats aspired to undertake educational reforms in the late Ottoman era “frequently hold up their (non-Muslim community schools’) example as a source for emulation, if not outright praise”.

The history of foreign (missionary) schools dates back to early 16th century when the Ottoman Empire began having bilateral contracts (Capitulations) with foreign Christian nations and thereby conferring rights and privileges to their subjects residing or trading in Ottoman lands. The centuries old protectorate of Christian missions in Muslim lands was

thereby contractually extended to include the granting of economic privileges as well.

Before I engage in the discussion of the capitulations-driven spread of missionary schools in the Ottoman Empire, I would like to expand on the wide range of rationalities underlying the initial granting and subsequent institutionalization of capitulations.

Kuran (2011) notes that Islamic law allowed Ottoman rulers to extend security guarantees to friendly foreigners and even treat the latter as potential subjects deserving some of the rights already granted to domestic non-Muslim groups living under the Ottoman community system. This conceptual link between capitulations and community system is also suggested by others who extensively researched Ottoman history. Ahmad (1984), for instance, notes that “the capitulations arose out of the same concept as the millets, and the European merchant communities were treated in much the same way as a religious community” (Ahmad, 1984: 21).

According to Kuran (2011), there is no satisfactory explanation for why Ottoman rulers decided to grant such privileges to non-Muslim foreigners in the first place. The existing literature, he points out, “identifies five distinct motives for the capitulations: coalition formation, limiting the political capabilities of potential domestic rivals, revenue generation, protection of trade routes, and securing strategic goods”. (Kuran, 2011: 218). He suggests that Ottoman rulers have indeed achieved most of their objectives including the facilitation of trade relations in the Mediterranean marketplace for many centuries through the reciprocal obligations included in the Capitulations. These concerned matters of interest to both contracting parties, such as state protocol, freedom of mobility,

security, and cooperation against piracy. Also, privileges granted without reciprocity were initially limited to matters which the Ottoman rulers considered as not directly or significantly relevant to their sovereignty. For instance, early capitulations allowed foreign traders to have their estates to be handled according to the inheritance laws of their homelands instead of Islamic law under which estates would have been distributed among inheritors the identities and shares of whom are clearly described in the Koran.⁹ Capitulations also protected foreigners from undocumented claims in local Ottoman courts where commercial cases were decided mostly on the basis of oral testimony, a reflection of the lack of widespread reading and writing skills among Ottoman subjects. Foreigners were thus granted consular representation and trial (Kuran 2011).

When military defeats from the late 17th century onwards began changing the hierarchical world order in favor of Christian Europe, however, the latter acquired an increasing bargaining power vis-à-vis Ottoman Empire and expanded the scope of legal and fiscal privileges without reciprocity. Kuran (2011) argues increasing economic and institutional divergences played a decisive role in the transformation of capitulations from Ottoman rulers' unilateral acts of grace into international obligations consolidating Western power and undermining Ottoman sovereignty. Such transformation also resulted in increasing discrimination against Muslim Ottoman subjects who could not enjoy the kind of legal and fiscal privileges granted to foreigners and their local protégés. Lewis (1961) suggests that the abuse of Capitulations by local non-Muslim merchants had been decisive in

⁹ Kuran (2011) argues that such differences in inheritance laws have been instrumental in the accumulation of capital in the Christian West and the economic underdevelopment of the Muslim Middle East.

creating such discriminations. He notes that European embassies and consulates established in Istanbul and Ottoman provinces protected their local interpreters and agents through “berats”, certificates granting them extraterritorial privileges and immunity. However, local non-Muslim merchants soon began abusing the berat system. By buying these certificates, they acquired what I would call double citizenship in modern terms and enjoyed economic and fiscal privileges denied to their fellow Ottoman subjects. What is even more interesting is that late Ottoman rulers tried to curb the increasing traffic of berats and undermine the power of foreign missions in the overall process by directly selling them first to their non-Muslim and then Muslim local merchants for a fee. (Lewis, 1961; 448-9).

Although a comprehensive discussion of discriminations resulting from Capitulations is beyond the scope of this research, the following analysis will provide some insights about how Capitulations indirectly led to educational inequalities among different religious communities of the Ottoman Empire. As I will explore in subsequent chapters these educational inequalities persisted even during the Republican era and thus continued to be a sphere of governmental practices seeking to promote the learning of foreign languages.

In line with the Franco-Ottoman Alliance of the 16th and 17th centuries, capitulations were set first and foremost with France, and thus opened the doors of a long lasting French influence in the Ottoman Empire. It is interesting that the privileges associated with these initial Capitulations were also extended to Catholic subjects of the Ottoman

Empire and this encouraged many local non-Muslims to convert into Catholicism. Despite initial reaction from the leaders of other Ottoman non-Muslim groups, conversions continued and became a widespread practice especially among local Armenians (Kucuk, 1985). It is equally interesting that through another capitulatory treaty negotiated in 1673 all dragomen, whether Turkish or not, became the legal subjects of the foreign power employing them, entitled to all the privileges and immunities associated with such status. With the same token, the dragomen's diplomatic immunity was extended to all their family members and made hereditary. "The capitulatory agreements remained the major source of friction between Turkey and the Western Powers as late as World War I and most of this friction stemmed from the ambiguous position of the dragomen" (Roland, 1999, 46).

Soon after the Capitulations are contracted with France, Catholic missionary activities expanded to almost all corners of Ottoman lands. Various religious orders of Catholic denomination initially associated with the chaplains of French diplomatic missions subsequently expanded to provide educational and philanthropic services to local Christians mostly through schools and hospitals. The first missionary schools in the Ottoman Empire were Catholic and organized by Jesuits. King Henry IV sent Jesuits to Istanbul to educate Catholic pupils as demanded by the church and the French envoy. In 1607, they established an educational establishment named after Saint Benoit and began giving courses in Latin and Greek grammar as well as in mathematics. The school started to give French, Turkish, and Modern Greek courses at the end of the 17th century. With the extension of capitulations to other foreign powers over the course of the next two

centuries, many religious groups financed by America, France, England, Italy, Prussia, and Russia established their own schools within the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire. These schools were initially established as religious institutions that belonged to churches. As foreign embassies in Istanbul began demanding educational institutions for the children of their own personnel, however, these religious institutions were later annexed to newly established missionary schools (Kentli, 2009).

Foreign schools operating in the Ottoman Empire “proselytized and offered religious instruction; they also taught natural science, math, foreign languages, and aspects of Western culture and history” (Rutz and Balkan, 2009:48). Their missionary activities were limited to non-Muslim and non-Turkish subjects of the Empire. Yet their dramatic expansion after the 18th century and their increasing educational appeal to Muslim subjects pushed the state administration to intervene, a response to be discussed later in this chapter.

The second category of schools in the Ottoman Empire took care of the religious education of the Muslim subjects through the so-called “mektebs” and “medreses”, at elementary and higher levels respectively. The educational aim of the pre-modern Islamic school system at the elementary level was the inculcation of basic religious knowledge to students, particularly the learning of Koranic verses by heart, whereas in the next educational stage of medreses the students could concentrate on deeper learning of religious knowledge.

These two institutions of religious education were inherited from the Seljuk period of Turkish history and they were the only educational institutions available for the common Muslim Ottoman subjects. Those people who aimed to acquire practical and worldly knowledge had to educate themselves and / or participate in the circles of cultivated men. This was indeed the path followed by many Ottoman scholars, from pre-modern as well as modern period (Somel, 2001). It is important to note that education was not limited to processes of formal schooling which was only one of the many itineraries one could take for upward social mobility in the Ottoman society. This point is worth remembering when we will engage in the discussion of new media of EFL learning as unusual means of accumulating cultural capital outside the confines of formal schooling and acquiring upward social mobility within and across borders.

Mektebs were founded by vakifs (pious endowments), but controlled by the Seyhulislam (the leader of the state hierarchy of ulema) with respect to academic decisions, such as the appointment of teachers and the method or content of instruction. All students, irrespective of their mother languages, were expected to develop good recitation skills of the Arabic Koran. They were not, however, given any instruction on the grammar or syntax of neither Arabic nor other languages, including Turkish. As such, the graduates of mektebs were not always considered literate, if the later is defined as the ability to read and write in a given language and had therefore certain, albeit limited, prospects for upward social mobility.

Medreses offered a more sophisticated educational experience with a richer curriculum, which included a wide range of courses through a twelve-level grade system. For example, the lower eight grades taught the basic tenets of Arabic grammar, syntax, and writing, philosophy, theology, Muslim tradition and law, the natural sciences, physics, medicine, logic, theology, astronomy, geometry and rhetoric, whereas the four higher grades offered the students the option to specialize on Islamic law, medicine or theology. Interestingly enough, instruction in Turkish language was still missing but Arabic language was now on the table as a full course. Advancement from lower to higher grades was based on merit, which was measured by exams held at the end of each level (Luk, 2006: 30-32).

As a result of their rich curriculum and system of successive evaluation and merit-based advancement, medreses were able to produce high quality scholars for many centuries. Medrese-educated ulema formed a ‘powerful corps of Muslim learned men who dominated the religious institutions, the positions in public administration, diplomacy and politics’ (Hey, 1961 as cited in Jung and Piccoli, 2001: 38). By the seventeenth century, however, the academic quality of medreses had deteriorated as a result of controversial curriculum changes and the gradual corruption of the system of merit-based advancement.

Ottoman officials were traditionally trained through a system of apprenticeship and practical experience. After the conquest of Istanbul in 1453, however, this system of training was found to be inadequate to cultivate the kind of state officials required by an

expansionist Empire. It was also feared that overly qualified state officials might not always remain loyal to the Sultan and even dare to challenge his authority. Enderun (the Palace School) was designed as an answer to this dilemma. Although the concept as such was not new and other dynasties both in the West and in the East had established their own palace schools, the Ottoman experience was unique especially with regard to the criteria of eligibility for admission to the system. Admission to this prestigious system of schooling was initially limited to non-Turkish and non-Muslim subjects of the Empire.¹⁰ The physically and intellectually promising teenage sons of non-Muslim and non-Turkish parents were chosen and then taken to the imperial capital to start a long and multi-leveled education, designed to make them highly qualified and loyal ruling elites, a process which also involved religious and cultural conversion to Islam. Although this clearly paved the way for their upward social mobility, it nevertheless limited them in many respects.

These young men were given the opportunity to realize their full potential, however defined, but had to make sacrifices in other aspects of life. For example, they were subject to certain laws according to which they were not permitted to marry or become involved in the pursuit of economic interests because such self-serving personal preoccupations might lead them to develop loyalty to other than the Sultan (Miller, 1973). As the subsequent sections of this chapter will explore, the private spheres of live and personal conduct of potential or actual students continued to be subject to

¹⁰ In the second half of the sixteenth century, this rather discriminatory approach was abandoned and eligibility for admission was extended to Muslim Turkish subjects as well.

disciplinary norms through educational policies and regulations of the late Ottoman and early Republican governments. Disciplinary norms have been at least partially replaced by control mechanisms in the late Republican era with the prominence of neoliberalism and the accompanying emergence and widespread welcome of alternative media of EFL learning in Turkey.

These teenage boys were initially exposed to a challenging pre-schooling, which consisted of two levels. The first level involved enduring a challenging apprenticeship in Anatolia (the rural mainland) with Turkish and Muslim peasants and artisans. Admission to the next level was possible only if and when they were deemed to have reached both physical and mental maturity and developed adequate knowledge of Turkish culture and Islam. They were subsequently taken to the palace for an intensive formal schooling where they would learn more about Islam and study Ottoman Turkish that was used by the government administration. The students who perfected at the pre-school level were finally taken to the Palace School, whereas less impressive ones were sent to the Janissary or gardener corps of the Ottoman military. The prospects for occupying positions where one could be involved in the conduct of others thus was subject to his performance in his self-conduct.

The prestige of Enderun and the prospects it offered were considered to be so high in the society that some Muslim families were prompted to develop unusual strategies to make their sons eligible for admission. It is noted that some parents have even “turned over their sons to Christians in order that, in the guise of Christians, they might be accepted

into the corps" (Horniker, 1944:196). This pragmatism is strikingly similar to that of some contemporary Turkish/Muslim immigrants to Canada, who drop their Turkish/Muslim names for Western/Christian ones in order to increase their chances to be called for a job interview or avoid giving their Canadian born babies names that would reveal their original ethnic/religious identity.

The Palace School had a comprehensive curriculum seeking to provide general, academic and vocational training. It provided courses on Turkish, Arabic, and Persian languages, Turkish and Arabic literatures, Koran and Koranic commentary, Muslim theology, jurisprudence and law, Turkish history, music, mathematics, arithmetic and geometry (Miller, 1973). It is important to note that Enderun was, at least through the course of the 15th and 16th centuries, the only institution that offered courses in Turkish and Persian and provided a rather general education to its students. The Palace School could not, however, preserve its high educational quality and institutional prominence for long because it gradually lost the factor its prestige depended upon: admission and advancement on the basis of merit. This institutional deterioration had far reaching implications: the graduates of Enderun were no longer highly qualified and absolutely loyal ruling elites. Especially those who joined the ranks of Janissary corps became increasingly tempted to marry and own a business, thus to develop other loyalties. Their transition from quasi-slaves of the Sultan to self-serving interest groups could neither be contained nor reversed.

By the 18th century, Janissaries, the product of the prestigious Palace School system, were already considered as a real threat to be eliminated or at least reformed for the military and political survival of the Empire. Moreover the military defeats and the increasing decline of the Ottoman Empire as a world power suggested the necessity to undertake military reforms first. In this context Sultan Selim III recruited foreign military advisers and introduced colleges of military sciences following the model of French academies. In these new colleges, almost everything was French, from the language of instruction to the library collections and the teachers.

The strong and sometimes violent opposition of traditional Janissary delayed the military reforms until their destruction in 1826. Their subsequent replacement with a new and European-style army under unified command provided the ground for subsequent reforms under the rule of Sultan Mahmud II (Hanioglu, 2008). Sultan Mahmud II continued the reforms with a policy of administrative centralization aimed at subjecting the provinces to the control of the central government.

The first general census in the Ottoman history was carried out under his rule in 1830-31 to provide the central government with quantitative and qualitative information about the subjects of the empire. It is possible to mark this as the beginning of a governmentalization process in the Ottoman Empire. Despite its limitations, the census results enabled the central government to devise a centralized, standardized system of taxation. Other symbolic, yet important, steps followed, including the publication of the first official Ottoman newspaper, the issuance of passports to Ottoman subjects, the

extensive reform of the Ottoman postal service, and the posting of the portraits of the Sultan in civil and military offices throughout the empire (Hanioglu, 2008).

Mahmud II also took some steps on the educational front. These included the establishment of new professional military schools and the revitalization of old ones. The central government also began sending small groups of students to France for training in military sciences. Yet, Ottoman authorities were extremely concerned about the risks associated with first time exposure to a foreign culture and tried different measures to minimize them:

To limit the dangerous influence of French culture on impressionable young minds, those in charge of the program were instructed to avoid teaching the French language, to enforce the exclusive use of Turkish and Arabic, and to select accommodation outside of Paris. It was emphasized that students were to learn only “sciences”, and were then to return to the country without being “unduly influenced by the detrimental values of a foreign culture” (Hanioglu, *ibid*, 63)

Although the language used about exposure to Western culture is significantly more positive in contemporary Turkey, anecdotal information I gathered during my research suggests that such concerns continue to be stressed even today when briefing Turkish students before they start their studies in foreign countries. A foundation in Turkey, for instance, is quoted as informally cautioning the students it sponsors against the cultural risks of studying abroad. The students, who are sponsored by the foundation, are advised to return to Turkey immediately after graduation without wasting their time and refrain from marrying foreigners and settling in overseas.

Exposure to Western cultural influences, however, could not be easily prevented, especially after the educational reforms of the late Ottoman era, which we will discuss in the next section. However, before concluding this section we need to discuss another equally important channel, the one opened by the Ottomans' desire to initiate direct diplomatic contacts with the West.

In the face of increasing European competition for economic and geopolitical power, the Ottoman Empire had to change the tenets of its foreign policy, which, for many centuries, had been dominated by isolationism, or what I would suggest to be a kind of *raison d'État* leading the state to be organized only by reference to itself. Adopting a whole new policy of engagement, the Ottoman Empire first formed alliances to join the European game of the balance of power, initially as a senior partner. After a series of military defeats that reduced its position to a junior partner in these alliances, however, the Ottoman Empire began collecting more detailed information on European powers – their domestic politics, their alliances, their capabilities, and their goals (Hanioglu, 2008). The establishment of more direct/ reliable communication with and understanding of the West for the ultimate purpose of exploring what made the Europeans increasingly powerful and how the Ottoman Empire could possibly be reformed, constitutes one of the most interesting modernization initiatives taken by the Ottoman sovereigns of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. A detailed examination of this particular initiative is also instructive of the way the knowledge of Western languages has begun to be constructed as the main instrument for social advancement in the Ottoman society.

In the past, diplomatic contacts of the Ottoman Empire with Europe were maintained through the European embassies in Istanbul and the medium of dragomans, who were usually local Christians, simply because Ottoman sovereigns and ministers bothered themselves neither with opening embassies in, nor learning the languages of, the West, which had long been considered barbarous and infidel (Lewis, 2002; Konig 1990). Instead, it was the West which took the effort to learn the Turkish language in order to secure a direct communication with the Ottoman Empire. In 1669, the Commercial Council of France decided setting a school of interpreters in Istanbul. The school was to give young French students a three years programme of Turkish training. After getting their dragoman certificates, these students were expected to return to France for their college education and finally be assigned to the French embassy in Istanbul for diplomatic internship.

Formally known as the *Ecole de Péra*, the school was run by Capuchin friars who had settled in the Ottoman capital. This early enterprise laid the ground for what was later to become the prestigious *Ecole des Langues Orientales*, or *Langues O'* in Paris. (The French) undertook to create "a breeding ground for professional interpreters" with a view to enhancing France's influence in the Orient. Given the economic importance of the Ottoman Empire at the time, Turkish was the first language to be taught there. It was only much later that Arabic was introduced, followed by Persian some time later (Ottoman, 2004)

With their military and economic power in significant decline, however, Ottoman sovereigns increasingly felt the need to reform their diplomatic channels and manners with the West. I suggest that this corresponds to a change in the Ottoman *raison d'état*, generating long lasting implications for the teaching / learning of foreign languages in the Ottoman and then Republican Turkey.

It was Sultan Selim III who established the first regular and permanent Ottoman embassies in major European capitals in 1792. Since few Turks knew western languages, the first Ottoman ambassadors to Europe were accompanied by Greek dragomans as well as by Turkish secretaries whose duty was to study the languages of Europe- especially French- and to learn something of the ways of Western society. Greeks continued to hold the post of dragoman until 1821 when the Greek revolt forced the Ottoman sovereigns to look to their Turkish/Muslim subjects for taking over the important task of official translation.

It would however be simplistic to assume that this shift was just a result of such grand changes as the spread of nationalism among non-Turkish subjects of the Ottoman Empire prompting the latter to counteract in an imperial fashion. There were also other, less grand and in fact rather molecular considerations at stake. Local non-Muslim subjects began abusing the berat system I discussed earlier to acquire fiscal and commercial privileges granted to foreigners through Capitulations:

In the early seventeenth century, the Ottoman government had instituted a preferential 3 percent customs tariff for merchants of Great Britain and the Netherlands. Over time this privilege was extended to merchants of other foreign powers. Foreign traders thus obtained a considerable advantage over Ottoman non-Muslims, who paid a 5 percent tariff, and Ottoman Muslims who paid 4 percent tariff. The system was corrupted by many non-Muslim Ottomans, who abused the privileges granted to Ottoman dragomans and servants in the service of foreign embassies and consulates, becoming merchants under foreign protection. In 1802, an imperial decree redefined the status of Ottoman merchants engaged in commerce with Europe. Henceforth, all Ottoman merchants, regardless of their religious affiliation, were entitled to the same privileges previously bestowed on aliens. In addition, the government adopted strict controls over the process of enlistment for service in foreign embassies and consulates (Hanioglu, 2008, p.47)

In the meantime, there was a growing interest in understanding the roots of western civilization and this resulted in an increasing demand for the translation of western works of art, sciences, philosophy and literature. Thus, the Translation Chamber was established in 1832 to secure organized translation activities. The mandate of the Chamber was to train translators who would carry out official correspondence, make translations, and teach French (Aksoy, 2005).¹¹ The creation of Translation Chamber at the Sublime Porte was followed by the introduction of many other similar translation offices within the ministries. All these developments resulted in the emergence of a new class of elites, who owed their first steps towards advancement to their knowledge of a foreign language, most notably French. Here, I would like to directly quote Bernard Lewis who, I believe, very skillfully depicts the picture:

For the shopkeeper's son, as for the others, French was the talisman that made the clerk a translator, the translator an interpreter, the interpreter a diplomat, and the diplomat a statesman. At a time when the Ottoman Empire was obsessed with the sheer problem of survival in a world dominated by an aggressive and expanding Europe, the positions of trust and decision inevitably went to those who knew something of Europe, its languages and its affairs. The new elite of power came ... from the translation Office and the Embassy secretariats. What had once been a despised and quasi-menial task, contemptuously left to Greek dragomans ... now became the school of statecraft and the battlefield of power (Lewis, 2002:118).

Karpat (1985) further stresses the contribution of the Chamber of Translation and Foreign Office to the making of statesman in Ottoman Empire by noting that the famous reformist prime ministers of the nineteenth century, such as Resit, Ali, Fuat, and Mithat Pasas were

¹¹ It is interesting that the assignment of Yahya Efendi, a highly respected Muslim scholar, as the Head of the Translation Chamber, Sanizade, the Imperial Historiographer of the time noted that this “placed this crucial post in safe, Muslim hands, and freed the professional use of foreign languages from the stigma of a gavur (*infidel*) trade” (Lewis, 2002:87).

all products of these institutions. He nevertheless states that the significance of these institutions, especially of the Chamber of Translation, lay in the fact that they “symbolized the orientation of the Ottoman state towards Europe, the adoption of a new mentality, and the ascendancy of a modern civilian bureaucracy” (Karpat 1985: 93). I suggest that this is when the learning of Western languages became part of a process of imagining new identities and communities also for the Turkish and Muslim subjects of the Ottoman Empire.

2.3 Late Ottoman Era and Educational Reforms

Despite all the initial steps taken over the eighteenth century, the real reform period, commonly known as Tanzimat era in Ottoman history, began in 1839 with the appointment of a reform commission by Sultan Mahmud II. It is important to note that all this was taking place in a context where Ottoman sovereigns felt compelled to define their relations with their subjects in explicitly paternalistic terms. Sultan Mahmud II, for instance, defined his subjects like his own children and assured that he treats them all with affection and justice irrespective of their religious differences (Bozkurt, 1996:41).

The report of the commission provided the basis of the imperial edict of 1839, which was promulgated by Abdulmejid I (the son and successor of Sultan Mahmud II). This marked the beginning of actual Tanzimat reforms whereby a number of rights were granted to the subjects of the empire and were guaranteed by the sovereign authority of the Ottoman Sultan. “The edict promised new laws guaranteeing life and property rights, prohibiting

bribery, and regulating the levy of taxes and the conscription and tenure of soldiers. Most significantly, they (the new laws) would apply to all Ottoman subjects, Muslim and non-Muslim alike. The document (edict) (also) served as an assurance to the Great Powers that demanded domestic reforms in return for future recognition of the Ottoman Empire as a member of the concert of Europe” (Hanioglu, 2008:72-3). In a post-French Revolution era, where non-Muslim provinces began developing distinct national identities often with the support of the Great Powers, the imperial edict of 1839 aimed at securing the loyalty of the subjects and thus territorial integrity of the empire. The second stage of the Tanzimat era started with the 1856 imperial decree of Sultan Abdulmecid I and strongly emphasized equality among all imperial subjects. As such, the second Tanzimat era ended the traditional millet system and marked a move towards universal citizenship among all subjects of the Empire. What is particularly significant for our discussion, however, is the removal of the legal barriers impairing non-Muslim subjects’ recruitment as civil servants. “To consolidate the affective bond among all Ottoman subjects, the 1856 reform decree opened government employment and the elite civil and military schools to all” (Findley, 2008: 30).

It is important to note that the reform process began and evolved in a context of global rivalry, mostly among Great Britain, France and Russia, for influence over Ottoman politics. Hanioglu (2008) notes that informal alliance with Great Britain was the major feature of Ottoman foreign policy during Tanzimat era. He explains that “this alliance rested on a set of shared interests and above all on the existence of a common enemy: Russia. With regard to France, the Ottoman government should take care to maintain

cordial relations with this powerful nation not in the illusory hope of receiving its protection, but in order to prevent it from joining a hostile coalition” (Hanioglu, 2008: 77-8). The foreign policy of the Tanzimat statesmen enabled them to get the military support of an Anglo-Franco alliance to defeat Russia in the Crimean War and to sign the Paris Treaty of 1856, whereby the Ottoman state received international guarantee of its territorial integrity and admission to the European club of powers. It is through Paris Treaty that Ottoman Empire officially declared that its *raison d'état* is to secure the welfare and happiness of all Ottoman subjects. However, the same Treaty also allowed European powers to interfere in case of discrimination against non-Muslim subjects (Davison, 1973; Sander 1993). Therefore, the Paris Treaty made the Ottoman territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire open to the interpretation and ultimately intervention of the Europeans in the following decades (Hanioglu, 2008).

The relations with newly emerging Western powers of the nineteenth century are also worth highlighting for a more complete understanding of the global rivalry for influence over a declining imperial power. For instance, bilateral relations with Germany, which has later to become the military ally of the Ottoman Empire during the First World War, evolved in the context of German neocolonialism in general and Germany’s imperial ambitions vis-à-vis Mesopotamia and Palestine in particular. In his piecemeal study of German influence in the Ottoman Empire during the late Hamidian era, Ortayli (1981) notes that the increasing difficulty of achieving colonial expansion through military force in the international context of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century led many Western European colonial powers to develop alternative strategies to exploit the

resources of still largely traditional empires such as Russia, China, Iran and Ottoman Turkey.

Soon after completing its unification and emerging as a new industrial power in the late 19th century, Germany also began developing such strategies and focused its efforts on the Ottoman Empire which seemed to be easier to penetrate in the context of a growing Ottoman distrust against the French and the British. Unlike the latter, Germany was perceived as a genuine ally interested in furthering mutual economic and strategic interests only. As Ortayli (1981) suggests, the success of German neo-colonialism in the Ottoman Empire was also due to the late Ottoman rulers' assumption that they could, like their German contemporaries, achieve military and economic progress without compromising authoritarian structures. It was on these grounds that a modern police force in the Ottoman Empire was first created with the help of German expertise. The latter was also instrumental in the modernization of the Ottoman military and civil administration. Ottomans also granted various concessions to German companies for a number of projects, including the famous Istanbul-Baghdad railway.

German Lutheran missionaries established a number of schools in the populous areas around the projected railway line. It is noted, however, that Germans did not consider those schools as a tool of religious propaganda but rather as an integral component of their expanding financial and political influence in the Ottoman Empire (Ortayli, 1981)¹².

¹² An early record of the teaching of German in state schools can be traced back to the eighteenth century, when the teaching of French was replaced by the teaching of German in some military institutions in order to meet the communication needs of the military

Since the number of these schools always remained very limited, however, the German culture and language did never reach the kind and level of prominence that the British or the French enjoyed in the Ottoman and then Republican Turkey. However, as the collections of many prominent museums in today's Germany suggests, the cultural ambitions of German neo-colonialism have perhaps never been so high but were just limited to the exploitation of the archeological richness of Ottoman territories.

The relations of the Ottoman Empire with another emerging power, the USA, date back to 1830 when the former officially recognized the latter with the signing of the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation. Until then, American citizens, including the missionaries, were considered British subjects who conducted their activities in the Ottoman lands under the patronage of the British Diplomatic Mission (Erhan, 2000). Early American missionary activities in the Ottoman Empire began in 1818 through the concerted efforts of the Boston-based American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM, the Board). Their initial target was the evangelization of the non-Protestant Christian subjects. Therefore, they were initially preoccupied with printing religious books in Armenian, Arabic and Greek.

By the late nineteenth century, however, American missionaries not only increased the reach and the scope of their activities, but also began to influence both the diplomatic

personnel for technology transfer. When the Germans were allowed to open schools both in Anatolia and Istanbul in the following century, the number of foreign boarding schools teaching German considerably increased. In the early 1900s, the German way of life and cultural values were quite fashionable among the elite in Istanbul (Buyukkantarcioğlu 2004: 37).

relations with and the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire. For instance, the traditional Ottoman millet system did not recognize Protestants and this began creating an identity problem for increasing numbers of converts to Protestantism. In order to solve this problem, the Board mobilized the British Embassy and the American Legation for a diplomatic campaign with the Sublime Porte and managed to get an official millet status to Ottoman Protestants in 1840 (Erhan, 2000). While diplomatic pressures were urging the Ottoman rulers to tolerate American missionary activities, the internal dynamics of its own traditional millet system were pressing them in the opposite direction. Frustrated by the increasing number of conversions to Protestantism, the clergy of Oriental Churches representing the non-Protestant Christian subjects of the Empire were urging the Ottoman rulers to act. When it did act, however, the Ottoman Empire found itself increasingly threatened by the military power of the USA and had to step back. The case of the Robert College in Istanbul provides an interesting example by illustrating how the nature of the accommodation of missionary schools in the Ottoman Empire shifted from a consensual to confrontational one.

The first American missionary schools in Ottoman lands were established in provinces, which, as were far away from the imperial capital, did not stir any concern. When the graduates of these provincial American schools got involved in subsequent nationalist upheavals in their respective regions, however, Ottoman rulers became reluctant to tolerate any further American missionary educational activity. Therefore, when a rich American businessman and philanthropist, Christopher R. Robert, volunteered to sponsor an American college in Istanbul and when the Board chose a dominantly Muslim

populated quarter of the imperial capital for school location, the Sublime Porte refused to give the required permits. American diplomatic efforts, backed by a show of military power, however, proved successful and the permission was granted for the building of the famous Robert College in Rumelihisari, Istanbul (Erhan, 2001).

The Tanzimat period also witnessed important economic changes. The establishment of banks challenged the monopoly of traditional moneylenders and provided the central government with more control over financial and economic activities. Growing internal debt, however, compelled the Ottoman government to begin borrowing from European governments and banks. This, combined with the increasing prominence of foreign capital in the newly established Ottoman banks, eroded the control of the central government over its own finances and economy.

In 1856, the Ottoman Bank was established in London, with British capital, to fund commerce with the Ottoman Empire. In November 1862, French shareholders joined the British founders of the bank turning it into an international syndicate, named Banque Imperiale Ottomane. By 1875, the bank played such a central role in Ottoman debt management that the sultan granted it the right to control the budget and expenditures of the state, thus in effect making a foreign syndicate treasurer of the empire. In October 1875, the desperate Ottoman government decided to default unilaterally on interest payments on its foreign debts, provoking an outcry on European stock markets and tarnishing its own image abroad (Hanioglu, 2008:91-2)

During the Tanzimat era, the Ottoman Empire has become more open to international trade and foreign capital. The number of countries benefiting from free trade agreements through Capitulations increased. In the absence of any state protection, these agreements discriminated against local Muslim industries:

With the Ottoman lands becoming an import market for European manufacturers, many Ottoman artisans became jobless. In the Balkans, Muslims were gradually transformed from the backbone of handicrafts into unskilled laborers, where ‘a new group of Christian traders, agriculturalists, shippers and craftsmen, sprang up and gained wealth, education and power’... Towards the end of the nineteenth century, ‘over 90 percent of the industrial establishments with more than ten workers were owned by non-Muslims’. The Capitulations not only opened doors for tax evasion, but also strengthened political and economic ties between the Christian minorities and the West. The modern sector of the Ottoman economy therefore acquired a Christian and an extraterritorial face, obstructing the efforts of the Tanzimat reformers to integrate the minorities politically. (Jung and Piccoli, 2001: 50).

It is important to note that educational credentials in general and foreign language skills in particular were equally instrumental in enabling the non-Muslim subjects of the empire to engage in transnational processes of exchange, which ultimately brought them wealth and power. Due to the educational arrangements of the traditional millet system, the Turkish and Muslim subjects, however, lacked such credentials and skills. Therefore, the educational change of the late Ottoman period, which we will now discuss in detail, can be considered as a state intervention to correct such uneven consequences of the traditional millet system. In other words, while they were initiated to form a system that would cultivate the kind of military and civil bureaucracies needed by a modernizing statehood, educational reforms also served to restore the balance of power among different ethnic and religious groups with respect to education, cultural capital and social mobility. This corresponds to a shift in *raison d’Etat* whereby the police became increasingly more concerned with the well-being and happiness of the population.

By the late 18th century it was already clear that the graduates of Muslim mektebs did not even have basic literacy skills and that this significantly impaired their upward social

mobility along educational and professional hierarchies.¹³ Even if some were admitted to military schools, they had to be re-educated. Therefore, the educational reforms of the Tanzimat era began with the opening of intermediary institutions (*rustiye*) intended to fill the gap between elementary and second levels and to lessen the burden on military schools. The Tanzimat reformers also established professional schools to train civil servants. This was accompanied by the founding of other institutions of higher education, usually modeled on French equivalents of their time. These included the Academy of Sciences, which was founded in 1851 and the Darulfunun, the first imperial university, which was opened in 1870 and then closed the next year due to a combination of financial difficulties and ideological controversies (Alkan, 2000).

These initial steps were followed by administrative reforms to centralize education. In this context, a temporary council of education was founded in 1845. Kemal Efendi,

¹³The problematization of *illiteracy* in the Ottoman Empire dates back to the Tanzimat Period of the nineteenth century when the traditional lack of interest that Ottoman rulers usually showed toward literacy campaigns underwent a dramatic change and early efforts to create a standard language began (Jung & Piccoli, 2001). Interestingly enough, the problematization of *literacy* seems to have a longer history. The differences with which the Ottoman state treated its Jewish/Armenian communities on the one hand and its Turkish/Muslim populations on the other with respect to the introduction of the press are worth noting in this respect. “The Jewish community was allowed to introduce a press as early as 1493-94, but only on condition they did not print in Turkish or Arabic. While the Armenian community soon followed, the first printing press for the dissemination of papers and books among the Muslim population came as late as 1727” (Jung & Piccoli, 2001: 58). However, the permitting of the printing of books dealing with nonreligious topics in Turkish did not stimulate an overwhelming demand for such books by Turkish / Muslim subjects. “The major printing houses published a combined total of only 142 books in more than a century of printing between 1727 and 1838. When taken in conjunction with the fact that only a minuscule number of copies of each book were printed, this statistics demonstrates that the introduction of the printing press did not transform Ottoman cultural life until the emergence of vibrant print media in the middle of the nineteenth century” (Hanioglu, 2008, p.38).

inspector-general of schools, was sent to study the systems of England, France and Germany (Davison, 1961). The council of Education was made permanent in 1847 and then transformed into a Ministry of Education in 1857, marking the beginning of educational centralization (Alkan, 2000). It is important to note that during the nineteenth century France, England, Germany, Italy, Russia, Austria, Prussia all established ministries or offices of education within their central administration and began to secularize their schools. The Ottoman Empire, however, founded an office to regulate education much earlier than many of its contemporaries (Alkan, 2000, p.55). Therefore, as Fortna (2001) notes, reforms to build a centralized educational system and administration cannot simply be considered as the submission of Ottoman rulers to an imposed Western modernization. Ottoman educational change was part of a global trend on the one hand and an endogenous response to increasingly challenging educational competition threatening its political and territorial unity on the other.

The standardization and systemization of education soon followed with the new Regulations issued in 1869 under the inspiration of French secular education reform program. Accordingly, “the schools were classified as either general or private. Education was divided into five stages: sibyan (elementary), rustiyye (intermediary), idadiyye (secondary/preparatory), sultaniyye (high), and aliye (university), a structure the Republic would inherit with some changes” (Alkan, 2000: 61-2). The new Regulations put the general schools under state control and administration. Private schools, in contrast, were to be controlled by the state but administered by individuals and communities, Ottoman or foreign. Permission to open a private school required the observance of strict criteria,

which were clearly laid out in Article 129 of the new Education Regulations. For schools to be opened, the article stipulated (1) that their teachers be in possession of certificates either from the Education Ministry or from the local education administration; (2) that the schools attest to the fact that no lessons “contrary to custom and (state) policy and ideology” will be taught in the schools; and (3) that the schools be granted an official permission from both the local education administration and from the governor if the school was in the provinces, and from the Education Ministry if in Istanbul (Fortna, 2001: 92).

The new Regulations undermined the educational arrangements of traditional millet system by introducing a new kind of classification (public/private) and stage-based identification for all existing schools. Moreover by redefining the terms under which communities and foreigners can open and operate private schools, they provided the central government with legitimate power to control their activities. On a more general level, the new Educational Regulations paved the ground for an unprecedented state involvement in the domain of education, which, according to the traditional millet system, was monopolized by various religious authorities. Before engaging in a discussion of the implications of the New Regulations for the Ottoman state, however, I would like to draw attention to Muslim communities’ educational response to the political and educational changes of this era.

Somel (2011) notes that the educated Turkish Muslims' fears regarding the expanding economic and educational power of non-Muslims were aggravated when Tanzimat reforms provided the latter with additional rights and the New Educational Regulations resulted in more non-Muslim educational activity. Their concerns paved the ground for the emergence of "a series of independent initiatives with a civic character for private Turkish Muslim education". These initiatives, often organized through the educational associations formed by well-educated and public minded civil servants and officers, resulted in the establishment of private Muslim schools in various important cities of the Empire. Some of these schools survived the transition from the Imperial to the Republican regime and managed to remain prestigious until the present time. These include the famous Darussafaka, the school of orphans and the Numune-i Terakki, the school that is the forerunner of today's Istanbul Boys' High School.

Drawing on the statistics for the years from 1893 to 1894, Somel (2011) notes that a total of twenty private Muslim schools existed in Istanbul and that some of them went beyond the common concern of providing the students with a sound Islamic knowledge¹⁴. They not only equipped their pupils with worldly practical skills but also taught them prestigious European languages. As such, they appealed to the children of not only Turkish Muslim civil servants but also those of non-Muslim families. Although this suggests that Muslim private schools had outstanding educational quality, Somel argues

¹⁴ Although the establishment of private Muslim schools was encouraged during the Hamidian era and reached a total of twenty nine in Istanbul only by 1903, these independent ventures were usually regarded with suspicion (Somel, 2011). Moreover, these private initiatives did not have the financial means and commitments to undertake massive educational investments. Therefore, the Ottoman state had to assume the role of an educational entrepreneur in a fashion that I will discuss in the rest of this chapter.

that the real significance of this particular educational movement lies in its implications for our notions of Ottoman modernization: “Although we have become accustomed to observing Muslim Ottoman modernization generally from a state and centralist perspective, it is possible to consider private Muslim schooling as, in some sense, an autonomous, civic feature of Islamic cultural modernization” (Somel, 2011)

The new Education Regulations had significant implications also for the processes of acquiring upward social mobility through public schooling. The central government tried to extend the same educational opportunities to all of its subjects, so that they could fairly compete for upward social mobility irrespective of their location, and ethnic/religious backgrounds. Accordingly, it insisted “on providing the provinces with the same array of educational institutions as was available in the capital, with the obvious exception of higher, specialized academies and envisioned a complete, integrated network of schools that would stretch across the length and breadth of the empire and would work as a pyramid to funnel the top students to the capital for specialized training at the advanced level or directly into the scribal service of the central government” (Fortna, 2001:113).

The fact that mass literacy became a state concern during Tanzimat era is worth noting in this respect. Although elementary schools (mektebs) to educate young children had existed for many centuries, there was no compulsory education as such. The new Regulations made education at sibyan (elementary) level compulsory for all children at the age of six and enforced the implementation of the policy by bringing monetary penalty for parents who violated the rule. The introduction of such disciplinary norms

that subjectified not only students but also their parents suggests an important shift in the art of government in the Ottoman Empire. Curricular changes complemented this policy by increasing the desirability of sibyan schools. The curricula of the first-level sibyan and rustiye schools included not only introductory courses on religion, but also those on language, mathematics, history and geography (Alkan, 2000: 64).

With the introduction of teachers' schools and the appointment of their graduates to both old and new schools the state has further increased its regulation of the domain of education. Religious authorities did not welcome the erosion of their power in such a critical sphere they had monopolized for many centuries. The introduction of idadis, sultanis and higher schools, which offered interdenominational education, triggered greater reaction from the leaders of the non-Muslim communities on various religious and political grounds. "The leaders of the Orthodox, Catholic, and Jewish communities all criticized the state's mixed, quasi-secular education for fostering the dissolution of the religious communities" (Alkan, 2000: 51).

Despite strict regulations, community and foreign missionary schools significantly expanded their activities across the Ottoman territory. With reference to 1893 statistics, Alkan (2000) notes that the total number of non-Muslim schools was 6437 in the provinces and 302 in Istanbul, most of them operating without a license. The number of foreign schools, however, is highly debated. According to an Ottoman inventory from 1894, they were estimated to be 427. Ortayli (1981), however, estimates the number of American schools alone close to 400 by 1886 (cited in Fortna, 2001). Yet, there is

agreement about their dramatic expansion by the early twentieth century. Quoting an unofficial count, Davison (1961) estimates the number of French Catholic schools at 500, American schools at 675 and British at 178 in the eve of World War I. There were also German, Italian, Austro-Hungarian and Russian schools in lesser numbers.¹⁵

It is important to note that the increasing presence of foreign missionary schools in Ottoman lands was part of a global trend. The nineteenth and then early twentieth centuries, during which foreign missionary schools have dramatically expanded their activities across the Ottoman lands, were also the years of the great flowering of Protestant overseas missions, of Catholic reaction in kind, and of the new imperialism which led governments and peoples of several European powers to support in the Near East schools purveying their own brand of culture (Davison, 1961).¹⁶ Their perception as increasingly suspicious institutions that are engaged in stealing the hearts and the minds of Ottoman youth fueled an educational competition and urged the state to fight back in a fashion, which we will discuss before concluding this chapter. It is nevertheless worth noting here that the response of the Ottoman rulers corresponds to a change in the way

¹⁵ It is interesting that Protestant and especially American schools were singled out in an Ottoman inventory of 1893, suggesting that “the North American revivalism had hit Ottoman lands in full zeal and fiscal strength” (Fortna, 2001; p.79) with long lasting implications for the educational system of both Ottoman and Republican Turkey.

¹⁶ As we have already discussed, the support of Western powers to missionary educational activities could even take the form of military threat. US administrations, for instance, secured the expansion of their missionary schools in Ottoman lands, mostly by threatening the Ottoman Empire on military grounds. Although the Hamidian regime, which we will discuss in the rest of this chapter, tried very hard to overt such pressures, increasing US military power and threat, transformed the Ottoman Empire into an increasingly submissive party in bilateral relations.

the Turkish Muslim subjects were perceived. The latter were now considered as a contested object and the control over their training / education a matter of sovereignty.

The introduction of interdenominational schools combined with curricular changes sought to create a common identity among religiously diverse subjects of the Empire. Contrary to the expectations of Ottoman rulers, however, this process resulted in strengthening separatist tendencies, which prompted, in turn, more rigid control over community and foreign schools (Alkan, 2000).

Given the important role they played in the educational and political changes of the late Ottoman era, it would be instructive to examine the conditions under which interdenominational educational institutions were initially introduced. The Lycee de Galatasaray, which was established in 1868 and later served as an experiment and laboratory model for the idadi schools of the late Ottoman era, is the first example of an educational setting, where students from different religious backgrounds would study and board together. This was a Franco-Ottoman project the history of which deserves particular attention for a better understanding of political, economic and cultural logics underlying educational change of that era.

The French government was getting increasingly dissatisfied with the pace of the Ottoman reform process. In 1867, they sent the Sublime Porte a list of the changes they wanted to see enacted by Ottoman rulers. The list included various economic, political and social demands, and emphasized the creation of a completed and integrated

educational system in the Ottoman Empire.¹⁷ The Lycee de Galatasaray emerged as the model to satisfy both French and Ottoman expectations from educational change. The Ottoman state was keen to foster a common identity among its ethnically and religiously diverse subjects. The global power struggle of the time was such that France was also favoring the incorporation of Ottoman subjects and it therefore supported and promoted the introduction of an interdenominational, secular and modern education.¹⁸

By actively encouraging the Ottomans to reproduce a French-style system, Paris was hoping to extend its political and cultural influence in the Levant. The choice of French as the language of instruction in the school was itself a victory for Paris. Moreover by exporting teachers, administrators, textbooks, and even bed-frames, the French hoped to cultivate hundreds of potential Francophones and Francophiles. (They also) hoped that the education of Muslim and non-Muslim side-by-side would increase the opportunities of the empire's minority groups whose cause they championed (Fortna, 2001:102-3)

In 1868, the Lycee de Galatasaray began operating in a dominantly non-Muslim / Western neighborhood of Istanbul as the first example of interdenominational school in the Ottoman Empire. Despite the resistance of non-Muslim religious groups to send their children, it attracted 341 pupils¹⁹ and almost doubled this number by the following

¹⁷ It is interesting that the World Bank Structural Adjustment Programs, which played a significant role in bringing economic, social and political change since the 1980s, had similarly impatient overtones in conveying what the global community expected from Turkey in return of their financial support.

¹⁸ It is important to remember that all this evolved in the context of a Franco-Russian rivalry over the Ottoman Empire. While Russia sought to divide the empire into autonomous areas along religious lines, the French followed a policy aimed at strengthening the empire through centralization. The price for French support for a strong Istanbul, however, was the opening of the empire to French investors and French influence in areas such as education. (Fortna, 2001: 101)

¹⁹ According to Davison (1961) 147 of the 341 students were Muslims, most of them presumably Turks.

academic year. Moreover, it began to be considered as a model for future schools to be opened in the rest of the Empire (Fortna, 2001).

The French influence in Ottoman educational change began to decline when France lost the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. “The French military mission was being abolished and the French language was falling out of favor in the military medical school and in several other educational institutions. Galatasaray, now coming under attack in the press as an instrument of French interest, saw its enrollment fall and its French director depart, replaced by a series of Ottoman officials” (Fortna, 2001: 104). This marks the beginning of a new era in late Ottoman history, one in which educational change, in Fortna’s words, shifted from “adoption” of to “adaptation” of European models, under the rule of Sultan Abdulhamid II. Before we begin discussing Hamidian era, however, it would be instructive to briefly overview the intellectual climate change brought by Tanzimat reforms and see how this led to important political changes towards the end of the nineteenth century.

Hanioglu (2008) notes that the growing fascination of the bureaucratic elite with Western culture marked a sea change in the intellectual climate of the empire. The catchword of Tanzimat era, he stresses, was the concept of Alla Franca, which symbolized European supremacy. It carried prodigious power, and could confer instant worth or legitimacy on an object or habit. (Hanioglu, 2008: 100). What is presumably more relevant for our overall discussion, however, is his remarks about the increasing prominence of European languages in general and French in particular during Tanzimat era. He stresses that

European languages acquired a highly prestigious status in Ottoman officialdom during Tanzimat period. “By the second half of the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Foreign Ministry was corresponding with its own representatives abroad in French, knowledge of which had become essential for advancement in government service” (Lewis, 1982, p.88 as cited in Hanioglu, 2001: 95).

The class dynamics of this intellectual climate change are even more interesting. The records of books owned by members of the Ottoman ruling class in the mid-nineteenth century demonstrate that low-ranking officials continued to read classical catechisms whereas higher-ranking officials had shifted their interest to European books. Hanioglu notes that Westernization remained primarily a class-oriented phenomenon into the late nineteenth century but that European manners and ideas became more widespread afterwards. “Accordingly, the taste for things European began to be associated with generational attributes and urban living, rather than strictly with class orientation” (Hanioglu, 2001:96).²⁰

The second half of the nineteenth century also witnessed the emergence of a vibrant political discourse among the increasingly literate Ottoman urban public who, through newspapers and magazines, had become a fertile ground for spreading new ideas.²¹ In

²⁰ It is interesting to note that the contemporary interest in English / American manners and ideas in general and English language in particular may similarly be associated with generational attributes and urban living, rather than with class orientation. Otherwise, it would be difficult to explain the popularity of EFL mostly among younger generations and urban populations.

²¹ Newspapers were often read loud in coffeehouses to the illiterate and therefore reached a wider public. The lively debate in the press also stimulated the evolution of Ottoman

1865, a group of young intellectuals, westernized bureaucrats, journalists and some modern-oriented ulema belonging to the lower stratum of the educated bourgeoisie, began to spread their ideas among the literate public (Mardin, 1988: 31). They were known as “Young Ottomans” and differentiated themselves from the ruling intelligentsia in their concerted attempt to synthesize Islamic tradition with the ideals of European Enlightenment. In agitating against the over-westernized bureaucratic elite of the country, who had almost completely monopolized the resources of the modern state apparatus, the Young Ottomans combined both a critique of the ‘aristocratic’ political establishment of the Empire and their own aspirations to participate in the power resources provided by the modern sectors of Ottoman society” (Jung & Piccoli, 2001: 44-5). Their political opposition resulted in the promulgation of the first Ottoman constitution in 1876, shortly after Abdulhamid II’s succession to the throne, and in the opening of the first Ottoman Parliament in 1877.

The first parliamentarian phase of Ottoman politics witnessed important developments, which are worthy of discussion for their relevance to our overall analysis. Article 18 of the 1876 Constitution made Turkish the official language of the Ottoman state signaling the beginning of a process of linguistic consciousness, which, as we will discuss in the following chapter, culminated into a Language Revolution during the formative years of

Turkish from a flowery language of poets and a stilted idiom of bureaucrats to a dynamic medium for the exchange of new ideas among a wider public. State-led efforts to standardize and simplify the imperial language, amplified by the emergence of a lively press, the centralization of the bureaucracy, and the adoption of a more inclusive state ideology- Ottomanism- made Ottoman Turkish accessible to more people than ever before. Nevertheless, the language of government did not penetrate below the upper middle classes of society. (Hanioglu, 2008)

the Turkish Republic. More interestingly, Article 18 held that “a prerequisite for Ottoman subjects’ employment in State service is that they know Turkish, which is the official language of the State” (Lewis 1999: 16). As such, it suggested that upward social mobility had linguistic conditions. Yet, as Eraydin Virtanen notes, there was no agreement as to which language variety (the palace or the folk language) should become the standard language. Spoken Turkish had various dialects making it difficult to formulate a standard written language. The problem became evident during the first assembly of Parliament. “The differences between the various dialects of Turkish were so great that the secretaries were unable to type the speeches of the members of parliament” (Karal 1994: 61 cited in Eraydin Virtanen 2003).

Another important impact of the first constitutional era was on the social habitus of the Young Ottomans. Although the latter initially criticized Tanzimat reformers for having an overly aristocratic attitude and neglecting the people, they themselves developed similar attitudes and failed to overcome the centuries-old dichotomy between the ruled and the rulers due to seducing nature of their new social habitus. The huge gap between the court and the people was perpetuated in the habitus of the new elite, which saw itself in the position of enlightened teacher (Jung and Piccoli, 2001: 55). The constitutional era ended when Sultan Abdulhamid abolished the parliamentary regime in 1878 starting presumably the most debated period in late Ottoman history. The reign of Abdulhamid II lasted 32 years and ended on 23 July 1908 with the restoration of the constitution after the so-called Young Turk revolution.

The Hamidian era inherited an impressive overall total of 443 rustiye schools, 18 idadis, more than 11 institutions of higher education and 1 sultani from the Tanzimat period (Alkan, 2000). These seemingly successful quantitative achievements of Abdulhamid's predecessors, however, were symptomatic of an "inchoate and unevenly advanced" educational system, which largely ignored the secondary level and thus impaired a smooth advancement of students from elementary to higher schools and then the channeling of graduates to government offices (Fortna, 2001). By the time Abdulhamid II took over, it became clear that the Tanzimat efforts could not produce the kind of systemic education system the Ottoman statesmen dreamed of achieving. Moreover, despite all the emphasis on developing rustiye schools, Tanzimat educational change could not produce a significant increase in literacy which, when defined in terms of legible handwriting, was still considered as the crucial qualification for state offices, thus as the minimum criteria for upward social mobility (Alkan, 2000).

At the beginning of the Hamidian era, many provinces, especially those in commercially developed regions, where people realized the importance of education as a channel of social mobility, were sending pleas to the central government for the foundation of modern educational institutions and the renovation of old ones (Alkan, 2000). These pleas also expressed concerns about the implications of educational activities of local communities, neighboring countries and foreign missionaries for the territorial integrity of the empire and the loyalty of its subjects. They urged Ottoman authorities to get involved in this competition and not let others steal the "hearts and the minds" of the imperial subjects in general and of Turkish Muslims in particular (Fortna, 2001).

The metaphoric language used in these provincial pleas provides interesting evidence of how Hamidian statesmen perceived educational competition. Foreign schools are described as a “contagion” and a “vermin”. The competition, which is considered as a biological menace, is said to be “afflicting”, “threatening”, and in danger of “spreading” to other areas of the empire (Fortna, 2001: 85). As I will explore in subsequent chapters the language used in contemporary Turkey about foreign providers of education in general and EFL skills in particular is much more politically correct and far less offensive than the one used in late Ottoman era.

There are two other interesting points to note about these provincial pleas. First, although provincial administrators were mostly motivated by a sense of fear for the future of the state, provincial self-interest was another factor in their demands for the building of schools (Fortna, 2001). Indeed, such pleas proved to be effective in bringing not only more educational investment into the provinces but also various infrastructures ranging from railways to numerous administrative networks. Second, the provincial pleas of the Hamidian era never questioned what they deemed to be the proper response. Provincial governors believed that fending off the incursion of the foreign educational offensive required an Ottoman response but they never attempted to question the ground rules of competition that had been set by Westerners. They all agreed that Ottoman central government should establish similarly modern schools that would successfully compete with and provide alternative to those of foreigners.

As Fortna (2001) points out, late Ottoman statesmen were suggesting a kind of import-substituting industrialization policy in the sphere of education. It is interesting that this kind of policy response was welcome not only by the statesmen of the late Ottoman period but also by various Turkish governments of the last few decades. As we will discuss in the next two chapters, the increasing failure of state schools to teach foreign language skills well prompted Turkish governments to establish elite public schools, which would successfully compete with foreign schools in Turkey and/or supplement them in the face of a growing demand and supply gap. Like their predecessors of the late Ottoman era, Turkish governments did not problematize the ground rules of competition set by Westerners. They participated in the competitive game by establishing their own competitive schools.

Educational competition, which was perceived to threaten the Ottoman Empire, was confirmed also by the reports of inspector generals sent to the provinces in the Hamidian era. Sakir Pasha, who inspected the province of Anatolia region from 1895 to 1900, reported that he was struck by the contrasting opportunities that existed for the non-Muslim and Muslim populations. He concluded that, due to the education being provided by foreign missionary schools, the country's commerce and wealth was passing into the hands of the non-Muslims day by day (Fortna, 2001:67)

Provincial pleas and inspection reports provide interesting details about how Ottoman statesmen perceived each group of educational adversaries in terms of their competitive advantages. Foreign missionary schools were described as able to command vast

financial, cultural and political resources. They were able to offer financial incentives to attract students, either by reducing fees or waiving them altogether (Fortna, 2001). It is important to stress that foreign schools were not considered a significant threat for the Turkish subjects of the Empire. Davison (1961) argues that Turkish subjects were, at least initially, suspicious of foreign and Christian activities and stayed away from missionary schools. Such a distance was also promoted by the educational arrangements of the traditional Ottoman millet system. Nevertheless Turkish people have gradually developed long lasting respect and trust for foreign missionary schools and began attending them by early twentieth century.²²

The challenges represented by cross border educational activities of nationalist agents from neighboring lands tended to be localized but were still considered significantly dangerous. In most cases, these neighboring lands used to be part of the Ottoman territory before they became autonomous or annexed to another sovereign (usually European) power. Therefore they had linguistic and cultural affinity with the Ottoman subjects across the borders. This enabled them to easily promote their nationalist agendas among the Ottoman subjects either by establishing schools in bordering provinces or encouraging them to study outside the Empire (Fortna, 2001).

²² By the 1870s, small groups of Turks regularly appeared on the rolls of some foreign schools. By the time of the 1908 Young Turk Revolution Turks in Robert College constituted between three and five percent of a student body which totaled over 300. In some of the French schools the percentages were higher: at the College St. Joseph in Kadikoy Istanbul, for instance, this was fifteen percent in 1900 and 56 percent in 1911. It is noted that Turks who attended foreign schools came either from heterodox religious backgrounds or from elite families already exposed to Western culture (Davison, 1961).

The schools of non-Muslim communities were usually perceived as a model to be emulated rather than a threat to be eliminated. What made non-Muslim community schools a potential model for the educational reforms of the Hamidian era was their success in cultivating moral qualities in their students by actively involving their respective clerics in educational processes. Moreover, Ottoman officials usually acknowledged the diligence of non-Muslim communities in education by stressing that the success of their schools was a result of their community dedication and financial sacrifice.²³ Reflecting on what made non-Muslim schools more successful led Ottoman officials to draw conclusions about why Muslim communities lagged behind in education. Part of the problem, they concluded, was the failure of Muslim notables to properly appreciate the significance of education and produce a “modern” educational network across the empire (Fortna, 2001).²⁴

In the absence of sufficient community dedication and financial sacrifice from Muslim communities, the Ottoman state had to take care of the gigantic task of providing education to its Muslim subjects and thus overcome their disadvantages vis-à-vis foreigners, neighbors and fellow millets. In order to overcome the chronic lack of funds, the Ottoman state also created an Education Fund in 1884 by increasing the amount of

²³ Community schools grew rapidly in the later nineteenth century, and often thanks to some significant foreign financial and educational support- from the Alliance Israelite for Jewish schools, from Greeks abroad and the University of Athens for Greek schools, and a little Armenian support from Russia for Armenian schools (Davison, 1961).

²⁴ It is interesting that while the Ottoman state was getting more involved in education, it was also problematizing the lack of enough private initiative in this domain. Successive governments of the late Republican era took a similar approach and encouraged the local notables and rich businessmen to get involved in education. Indeed, many schools and universities, which were built and then endowed to the Ministry of National Education over the last few decades, are the outcome of such state-encouraged private initiatives.

the tithe levied on agricultural production (Fortna, 2001). Prompted by the sense of urgency expressed in the provincial pleas and inspection reports, Hamidian regime initiated a massive educational investment at all levels. In this context, the replacement of traditional mektebs with new style ibtidais, and of their medrese background teachers with the graduates of modern teachers' schools, was accelerated (Alkan, 2000).

The scale of the task, however, was daunting and led the state to construct a parallel system rather than completely building on or adapting the existing Muslim schools (Fortna, 2001). As I will discuss in the next chapter, a similar strategy was also followed during the Republican era. Successive Turkish governments, urged by the necessity to improve overall record of public education in EFL teaching, constructed parallel systems rather than completely reforming or replacing existing problematic public schools. The introduction of the so-called selective Anatolian schools in the late 1950s is an instructive case, which we will discuss in the following chapter.

The main focus of Hamidian educational reforms was on the creation of more idadis, in an attempt to fill the gap between elementary and higher levels and complete the overall system. Somel (2001) suggests that this was due to the authoritarian-reformist ideology of Tanzimat educational statesmen the most prominent of whom was Rifat Sadik Pasa whose Ahlak Risalesi (the Booklet of Ethics) was widely instructed at both traditional and government mektebs between 1847 and 1876.

Rifat Sadik Pasa was an advocate of the legal protection of basic civil rights of imperial subjects as well as the encouragement of trade, industry and education. He was, however, also a defender of the concentration of political power in the hands of the Sublime Porte bureaucracy. His authoritarian-reformist attitude was paralleled in his view on education. While favoring the expansion of public education among the Ottoman subjects, Rifat Pasha also showed a degree of cautiousness concerning the political consequences of mass education. For him the general population should acquire only basic literacy. Professional education was to be reserved for those aiming to become civil servants, army officers or financial experts, because providing ordinary people a more comprehensive instruction might lead to a liberal outlook and even to disobedience and rebelliousness (Somel, 2001, p.62).

As with the lycee in France or the gymnasium in Germany, the Ottoman idadi was key to educational change during Hamidian era (Fortna, 2001:89). Not only did idadis expand numerically during this period but also provincial idadis were divided into agricultural, artisinal, and commercial subdivisions.²⁵ In the 1890s, mixed idadis began to become boarding schools, following the example of the Lycee de Galatasaray discussed in the previous section (Alkan, 2000; Fortna, 2001). With their relatively modern design and curriculum, it was hoped that idadis would strengthen the Ottoman state in educational

²⁵ According to Kodaman (1988) a total of 51 idadi schools have been founded between 1882 and 1894 only. Yet, the capacity problem of state education was not overcome even after years of energetic spurt of Ottoman school construction in the provinces under the reign of Abdulhamid II. The official Ottoman education yearbook of 1898 suggests that, the number of students that the government schools could accommodate in Beirut province for instance, was outnumbered by a ratio of two-to-one by foreign schools and of three-to-one by millet and foreign institutions combined. (Fortna, 2001: 53)

competition against the proselytizing foreign missionaries, the highly motivated nationalist educators of neighboring states, and the schools of indigenous minorities. With the ideological stamp of the Hamidian regime, however, both the idadis and their role model Galatasaray went through important transformations, illustrating a shift from mere “adoption” to “adaptation” of Western education.²⁶ Such a shift was deemed necessary to meet the increasingly challenging demands of the present on the one hand, and to minimize the associated political and moral costs for the future on the other.

The assignment of a Muslim director, Ali Suavi, to the Lycee de Galatasaray in 1877 is a symbolic indication of this transition from “adoption” to “adaptation” of Western educational model. The new director of Galatasaray was best known for “anti-Western and anti-bureaucratic broadsides as well as his general views on education and the importance of resisting foreign influence in the Empire”. He was also known as an advocate of Turkish as the language of instruction in all Ottoman schools. He introduced various changes, which made the Lycee de Galatasaray a more Muslim, a more Ottoman, as well as a more effective institution and thus formulated a model to be emulated in the rest of Ottoman idadis (Fortna, 2001).

As Alkan (2000) puts it, Hamidian regime was fighting a “cold war” within the sphere of education. In line with the spirit of such wars, the state not only used conventional weapons, such as building new schools and reforming existing ones wherever possible,

26 As a result, schools originally conceived, under considerable European pressure, to educate Muslim and non-Muslim children together in a “mixed” environment were now referred to routinely as “Muslim schools” (pp. 241-243).

but it also mobilized unconventional mechanisms of control over all educational institutions, Islamic, foreign and non-Muslim alike to thwart any separatist or nationalist aims. Thus, the Ottoman Ministry of Education hired inspectors to monitor the private lives of students in general and of Muslim students in particular who were attending idadis and higher schools. The frequenting of Galatasaray students of “inappropriate” places such as beerhouses and café chantants located in the neighborhood of their school, was causing unrest among educational authorities: “Increasingly concerned with the pernicious effects of Western European influence and with the concomitant moral dissipation of its subjects the Hamidian state worked to overhaul the curriculum of its schools and to assert itself as the moral guardian of its children” (Fortna, 2001).

By expanding boarding schools all over the imperial territory, by emphasizing religion and ethics in the curriculum, and by recruiting promising graduates to various government offices, the Hamidian state got pervasively involved in the ways its young subjects conducted their lives and created a society of discipline. The introduction and expansion of ethics courses into the curriculum of various educational levels during the Hamidian era deserves particular attention in this context. The ethics courses sought to teach how to be ideal believers/subjects who direct their obedience and loyalty solely to the Sultan and willingly undertake duties such as military service and tax payment. As such, the religion as a reference point acquired a more worldly nature, sowing the seeds of a subsequent transition from “subject ethnics” to “citizen ethics” (Alkan, 2000).

Other mechanisms of discipline included closing some foreign schools that were found to be operating illegally, hiring traveling ulama to inveigh against the dangers of missionary schooling, and deploying a growing number of inspectors to monitor the competition (Fortna, 2001). The regulation of non-Muslim and foreign schools also involved the assignment of a specific educational director to oversee their teaching certificates, curricula and textbooks. More significantly, Turkish was made a compulsory course in community and foreign schools (Alkan, 2000). This plan, which pragmatically blended both conventional and unconventional weapons, is what makes the Ottoman response to educational competition a locally developed solution to the globally pressing demands of a world time. Ottoman educators were not only bringing foreign educational elements into the service of the state but also simultaneously indigenizing them (Fortna, 2001).

While the collective agency of the Ottoman rulers was instrumental in designing this indigenous solution, it was not always enough to secure the outcomes of educational change. The latter was also a function of the individual agency of the students who did not necessarily develop uniform hearts and minds. In other words, as Fortna (2001) successfully demonstrates, Ottoman rulers attempted to create their own solutions to educational problems in a fairly competitive fashion but they did not necessarily succeed in producing “cadres” of like-minded graduates who emerged with a similar worldview.

Fortna (2001) acknowledges that the unprecedented active involvement of the Ottoman state in public education transformed its relations with its subjects and that kind of new relationship was critical to the pre-eminence of the nation-state in the twentieth century.

Nevertheless, he takes issue with the overemphasis on state power and the depiction of the state as assuming a mechanistic role resulting in the effacement of the individual in the educational processes. Similarly, he acknowledges that Hamidian regime had a strong interest in creating an orderly, centralized system producing loyal subjects. Nevertheless, his analysis of disciplinary records of individual students suggests that Hamidian schools did not function like “Napoleon’s dream of mechanical precision and certainly not like Jeremy Bentham’s celebrated Panopticon” which Michel Foucault later used in his analysis of Western society. By focusing on Ottoman collective and individual agency, Fortna goes beyond normative judgments and presents the Hamidian classroom as necessarily conflicted and contested, and not as part of an inevitable process that itself aided and abetted the meta-narratives of westernization, secularization, and modernization.

A more nuanced approach to state schooling, is, moreover, supported by contemporary developments, which suggest that schooling may be less important in human development than we have been led to believe. Scaling back expectations for what was achieved within the four walls of a school is not something that comes naturally, particularly for those of us who seem to spend an inordinate amount of our lives studying and working in educational institutions, but it may nevertheless be necessary to avoid some of the pitfalls that stem from overstating their effects (Fortna, 2001:22).

Fortna (2001) also draws attention to the limitations of binary categorizations in understanding the cultural dynamics of educational change in late Ottoman era. He demonstrates that not only the so-called modern, secular and western educated bureaucrats but also the traditional, religious and medrese educated ulema played a positive role in educational reforms. In this context he reminds us how ulema religiously legitimized educational change in the face of the demands of the present and actively

encouraged Muslim families to send their children to modern Ottoman institutions instead of foreign missionary schools. According to Fortna, both of these seemingly opposing groups were caught between hope- seemingly boundless optimism they had for the power of education to effect positive change- and fear- a specter of education as menace when deployed by less than friendly actors, foreign, neighboring, or internal (Fortna, 2001: 34).

According to Fortna (2001), late Ottoman rulers' increasing involvement in the cultivation of its subjects was part of a global trend for state provisioning of education buttressed by an economic program. Competitiveness was the byword of an increasingly Darwinian recasting of an earlier mercantilism. Education was seen as an economic imperative, as a means of assuring the competitiveness of a given nation vis-à-vis its rivals and neighbors (Fortna 2001, 46). Similarly, we may suggest that the Turkish governments' direct or indirect involvement in the expansion of the EFL provision over the last few decades can be seen as part of another global trend whereby the learning of EFL is constructed as the only medium for keeping abreast with the "demands of another – this time neo-liberal- present".

One final but significant aspect of Hamidian educational plan concerns the unprecedented state involvement in the imaginary processes whereby young subjects constructed historical and territorial bonds of association. Alkan (2000) notes that Hamidian history books attributed the origin and sacredness of the Ottoman state to two sources: The first was a genealogy linking Turkish people to "Prophet Noah", His son "Yafes" and His

grandson “Turk”. This made Turkish people ancestors to Hungarians, Bulgarians and Wallachians and thus relatives of European nations. Through the second, the Ottoman state as the political and religious transmitter of Islam was also related to the Arabs. A parallel but presumably more significant process of imagination was made possible through geography courses. In an attempt to promote a renewed sense of loyalty to the empire and its ruler, Hamidian regime introduced what Benedict Anderson called logo-maps into the classrooms of state run rustiyye and idadi schools where students spent hours to develop not only cartographic literacy but also a sense of unitary territory to identify with (Fortna, 2001).

The map consciousness created through the introduction of logo maps allowed the students to see their political and geographical milieu in two-dimensional terms. Students could now see their own position both with respect to the capital and with respect to their fellow subjects in other provinces, most of which doubtless had been mere abstractions before the maps’ arrival. Secondly the observers could now be encouraged to look beyond the borders of their own locality and to perceive the relative position of their province and country in world perspective (Fortna, 2001: 200).

What was ironic is that the empire was attempting to render its young generation geographically literate at the very time as its borders were contracting so rapidly. Moreover, while the same generation was expected to become ideal believers/subjects and then join the ranks of loyal elites, they were emerging as advocates of positivist line of thought. Indeed, those who formed the “participatory-democratic” and “secularist citizen” political subculture known as Young Turks movement in 1889 were the graduates of the very schools established or reformed by Abdulhamid II (Fortna, 2001). The organization behind the Young Turk Movement, the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), found its most fertile breeding ground for its clandestine activities

particularly among the students and graduates of civil and military schools. Their opposition finally resulted in a civil and military insurgency demanding the restoration of the constitution. Sultan Abdulhamid had to give in and a new phase, known as Second Constitutional era began in 1908.

Lewis (1961) defines the Young Turk revolution as a patriotic movement of Muslim Turks. The centrality of Turkishness in the Young Turk revolution becomes even more evident when we consider their language policies. As we have already noted, the language of the ethnic group that founded the Empire had almost never been granted a prestigious status. Rather, that privilege was assigned to various foreign languages such as Arabic, Persian and French. As the state became more multilingual and multiethnic by expansion, the language of the main ethnies was unexpectedly pushed into the colloquial domain. Unlike in Africa, it was not the colonial powers who imposed a foreign language upon the Turkish people but the rulers and intelligentsia (Yagmur 2001: 408 cited in Eraydin Virtanen 2003). When the first constitution made Turkish the official language of the Ottoman State this centuries-old subordination was partially eliminated. The Young Turk regime took another radical step in this direction and made Turkish compulsory not only in primary and secondary schools but also in courts, leading to resentment among the non-Turkish subjects of the population (Eraydin Virtanen 2003).

Despite the predominance of Muslim Ottomans of ethnically or linguistically Turkish background, the Young Turks were internally stratified, which resulted in subsequent power struggles. They were broadly divided into two main groups: the Liberals and the

Unionists, with the latter being mostly associated with CUP and consisting of lower middle-class of civil servants, officers and young intellectuals” (Ahmad 1993: 33-5 cited in Jung and Piccoli 2001: 67). The increasing external security constraints of the Ottoman Empire helped strengthen the hands of the Unionists. In 1913, they managed to consolidate their regime through a coup d’etat, which left the Palace only with formal responsibilities (Jung and Piccoli 2001).

According to the statistics published at around 1906, the Second Constitutional era inherited an impressive total of 8324 schools from the Hamidian regime.²⁷ These included 7739 modern ibtidais, 88 idadis, 459 rustiyes, 10 institutions of higher education and 28 teachers’ schools. The Second Constitution projected to continue educational reforms with particular emphasis on the expansion of sultanis-institutions of higher education (Alkan, 2000). Indeed, by 1914 the number of sultanis had reached an impressive 34. Yet, under unfavorable conditions including the Balkan Wars, which resulted in the loss of economically and commercially developed territories, the onset of World War I and chronic fiscal problems, Second Constitutional era witnessed a numerical regression of overall schools. The statesmen of the Second Constitutional era concentrated its efforts to bring in quantitative change by putting its own ideological stamp on education. They sought to disseminate a participatory political culture of a fairly secular and national nature and to promote a Turkish-Islamic synthesis through curricular changes. The indoctrination process was helped by courses such as

²⁷ Hamidian regime was not only involved in massive educational investment but also tabulating its achievements (both) for its own internal purposes and a more public display of such progress. Accordingly, the Ministry of Education began producing its own yearbooks as of 1889. (Fortna, 2001)

introduction to sociology, political science, civics, ethics and economics. The courses on economics sought to promote attitudes and behaviors conducive to the country's development by stressing the vitality of saving money for capital accumulation and the importance of entrepreneurship and domestic production (Alkan, 2000).

The Second Constitutional era also witnessed some structural changes in the educational system. The ibtidai and rustiye levels were combined and compulsory elementary schooling was thereby increased to six years.²⁸ Women were provided more educational opportunities with the introduction of more idadis, sultanis and a university for girls. Teachers' schools also underwent reorganization.

Soon after the onset of the Second Constitutional era, a series of nationalistic regional insurrections erupted in the Balkan and Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire. Balkan states of Serbia, Montenegro, Greece, and Bulgaria set up a military alliance against the Ottoman Empire. The two rounds of Balkan Wars in 1912 and 1913 resulted in the loss of Ottoman lands of Albania, Macedonia and Thrace. It was, however, the military defeats of the First World War, which paved the way for the ultimate collapse of the Ottoman Empire. In August 1914, two German cruisers entered the imperial waters to escape the British Mediterranean fleet and then got incorporated to the Ottoman navy with the authorization of the pro-German faction of the Young Turk regime. When the same cruisers soon spearheaded a surprise attack on Russia under the command of their

²⁸ According to the statistics, at the onset of World War I, there were 1,465,552 children at the age of compulsory education. But the schooling rate was only 16.9 %. The rate for boys and girls were 26.7 % and 6.6 % respectively (Alkan, 2000).

German admiral, the Ottoman Empire was automatically drawn into the First World War as a member of the German-Austrian alliance (Jung and Piccoli 2001; Hanioglu 2008). Defeated on multiple fronts, the Ottoman Empire had to accept the bitter terms of the armistice of Mudros of 31 October 1918. The leadership of the Young Turk regime fled the Empire leaving Sultan Mehmet VI to rule. The armistice ended the involvement of the Ottoman Empire in the First World War but did not stop the expansionist ambitions of the victorious allies, which subsequently engaged in an active partition of the remaining imperial lands through continuous military occupation.²⁹ In August 1920, the Sultan had to accept the terms of the Treaty of Sevres whereby the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire were literally taken over by Western powers.³⁰ A National Movement of Resistance, however, was already underway in Anatolian mainland of the Empire, under the leadership of an Ottoman army officer, Mustafa Kemal, who was assigned as the new inspector general of the Ottoman ninth army³¹. On

²⁹ Woodrow Wilson's famous Fourteen Points of 1918 set three principles of partition: sovereignty for the Turkish portion of the empire; security of life and an unmolested opportunity for the autonomous development of non-Turkish nationalities; and the permanent opening of the Dardanelles under international guarantees as a free passageway for the ships and commerce of all nations (Hanioglu 2008: 192).

³⁰ The treaty foresaw the formation of French and Italian zones of occupation in the southeast and southwest, the cession of much of western Anatolia to Greece, and the establishment of two independent states, Armenia and Kurdistan in the east and southeast. The residue of the territory was to remain Ottoman. Istanbul, while remaining the seat of the Ottoman government and Caliphate, was to become an international city, with free navigation through the Straits controlled by an international commission. The Ottoman state was to have a token army and navy without tanks, heavy artillery, airplanes, or battleships. The Ottoman budget was to be placed under the supervision of an Allied financial commission (Hanioglu 2008: 196).

³¹ Mustafa Kemal is presumably the most prominent of those late Ottoman military elites, who owe their upward social mobility to their knowledge of Western languages and literature. He learned French during his schooling at a modern military school of the late Ottoman era. Interestingly enough, however, his knowledge of French language and culture reached perfection only through his exposure to rather informal processes of

the premise that the Ottoman Sultan was stuck in Istanbul under the occupation of western allies and thus could not do much to save the Empire, Mustafa Kemal took his new post as an opportunity to promote the idea that it was the time for the people to take over the responsibility for liberating the country, even if this may sometimes meant disobedience to the imperial authority.

The National Movement of Resistance based its claims on the principle of self-determination for the “Turkish parts of the Ottoman Empire”, the twelfth of the Fourteen Principles of US President Woodrow Wilson (Zurcher 2000: 163). The first significant organized effort in this context took place in July 1919 with the inaugural congress of the Association for the Defence of the Rights of Eastern Anatolia in Erzurum. Mustafa Kemal was elected as the chairman of the Congress and drafted the first version of the so-called Misak-i Milli (National Pact), a document expressing the determination of the National Resistance Movement to maintain the territorial integrity of the country as it stood when the Mundros armistice was signed against the claims of occupation forces.

The National Pact was also adopted by the politically emasculated and subordinated Ottoman Parliament, which assembled in Istanbul in January 1920. When the British forces closed down the Ottoman Parliament, representatives of the National Resistance Movement convened in Ankara to open the First Turkish Grand National Assembly in 23 April 1920. The National Resistance Movement soon monopolized the means of physical

learning. Mango (2008) notes that Mustafa Kemal sought to improve his French skills by attending the summer courses provided by French missionaries and that he later used his French in his correspondences with a young Italian woman, the widow of an Ottoman officer (Mango, 2008, p.153).

force and recorded military victories first in the eastern and then southern Anatolian fronts, resulting in the signing of bilateral treaties with Russians and the French-Italian alliance respectively. The decisive victory came with the defeat of the Greek army in the Western Anatolian front and the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne in 24 July 1923 annulling the Sevres Treaty and granting the Turkish Grand National Assembly the right of national self-determination over the Anatolian mainland as defined by Misak-i Milli. Moreover, although non-Muslim minorities were granted most of the rights they enjoyed under the Ottoman millet system and that such provisions were defined as obligations of international concern placed under the guarantee of the League of Nations, Capitulations were completely abolished. Yet, the New Republic had to agree to pay two thirds of Ottoman debts and not change its customs tariffs until 1929 (Lausanne, 1923). These unfavorable economic provisions of the Lausanne Treaty restrained the economic development of Turkey, which had inherited an already impoverished territory and population.

Lausanne negotiations also resulted in an agreement on the exchange of Greek Orthodoxs and Muslims living in Turkish and Greek soils respectively, with far reaching demographic, economic, cultural and political implications for both polities. Not only the sheer number ³² but also the qualifications of the exchanged populations had been decisive on the overall impact:

³² According to Hirschon (2003), the total number of Christians who entered Greece at this time was about 1.2 million. For the tiny Greek state, a nation totaling around 4.5 million, the influx represented a massive increase by one-quarter of its population in just two years. The number of Muslims expelled from the Greek state and received by Turkey after 1923 was relatively small -350,000 in an estimated total of 13,5 million or under 4

Anatolian Greeks represented not only a huge addition to the existing population (of Greece) but also a generally more educated and wealthier group than the indigenous Greeks. (Therefore) the principal consequence of the(ir) departure was the subsequent decimation of what could best be described as the nascent bourgeoisie of the Ottoman Empire, i.e., those who had achieved a degree of independence from the state in exploiting a market potential and in creating the foundations of a civil society in the form of a network of autonomous generations” (Keyder 2003: 51).

More importantly, the population exchanges of 1923, together with the Armenian deaths and deportations during the First World War, created a relatively more homogeneous (Ottoman) population, one that is free of ‘alien’ ethnic elements, where the understanding of ‘alierness’ was based on a religiously defined concept of ethnicity (Keyder 2003: 39-42). This provided the basis for the official nationalist ideology and Turkish identity construct of the new polity to be emerged out of the ashes of the Ottoman Empire. On 29 October 1923, the Turkish Grand National Assembly proclaimed the establishment of the Republic of Turkey. Mustafa Kemal was assigned as the first president and Ankara as the capital city of the new Republic. The new president assigned Ismet Inonu, one of his close allies within the military elite, as the first prime minister of the Republic.

2.4 Conclusions

This chapter sought to provide an overview of the pre-Republican Turkish history with particular reference to the educational, cultural, economic and political backgrounds of the current interest of Turkish people in learning prestigious Western languages in

percent (pp.14-5). Accordingly, Greece’s Muslim population and Turkey’s Christian population in their respective totals have both decreased from 20 to 6 percent (Hirschon 2003, Keyder 2003).

general and EFL in particular. It sought to demonstrate that the current popularity of alternative media of EFL learning can best be understood if we take into account that the knowledge of prestigious and often foreign languages was almost always constructed as a valuable quality granting status in the Turkish society.

The acquisition of such linguistic skills constituted a sphere for governmental practices resulting in or from reconfigurations of territory, population and power within and across borders. During territorial expansion, Ottoman rulers' involvement in regulating this sphere was limited to securing the cultivation of religious, military and civil cadres through prestigious educational institutions such as Medrese and Enderun which recruited only very talented students. The education of ordinary subjects, however, was left to their respective communities which, according to the millet system, were allowed to establish their own schools.

This indifference, which can be justified with reference to Islamic imperative to maintain respect for and justice among various religious communities was subsequently replaced by active engagement in educational sphere as a response to changes in domestic and international configurations of power from the eighteenth century onwards. In order to curb the increasingly evident educational superiority of Non-Muslim communities and the politically harmful educational competition fueled by the expansion of foreign missionary schools, all teaching many practical and Western language skills, Ottoman rulers introduced a modern public education system by first adopting then adapting Western model. Through such educational and other neighboring practices Ottoman

rulers constituted themselves first as father kings and then as moral guardians of the governed. Such constitutions objectified the governed first as children to be treated equally and then disciplined for their own sake.

The modernization of education in general and the increasing exposure to Western languages and ideas in particular had indirect, but far-reaching, political consequences. The project of teaching and boarding students from different communities together and various aspects of the modern curricula produced unexpected results with individual millets eventually going their own nationalist ways. The same educational reforms were also responsible for the cultivation of the cadres of Young Turk Movement, which had a decisive role in the course of critical military and political developments of the late Ottoman / early Republican eras. The majority of Republican leaders, including Mustafa Kemal, who emerged as the leader of the National Resistance Movement and then the first president of the new Republic of Turkey, were graduates of the modern military schools. Their cultural capital of Western knowledge proved to be instrumental in their rise to positions of political power, confirming once more the crucial role the knowledge of prestigious languages has played in upward social mobility throughout Turkish history. Moreover, as we shall see in the next chapter, their ownership of such cultural capital also helped them to legitimize their monopoly as the enlightened teacher of the people, leaving little room for graduation for their subject students.

CHAPTER 3

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF REPUBLICAN TURKEY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will focus on the Republican era of Turkish history and highlight that the knowledge of prestigious and often Western languages continued to constitute a valuable quality increasing prospects of upward social mobility. The first section of this chapter will discuss the political ideology of the early Republican ruling elites with particular reference to the educational and linguistic reforms of the formative years of the new polity.

Rather than providing an educational historiography of the Republican era³³, I will focus on the changes in educational and other policies which had direct and indirect implications for the constitution of certain foreign languages as prestigious and the governing of Turkish citizens through the processes of foreign language acquisition. I will demonstrate how the Republican ruling elites have sustained their elite status through

³³ There is a significant body of Turkish scholarship on the educational policies and practices of Republican era. This includes the influential and almost classical studies of Faik Resat Unat (1964), Yahya Akyuz (1982), Osman Kafadar (1997) and Necdet Sakaoglu (1991 and 2003). According to Somel (2011), these studies contributed to political and cultural discourses which constituted the educational reforms of the early Republican period as dramatic ruptures from the traditional and religious structures of the Ottoman Empire or even as the first attempts to modernize education in Turkish history. Drawing on his critical account of Turkish educational historiography produced over the last three decades, Somel notes that these studies are now being increasingly challenged with the emergence of a new paradigm that highlights the continuities between the Ottoman and the Republican periods.

their competence in the very language they constructed for all Turkish citizens, thereby defining and imposing educational and other terms of upward social mobility.

The second section will discuss the post-second World War era, which saw the transition from a single party regime to a multiparty democracy in Turkey. I will analyze the implications of the growing economic and political integration with the West for the educational policies of Turkish governments with particular reference to how the learning of Western languages came to be promoted and justified. The chapter concludes by drawing attention to the historical trajectory of the political, economic and cultural logics of constructing and variably defining identities, memberships and connections in terms of the knowledge of certain prestigious, and often foreign, languages in Turkey.

3.2 Early Republican Period: Nation Building and Language Reform

The Republic of Turkey was founded as the successor to the Ottoman Empire. The ruling elites of the young Republic immediately engaged in a long process of detachment from the past for the construction of a distinct (historically de-contextualized) present and future. Despite the country's history of armed struggle for liberation from Western occupation, however, republican elites never took a hostile attitude against the West and considered it as a source to be emulated. Accordingly, they continued the path of westernization taken by their Ottoman predecessors but with the aim of building a strong modern nation-state.

Given the active military role European states played in the partition of the Ottoman Empire and then still fresh memories of the War of Independence from Western invasion, it would be naive to claim that Turkish nationalism was free of xenophobia during the formative years of the Republic. Yet the Republican elites would to overcome negative feelings for European states among the populace through a pragmatic and positive reconstruction of the West as the only source of civilization.

The leadership of the National Resistance Movement had been successful in creating solidarity among hitherto conflicting groups who took part in the movement, by promoting a sense of common enemy: the Western forces of occupation. Once this common enemy was defeated in military terms and independence secured, however, the ruling elites had to find other means and ways of silencing internal opposition to their claim to rule and to do so according to their own ideology. This involved the monopolization of the means of symbolic reproduction backed by a monopoly over the means of physical force.³⁴

³⁴ The mobilization of the means of physical force to oppress and punish opposition, found its legal legitimization in the provisions of the Law on the Maintenance of Order, which was passed by the Turkish Grand National Assembly in 1924 to deal with the Kurdish insurgency. The independent tribunals, which were reinstated around the same time, were used to punish those deemed anti-revolutionary insurgents, but mostly Muslim Kurdish citizens, which counted for 20 percent of the overall population. Since they were predominantly Muslim, The Lausanne Treaty did not recognize Kurdish citizens of Turkey as a minority, leaving the protection of their political and cultural rights to the mercy of the Republican rulers. Zurcher notes that the Law on the Maintenance of the Order was also used to suppress the then nascent Turkish press, limiting the freedom of expression only to those newspapers, which shared the official ideology of the Kemalist regime. According to his estimates, 7500 people were arrested and 660 were executed under the Law (Zurcher 2004: 173)

The Republican People's Party (RPP), founded by Mustafa Kemal in 1923, which dominated the single-party politics of the country over the next two decades, was the major instrument in the consolidation of the Kemalist regime (Jung and Piccoli 2001). Throughout the early Republican era, the ruling party focused on creating the conditions necessary for the “subordination of religious power to secular authority, suppression of sectarian collective identities in the interest of national unification, and the making of a new social class that would provide political, economic and cultural leadership” (Rutz & Balkan 2008: 40). While those living in the towns and cities (i.e. bureaucrats, officers, teachers, doctors, lawyers and entrepreneurs of larger commercial enterprises) largely supported the Kemalist revolution, “the craftsmen and small traders formed the backbone of the suppressed traditional culture” (Zurcher 2004: 194).

Like the Unionists of the late Ottoman era, the ruling elites of the Kemalist regime drew on their “organizational and cognitive knowledge of their Western style education as their particular power resource. The officers, bureaucrats and professionals of the republican elite based their legitimization to rule on knowledge (Mardin 1971: 201 cited in Jung and Piccoli 2001). On the basis of this knowledge, the ruling elites defined the principles of their official ideology as nationalism, statism, revolutionism, populism, republicanism, and secularism, principles that became the symbol of the RPP emblem in the form of six arrows and were then incorporated into the Turkish constitution (Ahmad 1993:63).³⁵

³⁵ Some scholars argue that most of these principles were already under implementation in the late Ottoman era and that they therefore evidence a case for continuity, a position which is strongly rejected by those subscribing to the Kemalist ideology. To the extent they managed going beyond mere ideological opposition, this rather new trend did indeed bring a more nuanced analysis of Turkish political history. For a detailed discussion of

Although all six principles were used as important pillars of the official ideology, secularism and nationalism have received the most emphasis in the efforts to transform the imperial religious legacy of the Ottoman Empire into a secular and modern Turkish nation-state. There were ideological grounds for the prominence of these principles:

Kemal and his circle believed (that) only scientific rationalism could form the basis for the modernization leap Turkey would have to make, and only a nation-state could give Turkey the coherence needed to compete with the national states of Europe. Because they thus emphasized secularism in their thinking on modernization, they did not find a nationality in which religion was the dominant factor a suitable basis for a nation-state. The Kemalist concept of nationality was ... firmly based on language, culture, and common purpose. Any individual within the Republic of Turkey, whatever his faith, who speaks Turkish, grows up with Turkish culture and adopts the Turkish ideal (was considered) as a Turk" (Zurcher 2000; 175-6).

Moreover, given the provisions of the Treaty of Lausanne, which assigned minority status to non-Muslim groups and granted them a broad range of rights, the Republican ruling elites chose to construct a common identity for the rest of the population, one that would claim to ultimately accommodate everyone living in Turkey. Accordingly, they adopted a territorial, civic, republican political model, which was based on the principle of equality before the law and constitutional citizenship. As a result they did not give official recognition to ethnic background at state level (Eraydin-Virtanen 2003).

this new trend and its contributions to the study of Turkish history see Karpat 2000, which provides a very good collection of chapters by a number of Turkish and non-Turkish scholars, including Alkan's piece on education. Alkan notes, "both periods regarded modernization as a fundamental purpose and used education as its key instrument to achieve it. Modern education also became the avenue for social mobility that broadened the recruitment basis for government service and thus created the modernist elites" (Alkan 2000: 132).

Structural factors, such as the demographic legacy of the Ottoman Empire, have been decisive in their choice of constructing a new identity based on linguistic but not ethnic / religious Turkishness. The results of 1927 census suggest that the young Republic inherited a religiously and linguistically less diverse population from the Ottoman Empire. The total population was recorded as approximately 13.6 million including people from 14 linguistic and 7 religious groups. However, Muslims accounted for 98 percent of the population. More importantly, almost 87 percent of the people spoke Turkish as their mother tongue (Eraydin-Virtanen 2003; Benli Altunisik & Tur 2005). Therefore the Kemalists had a demographic justification for creating a common standard Turkish language and using it in the construction of a new national identity around Turkishness and in the dissemination of official ideology among the people.

Although the search for a common standard language dates back to the late nineteenth century, when Ottoman reformers had to popularize their language to improve their communication with a larger proportion of the Ottoman subjects, these earlier attempts did not culminate in the language revolution of the republican era. In other words, the creation of an “imagined community” might have begun in the late Ottoman era, but as we shall see, the construction of a Turkish nation state through a common standard language and “print capitalism” took its full scale only during the formative years of the new Republic. The republican language revolution was promoted by “state intervention in language through a set of legislation and actions, and even public and official attitudes to language” (Colak, 2004: 68).

The most radical step taken in this context was the abandonment of the old Arabic alphabet and its replacement by a custom-made Latin script in 1928.³⁶ The reform of the alphabet involved the removal of one of the most important links with the imperial religious past and created a permanent loss of memory in the cultural and social landscape of Turkey. As Karpat (1985) notes, after the replacement of the old alphabet in 1928, there was a tendency to consider “literate” and to register as such only the people who could read the Latin script. Therefore, with the introduction of the new alphabet, the literacy rate, defined in terms of the ability to read and write in the new script, dropped to almost zero overnight. With the subsequent introduction of aggressive literacy programs, however, the literacy rate reached an estimated 20 and 34 percent in 1935 and 1950 respectively (Ahmad, 1993: 82).

Literacy campaigns involved not only the immediate introduction of the new alphabet to the school curriculum and the training of young army soldiers, but also the establishment of the so-called Millet Schools (Nation Schools) for the compulsory education of adults ranging from 16 to 40 years of age across the country. People were forced to attend these schools, and those who chose not to, or who did poorly at class, faced penalties (Colak 2004: 72).³⁷ The imperative to convey the official ideology to the people required making

³⁶ The new alphabet was introduced after long debates between different groups of the ruling elites. The Westernizers argued that the Arabic alphabet was the main cause for widespread illiteracy and ignorance. The Turkists and Islamists, on the other hand, claimed that illiteracy and ignorance stemmed from economic backwardness and lack of a true national education. Unlike their Young Turk predecessors, the Westernizers of the Republican era won their case mostly thanks to the settlement of the RPP’s authoritarian rule, which silenced the opposition of Turkists and Islamists (Colak 2004: 71)

³⁷ The police “visited cafes and backgammon dens, removing to school any culprits who could not produce certificates of their reading and writing ability...The penalties were

them literate in the new Turkish language as soon as possible, sometimes against their own will. The Republican efforts to increase literacy among the villagers are particularly worth examining since they offer interesting insights into the way knowledge of a language, in this case Republican Turkish, was constructed as a linguistic passport essential for acquiring access to and membership of an imagined community and holding positions of power in society.

In the face of significant shortages of schools in the countryside, the Republican rulers first attempted to increase literacy by using young local villagers, who had learned how to write and read in the new Turkish language during their military service. These villagers were given a six-month training after which they were assigned as teachers to their respective villages. When this policy did not bring significant changes, the Republican government tried the alternative offered by Ismail Hakki Tonguc, a leading pedagogue of the early Republican era. Tonguc introduced the so-called “Village Institutes” in which village youth were trained as primary school teachers with modern technical and agricultural skills, and then assigned to the countryside where they would share their knowledge with the locals”. They thus became the local extensions of the enlightened teacher of the people, an elite category, which Republican rulers constructed for themselves. The village institutes produced the expected results but did not last long. With the transition to multiparty democracy in the post-Second World War era, the opposition described them as elite institutions spreading communist propaganda. Therefore they were first transformed into ordinary teacher training centers in 1948 and

prescribed both for those who neglect to attend the schools and for those who attend but are lazy” (Allen, 1968:125 cited in Colak 2004: 87)

then completely abolished in 1950 by the Democratic Party government (Zurcher 2004: 194-5).

The dramatic growth of formal education institutions also played a key role in creating literate citizens able to read and write in the new script. The number of elementary, secondary and higher schools increased by 4 to 5 times from the early 1920s to early 1950s (Tekeli 1983). Indeed, education was considered so crucial to the creation and consolidation of a modern nation state that the Republican ruling elites began their educational reforms, immediately after the adoption of the Unification of Education Act by the Turkish Grand National Assembly.³⁸ Accordingly, all educational institutions inherited from the Ottoman era, including the Muslim and non-Muslim schools, were placed under the authority of the Ministry of National Education and were organized, as during the late Ottoman era, according to a three-layer system.

The Kemalist reformers framed their education project as totalizing in scope and revolutionary in intent. They included administrative reorganization, a reconceptualization of schooling and a change in the content of the curriculum. Most of the important reform were completed in the early years of the republic and persisted thereafter. The state brought different kinds of schools under a single centralized Ministry of National Education, eliminated the dual system of secular and religious administrations of similar kinds of schools, certified teachers, credentialed students, and regulated curricula and pedagogy (Rutz & Balkan 2008: 40)

³⁸ It is important to note that, despite his ideological commitment to the establishment of a unified modern national education system, Mustafa Kemal “never really expended the resources necessary to meet the challenges of the 1924 unification of education law. Instead, the final transformation to a modern education hierarchy owed much to the transformation of Turkey into an industrial state based on the accumulation of capital through state ownership of companies and the appearance of an educated new middle class” (Rutz & Balkan 2008: 40).

Printing constituted another medium for increasing literacy and creating a new national community. “After the revolution, facing the loss of their readers, newspapers and other periodicals took financial support from the government. Some newspapers, which criticized the change and other reforms, were deprived of the critical subsidy” (Colak 2004: 73).

Another important step in language revolution was the establishment of Turkish Linguistic Society in 1932, to terminate the subordination of Turkish to foreign languages and to bring it back to its prestigious position among world languages. In this context, words as well as grammatical and syntactical forms of Arabic and Persian origins, which were seen as symbols of a traditional, religious and “therefore” backward past, were eliminated.³⁹ Pure Turkish forms and words, which were collected from dialects and ancient texts, replaced those that had been eliminated.⁴⁰ Words of European origin, however, were exempt from this process. Consequently, radical linguistic purism created an artificial language that was increasingly difficult to understand by the very people it

³⁹ The Treaty of Lausanne granted broad-ranging linguistic rights to the non-Muslim groups (minorities) of the Turkish Republic. However, the languages of the rest of the population, who did not speak Turkish as their mother tongue, did not enjoy legal protection, making them subject to marginalization / oppression in the public sphere, mainly because of their perceived threat to national identity / unity. Yet, despite the prominence of Turkish - 90 percent of the population registered Turkish as their mother tongue- it is calculated that there are 34 living languages in contemporary Turkey (Eraydin-Virtanen 2003).

⁴⁰ An interesting aspect of this process of linguistic purification was the renaming of places and people according to Turkish history, culture and language. These efforts culminated into the 1934 Law of Surnames requiring everybody to take a family name, which would be of pure Turkish origin. The Turkish Grand National Assembly bestowed the surname of Ataturk (meaning the father of Turks) to Mustafa Kemal, the founder and president of the Republic. Ordinary people, however, had to go through a challenging process of “state-censored imagination” to formulate a unique pure Turkish surname for themselves and their families.

had been created for. Ottoman Turkish which was condemned as being the language of the palace was abandoned, but ironically enough, it was replaced “by a supposedly pure Turkish language, which might be considered as an equally esoteric and equally unintelligible class dialect” (Baskan 1986, p.109).

The ruling elites also took severe measures, ranging from legislation requiring the press to use pure Turkish in the newspapers to municipal decisions prohibiting public use of words and forms other than pure Turkish. The so-called People’s Houses, which were designed to provide a modern cultural habitus for ordinary people and thus bring them closer to the taste and manners of the ruling elites, were also used to promote pure Turkish both among those who spoke a different dialect of Turkish and those from non-Turkish and non-Muslim backgrounds (Colak 2004).

Despite all these measures, even the best-educated segments of the society faced significant difficulties in becoming literate in the newly created language. In the face of the “linguistic anarchy” (Colak 2004) they created, Mustafa Kemal and his cadres had to moderate their attitude towards linguistic purism. They justified their new attitude by developing the highly controversial Sun Language Theory, which argued that Turkish was the mother of all languages and that there was no need to eliminate words previously thought to be of foreign origin.⁴¹ The moderation of linguistic purism prevented the

⁴¹ The linguistic project of constructing Turkish language as the mother of all other languages was accompanied by the formulation of the so-called “Turkish Historical Thesis” by the Society of Turkish History. Accordingly, Turks were descendants of white (Aryan) inhabitants of Central Asia, who had been forced by drought and hunger to migrate to other areas such as China, Europe and the Near East. Therefore Turks were the

language revolution from further contradicting its own objectives and secured the development of a common standard language that is less alien to the citizens of the Republic. In the final analysis, therefore, the language revolution had at least a limited “functional utility in creating a more democratic society by bridging the gap between the languages of the elite and the masses” (Ayturk, 2004; 19).

Nevertheless, in contrast to the principle of populism, which projected the creation of a homogeneous modern nation state, free of class differences and privileges, the language-based divide continued to be a defining characteristic of Turkish society and politics. Colak (2004) notes that “the official language policies of this era began to spawn a state and intellectual elite who continued to benefit from its monopoly of the mastery of the official language. It was a symbol of a high, cultured and civilized life. Its use gave the right to take part in that life” (p.85). Again as Colak quite rightly remarks, the official Turkish promoted by the early Republican elites came to be a language that was, in the words of Eugene Weber, ‘about status, access and success’ (1996:296).

As noted previously, despite the emphasis on elimination of all foreign elements from Turkish language, the presence of Western words in the new vocabulary was tolerated. Knowledge of western languages continued to be perceived as a source of prestige in the society. In this sense, the divided cultural landscape inherited from the Ottoman Empire was not significantly changed and language continued to be instrumental to this division.

mother of all other civilizations and Anatolia, the territory inhabited by Turkish citizens, had been a Turkish country since time immemorial (Zurcher 2004:191)

Buyukkantarcio glu (2004) points out another, and presumably more important, aspect of the Republican language reforms, whereby not only did the knowledge of western languages continue to be a source of prestige but it became easier to learn them:

After the diaglossic differences between the written and spoken forms of Turkish were eliminated, learning a foreign language was not as difficult as it had been. During the Ottoman Empire, as foreign language teaching was simply based on the grammar teaching and the translation of the written texts, any learner had to be good at the written form of Turkish, the high variety of Ottoman. If a text was in French, for example, it was first analyzed in terms of the syntactic features of Arabic, and then was translated into the written Ottoman Turkish. For this reason, any western language learner had to know Arabic and Persian in order to make successful written translations into Turkish (Ergin 1977 cited in Demircan 1988). This means that the layperson, who spoke the low variety, had almost no chance of learning a western language unless he or she received education in one of the well-established schools and learned Arabic and Persian (Buyukkantarcio glu 2004: 39)

Certain scholars have drawn attention to this rather underemphasized dimension of the Turkish language reform. Lewis, for instance, holds that “the purpose of the change of alphabet was to break Turkey’s ties with the Islamic east and to facilitate communication domestically as well as with the Western world” (Lewis, 1999, p.27). Baskan (1986) goes even further and notes that with the alphabet reform “not only would Turkish children be able to learn reading and writing in a much shorter period, but they would also be able to learn European languages more easily and quickly” (1986, p.101). Therefore, I suggest that the republican elites were not only creating an imagined community around Turkish nationality by standardizing the Turkish language, but they were also preparing, perhaps unintentionally, the ground for the participation of future generations into processes of imagining other communities for themselves by facilitating the acquisition of Western languages. The fact that Western languages were made compulsory subjects of school

curriculum in 1924 for the “cultural enrichment” of Turkish citizens reflects this outlook (Sebuktekin, 1981, cited in Dogancay-Aktuna 1998).

The foreign languages taught in the state schools of the early republican era were German, French, English, Italian and Latin (Demircan 1988 cited in Cetintas & Genc, 2001). While French was still considered a highly prestigious language, English and German were increasing in popularity on the eve of the Second World War.

The state schools recruited most of their foreign language teachers from among the graduates of the philology departments of Istanbul University and Ankara University. The growing need for qualified foreign language teachers prompted the teacher training colleges of Istanbul and Ankara to establish their departments of French, German and English in the late 1930s (Buyukkantarcioglu 2004). What is more interesting, however, is that the Republican elites not only promoted the teaching of these Western languages, but they also naturalized their adoption as the medium of instruction at select universities and newly established schools. In this context, the Universities of Istanbul and Ankara, began instructing in German (Karahan 2005).⁴²

⁴² Many European university professors, who escaped from the fascist regimes in Europe during the Second World War era, sought refuge in Turkey, where they played a leading role in the establishment and development of various faculties and departments within Turkish universities. Istanbul University, which was inherited from the late Ottoman era and initially closed down by the Kemalist regime, accommodated many of these European professors and thus increased its international reputation thorough the scholarship brought and academic departments established by these foreign professors (Karahan 2005)

The idea of establishing new schools that offered English instruction was advocated by Ataturk himself who, in the absence of state funds, encouraged prominent figures of the ruling elite to join their financial and intellectual sources under an education foundation. The ruling elite thus established the so-called Maarif Cemiyeti in 1929. The first initiative of this foundation was to open a preschool in Ankara, the capital city. This was followed by the introduction of elementary, secondary and high school levels in 19931, 1933 and 1936 respectively.

The establishment, which is currently known as TED Ankara College, was initially called Yenisehir Maarif Koleji (Education College). It is the first experimental model the early Republican rulers introduced to provide an alternative to foreign missionary schools inherited from the Ottoman era. Also, it has interesting similarities to Galatasaray, the experimental model introduced by late Ottoman rulers. Both were established in the capital city of their respective polities. They were both designed to offer instruction in the prestigious foreign language of their respective era. As such they were both constructed as locally developed alternatives to elite foreign missionary schools. The fact that the Republican model was named college is particularly instructive in this regard. In Turkey, the term “college” is typically used to refer to an elite private high school and mostly as an abbreviation for foreign missionary schools. Therefore, by calling their locally developed experimental model a college, early Republican rulers have clearly engaged in a war of image in their educational fight against their foreign competitors.

It is nevertheless important to note that foreign missionary schools underwent significant changes under the Republican rule. As I will discuss in more detail in the rest of this section, they were compelled to continue their activities as secular institutions within a unified education system regulated by the Ministry of National Education. This change had a wide range of implications for their administration, finances and curriculum, making the terms of educational competition of the Republican era different than those of late Ottoman period. Moreover, Galatasaray Lisesi was a reflection of late Ottoman reforms which sought to combine traditional and western forms of education. By contrast, Yenisehir Maarif Koleji was a clear manifestation of the Republican departure from the Ottoman dual system where traditional and western forms of education co-existed for many centuries. This departure was institutionalized with the abolition of traditional forms and the unification of all existing educational institutions under a secular and western regime.

While educational changes of the early Republican era promoted foreign languages as compulsory subjects or media of instruction at schools and universities, some subsequent legislative changes concerning the criteria of admission to public service constructed them as essential prerequisites for upward social mobility. In 1939 RPP government introduced an act to encourage public servants to learn foreign languages. Accordingly, both potential and actual civil servants were required to score well in the centrally administered foreign language tests in order to qualify for admission and promotion respectively. Good scores were also required for those civil servants who were to go abroad for conferences or training (Buyukkantarcio glu, 2004). Thus, the processes

whereby foreign languages are acquired became, once more, politically significant, providing interesting vantage points for comparing and contrasting how they have been governed throughout the Turkish history.

Secularization of education took place gradually, or rather, cautiously, to avoid strong confrontation with Islamists, who continued to voice their opposition during the formative years of the Republic. The Unification of Education Law of 1924, which abolished the coexistence of religious and modern schools, a duality, which persisted throughout the late Ottoman era, constitutes the first step in this direction. This was followed by curricular changes, whereby religion courses were first given a more secularist character in 1927 and then gradually eliminated from the elementary and secondary school curricula (Alkan 2001).⁴³

While secularization of education had been decisive in the process of constructing a new imagined community, one not based on religion, the Kemalist regime's interventions in

⁴³ The introduction of secularism did not separate state and religion, but was rather a move to take religion out of politics while keeping the state involved in religious affairs (Adivar 1930: 231, cited in Jung & Piccoli 2001). In this respect, the Directorate of Religious Affairs, set up in 1924 as ‘department for the administration of mosques and the appointments of imams and preachers’ (Landamann 1997: 215, cited in Jung & Piccoli, 2001), became the major instrument of state interference. As we will discuss in the following section of this chapter, after transition to multiparty regime, the state’s involvement in religion was extended to the establishment of special high schools for the training of religious personnel. The unexpected outcome of this initiative was that the sons and particularly the daughters of conservative Muslim families, who wanted to avoid exposure to the assimilatory western/modern social habitus of other state schools, used this new educational option as an alternative and “safe” instrument of upward social mobility. However, their pragmatic calculations ended up being highly problematized by self-declared secular politicians and resulted in the radical educational reforms of the late 1990s.

other spheres sought to guarantee success by abolishing symbolic links of association with a Muslim identity. Most of the scholars studying Republican reforms of secularization overemphasize the laws and regulations that interfered with the dress and conduct of Muslims in the public sphere. I suggest, however, that Muslims' encounter with each other during their religious pilgrimage in Mecca is equally decisive in making them imagine themselves as members of a global Muslim community (*ummah*). Equally important in this process of imagination is the azan, call to prayer from the minaret, which is universally uniform in its melody and Arabic lyrics; the observance of the same calendar, but more particularly of Friday as the religious day of rest for all Muslims around the world; the imagination of a Muslim community working, resting and worshipping at the same time as opposed to Christians and Jews.

The Kemalist regime sought to interfere in these processes of imagination by adopting the Gregorian calendar in 1926, by replacing the Arabic azan with a Turkish one in 1932, by prohibiting pilgrimage to Mecca in 1934 and then by changing the official day of rest in 1935 from Friday to Sunday. Anderson (1983) notes that “religious pilgrimages are probably the most touching and grandiose journeys of the imagination” but that “they had, and have, more modest and limited secular counterparts” (p.55). Accordingly, I suggest that the Kemalist regime authoritatively constructed and imposed a new route for its Muslim citizens’ journey of imagination by impairing the processes whereby they used to imagine themselves as members of a global community of Muslims.

A closer examination of the overall secularization project also suggests that Republican elites intervened not only in the processes whereby citizens imagined themselves as Muslims, but also in some of the routes they had been taking to acquire cultural capital and social mobility during the Ottoman era. As I discussed in the previous chapter, the ulema (Islamic scholars of high caliber who represented the high institutional Islam) owed their status and power to their knowledge of Islamic sources to which they had access through their proficiency in Arabic and Persian. Ordinary Muslim subjects, however, owed their upward mobility to their modest formal schooling or informal processes of apprenticeship under the supervision of a master. Such apprenticeship was sometimes of a spiritual nature and was taken care by the dervishes of the Islamic brotherhoods, which “served vital religious and social functions throughout Ottoman history. On a psychological level they offered a mystical, emotional dimension that was lacking in the high religion of the ulema and at the same time they served as networks offering cohesion, protection and social mobility” (Zurcher 2004: 191-2).

By reforming the state, education and law, the Kemalist regime completed the abolition of the institutional grounds of high Islam. By banning Islamic brotherhoods in 1925, the regime extended its secular reach also to the popular Islam. Both moves resulted in denying upward social mobility to those who represented high and popular Islam, unless they accepted the Kemalist conception of cultural capital. The adaptation of the ulema to changing conditions proved to be faster; they soon ended up being accommodated in the Republican state institutions established to promote a high, but secular, version of Islam. The dervish orders, however, initially went underground but subsequently emerged as

significant political actors with both economic and organizational power, especially in the educational sphere.

The secularization of education was accompanied by the Turkification of the curriculum, which brought another state censorship to the imaginary processes of constructing identity by imposing absolute detachment from the Islamic Ottoman past and obsessive attachment to Central Asian Turkish history. In order to secure the indoctrination of students along principles of secularism and Turkish nationalism, “the Ministry of National Education oversaw an enormous system of modern discipline and surveillance. Centralized administration extended into the micromanagement of classrooms of the nation” (Rutz & Balkan 2008: 40).

The three-layer hierarchical organization of the Republican education system defined clear functions for each level of schooling, providing varying degrees of cultural capital and social mobility to their respective graduates. It included primary, secondary and tertiary levels of schooling. The first layer involved free and compulsory schooling for five years. The second layer consisted of two cycles organized as middle and high school education, each of which involved three years of schooling.⁴⁴ The third layer involved university education, which could take 2 or more years, depending on the programme of individual students.

⁴⁴ Amid periodic debate, the 5-3-3 progression would remain the standard for decades until the Eight Grade Reform of 1997, when compulsory universal education was extended from five to eight years (Rutz & Balkan 2008: 42).

A close examination of socio-economic implications of this educational hierarchy provides interesting insights into state designed paths of upward social mobility during the early Republican era. Rutz and Balkan note that “important occupational categories and social distinctions emerged and were refined by the ministry (of Education). Primary school terminal graduates, for example, shaped the upper fragment of a working class in contrast to middle school terminal graduates, who shaped a lower fragment of a middle class” (2008, 43). High school education, however, was the only gateway to universities, which offered the prospect of prestigious professional and political careers. Therefore high school was considered as the “main reservoir for potential elites in the society, an agent of social mobility, placement, and status” (Kazamias 1966: 470). The majority of high schools provided general education, while a limited number of schools offered vocational and technical training⁴⁵. Interestingly enough, it was the former category of high schools, which was considered as more prestigious and this was so despite Turkey’s increasing need for skilled workers and the educational goals, which were refined to stress the economic imperatives of the 1930s⁴⁶.

⁴⁵ Like their Ottoman predecessors, high schools in Republican Turkey were similar to French lycée in a number of respects, including their subject matter orientation. Originally they sought to provide their pupils a “general culture interpreted largely in terms of literary humanistic studies, very much like the French concept of culture générale” (Kazamias, 1966: 470). “Since Tanzimat education reforms of the late Ottoman period, high school had been widely regarded by officials and ordinary people as the school for training political, administrative and economic elites” (Rutz & Balkan 2008: 45)

⁴⁶ The World Depression and the country’s general economic situation in the early 1930s spurred the adoption of statism and the formulation of two economic five-year plans in the 1930s, displaying a clear preference for industrialization and state entrepreneurship” (Jung & Piccoli 2001: 76). However, focused on the supply of manpower for the state bureaucracy, the state displayed no increase in efforts to expand secondary vocational education until the first five-year plan (Ozelli 1974: 86-7, cited in Jung & Piccoli, 2001). On 8 March 1939 the Ministry of Education issued a bill (no.3952/348) reformulating the

The paradoxical unpopularity of vocational schools in Turkey has its own historical roots. Tekeli notes that vocational schools, which were mostly inherited from the Ottoman Empire, were attended by orphans or the children of very poor families (Tekeli, 1983: 664). Rutz and Balkan explain this paradox with reference to Turkish middle class families' perception about social mobility;

In many countries the place of vocational and technical middle schools has been met with some ambivalence among middle class families. Turkey is no exception. Despite the demand for skilled labor, middle-class parents continued to steer clear of this option. Certification from these schools were viewed by parents as terminal, ending in lower commercial, trade, or technical positions that were less appealing than other occupations more central to the lifestyle of core and upper middle-class families (Rutz & Balkan 2008: 42)

While state schools providing general education were typically preferred to vocational and technical schools, their subordination to their foreign missionary competitors in terms of prestige was not reversed. Interestingly enough, despite the Republican elites' efforts to increase the competitiveness of state schools by introducing compulsory foreign language courses into the curriculum or by establishing the so-called Maarif Kolejleri, where the medium of instruction was one of the favored Western languages, foreign missionary schools continued to be perceived as providing a higher cultural capital and better prospects for upward social mobility. An examination of the political and cultural relations of the early Republican governments with their Western counterparts is critical for a better understanding of the continuity of the prestige of foreign missionary schools.

aims of education. The Bill stated that a productive and diligent youth should be raised to comply with the imminent economic reforms and not leave the country in a state of economic captivity (Alkan 2000: 130).

Foreign missionary schools decreased in number during the waning of the Ottoman Empire and now there are currently only 13 of them in contemporary Turkey (4 American, 4 French, 2 Austrian, 1 German, 1 British and 1 Italian).⁴⁷ They continued to exist during the Republican era, “as a consequence of the outcome of the Treaty of Lausanne. Turkey, in exchange for sovereign borders, agreed to protect the foreign schools within its territory”(Rutz & Balkan, 2008: 48). Therefore, the Kemalist regime was not responsible for their attrition.

The educational reforms of the early Republican era organized them under a unified secular system and the authority of the Ministry of National Education, limiting their power over their administration and curriculum. Thus, unlike their Ottoman predecessors, Republican rulers effectively eliminated the negative sovereignty implications of foreign missionary schools. The only thing that remained intact, even after the educational reforms of the populist and statist Kemalist regime, was foreign schools’ status as private educational institutions not open to the wider public. “As only well-to-do could afford to send their children to these (foreign) schools, Nationalists denounced them as “class” institutions harmful to the growth of Turkish democracy” (Daniel 1967: 55). Yet, the literature on the political and cultural relations of Turkey with the West suggests that American schools enjoyed an increasingly warmer welcome and exercised greater influence:

⁴⁷ The non-Muslim community schools did also numerically regress during the transition from Ottoman Empire to the Turkish republic. According to the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) Report, in 2000, the Armenian community had 19 schools; the Jewish community had 3 schools and the Greek Orthodox community 26 schools. (ECRI, Council of Europe, Second Report on Turkey, CRI (2001) 37, Strasbourg)

Great Britain and France, with whom Ottoman Turkey enjoyed close ties, were regarded with distrust by the Nationalists⁴⁸. (Although) the conflict between the xenophobic character of Turkish nationalism and American distaste for the “terrible Turk” formed the principal theme of American-Turkish cultural relations until World War II, the reputation of the United States with the Kemalists was good and their receptivity to American influence was increasing. Cooperation with America was termed the least dangerous and most hopeful course” (Daniel 1967: 52-3).

There were both external and internal logics underlying the relatively positive perception of the United States. Before exploring these logics, it would be useful to discuss briefly the evolution of the rationales underlying the operations of missionary schools, since this will also provide insights about the evolution of foreign language teaching into a global business.

Educational missionary activities, which also involved the teaching of western languages to non-Muslim subjects of the Ottoman Empire, were typically motivated by a desire to build religious solidarity and loyalty among the members of non-Muslim communities. The focus of their efforts, however, gradually expanded to include emancipation both in this world as well as in the hereafter. This shift is presumably best depicted in theologian Dr. James Barton’s evaluation of the effects of American missionary schools operating in the Ottoman Empire:

⁴⁸ It is important to note that perhaps the only country with which the Republic of Turkey maintained friendly relations during the 1920s and 1930s was the Soviet Union. In the late 1930s, however, there was a remarkable improvement in Turkey’s relations with the Western powers. “At the root of this improvement lay the fact that, together with France and Britain, Turkey now definitely supported the status quo and rejected the aspirations of the ‘revisionist’ powers such as Nazi Germany and fascist Italy, which wanted to redraw the map of Europe. The fact that its ally, the Soviet Union, too, joined the anti-revisionist camp, facilitated Turkey’s rapprochement with the West. In 1932, Turkey joined the League of Nations” (Zurcher 2004: 2002)

These modern educational institutions in Turkey are a mighty force in reshaping the life, thought, customs and practices of the people of that country. Men and women from these schools are taking leading positions there in the learned professions as well as in commerce and trade. Large numbers of former students in the mission schools are now prosperous merchants and businessmen in Europe and America. Through these men of modern ideas, Western machinery and the products of our factories are finding their way into that part of the East in increasing quantities while the products of Turkey are in exchange brought to us. It is probably true, as has been frequently stated, that the money given from America, for the establishment and support of American colleges in Turkey is far more than returned, with large interest, in the form of increased trade with that country (Barton 1908, cited in Kentli, 2009).

It is interesting to note that not only the graduates of American missionary schools but also those of others which operated across Ottoman territory usually took leading positions in the commercial, artistic and intellectual spheres. Their involvement in the bureaucracy and military, however, remained very limited, leading them to foster very specific forms of cultural, social and economic capital. As I noted in the previous chapter, the foreign missionary schools recruited mostly among the non-Muslim subjects of the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, the professional prospects of non-Muslim subjects were limited to commercial, artistic and intellectual domains under the Ottoman community system. With the abolition of the Ottoman community system in 1856, however, non-Muslim subjects became eligible for employment and promotion in the bureaucracy and the military. This widened the range of career prospects for the graduates of foreign missionary schools. The nation-building project of the Republican regime reintroduced various discriminatory policies and practices against non-Muslim subjects and impaired their upward social mobility in the military and the bureaucracy. According to the Public Service Law of 1926, for instance, not all Turkish citizens but only those of ethnic Turkish descent were defined as eligible for employment in the public service. Recent

evidence, however, suggests that the relations of the Republican state with its non-Muslim citizens are normalizing again.⁴⁹

As pointed out by Barton (1908), those who studied either in the USA or at local American missionary schools of the late Ottoman era formed an influential group, even among the elites of the subsequent Republican regime. They promoted closer cooperation with this newly emerging world power to which they were culturally connected. Some believed that “French culture was dainty and refined rather than virile and that Turkey required the strength and creative activity, which America could provide” (Allen, 1935, 22-23 cited in Daniel, 1967, 61). Their pro-American agitation resulted in the engagement of John Dewey, a prominent American scholar, as a consultant for the educational reforms of the early Republican era. Although exposure to American educational principles did not end the prominence of French influence in the Turkish education system, elementary schools thereby became, at least initially, less formalistic and more flexible by adopting the project method which encouraged learning by doing (Daniel, 1967, 61).

It is important to note that the conduct of the American diplomatic mission then deployed in Turkey was also important in creating a more favorable climate for cooperation. The mission was very careful to establish a constructive dialogue with the Republican rulers,

⁴⁹ In 2011, the Turkish Secretariat of European Union Affairs, a key public organization coordinating Turkey’s accession process, recruited a Turkish citizen of Armenian origin, a graduate of Robert College in Istanbul, for the position of EU specialist. Shortly after this incidence, the Turkish Foreign Minister offered another Turkish citizen of Armenian origin, a prominent economist, to be Turkey’s ambassador at the OECD.

and a cooperation strategy that would accommodate Turkey's desire to westernize without becoming dependent on the west.

The unwillingness of the US government to assume responsibilities abroad in the 1920s and 1930s secured the provision of American aid and expertise to Turkey mostly via the agency of individual American citizens and private institutions, some of which were already operating in the country. This latter group included American missionary schools that reluctantly complied with the rules of their new environment. The American Board, with which these schools were associated, has gradually changed its position and ended up becoming a strong supporter of the Kemalist regime. The efforts of those who promoted a climate conducive to closer cooperation proved to be successful. The fact that the Turkish state exempted American schools from the taxes introduced with the new Tax Law of 1930 is symbolically significant in this context (Daniel 1967).

Moreover, in the absence of local technical expertise to draft and implement various projects of infrastructure and agro-industry, deemed essential for setting the foundations of economic development, the Turkish authorities cooperated with American consultants, recruited either from among the personnel of the American schools in Turkey or the academic staff of leading universities in the USA. For instance, Robert College was the sole provider of training for Turkish electrical and mechanical engineers throughout the early Republican era and several of the technical schools of this era were modeled on Robert College's engineering curriculum. The appointment of the graduates of American

schools to academic and administrative posts of major Turkish colleges and universities further expanded the reach of American academic influence in Turkey (Daniel 1967).

There were parallel processes taking place in the economic sector, which was becoming increasingly penetrated by American companies, first through their Turkish agents and then via direct investments in Turkey.⁵⁰ American penetration into the Turkish economy was also extended into the sector of economic advice. In 1933-34, the Republican government commissioned a team of American experts to survey the Turkish economy and propose a developmental strategy and plan. Although economic advisory aid of the USA in general and the impact of this team in particular are not widely addressed by Turkish scholars who study the early Republican era, it would be worth looking more closely at the economic and political context of these developments for a better understanding of the course of events in the post-second World War period.

Yet, before engaging in such discussion, it is imperative to note that many countries, including Egypt which was a former Ottoman and British colony, were going, almost simultaneously, through a similar process of techno-modernization with American

⁵⁰ The economic policy of the Turkish Republic during the 1920s was rather liberal. The Economic Congress of Izmir, which was held as early as February 1923, with the participation of more than a thousand representatives of different economic sectors from all provinces, provided the ground for the identification of industrialization as the vital part of economic development strategy through support for both national and foreign capital. In 1924 Is Bank was established as the first private (but state controlled) investment bank, mostly though private funds, which ironically included the donations of Indian Muslims who supported Turkish National Resistance Movement to save the caliphate. This was followed by the creation of Turkish Industrial and Mining Bank and the adoption of the Law for Encouragement of Industry in 1927. Yet, agriculture was still the largest sector with a spectacular recovery of 90 percent during 1923-1926. (Benli Altunisisk & Tur 2005: 18; Zurcher 2004: 196)

technical assistance. Mitchell (2002) notes that from the opening of the twentieth century to its close, the politics of national development and economic growth was a politics of techno-science, which claimed to bring the expertise of modern engineering, technology, and social science to improve the defects of nature, to transform peasant agriculture, to repair the ills of society, and to fix the economy” (Mitchell, 2002, 15).

The detrimental impact of the world economic crisis of 1929 on Turkish economy, combined with the increasingly negative image of the Turkish private sector as agent for development and the shortage of foreign private capital, led the early Republican elites to revise their initial strategy of economic development which sought to create the conditions for a market economy based on private ownership. In the face of increasing poverty and political unrest, involving the state in industrial development through public investments emerged not only as an economic but also political imperative. In 1931, the Republican Party adopted statism as one of its guiding principles. Some radical statist bureaucrats and technocrats interpreted this change as an abandonment of the liberal strategy of industrialization. In 1932, the customs privileges that had been granted to private companies for their machine and raw material imports were abolished. Yet, when Is Bankasi’s project to establish a paper factory was refused by the statist Minister of Economy of Inonu government, President Ataturk intervened for a cabinet change. Prime Minister Inonu had to appoint liberal Celal Bayar, the founder of Is Bankasi, the first private development bank of Turkey, as the new Minister of Economy (Tezel, 1993). This helped to counterbalance the radical etatist inclinations of some Republican leaders and bureaucrats.

In the economic turmoil of the Great Depression, the USA and France failed to provide the Republican regime with the technical and financial aid it needed to undertake the kind of industrial investments deemed essential to boost the Turkish economy. The Republican government then sought the aid of the Soviet Union and Italy as these countries were considered to have the appropriate expertise. Following the Prime Minister Inonu's visit to the Soviet Union, a group of Soviet experts came to Turkey to study the industrial investment projects envisaged by the Turkish government.

At the same time, a group of experts from the USA was also contracted for the same mission, through the directive of Ataturk. (Tezel, 1993). The report of the U.S. mission "went beyond the usual American emphasis on free enterprise and allowed a considerable role for state intervention in the economy, including state entrepreneurship, but its authors felt unable to endorse industrialization as the primary of state development policy. The report's main recommendations privileged agricultural over industrial development"(Patton, 2000: 54).

There is no consensus as to whether the recommendations of the U.S. mission, initially led by Walker D. Hines, were taken seriously and implemented. Tezel suggests that the so-called first five year development plan was devised following the recommendations of both groups of foreign experts. Patton (2000), however, draws attention to the paradoxical absence of reference to this particular U.S. mission in Turkish historiographical accounts of external influences on economic policies. In this context she

refers to Ilkin (1982), a prominent Turkish historian, who argued that the U.S. mission's influence was negligible. She contrasts this account with the testimony of Goldthwaite Dorr, an associate of Hines who took over the responsibility for seeing the report to its completion after Hines' untimely death:

Dorr claimed, upon revisiting Turkey in 1949-1950, that government officials told him that the 'report had been their Bible', and that both outgoing Prime Minister Inonu, and incoming President Bayar praised its value. Ilkin, who met with both Inonu and Bayar later on, observed that the Turks deliberately flattered and misled Dorr in their desire to gain U.S. assistance in the postwar period (Patton, 2000: 47)

We therefore do not know whether or to what extent the recommendations of Hines mission were implemented. What we do know is that American economic and political liberalism found better and more secure ways for penetration only with transition to multiparty democracy, after which the graduates of American schools in Turkey rose into the ranks of political leadership. According to Daniel, "it was no accident that when Ismet Inonu left the Premiership in 1937 at the age of 53, he took up the study of English, nor that Adnan Menderes who became Premier in 1950 had been educated in the American schools" (1967:63).

The late 1930s witnessed critical changes both in Turkey and the world at large. Inonu, who became the second president of the country upon Ataturk's death on 10 November 1938, used the increasing rivalry among Western powers to get the much-needed foreign assistance for Turkey's military and economic development. On 19 October 1939 Turkey signed an Anglo-Franco-Turkish treaty of mutual support whereby it was granted a loan of £ 16 million in gold and a credit of £ 25 million for the purchase of military

equipment, deemed essential for preemptive war preparedness. It committed to “collaborate effectively” if and when a European power engages in an act of aggression leading to a war in the Mediterranean basin. When the Second World War broke out, however, Turkey carefully avoided commitments to France and England and managed to stay outside of the war until German defeat became evident in early 1945. Only then Turkey symbolically declared war against Germany in order to avoid isolation in the post-second world war era and qualify as a founding member of the United Nations.⁵¹ Although President Inonu and his successive RPP prime ministers considered that keeping Turkey out of the war while securing founding membership of the United Nations in the post-war era reflected their successful maneuvering in international affairs, the way they handled the economic implications of the war increased their domestic unpopularity even among their typical supporters such as bureaucracy, bourgeoisie and landowners.

3.3. Post-Second World War Period and Educational Changes

There were equally challenging developments in Turkey’s foreign relations in the post-Second World War era. The Soviet Union insisted that it would remain friendly only if Turkey agreed to return some of its northeastern border provinces and to establish a joint

⁵¹ Republican elites had various rationales in their efforts to stay outside of the war. President Inonu and most of his ruling elites had a clear memory of how the Ottoman Empire was pulled into the First World War and could not afford letting the young Republic go through another military survival test. Moreover they were reluctant to take an openly hostile attitude against Germany and its allies, who recorded a share of nearly 50 percent in Turkey’s foreign trade during the second half of the 1930s (Zurcher 2004: 199).

Turkish-Russian defence force for the control of the Straits. The conditions were unacceptable and Turkey therefore turned to European powers. The latter, however, had a clear memory of how Turkey avoided its commitments during the war, and were therefore reluctant to help. Moreover they were also busy recovering from the war and could not afford to offer substantial military protection or assistance. It was also a time when the neighboring Greece was going through a civil war between communists and fascists, making this region in general, and Turkey in particular, increasingly geo-strategic and therefore worth protection in the eyes of the US administration (Zurcher 2004).

The US administration got directly involved after the British government formally made it clear that it could no longer continue its military and economic aid to Greece and Turkey. The first initiative taken in the context of US engagement was the formulation of the “Truman Doctrine”, which argued that the USA has a responsibility to help all those free nations deemed vulnerable to communist expansion. Accordingly Greece and Turkey were provided military and financial support. Assistance to Turkey included the deployment of US military and civilian personnel in Turkish territory, the delivery of substantial amounts of military equipment to the army and the training of twenty-five thousand Turkish officers in the use of the equipment. Moreover, the US government contributed to the construction of some thirteen thousand miles of all weather roads in Turkey by paying 10 percent of the overall cost of this project. (Satterthwaite 1972)

The second foreign policy initiative, which the US administration launched in the immediate post-second world war era, was the Marshall Plan. The Plan had three complementary aims: “to help the Europeans help themselves; to sustain lucrative export markets for US industry; and to eliminate poverty as a breeding ground for communism” (Zurcher 2004: 209). The total amount authorized for expenditures in Turkey under the aid programs from 1948 to 1955 was \$ 452.8 million, of which \$ 195.0 million was for loans and \$ 347.8 million for grants. The US administration was particularly proud of its contribution to the development of Turkish agriculture, emphasizing how it introduced various types of equipment, built ports and all-weather roads, and thus expanded the cultivable lands of the country. In consideration of the rise of 50 percent and 300 percent in Turkey’s grain and rice production respectively over the first three years following the launch of the Marshall Plan in 1948, President Truman, described Turkey as “another example, where a veritable agricultural revolution was brought about with a team of nine American experts” (Satterthwaite 1972: 82-3)

The Turkish Republican leadership sought to maximize Turkey’s share of the US military and economic aid by coming closer to the political and economic ideals promoted by Americans. By allowing more democracy and free enterprise at home, it expected to increase its popularity among its own people and to ease the increasing domestic political tension. Thus, President Inonu began publicly criticizing the lack of any major opposition party in Turkish politics and indirectly encouraged the establishment of the Democrat Party (DP) by Celal Bayar in January 1946. Moreover, in light of DPP’s potential to win future elections, the RPP government took preemptive measures by compromising on

some of its heavily criticized secular and statist policies. The government began its popular campaign by formulating a more liberal economic development plan, which shifted the emphasis from industrialization to the promotion of agriculture and agro-industry. Yet, this shift took place not only because RPP wanted to look like its political opponent. In order to qualify for membership in the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the government had already taken a number of economic decisions, which involved the devaluation of the Turkish lira and the adoption of liberal economic policies to facilitate integration with the world economy (Zurcher 2004: 215-6). Moreover, Turkey was also a founding member of the original European Economic Cooperation (predecessor to the OECD) and a member of the Council of Europe since 1948 and 1949 respectively.

In an attempt to moderate its conception and implementation of secularism, the RPP government also introduced religious education into the curriculum of primary schools, began providing foreign currency to citizens willing to go to pilgrimage, and founded a faculty of theology in Ankara. Moreover, it allowed the opening of Quranic courses, where the dervishes of the Islamic brotherhoods who had been forced to go underground, found the opportunity to develop formal teaching and organization skills. The graduates of these courses have subsequently been allowed to become civil servants, work as preachers in the mosques and as administrators at the directorates of religious affairs (Benli-Altunisik & Tur 2005). This last move brought significant prospects of upward social mobility to those whose cultural capital had hitherto been devalued by the secular Republican regime. On a more general level, the Republican ruling elites gradually lifted their censorship on the processes whereby Muslim citizens were constructing their

respective imagined communities. Yet, this time another kind of intervention was in place: The dervishes of the autonomous religious brotherhoods, who owed loyalty only to their spiritual master, were now invited to become civil servants. The analogy of a dervish whirling around the state apparatus would presumably be enough of an exaggeration to describe what was really at stake.⁵² As we will discuss in the rest of this chapter, some religious brotherhoods ended up whirling around a global system by establishing elite formal schools and universities not only in Turkey, but also in a large number of countries across the world to teach the children of local ruling elites both Turkish and English languages.

Despite all its efforts to win popular support at home and its relative success in securing and efficiently using US aid, the RPP government lost the 1950 elections to the DPP which, by winning nearly 84 percent of the seats, was able to form a majority government. This was followed by the selection of Celal Bayar as the new president and the appointment of Adnan Menderes, an American educated big landowner, as the new prime minister.

Unlike their RPP counterparts, who typically had military and bureaucratic background and fewer local roots in their constituencies (Zurcher 2004), the deputies of DP consisted of merchants, landowners and lawyers, most of whom were born in the cities and

⁵² Ironically enough, the image of whirling dervishes have now become an almost integral part of the Turkish cultural heritage promoted by Turkey's overseas missions to attract more tourists into the country. Whirling dervishes are now the objects of a cultural entertainment industry, which hire them to perform their otherwise highly spiritual performances to popular audiences in the streets of touristic quarters of Istanbul as well as to the more elitist audiences crowding the art halls of foreign cultural capitals.

provinces they represented in the Parliament: “In the 1950 Parliament, the proportion of deputies representing localities increased to 60 percent, in contrast to the figure of 34 percent in 1935” (Benli-Altunisik & Tur 2005: 29).

Notwithstanding the economic growth of the early 1950s, which substantially increased the living standards of all, including those of military and bureaucratic elites, the army and the bureaucracy did never really ally with DP. Moreover, despite its electoral success, which reflected a significant popular support for DP, the leadership of the new ruling party still feared that the continuing support of the military and bureaucracy for Inonu could undermine the consolidation of their rule in Turkey. Accordingly it engaged in a campaign of oppression against RPP and all deemed to be its actual or potential allies. Although the DP managed to remain in power through subsequent elections, things began to change in the second half of the 1950s due to growing economic crisis and increasing disaffection of the academic and military elites (Zurcher 2004).

The DP government had a mixed record in terms of its economic policies. The modernization of Turkish agriculture and the improvement of transportation infrastructures, combined with favorable weather conditions, produced a significant increase in agricultural production and exports. It is important to note that most of the economic boom of this era was made possible with foreign assistance in general and US economic aid in particular. By contributing to the transportation infrastructure of Turkey, Americans also helped the country and especially its villages to come into contact with the outside world. The result was a sense of mobility and dynamism that were entirely

new (Zurcher 2004). The growing immigration of villagers from the countryside to the big cities and of Turkish guest workers to Germany from the 1950s onwards constitute just one of the many manifestations of this mobility and dynamism.

The same period also witnessed expansion in the industrial base since the capital generated from the agricultural boom of the early 1950s was later translated into industrial investment by some large landowners.⁵³ It is also noted that in the absence of any significant domestic or foreign capital the state had to initiate massive investments, most of which ultimately proved to be shortsighted and uncoordinated and led to the generation of huge deficits, debts, inflation and a black market (Zurcher 2004: 225-9). To secure popular support, the DP governments further the secularist principles of the Republican state by increasing the number of religious schools and mosques and by taking a number of symbolic steps to further naturalize and legitimize popular Islamic symbols, such as brotherhoods. With increasing frustration and confrontation, a group of NATO trained Turkish army officers initiated a military coup in 1960.

⁵³ Zurcher (2004) points out that the Korean War led to a boom in cotton prices. Large cotton farmers of Turkey maximized their profits and the most astute among them soon invested their money in cotton based industries in and around Adana”, the constituency of the then Prime Minister Adnan Menderes, who himself was a large landowner in the region. “Several of the 30 or so large family-owned holding companies that dominate Turkish industry today started out in this way” (Zurcher 2004: 228). Interestingly enough the Korean War also helped to the admission of Turkey to NATO in 1952. Turkey was not admitted to the Alliance when the Korean War broke. By offering its troops to the United Nations’ expeditionary force to Korea, Turkey managed to impress the founding members of NATO and even those Scandinavian countries who objected to its membership on the grounds that it was neither Atlantic nor democratic (*ibid*: 235)

The dramatic end of Turkey's first real experiment of multiparty democracy needs to be considered in the light of a complex web of alliances among those whose power and status had been challenged by the inception of DP rule. The literature on Turkish political history, usually based on meta-narratives, seeks to explain the military coup as a reaction to the "provocative policies and actions" of the DP government. What is missing in such totalizing discourses, however, is the rather benign ways the DP intervened in the very processes whereby the military and academic elites acquired their cultural capital and upward social mobility Kemalist way. An analysis of the educational changes of the DP rule reveals what was really at stake.

As I have already noted, the graduates of American missionary schools had usually been appointed to the academic and administrative posts at leading Turkish schools and universities during the early Republican era. As such, they constituted the core of the academic elites of the Republican regime, with increasing influence over the course of intellectual debates and political developments in the country. Since there were only three universities in Turkey until the 1960s academic elites of the time held a really rare power and prestige. The military officers were also the products of equally modern and elite schools. Moreover, they also had the opportunity to update their Western knowledge after graduation through training by US military aid missions deployed in Turkey and/or NATO's exchange programs overseas. The alliance behind the military coup of 1960 involved mainly these two groups both of whom obtained their formal education at elite schools and acquired a particular type of cultural capital where the knowledge of English had a defining role. The social capital they developed through participation in overseas

programs presumably constitutes another equally important asset which afforded them membership in international networks of military elites and thus the confidence to assume political power at home.

In 1955, the Ministry of National Education introduced six more Maarif Koleji (Educational Colleges) in different parts of Anatolia and thus extended opportunities to learn and study in a western language beyond Ankara, the capital of the Republic. It is important to note that this was similar to the expansion of idadis to the provinces after the introduction of their experimental model, Galatasaray, in Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire. The rationale for the introduction of state colleges to instruct in a Western language was summarized as follows: "Considering the constantly increasing cultural and economic exchanges of our country with other world nations and our fast growing national economic and technical structures, we strongly need a young generation, which will be able to learn world languages and thereby benefit from scholarly and scientific works published in such languages" (Translated from the Minutes Bulletin of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, 1955 cited in Cetintas and Genc 2001). It is important to note that the teaching of world languages was rationalized in very technical and scientific terms as a requirement for elite membership in an international community of techno-modernization.

Although the first of such schools was established in the early 1930s under the auspices of Kemalist cadres, they began to challenge the monopoly of missionary and military schools by creating cultural capital based on foreign language skills, only under the DP

rule. After the popular expansion of these state colleges, the processes of acquiring such cultural capital and/or upward social mobility became more inclusive than before. It is symbolically significant that these state colleges were later named as Anatolian high schools. As already discussed, most elite foreign schools inherited from the Ottoman era were established in the predominantly non-Muslim neighborhoods of Istanbul, the imperial capital. The renaming of their Republican competitors after Anatolia, the largely rural mainland of Turkey, suggests that Turkish governments were also engaged in challenging the historically held categorical and spatial assumptions about educational quality. The underlying message, I suggest, was that educational institutions need neither to be exclusively elitist and foreign nor located in Istanbul to be prestigious and competitive.

Each individual Anatolian high school had its own admission test to measure the academic standing of the applicants. Only successful ones were admitted and thus entitled to a free education that was deemed as prestigious as the one offered by private foreign schools. With the increasing emphasis on merit, the centrality of family credentials (religious, economic, cultural, professional etc.) was attenuated as a determinant of the acquisition of cultural capital and upward social mobility.

As the number of private foreign schools remained the same since the inception of the Republic, successive governments sought to meet the growing popular demand for studying in a western language in general and in English in particular, by increasing the number of Anatolian high schools. Yet, the supply failed to meet demand and some kind

of intervention was deemed necessary to regulate the admission procedures in a technically viable and democratic fashion. The most significant step in democratizing the admission procedures to public Anatolian and private/foreign schools was the introduction of centrally administered selection examinations for each group in 1976. As we will see, this change promoted the creation and consolidation of a private tutoring industry, which significantly benefits from the fierce competition for admission to prestigious schools.

Rutz & Balkan (2008) argue that Anatolian schools had far reaching implications for the reproduction and differentiation of Turkey's nascent middle class, which increasingly accommodated corporate managers and professionals from both private and state sectors. The general high school diplomas, which historically accorded prestige and status and thus provided the credentials of a middle class in Turkey, began to lose their ability to perform such socio-economic functions to universities from the mid 1950s onwards. Until the 1960s, there were only three universities and admission was based on academic merits. The graduates of general high schools usually compared unfavorably to those from private foreign high schools. Therefore, it is argued that, by introducing the Anatolian high schools, which combined better quality education with more intense foreign language instruction, the Ministry of National Education sought to provide a public alternative to the elitist private foreign schools and thus offered a wider public educational competitiveness for admission to universities.

The main appeal of Anadolu schools to the core middle class was that they offered foreign language instruction, almost exclusively in English, analogous to the private foreign schools, but were free of tuition. And by virtue of their selectivity, symbolic capital accrued to those families whose children attended

Anadolu schools during a time when general middle schools were entering a period of expansion in number but decline in quality (Rutz & Balkan 2008:45)

It is generally agreed that Anatolian schools emerged as alternatives to private foreign schools in the context of the Cold War, which intensified Turkey's military, economic, and cultural ties with the US. The fact that "Peace Corps volunteers began to appear in Turkey's new Anadolu schools to teach English and science" (Rutz & Balkan 2008: 44) is an interesting piece of information in this regard. It is also the case that American educational support to Turkey throughout the Cold War era involved further contributions from a number of state and private institutions including Fulbright Commission and Ford Foundation. The latter is especially known for its financial and administrative support for the improvement of existing Turkish universities and the creation of prestigious new ones, such as the Middle Eastern Technical University, which instructs in English language.

Rutz & Balkan note that in line with the increase in the prestige and power attributed to the US in Turkey, "middle-class families...harbored expectations for sending their children to American universities" (2009:45) if not to Turkish universities instructing in English and according to American model. This had long lasting and far-reaching implications to be discussed in the next section of this chapter. Let me first conclude this present section by providing an overview of the post-1960 period for a better understanding of the context in which alternative EFL learning media emerged and became popular in Turkey.

The military officers, who planned and executed the coup of 1960, soon formed a National Unity Committee (NUC) vested with full power and authority. One of the first initiatives of the Committee was to start the process of drafting a new constitution to prevent future incidences of power monopoly in the political system. The academic elites who had supported the military coup of 1960 played a decisive role in the drafting of the new constitution. The new constitution would bring changes which tolerated a wider spectrum of political activity as manifested by the emergence of many rightist and leftist parties in the 1960s and 1970s. The new constitution was adopted at the 1961 and democracy was subsequently restored with the general elections. While the RPP only secured 36.7 percent of the votes which was distributed among a number of newly established political parties (Zurcher 2004). Justice Party was one of these and deserves particular attention because it brought a new kind of elite to Turkish politics, especially with the rising of Suleyman Demirel to the party leadership in 1964:

Demirel was a self-made man, born in a village in the province of Isparta, who had been in charge of dam building under Menderes and had had a successful career in private enterprise (working for an American firm) after 1960. He proved, if not the most important, certainly the most enduring Turkish politician of the postwar era. The emergence of Demirel as party leader was at the same time the symbol of the emergence of an entirely new elite. The JP (became) a party in which, and through which, self-made men from the countryside and from the smaller (but fast growing) provincial towns became a dominant force (Zurcher 2004: 250)

Demirel was not from a wealthy family and he grew in a village, sometimes helping his family as a shepherd. He tolerated and even promoted his public image as “Shepherd Suleyman”, in an attempt to reach the hearts of poor villagers and small farmers so that they can hopefully associate themselves with his Justice Party. Yet, his evolution into a hydraulic engineer building dams and working for Americans and finally into an

influential political leader was also significant for those, who aspired to acquire cultural capital and social upward mobility despite their similarly humble backgrounds.⁵⁴ It is important to note that his electorate often called him “Savior Father”. As such, Demirel stands as an interesting and almost iconic figure of modern pastoral power, or what we may call techno-pastoralism in Turkish politics.

Although they never managed to gain popular electoral support and enter the Parliament, the left parties of the 1960s also deserve particular attention for they offer interesting insights as to what kind of cultural capital was tolerated and offered upward social mobility in Turkish society. In a context, where RPP defined himself as the left of the centre to appeal to the nascent working class, but carefully avoided any discussion that would contradict with Kemalist principles, it was these newly founded small parties that promoted a left discourse despite the unfavorable conditions of the cold war era. The left discourse found expression in a number of new periodicals and the political debating societies, which sprang up at all the major universities. In 1970, to prevent the left intellectuals from monopolizing the political, social and cultural debate in Turkey, some businessmen, academicians and politicians on the right found an intellectual think tank called the Hearths of the Enlightened. Their ideology, a “Turkish Islamic Synthesis (TIS)”, included some tenets that were adopted by the parties of the right of this era to

⁵⁴ It is important to note that the late 1960s was also a time when those who were already in positions of power and status in state bureaucracy were aspiring to improve their foreign languages using state resources. In 1968, the government opened the State Officials Foreign Languages Training Centre (Devlet Memurlari Yabanci Diller Egitim Merkezi). Although later arrangements put an end to the function of this center, public sector organizations conducted foreign language training of their personnel either within the framework of their in-service activities or by sending them to foreign cultural associations (Buyukkantarcioğlu 2004)

promote the rise of Islamism or ultra Turkish nationalism (Benli Altunisik & Tur 2005; 147). As I will show, the military regime of the early 1980s used this synthesis to reformulate the state ideology in line with a complete makeover of Kemalist principles.

Despite the provisions of the 1960 Constitution, which legitimized ideological discourses, various national security and intelligence units in Turkey began to purge the schools and universities of leftist teachers and professors in the late 1960s. “Translators of foreign socialist or radical literature were brought on trial, even if the translated texts were eighteenth century tracts” (Zurcher 2004; 251). It is interesting that proficiency in a western language, which had been constructed as a prestigious cultural capital since the beginning of Turkish modernization, now became as suspect if left to the hands of the communists. Those who used their knowledge of western languages to translate communist texts into Turkish were considered - much like their Greek predecessors of the 1830s who were attacked for using their foreign language skills either to unlawfully further their personal interests or to undermine the integrity of the Ottoman Empire-unworthy of promotion.

With their legitimate rights to political expression denied, leftist students gravitated to the streets of major urban cities, where they clashed with both the police and their rightist opponents and ended up being arrested or killed. It was in this context of street violence, accompanied by political and economic instability, that the military intervened in 1971, this time urging the political parties in parliament to form a strong and credible government able to end the anarchy and carry out reforms in a Kemalist spirit (Zurcher

2004). Even after the restoration of parliamentary democratic regime in 1973, the political parties could not form strong and credible majority governments or coalitions that would secure economic and social stability.

Most governments of the post-1960 era adopted a development strategy based on import substituting industrialization which promoted the establishment of joint ventures between Turkish and foreign companies, sometimes resulting in sectoral oligarchies.⁵⁵ The development of local industries still required foreign parts and materials, the importation of which depended on the availability of foreign reserves. Although these were initially secured with American aid and the remittances of Turkish workers from Europe, the course of the economy began changing, especially in the aftermath of the world oil crises. Energy, which was essential to keep the nascent industries running, became a rare and expensive commodity. Moreover, there was a dramatic decline in the remittances of Turkish workers. The much needed foreign credit was finally secured from the IMF, World Bank and OECD when Turkey agreed to undertake an aggressive economic reform program. The 1979 elections resulted in a new coalition government which assigned the task of implementing the reform package to Turgut Ozal, a prominent

⁵⁵ It is interesting that even the military became an economic power in the post-1960 era. “The foundation of the “Army Mutual Assistance Foundation” (OYAK) in September 1961 marks the emergence of the military as an entrepreneur. With the creation of OYAK, the army established military-business relations. Supported by subsidies, legal privileges, and tax exemptions, OYAK, with more than 25 companies, has developed to become the fourth or fifth largest holding in Turkey, involved in supermarket chains, real estate development, joint ventures in industry and agriculture, and stock, bond and insurance operations (Parla 1998: 30, 42 cited in Jung & Piccoli 2001: 95).

bureaucrat of Kurdish background.⁵⁶ Due to the strong opposition of labor unions, however, the government was not able to implement the economic reform program (Zurcher 2004).

The late 1970s again witnessed an increase in political violence. The number of victims rose from 230 in 1977 to about 1500 in 1979. Zurcher (2004) notes that “a number of extremist youth groups... on the left... and on the right had no trouble in recruiting youngsters, who had few or no career prospects due to the economic crisis ... and to the system that made higher education available to only 20 percent of the 200,000 potential students, who graduated from high school each year”.⁵⁷ It was also a time when an Ankara University student founded the neo-Marxist Kurdish Worker’s Party to fight for the establishment of a socialist Kurdish state in the southeast of the country (Zurcher 2004: 263-4). Also, the Islamic revolution in Iran agitated the secular forces in Turkey who feared that such a dramatic political change in a neighboring country would be a source of inspiration for religious fundamentalists at home. Finally, On 12 September 1980, the Turkish army took power. This marked the beginning of a new phase in the political, economic, social and cultural transformation of Turkey.

⁵⁶ Turgut Ozal studied electrical engineering in Istanbul and then economic in the USA. He served as adviser to Demirel and then as the head of the State Planning Organization. He also worked for the World Bank and private sector before he joined active politics in the early 1980s. As such, he constitutes one of the iconic figures of Turkey’s transition from techno-modernization to economic neo-liberalization over the last few decades.

⁵⁷ In an attempt to monitor the annual flow of entrants to universities, the Ministry of National Education introduced a national test in 1974. The scores for admission were set just high enough to let only 10 percent of the applicants (Rutz & Balkan 2008: 46).

The inception of street violence in Turkey from the late 1960s onwards and the subsequent military interventions can be interpreted in terms of grand economic and political accounts of this period. Yet, such totalizing narratives often ignore the molecular yet significant considerations, such as the logics underlying the redefinition of cultural capital and the reformulation of the terms by which it can be converted into other forms of capital and upward social mobility. They also tend to underestimate the role of individual and collective agency in the course of events. For instance, despite their preoccupation with explanation, such totalizing does not explain why those leftist students did not choose to use their linguistic cultural capital to promote American propaganda and thereby acquire economic, social and even political power. Even if we narrow this question to individual public figures of this era such discourses still do not seem to offer plausible answers. Bulent Ecevit, who overtook the leadership of the RPP in the early 1970s, kept a distance from the US despite his American educational background, and chose to present his party as the left of the centre. Demirel, the leader of the JP, came from a humble rural background and yet his affiliation to American interests proved to be stronger than his attachment to his fellow villagers and small farmers. Similarly, Turgut Ozal, who later became the prime minister and president of the country, chose to save his energy and power to create a small America in Turkey instead of a socialist Kurdish state. These personal histories suggest that the course of events is not always linear and that the underlying considerations may be more (or perhaps less) complex than what totalizing narratives lead us to believe.

When I reflect on the course of events for those who have historically been constructed as the ‘distant and subordinated other’ throughout the Turkish history, I suggest that the increasing mobility of Muslim people from the countryside to Turkish and/or European cities may well have played a role in the growth and diversification of their aspirations, bringing agency, flexibility and inclusiveness to the processes of acquiring cultural capital and upward social mobility. Indeed, Turkey’s rapid population growth (an average of around 2.5 percent annually between 1950s and 1970s), a lack of opportunities in agriculture, and the attraction of the new industries combined to draw more people from the countryside to the big cities. The trend, which began in the 1950s, accelerated over the next two decades, bringing with it significant demographic changes and infrastructural problems in major cities like Istanbul and Ankara, where the new comers built widespread squatter town settlements (Jung and Piccoli 2001; Zurcher 2004). Although some accounts call these settlements ‘slums’, Zurcher quite rightly cautions against this usage:

Unlike the inhabitants of the slums in major Western cities, who have reached the end of the line and often do not feel part of the society any more, the people in the Turkish squatter towns were, and are, upwardly mobile, and integration-oriented. Many had to make a living in temporary jobs, as day laborers, street vendors or janitors. Vast numbers of women from squatter towns worked as domestics in bourgeois neighborhoods. (Yet, some) found regular work in the new industries. (Zurcher, 2004: 270).

Interestingly enough, the same period also witnessed the inception of migration to European countries, like Germany, which sought to solve its acute labor shortage problem by recruiting from poor Mediterranean countries. The first group of Turkish workers to go to Germany in 1957 was highly qualified; most of them held diplomas or certificates from technical schools or training courses. After the signing of a bilateral agreement in

1961 the number of Turkish workers going to Germany increased and their profile became more diverse and less qualified. The first group of this second round of migration consisted mostly of “city dwellers, who had recently migrated from the country-side (thus establishing a pattern of two-stage migration)”, whereas the second group was directly recruited from the provincial towns (Zurcher 2004: 270-1).

In this junction, let me note that despite the German-Turkish alliance over the First World War and the role Germany played in the development of vocational training in Turkey in the post war era, German language never acquired the kind and level of prominence enjoyed by other European languages among Turkish subjects. Yet, it always secured its status as a second or third popular foreign language in Turkey. A discussion of the reasons underlying the subordination of German to English is clearly beyond the scope of this thesis. Yet, I suggest that we should perhaps explore what kind of identities, connections and memberships the German culture and language are associated with in the perception of Turkish people. Given Germany’s military defeats and responsibilities in civilian losses in both world wars and Turkish people’s unfavorable perception of vocational training, any investment in learning German culture and language may well be considered as an irrational undertaking. It is not surprising that Turkish migration to Germany since the 1960s did not change such perceptions given the mixed record of success and access of first and second generation of Turkish migrants.

The destination of Turkish migrant workers subsequently expanded to include other western European countries like Belgium, Netherlands, France, Switzerland and Britain.

The number of Turkish people living in Western Europe reached 2.5 million by the end of the 1970s (Zurcher 2004). The number of people who left Turkey (to work abroad) under state-controlled programmes during the 1960-1994 periods was estimated as 1.63 million (Unbehaun 1996: 88, cited in Jung & Piccoli 2001). This was also a period during which Turkey was attempting to make new allies and thus to lessen its dependency on the US. In 1964, just one year after the signing of the Ankara Agreement, Turkey became an associated member of the European Community, the predecessor of the European Union (EU).

The emigration of Turkish workers first to Germany and then the rest of the Western Europe had important implications for the internal social dynamics of Turkey. In his account of these migratory experiences Zurcher (2004) provide useful insights about how they affected the economic and social profile of Turkish migrants as well as their cognitive processes of interpreting the world around them:

The effects of labor migration on Turkey, and especially the Turkish countryside, were many and varied. There was undeniably an injection of wealth, visible in new and grander houses, tractors, cars and appliances (sometimes before electricity had arrived in the village). The emergence of new wealth disturbed power relationships and social systems in the countryside. It also introduced a more materialistic outlook and established new mass consumption patterns. The migration also introduced a new awareness of the outside world (Zurcher 2004: 271).

I suggest that even before privately organized au pair and work and travel programs emerged as alternative media for EFL learning, the construction of “domestic work in the houses of complete strangers” or “menial jobs in a foreign country” as natural and rewarding experiences had a certain resonance, at least for these particular segments of

increasingly mobile and integration-oriented former villagers and new city dwellers. While the first generation sought to acquire upward social mobility by engaging in self-motivated or state-planned migration, the subsequent generation considered au pair or work & travel programs offered by private agents equally legitimate and perhaps more rewarding set of opportunities. The perceived benefits were deemed more than anticipated risks and many Turkish families would be increasingly tolerant to and emotionally supportive of their children's participation in alternative EFL learning programs, which involved border-crossing experiences into other imagined communities. The next chapter focuses on the economic, political and educational changes of the post-1980 era for a better understanding of how Turkish people became almost like entrepreneurial agents engaged in tailoring their aspirations and negotiating alternative and faster pathways for acquiring linguistic / cultural capital.

3.4. Conclusions

This chapter examined the political rationalities underlying the promotion of the teaching and learning of different languages by successive Republican governments. It first analyzed how the political project of constructing a modern nation state involved creating a common imagined community among the citizens of Turkey around linguistic Turkishness and the promotion of a standard Turkish language through various policies and practices including aggressive literacy campaigns during the early Republican era.

I suggest, however, that this focus on linguistic Turkishness did not interrupt historically rooted aspirations for the teaching and learning of Western languages. In a context where modernism continued to be the axis of Republican reforms, but with an emphasis gradually shifting from Europe to the US as a role model on the grounds that the latter had the dynamism and know how to help the technological and economic development of the young Republic, English language emerged as the most essential linguistic capital the actual and potential technocrats of the country needed to acquire. It was in this context that many prestigious Turkish schools and universities instructing in English were established through state initiative and US aid. The latter was also extended for the modernization of various sectors including agriculture and for the establishment of the required infrastructures. The US technical aid and expertise not only transformed the spatial configurations of the country by connecting the rural with the urban but also enabled Turkish people to develop new aspirations involving national and then transnational mobility for the purposes of studying or working elsewhere, projects that, according to many, required acquiring the right kind of linguistic capital through formal schooling.

Despite numerous political disruptions, including the military coups of the 1960 and 1980, Republican governments continued investing in education but failed to meet the demand for prestigious schools and universities, especially for those that instructed in English. This prompted them to introduce centrally administered national entrance exams in the 1970s to regulate admission to these educational institutions. As will be discussed

in the next chapter, this also paved the ground for the subsequent emergence and widespread welcome of alternative media to learn prestigious foreign languages in Turkey.

This chapter also demonstrated how educational reforms, together with some other interventions in the imaginary processes of Turkish people, constituted governmental practices whereby Republican rulers variably objectified the governed. Through such reforms and interventions Republican rulers constituted themselves as enlightened teachers of illiterate masses who need first to develop an identity around linguistic Turkishness and then acquire technical and Western language skills to contribute to the techno-modernization of their country. The flowing chapter will discuss how such constitutions were subsequently transformed by examining alternative media of foreign language learning as spheres for innovative neoliberal governmental practices.

CHAPTER 4

NEOLIBERALIZATION AND EDUCATIONAL CHANGE IN TURKEY

4.1. Introduction

The military government of the early 1980s engaged in a total restructuring of the political system and society first and foremost by attempting to depoliticize the masses. This was accompanied by the reconstruction of a common political ideology. Despite the centrality of secularism, the military pragmatically chose to adopt and promote a Turkish Islamic synthesis to create a new identity and sense of solidarity in a politically fragmented society. This choice had important implications for the definition of modernism and the role of the West. In this context, Karpat (1988) notes

The cultural and political emulation of the West (was) no longer the axis of ‘modernism’. It is rather economic development, technological advancement and material progress in all its forms. Reshaping of the national identity in the light of the Turk’s own cultural and religious ethos has broadened the scope of modernization in such a way that as to relegate the West, without abandoning it, to secondary position, while giving priority to a new historically rooted socio-cultural Turkish identity (Karpat 1988: 156).

I argue, however, that the change was not dramatic enough to challenge either the desirability or the centrality of modernism in Turkish political discourse. By changing the axis of modernism into “economic development, technological advancement, and material progress in all its forms”, the state just began orienting towards the USA, a modern Western country it considered to be a better source of inspiration in terms of economic and technological progress. As I have already argued, an intellectual discourse comparing and contrasting American and French models had been initiated by American-

educated early Republican elites, who argued that “French culture was dainty and refined rather than virile and that Turkey required the strength and creative activity, which America could provide”. The military induced shift in the axis of modernism towards “economic development, technological advancement, and material progress in all its forms” thus can be seen as a step towards completing the construction of the American model as a source of aspiration.

I suggest that the real significance of this shift of axis lies in its implicit redefinition of what counts as a prestigious cultural capital and reconfiguration of the ways and means by which it can be acquired. To put it bluntly, gone were the days, when ability to read and translate French philosophers after long years of usually elitist formal schooling, was deemed as an essential cultural capital required for upward social mobility. The economic liberalization policies of subsequent civilian governments further enhanced the new axis of modernism in Turkey.

This chapter will analyze the political rationality underlying the promotion of the teaching and learning of English language through a variety of new media since the 1980s. The following section will provide the economic background of the educational changes of this era with particular reference to the reforms of the 1980s and 1990s. The third section will analyze the locally developed alternatives of learning EFL in Turkey and demonstrate how they also failed to meet the expectations of those seeking to acquire the kind of linguistic and cultural capital valued in an increasingly neoliberal world order. The fourth section will conclude this chapter stressing the conditions that paved the

ground for the subsequent emergence and widespread welcome of other alternative media of EFL learning, those that involved transnational mobility and blurred the borders between hitherto distinct spheres of education, work, travel, tourism and care.

4.2. Neoliberal Reforms

The rise of Turgut Ozal, a strong proponent of neoliberalism, into positions of power, first as prime minister from 1983 to 1989 and then as president until his controversial death in 1993, had been very instrumental in the enhancement of the status of US as a role model and the consolidation of neoliberalism as the defining ideology of the last three decades in Turkey. Ozal was a “self-made man whose own career embodied the hope and ambition of countless peasants, squatters, and small traders and other self-employed” (Zurcher 2004: 283). His political career was dedicated to the promotion of both economic and political liberalism in Turkey, with a mixed record of success. His economic liberalization policies were inspired by the conditions attached to the IMF Stabilization and World Bank Structural Adjustment Programs of the 1980s. Provision of international credits required introduction of measures to improve the balance of payments, to control inflation, and to create export-oriented free market economy.

The initial success of Ozal’s economic reform programme was manifest in the growth of exports, improvement of the balance of payments and decline in the rate of inflation until well into the mid 1980s. Since the control of inflation was partly achieved by removing import restrictions and letting local products face the price competitiveness of their

foreign equivalents, the Turkish people were increasingly exposed to foreign (mostly American, European and Japanese) consumer goods. With the state encouraged development of private television stations, telecommunication infrastructures and tourism as a new sector, Turkey became exposed not only to goods but also to images and people from different corners of the West, predominantly those of American origin. This widespread exposure raised Turkish awareness of the existence of other communities that have become less and less distant since the early 1980s. People from other parts of the world visited their homes through the screens of their TVs, ate their food at local restaurants, enjoyed their beaches, but spoke strange language(s). The guest was fascinated with the host and the host was fascinated with the guest.

These encounters motivated many Turkish people to aspire to venture beyond their own community. While some of these aspirations were limited to touristic visits to Western countries, an increasing number of Turkish people sought ways to study, work and settle abroad, hoping that such transnational experiences would eventually bring them cultural capital and upward social mobility. By the late 1980s, the ground was ready for engaging Turkish youth in transnational experiences, which involved the blurring of borders among hitherto distinct spheres of traveling, studying, working, and migrating. The migration of Turkish countryside to major urban cities in Turkey and Europe in the 1960s had already laid the basis for the construction of “domestic work in the houses of complete strangers” or “menial jobs in a foreign country” as natural and rewarding experiences. The growth of tourism in the 1980s consolidated this construction and prepared young Turkish people

for the challenging experience of au pairing or working & traveling abroad to improve their foreign languages.

Educational changes in this period created despair for most of these aspirants initially left out by the increasingly competitive processes of admission to good quality schools and/or universities, but subsequently offered alternative media of learning Western languages. Before engaging in a detailed discussion of these educational changes, however, I want to emphasize that such aspirations were made possible not only through the process of economic liberalization. I suggest that Turgut Ozal's most important legacy was social, for it created a society irrevocably exposed to, and transformed by, new ways of advancement crossing borders of territoriality. Ozal constantly encouraged the people to broaden their visions, increase their expectations and improve their living standards. Together with his family and his team of American educated bureaucrats, Ozal demonstrated that upward social mobility can be faster and more rewarding if one is ready to take risks.

It is undoubtedly true that the MP had brought a new dynamism to both the economy and the administration. The new men Ozal had brought in, often with a background in business, many of them with American management degrees, had gained a reputation for ‘getting things done’, which contrasted sharply with the almost total paralysis of the government of the later 1970s. The debit side was that, like his contemporaries in office Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher (both of who he greatly admired), Ozal believed in an unrestricted capitalist free-for-all. As in the United States and the UK, only more so, this resulted in a number of business scandals” (Zurcher 2004: 286).

It was in Turgut Ozal’s era that English words entered the lives of the ordinary people, through American goods, fast food restaurants, and movies. It was not only that big shopping malls in major Turkish cities chose to use English names to attract more

customers, but even small grocery stores also began calling themselves ‘super markets’ with the pride of having American goods (albeit in limited number) on their shelves. Again, it was in Ozal’s era that the number of private radio and TV channels dramatically increased in Turkey, challenging the monopoly of the state-run Turkish Radio and Television (TRT). The broadcasting policies of the private channels were more relaxed in terms of their content and with regard to the use of standard Turkish language. The TV screens became spectacles of Western and predominantly American life styles. Not only the Turkish DJs of western pop music programs, which were increasingly popular among the youth, but also local politicians and experts on TV programs, seasoned their speech with English words.

Particularly the younger or the “educated” people in the “westernized” metropolitan areas subconsciously felt that the possession of western consumer goods, the adoption or the imitation of source-cultural habits, and the occasional “seasoning” of speech with English words were signs of sophistication and westernization. As having a good mastery of English was- and still is- one of the determinants of better career opportunities, it was also directly taken as an important factor toward achieving a higher living standard in the future” (Buyukkantarcioglu 2004: 42).

As noted in the previous section of this chapter, the early 1970s witnessed attempts to regulate admission procedures to universities. The country had only few universities but the number of people with aspirations for higher education was constantly growing. The introduction of a national selection exam, which would allow only those who scored well enough, seemed the only democratically and technically viable option. In 1974, the Ministry of National Education introduced a national university entrance exam and set the admission scores high enough to admit only 10 percent of the applicants. At the same time, in the face of growing demand for university education, successive governments

built more public universities across the country. The expansion of university education to all corners of Turkey soon became a central pillar of party propaganda before each election, because countryside tended to vote for those parties, who promised to build universities in their constituencies. Universities were expected to inject economic wealth and status into their host regions and thus constituted an essential part of political bargaining. In most cases, the promises were kept and almost each city in Turkey ended up having its own university.

With the economic liberalization policies of the 1980s, privatization was extended also to education. Many prominent Turkish businessmen undertook significant educational investments, usually thanks to strong incentives and tax exemptions. They built universities, many of which were organized according to the American model and offered instruction in English.⁵⁸ Although some set their standards very high and soon became very prestigious, others catered to the needs of wealthy families, who sought to place their not-so-academically gifted children in a private university.

Despite the expansion of both public and private universities on the one hand and the governments' decisions to let more people in on the other, admission to universities remained highly competitive. In 2006, only 22 percent of 1,678,383 applicants who took the university examination could be placed at a university program (Tansel & Bircan 2008). Rutz & Balkan (2008) note that passing the university entrance exam became "the divide between the urban, industrialized upper middle class and the core middle class that

⁵⁸ As of 2007, there were 93 universities in Turkey and 25 of them were private (YOK, 2007)

grew in numbers but steadily lost ground to the university-educated professional, managerial, administrative, and technical elites that constituted the emerging middle class. The effect of the university entrance exam was to turn the general high school diploma into a terminal credential for growing numbers of middle class aspirants" (Rutz & Balkan 2008: 46).

A degree from a Turkish university, however, did not always grant automatic membership into an upper middle class, however defined, nor did the general high school diploma meant the end of upward social mobility. The increasingly competitive labor market requirements favored only those with outstanding academic credentials, degrees from top English-language universities and advanced computer literacy. Moreover, there was also an emphasis on a number of non-academic skills, which most new graduates simply did not have. The applicants were expected, for instance, to have good communication skills, to be flexible and ready to work in multicultural settings, and to take the initiative. Ironically, such skills, not always easily acquired through formal schooling, were at the centre of the discourse marketing alternative media of EFL learning that will be discussed in the next chapter.

A similar trend of regulation and privatization was also visible for middle/high school education. When the regular public high schools became increasingly crowded and therefore unable to maintain a certain level of educational quality, the superiority of foreign private schools, the heirs of missionary schools of the late Ottoman era, became evident once again. As we saw earlier, the introduction of new prestigious public schools,

initially called colleges and then named Anatolian high schools by Republican governments, was provoked partly by the urge to enable public schools able to train the kind of youth needed for the growing cultural and economic exchanges with the rest of the world and to use the benefits of such exchanges in the development of Turkey. Therefore the new schools were designed to offer not only better quality education but also instruction in English or one of the other prestigious Western languages. The demand for these schools increased so much over the years that successive governments had to establish many more across the country. Cetintas and Genc (2001) note that the number of Anatolian high schools reached an impressive 411 by 1999 and that 92 percent of them were offering instruction in English. Yet, they were still far from meeting the increasing popular demand for good quality education. In line with the privatization drive of the 1980s, private entrepreneurs were also encouraged to open private high schools. Like their equivalents in tertiary education, most of these new private high schools instructed in English, although only few were considered as prestigious as Anatolian public or foreign private schools.

In an attempt to regulate competition over admission to prestigious high schools, the Ministry of National Education introduced a system of centrally administered national selection exams in 1976, in a fashion similar to the one adopted for admission to universities in 1974. Although these regulative practices were presented as democratically and technically justifiable, they nevertheless promoted further privatization of Turkish education system, which soon reached the stage of a self-

orchestrating spectacle of consumption involving a network of alliances among various national/international individual/collective actors.

It is important to note that the privatization drive not only led to the creation of more private educational institutions, but also changed the way even public elementary schools were administered. Although elementary schooling is compulsory and free in Turkey and it is illegal to charge parents any kind of fee, school administrators began requiring donations from parents and refused to register the children of those who did not cooperate. Most parents choose not to make these cases public or to negotiate the amount to be paid fearing that confrontation would have negative repercussions for their children. Others simply could not afford the fees and sought to register their children at other elementary schools, where they hoped to get better deals. Even when some parents occasionally dared to make their cases public, the response of higher authorities did not extend beyond passive condemnation of such practices.

The imperative to perform well in centrally administered tests of admission to prestigious high schools and universities led many to seek additional private tutorials, resulting in a dramatic increase in the number of private tutoring centers/cram schools. These tutoring centers catered to the educational needs of a wide range of groups including those who wanted to acquire foreign language skills. As such, they constitute the most significant locally developed alternative media of EFL learning in Turkey. Their real significance, however, lies in their subsequent categorization as an ineffective way to acquire fluent

linguistic skills, a construction that also contributed to the legitimization and naturalization of other alternative media, such as au pair and work & travel schemes.

The persistence of the strong state hold on competition for admission to prestigious schools and universities throughout the last three decades, which had been supported by neoliberal rhetoric and practices, may at first sight seem ironic. With reference to the emergence of private tutoring centers, which typically benefited those who could afford their services, Rutz & Balkan (2008) note, however, that the “irony disappears if it is understood that the neoliberal state, through the Ministry (of National Education), stacked the deck in favor of new middle-class families”. While insightful, such an analysis fixes the state as a categorical and permanent ally of a particular class, and therefore ignores the dynamism with which Turkish state had constantly repositioned itself in flexible and innovative networks of alliances. While it is tempting to assume that the state submitted itself to the requirements of ‘global neo-liberalization’ and the interests of a particular class, understanding the course of events and actions in Turkish educational history requires a more nuanced analysis of various logics and rationalities of a wider range of individuals and collectivities.

Before engaging into the discussion of private tutoring centers’ and other locally or globally developed alternative media of EFL learning, it would be instructive to take note of some factual data with regard to the evolution of the popularity of individual foreign languages in Turkish secondary school settings. Buyukkantarcio glu (2004) notes that there had been a change in the objectives of foreign language teaching of state schools

throughout the Republican era. While early Republican rulers focused on the development of reading and translation skills, from early 1980s the objectives were more ambitious. The Act of 1984 required the foreign language curriculum of secondary schools to enable the students to acquire the necessary skills to understand the foreign language, to express themselves through speaking and writing and to translate the texts in their respective subjects into Turkish. The Act also made the teaching of at least one foreign language compulsory (Buyukkantarcioglu 2004: 45).

The republican era also witnessed dramatic changes in the demand for the teaching of individual foreign languages at secondary schools. According to Demircan (1988), the distribution of students taking a foreign language course at secondary schools in 1950-51 period was such that French, English and German ranked as the first, second and third most popular subjects respectively. This ranking dramatically changed over the next three decades. While French suffered a significant decline down to the third rank by the mid-1980s, German became the second most popular foreign language among the students of secondary schools. The ultimate winner, however, was English. The number of students taking English language courses at secondary schools was over 1,5 million by the mid-1980s, corresponding to a phenomenal increase of 3,204 percent from 1950. This granted English the status of most favored foreign language by the students of these schools.

The same trend was also evident in the distribution of students enrolled in schools instructing in a foreign language. The number of students enrolled in English medium schools dramatically increased over the same period, confirming the dominance of

English language within the formal secondary school system. The statistics of the Ministry of National Education further confirm this trend with reference to the phenomenal increase in the number of English-medium secondary schools from the late 1980s onwards. Accordingly, during the school year of 1987-88 there were 193 English medium secondary schools (103 private, 90 state owned) in Turkey. This total increased to 1065 (650 private, 415 Anatolian) during the school year of 2004-5. Moreover, in 1994, a new law made it possible to open ‘Super English Language High Schools’, to admit only those academically outstanding students who scored an average of at least 4.0 out of 5.0 during their elementary school education.

English is also prominent at the tertiary level of the Turkish education system. Most of the private universities offer instruction in English. While there are only two state universities (Bosphorus and Middle East Technical) where all the programs are offered in English, a significant part of state universities provide Turkish/English instruction in some of their programs. Moreover, even those where instruction is offered in Turkish, the English language is incorporated into the curriculum of first year students as a compulsory subject. Until 1994, French and German were also offered, but since an overwhelming majority of students chose to take English, these two languages were removed from the curriculum of universities. (Kirkgoz 2007).

With the Educational Reform of 1997, foreign language courses were introduced also to the curriculum of elementary schools. Before the reform, compulsory elementary schooling was only 5 years. Exposure to formal teaching of foreign languages began only

if and when students were to proceed into secondary education. In the case of admission to an Anatolian high school or private/foreign private high schools this exposure could last 7 successive years. When the Reform of 1997 increased the duration of compulsory elementary schooling to 8 years, however, it also limited exposure to foreign languages to 4 years, a change, which had severe implications for the capacity of Anatolian or foreign/private high schools to equip their students with good foreign language skills. To compensate such side effects of the reform, the Ministry of National Education introduced foreign language courses into the curricula of elementary schools. Students were required to begin learning at least one foreign language from the 4th grade. Most parents chose to register their children into English classes. In 1997-98, 98.47 percent of elementary school students were registered in English language classes, followed by 1.38 percent and 0.14 percent taking German and French respectively (Genc 1999: 307).

The prominence of English as the most favored foreign language in Turkey is also confirmed by the findings of my research in Turkey. The representative of an international company owing and operating foreign languages in 51 countries across the world noted that they “offer programs in 7 different languages”. “However”, he added, “those who are interested in learning English constitute 95 percent of the total and the interest in other languages is still insignificant”. The representative of a local company involved in placing Turkish young people in a wide range of programs abroad noted that they “don’t need to convince (their) customers about the importance of English. They already know that it is a need. They approach us only to find out how much it would cost them to learn English and what method would be the best for them”. One of my

interviewees, the co-founder of a Turkish company that places Turkish students in UK language schools and universities, went so far as to suggest that it is futile to question whether we need to learn English or not: “The question is not whether one needs to learn English or not, but which program or schools he or she has to take”⁵⁹.

It is important to note that while EFL courses were offered at both state and private schools and universities, there were some technical considerations which led to the construction of the private institutions as superior to public ones in this respect. The newly established private schools and universities used EFL textbooks and materials prepared by British and American experts and promoted by the cultural agencies of the UK and the USA. These books and materials usually focused on developing the communicative and functional skills of EFL learners. State schools, however, continued to use texts and materials prepared by Turkish experts according to the audio-lingual methods of the previous decades (Buyukkantarcioğlu 2004). Therefore, although EFL learning was offered at both state and private schools and universities, students were using different texts, prepared according to different methodologies and providing different levels of exposure to the source culture(s) of English language.

It is ironic that while some foreign languages were allowed and even encouraged to freely compete in various settings, non-official languages spoken by various ethnic groups in

⁵⁹ Her construction of English proficiency as an unquestionably indispensable skill is consistent with the language of the human resources pages of Turkish newspapers where it has become almost impossible to find a job posting published in Turkish language. Even those job posts, which are posted in Turkish and do not really require any foreign language skills, favor those with a good command of English.

Turkey were not given the right of expression in the public sphere on the grounds that such linguistic liberties would undermine national unity and integrity. While the broadcasting of Western programs and movies in their original languages, particularly in English, was never problematized, broadcasting in the languages of various ethnic groups living in Turkey was not tolerated. Similarly, while private tutoring centers teaching Western languages have been freely operating for many decades, educational institutions could neither publicly nor privately undertake the teaching of the languages of various ethnic groups living in Turkey. It was only after the EU induced constitutional amendments and legislations, that such restrictions were lifted and more linguistic rights were granted from 2001 onwards (Eraydin-Virtanen 2003).

The Arabic language was also subject to discrimination. Although Arabic was allowed back to the educational stage with the opening of religious schools, its value as a cultural capital was downgraded and could not provide the kind of upward social mobility promised by Western languages in general and English in particular. Throughout the Republican era, the graduates of religious schools had either no or limited mobility across educational hierarchies. Currently, their admission to university programs is strictly regulated through a state policy, which makes it practically impossible for them to get admitted to programs other than higher religious studies.

The regulation of religious schools was not limited to the restrictions imposed on their graduates. The secular Republican governments made sure that the inflow of students into these schools was also restricted. Admission to religious schools, which initially

provided 7 years of continuous religious education, required passing centrally administered national selection exams at the end of 5 years of elementary schooling. Although this can be considered as a state sponsored effort to construct religious schools as elite institutions, subsequent educational changes confirmed that the secular Republican regime was not really granting any favors to those who aspired to religious studies. This became evident with the introduction of an Education Reform in 1997 whereby compulsory elementary schooling was increased to 8 years and the duration of religious secondary schooling was reduced to 4 years. Conservative families, who wanted to expose their children to a religious curriculum as early and as long as possible, were deeply disappointed. They believed that spending only 4 years at a religious school would be insufficient for their acquisition of strong Arabic skills and the establishment of solid religious foundations, the type of cultural capital they desired for their children. They also feared that their children would be already corrupted by the temptations of secular culture by the time they begin their religious education. The 1997 Education Reform has therefore potentially victimized some adolescents for whom the religious schools had hitherto been the only formal schooling option approved by their conservative families.

4.3. Locally Developed Alternative Media for EFL Learning

Turkish governments tried to compensate the failure of the national education system to meet the increasing demand for foreign language learning by introducing schemes of distance education through national radio and television channels. In the 1970s, the Ministry of National Education prepared radio programs for teaching English, French and

German languages. The programs were prepared on the basis of foreign language textbooks then used at public schools and thus served as free tutorial for those students who were already familiar with such books. Moreover, they offered the wider public with the prospect, however limited, of learning a foreign language. In the 1980s, the Ministry of National Education introduced TV programs designed to provide tutorials for high school students preparing for university entrance exams. These TV programs sought to improve the foreign language skills of their targeted audiences, as well of the wider public. (Adiyaman 2002)

In 1982, Anadolu University introduced an Open Faculty to provide distance education. The Open Faculty admitted its students according to their respective scores in national university entrance exams and offered a wide range of programs. In 1992 and 1998 respectively, an Open High School and an Open Elementary School were established. Those who had to discontinue their elementary and secondary education for various reasons, including socio-economic difficulties and health problems, were thereby offered the opportunity to attend these schools and graduate with officially recognized degrees. All these schemes of distance education were instrumental in extending the reach of formal school curriculum in general and of foreign language courses in particular to a wider public audience (Adiyaman 2002)

The number of local providers of foreign language programmes through distance education has increased over time. A recent initiative worth noting in this context is the “Distance Interactive Learning” (DIL) Project initiated by the prominent Middle East

Technical University in 2001. The project is open to those who aim to score well in the national or international tests designed to measure language proficiency. It is open also to others, who might be interested in improving their foreign language skills through interactive distance education (Adiyaman 2002).

It is interesting to note that it was actually a local private entrepreneur, who first introduced the concept of teaching foreign languages through distance education in Turkey. In 1953, Fono Distance Education Inc. started offering foreign language programmes through correspondence. Those who successfully completed the programs were granted proficiency certificates officially recognized by the Ministry of National Education. Another private initiative dating back to the early 1950s is Limasollu Naci (Adiyaman 2002). The company was founded by and named after a Turkish Cypriot who began his professional career as a photographer. He is known not only as being one of the pioneers of private distance education in Turkey, but also as the first one to introduce Turkish youth to the concept of learning foreign languages in summer camps, initially in the coastal regions of Turkey and then in the UK. These two companies were quite popular in the 1960s and 1970s when they were the only options available to people for learning foreign languages outside of the confines of formal schooling. Anecdotal evidence retrieved from the Internet suggests that they are no longer popular among the new generation mostly because of their outdated marketing strategies that rely heavily on traditional and electronic spam mails. As I will discuss in the rest of this chapter, the agents promoting alternative media of EFL learning had different marketing strategies, which based mostly on social networks, rather than aggressive advertisement campaigns.

These locally developed schemes of distance education provided some alternatives to formal schooling in foreign language learning and helped to create some basic awareness of the possibility of acquiring cultural capital outside of the time/space compression of formal schooling. Nevertheless, none of them proved to be as economically and socially significant as the private tutoring centers/cram schools. Tansel & Bircan (2008), provide interesting insights into the economic and social significance of these educational institutions. They note that private tutoring takes three different forms in Turkey. The most expensive is the one-to-one private tutoring, which is usually provided by outstanding students of the prestigious universities and retired or active professional teachers. Elementary school boards are also involved in the organization of extra tutorials with the permission of the Ministry of National Education. Teachers affiliated with the Ministry provide tutorial services to their students on the premises of their schools for a fee paid by the parents. Although this is a financially rewarding practice for the teachers, it nevertheless subjects them to regular performance evaluations and thus competitive pressures: “In order to evaluate student performance, two examinations are given each term, the results of which are reviewed by the school board so as to reflect on the teacher performance with the board’ suggestions for their improvement or replacement” (Tansel & Bircan 2008: 12).

The third, and the most significant, form of private tutoring is provided by the so-called cram schools. They recruit professional teachers as well as counselors to help their students succeed in the national entrance exams to prestigious high schools and

universities and to make well informed decisions about their academic and professional options. The number of cram schools increased from 157 during the 1975-76 academic year to about 4,000 in 2006. While they grew 25 times, formal secondary schools only grew 3.5 times over the same period. Moreover, the number of cram school students increased from 46,000 to over one million and the number of cram school teachers reached 50,000 by 2006 (Tansel & Bircan 2008: 15).

As of 2005, there were 908 cram schools in Turkey providing foreign language teaching (Ministry of National Education). These cram schools cater to the needs of a wide range of groups including those who prepare themselves either for the English instruction of the undergraduate programmes of Turkish universities they have been admitted to⁶⁰ or to score well in a number of local and international exams designed to test their linguistic competences. TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) and GRE (Graduate Record Examination) are the major international exams Turkish people seek to pass to prove their English and disciplinary proficiencies and thus increase their chances to be academically and/or professionally recruited. I will discuss these international tests and their implications in the next chapter. It is important to note, however, that these are not the only tests taken by Turkish people who seek to prove their foreign language proficiency. In Turkey, promotion to higher levels and pay rates, as well as deployment

⁶⁰ Tansel & Bircan (2008) note that even the graduates of prestigious high schools sometimes lack the level of proficiency they need to start their English medium programs they are admitted to. They therefore spend the first year of their programme taking an intensive English language class. Some of them also take supplementary courses by attending cram schools.

overseas, in both the public and academic sectors requires achieving high scores in various nationally developed and centrally administered language proficiency tests.

The first two of such tests, Language Proficiency Test for State Personnel (KPDS) and Language Proficiency Examination for Academic Personnel (UDS), were introduced in 1990 and 2000 respectively. There is also the more recently instituted State Personnel Selection Examination (KPSS), which is designed to measure the foreign language proficiencies of those who apply for public sector positions (Kirkgoz 2007; Tansel & Bircan 2008).

There is no consensus about the economic size of the Turkish cram school sector. It is estimated that fees students paid to cram schools in 2006 only amounted to about 3 billion dollars and that there are at least 4,000 underground cram schools the revenues of which are not reflected in this estimate (Tansel & Bircan 2008). Referring to a study conducted by the Turkish Education Association (TED), Gok (2005) notes that the total amount of fees, which people paid to these private tutoring centers in 2004 only, would have been enough to establish 17 more Turkish universities with a capacity to admit 3.500 undergraduate and graduate students.

The law governing cram schools requires them to provide free tutorials to 5 percent of their students who come from low-income families. The practical implication of this law is that most cram schools require applicants to sit a selection exam and offer free tutorials to top scorers coming from low income families (Tansel & Bircan 2008). If the same

students also prove to be top scorers in the centrally administered entrance exams to prestigious high schools and universities, then they pay back their dues by letting their cram schools use their public appearances as promotional commodities. Rutz & Balkan (2008), suggest that this corresponds to the construction of these tests as a commodity fetish in line with the neoliberal ideology. They argue that “by fetishizing the test, by making it a spectacle, making celebrities of its child (and adolescent) winners and wizards of its newly wealthy test service experts, media helped to create and promote a public consumer subculture that enhanced the symbolic capital of the new middle class” (Rutz & Balkan 2008: 87). Although these spectacles may have helped the cram schools to recruit promising new students and even encouraged less promising ones to keep coming back for another chance,⁶¹ many others gave up in favor of alternative routes to the cultural capital and upward social mobility they desired. I will focus on this group in the next section. Here I want to discuss how the cram schools, especially those specialized in foreign language teaching, are constructed and perceived.

Generally speaking, these cram schools constitute sites of self-formation for those who need to make up for their previous failures in different spheres of life by submitting themselves to the supposedly ‘rewarding’ processes of learning a foreign language. These people constitute a very heterogeneous group including those who seek to make up their lack of higher education by learning a prestigious foreign language as well as those who already have a university degree but not a job. For some people, these centers constitute sites for socialization and even mate finding.

⁶¹ It is noted that 41 percent of the takers of 2006 national university entrance exams were repeat-takers (Tansel & Bircan 2008: 10)

Tansel and Bircan (2008) note that Turkish families typically tend to favor their sons rather than their daughters when it comes to sending their children to educational institutions, especially when household resources are limited. Therefore they suggest that gender inequalities are expected to be higher at private tutoring centers than free public secondary schools. When they found that the private tutoring centers recorded much higher gender equality than secondary schools in the academic year of 2005-2006, they regarded this as a paradox. I suggest, however, that this is in fact quite natural given the differences between formal and informal systems of education as well as the pragmatism with which a still traditional society is trying to survive within an increasingly neoliberal paradigm. First, unlike secondary schools, private tutoring centers are not a terminal station for those who seek educational achievement: they welcome back those who previously failed in their previous attempts. As such, they constitute sites of socialization, where young people build a sense of solidarity with those with whom they share similar personal stories. Second, given the cultural norms, whereby parents try to keep their daughters safe under the roof of some sort of educational institution until they succeed in university entrance exams, develop good foreign language skills, or at least find a husband, the cram schools are even more significant for young females in Turkey.

As I noted before, private tutoring centers have been an important instrument in bringing the educational processes in Turkey outside the formal compressions of time and space. They also offer useful vantage points for examining the neoliberalization of Turkish educational system and understanding that this latter did not simply happen over night in

the post 1980 era. Indeed, the regulation of cram schools in Turkey dates back to a legislation introduced in 1915 by the late Ottoman rulers. Their initial purpose was to teach science, art and language and they were not meant to be complementary, but alternatives, to the existing formal educational institutions. Private tutoring centers and existing formal educational institutions, however, have become increasingly complementary, in rather problematic ways, over the last four decades. With the expansion of the central exam system in the assessment of eligibility of students enrolled in public/private schools for higher levels of education, attendance in a cram school has become the pre-requirement for competitiveness and success.

Shortly after the law of 1965 that provided them stronger legal basis, private tutoring centers became subject to official debate and criticism. In 1974, the Education Minister argued that these centers created inequalities of opportunity and that they should be closed down. Yet, private tutoring centers survived until the military regime of the early 1980s ruled their closure. Under strong lobbying by cram school owners, however, the Ozal government, passed legislation allowing the continuation of their activities. Accordingly, the opening and operation of private tutoring centers are regulated by several laws and are required to get licenses from various ministries such as Ministry of National Education, Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Interior Affairs. Moreover, they cannot undertake any activities other than providing extra tutorials to students in areas where they are not performing well, preparing them for centrally administered exams, which assess their eligibility for higher levels of education, and identifying and

supporting those students who are willing to advance themselves in specific areas of research and expertise.

Over the last three decades cram schools became a large-scale business organized under various associations. OZ-DE-BIR was formed in 1985 in order to foster coherence and cooperation among crams schools and to promote their interests in their dealings with other public and private institutions. It was followed by smaller scale associations such as GUVENDER and TODER, which were founded in 1991 and 2003 respectively.

In an attempt to naturalize the existence and popularity of private tutoring centers, OZ-DE-BIR stresses that similar educational institutions exist in many other countries and most notably in Japan and Greece. They claim that while only 35 percent of graduating high school students attends a private tutoring center in Turkey, this percentage is as high as 40 percent and 80 percent in Japan and Greece respectively.⁶² Yet, it is important to remember that there is also an underground cram school sector, the size of which is not known. Moreover, the population of cram schools is not limited to graduating high school students, but includes many others with different educational and professional backgrounds and motives.

⁶² Tansel & Bircan (2008) note that private supplementary tutoring has been widespread in the East Asian countries for some time and that they have recently grown substantially in Western and Eastern Europe. They point out they constitute a large-scale industry especially in the countries where there are national exams to select students who will advance through upper educational levels.

OZ-DE-BIR defines cram schools as social institutions born out of a social demand for their services. It is argued that they are not just private entities operating according to free market principles, but also socially responsible organizations, creating direct and indirect employment for various sectors, granting higher social status to their teachers, providing an affordable option to those who cannot afford highly expensive individual tutoring services, and accommodating poor but successful students free of charge. What is equally significant is the construction of cram schools as a social safety net for the young generation. OZ-DE-BIR claims that thousands of young people, who could not succeed in the university entrance exams are pulled back to the disciplinary circles of education and find hope in attending these centers. As such, these young people are saved from becoming a burden on or a threat to the society. Indeed, the fact that cram schools provide academic, professional and psychological counseling and organize various cultural and sportive activities practically make them alternative mentors if and when state and/or family agents are deemed not qualified or trustworthy for mentorship. It is therefore no coincidence that it is the cram school teachers who usually join the top scorers in their media appearances. Equally important is the fact that counseling services were offered only by a limited number of cram schools prior to 1987. Then, the Ministry of National Education issued a regulation requiring all private tutoring centers to provide to offer counseling to their students.

Despite such positive constructions, however, cram schools are still widely criticized. It is interesting that in 2004, Ankara Chamber of Commerce published a report drawing attention to the growing size of cram schools and to the negative implications of this

growth for the national education system. The report suggests that crams schooling is a new form of privatizing national education system with potentially dangerous outcomes, such as the weakening of the state in the provision of education to its citizens and the deepening of existing inequalities in the society. Similar concerns and criticisms are raised also by various Turkish scholars. Gok (2005), for instance, argues that private tutoring centers do not bring any sustainable solution to the growing capacity deficit problem of schooling system in Turkey but drains the funds, which could have otherwise been used to fix the problem. Moreover, she notes, private tutoring centers are now the role model even for state schools, which, instead of focusing on formal curriculum, begin providing extra tutorial services to their students for a fee. Indeed, it is a fact that, not only public schools, but many other public and/or private entities, such as municipalities, unions, associations and universities are increasingly opening their own private tutoring centers and this is criticized even by their private sector equivalents on grounds of unfair if not illegal competition in the sector.

Another criticism of private tutoring centers is that they cause deterioration in the quality of public schooling by attracting good teachers of public schools through highly better employment contracts. It is also argued that new graduates of education faculties, faced with the dilemma of working in remote rural public schools at reasonable salaries or teaching at big city private tutoring centers at very low levels of payment, usually end up choosing the latter option. Nevertheless, most teachers working at private tutoring centers are denied their unionization rights and work on the basis of yearly contracts granting them little employment security (Gok, 2005).

What is more interesting is that cram schools are sometimes perceived not as benign social safety nets but rather as dangerous traps for younger generations. Gok (2005), for instance, suggests that crams schools are more relaxed educational settings where students can easily be brainwashed by teachers who do not agree with Kemalist ideology. As such, she voices the concerns of secular forces in Turkey over investments by local Muslim groups in the cram school sector. As I discussed in the previous section, the oppression by Republican regimes which initially forced religious orders and brotherhoods to go underground, was subsequently and occasionally relaxed and allowed the latter at least limited mobility around the state apparatus. Some of these religious brotherhoods, but more particularly the so-called Nurcu Movement, chose to use this limited mobility to become educational and cultural entrepreneurs over the last few decades⁶³.

The followers of Nurcu movement now own and operate private cram schools, as well as formal educational institutions ranging from kindergartens to universities. Moreover, they build and operate schools all around the world, but more particularly in the Turkic Republics of Central Asia, to provide high quality education and teach both Turkish and English languages to the children and youth of host nations. As such they are actively

⁶³ The Nurcu Movement was founded in 1930 by “the Islamic modernist Sait Nursi, whom his followers called Bediuzzaman (Marvel of the Time)”. He supported “the national resistance movement but warning against its secularist tendencies. He was arrested with allegations of involvement in the Kurdish Islamic rebellions in eastern provinces and was forced to resettle in a western province where he wrote his collection of Koranic interpretations, known as the Risale-i Nur (Message of Light). In it, he enjoined Muslims to take God’s unity as the basis of their lives, but also to study modern science and technology and to use them in the cause of Islam’ (Zurcher 2004: 193)

engaged in promoting multiple imagined communities not only for Turkish people but also for all others attending these Turkish schools around the world. Their case is quite instructive as to the interesting dynamics of conversion among different forms of capital and to the political nature of such conversions.⁶⁴

Although cram schools brought interesting dynamics to the acquisition of foreign languages in Turkey, there are quality concerns undermining their image as alternatives to prestigious educational institutions. These concerns are partly related to the lack of sectoral association and regulation. Only 30 of the cram schools offering foreign language courses are members of the Turkish Association of Private Foreign Language Cram Schools (OZDILDER) established in 1991. This suggests that a significant majority

⁶⁴ Nurcu movement is fragmented into different groups, the most prominent of which is organized around Fethullah Gulen, a contemporary Islamic scholar who received his religious training from his father and other private mentors. Turam (2007) notes that the group emerged “out of the fragmentation of the (Nurcu movement) in the 1980s and expanded internationally across the continents in the 1990s. In addition to a fast-growing diaspora across the world, it is estimated that there are approximately six million followers of the Gulen movement within the national boundaries of Turkey.” (p.11-12) “The movement has been extremely successful in fostering upward social mobility. It has attracted cross-class constituents who aspire to the attainment of middle-class ethics and bourgeois life styles through education”(p.2). The followers of Fethullah Gulen define their movement as part of civil society by which they refer to a “multitude of small-scale projects connected through dispersed yet efficient networks across the globe. These international networks of schools, companies, media outlets, hospitals, and associations reconcile faith with education, business, science, and Western technology”. It is interesting that some followers sought to justify their self-proclamation as civil society movement by emphasizing that “the movement’s schools were scientific rather than religious and that the teaching in these schools was largely conducted in English rather than in Arabic” (Turam, 2007, p. 25). Turam’s analysis of non-confrontational politics of engagement in Turkey skillfully situates “the activities, networks and organizations of (Gulen Movement) into the larger debate on Islam, civil society, state transformation and democratization”. She argues that “the politics of engagement resulted in the formation of a limited consensus between the Islamic actors, the Turkish state, and the international actors” (pp.14-15)

of this sub-sector operate below the standards set by existing regulatory and/or professional authorities. The lack of pervasive sectoral association and regulation also suggests that there are some quality issues pertaining to the English skills one can acquire through these Turkish cram schools. In fact, it is no surprise that the English skills required by leading educational and/or professional recruiters in Turkey are still defined not in terms of certificates provided by these cram schools but in terms of degrees from highly reputable Turkish and/or foreign schools/universities where the language of instruction is English.

The competitive dynamics of higher education and labor market in Turkey suggest that those who acquire foreign language skills through attendance in cram schools are not considered competent and competitive enough to be admitted to highly reputable universities or companies. If they are lucky enough, however, they may end up working in small sized companies operating in sectors such as import, export or tourism. Therefore, the relatively lower quality of the foreign language teaching cram schools provide to their students make them fit for employment only in particular kinds and levels of jobs and membership in either upper working or lower middle class.

It is important to note that what is constructed as “job market requirements” play an increasingly decisive role in defining what constitutes good quality language teaching and in hierarchically ranking various providers. What is equally important is that such constructions also legitimize the emergence of new actors in the EFL market. It was therefore no coincidence that when formal educational institutions and cram schools

failed to offer EFL courses tailored to these requirements in the 1990s, many public universities in Turkey introduced various certificate programs for the wider public, to train qualified personnel especially for the booming sectors of foreign trade and tourism and that these programs usually involved teaching business English. These certificate programs were widely advertised as sources of competitive credentials for those looking for upward social mobility in the labor market. They also meant additional income for the academic staff of these public universities where salaries usually tended to be less than competitive.

In their analysis of the macro processes underlying the educational changes of the late 1990s, Ercan and Uzunyayla (2009) note that the latter were oriented towards “the self-production of labor power” leading to what Brown and Lauder (2006) coined as “credential inflation” that would make people ideal neo-liberal subjects. They note that in a context where the discourse shifted from employment to employability, unemployment was constructed not as the structural inability to create employment in various fields, but the individuals’ lack of necessary knowledge, skills and qualifications. Consequently, the notion of life-long learning, which was hitherto used for non-formal education of specific age groups not being covered by formal education, was reconstructed as the continuous upgrading of personal qualifications through school, work place and other means (Ercan & Uzunyayla 2009: 111-2). The neoliberal discourse led not only to the diversification of local alternatives but also of transnational ones, which I will discuss in great length in the next chapter.

4.4. Conclusions

As I have tried to demonstrate, successive Turkish governments undertook various educational changes to make foreign language learning processes more inclusive. The introduction of radio and TV broadcasted distance education programs on the one hand and the making of foreign language courses compulsory as early as 4th grade on the other hand suggest that the state was decisively and actively involved. Nevertheless, problems typical of mass education hindered the success and quality of foreign language teaching to the wider public.

Therefore, acquiring good command of a foreign language, which would bring upward mobility to prestigious universities and/or jobs continued to be limited only to the wealthiest or the brightest. Even the locally developed private alternative media of foreign language learning, such as cram schools, could not change the status quo. The change, however limited, came with those alternative media of EFL learning, which involved direct contact with the source culture (s) of English. I will discuss these media in the following section in the context of the evolution of EFL teaching into a profitable global industry offering increasingly innovative options to wider segments of potential learners.

The discussion of this chapter showed that successive governments of the last few decades sought to govern the processes of foreign language learning with increasingly neoliberal rationalities by actively promoting the diversification of the media whereby

Turkish people could venture such undertakings. As such they constituted themselves as corporate executives competitively managing national human resources for integration into global economic spaces. However, the neoliberal ideology of the 1990s preached that the latter requires creating mobile, risk taking, enterprising individuals who venture in spaces extending beyond the borders of nation-states.

CHAPTER 5

EFL LEARNING IN TRANSNATIONAL SPACES

5.1 Introduction

Good command of the English language is increasingly constructed as one of the key criteria for participation in the global economy and transnational labor market. Those who are endowed with such skills find themselves with competitive advantage vis-à-vis others. This also potentially gives them the power to decide whether and how to share these skills and thus to define the terms of a highly profitable global business. Therefore, it is not surprising to see that in a global context, where almost everything is increasingly commodified, English language and literacy skills have become highly profitable commodities. This process of commodification has involved the construction of non-native learners of the language as consumers who are in constant need of self-improvement to be competitive and, to service this market, the development of innovative media of learning.

This chapter will examine the processes whereby EFL skills are acquired in the contemporary era with reference to the products and services of a so-called global English Language Teaching (ELT) industry. It will try to demonstrate how some cultural exchange programs, such as au pair and Work and Travel schemes, are explicitly or implicitly constructed as affordable alternatives to acquire not only a better command of English but also a number of other social skills, which are presented as essential for

competitiveness in labor markets. It will discuss how such schemes, which have the potential to make the process of acquiring linguistic capital and therewith upward social mobility, more inclusive, can sometimes be used by nation-states to create new inequalities or reinforce existing ones. In this context I will discuss the role of standardized proficiency tests as techniques such as TOEFL for governing people at a distance and exposing them to arbitrary processes of exclusion from access to and membership in extended economic and political spaces.

The following section will provide an overview of the global developments in ELT sector with particular reference to the expansion of English language schools around the world and the changes in the logics, regulations, technologies and pedagogical principles underlying their operations. The third section discusses alternative media of EFL learning, which involve direct exposure to source culture(s) and blur the hitherto distinct spheres of education, travel, work and migration and discuss the role they play in the constitution and governance of economic and political spaces extending beyond nation-states. Focusing on the increasing popularity of cultural exchange programs, such as au pair and work & travel among Turkish youth, this section will complete the historical analysis of Turkish peoples' experience with foreign language learning.

5.2. The Making of Global EFL Industry

In February 2005, *Language Travel Magazine* issued a special report on the evolution of the ELT industry. The report noted that ELT, initially seen as a means to idealistic ends

such as international understanding and peace, has now become a multi million-dollar business attracting a lot of major operators with well developed networks of agents and support offices around the world. As such, the report characterizes ELT as one of the motors of the globalization process. In that report, Baker (2005) noted that the history of English language schools in the world dates back to the late 1800s when German Maximilian Berlitz used to travel to Europe to demonstrate his teaching method and to teach English to famous students such as the then Emperor of Germany and King of Prussia. The London School of English, which is known to be the first of its kind in UK, was also established by a former Berlitz teacher, out of his professional criticism of Berlitz teaching methods.

The early 1900s witnessed the offering of English language teaching at a number of universities in the UK and the USA. The first stand-alone ELT division of a US university, however, was the English Language Institute (ELI) of the University of Michigan. The Institute was established in 1941 and offered intensive courses to Central and South American graduate level students who wished to undertake advanced study in the USA in their respective fields. Baker (2005) stressed that the University of Michigan was given the mandate to develop language and cultural programs for Latin American professionals and students as part of then US President Franklin Roosevelt's "Good Neighbor Policy". The policy was twofold. It was to counter the pre-War threat of totalitarian takeovers in Central and South American countries and to strengthen ties of the US with Canada and Mexico.

The end of the Second World War marked the beginning of a new era in the evolution of the ELT industry because then, “private language teaching institutions started to appear more regularly around the world, capitalizing on a new era of post-war prosperity and capacity for travel” (Baker, 2005:24). Another driving force for the growth of the sector in this era was the assumption that people who can speak the same language will be less likely to engage in war. Baker quoted a number of ELT pioneers to illustrate how the sector initially emerged with such visionary assumptions. For instance, Frank Bell, the founder of Bell language schools in UK, aimed “to promote international understanding by providing high quality English language training to students all over the world” (Baker 2005). Similarly, Frances Batchelor, the founder of Estbourne School of English in the UK, started “with the dream of encouraging young people of all nations to learn the English language and to foster friendship between nations of the world” (Baker, 2005:23)

The 1960s witnessed the emergence of the first private language schools in a number of other countries, such as Canada (1962), Malta (1963), Ireland (1964), Australia (1965) and New Zealand (1969), with various objectives. NSTS English Language Institute, the first English language school in Malta, for instance, was initially set up as a student committee within the University of Malta. In late 1950s and early 1960s, student unions of European universities were cooperating to develop student travel and exchanges as a means of promoting international understanding and peace in the post second world war era. NSTS was therefore established to offer English language programs to attract more visiting students to the University of Malta. The first private language school in Australia, on the other hand, was established for more pragmatic reasons. It is argued that

the Australian government of the time suggested that the private sector should take initiatives to attract international students to the country's tertiary system. The Woods English Teaching Laboratory was then established in 1965 to provide language training to prepare students for university entrance.

According to Baker (2005) a number of factors, such as substantial demand from Western European countries, the introduction of au pair business and the lack of any sectoral regulation, powered the growth of the ELT industry in UK until the 1960s. Then came the first industry associations: Arels for private language schools in the UK in 1960 and UCIEP for university and college programs in the US in 1967. Evans (2008) notes that the ELT industry is still largely unregulated but that sectoral associations "have become industry standard bearers for quality, creating links with fellow associations in the field and working collaboratively with governments to ensure legislative change benefits their members and their clients"(Evans, 2008). The contemporary emphasis the regulation of standards is the result of the commodification of English language and the evolution of the processes, whereby it is taught, into a competitive market economy. This contrasts dramatically with the past eras, when there was only one (or perhaps very limited) way to learn a foreign language and therefore no room to imagine regulation.

The recent growth of the global ELT business is a consequence of the truth engineering by some major individual players, which can afford to undertake large-scale research and case studies about the merits of direct exposure to the source culture(s) for learning English. One of the sector representatives I interviewed for my research was associated

with a major player in the global EFL sector and referred to a recent research project conducted by their VP for Academic Affairs which suggested that where one learns English has an impact on his/her learning speed and success. The project, he noted, compared English learning abilities and speed of two groups of Turkish students who were newly admitted to the same Turkish university, requiring them to have a given level of English proficiency. The groups were given the option of achieving the required level of proficiency “either by attending the university’s own English program in Turkey or by taking the same program abroad. The project results suggest that the latter group learned English much faster than their equivalents in Turkey”.

The language of EFL advertisements also provide interesting vantage points for identifying the major tropes used to promote English and for deconstructing the underlying discourses. Pegrum (2004) analyzed the advertisements published in various (international, UK and US-based) magazines targeting teachers, agents, and students of EFL, and identified a general thematic overlap. Most advertisements implicitly ascribed superior status and originality to the English of native speakers, which suggests that English is constructed as an asset “belonging to its native speakers, who are free to market and sell it” (Pegrum, 2004: 9).

Pegrum (2004) notes that some of the major probes in these advertisements were “partially or wholly incompatible, revealing a certain conceptual instability, a lack of self-identity, at the heart of ELT”. He explained that “in a turnaround on the trope of tradition, the majority of advertisers stress novelty and innovation, presenting English as

an all but inevitable concomitant of modernization, globalization, self-development, and a cosmopolitan enjoyment of life”. Moreover, some of tropes were not appealing to the very audiences they are designed to target. The advertisements, which focus on self-development and enjoyment of life, for instance, use visual materials often linked to the promotion of place, such as scenes of beaches. “Yet such publicity could well serve to alienate parts of the increasingly dominant markets, including those in East Asia, which consist of students and their parents who see English- and self-development-instrumentally, and as a serious matter. Similarly, the communicative approach to language teaching which implicitly underlies much, though not all, advertising in this vein may not engage those whose primary interest is not in native English popular culture or modes of interaction. Equally, the strong element of cosmopolitanism can only be received in much of the world as culturally and financially exclusionary” (Pegrum, 2004:6). Considering the obvious incompatibilities among different probes underlying the EFL advertisements, as well as their possible/potential contradictions with the cultural logics and rationales of their target audiences, Pegrum suggests that “in Foucauldian terms … the dominant discourses never achieve complete hegemony” (Pegrum, 2004:4).

It is important to note that major players in the ELT business also seek to reach their audiences and soften their self-interested images through philanthropic investments. One of them is the English First (EF) Education, founded in 1965 by a Swedish entrepreneur. The Company website and newsletters emphasize its involvement in charity to suggest that its business, which is about breaking “down barriers of language, culture and geography”, is also about “making the world a better place”. “We believe”, they note, “that positive change is possible, one student a time and one charitable project at a time”.

EF is particularly proud of its founding membership of the Mentor Foundation, together with several members of the royal families of Sweden, Luxembourg, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia. The Mentor Foundation is involved in activities to help reduce the drug addiction around the world. EF Education is also proud of having contributed several million dollars to Red Cross over the last 40 years. Finally, EF is noted as fundraising for several local charity projects such as saving babies from premature birth in the USA and teaching English to the Brazilian poor.

Similarly, Bell Language Schools in the UK has an educational trust offering “a variety of scholarship programmes including scholarships for international students, aged 12-17, to attend Bell Bedgebury International School, scholarships for adult learners to attend courses at (their) UK intensive centres, and scholarships for EFL teachers to attend IATEFL, the main industry conference, which provides a forum for the exchange of ideas and opportunities to meet with other teachers throughout the world”. The company is also proud to offer free access to their Bell English On-Line for those who cannot afford to attend Bell language schools.

Kaplan, another prominent EFL company with worldwide operations, emphasizes the notion of “passion for giving back” as part of its culture. The company has an Educational Foundation engaged in various local and international community outreach activities. The Foundation’s Leadership Program is presented as serving “talented community college students who have the potential to become influential in their communities and professions”. It notes that “the Foundation’s comprehensive, multi-year

commitment to each student includes scholarships, academic advising, tutoring, leadership development, career counseling and other resources needed to help them complete their associate's degrees and continue their studies at competitive four-year universities". It is noted that the company spearheads numerous scholarship programs, tutoring initiatives and volunteer activities around the world to assist students in underserved communities"

Proactive or reactive responses of sectoral associations to changing market conditions play an important role in the growth of the ELT industry. At an international level, one can cite the case of Alto, the Association of Language Travel Organizations, which is operated under the World Youth Student and Educational Training Confederation (WyseTC). Responding to the current needs and interests of its members, Alto's new strategic focus is on providing premium trading, innovative market intelligence and professional development opportunities. Alto also works to effect changes on transnational level. One of its recent reports about youth mobility, for instance, provided the basis of a United Nations World Tourism Organization compendium to encourage governments to actively support youth tourism products and services, including international education and language travel.

Although institutionalized government-industry relations are also present in Australia, New Zealand and Malta, ELT associations' increasing lobbying and advising power vis-à-vis governments is presumably best evident in the case of English UK, which is a member of all the key government committees relating to international education. The

government has been working with English UK to link accreditation to visa issuance for foreign students willing to study English language in the UK.. However, these channels of consultation don't always result in furthering the economic interests of the UK EFL sector. As I will discuss in the rest of this chapter, UK immigration authorities have recently introduced controversial immigration rules, which required some foreign students to have better than Basic English to get student visas and prompted UK EFL sector representatives to launch court battles against the UK Home Office.

The economic size of the global English language teaching industries is difficult to estimate mostly because of the lack of consistent data across countries. There are, however, some estimates about how native English speaking countries' respective industries compare with each other. Student enrolment criterion suggests that the UK was the most successful in 2007 with almost half of the students choosing to study there. Another criterion according to which UK performed better than other countries in the same year is the total revenue generation; English language training in all native countries generated a total revenue of 30 billion dollars in 2007 and the share of the UK ELT industry in this total was as high as one third. However, according to student week criterion, which is considered to be a better indication of overall performance, countries such as USA and Australia seemed to have performed better, since they attracted longer-term students. Canada is the next best performer according to the same criterion, a success, which, it is noted, came after the Canadian ELT industry overcame its fragmentation problem (Baker, 2008).

Visa regulations play an increasingly important role in shaping students' decisions about their study destinations and in determining the countries respective market shares in the global language travel and study industry. Therefore, some countries seek to increase their market share by pragmatically modifying their visa regulations. Australia, for instance, has recently reduced its student visa Assessment Level to Level 2 for higher education as an incentive for its higher education institutions. "One of the primary drivers at the moment is Australia's need for skilled migrants ... The Australian government has developed transparent pathways for international students to transition into migrant programs and English language skills are a very important part of this transition" (Baker, 2008). This suggests that otherwise and hitherto distinct spheres of foreign language learning, immigration and work are now aligned along an axis, which is increasingly subject to conveniently manipulative regulations by different states for different purposes.

Even countries with comparative advantage over others pragmatically revise their visa systems to help their ELT industries. The UK's Points Based System (PBS) introduced in 2009 is an interesting case in this context. The new system allowed issuing student visas to those holding confirmation of enrolment from an accredited school and proof of sufficient funds. However, in the face of mounting criticism that the PBS did not bring enough provisions to deter illegal immigration and radicalization of students at UK institutions, the UK's then Home Secretary Alan Johnson announced new rules in

February 2010.⁶⁵ Accordingly, non-EU citizens seeking to study in the UK are required to have more than beginner level English. The new rules also reduced the number of hours, non-EU below degree-level course takers were permitted to work a week from 20 to 10 to protect jobs for British youngsters. By constructing non-EU students with beginner level English as potential threats to the national / international security on the one hand and to the employability of otherwise competitive British youngsters on the other, the new rules made it harder for some foreigners to enter and survive in the UK.

Ironically, the same rules also challenged the vested interests of the UK's EFL sector, which benefited greatly from the growth of international students in the UK. The sector responded by launching a court battle. In July 2010, English UK, the body that represents most language schools, won their appeal against the decision of the UK Home Office. English UK estimates that the ruling has saved more than 3,000 jobs and more than £600 million a year in overseas income. English UK is also quoted for noting that tighter regulations had significantly damaged the UK's reputation as a destination for genuine students wanting to study English, and were working in favor of competitor countries, such as the US (Adam Gabbat from guardian.co.uk, July 9, 2010).

In June 2010, the UK government took another controversial move and announced that from autumn 2010, non-European migrants applying to come to the UK to join or marry their settled partner, will need to take compulsory English language tests and demonstrate basic English at A1 level, before they are granted a visa. The fact that the state is

⁶⁵ It is speculated that the new rules came as a direct response to the bombing attempt on a US-bound aircraft in December 2009 by a British-educated Nigerian.

assuming English as the language of the partner, who is already settled in the UK and that it is naturalizing its imposition on the new comer with an implicit assumption that this is the only language with which they can communicate is highly illustrative of the UK authorities' perceptions of linguistic and racial hierarchy. If the new comer is from Germany, a EU member, for instance, the couple to be settled in the UK is considered civilized, multilingual and mature enough to choose their own language of communication so the state doesn't need to step in to impose English. If the new comer is from Turkey, however, he/she needs to have an already good command of English if he/she doesn't want to be lost in translation with his/her dealings with his/her partner and host society.

It is exactly in those lines that UK Home Secretary Theresa May legitimized the introduction of the new English requirement for non-EU spouses. She argued that these "rules will help promote integration, remove cultural barriers and protect public services" (UK Home Office, 2010). On a more general level, such a wide use of the requirement of good English skills, variably defined, across the UK visa system, provokes new negotiations and constitutions at individual and collective, national and transnational levels. As such, it urges us to revisit the notions of literacy and cultural capital and to explore how they are increasingly used by various actors, including but not limited to EFL providers, to negotiate the terms of access to or membership in various imagined communities in contemporary neoliberal era.

According to Sing, Kell and Pandian (2002) EFL providers include 3 major groups: National Flagships, Hybrid Enterprises and Shop Front College Operations. National Flagship providers are those organizations that are funded by the governments of English speaking nation states in order to promote their national images and interests through nationally branded cultural and educational products, including but not limited to, language training. The most prominent of these national flagships are the British Council and IDP Australia. It is interesting to note that the two are not only major competitors in the global ELT market but also strong allies in the promotion of their common interests, such as the preservation of the integrity and status of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). Both the British Council and IDP Australia own IELTS as a measure of language standards and quality assurance. They both work closely to promote IELTS and to protect it from other testing systems such as the American Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

Hybrid Enterprises are those emerging from the consortia of public and private organizations. These consortia include partners from a wide range of sectors such as education, publishing, multimedia and information technology. “As ELT providers are using new technologies of learning, these partnerships take on a strategic imperative to mobilize resources and expertise to address English language teaching globally” (Singh, Kell, and Pandian, 2002).

Finally, shop front college operators consist of those language schools with a yearly enrollment of less than 10,000 students. They are usually privately owned and operate in inner city locations. They are, heavily dependent on national flagships for ELT curriculum, methodology and products. Also, strong global competition sometimes forces them to enter into partnerships and thus form hybrid enterprises.

According to Singh, Kell and Pandian, English became so widely commodified only after the collapse of the Soviet Union and its communist allies in the late 1980s. Another defining characteristic of the current phenomenon, they suggest, is that the global markets for ELT products and methods are now being expanded through digital technologies of human interaction and knowledge production and that “...this has increased the pressure for cheaper, non-regulated but skilled labor to work in the knowledge-intensive ELT industry” (Singh, Kell and Pandian, 2002).

What is presumably more interesting is that the industry now offers more than one type of English: one is the “Enterprise English”, which is constituted by the knowledge of the language relating to global business and the new technologies and the other is “Cultural Heritage English”, which is marketed to those seeking to manufacture differentiated class identities. The former category is presumably the one that contributes the most to the diversification of the EFL products and services, when we consider the increasing construction of English for specific purposes, such as business, science and technology, health and medicine as key to professional advancement. While this category is considered a means to enhance possibilities for transnational mobility, “Cultural Heritage

English' is being sold as having the additional benefit of acquiring even greater symbolic value, that is, the ability to give linguistic expression to a chosen source of aristocratic identity and social class differentiation (Singh, Kell and Pandian, 2002). Waters (1995) claimed that the presentation of British English as a differentiated, marketable commodity is related to the development of a global consumer culture as much as the historical legacy of the English empire. According to Featherstone (1995) the creation of this consumer culture by entrepreneurial brokers of ELT products and services also involves the development of social technologies. It involves the rationalization and reordering of previous work practices of both ELT workers and their students around the new technologies and the new pedagogies that create or enable this to happen. (Sing et al. 2002, pp.69-70)

Kartal (2005) argues that the evolution of language teaching into a highly profitable industry was made possible by the development of information communication technologies and their introduction into the language learning environments from the 1950s onwards. He also claims that this revolutionized foreign language education by opening the learning environments to the reach of a wider public- the masses. His discussion is based on an examination of the changes in learning theories and approaches and their implications for foreign language education. The first quarter of the 20th century, he notes, witnessed the development of behavioralist learning theory, which culminated into the so-called American structuralist approach and patterns drills in language learning. The new theory and approach suggested that for a certain linguistic behavior to be established, the learner needed to exercise such behavior repeatedly. Given

that this was unimaginable for any language teacher to be physically present each time such repetitive exercises were performed, however, recording and retrieving technologies were called into help to provide the needed learning environment. This led to the development of audio-lingual media and to the establishment of language laboratories in the post second world war era. Kartal (2005) notes that this new technique was initially called as the ‘Army Method’ because it was first developed and used to teach foreign languages to the staff of the US Army, which, after the defeat in Pearl Harbor, came to realize that nobody else spoke English in the Pacific and that Americans needed to learn the languages of others.

Although the popularity of the new audio-lingual method within the US military establishment did not last long, it nevertheless was welcomed by the educational community and the general public. The success of the “sputnik” project of the Soviet Union in 1957 was also instrumental in getting the US administration to conclude that there is a crucial link between foreign language education and national security and to start undertaking more research and investment in this particular sector. Consequently, almost all schools and universities in the USA were equipped with language laboratories. From the 1960s onwards, the audio-lingual method and language laboratories have become popular in Canada, Europe and other parts of the world. They lost their popularity in the early 1980s due to a number of pedagogical, technical, economic developments, but mostly because of the emergence of the so-called cognitive communicative approach at the end of the 1970s (Kartal 2005).

The fundamental motive of this new cognitive-communicative approach was to make the learners develop native speaker like language skills. Accordingly, they needed to go beyond producing predefined responses to pre-designed questions and assume control of unanticipated circumstances through better control of the language. First TV programs and video films and then satellite, cable, information and communication technologies were used in experimenting this new approach in language education. It was the introduction of interactive multimedia devices and technologies, however, which really revolutionized the processes of language learning. The websites designed to teach foreign languages as well as various internet services such as e-mail, discussion forums, chat rooms, video conferencing all offered self (autonomous) and/or distant learning options to learners (Kartal 2005).

Despite a clear shift from old to new technologies in language education, there is still an ongoing debate as to whether there has been any significant change in the learning approaches or whether learners are now becoming more like native speakers of the languages they study. According to Kartal (2005) a closer examination of cognitive communicative approach and the technologies would reveal that we are actually back to the old behavioralist approach and techniques. In other words, the learning environment is still not fully interactive. Moreover, even those exercises designed to encourage interactive learning and offered through such media as CD-Rom and Internet fail to equip the learners with native like speaking and writing skills. It is therefore possible to suggest that one of the many reasons why cultural exchange programs are recently constructed

and perceived, as alternative media to acquire good EFL skills, is that they offer direct and wide range of exposures to, and interactions with, the source culture(s).

The global ELT market is also characterized with the competition between the so-called “standardized British English”⁶⁶ and the local varieties that emerged in former Anglophone colonies such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States of America. However, the competition has recently become even more intense with the involvement of new competitors such as India, Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines in the global ELT market.⁶⁷ In a context where those who speak English as a second language outnumber native Anglophones, “these countries have generated a quite different expression of values and identities from those of Anglophone cultures and have further extended their English use to create intellectual properties and exports in English language goods and services. Also, as high technology and datacast media industries are developed in countries such as China, India, and Malaysia, the situation for monolingual “native” speaking ELT providers is coming under increased competition” (Singh, Kell

⁶⁶ The process of standardizing or rationalizing spoken, and then written English, in order to achieve “linguistic correctness” was initiated by the rising middle class of England who were involved in developing a model (rather than common) English language for both functional convenience and to assert class distinctions. Raymond Williams (1965, 247) defined standardized British English as a tool that made some English people “capable of the vulgar insolence of telling other Englishmen (sic) that they do not know how to speak their own language”. These social divisions have since been misinterpreted and misrepresented as distinctions between the educated and uneducated- an issue confronted by many bilingual students, including those studying abroad (Singh, Kell and Pandian 2002).

⁶⁷ As I have discussed in previous chapters, in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Empire, even Turkish entrepreneurs, especially the ones belonging to the religious brotherhood I have discussed in the previous chapter, have become significant actors in the education system of most Central Asian countries by opening prestigious colleges and universities which offer English/Turkish based instruction to local students.

and Pandian 2002). This competition had inevitable implications for the conventional ELT products and services, which have so far been structured around standardized British (and more recently American) English. Global ELT industry is now increasingly under pressure to customize its products, services and even teaching theories and methodologies to accommodate different varieties of English.

However, despite this pressure, “native” speaking ELT providers do not easily give up their long enjoyed monopoly in this sector. For instance, it is instructive that most English-medium universities, particularly those from North America, require their applicants to score well in TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), which “still uses the native speaker as the criterion for correctness, in spite of the increasingly vague definition of that construct” (Shohamy 2007).

Internationally recognized standardized language proficiency tests, such as TOEFL and IELTS, and the materials and courses designed to prepare students for success in such tests constitute an increasingly innovative and profitable branch of the global EFL business. Singh, Kell and Pandian note that a significant portion of the money generated by the Australian ELT businesses come from overseas clients who are “keen to take English language examinations and to purchase English language instruction as an investment in either a financially rewarding career and/or transnational mobility as skilled migrant labor” (2002: 65).

As I have discussed elsewhere (Akinturk 2004), however, TOEFL and IELTS are not only major cash cows for the global EFL business but are also interesting neo-liberal technologies of governing at a distance the populations of prospective international students seeking admission to English medium universities. Most English-medium universities, and particularly those from North America, require international applicants not only to submit the rather conventional documents, such as transcripts and letters of reference, to support their applications, but also the scores they had from one of prestigious language tests such TOEFL and IELTS. Although such additional requirements asked from international applicants may seem quite benign on technical grounds, a closer investigation suggests that they actually play an important role in an overarching neo-liberal governmentality. I will briefly explore how such language tests aligns the interests of a wide range of individual / collective, national / transnational, public / private actors and thus play a role in a neoliberal governmentality, with particular reference to the case of TOEFL.

The TOEFL Programme was initially developed to measure the English proficiency of international students wishing to study at colleges and universities in the United States and Canada. It was launched for use in 1963-64 through the cooperative effort of more than 30 US organizations, public and private. A national council on the Testing of English as a Foreign Language was formed of representatives of private organizations and government agencies concerned with testing the English proficiency of nonnative speakers of English who wished to study at colleges and universities in the United States. The program was financed by grants from the Ford and Danforth foundations and was

initially attached to the Modern Language Association. In 1965, responsibility for the TOEFL programme was jointly assumed by the College Board- a US non-profit membership association founded in 1900 and composed of 4,300 schools, colleges, universities, and other educational organizations-, and the Educational Testing Service (ETS)- another US non-profit organization founded in 1947 and committed to educational testing, measurement and research. Today, the administrative responsibility of TOEFL program is assumed by ETS.

When applicants swamped US colleges and universities in the late 1940s, ETS invented all the components of large-scale multiple-choice testing - from registration and administration to scoring and score reporting. The company is now poised to broaden its scope beyond the U.S. measurement space into the worldwide education and training space. It is presented as the world's largest private educational testing and measurement organization and a leader in educational research, with a dedication to serving the needs of individuals, educational institutions, and government bodies in almost 200 countries. ETS develops and administers more than 12 million tests worldwide. It employs approximately 2,500 regular employees, including more than 1,100 professional staff members with training and expertise in education, psychology, statistics, and psychometrics. Additional areas of staff expertise include computer sciences, sociology, and humanities. Its experts are available to help education leaders around the world find new ways to advance learning through innovative assessment.

The format of ETS administered TOEFL tests, which has been pen and paper-based from the very beginning, evolved over time but its structure, based on three sections that measure listening, writing and reading proficiencies, changed only recently when TOEFL Board initiated a broad effort to customize the programme in line with the needs of the twenty-first century. According to TOEFL Test and Score Data Summary, 2002-2003 Edition, this effort was a response to what they term as a call from various constituencies for a new TOEFL test that (1) is more reflective on communicative competence models; (2) includes more constructed response tasks and direct measures of writing and speaking; (3) includes tasks that integrate the language modalities tested; and (4) provides more information than the paper-based TOEFL.

Currently TOEFL tests are available in both paper and computer-based forms. The latter form was introduced in the late 1990s as a response to the demand by communities using these test scores for better and twenty-first century-tuned testing formats. The introduction of computer-based testing has been a dramatic change with numerous implications for all individuals and collectivities involved in these testing programmes. The implications include more businesses for those who supply the goods and services needed to sustain such a technology and expertise intensive testing format, faster scoring, more testing capacity, and a whole range of new concerns for international test takers who are not very computer literate. Computerized testing allows the TOEFL, which typically corresponds to a totalizing technology of domination, to work also as a technology of individualization, by randomly adjusting the nature and difficulty of successive questions to the test takers' earlier performances.

According to TOEFL website, nearly 20 million students have taken this test in more than 165 countries since 1964. Over 4,500 institutions worldwide now use scores from TOEFL tests to make better-informed decisions about the proficiencies of their applicants at a distance. The collectivities using and/or requiring TOEFL scores include, not only educational institutions, but also certain independent organizations, foreign governments, and medical certification and licensing agencies.

Given its significant money-raising capacity for both immediate and related businesses, one can easily associate the TOEFL program with the promotion of commercial interests of North American testing business and the exploitation of poor international students. A closer investigation, however, reveals that it is more than a set of tools for realizing market-oriented exploitative goals. TOEFL scores problematize the population of international applicants to North American universities in terms of their English proficiencies and skills. These scores provide the basis of statistics, which make it possible to identify and address the problems thus constructed. They also make it possible to produce research and policy papers, thus a knowledge base, legitimizing the subjection and governing of the populations of prospective international students. This knowledge base also enables the drawing of foreign and international assistance programmes.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ ETS Global Institute provides education leaders throughout the world with instructional programs, research, and technical assistance on assessment issues and policies, whereas ETS Center for Global Assessment develops, manages, and delivers large-scale assessment projects for international agencies, governmental departments, private foundations, and individual education institutions (<http://www.ets.org/aboutets/expert.html>)

As such, TOEFL program constitutes one of the numerous contemporary modes of objectification and technologies of governmentality with a global scale. It contributes to the construction of truths about a given population (i.e. the proficiency of international applicants of North American universities), divides them according to these truths (e.g. eligible/non-eligible for admission) and enforces the processes whereby the individuals constituting this population turn themselves into subjects (e.g. competing and consuming free individuals who seek the highest possible test scores and successful university admission).

The TOEFL program also illustrates the discursive and programmatic character of neo-liberal governmentality: The need to evaluate the proficiency of international applicants for well-informed admission decisions by North American universities requires devising instruments related to writing, listing, computing that render this realm into discourse as a knowable, calculable and administrable object. The same imperative also requires uncovering the factors leading to success or failure of international test takers with an internal optimism that reality can be reformed and programmed. The failure per se at a given test is not a problem and can be fixed provided that the test takers don't give up, keep retaking the tests and use the goods and services that would help them to improve test performance. This conditional promise reminds us the Mitchell's circular paradox of reflexive government: Test takers are first required to exercise freedom as consumers of educational goods, technologies and services in order to gain the support and guidance that will allow them to exercise freedom as successful test scorers and ultimately as international student admitted to North American universities.

These programmes, therefore, are characterized by the exercise of a disciplinary, but not repressive, modern pastoral power that seeks the creation and shaping of competing and consuming subjects and thus capable international students. This is a kind of power that is driven mainly from the knowledge base of those who are involved in its exercise and thus depends largely on the sustainability of raw data generating processes feeding this knowledge base. Indeed, what makes ETS a powerful player in this whole network is its almost monopolistic position over the development and administration of TOEFL and many other tests, which in turn provide it with the very raw data needed to maintain and sustain its knowledge-based power. By using test scores data, ETS produces interpretative information which problematizes test takers on various grounds and suggests that the solution lies in submission to the disciplinary power of consuming the goods and services as well as foreign/international assistance programmes ETS offers. Moreover, the same scores enable them to prepare research papers, which in turn give them the capacity to respond to and challenge the criticisms against the testing programmes.

The power associated with these programmes is also an innovative one that continuously shifts its networks of alliances to include new centers of knowledge and processes of subjection. The introduction of computer-based TOEFL program is an interesting example in this respect. This particular change made possible the exercise of a power, which is innovative not only in technological terms, but also in terms of a whole set of cultural, social and behavioral novelties it brought into the testing experiences of

international students. By exposing international test takers to the North American way of doing things, such novel testing experience facilitate their subjection. More importantly, they further strengthen the message that failure can be fixed if test takers keep trying, submitting themselves to the disciplinary power of the knowledge masters to make them better fit for success. Such submission involves the participation of international test takers in a network of aligned interests, not only as applicants seeking admission to North American universities, but also as consumers of a continuously innovative set of self-help and self-responsibilization materials and services designed to increase English proficiency, computer literacy, test familiarity etc. The other members of this network of aligned interests are the publishers of test preparation materials and language schools. A recent report prepared by ETS notes that any innovation introduced into the TOEFL tests reverberates immediately with publishers and Intensive English Programme (IEP) providers in the USA.

This discussion clearly illustrates the numerous obvious micro-spheres of power involved in the running of TOEFL and other English proficiency tests. What is less obvious and more difficult to identify is how these link with macro-spheres of power and their grand global socio-political objectives. Part of the difficulty stems from the lack of extensive literature addressing and exploring the role of such technologies of examination and assessment in broader practices of global governmentality.⁶⁹ Yet, there are enough

⁶⁹ Shohamy (2007) notes that there has been a shift in the study of these English proficiency tests towards an emphasis on use-oriented view of testing. This new emphasis views tests not only as isolated events, but rather as acts which are embedded in and connected to educational, pedagogical, bureaucratic, psychological, social, and political variables that affect people, knowledge, curriculum, teaching, learning, ethicality, social

grounds to suggest that the use of these test scores as admission requirements for international applicants wishing to study in North American universities, not only aligns the interests of those who constitute the micro-spheres of power with one another, but also links them with grand global socio-political objectives outlined in North American macro-spheres of power. An interview with Kurt M. Landgraf, President and CEO of ETS, suggests such a link, indicating that agents of expertise inhabiting the educational micro-spheres of power fit in grander global socio-political objectives of governments of the neo-liberal world:

President George W. Bush recently outlined a new US foreign policy in which America will be more assertive in combating terrorism by our enemies first. The commencement speech at West Point made headlines around the world, and commentators are still writing and talking about it, and understandably so. Something else in the President's address received little notice, nor has it prompted much in the way of additional conversation. While not nearly as momentous as the 'first strike' doctrine, it was an important passage nevertheless. In his speech President Bush said, "In our development aid, in our diplomatic educational assistance, the United States will promote moderation and tolerance and human rights". ETS fully supports this renewed American commitment to international education. We provide assessments of all kinds in over 180 countries and our various tests are used by thousands of US colleges and universities as they seek to enroll students from abroad" (Landgraf, Kurt, M., www.ets.org/aboutets/issues13.html)

The remarks of the ETS President and CEO resonate with my earlier discussion of English proficiency test scores' construction as a visa requirement to deter potential terrorists from entering the UK. The response such constructions provoked within the UK ELT industry suggests that such tests are at the heart of a neoliberal governmentality with underlying networks of alliances, which are not free from contestations and negotiations.

classes, bureaucracy, politics, inclusion and exclusion. Yet a nuanced understanding of how such different variables and actors are connected is not given enough attention in the literature of political science.

Although the contesting and negotiating actors in this particular case are in the positions of power and wealth, it is nevertheless misleading to assume that the resulting reconfigurations of alliances necessarily victimize junior allies, which the totalizing discourses typically present as powerless and poor victims. It is important to remember that the latter are involved as agents in taking these tests to further their respective interests. Therefore, the same people are, at least potentially, able to withdraw their trust in and to undermine the power of such tests, by questioning their rationale and eventually refusing to take them by giving up their self-interested aspirations of studying in English medium universities, or migrating to English speaking countries. However utopian it may be, it would be interesting to imagine, at least for a moment, how different things would be if all international students boycotted English medium North American universities or the aging European societies were deprived of the inflow of young and skilled migrant labor force from other parts of the world.

It is therefore important to explore the nature of the relationships and alliances that exist, either currently or potentially, among different actors involved in the global ELT market. This requires highlighting the changes taking place in the rationalities underlying the transmission of foreign language, and particularly English, skills. The fact that this transmission is now imagined and governed as a “market” whereas it was previously taking place through a network of government, voluntary, missionary, philanthropic, diplomatic, civic etc. organizations, all motivated with their respective rationalities, deserves particular academic interest. Yet, there are not many studies, which directly address such questions.

In most accounts, global English Language Teaching (ELT) industry is often associated with the workings of English colonialism. However, such accounts fail to explain the spread of English language into interestingly diverse spaces including individual countries such as Turkey, which have never been colonized and multilingual regional spaces such as the European Union. Moreover, they don't pay attention to the novelty of the processes whereby English language skills are transferred today and the agency of those who choose to use from a variety of options ranging from on-line EFL programs to those which involve transnational mobility. Therefore, the processes of cumulative disempowerment that began with colonialism and reproduced by globalization should not stop us from engaging in a more nuanced analysis of the contemporary spread of EFL and exploring the implications of novel media of EFL learning for questions of power and equality. The following section will try to undertake such an analysis with particular reference to the Turkish context and thus complete the historical analysis framed in the previous chapters.

5.3. Reconstruction of Cultural Exchange Programs

The second and the third chapters discussed how the knowledge of a prestigious and often foreign language has almost always divided the Turkish society on cultural grounds. The late Ottoman and then Republican educational reforms which sought to eliminate this divide by expanding formal schooling to the masses and introducing foreign language courses into the curriculum, even at the elementary school level,

brought some change. However, limitations and problems typical to mass education impaired the extension of quality foreign language teaching into the wider public. Therefore, acquiring a good command of a foreign language which would bring upward mobility via access to prestigious universities and/or jobs continued to be limited only to the wealthiest or the brightest people, who could afford to attend prestigious schools through their own wealth or highly competitive scholarships. Even the locally developed private alternative media of foreign language learning, such as cram schools, could not change the status quo. The quality of foreign language teaching at these local private tutoring centers was compared unfavorably both with foreign language schools abroad and prestigious formal schools in Turkey.

The change, however limited, came with those alternative media of EFL learning that involved direct contact with English source culture(s). These alternative media also challenged the historically grounded monopoly of local communities, state, and family over the processes of “becoming” or “person-making” in Turkish society, but only to relocate them in new, transnational networks of alliances. These alternative media included various options, which ranged from EFL courses offered by locally established foreign cultural agencies to foreign language schools and cultural exchange programs that involved crossing physical and then categorical borders. In this section, I focus on the latter category of alternative media. Before engaging in such a discussion however, I will first examine how various locally deployed foreign agents established the basis for the popularization of such transnational experiences of EFL learning among Turkish youth.

Cultural agencies of foreign missions in Turkey offered direct and affordable contact with the source culture(s) of English. The most prominent of these agencies is the British Council, which is directly funded by the British Foreign Office to create stronger cultural relations with other countries. It has operated in Turkey since 1940 and currently has centers in Ankara, Istanbul and Izmir. It is also active throughout the rest of Turkey. The Council claims that it seeks to build sustainable and mutually beneficial relationships between people and institutions in the UK and Turkey. Its work covers a vast range of areas from English language and education to science and the arts, and from work with civil society to government reform. It stresses that most of its work committed to demonstrating the UK's support for Turkey's accession to the EU in practical ways and to empower young people in Turkey and the UK.

The British Council played an active role in the promotion of EFL in Turkey. The face-to-face language courses of the Council have been considered prestigious alternatives to the locally owned and administered cram schools. In the aftermath of late terrorist attacks on the diplomatic mission in Istanbul, however, the British Council decided to discontinue its service for security reasons. This development is interesting as it provides insights into the reconfiguration of the roles of respective actors involved in the promotion of EFL both locally and globally. Although some blamed security concerns, which increased in the aftermath of recent terrorist attacks to British Consulate in Istanbul, other explanations are possible. After all, British Council has been continuing its activities in Turkey since 1940 and it still provides direct courses in other countries that are not necessarily safer than Turkey. Moreover, soon after the British Council

stopped providing direct EFL classes in Turkey, its teachers and administrators opened their own private businesses and recruited a great deal of Turkish EFL students thanks to their reputation as former British Council employees (Hurriyet Daily Newspaper, 1 November 2006).

The British Council continues to provide both print and online resources to potential EFL students and administers various English proficiency tests, such as IELTS- the International English Language Testing System, which is designed to assess the language ability of candidates, who need to study or work at English medium settings. One particular area where the Council has become more active over the last few years is cooperation with local English teachers and their professional associations. The Council supports EFL teachers of Turkish nationality with various training programs, networks, dynamic on-line resources, monthly newsletters and funding opportunities. It also works very closely with INGED, the English Language Education Association of Turkey on a number of ELT projects.

The promotion of UK educational institutions, ranging from language schools to universities, constitutes another important Council activity which is performed through information provision rather than direct counseling to interested parties. Interestingly enough the counseling and placement services for Turkish people willing to study at a UK educational institution is now provided by a private company, EDKON, founded by two former employees of the British Council in Turkey.

Another foreign cultural agency involved in the promotion of EFL among Turkish people is the English Language Office (ELO) of the Public Affairs Section of the US Embassy in

Turkey. ELO works with Turkish universities and the Turkish Ministry of Education to help improve the teaching of English and to disseminate information on American culture and institutions. The Office assists in the implementation of English Language Teaching (ELT) teacher development programs nationwide, and coordinates a sales and distribution program for their English language teaching materials and reference sources.

The Office played an active role in the establishment of INGED, the English Teachers Association of Turkey. It also works closely with program directors, school administrators, and educational professionals from both the government and private sector to make the teaching of English in Turkey more effective. The programs and activities of ELO include teacher development workshops and presentations on a variety of topics including curriculum development; content-based learning; ELT methodology; and American studies. The Office conducts exchange programs to place English Language Fellows (ELFs) from the USA at Turkish universities or tertiary-level institutions and Turkish teachers of English at American universities to teach English and Turkish respectively. It also provides partial travel grants for Turkish teachers to enable them to participate in teacher development programs in Turkey and at the annual convention of TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages). The English Access Micro Scholarship Program, which is a recent initiative of the Department of State for underprivileged youth in predominantly Muslim communities, is also administered by the Office. Finally, the Office sells and distributes US government-produced materials for teacher development and the teaching of English and American culture.

The sector of foreign agencies involved in the promotion of EFL in Turkey also includes newcomers. For instance, Australia has recently become actively engaged in increasing its share in the Turkish ELT market, particularly by attracting more students to Australian educational institutions. According to the Australian Trade Commission (Austrade), an estimated number of 50,000 Turkish students travel abroad for higher education, each year, mostly because of the failure of the existing universities to meet the overall demand for higher education in Turkey. The Commission notes that Turkey has a young population with about 50 per cent under the age of 30 and that it therefore promises an even greater potential for global educational businesses. Austrade believes that distance learning is relatively poorly understood in Turkey. Therefore, on-line degrees and programs of Australian educational institutions are not expected to be popular with Turkish students. It nevertheless believes that opportunities to recruit Turkish students exist for other products and services such as English Language Intensive Course for Overseas Students (ELICOS), commercial colleges, technical and further Education (TAFE), undergraduate and postgraduate studies. According to Austrade, the sectors of greatest potential to Turkish students include business, banking, engineering, finance, information technology, and media-related courses. Most students require English language programs training in Australia prior to commencing other courses. There is also an increasing market for postgraduates from Turkish institutions and young professionals wanting to improve their English for career advancement.

While the cultural agencies of foreign governments promote their respective language schools and universities among Turkish people, international educational counselors facilitate and coordinate their placement overseas, sometimes through cultural exchange programs such as au pair and work & travel schemes. The Interviews I conducted during the summer of 2007 provided useful insights into this growing sector of international education counseling and interesting vantage points for understanding the transnational dimensions of EFL learning in our age. In the process of selecting the companies to be interviewed my main concern was to come up with a sample group operating in different subsectors and promoting the economic interests of different domestic and international actors. I reached most of my interviewees through the contact details provided by the website of UED (the Association of International Educational Counselors) in Turkey. Since my field research took place in the summer months and that this was a particularly busy time for the sector, I could interview only 4 people, one of which was not an UED member, yet still representing a very prominent company.

My interviewees were all involved in international educational counseling services but were specialized in different programs. Table 1 summarizes the profiles of the companies and their representatives. The list of the questions and the answers gathered during the interviews are provided in Annex 1, at the end of the thesis.

TABLE 1- Profiles of the Interviewed Companies

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Company Name | EF (English First) Education |
| Interviewee | Head of Turkey Office and Former manager of EF Head Offices in Brazil and Ecuador. |
| Company History & Profile | Established in 1965 by Bertil Hult, a then young Swedish entrepreneur, the company's initial business idea was simply to take Swedish high school students to England to learn English: on-site language and cultural studies. Yet, the company grew to be the world's largest private education company, with a group of fourteen subsidiaries, and non-profit organizations centered on language learning, educational travel, cultural exchange and academic programs. It has over 26,000 employees, teachers and volunteers with offices and schools in 51 countries. Bertil Hult describes the company mission as follows: "EF's mission is simple: to break down the barriers of language, culture and geography that divide us. In the past four decades, EF's educational programs have helped people of all ages and nationalities become citizens of the world". The company's Turkey Office is focused mostly on recruiting Turkish students for EF Language School's around the world. |
| Company Name | EDCON |
| Interviewee | Co-founder and manager of Istanbul Office; former employee of British Council Turkey Office |
| Company History & Profile | EDCON is an educational counseling firm established in Turkey in 1996 by two former employees of the British Council Turkey Office. The company officially represents many foreign language schools and 22 UK universities in Turkey. It offers educational counseling and placement services to those Turkish students interested in studying or attending a language school in the UK. |

TABLE 1 –Continued

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Company Name | ICEP (International Cultural Exchange Program) |
| Interviewee | Head of the Istanbul office of ICEP |
| Company History & Profile | <p>The company was established in 1986 in Ankara. It is among the pioneers of international educational counseling firms established in Turkey. Their initial focus was on placing Turkish students in foreign language schools and certificate programs abroad. They subsequently introduced au pair, summer camp and work & travel programs into their portfolio. ICEP is the first Turkish firm to send Turkish au pairs to the US. They also recruit foreign au pairs to place in North America and Europe. They seek to increase Turkey's share in this global market by offering foreigners au pair, internship and holiday programs in Turkey. To this end they are working with Turkish authorities to draft a legislative framework in Turkey. In 1995, the founders established the ICEP Scholarship Foundation, a non-profit organization, with the purpose of providing "cultural exchange opportunities for young people and students around the world". The founders of the Foundation believe that encouraging people to explore other cultures will help to foster peace and advance international understanding in the future. To this end, they provide "a wide range of services, including internships, holiday exchanges, educational programs, correspondence links and au pair placements to over 20,000 youngsters every year." The Foundation, whose Honorary President is a retired colonel of the Turkish Armed Forces, encourages Turkish youngsters to explore other cultures through the most inexpensive media such as work and travel, because they claim that the one, who loves his / her nation, should refrain from making other countries richer with his / her own national wealth.</p> |

Table 1 –Continued

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Company Name | Genetur |
| Interviewee | Manager; President of UED (Turkish Association of International Educational Counselors) |
| Company History & Profile | The company was established in 1976 and holds a leading position in the Turkish market with respect to the youth travel industry. It promotes a wide range of programmes such voluntary youth camps and places young people in foreign language schools abroad. |

These 4 companies presented themselves as representatives of a new sector, which emerged to fill the gap left by Turkish public schooling and local private tutoring centers in providing competitive foreign language skills. They noted that the number of the companies operating in their sector almost quadrupled over the last three decades, spreading from their original concentration in Taksim / Pera neighborhood of Istanbul to other localities in Turkey. All stressed that the sector is poorly regulated and recorded which makes it hard to estimate Turkey's contribution to the global EFL sector. Since visa categories do not specify the schools or the programs attended overseas, it is difficult to estimate the number of Turkish people traveling to learn EFL. Two of the companies I interviewed, however, estimated that an average of 30,000 Turkish people travel to attend foreign EFL schools and programs every year.

It is interesting that international educational counselors in Turkey initially chose to open their offices in the Taksim / Pera neighborhood of Istanbul, like most of the foreign missionary schools and their first local competitor, Galatasaray, did during the Ottoman era. The fact that educational novelties, however defined, continue to be introduced in a

neighborhood historically known as non-Muslim has a symbolic significance. The choice over space is indicative of the choice over people. It tells us that historically rooted social inequalities in the acquisition of cultural capital and upward social mobility are still relevant. Yet, the contemporary coexistence of elite schools and international educational counselors in the same neighborhood suggests that such inequalities are now being negotiated among numerous actors, involving its former victims who are now offered alternative pathways to cultural capital and upward social mobility.

My interviewees noted that, despite the novelty of their products and services, international educational counselors were initially considered part of other well-established sectors, such as tourism and travel. Some recalled that TURSAB (The Turkish Union of Tourism and Travel Agencies) tried very hard to register them as members, and that this prompted them to take the initiative to define their distinct activities and form their own sectoral association. They noted that a bunch of educational counselors joined their efforts to establish YESAD (Association of Agents for International Education Services) in 1995.

Although YESAD significantly contributed to the construction of the international education as a unique sector, it could not survive long. It is noted that new comers to the sector were not particularly interested in joining YESAD. Moreover, the laws and regulations of the mid 1990s, it is argued, were not too conducive to establish and maintain a sectoral association. When the lack of standardization, auto-control and regulation in the sector began to be problematized at the end of the 1990s, however, a

number of well-established companies launched a new campaign to establish their own sectoral association. Taking advantage of the then relaxed laws and regulations of association and consulting the constitutions of similar sectoral/professional associations abroad, they established The Turkish Association of International Counselors (UED) in 2001. Their efforts to organize such an Association were strongly supported by the British Council and the Consulates of countries such as US and Australia, the main destinations of Turkish people hoping to learn English. Such support was even manifest in UED's relations with foreign consulates and embassies in Turkey. It is noted that UED members enjoyed relative ease in getting student visas from the British Embassy for many years, until the latter has later contracted all visa related intermediary services to a private Turkish company.

The mission of UED Is described as helping young people to identify the programs that are best suited to their needs by facilitating their dealings with foreign educational institutions. Unlike its predecessor, UED survived as the only sectoral association of international educational counselors in Turkey. It more then doubled the number of its members from 15 to 31 over the last 9 years. It is noted that there are still many other companies, who choose not to join the UED and that this makes standardization and regulation of the sector even more difficult.

My interviewees were mostly members of UED; so their accounts of the Association were naturally very positive. They argued that the Association has the power to monitor the activities of its members and to set quality standards for the sector. One non-UED

member interviewee, however, argued that the Association never had binding authority over its members because of voluntary membership and he challenged the claims that UED brought great improvement to the quality of the ELT sector in Turkey or to the rights of final customers. The limitations of UED are also acknowledged, although more cautiously, by its own president, who was among the interviewees.

I have to admit that we still have a long way to go to become fully institutionalized and join the group of well-established civil society organizations, which enjoy state funding. Right now, we don't even have the legal authority to enforce any regulations within our sector. (However), we are proud to see that potential EFL students now inquire about whether their counterparts are UED members or not.

UED works closely with non-profit organizations to reach out their potential customers and to promote their business through symbolic but powerful gestures, such as sponsoring poor students for short-term educational camps in foreign countries. Practices of mixing markets with philanthropy are not limited to those, which are UED members. One of the companies, which I interviewed for my research, was not a member of the UED. Yet, it had a special pricing policy for the children, whose parents had lost their lives serving / defending the country. The same company was also offering scholarships to university students, who volunteered to promote the company services in their respective campuses.

It is interesting to note that not only for profit organizations but also non-profit organizations are actively engaged in the construction and promotion of EFL knowledge as a valuable and convertible cultural capital. For example, the President of The Turkish “Volunteers for Education Foundation” (EGV), which partnered with the UED in the

selection and placement of poor students in foreign summer camps, suggests that EFL sector emerged out of a demand. He neither questions whether the causality, if any, works in this direction, nor problematizes the kind of response he is naturalizing or advocating. As such, he sounds very much like the provincial governors of the late Ottoman era urging the establishment of local schools that would compete with those of non-Muslim communities and missionaries.

Today, everybody wants their children to know a foreign language and have computer skills. Everybody sees that future of this country lies in globalization. We therefore have to give our children that kind of education (Ibrahim Betil, EGV President, quotes from a press conference, retrieved from <http://arsiv.zaman.com.tr/2002/01/31/egitim/butun.htm>)

This emphasis on the importance of having both computer and language skills in a globalized world helps understanding the increasing popularity of another alternative media of language learning known as on-line English programs. These schemes are promoted in Turkey, sometimes by ridiculing old modes of language learning, such as textbook based public schooling. For example, an advertisement campaign of an internationally reputable EFL company suggested old ways of learning English were being defeated by the new ones. The argument was creatively illustrated with the reformulation of a Turkish proverb, where “going to the other side” is synonymous to “being dead”. Accordingly, Mr. and Mrs. Brown, who were the main characters of an old EFL textbook in Turkey, were described as being “gone to the other side”. It was suggested that generations have tried but failed to learn English from this old couple, and that young people should consider new and more viable options such as on-line English programs.

On-line English programs are worth highlighting as they draw our attention to individual agency and self-discipline, which apparently play a role in the processes of EFL learning. Despite all the rhetoric of a neoliberal global hegemonic power binding our hands, the case of those who choose to learn English through on line programs flag that individual and collective agencies are still alive and even decisive.

Another area where the agency of the learners is evident is the language travel sector, where many students seek help from local agents to be placed in foreign educational settings to study or learn English. The international Language Travel Magazine (LTM), which has been conducting annual market surveys for Turkey over the last few years, provides some information on this particular sector. The respondents to the LTM surveys in Turkey constitute only a very small sample of language travel agents working in the country. Yet, they support the claim that Turkey is an important growing market for the global ELT sector. According to these surveys, the average market growth across all interviewed agency businesses were 24, 29.4 and 32 percents in 2005, 2006, and 2007 respectively. The surveys suggest that the UK is the most popular destination for language travel: it is reported that 46, 43, 46 and 55 percent of the clients of the responding agents went to the UK in 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008 respectively⁷⁰. According to the LTM surveys, the USA usually ranks the second, with Canada and Australia fiercely competing for third.

⁷⁰ The Education Market Intelligence of the British Council also suggests that the UK is a highly favored destination among Turkish ELT students: “The UK is the preferred option for ELT, and almost 60 per cent of the Turkish students studying in the UK are ELT students” (British Council, 2006).

In 2005, the LTM surveys reported that the main motivation for Turkish students to study a foreign language was the prospect of studying abroad. However, in 2006, 2007 and 2008, future work has become the most important motivation. This partly explains the decrease in the popularity of academic preparation courses among the clients of participating agents over the last three years. It also reveals why General English, which has always been the most popular course, has become even more so over the same period. Another interesting trend has been the steady increase in the popularity of summer programs, which have reached a remarkable share of 18 percent of the total in 2008.

Surveys suggest that agencies in Turkey recruit most of their clients via word-of-mouth recommendation, while their websites are the next most important recruitment method. This finding is supported also by some of the EFL agents I interviewed in Turkey. Additional studies suggest that the power of social networks is not limited to the Turkish context and that it extends beyond the decisions about the agents to work with. A study commissioned by the British Council, for instance, found that the majority of students traveling to the UK received information about potential places to study from friends and family, followed by information from travel agents or specialist language school agents. Another British Council report confirmed this finding with particular reference to the EFL students coming from Japan, the biggest market for UK ELT services (Sherr et al, 2004). It is important to note, however, that this is not a universal phenomenon. One of the international education counselors I interviewed suggested that Turkish students contrasted dramatically with German ones in that respect. Potential EFL students from Germany were generally described as making faster decisions, using the Internet rather

than agents or social networks for source of information. Therefore we may assume that the power of social networks is more prominent in countries with particular cultural backgrounds.

Social networks have been instrumental in the increasing popularity of particular alternative media of EFL learning in Turkey. Au pairing, which did not initially appeal to the families of potential Turkish au pairs, for instance, subsequently became a legitimate and desirable option, mostly through the power of social networks. Turkish au pairs, who were placed in different parts of the world, formed e-mail groups, where they exchanged valuable first hand experiences and played an important role in shaping the decisions of new aspirants. The success stories of some former au pairs, who ended up with good academic and professional careers in Turkey and elsewhere, also helped Turkish families to perceive it as a safe way of advancement for their children. As I noted earlier, one of my interviewees was a former au pair, who graduated from a British University and then worked many years at the British Council Turkey Office. Although hers was obviously an outstanding and exceptionally rewarding experience, my other interviewees also confirmed that many Turkish people, who had previous transnational experiences of EFL learning, and more particularly au pairs, end up opening their own businesses in this sector, converting their cultural capital into economic capital and status.

The failure of formal schooling and other locally available alternatives to teach good EFL skills on the one hand and the increasingly positive construction of au pairing as a safe, affordable and rewarding option on the other, paved the way for increasing popularity of

au pair programmes among the Turkish young girls. It is estimated that the number of Turkish au pairs hosted since 1972 in England only is about 35,000. Until recently, some referred to London as a city where “Turkish au pairs look after babies”.

Interestingly enough, there are also efforts to bring foreign au pairs to Turkey as a way to promote Turkish language and culture. One of the companies that participated in my research, noted that foreign au pairs’ interest in Turkey is significant and that their company is trying very hard to convince Turkish authorities to develop the required legislative frameworks. The company believed that au pair and other cultural exchange programs should be both ways and that similar initiative, which would promote Turkish culture and language, also needs to be promoted. This reminds us the role of reciprocity in the institutionalization of social equalities around the world and suggests that different and seemingly contradictory rationalities such as nationalism and neoliberalism may well be mixed in the pursuit of such institutionalization.

Au-pair programmes are usually considered as cultural exchange schemes. They have become highly popular first in European countries such as France and England and then in North America. One of the promotional brochures I reviewed during my research suggests that the term au pair was first used in 1897 in a magazine article published in France. The article used the term to refer to young female Anglophones, who spend some time in France, living in French family households and teaching English to local people. Therefore, au pair was initially perceived as a young female foreigner, who taught her own language to the people of her host country. The connotation of the term, however,

has subsequently changed to refer to young females who spend some time in foreign households to learn foreign languages. Therefore we can assume that au pairing as such is not a revolutionary medium for teaching / learning a foreign language. What makes contemporary au pair programmes novel is their centrality to the commodification of English and consolidation of a neoliberal governmentality, which aligns the interests of various national / international, individual / collective agents.

Au pair programmes are presented as mutually beneficial for both sides of the cultural exchange. Young people with a high school diploma and Basic English are placed in foreign family homes, where they improve their social and linguistic skills through direct exposure to the source culture. In return for the childcare and sometimes light domestic work they provide a given number of hours per day/week, their host families provide them full boarding and some pocket money, which the au pairs are expected to use for attending foreign language or vocational schools during their au pair placement. The demand for au pairs usually comes from middle class families of the host societies, where working mothers seek affordable and non-contractual childcare for their children so that they can continue building their professional careers⁷¹.

Au pair visas are usually for a two year period, depending in the immigration controls of individual countries. Since they cannot be extended or renewed, they are not considered as a route to permanent residency, but there are many cases where au pairs use this

⁷¹ For childcare implications of and various responses to the erosion of male breadwinner/female homemaker family form in the OECD countries see Michel and Mahon (2002)

scheme as a stepping stone to foreign countries for the purpose of finding a job or settle in abroad. Although most families prefer to host female au pairs, young men who meet the general requirements can also apply. It is important to note, however, that the UK, for instance, began recruiting male au pairs only after 1993 (Anderson 2009) and that the limited amount of scholarly debates have so far focused on the gendered subjectivities of female participants of these programs.

Despite their real life experiences, which involve working within and for the household, au pairs are not considered workers. Instead, they are presented as temporary but equal members of the family. As such, au pairing is strikingly similar to the ‘life cycle service’, common in the early modern period of Northwestern Europe where an estimated three-fifth of English young people were sent into the homes of others of the same, or perhaps slightly higher, social status to take care of the children and do some domestic work (Anderson 2009: 417-8). While British families imagined contemporary au pair regimes on these grounds, Turkish people had their own historical and cultural collective memories on which they constructed au pairing as a legitimate and desirable option for acquiring cultural capital and upward social mobility. Muslim families, who handed over their children to their non-Muslim neighbors so that they become eligible for the Ottoman Palace School; the case of Turkish countryside people, who naturalized doing domestic work in the households of urban families for integration and upward social mobility since the 1960s, and finally the case of Turkish youth who were fascinated by foreign tourists visiting their coastal home towns over the last three decades; they are all worth remembering in this context.

A detailed account of whether real life experiences of contemporary au pairs and their host families are consistent with what they had imagined is of course beyond the scope of this thesis. Yet, it is possible to suggest that the temporariness and categorical fuzziness of au pairing make the overall experience potentially open to manipulation and exploitation. Such risks never find expression in the materials used for the promotion of au pair programmes. International educational counselors I interviewed, generally presented au pairing, as “life time opportunities for those who want to be exposed to a different language and culture but can not afford traveling to or studying in a foreign country”. Au pair programs are thus described as the most affordable way to learn the language and the culture of a foreign country. Moreover, it is argued that these programs “teach young people how to become an independent, self-sufficient but responsible individuals, who can easily adjust to different cultural settings”. Therefore, they are presented as promising a particular kind of cultural capital that extends beyond the knowledge of a foreign language and involves other kinds of skills not always acquired through formal schooling, but increasingly valued by prospective employers.

There is another significant, yet underestimated cultural logic, which is genuinely used in the promotion of au pair programs in Turkey. For instance, one of the promotional materials I reviewed during my research stressed that au pairing is the only way one can travel overseas and learn foreign languages ‘without being a financial burden on his/her family’. In the context of a Turkish family culture, where children often remain financially and emotionally indebted to their parents for their ability to attend good

schools, find reputable jobs, meet their spouses and even furnish and maintain their own households, au pairing is constructed as a way to stop this circle of dependency through individual free agency. It was therefore not mere religious conservatism which made Turkish families initially reluctant to let their daughters participate in au pair programs. The latter was also perceived as a potential challenge to the deeply rooted familial hierarchical power structures, which, in the Turkish context, were maintained mostly through a vicious circle of indebtedness to the parents.

Despite all the rhetoric of individual agency promoted by international educational counselors, however, families still play a decisive role in the process by eventually endorsing their daughters' aspirations and sometimes paying the fees charged by the agents for au pair placements. One of my interviewees was the manager of a local company, which was known to be the first to send Turkish au pairs to the USA. He noted that Turkish families' perception of au pairing showed a significant positive change over the last two decades. He cautioned however that such perceptions still depend on the expectations au pairs develop on the basis of their respective backgrounds. He noted that host families usually expect their au pairs to have a basic command of English and a driver's license – the latter being especially essential in countries like the USA where life goes on the wheels. He suggested that Turkish girls, who already have such skills, usually believe that tasks such as babysitting and housekeeping are not prestigious enough, whereas German girls of similar specifications perceive au pairing as an exciting cultural opportunity.

These observations are consistent with the findings of Anderson (2009) whose study suggests that au pairing is perceived variably depending on a number of considerations. Her study is based on the experiences of Eastern and Central European au pairs in the UK before and after EU enlargement. She notes that most of them perceived au pairing as a “chance to come to the United Kingdom and to live a different kind of life for a while. As for its employment aspects, au pairing was, at best, a chance to look around, find some accommodation, improve one’s English and make some contacts, rather than being an indicator of the type of employment the au pair imagined in the future. Au pairs were keen to emphasize their education, their aspirations, their breadth of experience and possibilities. Many au pairs implicitly and explicitly expressed the sense that ‘This is not all that I am’” (Anderson 2009: 420).

Similarly, for some Turkish people, au pairing is something to be endured for a limited period of time, in order to improve their English through exposure to the source culture and eventually acquire the kind of cultural capital, which will make them competitive in academic or professional settings. Accordingly, it is no coincidence that most promotional materials used to recruit au pairs from Turkey use visual images, which seek to construct au pairing as a pleasant experience involving activities like swimming, shopping, playing etc. with smiling and friendly children. Even those images that involve domestic work are carefully chosen to show to the potential au pairs that they will be part of a family, every member of which has a role to play in the smooth running of the household. For example, au pairs are shown setting the table or washing the pets with the help of the children, but there are no pictures of au pairs changing diapers, sorting the

dirty laundry or ironing the clothes of family members. The promotional materials also depict au pairs interacting with people from the host society and thus practicing / improving their foreign languages. The images of au pairs, who speak to the teacher of the children, while picking them up from school, or interact with workers of local grocery stores while shopping with and for the kids, are interesting examples in this respect. Most of the promotional material accommodates the testimonies of actual au pairs, who praise their experiences. In most cases, there are pictures of Turkish au pairs frequenting the touristical attractions and fancy teahouses in London as a group, suggesting that au pairing is not a harsh experience to be endured in solitude. It also helps to build enjoyable collectivities with others from similar backgrounds.

Although international educational counselors in Turkey depict au pairing as a positive experience, they nevertheless stress that expectations from au pairs vary from one hosting country to another. It is noted that au pairs placed in UK homes are expected to work an average of 25-30 hours per week to help their host families both in housekeeping and childcare. In contrast those placed in US homes work up to 45 hours per week but are expected to concentrate on childcare only.

The evolution of regulatory schemes concerning au pair programs varies from one country to another having important implications in the way such schemes are constructed as avenues for acquiring cultural capital and access to imagined communities. Regulatory frameworks for au pair programs in Europe date back to the European Agreement on Au Pair Placement adopted in 1969 by the Council of Europe. The

Agreement recognizes that au pairs belong neither to the student category nor to the worker category but to a special one, which has features of both, and that it is therefore useful to make appropriate arrangements for them. The Agreement also considers that au pair placement constitutes an important social problem with legal, moral, cultural and economic implications, which transcends national boundaries of member states. It seeks to define and standardize in all member states the conditions governing au pair placement and thereby to give au pairs adequate social protection.

The European Agreement on Au Pair Placement is so far signed and ratified only by 5 member states; France (1971), Denmark (1971), Norway (1971), Italy (1973) and Spain (1988). 7 member states have signed but not ratified yet. These are Belgium (1969), Switzerland (1970), Germany (1976), Greece (1979), Finland (1997), Moldova (2001), and Bulgaria (2002). Luxembourg is the only member state, which has first signed/ratified but then denounced. It is striking that a significant majority of the member states of the Council of Europe, 33 out of 46, did neither sign nor ratify the European Agreement on Au Pair Placement. EU countries accept au pairs from all EU states without a visa. Some EU countries, such as Britain, France, Spain and Germany, also accept au pairs from a range of non-EU European states, under specific visa arrangements.

The UK, the major destination of Turkish au pairs, is particularly worth discussing in this context. The UK is among those 33 Council of Europe member states, which neither signed nor ratified the Agreement. In the absence of any binding international

regulations, the UK governments enjoyed relative flexibility in their treatment of au pairs from different countries. More recently, they introduced the so-called Points Based System (PBS) for managing migration for those wishing to enter the UK for work or study. The new system had far reaching implications for au pair programs and practically made it impossible the recruitment of au pairs from Turkey as of November 2008. With the new system, the UK immigration authorities abolished au pair visa category and introduced the Youth Mobility Scheme (YMS) to grant Tier 5 temporary migrant status to the young citizens of non-EU countries willing to work in the UK for a period of 2 years. As of the date of the writing of this thesis, only Australia, Canada, Japan, Monaco and New Zealand have joined the YMS to sponsor their citizens.

YMS applicants are required to score a total of 40 points for their attributes (30 points for being a citizen of a YSM signatory country and 10 points for being between 18 to 31 years of age) and another 10 points for having enough funds (at least £ 1,600) to maintain themselves for the duration of their stay in the UK. They must not previously have spent time in the UK as a Working Holiday Maker or a Tier 5 YMS temporary migrant. Moreover, for their visa application to be processed, they are required to provide their biometric details in person. They must not have dependents under the age of 18, which means mothers of young children are almost automatically excluded from this scheme. There must be no recourse to public funds during their stay in the UK. They will be free to do whatever work they like except for self-employment, working as a professional sportsperson (including as a sports coach) or working as a doctor in training. Self-employment is only allowed if they don't own permanent premises, from which they do

business other than their home, if the total value of the equipment they use in their business does not exceed £5,000 and they have no employees. YMS visa holders may also engage in privately funded studies, voluntary work and au pair placements.

International educational counselors, who have been placing Turkish au pairs in the UK for so many years, were very disappointed with the new system and launched an aggressive lobbying campaign in and lawsuit against the UK. They claimed that the 1963 European Community Association Agreement (ECAA) – also known as Ankara Agreement- and its additional protocols entitle Turkish citizens to enter the UK as au pair and be exempt from the newly introduced visa regulations. Partly as a result of their efforts, Turkish citizens who want to enter the UK to establish a business now have the right to apply for an exclusive ECAA visa category, which grants them initial leave to remain in the UK for 12 months. If they meet the requirements and prove that they have successfully established their business, this period may be extended up to 4 years. There are no limits set for the funds they need to bring in as long as they can secure the establishment and maintenance of their business. Since they are not required to employ people, ECAA visa holders can also choose to be self-employed in a number of sectors. However, UK authorities make it clear that they will not tolerate disguised employment under this visa category. After the successful completion of the first 4 years, ECAA visa holders become entitled to apply for Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) in the UK and then for UK citizenship. They may also benefit from free health services and bring their families and dependents with them as long as the latter also qualify for ECAA visa.

Currently, international education counselors in Turkey are promoting this new visa category and status among Turkish youth. Since application procedures require applicants to develop business plans that would be acceptable by UK authorities, the new visa category brought significant changes to the profile of services offered by international education counselors in Turkey and made them more like business consultants charging higher service fees. What is more significant is that international educational counselors in Turkey are now reconstructing au pairing as a category of self-employment and Turkish au pairs as potential entrepreneurs eligible for ECAA visa.

Due to the recent introduction of this exclusive visa category, I do not have empirical evidence to suggest that such reconstructions are manipulative marketing strategies with negative consequences for those, who aspire to acquire good EFL skills through au pairing in the UK. It may however be that those, who would apply for ECAA visa to become self-employed au pairs in the UK may be easily refused on the grounds that their real intention is disguised employment. To the extent that this category serves to channel young Turkish citizens who want to acquire good EFL skills through au pairing to such a difficult to get visa category, UK immigration authorities would be privileging those who already have a good command of English. The previous regulatory regime did not problematize Turkish au pairs' lack of proficiency in English because EFL learning was a legitimate and essential component of the overall au pairing experience. Under the new regime, where au pairing is made only one of the self-employment options and applicants are expected to demonstrate entrepreneurial capacity and success in a competitive Anglophone setting, those with poor English skills are automatically discouraged to apply

or get potentially victimized. Indeed, the guidelines, which are prepared for UK immigration officers processing ECAA visa applications, explicitly refer to “proficiency in English” as one of the criteria to be used in assessing the applicants’ “intention to self-establish” in the UK.

Where an application would normally be assessed on paper only but it is felt that the level of English is of particular relevance to the application, consideration should be given to interviewing the applicant. Alternatively, the applicant may be asked to provide written evidence of their ability to speak English, such as an educational qualification in English.

Moreover, if the ECAA visa application is refused, the same guidelines suggest that the immigration officer may use merit-based refusal words such as: “Your level of English is not sufficient to allow you to run your business with a realistic chance of success”. Therefore, I suggest that the new visa regulations made au pairing in the UK more difficult for Turkish citizens, who have only basic English skills and that the new marketing rhetoric of international educational counselors, who don’t want to give up their role and share in the sector, doesn’t seem to be realistic.

Although au pairing in the UK, the major destination of Turkish au pairs, has now become more difficult due to the new visa regulations, the USA continues to be a viable option although it too entails linguistic requirements. The institutionalization of au pair schemes in the USA dates back to the establishment of the Au Pair Program in 1986, under the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program. The latter is comprised of 13 categories of exchanges, which are grouped under ‘private sector programs’ or ‘academic and government programs’. It is noted that more than 280,000 foreign nationals travel to the

USA annually using a J-1 visa to participate in the Exchange Visitor Program and that the US Department of State 2004 public diplomacy strategy “calls for broader and deeper use of exchanges-people-to-people contacts-“ to “change the hearts and minds” (US Department of State, 2005).⁷²

US Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs administers the Exchange Visitor Program, through the Office of Exchange Coordination and Designation. The Office processes sponsorship applications of US organizations to conduct exchange programs in the various exchange categories and designates the ones, which meet the requirements. The sponsors may be for profit or non-profit organizations; businesses; state, local, or federal government agencies; and education-related institutions. They sometimes contract with overseas organizations – such as student travel agencies- as local partners to help identify and screen exchange program applicants. Some sponsors serve as intermediaries between the exchange visitor and a third party, which engages the exchange visitor in the program activity for the category in which they are being sponsored. Third parties consist of a variety of organizations, which include, but are not limited to, hotels, law firms, restaurants, Internet companies and other private and public sector businesses and organizations. Sponsors are also responsible for managing information on the exchange participant in US Department of Homeland Security (DHS)’s Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), which has been in operation since 2003.

⁷² J-1 is a non-immigrant visa issued to foreign nationals to visit the United States temporarily to teach, instruct, or lecture, study, observe, conduct research, consult, demonstrate special skills, or receive training.

The Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, which was introduced to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries through educational and cultural exchanges, provides the legal framework for the Au Pair and all other categories under the Exchange Visitor Program. According to the US Department of State website, foreign nationals between 18 and 26 years of age may participate in the Au Pair Program for an initial period of 12 months, which can be extended for another 6 or 9 or 12 months in certain cases. Au pairs are required to be proficient in spoken English and must be secondary school graduates. The international educational counselors involved in placing au pairs in the USA note that US families don't accept those who do not have good driving records and previous childcare experience. Although proficiency in spoken English is one of the requirements, in a context where au pairing in the UK has recently been made so difficult, the USA still offers better prospects for young Turkish people, who seek to acquire good English skills through au pair programmes.

The American ‘Au Pair Program’ is worldwide and it is therefore open to au pairs from any foreign country except those with which the U.S. does not have diplomatic relations. Program participants enter the United States with a J-1 visa for a stay, which cannot exceed a total of 2 years. Since au pairs cannot further extend or renew their J-1 visas, au pairing is not considered as a route to permanent residency in the USA.

The participants of the American “AU Pair Program” are expected to take care of the children of their host families in return of full board accommodation and a weekly pocket money. At the same time, they are required to complete an educational component of six semester hours of academic credit or its equivalent (language or vocational courses), the cost of which is jointly shared by their host families. The latter is expected to pay a minimum of 500 US dollars per year towards their au pairs’ education at state colleges. Childcare cannot exceed 10 hours per day and a maximum of 45 hours per week. Moreover au pairs may not be placed with a family that has an infant less than three months old unless a parent or other responsible adult us at home. Similarly, to be placed in homes with children under two years of age au pairs must have at least 200 hours of documented infant childcare experience. Au pairs are paid for their work according to the Fair Labor Standards Act as interpreted and implemented by the US Department of Labour.

International educational counselors placing au pairs in the USA are subject to strict requirements. They have to administer psychological testing to measure the fitness of the candidates for au pairing experience, give au pairs 32 hours of training and provide them community counselors for support. Moreover, US Department of State audits them annually, using an outside auditor to ensure all requirements are met and documented
(Sue Shellenbarger, Wall Street Journal On Line)

It is hard to find accurate yearly or cumulative quantitative data about the number of au pairs in individual countries or in wider spaces such as the EU, North America, for a

number of reasons, but mostly due to the ambiguous status of au pairs, which conveniently subjects them to various visa categories and regulatory regimes. The visa statistics fall short of providing the whole picture since not all au pairs need a visa to enter their host countries. It is also the case that visa categories change over time posing challenges to those, who would like to find cumulative data. Moreover, the list of countries whose citizens need visa changes over time. The European enlargement is a typical example in this respect. EU member states, which used to require visa from the citizens of candidate countries exempt them from such practices as soon as they join the EU. Yet, it is estimated that 100,000 au pairs are being placed every year in EU countries, with the UK being the major recipient (www.coe.int). Statistics about the number of au pairs in the UK usually include the citizens of non-EU countries only because the latter were admitted into the country through a distinct au pair visa category which existed in the UK immigration system until recently. According to the UK Home Office (2003), the number of au pairs admitted from non-EU countries was 12,800 in 2002. However, Addley (2002) notes that some experts estimate the total number of au pairs in the UK as high as 50,000 for the same year. The number of au pairs placed in the USA since 1986 is estimated as 150,000 (Shellenbarger, Wall Street Journal On Line)

There is widespread consensus that in most European countries, anarchy and a lack of regulation prevail in relation to au pair placements. This stimulated the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe to send a recommendation to the Committee of Ministers in June 2004 about the issue of different forms of domestic slavery, including

au pair placements⁷³. This included a recommendation about issuing guidelines, which would ensure that the distinctive status of au pairs is recognized and safeguarded, that their working conditions and social cover are fixed and that the au pair industry is appropriately regulated at national and international level. The Committee of Ministers of the Council replied to this recommendation in January 2005 and practically informed the Assembly that the member states are not interested in the development and monitoring of a standardized au pair system. I suggest that the reluctance of the member states to standardize the au pair system across Europe should not be considered as the prominence of some vested interests over others. Even in the absence of such standardization, young people continue participating in au pair programmes and using them as a strategy for both spatial and social mobility.

The limited academic literature on au pair programmes focuses mostly on the experiences of East and Central European au pairs in the pre-enlargement EU. In other words, they correspond mainly to an era, where most of these young people still had to get visa to enter their respective EU host countries. Since the enlargements waive of 2004, citizens of these countries have free mobility across Europe but their past experiences of restricted mobility provide useful insights about the case of au pairs from other countries, like Turkey. Hess' analysis of Slovak female au pairs is quite instructive in this respect.

⁷³ For an exclusive account of neo-slavery victimizing foreign maids working in rich households of Asian countries see Ong (2006) "A Biocartography: Maids, Neoslavery and NGOs" in A. Ong ed. Neoliberalism as Exception: Mutations in Citizenship and Sovereignty.

Hess notes that Slovak au pairs were engaged in such migratory experiences because of the economic and social difficulties, which were manifest at national, familial and individual levels in Slovakia during the country's transformation process of the 1990s. The high rate of unemployment among high school graduates made the latter increasingly dependent on their families. University education was less of an option not only because of academic failure to pass the examinations but also families could no longer afford paying their children's fees. These young women therefore assumed that the pocket money associated with au pairing will help them save money, which they could later use to finance their university education in Slovakia. When they found out that the amount of pocket money was barely enough for their living, they began seeking extra jobs and extend their stay in the hosting EU countries. However, this was also the time when they began focusing on other things that would make their western experiences more rewarding, such as foreign language learning.

According to Hess the rationale underlying the shift of their emphasis towards foreign language learning was clear: These young women were troubled not with the general economic risk of impoverishment but also with a social experience of disqualification in the context of rapid marketization, privatization and westernization. This new context suggested that they need new skills, strategies and capital forms in a Bourdieuan sense and that this could be achieved if they managed to develop good foreign language skills through au pairing. Moreover there was increasing evidence that exposure to and knowledge of Western practices, knowledge and lifestyles would bring them more than just symbolic high value. The construction of the knowledge of a foreign language as an

indispensable cultural capital of the new era also motivated Slovakian parents to support their daughters' decisions to engage in such migratory experiences.

The Au Pair migration is therefore to be seen as an individual and family based qualification strategy to enhance one's own chances after the return. In regard of the other possibilities at hand, it is a highly functional practice of young women to cope with the social risks of the transformations. Temporary migration is in this sense a transformation strategy. As people have to make sense and act in daily live there are appropriations, tactics and thus new constitutions (Hess retrieved from <http://thistuesday.org/node/36>)

In sum, Hess argues that Slovak women tactically used au pair programmes in their struggle against the upheavals of transformational processes at home by extending their action onto the transnational space. Therefore, she criticizes the main social discourse on globalization and transformation of European societies for writing this female migration out of master narratives. She suggests that eastern European au pairs should be recognised as actors from below, who are using their agency to fill important social gaps torn up by the globalization and transformation processes.

The contextual overview, which I have provided so far with regard to the evolution of the rationalities and logics underlying the motivation of Turkish people to learn foreign languages, suggests that there are similarities between the experiences of Slovak and Turkish au pairs. They were both compelled to use au pairing as a strategy of spatial and social mobility to survive and benefit from the transformations taking place at national and global levels. To them, au pairing was the only affordable way they could learn a foreign language through exposure to the source culture(s) and thus acquire the kind of cultural capital, which they could later convert into economic and other forms of capital.

While au pairing provided some young people means of spatial and social mobility, it also benefited many other individual and collective agents at national and international levels. Newcombe (2004), who studied the experiences of au pairs from a wider range of countries in the UK context, argues that different groups, from the state and au pair agencies, to individuals and families, have vested interests in the scheme's existence. The state is better off if it can manage migration, provide affordable childcare, help both parents participate in the labor force, and encourage mobility within an integrated Europe. Au pair agencies, on the other hand, generate profits from their involvement in the placement of au pairs. Families are provided flexible, cheap and on-call assistance, which they need for the care of their children and the keeping of their houses.

Newcombe argues that "all these players are implicated in crosscutting relationships, not as part of some conspiratorial plot to exploit, but in a classical example of mobility that is necessary to different groups, and easily acceptable to the general public" (Newcombe 2004: 3). She suggests that we can widen our understanding of migration in the contemporary era only by exploring these relationships and by extending our conceptual parameters to capture these new mobilities. Therefore, Newcombe's findings in the UK context are consistent with my thesis that alternative media of EFL learning, such as au pair programs, are part of a broader project of neo-liberal governmentality, which align the interests of an unprecedently high number of state and non-state, national and supranational, formal and informal actors through "governing at-a-distance mechanisms".

My research suggests that Work & Travel Programs (W&T) are also perceived as alternative media for EFL learning among Turkish youth. Although international educational counselors generally avoid making foreign language learning neither a direct nor central benefit of these programmes, anecdotal evidence about the deception of many participants suggests that the misperception is widespread and not limited to Turkish participants. The media coverage of real life experiences of US work and travel program participants from Turkey and Brazil, for instance, describe them as victims of ignorant agencies that forced them to sub-par housing and slave-like working conditions.

A newspaper article focusing on the experiences of US W&T participants from Brazil stresses that these young people signed in these schemes assuming that coming to America “would help them improve their English, learn about the culture, and make a little money, too”. Another one reporting the case of Turkish young people emphasizes that the latter were all university students, who assumed that the program would enable them to spend their summer break to improve their English by working and traveling in the USA. It is noted that their experiences, like the Brazilian college students, turned out to be very disappointing, prompting civil society and media attention to the problems associated with the foresight of the W&T programs.

Another article, which appeared in the Turkish press, included the responses of the representatives of prominent international educational counselors recruiting W&T participants from Turkey, to mounting criticism about the role of sponsor agents in such crises. It is interesting that one of them was also one of my interviewees. He is reported

as saying that he was “annoyed by the fact that young people perceive these programs as a way to learn foreign languages”. “The main objective of the W&T programs” he noted “is to expose the young people to the economic and cultural life in the USA”. When I interviewed him in the summer of 2007, before the cases of victimized participants drew media attention, he presented W&T programs as a way to practice and improve English skills but only for a very brief period of time. Stressing that W&T participants stay no longer than a few months in the USA, he suggested that language benefits exist but are less than those of au pair programs. Therefore, the misperception is partly due to the agents’ confusing constructions and presentations of these programs as commodities to be marketed to those, who are desperate to use all means of direct exposure to source culture(s) to acquire good foreign language skills.

The number of local companies operating in this particular sub sector increased dramatically since 2005 when 2,500 Turkish university students were placed in the USA alone and many others lined up to apply (Electronic source: <http://tumgazeteler.com/?a=2147956> accessed on 7/2/2010). Especially the new companies tactfully used foreign language card to attract university students, who were not happy with their poor English and wanted to improve it through direct exposure to the source culture by working and traveling abroad.

Given the context of the Turkish culture, which assigns care and domestic work exclusively to female subjects, au pairing was not an easy option for most young males. Moreover the promotional material of companies recruiting from Turkey did not have

any visual reference to male au pairs. Therefore, in a context, where cultural and economic agents associating au pairing with females, W&T programs appeared as the only affordable option for many young Turkish males to further their foreign language skills in a foreign country. The brochures and other material used to promote W&T Programs among Turkish youth also emphasized the financial rewards of such experience, again tactfully addressing the cultural specificities of their targeted audience – a culture where working and earning are still largely considered as male responsibilities. In some cases the emphasis on financial rewards was such that applicants were encouraged to consider working in fish processing plants of Alaska, an option which would probably bring more dollars per hour but less linguistic / cultural capital.

The USA is the major destination of the W&T program participants from Turkey. The Summer Work & Travel Programme in the USA is part of the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program, which is administered by the Office of Exchange Coordination and Designation of the US Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The legislative authority for the Exchange Visitor Program was derived from the 1961 Mutual Education and Cultural Exchange Act.

Post-secondary students from all countries, with which the USA holds diplomatic relations, may apply to participate in the US summer W&T program. To take part in the program, candidates must work with a designated sponsor. W&T participants enter the USA on a J-1 visa, but only to stay during their summer vacation, which can be up to 4 months. Although the J-1 visa cannot be extended, the same exchange visitor is allowed

to participate in the W&T program in his/her subsequent summer vacations, until he/she graduates from his/her home college or university. Participants of US summer W&T program are expected to have good academic standing and sufficient proficiency in the English language. However, unlike the au pairs, who are required to have fluency in spoken English, there is no particular kind or level of linguistic proficiency expected from the participants of summer W&T program, perhaps because the latter are usually recruited in unskilled service positions, which do not always or necessarily involve verbal communication other than standard service sector language. In many cases they work at resorts, hotels, restaurants and amusement parks.

According to the promotional web page of the US Department of State, W&T program participants can also work in architectural firms, scientific research organizations, graphic art/publishing and other media businesses, advertising agencies, computer software and electronic firms, legal offices, etc. Moreover, it is noted that participants receive pay and benefits equal to an American working in the same or similar position. However, the media coverage about the real life experiences of Brazilian and Turkish participants suggests that employers in particular states and sectors find it hard to recruit American citizens for low profile summer jobs and that they fill their labor shortage by hiring W&T program participants. Therefore, while the latter can theoretically apply to higher profile positions, they usually end up doing rather menial summer jobs avoided by others.

Paul Peters of the Independent Daily notes that two young Moldovan women, graduates of a Moldovan college of economics, were told by their American W&T sponsor agent

that they would be placed in a “management-training program or something similarly career-boosting. Instead they were stuck cleaning floors and taking orders at Wendy’s. The women also paid exorbitant prices for substandard apartments miles away from work”. They filed a civil law suit against their W&T agent, who responded by further controlling “the plaintiffs’ daily lives through coercion and threats of being deported back to Moldova”. The attorney of the women is quoted as stressing that law suits in the United States are lengthy and that the temporary nature of the J-1 visa discourage those with poor financial resources to file complaints because this would require them to fly back and forth from their home countries for depositions. It is noted that sponsor agents charge considerable amount of money to place participants in summer W&T program, draining most of the financial resources available to them and make them sign financially binding lease agreements. If and when the participant is from a relatively less developed country, filing a lawsuit against the agent or simply exiting the program becomes practically impossible.

The statistics of the US Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs suggest that there has been a marked increase in the number of participants from only 20,728 in 1996 to 151,756 in 2008. More significantly, however, there has been a shift in the demand for US Summer W&T program from Western to Eastern European countries. “More recently, the largest numbers of Summer Work Travel participants have been citizens of Eastern European countries, including Poland, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, and

Romania”⁷⁴. It may therefore be suggested that this program became increasingly conducive to abuse and/or exploitation, not only because of the numerical expansion but also because of the changing geographical / racial profile of participants. Accordingly, it may be argued that cultural exchange schemes are considered as mutually beneficial if they take place among the equals but become problematic if they are extended to those from economically less developed and culturally too different societies, because the latter is stereotyped as potential overstayers on the one hand and victims of exploitation on the other.

As I already noted the number of Turkish participants in the program reached a peak in 2005, introducing Turkey into the list of top 10 participant countries. According to US sources, Turkey ranked as the 8th and 3rd largest country in terms of the number of its participants in the US Summer Work and Travel Program in 2006 and 2008 respectively⁷⁵. With the public image of the program gradually deteriorating after the media coverage of the disappointments of some participants, however, the demand from Turkey began declining more recently.

⁷⁴ In 2004 a total of 89,453 people entered the USA with a J-1 visa to participate in the Summer Work and Travel Program. Top 10 countries on that year were Poland, Russia, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Brazil, Ireland, Czech Republic, Peru, Romania and Belarus. It is interesting that the profile of the participants of the US Trainee program, another exchange visitor category, which attracted 27,475 foreign people to the USA in 2004, was significantly different. Top 10 countries participating in the US Trainee Program on that year were Germany, France, United Kingdom, Canada, China, Netherlands, Mexico, Japan, Ireland, and India (US Department of State, 2005)

⁷⁵ The statistics for 2006 are retrieved from the website of the US Consulate General in Istanbul, Turkey (http://istanbul.usconsulate.gov.tr/pr_121306.html). The numbers for 2008 are retrieved from the website of the US Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and suggest that Turkey ranked after Russia and Brazil (<http://exchanges.state.gov/jexchanges/programs/swt/pdfs/j-1-swt-program-for-ca-mtg-with-sponsors.pdf>)

My readings of the Internet forums suggest that there is still a great potential demand from Turkey. Turkish university students continue inquiring about the requirements of and their eligibility for the program, providing anecdotal evidence about the continuous perception of W&T as an alternative media to acquire good EFL skills (www.workandtravelturkey.com). The exchange of information and advise in such forums usually takes place with the mediation of editors, who are former W&T participants. The latter updates the forum about legislative changes, provides tips for successful application and visa interviews, and warns applicants about potentially or actually corrupt sponsor agents. The most frequently asked question on the forum is about linguistic and academic eligibility criteria. University students inquire whether their poor academic standing or Basic English would undermine their eligibility. Another frequently asked question comes from Open University students inquiring about whether their university is reputable enough to make them eligible. Their disappointment when the editor informs that they are not eligible, unless they study at the Faculty of English Language Teaching of the Open University, is particularly instructive about how even the supposedly more inclusive new media of EFL learning may sometimes reproduce the very hierarchies they are, perhaps naively, expected to challenge.

The debate about W&T Programs is limited to some superficial media coverage, which provoked only a weak political discussion within the USA. Accordingly, in 2005, the US Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report providing some insights about the problems associated with these exchange programs. The report focused on the

US Trainee and Summer Work & Travel categories and concluded that stronger action is needed to improve oversight and assess risks associated with poor regulation. It was noted that “state officials rarely visit the sponsors, host employers or third party organizations of the exchange participants to ensure compliance with the rules or investigate complaints”. GAO 2005 report also identified key risks associated with these two exchange programs as overstays by and exploitation of the visitors. While overstays were considered as a violation of US immigration rules with potentially dangerous consequences, exploitation of the visitors was a bad thing because it would undermine the purpose of exchange programs and thus the image of the USA. What kind of image the W&T participants have for the USA before and after their visit is a difficult question requiring extensive surveys, which are clearly beyond the scope of this thesis. Yet, the following testimony suggests that W&T participants usually begin with positive images carefully crafted by the media of American popular culture and sponsoring agents. When and if their W&T experiences turn out to be disappointing, however, the blame is conveniently put on the sponsoring agents only, without condemning other individuals and collectivities for such overrated positive image and/or resulting deception:

I just expected to see United States in the movies. I expect just good things here. I expect your medical situation is good, I expect people here are friendly, and you don't have corruption here. We have much corruption in Brazil. Here, I did not expect that. This is a good place to live in, but this company (the sponsoring agent) destroys the image of your state (Brazilian participant to US Summer W&T program, quoted in the Independent Daily by Paul Peters)

It is interesting that those who are constructed as the victims of the alternative schemes to acquire good EFL skills, such as au pair and W&T programs don't blame themselves for being so enthusiastic about doing menial jobs in a foreign country and paying a

significant amount of money to be eligible for participation in such programs. They neither question the rationales underlying such cultural exchange programs but assume that they are mutually beneficial. It is such assumptions that make them and many others members of an overarching network of alliances, which maintains the neoliberal governmentality of our age.

5.4 Conclusions

This chapter analyzed the rationalities as well as technical and pedagogical developments of the post-second world war era that went into the making of EFL teaching as a profitable and innovative global business. It suggested that the new media of EFL learning such as au pair and work & travel programs that involve transnational experiences blurring the borders between hitherto distinct spheres of education, work, tourism, and immigration are at the very heart of global neo-liberal networks of alliances.

It explored that discursive and governmental practices promoting such alternative media are integral to a project of governmentality seeking most notably to create a market society of mobile and enterprising rational individuals and governing people at a distance. This discussion showed that although such media rendered the processes of foreign language acquisition unprecedentedly flexible, their potential to make them more inclusive and democratic is hindered by EFL learners' status as junior members of underlying networks of alliances and less significant bargaining power vis-à-vis other allies. As suggested by the discussion of recent changes in UK immigration policies,

nation states still hold a capacity to modify the sets of political rationalities engaging them in networks of alliances with or without negotiation. These media of EFL learning thus constitute spheres of changing governmental practices which never fix but variably objectify individuals and collectivities within and across borders.

CONCLUSIONS

Benedict Anderson's seminal work helped many of us to see the emergence of the nation state as an imagined community the construction of which was made possible by the development of standard national languages and print capitalism. However, the role of foreign languages in defining people's identities, connections, and memberships with different spheres of communities within and across borders remains a potentially fruitful but still largely unexplored theme in the political science literature. Similarly, the fact that literacy and cultural capital are modern western constructs with variably defined equivalents in pre-modern or non-modern contexts and that the knowledge of foreign languages rather than native ones may have well constituted one of such equivalents do not get much scholarly attention.

This thesis is an attempt to contribute to existing literature by revisiting the notions of literacy, cultural capital and imagined communities with reference to Ottoman and Republican Turkish societies where the knowledge of prestigious foreign languages was almost always considered as a source of power and status. It examined the constitution of the processes whereby such linguistic skills are acquired as spheres for governmental practices that variably objectified the governors and the governed throughout Turkish history. It sought to identify the rationalities underlying such governmental practices in the context of domestic and international reconfigurations of territory, population and power.

Drawing on various governmental practices discussed in this thesis, I suggest that the political rationalities with which the processes of foreign language acquisition were constituted and/or acted upon in Turkish history had an increasingly secular and material character. While late Ottoman rulers were concerned with both material and moral survival of a declining empire through a censored modernization, their republican successors had more material political rationalities including but not limited to the construction of a techno-modern nation state, the consolidation of economic and political liberalization and finally the promotion of a market society of mobile and enterprising individuals.

Accordingly, the governmental practices of late Ottoman rulers objectified them first as father kings seeking to maintain justice among all their children and then as moral guardians of these children in the context of increasingly encroaching educational activities of foreigners. Early republican rulers constituted themselves as enlightened teachers of ignorant masses, the legacy of the Ottoman past, who needed to acquire first a new identity around linguistic Turkishness and then technical and Western language skills required for the country's techno-modernization. Those who ruled Turkey immediately after transition to multiparty democracy, on the other hand, constituted themselves as the representatives of the people economically and politically repressed by their predecessors. Finally, late Republican rulers were constituted as corporate executives for whom governing corresponded to rational management of economic and human resources in an increasingly neoliberal global order. The construction of au pair and work & travel programs as alternative media for EFL learning, especially for those

who could not acquire such cultural capital on the grounds of their nationality, family wealth and academic merit, is integral to such a neoliberal management of economic and human resources aligning the interests of individuals and collectivities within and across borders.

This discussion demonstrated that acquiring prestigious foreign language skills is not only a painful but also an expensive experience. Although the associated economic costs for the subjects are typically well stressed, the costs of becoming “emotionally indebted” to one or another kind of authority in particular, are still largely underestimated. I claim that with the introduction of a public education system and the construction of the latter as the way to acquire cultural capital and upward social mobility, the relations between the state and the people in Turkey began to be characterized by a “disempowering” feeling of indebtedness of the latter to the former. This “indebtedness” was later extended to the relations between students and their parents, when the latter began making financial and social sacrifices to prepare their children for centrally administered exams for admission first to elite middle schools and then to universities over the last three decades of the Republican era.

Although one may be tempted to underestimate the power of “emotional indebtedness” in determining the actions of individual subjects vis-à-vis their “creditors”, I argue that such considerations helps the Turkish state and/or family to consolidate its authoritative power over its citizens and/or children respectively. People in Turkey still tend to naturalize the power of the state and regard it as a force of good, by calling it “devlet baba” (father

state), suggesting an almost biological indebtedness of Turkish citizens to their state for their existence and progress.

I suggest that, unlike the state or the family, who help their citizens and children respectively with the expectation of some loyalty or at least a feeling of emotional and/or financial indebtedness, the private agencies involved in the promotion of such media present themselves as mere experts leaving the ultimate decision of whether and how to take advantage of these new opportunities to the individual agency and responsibility of their ‘clients’. In other words, the significance of alternative media of EFL learning in Turkey also lies in their ‘constructed’ potential to break this vicious circle of indebtedness to the state and/or family, which have historically dominated the processes of cultivating cultural capital deemed essential for upward social mobility. I acknowledge that such processes will always involve power relations serving the interests of some more than others. However, the popularity of new media of EFL learning in contemporary Turkey is a function of the illusion that they give their consumers more autonomy and less indebtedness. Such microscopic and exceptional considerations are at the heart of the neoliberal governmentality which constitutes individuals as free, competitive, enterprising and mobile members of heterogeneous communities within and beyond borders through the innovative intersection of technologies of domination and technologies of the self.

APPENDIX

INTERVIEWS WITH PRIVATE ELT SECTOR

REPRESENTATIVES IN TURKEY

In June 2007, I visited Turkey to conduct interviews with representatives of the private ELT (English Language Teaching) sector. Since early summer is typically a very busy period, it has been difficult to get appointments from sector representatives. Yet, I was able to conduct 4 interviews, which all provided me considerable amount of information and insight for my thesis research.

The first interview was conducted with one of the local executives of an international company, whereas the other three were with managers of local companies with different kinds of international operations. As such, each interview provided different but complementary perspectives on the ELT sector in Turkey and the world at large. Moreover, at a time when there were no sectoral reports on Turkish market, these interviews provided me with the empirical ground, which I desperately needed to qualify my observation that the private ELT industry has been consistently growing in Turkey. Luckily enough, some sectoral reports, which have been published more recently, further confirmed my hypothesis.

The scripts of these interviews are attached in the following to provide a more comprehensive understanding of various aspects of the ELT sector in Turkey.

Interview Questions:

1. My research question stemmed from my personal observation that the ELT sector in Turkey and the world at large grew and diversified significantly over the last decade. Would you agree with that observation? And what is your personal estimate about the current size of that sector, considering public as well as private actors?
2. What might be the possible causes of the growth of the ELT sector in Turkey and globally?
3. Is the ELT sector being regulated in Turkey and how?
4. What are the international regulatory frameworks that are being considered in the regulation of the Turkish ELT sector, if any?
5. Who are the old and new actors/ shareholders in the sector? And what are the new means and mediums of English learning used by these actors?
6. What are the sub-sectors of the ELT sector?
7. Which sub-sector does your organization belong to and since when?

8. Would you give us an estimate as to the share of each sub-sector in the overall ELT sector? What is the approximate market share of your own organization in your own sub-sector and the overall ELT sector?
9. How do you promote and market the concept of English as a foreign language?
10. Why do you think people choose the goods/services of your organization or those of the particular sub-sector you are representing?
11. What are the goals that motivate your customers to learn English? And how close do they get to their goals after they finish your programs?
12. Why do you think there has been a considerable diversification in the ways and means of learning English over the last decade or so? What are the possible local as well as global socio-political implications of this phenomenon?
13. How do the recruitment techniques and strategies employed by human resource companies or employers effect the development of the ELT sector in Turkey?

Interviewee : Manager of EF Education Turkey Head Office

Interview Location : Istanbul-Turkey

Interview Date: June 12, 2007

My interviewee has been working for EF (English First) Education Turkey since 1987.

He spent 7 years of his career at EF Education as the manager of EF Head Offices in Brazil and Ecuador. He is currently working as the Manager of EF Education Turkey Office.

EF Education has been founded in 1965 by Bertil Hult, a then young Swedish entrepreneur. The company's initial business idea was simply to take Swedish high school students to England to learn English: on-site language and cultural studies. Yet, the company grew to be the world's largest private education company, with a group of fourteen subsidiaries, and non-profit organizations centered on language learning, educational travel, cultural exchange and academic programs. It has over 26,000 employees, teachers and volunteers with offices and schools in 51 countries. Bertil Hult describes the company mission as follows:

“EF’s mission is simple: to break down the barriers of language, culture and geography that divide us. In the past four decades, EF’s educational programs have helped people of all ages and nationalities become citizens of the world”

Answers:

1. The sector as a whole includes many programs designed to meet the needs of different target groups ranging from primary school students to university graduates and professionals. It also embraces many sub and related sectors. Therefore, it is very difficult to measure the actual size of the whole picture. Yet, different actors may give some rough estimates about the size of their respective sub-sectors. EF Turkey has recently decided to focus mostly, if not only, on promoting its own international language schools among the interested Turkish youth. So, I can only give you a rough estimate about the size of this particular sub-sector. We estimate that about 30,000 people from Turkey choose to attend these language schools abroad every year with an average length of stay of 6 weeks. The average cost of attending a foreign language school for that long is about 550 dollars, including accommodation and tuition fees.

There has been a significant growth in this sector over the last decade or so. I guess the number of companies operating in the sector has tripled or quadrupled over this period. These companies were initially centered in the Taksim neighborhood of Istanbul, but then gradually spread to other localities. They are typically the representatives of a number of foreign language schools seeking to recruit Turkish students. We are different from them because we are the country office of EF International in Turkey and seek to promote EF's own language schools.

2. The sector owes its growth to a number of recent developments. The most important is certainly the increasing economic and cultural integration of Turkey with the globalizing world. The relative stability of the Turkish economy provided a favorable environment for that integration. Our foreign trade increased, boosting our consumption of foreign goods and increasing our ability to produce for foreign markets. Introduction of more TV channels and the spread of the Internet exposed Turkish people to other cultures and lifestyles. Foreign travel has become part of our vacation plans. Another important factor that facilitated the growth of ELT sector in Turkey has been the sector representatives' success in promoting English and in marketing their services. Turkey's drive to join the EU might also have had an impact in increasing the demand for English learning in Turkey.

English is of course not the only language that Turkish people are interested to learn. For instance, EF Language schools offer programs in 7 different languages. However, those who are interested in learning English constitute 95 percent of the total and the interest in other languages is still insignificant. Even those foreign languages such as German and French that have historically been more prestigious in Turkey do not currently get a comparable popularity. This clearly illustrates that there is still a great interest among Turks in learning English and that the ELT sector in Turkey is not saturated yet.

It is also important to note that even those who claim to know English have different levels of linguistic competence. And this is why the sector offers different levels of English programs. However, the need and the demand are still mostly for Basic English,

because most people are not qualified to directly enroll in higher-level programs such as Business English or to do internship in an English speaking workplace. This is so mostly because those who already acquired Basic English skills in the past loose these skills by not practicing them.

It is also suggested that the locality where you study English may indeed have an impact on your speed to acquire the linguistic proficiency. EF's VP for Academic Affairs, Dr. Christopher P. McCormick, has recently conducted a research project to compare English learning abilities and speed of two groups of Turkish students who were newly admitted to the same Turkish university. Both groups were required to meet the English proficiency prerequisites of their university either by attending the university's own English program in Turkey or by taking the same program abroad. The project results suggest that the latter group learned English much faster than their equivalents in Turkey.

3. There is no sector specific regulatory body in Turkey to regulate and inspect our activities. In the past, there have been attempts to consider this sector as part of rather irrelevant others such as tourism. The Turkish Travel Agency Association (TURSAB), for instance, attempted to expand membership to companies like us on the ground that our activities involve making traveling and accommodation arrangements for our students. A number of sector representatives have then established YESAD for a proper representation of our sectoral interests. A few years later, the founding members of YESAD established UED (International Education Counselors' Association of Turkey), which now projects to become a sector specific regulatory body in Turkey. Although

membership with UED is voluntary, the Association still has some power to monitor the activities of its members and to set quality standards for the sector.

4. There are no international regulatory frameworks or bodies that we are inspired of. I just remember that when we were about to form the UED, the rules of institution of a Brazilian association (BELTA) were consulted for some insight. I was even involved in the translation of the Portuguese texts of BELTA documents. I don't know if there are any international regulations or regulatory bodies, which require Turkish governments to regulate this sector. However, although we are not regulated as such, the international foreign language schools, which we promote in Turkey, are strictly regulated in their respective countries. These schools are also internationally accredited, giving a sense of trust to our potential customers.
5. Most of the old actors of this sector in Turkey are still operational. To name a few, I can mention companies such as Biltur, Atlas, Genetur, Sempatur, EF, Akademiks, and Aspa. They are mostly involved in placing Turkish students in foreign language schools abroad. Some of them expanded their activities to include new schemes of English learning such as work and travel programs. There are also new comers, such as Edkon, which was founded by two of the former staff of the British Council Turkey Office. They are specialized in placing Turkish students in mostly British universities.

Au pair programs are among the many new schemes of English learning. And I am personally familiar with these programs because I was the one who introduced them to

the operations of EF Brazil Office. We were so successful that Brazil has now become the second largest au pair supplying country after Germany in the overall EF au pair schemes. The picture is rather different for Turkey. Since it involves a wide range of requirements, it is a rather less attractive option, not only for the sector members, but also for those who seek to learn a foreign language. Most families require their au pairs to have at least a basic command of English, a driver's license and good babysitting skills. Those Turkish girls, who already meet the first two criteria, usually believe that tasks such as babysitting and related housekeeping are not prestigious enough, whereas German girls of similar specifications perceive au pairing as an exciting cultural opportunity.

Another scheme of English learning that has become popular recently is the so-called on-line English. EF's EFECTA is one of such on-line English learning programs. Students who take this program are given a password, which they can use to access the system wherever they are. However, some Turkish students who take this program criticize it on the grounds that it is different from the old top down learning systems they are used to. An interesting dilemma of most Turkish students is with respect to where they want to go to learn English. They are very reluctant to be placed in locations where they will encounter other Turks but ironically enough they all want to go to Miami!

Another common problem we face in Turkey is that it takes too long for Turkish students to make a decision about their prospective programs and locations. They usually wait

until the very last moment and make it very difficult for us to finish all the formalities required for their placement (visa, air travel, accommodation and registration etc.).

6. There is a wide range of sub-sectors associated with the ELT sector in Turkey. The sector is heavily supplied with goods and services of foreign origin, such as software, movies, computer games etc.
7. EF Turkey belongs to a special sub-sector in the overall ELT sector in Turkey. We operate in Turkey since the mid-1980s and promote our own internationally accredited language schools.
8. The ELT sector is very big in Turkey. However, there are many players and most of them are unregistered. This makes it very difficult to come up with an accurate estimate of the size of the overall market and to calculate the respective shares of individual players. When we consider only our own sub-sector and only the registered players, I can estimate the share of EF in Turkey as 15 percent. No other individual company is sending as many students as we do to study English abroad.
9. We promote our English programs mostly through newspaper advertisements where we use a creatively provocative language. In these advertisements we emphasize that English is a vital asset that has to be acquired as soon as possible for success in life. We also urge those people, who could not get admitted to a university or who could not find a job, to make a new beginning by learning English. At EF, we market our business mostly

through direct mailing of a comprehensive and up to date flier packages to those who call our offices and inquire about our programs. We then use aggressive and regular tele marketing to make them actual customers, because there is a general tendency among Turkish people not to act unless someone keeps reminding or encouraging them to do so. Unfortunately, this is the case even for those people who are desperate to learn English to make a new beginning in their life. However, this is not the case for the potential customers of many other EF offices around the world. EF Germany Office, for instance, would never know their potential and actual customers in person because they don't need to interact with them as directly as we have to do here in Turkey. German students usually register in EF programs and complete all other formalities through the Internet without any personal contact with EF staff.

10. The main reason why those who are interested in learning English choose the products and services of our company or other actors in the same sub-sector is the Turkish people's typical need to deal with a local counterpart. Educational counseling firms, including EF, conduct regular research about the characteristics of local people in their target markets and develop their marketing strategies according to the findings of such research. One of many findings about Turkish people suggests that they are very pessimist and usually tend to assume that things will go wrong. This is why they prefer to work with a local counterpart who they will hold accountable if and when they are not satisfied with the products and services they are provided. The main reason why they prefer EF is that we are a huge international education company with over 40 years of experience and strong networking capacity among a good number of country offices.

Also, our programs are not very expensive when we consider that they include not only school fees but also accommodation expenses. There are other and relatively inexpensive ways of learning English abroad, such as work and travel. EF is not offering them. But a few other companies have been quite successful in promoting these programs among those young people who were keen to learn English abroad but who could not afford other expensive programs.

11. People are motivated to learn English because they assume that it is needed. This assumption is supported by the job ads that require applicants to have English skills. However, I have some doubts as to whether this need is slightly exaggerated, because not all positions seem to require foreign language skills. Having said that, I believe that every individual today needs to know some English so that he or she can have an understanding of what is going in the world in general and in his own sector in particular.

Whether people achieve their goals after they finish our programs depends on their own commitment and performance because we are not selling a foreign language. What we are selling is rather a system and an opportunity to learn that language. And we trust our system to such an extent that we offer our students what we call a “learning guarantee”. In other words, if a student attends all his classes, completes all his course requirements, but still fails to be upgraded to a higher level, we don’t let him fail. We extend him extension until he succeeds and cover his fees for the duration of that extension.

12. There has been a considerable diversification in the ways of learning English over the last decade because there has been a significant improvement in the communication technologies and educational methodologies. When the sector actors realized that these technological and methodological improvements provide them the potential to make English learning faster, easier and more entertaining, they developed some novel means which enabled more and more people, from different income groups to engage in foreign language learning.

I am not a scholar to comment on the local or global socio-political implications of these developments, but I guess English learning has now become more inclusive.

13. It is very true that the language, which human resource companies or employers use in recruiting people, plays an important role in the development of the ELT sector in Turkey. This language creates an understanding that we need to know English in order to start a career and to be successful in life. I believe that the need for English is a real one for everybody. It is unfortunate that it creates some unfairness for those who don't speak English and who can't afford to learn it. But this is how things work in today's world.

Interviewee : Co-founder and Manager of EDCON

Interview Location : Istanbul-Turkey

Interview Date: June 13, 2007

EDCON is an educational counseling firm established in Turkey in 1996 by two co-founders, who had long years of working experience at the British Council in Turkey. Ms. Ozer herself is a former au pair who worked in the UK and graduated from a British university. EDCON officially represents many foreign language schools and 22 UK universities in Turkey. It offers educational counseling and placement services to those Turkish students interested in studying or attending a foreign language school abroad. Thanks to its almost monopolistic power in its respective market, the firm doesn't engage in any aggressive marketing strategy. It gets its publicity in Turkey mostly through the self-marketing activities of the associated foreign universities and language schools. Most of the company brochures and fliers were very simple in terms of visual and verbal expression. Nevertheless, they were rich enough to give insights about how the firm promotes not only its business but also English as a commodity among Turkish people. In one of these brochures, the firm presents itself as a gate that would take young people to a wide range of educational opportunities in the world and thus help shaping their future. In another brochure, it is claimed that one must know at least English if he or she wants to succeed in education, workplace and personal development, because it has now become almost a common language around the world. The brochure also suggests that English learning is now a much more inclusive process because people of all ages and levels can now choose from a wider range of programs offered in a wider range of countries.

Answers:

1. British Council may give you a better idea about the size of this sector because they have access to the statistics of all the student visas granted to Turkish citizens going to the UK. However, since the student visa is a general category, it is rather difficult to find out how many of these Turkish citizens are going to the UK for an EFL program. I can help you with an estimate of only those who are enrolled in academic undergraduate or graduate programs in UK. According to the latest data, there are about 2000 Turkish students enrolled in such programs. The number of the EFL students is of course far more than that but very hard to identify.

The sector did significantly grow over the last ten years, attracting many new companies. However, only those who could provide good quality service did survive or secure a significant market share. The fact that only half of the UED members consist of rather new comers suggests that this market has been a good niche mostly to old good companies. My partner and me founded EDKON after many years of service at the Turkish Office of the British Council and have been successful in this highly competitive environment. We owe our success mostly to our former students, who recommended us to their friends after their return from UK. They helped us to generate and maintain a very good reputation in this market.

The ELT market is made of many different sub sectors each with distinct characteristics and specializations. At EDKON we are specialized in promoting the academic programs

of select UK universities among Turkish students. Promotion of EFL schools, on the other hand, has a very small share in our overall activities. There is a specialization also with regard to the foreign destinations to which companies are sending their students. The USA is the leading destination, especially for academic programs, whereas the UK attracts more EFL students. The only exception to this general rule is that the master programs of UK universities are now attracting more Turkish students because these programs take only one year to finish and thus compare more favorably with their US equivalents.

2. The growth of this sector is largely due to the increasing demand of Turkish people for acquiring or improving foreign language skills. Families are increasingly interested in sending their kids to summer schools abroad. Those who already have some Basic English skills, but little practice, i.e. university students, also prefer taking short-term language programs in a foreign country.
3. This sector is not regulated in Turkey. Even its organization under a sectoral association is a rather recent phenomenon dating back to late 1990s. When some irrelevant sector organizations such as TURSAB attempted to almost forcefully extend us membership, we had to take the initiative to define our activities and to form our own association. UED was thus formed to represent all the companies offering international educational counseling services in Turkey to those who are interested in studying or learning a foreign language abroad. Our efforts to organize under such an Association were strongly

supported by the British Council and the Consulates of countries such as USA and Australia, the main destinations of Turkish people to study or learn English.

Although it is not a regulatory authority, UED can and does exercise some power over its members to maintain some standards in the sector. As such, the Association also helps protecting the rights of the final customers against local companies or foreign universities/schools who don't comply with their commitments. In the absence of a formal regulatory body, however, its role in the regulation of the sector remains very limited. And this is part of the reason why the market is so abundant with newcomers who have no qualifications of whatsoever to operate in the ELT sector.

Another reason is of course the increasing interest of foreign language schools to attract students from Turkey. Some of these schools do not qualify to work with good local counterparts like us. They therefore seek smaller and rather unqualified local counterparts, which they find much more easily. However, this is not so much the case for foreign universities, because placing a student in a foreign university usually takes a very long process, which only good and well-established companies can afford. Small companies usually don't get involved in such processes where they can get paid only by the universities and only upon successful completion of the placement. Even the presence of a formal regulatory body may sometimes not be sufficient to ensure very high quality standards in this sector. Take the example of British Council accredited language schools in the UK. There are about 300 of them and they all comply with the quality standards set by the British Council. However, this is not to say that they are all equally good. We just

know that they are in the list but have no idea where they sit in the scale. It is only through our students' feedback that we can judge how they compare with each other.

4. Countries like the UK and Australia have regulatory frameworks for their respective ELT sectors. There is none in Turkey and I don't see any effort to follow the examples of other countries. As far as I know the EU grants some funds for some educational projects. However, I am not aware of any such project with direct relevance to the regulation of the EFL sector in Turkey.
5. In Turkey, foreign language skills were typically acquired through the school system, either public or private. However, with the exception of some private schools, formal schooling in Turkey did not prove to be efficient in equipping people with good foreign language skills. This is the main reason why people increasingly sought alternative ways to learn English. The cost played a significant role in determining which alternative they ended up with. Those who could afford went to language schools abroad whereas the less fortunate ones enrolled in the programs of local cram schools.
6. The ELT sector offers many different programs. EDKON promotes General English and academic study programs in the UK. However, there are many other companies specialized in other programs such as au pair, work and travel etc. These two programs have become particularly popular among the young people in recent years. I strongly believe that these programs are lifetime opportunities for those who want to be exposed to a different language and culture but can not afford traveling to or studying in a foreign

country. They teach young people how to become an independent, self sufficient but responsible individual who can easily adjust to different cultural settings.

7. EDKON was founded in 1996. It is specialized in providing educational counseling to Turkish students who want to learn English but mostly to those who wish to enroll in an academic program in UK.
8. It is hard to estimate individual shares of each sub-sector in the overall ELT sector. If you ask our share in our own sub-sector, I can easily claim that we are the only one who provides free counseling services to those who want to be placed in an academic program in the UK. When I say free, I mean that we don't get our service fee from the student. We provide the student a very long educational counseling service for which, we are paid by the university where he or she decides to be placed. Some people speculate that we are doing what the British Council used to do before. This is only partly true because the only thing we do in common is placing students in language schools. However this activity has a very small share in our overall business. We are more focused on placing Turkish students in UK universities, an activity in which the British Council is not, and has never been, involved. Their involvement was confined to the provision of general information only.
9. I believe that English doesn't need any marketing. Almost everybody agrees that it is an essential commodity. Also, we don't engage in any aggressive advertisement campaigns, because EDCON's reputation is built upon the satisfaction of our former customers and is

spread mostly through the recommendations they make to their friends. Therefore the question is not whether one needs to learn English or not, but which program or school he or she has to take.

10. Potential customers choose our services because they are smart enough to see what we can offer them and how different we are from the others. They know very well who has the knowledge and the expertise to help them. They also somehow sense if we are honest enough or not. Every single medium of English learning has its own cost and benefit. And potential customers make their choices on the basis of their cost / benefit analysis.

11. People are motivated to learn English because they believe that this is a need. Whether they will achieve their goal at the completion of their program depends mostly on where they attended a language school and whether the latter was accredited. If they attended a British Council accredited language school in UK, I would expect them to achieve their goals to a great extent. However, if they took a program in a local cram school, then it is hard to predict the outcome, because there is no authority to set and secure educational quality standards for such institutions in Turkey.

12. The recent diversification of mediums of English learning has various implications for the making of the individual of our age. It is not just about learning a foreign language. It is also about producing and reproducing a self-sufficient, independent, responsible world citizen who has a whole new world vision. Therefore, the process whereby the language is learned is just a key to a whole new world where the individual is exposed to and

transformed by different cultures and life styles. We had a student whose father was an MP in Turkey. He was so used to have a comfortable and expensive life style that even when he was studying in Switzerland he used to go to his nearby school by taxi. After some consultation with our company, his father decided to send him to London where he was exposed to a less luxurious and comfortable life style. He eventually learned not only to speak English but also to be a more self sufficient and humble individual. I remember his father once called to let us know that his son got himself a second hand bike, something that could never be expected from a well to do Turkish youngster. In contemporary Turkish culture, second hand buying is not considered as a wise and smart way to recycle things. It is perceived as something that only very poor people would do out of deprivation and/or desperation.

The increasing interest of Turkish students in foreign language schools abroad is also beneficial to the hosting institutions and countries. Turkish students not only mean great business for them but also a desirable diversity to their student profile. Turkish students also have a very good reputation for their ability to easily mix with and adapt to multicultural environments.

13. I agree that the recruitment techniques and strategies employed by human resource companies or employers effect the development of the ELT sector in Turkey. The language they use stresses the importance of English to such an extent that those who don't speak that language are almost automatically excluded from job opportunities, even if the latter don't necessarily require a foreign language skill.

Interviewee : Head of the Istanbul Office of ICEP

Interview Location : Istanbul-Turkey

Interview Date: June 13, 2007

ICEP (the International Cultural Exchange Program) is known as one of the pioneers of international educational counseling firms established in Turkey. It was founded in 1986 with the initial focus of placing interested Turkish students in foreign language schools and certificate programs abroad. ICEP subsequently introduced au pair, summer camp and work & travel programs into their portfolio and expanded their destinations across Europe and North America. ICEP is the first Turkish firm to send Turkish au pairs to the USA.

In 1995, the founders of ICEP established the ICEP Scholarship Foundation- a non-profit organization- with the purpose of providing “cultural exchange opportunities for young people and students around the world”. In this context, the Foundation also aimed to introduce Turkey, its history, heritage and culture to young foreigners. The founders of the Foundation believe that encouraging people to explore other cultures will help to foster peace and advance international understanding in the future. To this end, they provide “a wide range of services, including internships, holiday exchanges, educational programs, correspondence links and au pair placements to over 20,000 youngsters every year.” The Foundation, whose Honorary President is a retired colonel of the Turkish Armed Forces, encourages Turkish youngsters to explore other cultures through the most inexpensive media such as work and travel, because they claim that the one, who loves

his / her nation, should refrain from making other countries richer with his / her own national wealth. They also seek to increase Turkey's share in this global market by offering foreigners au pair, internship and holiday programs in Turkey.

Answers:

1. We are one of the few companies in Turkey offering a wide range of alternatives to those who want to learn or study in English abroad. As such, we serve the needs of a wide range of people; university graduates, who wish to attend language schools abroad to improve their Basic English, young people, who want to achieve the same goal through paid exchange schemes such as work & travel and au-pair, and finally those, who want to excel their English through undergraduate or graduate academic programs of foreign universities. As someone from the ELT sector, I totally agree that the sector did grow and diversify significantly over the last decade or so. For instance, Turkey was the 7th or 8th largest market for the UK ELT sector about 5 years ago; it has now become the 2nd largest market. However, the actual size of the overall sector is hard to estimate. Yet, I can try to give you a rough estimate of the total number of Turkish students going abroad to learn English. The number of those going through work and travel schemes only is estimated as 3.000, 6.000 and 10.000 in 2005, 2006 and 2007 respectively. I believe the total number is 2 or 3 times of this subtotal. Therefore, I would estimate the total number of those going abroad in 2007 to learn English as about 30.000. If we set the average expenses of each student as 5,000 dollars per year, we may then reach a rough estimate about the size of this particular sub-sector in the overall ELT sector.

2. The actors in the ELT sector had to change the language they use in marketing their products and services in order to survive in this increasingly competitive global market. You cannot simply keep arguing that English is a must and that you have very good language schools for those who are interested in learning English. You also have to diversify the mediums of English learning and make them attractive to a wider range of potential customers. This is the main reason why the ELT market has become increasingly diversified over the last decade or so. English is now learned through a wider range of unconventional mediums such as work and travel, internships etc. Another reason is of course the increasing receptiveness of Turkish people to such alternative mediums, which involve greater exposure to different cultures and lifestyles. A typical example is the change in the way au pair programs are perceived by Turkish parents. In the past, they used to be more reserved and cautious about sending their daughters to abroad as babysitters of western families. I even remember parents who were using a rather threatening language with us so that their daughters don't get disappointed with their au pair experiences. But the parents now seem to have greater trust in and ease with such arrangements.

3. The ELT sector is not regulated in Turkey. The only exception is of course the public/private schooling and the local cram schools offering language programs in Turkey, which are all regulated by the Ministry of National Education. However, there is no authority regulating the other actors of the ELT sector. There have been some efforts to organize the sector under some umbrella organizations. UED, for instance, is one of

them. It was founded by a number of international educational counselors in Turkey. One great advantage it did bring was the relative ease the UED members were enjoying in getting student visas from the British Embassy. However, they lost this advantage when the British Embassy contracted all visa related intermediary services to a private Turkish company. Also, since it is a voluntary association, UED never had binding authority over its members. As such, it is hard to claim that it did bring great improvement to the quality of the ELT sector in Turkey or to the rights of final customers.

4. The USA and the UK are the main destinations of Turkish students who are going abroad to learn English. And I don't expect these two countries to have any significant international educational counseling sector like the one in Turkey, simply because nobody there would be interested in going abroad to improve their English and only few would be interested in learning a foreign language in another country. Accordingly, I don't think that they would have a regulatory body for this sub-sector in particular and the ELT sector in general.
5. I can easily speculate that 10-15 new ELT companies are opening every year in Istanbul only. However, almost all of them close after a short while because only the good ones survive in this highly competitive environment. Opening an ELT company has become popular especially among those who attended a language school abroad in the past and then decided to become an entrepreneur in this sector upon their return to Turkey. Another key for success in this sector is the ability to introduce new, attractive and

affordable mediums of English learning, such as English Plus programs (e.g. English and Golf), Au pair, Work and Travel etc.

6. ELT sector in Turkey has a number of different and increasingly diversifying sub-sectors.

Most of them deal with the processes whereby Turkish students are sent abroad to learn English or study in an English speaking country.

7. ICEP has been in the Turkish market for over 20 years now. We belong to the sub-sector

that is specialized in sending Turkish students to foreign language schools and exchange programs abroad. We survived as an old company offering new and increasingly interesting programs to our customers. We are, for instance, the first company to send Turkish au pairs to the USA. We also have quiet unique defining characteristics; ICEP has a scholarship foundation established in 1995 with a dedication to promote cultural exchange around the world. We therefore don't operate with a pure business mentality.

8. There are over 100 companies in our own sub-sector and ICEP is in the top 5.

9. We don't need to convince our customers about the importance of English. They already know that it is a need. They approach us only to find out how much it would cost them to learn English and what method would be the best for them. Each method is of course promoted with a different and specific language. Au pair programs, for instance, are promoted as "the most inexpensive way of learning English". The slogan we use for our

work and travel programs, on the other hand, is: “Let traveling be your summer job this year!”

10. People choose the services and programs of our company or of this sub-sector because the schooling sector in Turkey has become increasingly ineffective in equipping them with foreign language skills that would enable them to get a job in the labor market.
11. The main motivation that leads people to learn English is to be able to find a good job. Indeed, when we look at the job ads in Turkey, we clearly see that proficiency in English has become a must. And even this is not enough to impress employers who usually prefer those with more than one foreign language skills. I personally believe that those who go abroad to learn a foreign language are more likely to achieve their goal than those who try to learn that language in Turkey, even if the latter attends very good quality local schools or cram schools. The reason is obvious; the chances of someone to develop proficiency in a given foreign language are higher if he or she is living in the country where that foreign language is spoken. But even this would not guarantee success. He or she also needs to mix with and socialize with people speaking that foreign language. There are, for instance, a few English schools in London that are very popular among Turkish students. Since the students of these schools usually mix with their Turkish classmates, their rate of success is significantly lower than other Turkish students attending other English schools in London. The success also depends on the kind of medium you choose. Work and travel programs, for instance, are much shorter than au pair programs. They enable you only to practice your English and only for a very short

period of time. Au pair programs on the other hand can be extended up to two years and can therefore bring real improvements to one's English.

12. There has been a considerable diversification in the ways and means of learning English over the last decade or so, because the ELT sector had to make itself more attractive in this increasingly competitive global market. Also ELT companies had to make themselves accessible to a wider range of customers with different levels of income and various priorities. I personally believe that this diversification had cultural implications as well as structural implications for Turkey. Our exposure to different cultures and life styles has significantly increased through these novel mediums of English learning. The positively changing attitude of the families of Turkish au pairs, suggests that the cultural implications of this phenomenon were not confined to younger generations only. Also, the schooling system in Turkey has become less sufficient and less competitive in endowing Turkish people with foreign language skills, increasing the business for other and mostly international actors.

Unfortunately no Turkish authority keeps reliable statistics about the number of Turkish people going abroad to learn a foreign language. Consequently, no Turkish authority considers this increasingly growing sector important enough for policy making and regulation. There are many foreign au pairs who are interested to come to Turkey to learn Turkish. When I approached the relevant authorities in Turkey, I could not get any meaningful feedback or action to put the necessary regulatory frameworks in place. So, not only that we let international actors generate business from our own citizens, but also

don't do anything to set the regulatory frameworks that would help our country to become a popular destination for foreign au pairs.

13. I personally think that most of the employers in Turkey don't know much about their business. They all seek to employ only those who know English and preferably a second foreign language, without even questioning whether this is really what they need. I think that they would be better off if they were to hire people those who were really qualified for that position and outsource any translation job. Alternatively, they can confine their desire to employ people with foreign language skills only and only for those positions where such skills are really essential, such as international relations etc...

Interviewee : Director of GENCTUR, President of UED

Interview Location : Through Electronic Correspondence

Interview Date: May, 2009

Background Information about the interviewee and his/her organization:

The company was established in 1976 and holds a leading position in the Turkish market with respect to the youth travel industry. It promotes a wide range of programs such voluntary youth camps and places young people in foreign language schools abroad.

Answers

1. I certainly agree with your observation that the ELT sector in Turkey and the world at large grew and diversified significantly over the last decade. We witnessed the introduction of different programs and schemes in the learning of foreign languages in general and of English in particular. They constitute a wide range of new options including work & travel programs, international voluntary youth camps, au-pair programs, and summer camps for kids. They are more focused on equipping students with practical skills and supporting their personal development. Since they provide affordable real life learning opportunities which are later recognized as good credentials by academic or professional job markets, they have become increasingly popular over the last few decades. According to ALTO's Global Directions in Language Travel 2008, the number of people learning English overseas is about 1.3 million and the dollar size of the EFL travel sector is 8 billion per year. This corresponds to about 7 percent of global youth tourism and travel business. Currently the sector is growing by 7 percent per year,

but this is estimated to reach a growth of 10 percent by the year of 2010. Considering that the annual growth rate of the global tourism sector during 2000-2007 period has been only 3,6 percent, the significance of the growth of foreign language travel becomes even more obvious.

The most favored destinations for EFL travel are the UK, Canada, USA, Ireland, Australia, Malta and New Zealand. EFL students originate mostly from China, South Korea, Japan, Switzerland and Thailand. I don't have data specific to the UK and the USA. Yet, the EFL sector generates a business of 1,8 billion and 1.2 billion dollars for Canada and Australia respectively.

The possible causes of the growth of EFL sector in Turkey and the world at large include globalization (most particularly of education), changes in the organizational structures of companies and their job requirements, the increasing importance of communication skills and English proficiency, the recognition that a foreign language is best studied in its own native land, the inability of national education systems of non-Anglophone countries to teach EFL to their citizens (particularly when it comes to the transmission of speaking skills), and the fact that local private educational institutions fail to offer affordable alternatives for learning EFL.

2. Unfortunately, the majority of the EFL sub sectors, particularly the one dealing with international education, are not regulated and accredited in Turkey. The sector is therefore growing without exposure to any form of regulation. There are however some

efforts to establish self-regulatory schemes through the establishment of sectoral associations such as UED, the Association of International Educational Counselors of Turkey. The Association, which was established in 2001 by 15 Turkish companies of international educational counseling, has now 31 institutional members. The history of UED actually dates back to 1995 when a bunch of educational counselors joined their efforts to establish YESAD (Association of Agents for International Education Services). Although they did not have the time and the resources exclusively assigned for such sectoral missionary projects, the founding members of YESAD did their best to construct themselves as members of a unique sector with significant differences from otherwise similar ones. It has however been very difficult to convince people about the need of such a sectoral association. Moreover, the laws and regulations of the mid 1990s were not too conducive to establish and maintain a sectoral association. YESAD did not therefore live long. However, few years later, we felt once again urged to do something to introduce standardization, auto-control and regulation to our sector. Taking advantage of the then relaxed laws and regulations of association we established UED, which is now the only sectoral organization of international educational counselors in Turkey. UED members are also members of a number of other sectoral associations, such as TURSAB, The Turkish Union of Tourism and Travel Agencies. Yet, we are different from them and this is what makes us join our efforts under UED. I have to admit that we still have a long way to go to become fully institutionalized and be among those well-established civil society organizations enjoying state funding. Right now, we still don't have the legal authority to enforce any regulations within our sector. Moreover, there have been cases where some of our members acted inconsistently with our very funding principles of

sectoral solidarity. Yet, we did not give up and almost tripled the number of our devoted members over the years and we are ready to welcome all international educational counseling firms who share our principles. Some of our members may from time to time go through difficult times under the pressure of increasing competition. In such cases we try to help them through efforts of reconciliation between all parties. We are proud to see that potential EFL students do now seek whether their counterparts are UED members or not.

3. –

4. The old and new actors / shareholders in this sector are as follows: Schools; agents; short and long term voluntary working camps associated with national and international youth organizations (programs of cultural exchange designed to increase foreign language and practical working skills of young people); long term social projects in host countries; various EU programs such as Erasmus, Socrates and EVS; different lodging spaces for students such as family households, hotels, hostels, student houses etc; foreign agents dealing with programs such as internships, work & travel and au pair; insurance companies dealing with travel and health insurance needs of students; airline companies.

The schools usually employ interactive teaching methods designed to increase communication skills of (e.g. speaking) students along with other typical skills such as reading, writing and listening.

5. I am not sure whether one can come up with a list of all subsectors of the EFL sector. Yet, I believe the following may give you an idea about the extent of programs involving foreign language learning abroad: Foreign summer schools; International voluntary working camps; Work & study programs; Social projects; Internship in a foreign country programs; Au-pair and demi-pair programs; Certificate, diploma, graduate and postgraduate programs of foreign universities and colleges; Preparatory programs for foreign college and universities (e.g. foundation and A level); Pre-master and pre-MBA programs; Vocational education programs; High school programs; Work & travel.
6. Genctur will celebrate its 30th anniversary in May 2009. It has a well-established reputation in the EFL sector. It also promotes a wide range of other programs, such as social projects, EVS, International Voluntary Working Camps, which are only indirectly related to EFL learning schemes.
7. I am not sure about the individual shares of all subsectors in the overall Turkish EFL sector. The findings of the 2008 Global Directions in Language Travel Report of ALTO (Association of Language Travel Organizations) may however give you an idea about the situation on a global level: Summer schools and other non-degree programs (% 22); College and University preparation programs (% 20); High school programs (% 15); Postgraduate programs (% 15); Vocational Training Programs (% 13,5); Degree Programs (% 12); Other: % 2,5. The number of Turkish young people participating in such programs through Genctur is around 2,000 per year.

8. We recruit our clients mostly through word of mouth recommendations and media coverage. We also make monthly announcements through our Internet bulletins. We promote our English language programs as means which contribute to one's personal development and to help one to explore him / herself and the world at large. Each program is promoted by a different motto; "body language is not enough" for language schools, "ignore the borders, explore the world" for voluntary working camps. Since our activities generate a great interest in the public, we get our media coverage not through paid advertisements but by being a news subject in the newspapers and TV channels.
9. I can only talk about why people choose the services of our company. The positive experiences of those who have participated in our programs in the past constitute a very strong reference for our company. Moreover we offer a really very wide range of services and we have successfully operating in this rather new and volatile sector for almost 30 years now.
10. The young people who don't have good English skills are worried about their future. Similarly the parents of these young people are concerned that their children will not have a bright future in the absence of such skills. So considerations of survival in an increasingly competitive world are the main motivation for the less fortunate ones. Those who have been fortunate enough to have already learned English through good schooling, on the other hand, attend EFL programs and cultural exchange schemes to further improve their communication and social skills. There are also those who seek not only to improve their English but also to learn an additional foreign language through our various

programs. We have been in this sector for almost 30 years now. This long history enables us to draw conclusions about whether our programs actually work to help our customers achieve their objectives and realize their dreams. Even my personal observations as a Genetur executive suggest that many of the young people who attended our programs in the past ended up with very good positions in various economic sectors. We are happy to see many of them attending our company anniversary receptions and sharing their success stories with us. Genetur means a window of opportunities for many Turkish young people who seek to explore the world and bring life changing experiences into their lives.

We have so far been the cornerstone in the lives of so many young people who include many well known public figures such as Nasuh Mahruki, a Turkish professional mountain climber, writer photographer and documentary producer, whose first experience abroad was through Genetur's Voluntary Working Camps. (Mahruki, age 41, is known as the first Turkish and Muslim climber to the mount of Everest. He is also the founder and president of AKUT Arama Kurtarma Dernegi – a voluntary Search and Rescue Society based in Istanbul. He got both national and international acknowledgement for the active involvement of AKUT in a number of search and rescue operations in the aftermath of many devastating earthquakes both in Turkey and in other countries). Some of the young people, who participate in our programs, are also the children of those who had very positive experiences with us in the past.

11. French used to be most prestigious foreign language when the economic and political relations of the Ottoman Empire with France were significant in the past centuries. In the new world order, however, things are different and English is now the leading world language. Yet, this is not the only change characterizing today's condition of foreign language learning. 30 years ago, we used to learn English through heavily grammatical textbooks. The high schools students of today, however, learn English through a different methodology, which emphasizes speaking and interactive communication skills. This is particularly the case in some of the Turkish private high schools, where the medium of instruction is English. The graduates of such schools participate in EFL related programs mostly for further improving their linguistic skills and increasing their understanding of world cultures. The increasing competition in the job market also motivates them to learn additional foreign languages such as German, Spanish, Russian and Italian.

12. In Turkey, graduating from a highly prestigious department (e.g. Industrial engineering) with a very high average is no longer enough to find a good job. The students are also expected to equip themselves with other skills: to know more than one foreign language, to be involved in voluntary working experiences and social projects, to have great organizational skills, to be open minded, to be familiar with different cultures etc. As such, one may well argue that the programs we promote help our clients to transform themselves into who they need to be to find a good job. It is therefore possible to argue that the techniques and strategies used by employers and human resources companies contribute to the growth of EFL sector both in Turkey and the world.

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