

Sumud pedagogy as linguistic citizenship: Palestinian youth in Israel against imposed subjectivities

M U Z N A A W A Y E D - B I S H A R A 

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A B S T R A C T

This linguistic ethnographic study offers a nuanced pedagogical account of the Arabic term *sumud*, or ‘steadfastness’, through a sociolinguistic analysis of decolonial modes of expression among Palestinian youth in Israel. I reflect on events during the 2021 uprisings in East Jerusalem, when Palestinian youth within Israel took to the streets in solidarity with Palestinians in Jerusalem and Gaza. Considering the Israeli education system’s denationalization of the Palestinian community within its borders, I examine how Palestinian political ideals cultivated outside the formal educational system open new possibilities for political organizing and expression. I reflect upon interviews with members of the Haifa Youth Movement and a Palestinian hip-hop artist and his lyrics. Engaging with Stroud’s theorization of linguistic citizenship, I show how pedagogy of *sumud* as a linguistic citizenship practice opens new semiotic spaces for Palestinian youth in Israel to resist the erasure of their identity. (Linguistic citizenship, *sumud* pedagogy, Palestinian youth, colonized education)*

I N T R O D U C T I O N

May 2021 marks an important point in the ongoing Palestinian struggle against Israel’s settler colonial policies. Uprisings in the Jerusalem neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah began as the Israeli Supreme Court was expected to deliver a ruling on whether to uphold the eviction of six Palestinian families from the neighborhood on May 10, 2021. The uprisings in Jerusalem soon accelerated into violent encounters between Israeli forces and Palestinians, ultimately leading to another war on Gaza. Within this context, Palestinian youth in mixed cities and other Israeli localities took to the streets to express solidarity with Palestinians in Jerusalem and Gaza. However, to show solidarity with the plight of Palestinians is to defy the main tenet of the Israeli education system.

Since its establishment, Israel has administered and maintained two segregated schooling systems: one for the (Hebrew-speaking) Jewish majority and one for the (Arabic-speaking) Palestinian minority. The Israeli establishment has always perceived of Palestinian national-cultural identity as a threat to the Jewish nature of

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the state (Reches 2009). This is why the Israeli education system serves a dual role: as a *nationalizing* apparatus for Jews and as a *denationalizing* apparatus for Palestinians. It does so by promoting the Zionist narrative and erasing the Palestinian national identity (Yiftachel 2006; Peled-Elhanan 2012; Awayed-Bishara 2020; Karkabi 2021). In this sense, Palestinians in Israel are subjugated to Israeli denationalization of their community (Karkabi 2021). Previous research has shown how the educational apparatus acts to limit what Palestinian youth can express about their identity and experiences (Awayed-Bishara, Netz, & Milani 2022). Against this backdrop, the May 2021 incidents provoked me to ask: How are Palestinian youth, who are subjugated under Israeli governmentality, mainly through the denationalization of their community, transforming and resisting denationalizing discourses and creating a new sense of collective identity and agency?

This article sets out to address this question and examine the way Palestinian political ideals cultivated outside the formal educational system have opened up new possibilities for political organizing and expression in ways forged and embraced by youth. Engaging with Stroud's (2018) theorization of *linguistic citizenship*, I analyze how Palestinian youth in Israel have been acting with *sumud*, or steadfastness, as a form of *cultural-discursive resistance* for constructing new subjectivities differing from those the Israeli state imposes on them, mainly through its educational apparatus. Linguistic citizenship (LC) encompasses all those acts through which people 'position themselves agentively' and 'craft new, emergent, subjectivities of political speakerhood, often outside of those prescribed or legitimated in institutional frameworks of the state [e.g. schools]' (Stroud 2018:4; also Stroud & Williams 2017; Stroud & Kerfoot 2020; Awayed-Bishara 2021a,b; Williams, Deumert, & Milani 2022). By conceptualizing *sumud* as a localized application of LC, I extend the notion of LC beyond its South African origins and offer a semiotic approach for understanding how Palestinian youth in Israel have been acting with *sumud* in becoming political, vocal, and 'transformative agents' (Bierria 2014). Transformative agency encapsulates those actions that are intended 'to fundamentally overturn conditions of systematic oppression, especially (but not exclusively) through collective action, such as through community organizing, movement building, or political advocacy' (Bierria 2014:139). Bierria argues that asking 'how', rather than 'if' or 'whether', offers a more open, existential project that enables us to understand how disenfranchised agents 'exercise meaningful action in a culture designed to define that action into something else entirely' (Bierria 2014:141–42); namely, Israel's perception of Palestinian nationality as a threat.

LC is concerned with the question of how marginalized speakers in colonized contexts claim autonomous selves and constitute alternative subjectivities different from, often contrasting to, the established ones (Stroud 2018; Awayed-Bishara et al. 2022). The study hereby presented emphasizes what minoritized groups do with their available linguistic and semiotic resources in the process of *decolonizing the self*; specifically, how they redefine the self through reclaiming colonized

space and undoing colonial fear. Focusing on the meaning-making practices of Palestinian youth OUTSIDE and AGAINST their colonized education, I offer an understanding of *sumud* as a set of locally specific acts that can be aligned with and expand the application of LC in sociolinguistic research on other troubled educational contexts—for example, contexts of (in)securitization (Rampton & Charalambous 2020) or crossfire (Silva 2022).

Towards this end, I draw upon data from interviews I held with members of the Haifa Youth Movement and a Haifa-based Palestinian hip-hop singer known as Big Sam, as well as from his song lyrics. I examine the way Palestinian youth in Israel act with *sumud* as a particular form of resistance in the sense that being *sami-da/samid* (female/male forms of ‘steadfast’) ‘requires that one does not allow oneself as a Palestinian to be written out of history’ (Rijke & van Teeffelen 2014:91). Specifically, I employ the notion of ‘acts of resistance’ to focus on NON-VIOLENT SEMIOTIC STRATEGIES PALESTINIANS USE TO RESIST ISRAEL’S ATTEMPTS TO ERASE THEIR PALESTINIAN IDENTITY.

I begin with a brief review that links linguistic citizenship to transformational spaces, followed by a theoretical framing of *sumud* in Palestinian colonized education (Awayed-Bishara et al. 2022), leading to the underpinning of pedagogy of *sumud* as a LC practice à la Stroud (2018). Before delving into data analysis, I also provide some methodological reflections.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Linguistic citizenship and transformational spaces

Linguistic citizenship was first introduced within a critique of the discourse of rights related to language educational equality. It highlights the importance of practices whereby ‘people use a variety of (self-authored) linguistic (and multimodal) practices to sculpt alternative political and ethical, religious and epistemological subjectivities to what is otherwise given’ (Stroud 2018:5). LC offers an understanding of acts of citizenship as not necessarily related to notions of nation-state citizenship (i.e. the wielding of a passport) but rather to ‘practices whereby new actors, seeking recognition in the public space in order to determine a new course of events, shift the location of agency and voice’ (Stroud 2018:21). By stressing the importance of grassroots activity, LC emphasizes cultural and political voice and agency while seeking to shift the analytical and activist gear from ‘affirmative’ to ‘transformative’ strategies (Fraser 1995; Stroud 2001). This focus on transformation aligns with Bierrria’s (2014) use of ‘transformative agency’ as a useful analytical tool to discern how minoritized youth cultivate and exercise their agency to resist and negotiate the institutional erasure of their identity.

Within the Israeli-Palestinian conflict zones, an important rationale for using LC is that it addresses semiotically the problem of co-habitation across difference (Milani, Awayed-Bishara, Gafter, & Levon 2022), where questions of ethical

responsibility of others are pivotal (Todd 2015), and individual freedom and agency is dependent on engaging with plural others. Thus, LC comprises semiotic acts in marginal spaces (e.g. non-institutional, non-normative spaces) that are generative of new political subjectivities concomitant with re-formed collectivities, rather than recognition and adaptation to the status quo in mainstream arenas. Through this focus on agency and political speakerhood in marginal Southern spaces, this article employs LC as a useful lens for understanding *sumud* as a pedagogical act of transformation. In so doing, this study heeds recent calls for rethinking socio-linguistics from a Southern perspective and circulating '[S]outhern expertise and knowledge of pluriversal views of humanity in communalities of being, knowing, and believing' (Heugh, Stroud, Taylor-Leech, & De Costa 2021:2). Focusing on Southern epistemologies 'concerns the production and validation of knowledges anchored in the experiences of resistance of all those social groups that have systematically suffered injustice, oppression, colonialism, and patriarchy' (Santos 2014:1). Speaking from a Southern locus of enunciation brings to the fore the revolutionary sense of *sumud* as it is manifested in language and other semiotic practices Palestinians use to express their great refusal to recognize and surrender to the power structures of colonialism, specifically those operated in their colonized education.

Sumud in Palestinian colonized education

A growing corpus of research has developed versatile understandings of *sumud* as a key concept in intellectual debates about the strategies Palestinians develop under colonial conditions (e.g. Tawil-Souri 2009; Meari 2014; Rijke & van Teeffelen 2014; Ryan 2015; Shehadeh 2015; Fassetta, Imperiale, Aldegheri, & Al-Masri 2020). Mindful of how the notion of *sumud* may be applied in different Palestinian contexts, this article casts a spotlight on Palestinians who remained 'inside' and constitute some 21% of Israel's population.¹ Here, the *sumud* practices are adapted to the specific circumstances of living as an actively marginalized minority, and as second-class citizens in a country that defines itself first as Jewish and then as democratic. Israel's prioritization of its Jewishness over its democratic nature (Smooha 2002) was manifested most substantially in July 2018 when the Knesset (Israeli parliament) passed the Nation State Law that defines Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people alone. The law not only reinforced the second-class status of its Palestinian citizens, but also transformed the status of Arabic from an official language into a language with a 'special' status.

Notwithstanding Arabic's continued use as the medium of instruction in Arab schools, the scholarship has consistently observed the misrecognition of the Palestinian collective identity (e.g. Peled-Elhanan 2012; Awayed-Bishara 2020, 2021a,b). To ensure the *denationalization* of Palestinians, fear was instilled within the Palestinian localities through a sophisticated system of surveillance (Rouhana & Sabbagh-Khoury 2014). Direct surveillance prevailed during the

military rule that Israel imposed on the Palestinian community between 1948 and 1966 (Robinson 2013), while an indirect system of control remains in the form of colonized education (Awayed-Bishara et al. 2022). *Colonized education* captures how Israel had designed Arab education to denationalize, and particularly to *de-Palestinize* Arab students. For example, in one English-as-a-foreign-language class reported in our study, the teacher mentioned the Arabic word for revolution, *thawra*, with the goal of apolitically discussing revolutionary schools in the US. The word *thawra* immediately evoked in the students a sense of belonging to their Palestinian identities as they started to call out the word *falasteen* ‘Palestine’. In response to students’ articulation of perhaps the most ‘un-sayable’ word, *falasteen*, the teacher utilized policing (even silencing) discursive strategies until she completely depoliticized the discussion of *thawra* in class.

Being subjected to a colonized form of education has indeed interpellated and contained many Palestinians within the logic of colonial politics. At the same time, it has also driven many others to ‘require different discourses of cultural opposition’ (Karkabi 2018:1182). Previous studies have underpinned linguistic citizenship as a route through which Palestinians develop new modes of political speakerhood against Israel’s continuous attempts to erase their Palestinian identity and eradicate their sense of Palestinian belonging and collectiveness (Awayed-Bishara 2020, 2021a,b; Awayed-Bishara et al. 2022). It is precisely within these alternative modes of speakerhood, and resistance, operating outside the discursive space of formal educational politics that I underpin *pedagogy of sumud* as a LC practice.

Underpinning pedagogy of sumud as a linguistic citizenship practice

Approaching modes of political speakerhood from the perspective of *sumud* entails reading the colonial power structure of Palestinian education from the perspective of youth who are concurrently subjected to it but also challenging and destabilizing its terms. Under conditions of oppression, *sumud* ‘is a constant revolutionary becoming, opening up a possibility for an alternative regime of being’, and ‘for an ethical-political relational self’ (Meari 2014:549). This article looks at *sumud* as a particular revolutionary and liberating Palestinian mode of being that encodes a liberational potential for humanity (as per Freire 1970/2005). The humanizing essence of *sumud* is embedded in the aspiration of Palestinians not merely to survive and endure as a nation but also to contribute ‘to the protection and maintenance of the human values of freedom and liberation’ (Jaradat 2010, as cited in Meari 2014:554–55). Thus, *sumud* pedagogy comprises a processional form of BECOMING that is never finished or fixed, but rather dynamic and continuous. *Sumud* involves reorganizing the Palestinian revolutionary self (Meari 2014) and developing Palestinian political agency, which ‘is not given but achieved on the basis of practices that alter the subject’ (Feldman 1991:1). With its focus on transformative

practices for crafting autonomous subjectivities (Stroud 2018), LC offers a useful bridging concept for studies looking at particular cases of individuals and communities applying practices of *sumud*.

Pedagogy of *sumud* is inherently transformative, as it entails the acknowledgement of Palestinian everyday struggle as an important practice against colonialism (Santos 2014). In conjunction with decolonial struggles elsewhere, *sumud* is often also ‘acknowledged as such by an invested community of actors, and … [as] a part of an emerging sociality, community, or an alternative citizenship’ (Stroud & Kerfoot 2020:9). In this sense, the actualization of *sumud* requires continuous cultivation and nurturing processes that are often mobilized through linguistic and multimodal articulation in chants and hip-hop songs, in particular. Notably, the qualifier ‘linguistic’ (in LC) should not be interpreted as indicating spoken and written codes, but rather refers to all meaning-making resources including visuality, bodily expression and materiality (see also Milani 2015; Peck & Stroud 2015; Mpendukana & Stroud 2019), which social actors employ to make themselves seen and heard. In the literature drawing on LC, chants and hip-hop lyrics are typical examples ‘of how forms of semiosis are creatively deployed to create a disruptive space for “citizen” engagement for those whose voices are habitually silenced’ (Stroud 2018:4). In their study of the role Palestinian hip-hop and rap play in the lives of Palestinian youth, Maira & Shihade (2012:18) quote a young Palestinian solo rapper who identifies hip-hop as a pedagogical tool for her generation.

In schools, they don’t teach us about [Mahmoud] Darwish [Palestine’s poet laureate] or about Palestine. They don’t teach us about our history, we don’t know it, so we teach youth through our songs. When I was in school, I didn’t know about Darwish or about Palestinian history. Through hip hop, I came to know and became *wataniya* [Arabic for ‘homeland-conscious’]. Identity is our number one issue, and hip hop is our tool of education.

Against this backdrop, I posit that in response to colonial DENATIONALIZING forces, the sociolinguistic and semiotic practices that young Palestinians perform outside the formal educational system function as ‘a powerful means of reaching out to the Palestinian community, of NATIONALIZING and defining resistance, and of forging political allegiances’ (McDonald 2013:6, emphasis added). Before demonstrating how this is actualized in practice, I provide some methodological reflections.

METHODOLOGY

Research methods and cases studied

This qualitative linguistic ethnography employs research methods suitable for accessing sensitive issues and engaging with individual and social understanding. Applying linguistic ethnography methods allowed me to add the element of *reflexivity* about my role as a Southern researcher in studying meaning-making processes

as they happen in society (as per Tusting 2020). Notably, Rampton, Maybin, & Roberts (2015) highlight how linguistic ethnography entails attention to people's emic perspectives; sensitivity to multiple understandings of particular contexts; and openness to complexity, contradiction, and re-interpretation over time. Hence, data reported in this article are drawn from: (i) an ethnographic study I conducted shortly after the May 2021 incidents (in June 2021), which included semi-structured interviews with six members of the Haifa Youth Movement; and (ii) a critical analysis of a particular genre of Palestinian hip-hop produced by Big Sam and an interview that I held with him in Haifa (in February 2022). In this article, I focus only on the statements made in interviews by two of the HYM's co-founders: Sama (she) and Adi (he). Both Sama and Adi were in their early twenties at the time of the interviews, and they both granted me permission to use their first names. I show interview excerpts in Arabic alongside English translations. My conscious choice as a Palestinian scholar to do so comprises an act of resistance against the Nation State Law that demoted Arabic from an official language to one with 'special status' (see section above), and as part of my engagement with Southern epistemologies.

Setting: Focus on Haifa

Haifa is Israel's third largest city, with a mix of Jewish and Palestinian Arab residents. It is often regarded as the last residence option available for young Palestinians from villages and towns in the Galilee and Triangle who seek an urban Palestinian lifestyle (Karkabi 2018). This urbanization process resulted in increasing numbers of Palestinian civic organizations, university graduates, and professionals leading to the city's accelerated cultural revival (Eqieq 2019) and to imagining Haifa as the PALESTINIAN CULTURAL CAPITAL IN ISRAEL (Karkabi 2018).

As the imagined Palestinian cultural capital, Haifa also plays a central role in the development of the Palestinian music scene (Karkabi 2018). In the last two decades or so, several Haifa-based bands have fused local music styles with international global genres. Big Sam offers a particular example of such musicians. Born in the US to Palestinian parents—a father from Gaza and a mother from Yafa (Jaffa)—Big Sam moved to Haifa after spending several years in Qatar armed with rich cultural, linguistic, and musical repertoires. When asked why he chose Haifa, he answered: "Haifa is coastal just like Gaza. Being in a city of sea and sand is as close to my father's home town as I could ever get." Using a mix of rural spoken Arabic and Modern Standard Arabic, Big Sam offers a distinctive genre of Palestinian hip-hop that has been gaining momentum among many Palestinians.

The Haifa Youth Movement (HYM), founded in 2014, also features in Haifa's cultural scene:

Haifa youth movement is an independent youth movement that was established by young Palestinians in Haifa, aiming to build a platform for the city's youth. HYM is united in its ambition to

cultivate community while maintaining and strengthening our national identity and historical narratives as Palestinians. We aspire to strengthen Haifa's presence as a cultural and political center for Palestinians in general, and especially for those living within the 1948 borders. As a group, we see ourselves as the true natives of this ancient city, and we have no fear in expressing our identity and belonging.²

My analysis seeks to identify the extent to which the cultural ideals cultivated by Big Sam's music and young members of the HYM might constitute counterhegemonic pedagogical practices for contesting Palestinian denationalization.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Through claiming autonomous selves and subjectivities, young Palestinians open up spaces for: (i) unmuting their linguistic and national voices; (ii) undoing colonial fear; and (iii) redefining the self through reclamation of Palestinian space.

The unmutting of young Palestinians' linguistic and national voices

Big Sam is a Palestinian hip-hop artist whose protest music has been capturing the attention of many Arabic-speaking listeners, both locally and globally, as manifested by his tremendous popularity and high number of followers on Facebook and Instagram. His musical identity and hip-hop lyrics seem to open up a space for political speakerhood outside the regimented educational institution (Stroud 2018). As 'a site of cultural production, knowledge production, and activism where aesthetics are inextricably linked to politics and pedagogy' (Alim, Williams, Haupt, & Jansen 2021:209), hip-hop culture is potentially political and pedagogical (Haupt, Williams, Alim, & Jansen 2019; Williams 2021), encouraging a critical and dialogical engagement in colonial and oppressive contexts (e.g. South Africa or the US; Alim et al. 2021). Dialogical engagement in these contexts is pedagogically achieved through the explicit philosophy of 'Each one, teach one' (Alim et al. 2021:209). Situating himself and his music within this political-pedagogical hip-hop culture, Big Sam states:

بحاول أحافظ على الـ identity عشان الناس تضل منتذكرة انه الالهام كان من هناك، من بروكلين من بيترويت، من الأماكن اللي بليش فيها إنه في فنة او طبقة اللي هي مضطهدة black people من البوبلين، الحكومة، وبين في قمع، قائم، ومفروع، وهنون في نفس الاشي، هذا الموجود: طول ما في قمع، راح يكزن في هيب هوب. مش راح تسعبي عمر دباب ولا تامر حسني يبحروا عن شو بصير في فلسطين. الناس اللي بتموت بالقدس وحالحواجز، مين بدء يحكى عنهم؟ احنا الشعب، وعشان هيك عندي مسؤولية كبيرة.

'I try to keep the identity of the hip-hop artist so people keep in mind that inspiration came from there: Brooklyn, Detroit and from places where people, Black people, were persecuted by the police, the government, where there is oppression, oppressor, and oppressed; and here there is the same. This is the situation: as long as there is oppression, there will be hip-hop. You won't hear Omar Diab or Tamir Hussni [popular but apolitical Egyptian singers] speaking about what is happening in Palestine. Who will speak about the people dying in Jerusalem or at checkpoints? We are the people [i-sha'b], and this is why I have big responsibility.'

Big Sam asserts that his calling as a Palestinian artist is to speak against and contest the oppression of his people ‘here’ just as Black artists are doing ‘there’ in the US. While locating himself as a hip-hop artist within the African-American hip-hop struggle against anti-Black systemic racism (“inspiration came from there”), Big Sam notes the efforts he invests in making his own people cognizant of the Black struggle. Like much hip-hop in the US and South Africa that engages in dialogue with anti-poor, anti-Black, and anti-Indigenous contexts (Alim et al. 2021), Palestinian hip-hop speaks back to anti-Palestinian systemic racism (“speak about people dying in Jerusalem or at checkpoints”). “Speaking about what is happening in Palestine” is motivated by a sense of responsibility with which Big Sam distinguishes himself from popular artists such as Omar Diab and Tamir Hussni. This notion of responsibility aligns with the overarching principles of linguistic citizenship as a case of a speaker exercising agency and participation through multimodal means to break the silence in sociocultural arenas (Stroud 2018; Milani et al. 2022).

Moreover, cognizant of hip-hop’s political nature, Big Sam is also aware that his art is potentially pedagogical:

قبل يومين كنت عبّاركي مع امي بي موجودة بقطر، وبآخر المكالمة نهتني بقولها “انت اسا زي مدرس بي فايت على صاف فيه طلاب وهنی عمیستوا شو بذلك انت بي مسؤول عنهم.”

‘Two days ago, I was talking to my mother who is in Qatar. At the end of our conversation, she warned me by saying: “You are now like a teacher who is entering a class full of pupils and they are waiting to see what you want to say because you are responsible for them.”’

Big Sam’s citation of his mother’s description of his role as a ‘teacher’, alongside his perception of her words a ‘warning’, reinforce his sense of pedagogical responsibility towards Palestinian youth. He manifests this responsibility tangibly in his lyrics and in the ‘teaching strategies’ he uses for writing them:

أغنية استيطان كتبتها على أيام احداث الشيخ جراح. حاولت انه ما أكون كتير direct عن القضية... الفكرة من استيطان، بتعرفي كيف لما تكون في ولد صغير ويش يوحد دوا، فبتتحليله ايها بطريقة عشان تجربه يوحدها، هيلك انا كنت أعمل.. يعني، منحكي gazu وغزل وعلاقة ولكن خصوصي يستعمل بحديثي عن الحب كلمة gazu وحق العودة. اذا ما بعمل هيلك، الجبل الصغير ما راح يتلقى شو بحكي.

‘I wrote the song *istitan* [‘settler-colonialism’] during the events in Sheikh Jarrah. I tried not to be too direct about the *qadiyya* [‘problem’]. It is like ... when a child refuses to take medication and you try indirect ways to make it happen. This is what I do. I mean, I talk of love, passion, and relationships but deliberately use words like *gazu* [‘conquer’] and *haq il-ṣawda* [‘right of return’].³ If I don’t [talk about apolitical issues as well], the younger generation will not be receptive of this content.’

The above excerpt indicates that the use of Palestinian-related terms such as *istitan*, *qadiyya*,⁴ or *haq il-ṣawda* enables Big Sam to contest and decolonize the regimented sphere of speakable discourses that operate WITHIN the official educational system (Awayed-Bishara et al. 2022). To ensure that the younger generation will first receive and then also participate in decolonizing processes, Big Sam seems to apply the principles of culturally relevant pedagogies (Ladson-Billings 1995; Awayed-Bishara 2021a): namely, that discussing issues derived from the LEARNERS’ own lived experiences (e.g. love, passion, and relationships) raises their critical

consciousness and increases their receptivity of the offered content. The fact that Big Sam's music reaches a large number of Palestinian youth in Israel indicates that despite the colonized educational system to which they are subjected, these youngsters are offered a new discursive space for sculpting alternative subjectivities OUTSIDE formal educational domains. This is a core dimension of linguistic citizenship—constructing new constituencies that go beyond and against those that are institutionally designated or recognized by those who hold the official discourses of power (Stroud 2018).

In another song entitled *Layssa Bayti*⁵ ‘Not my home’, Big Sam describes the agony refugee parents experience when losing a child. He reports that this song was inspired by how a Syrian friend of his lost his daughter while trying to flee to Europe during the war. Deeply moved by the agony his friend's wife was feeling, Big Sam wrote *Layssa Bayti* to raise attention to the refugee crisis in its broader sense and to bring Palestinian youth closer to their Pan-Arab identity. Repeating the word *bideesh* which in spoken Arabic means ‘I refuse’, Big Sam agentively speaks against the oppressing and silencing of younger generations and calls for the unmuting and freeing of their voices.

- | | |
|-----|---|
| (1) | بديش أكون مربوط 1
‘I refuse to be constrained’ |
| 2 | بديش يعم سكوت
‘I refuse that silence prevails’ |
| 3 | بديش العمر يفوت
‘I refuse to see life passing’ |
| 4 | بلا ما نعطي دافع لجيل يعيش
‘without giving motivation to a generation’ |
| 5 | خر واعي مش مكتوب
‘who will live free and conscious, not oppressed’ |

Clearly, Big Sam holds himself responsible for intervening in the process of educating the younger generation to become “free and conscious”. His cognizant refusal to be “silent” and “constrained” about the oppression of young Palestinians offers a counter educational model to those commonly seen within formal educational systems (Awayed-Bishara et al. 2022). Namely, his pedagogical responsibility to encourage the future generations of Palestinians to become free speaking agents could be contrasted to the way most Palestinian teachers and educators are contained within the colonial regulations imposed on them in their colonized education (as we have seen in the English classroom and from an incident that Sama shares in the next section). Following the gestures of agency that he performs in lines 1–5 in rap rhythm in spoken Arabic, Big Sam moves in lines 6–11 into Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). Here, he sounds more like a Sufi poet making use of melodic hymns and chants of devotional poetry. Sufism is known to grant ordinary people an entry point to experience a higher state of consciousness and

to manage their social and psychological problems (Levin 2008). This connection becomes evident in the way Big Sam directly speaks to his oppressors.

- (2) 6 يا من سلبتم حرتي
‘To those who stole my freedom’
- 7 يا من رميوني على شواطئ الغريب
‘To those who threw me at the stranger’s shores’
- 8 أين بيتي وقضتي
‘Where is my home and my [Palestinian] problem’
- 9 هذاركم لا ملاذ
‘This is rubble not refuge’
- 10 هذا حطام لا وطن
‘This is ruins not nation’
- 11 هذا ليس بيتي
‘This is not my home’

The use of MSA is significant. Big Sam explains that the Quran is his source of inspiration when it comes to selecting a rich form of Arabic that reaches as many listeners as possible and that might, in his own words, ‘encourage the use of less Hebrew in the everyday speech of the [Arab] people who live in Israel’. Yet, he asserts that he speaks SPIRITUALLY, intending to appeal to everyone, regardless of their religious affiliation. Here again his Sufi influences emerge, enabling him ‘to communicate intensive mystical emotion through the medium of language’ to his audience, so they ‘experience the affective state which engendered them’ (Frishkopf 2000:2). He explains that some of the less commonly known words that he uses—for example, *aradeen* (plural for ‘land’, *ard*) or *nayareen* (plural for ‘fire’, *nar*)—often become debated issues amongst his fans. A critical examination of such debates indeed constitutes a rich research site for future research. He speaks of these linguistic discussions around the richness of the Arabic language with great satisfaction, specifically in the aftermath of the Nation State Law that cancelled the official status of Arabic. This embedding of Arabic into the sociopolitical realities of the Palestinians in Israel comprises an important feature of linguistic citizenship (Stroud 2015).

Lastly, and importantly, the notion of *sumud* encompasses an overarching umbrella term for the pedagogical mission that Big Sam commits himself to. Specifically, Big Sam offers a new understanding of how *sumud* pedagogy not only aligns with but also expands the transformative framework of linguistic citizenship.

صموه معناه قوة والقدرة على انه يضل الواحد يصرخ ويكي. دائمًا في قصص حزينة، ولكن في حدا بحزن وبشك وفي حدا بحزن وبصرخ. حتى لو حسيت انه كلشي توقف وانتهي، اسا بقدر اصرخ ويفقد احكي وبقدر ابكي وبقدر اعمل كلشي انا بدبي ايماء، فانيا اخر. هذا هو. الصمود انه تكون خر في كل شي بتتحكيمه ومن هون جاي القوة والصمود هو بقاء.

‘*Sumud* means power and the ability to keep screaming and speaking up. There are always sad stories, but what makes the difference is that some people remain silent when they are sad while others scream. Even when you feel that everything has stopped and ended, we are still able to scream,

we are still able to speak, we are still able to cry, and we are still able to do whatever we want to do. So I am free. That's all. *Sumud* is being free in saying whatever you want because this is the source of power and this is *baqa'a* ['survival'].

Mindful of the hardships, challenges, agonies, and even despair, Big Sam offers a hopeful pedagogy of *sumud* that allows Palestinians to live freely and mainly, UN-SILENTLY. This might be achieved by exercising linguistic citizenship, which grants agency by: (i) challenging the politics of silencing and erasure and reinserting their voice (Stroud & Williams 2017); and (ii) learning to unlearn colonial fear. Challenging the politics of silencing entails learning how to become liberated Palestinians through UNLEARNING colonial practices of de-Palestinization, as the following section illustrates.

Undoing colonial fear

I found that young Palestinians use ‘the undoing of colonial fear’ (Meari 2014) to liberate themselves from the shackles of institutional fear or surveillance, through the use of various discursive tools. Notably, they associate ‘fear’ to speak up against the Israeli institution with previous generations, not their own. Almost all participants explicitly claimed that their parents, and more generally older Palestinians, are still dominated and summoned by colonial fear. In this regard, Adi declares, “we crossed the barrier of fear”, although admits that they might not be ready for upcoming stages of struggle. He also differentiates younger and older generations by their understanding and exercising of *sumud*.

...هذا الفرق تعالى نقول، الوعي المفصلي بين جيل النكبة وبين جيلنا اليوم،انا بقعدش بالبيت او صامد عالسكت بس بالبيت تبعي،... الصمود هو انه اكون بحارتي [وادي الجمال] وبميتنى [وادي الصليب ووادي النسناس] وبكل محل في فلسطين التاريخية. هذا اللي بخلينا نقدر بنبني مستقبلنا هون: صمود بدون خوف.

...‘the difference is in the joint consciousness between the Nakba generation and our generation; for them, *sumud* means staying quietly at home. For us, *sumud* means being in our neighborhood (Wadi Ijmal) and our city (Wadi Salib and Wadi Nisnas) and everywhere, all around historic Palestine. This is what enables us to build our future in this place: *sumud* without fear.’

Adi critiques the way Palestinians of what he calls “the Nakba generation” often perceive *sumud* as the ability to stay put and preserve one’s own home and family. This conception of *sumud*, he claims, is limiting (within one’s own home) and overlooks the need to enable broader, more encompassing modes of steadfastness (“all around historic Palestine”). A broader understanding of *sumud* enables a shift from modes of resilience to modes of resistance, extending throughout “all historic Palestine”. In this sense, Adi links the construction of space (“This is what enables us to build our future in this land”) to the reorganization of the Palestinian self (“*sumud* without fear”) through a redefinition of *sumud* as an anticolonial mode of resistance (in one’s home, neighborhood, and everywhere). *Sumud* without fear must go beyond a concerted or individual effort to protect one’s own home or family, mainly by keeping silent (i.e. “quietly”) about the

colonial conditions that Palestinians experience (see Ryan 2015). By offering a committed, agentive, and fearless notion of *sumud*, Adi articulates a hopeful perception of Palestinians' ability to construct their future in this land.

Moreover, the undoing of colonial fear entails LEARNING how to become liberated Palestinians through UNLEARNING colonial practices of de-Palestinization. In this regard, Sama (now in her early twenties) discusses an experience she had in the eighth grade, when she and her classmates were punished and sent home by the school administration for hanging Mahmoud Darwish's poems on the corridor walls in their school and for wearing keffiyehs in an honor of his death (see Awayed-Bishara et al. 2022). She states:

إنه لما كنا صغار كان ننزل نعمل مظاهره على دوار اميل حبيبي، هاي المرحلة كانا ملايين حاجة ناقصة عنا انه احنا انتبها، بما انه المدرسة بتعطيهاش... ومش بس ما تعلمنا عن مين احنا كفاسطينيين كمان تعاقبنا عشان حاولنا نغير عن هوينا... وبعدين بس كبرنا فهمنا، وانا بعرف شو لازم اعمل.

'When we were young, we would go to demonstrate in Dawar Emil Habibi [a major Palestinian corner in Haifa named after the late Palestinian writer Emil Habibi] to compensate for what we were not getting from school. Not only did we not get an education about who we are as Palestinians from school, we were also penalized for trying to express our identity. I realize now at an older age [what we went through], and I know what I need to do.'

This excerpt further demonstrates how more recent acts of solidarity (in May 2021) and expression (students screaming *falasteen* in the English classroom) are situated across a long and continuous line of struggle Palestinian youth have been forging against an educational discursive regime that bans their political and national speakerhood. The experiences shared by Sama and other Palestinian school kids capture how the politics of military rule still operate in Arab schools to censor and constrain the sphere of the Palestinian 'sayable' (Awayed-Bishara et al. 2022). Against the constraining forces operating inside the formal educational system, however, Palestinian youth seem determined to voice alternative knowledges and craft new political subjectivities to compensate for those otherwise erased. Sama's 'current' realization is that today, she and other youth are still intentionally prevented from constructing their national sense of self and belonging, just like they were during her childhood. Yet, instead of submitting to these oppressive systems of erasure, she agentively works on their deconstruction. While this is indeed evident in her activist role as a HYM member, her activities are also linked to a different, even radical, notion of *sumud*:

انا اليوم جزء من الصراع تبعي هو صراع نسوى، بتخيل هذا نوع وعي جديد وتأني عن انه الواحد يصارع عاصمتراوية عليه ولهمة عيشه.... هو كمان جزء لا يتجزأ من الصراع الفلسطيني بالـ motto تبع طالعات ووطن حر ونساء حر، هي جزء لا يتجزأ من التحرر تبعنا والصراع الفلسطيني ملي فراع كثير كبير بجياته اليومية.

'Part of my struggle today is also a feminist struggle. I think that this entails a different type of consciousness than struggling to preserve one's family or living. ... it is an integral part of the larger Palestinian struggle and it is also the motto of *tal'at, watan 'hur,* and *nisaa' 'hurra* [names of Palestinian

feminist movements]. Our liberation as women is an integral part of our broader Palestinian struggle, and this struggle occupies a large space in my everyday life.'

Sama emphasizes how *sumud* as a particular liberating Palestinian mode of being requires a different type of consciousness. Sama's description of the kinds of struggle in which she is involved alludes to her spirit of agency and defiance, manifested in her ability as a young Palestinian woman to balance her struggles for liberation along more than one axis at a time (Atshan 2020). Stating that her Palestinian struggle today is not merely a struggle against colonialism but also against patriarchy indicates that Sama espouses intersectional resistance to oppression. While Sama offers a pivotal contribution to our understanding of the intersectionality of Palestinian resistance by underscoring the role of feminist movements, the literature on queer Palestinian movements also underscores their role in redefining the terms of Palestinian struggles in recent decades (see Atshan 2020 for an extensive overview of Palestinian queer movements' struggle alongside that of the feminist movements that Sama names above). In short, the multiplicity of voices that currently engage in the discourse of Palestinian struggle are becoming the decolonial way for 'overcoming the surveillance and disenfranchisement—both discursive and embodied—that [Palestinians] face from many directions' (Atshan 2020:216). Thus, Sama's everyday acts of struggle are acts of linguistic citizenship, which engage pluriversality by lifting the voices of 'individuals and groups historically captured in circuits of invisibilization, to demand recognition and lay claims to dignity' (Stroud & Kerfoot 2020:11).

To conclude, perspectives offered by HYM members suggest that young Palestinians are constituting new forms of political agency for revealing as well as contesting the colonial forces that aim to erase their identity and sense of self as Palestinians. Notable is their ability to clearly, fearlessly, and liberally construct themselves as free speaking agents. This political mode of speakerhood enables them to define themselves anew as full partners, not subordinates or 'colonized'. Adi states:

تعالى بنash من محل انه نفهم انه احنا مش اقلية ... هذا المفهوم بعطيك قوة انك تفهم انه انت بالداخل مش قادر لحالك وانك انت مرتبط مع هذا التواصل الجغرافي الكامل الي كله به يتحرر من نفس الاذوات الي جاي من نفس الراس.

'Let's begin by understanding that we are not a minority... This understanding gives you power that just because you are inside [Israel] doesn't mean you are on your own. Rather, you are connected to this entire geographic continuum through one common goal: we all want to liberate ourselves from the same oppressive tools that come from the same entity.'

The refusal to see themselves as a 'minority' offers a nuanced insight into what is often described as the conundrum of being a 'Palestinian in Israel': the experience of EXCLUSION Palestinians deal with as second-class citizens in a Jewish state, alongside that of SUSPICION from other Palestinians and Arabs in Arab countries (Meira & Shihade 2012). By emphasizing the oneness and continuity of the Palestinian people, and bringing in important gender and generational differences, these

young Palestinians decolonize their status as a ‘minority’ and offer a new epistemological self-understanding that liberates them from ‘oppressive tools’. Indeed, their status as a ‘national minority’ was involuntarily and even unwillingly set as a result of colonization and territorial expansion (Kymlicka 1995). In sum, their attempts as linguistic citizens to reimagine and reconstruct existing sociopolitical and colonial arrangements (e.g. their imposed minority status) is a central component in striving for transformation through acts of LC (Bierria 2014; Stroud 2018) as it becomes even more evident in the last analytical section.

Reclaiming ownership of Palestinian space and identity

The way participants related to Haifa and its significant Palestinian landmarks creates a link between space, identity, and political speakerhood. Particularly useful for analyzing this link is what Jaworski & Thurlow call ‘making space, locating self’ (2010:6), referring to those discursive processes through which the construction of space is deeply imbricated with realization of selfhood. Young Palestinians apply various discursive tools in reclaiming their ownership over Palestinian spaces.

Demystifying the space of ‘coexistence’. The first discursive tool that I identified is demystifying the space of so-called ‘coexistence’. The idea of ‘co-existence’ has long been linked almost synonymously to Haifa. In this regard, Sama states:

انه انا الي فهمته اليوم انه هاي الفقاعة رجعت ففقطت انه احنا مش عايشين بنفس الواقع، يعني احنا عايشين حد بعض بس الواقع هو مختلف كلية

‘What I understand today [following the May events] is that the bubble has exploded: we live side-by-side physically but in totally different realities.’

While Sama situates the explosion of the coexistence “bubble” within the context of the aftermath of the May events, Haifa’s municipal discriminatory policy towards its Palestinian residents has long reflected the hypocrisy behind the title of ‘coexistence’ (Leibovitz 2007; Monterescu 2009). Most notable are municipal attempts to encourage the ‘Judaization’ of the city, resulting from the city’s alarm about the growing Palestinian presence amongst residents (Karkabi 2018). The ‘coexistence’ space, then, is not a manifestation of a radically different Israeli political agenda or a quest for equitable resource distribution. Rather, it references Haifa’s decline in Israel’s geopolitics vis-à-vis other major cities like Tel Aviv (Kallus 2013), which enables Haifa’s framing in this manner. What Sama suggests is that Haifa only outwardly pursues ‘coexistence’ but in practice promotes ethnic segregation (Leibovitz 2007). Segregation is palpably felt in the exclusive Palestinian presence in historical neighborhoods (e.g. Wadi Nisnas) and the way Palestinian communities predominate in lower Haifa while Jewish communities predominate in the more affluent Mount Carmel neighborhoods (Kallus 2013).

While reinforcing that the bubble has indeed exploded, Adi brings to the fore a historical dimension for demystifying the idea of co-existence:

بفلاسطين تاريخا الناس قاومت كرد فعل مباشر لأشياء بتضير معها والناس نزلت عالشارع من دون ما حدا ينجر يقعنها. فاغلب الناس عارفة ومقتنعة لانه التهديد كان عبيتهن والمستوطنين بدهن يغلوتو عبيتهن. بحيفا، الفاقعة هاي فقعت لانه الناس شافت ايش يعني بيتك يكون مهدد وحارثك تكون مهددة.

‘Historically, in Palestine, people resisted as a direct response to things that happened to them and took to the streets without needing to have been convinced or asked by anyone to do so. Most people in Haifa went down to the streets because they knew and were convinced that the settlers were threatening their homes. In Haifa, the bubble exploded because people could now see with their own eyes how their homes and neighborhoods could be taken away from them.’

Through the words, “Historically, in Palestine, people resisted”, Adi situates the explosion of the bubble in May within the broader historic Palestinian struggle against ongoing Israeli settler colonial threats. This historic framing highlights the anticolonial nature of the struggle in Haifa, thereby complicating the notion of ‘coexistence,’ whose failures are now signaled by the colonizer-colonized nature of Jewish-Arab relations in the city. In saying “settlers were threatening their homes”, Adi refers to right-wing settlers’ acts of violence towards Haifa’s Arab residents and their homes in May 2021. The experience and response of Arab residents to this threat elicits a sense of *déjà vu*. The fear for one’s home being taken over by settlers brings to the minds of many Palestinians, including Adi and myself, images of the mass exodus of Haifa’s Arab population that began on April 22, 1948 with crowds of panic-stricken residents leaving their houses (Khalidi 2008:30). Neither Adi nor I experienced the Nakba firsthand; yet these images are remembered and discussed in many fora (Davis 2011), precisely so that younger generations, who did not experience the loss their grandparents did and do not learn about this history in their colonized education, connect with their history as Palestinians. Events commemorating the Nakba, such as the anniversary of the *Fall of Haifa*, are organized annually (Khalili 2007) with this counterhegemonic educational goal in mind. Adi’s linking of the struggle of Haifa residents in May to the 1948 exodus (“people could now see with their own eyes how their homes and neighborhoods could be taken away from them”) indicates that Adi, a third generation Palestinian, has LEARNED the lesson. Moreover, he explains how the HYM works to pass such knowledge to young Palestinians:

عند متأنل انه عننصل لعديد كبير من الشباب الفلسطينى لانه مجهد وتعب وانشغل على مالان مشاريع. بتذكر المشاركة بتحكى بحد ذاتها، المشاركة اللي كانت على مدار سنتين، اذا متواذن نموذج واحد الى ضل علينا عطول كل السنتين الي هو تكرى سقوط حفنا، المشاركة فيه بس تزيد، يعني بتذكر عملنا جولة تاريخية قبل سنتين او 3، كان فيها حوالي اكثر من 200 واحد، حتى اجا عليها بوليس @ فكروها مسيرة واحد تقاصينا، فاعملنا جولة لحد واد الصليب، فياى دلالة على انه هاي الشباب وعيت اكثر وعيتاقلوا معنا كثيير بمشاريع مختلفة.

‘We really hope that we are reaching a large number of Palestinian youth. We don’t mind the effort and how tiring this work might sometimes be, because participation in the anniversary of the Fall of Haifa over the years exceeded our expectations. Participation continues to rise every year. I remember that two or three years ago, we organized a historic excursion and there were more than 200 participants. When we arrived at Wadi Salib, the police [Adi laughing] came and requested that we identify

ourselves. Because of the large number of participants, they thought we were marching. Young people are becoming more aware of these issues and therefore wish to interact with us and attend our events.'

This excerpt describes the LEARNING PROCESSES taking place at events commemorating the Nakba (i.e. outside the colonized education). Wadi Salib is a neighborhood from where Palestinians were evicted in 1948 and were not allowed to return after the war ended. While the majority of descendants currently live in nearby countries, others live very close to their (grand)parents' childhood homes and pass almost daily through the ruins of their past (Heib 2019). In contrast to how the colonized education denies Palestinians the right to learn about this history in school, the HYM offers counterhegemonic pedagogical practices involving on-site narration and remembrance (Jaworski & Thurlow 2010). These youths' contesting and reworking of established colonial regimes of 'unlearning Palestinian history' in unacknowledged Palestinian spaces could be understood both as acts of linguistic citizenship and acts of resistance. Such LC involves the search for alternative modes of learning about and speaking of one's own self as a Palestinian (Awayed-Bishara 2021a,b).

These representational activities could open up a possible discursive space for young Palestinians to construct their identities through a process of geographical imagining and the locating of self in a place from which 'they' were previously expelled (metaphorically, as descendants of those who physically were). Notably, these activities coincide with the surveillance forces (i.e. the police), who arrived to interrogate and interrupt. Evidently, the police identified the act of gathering near Wadi Salib as a defiant one. Such surveillance is intended to instill in those youth a fear of the Israeli institution, a practice directly linked to the denationalizing forces operating not only within (Awayed-Bishara et al. 2022) but evidently also outside the formal educational sphere. These surveillance practices further complicate the notion of coexistence in Haifa, as the political movement of one of the supposedly coexisting groups is monitored and censored in the city.

Recontextualizing narratives of the Nakba. The second discursive tool that I identified is recontextualizing narratives of the Nakba for reclaiming ownership over Palestinian space. Such recontextualization offers a discursive way not merely for commemorating the Nakba, but also, mainly, for reinventing the present and planning for the future. Sama offers a broad understanding:

المدينة فيها كثیر معلم فلسطينية وفيها حتى معالم مخابية مثل وادي الصليب واحنا منحاول نرجع لهاي المحلات عشان نجيبيها للسطح،
ننكى عن اللي صار فيها وبنينها.

'The city has many Palestinian landmarks, even hidden landmarks such as Wadi Salib, and what we try to do is go back to these hidden places and talk about what happened. So we bring them [hidden places] to the surface and then [re]construct them.'

Sama suggests that young Palestinians are actively engaged with questions of return to displaced spaces, to which she refers as "hidden places". Analogous to other

indigenous minorities (e.g. Cherokees in Kituwah, Māoris in New Zealand), Palestinians have a set of communal and cultural practices that they use as part of their desire to keep in touch with the lands and places they lost in Israel's establishing itself as a nation-state. Bringing 'these hidden places [to which Sama refers] to the surface and then reconstruct[ing] them' is part of 'struggling to reclaim and regenerate one's relational, place-based existence by challenging the ongoing, destructive forces of colonization' (Corntassel 2012:88). Elsewhere, Sama explains that connecting with the lost place entails not only remembering, but also perceiving and visually constructing what "their lost neighborhood (or town/village) might look like in the future". These resurgence practices suggest that young Palestinians are no longer willing to acquiesce to the colonial order (e.g. the Judaization of Wadi Salib). Rather, they want to intervene in impacting the political contours of Palestinian lost places (i.e. to "reconstruct them") as part of crafting their alternative political subjectivities (Stroud 2018). In his analysis of implementation of right of return in the narratives of young Palestinian activists from Iqrith (a Palestinian displaced village), Hammami (2022:140) suggests that these activists innovatively utilize 'ruins to construct counter-narratives to the Israeli denial of an-Nakba [sic], to heal their wounded attachments to a sense of "home", and to transform ... [their] identity from "refugees" into "citizens"'. Hence, the active engagement of young Palestinians with questions of return/Nakba enables the construction of a counter-educational discourse that contests the hegemony of erasure. One way to achieve this is by delegitimizing the colonial power in defining Palestinian space and identity by means of reclaiming ownership of places from which Palestinians were excluded. This is further evident in the following excerpts:

سما: احنا مش بحاجة نستاهم بواقة او انه يوقفنا معنا بالصراع [على وادي الصليب]... احنا مش بحاجة انه تتفاوض على حقنا بالمكان لانه لنا، الاختيار الهن، مش لنا، انه يتقبلوا الصراع تبعنا او لا.

Sama: 'We don't need or wait for their [Jews'] approval or for them to join our struggle [over Wadi Salib] ... We don't need to negotiate our rights to the place because it's ours. It's their choice, not ours, to accept our struggle or not.'

عدي: انا قوميتي [الفلسطينية] بتعملي اسا لانه هي الاداة التحررية الي انا بقدر فيها اقاوم المستعمر لانه هو يستغلها عشان يقمعنا. فإذا اليهود بتقبلوا الادلاء انه القومية الفلسطينية هي اداة تحرر أساسية، فش عدي مشكلة مع انه تشتعل مع بعض عرب ويهدون.

Adi: 'What my [Palestinian] nationality means to me now is that it is a liberating tool through which I can resist the colonizer because the colonizer uses "my nationality" to oppress us. So if Jews accept that claiming our Palestinian nationality is a fundamental liberating tool, then I have no problem with joint Jewish-Palestinian endeavors.'

Both Sama and Adi repeatedly demystify Jewish-Arab coexistence (i.e. "joint Jewish-Palestinian endeavors"), but here they critique its 'affirmative' orientation (Fraser 1995). In Israel, the politics of recognition tends to be mainly affirmative in the sense that it recognizes the cultural, NOT NATIONAL, uniqueness and identity of the Palestinian collective (Reches 2009; Awayed-Bishara 2021b). While such

recognition, at best, gives visibility to cultural expressions (e.g. celebrating Jewish, Christian, and Muslim holidays in Haifa), it is mainly about UNDERWRITING the rights of Palestinians to equal treatment. Sama understands that extending a rights framework to contesting colonial realities is problematic, since it is the ‘colonizer’ who holds the power for either providing or denying the ‘colonized’ a specific right (Awayed-Bishara 2020). Therefore, she rejects negotiating “our rights over the place” altogether and reclaims Palestinians’ ownership to the place (i.e. “it’s ours”).

More bluntly, Adi defines the underlying framework that generates inequality and that, in his view, prevents genuinely TRANSFORMATIVE joint Jewish-Palestinian endeavors; namely, treating Palestinian nationality as a threat rather than a legitimate “liberating tool”. While both affirmative and transformative remedies aim to empower marginalized groups and grant them greater, more equitable shares in society by means of correcting inequitable outcomes of social arrangements, the former seeks to do so ‘without disturbing the underlying framework that generates them’ (Fraser 1995:82). Conversely, transformative remedies work towards ‘re-structuring the underlying generative framework’ (Fraser 1995:82). Adi is aware of the colonial power structure of the denationalization of Palestinians. Thus, he underscores not only the Palestinians’ existential need to claim their ‘Palestinian nationality’ but also that it is possible for Jews to both acknowledge and support it, rather than being threatened by it. By shifting the responsibility for a joint Palestinian-Jewish struggle to the other side that holds the power, and by refusing to abide by the colonial order (i.e. “we don’t need their approval” or “Jews accept that claiming our Palestinian nationality is a fundamental liberating tool”), Sama and Adi deconstruct and decolonize the institutionalized subjectivities imposed on them as Palestinians.

The way members of the HYM voiced their demands for deconstructing the underlying colonial frameworks could be captured through the transformative conception of linguistic citizenship, which seeks to remedy some forms of misrecognition (Stroud 2001, 2018) and offers a voice for reconstructing a Palestinian absent self (Awayed-Bishara 2021a,b; Awayed-Bishara et al. 2022).

C O N C L U D I N G R E M A R K S

Against the backdrop of Israel’s invested efforts to denationalize and de-Palestinate the Arab minority by colonizing and controlling their education (Awayed-Bishara et al. 2022), the NATIONALIZING forces operating outside the restricted educational framework seem actively at work. Palestinians work today alongside their Jewish counterparts at Israeli hospitals, universities, high-tech companies, pharmacies, law firms, and other public and private markets. Palestinians bring not only their expert professional knowledge to these everyday encounters, but also their national identity, which they are expected to remain silent about. Nevertheless, this article suggests that the Palestinian self is still cultivated inside homes, neighborhoods, and other sociocultural arenas.

However, the incidents of May 2021, *inter alia*, compel the question of whether cultivating and expressing one's identity in private is either sufficient or ethical. Why is 'adapting' to being surveilled an adequate objection to the public erasure of one's narrative? Can we sincerely speak of the desire to bring about 'peace' and 'coexistence' amidst the dominance of discourses of erasure? While these questions must remain in the focus of future research, this article indicates that the cultural ideals cultivated outside the institutional educational framework enable young Palestinians to defy the colonial administration of their education and Israel's ongoing attempts to grow future generations of Palestinians who are detached from their Palestinian rootedness and dominated by fear of the institution (Karkabi 2021; Awayed-Bishara et al. 2022). Specifically, the way young Palestinians in Israel express *sumud* in their extraordinary effort to teach themselves about how to build their relationship with the Palestinian space and how to respond to colonial attempts to silence their nationalist voices provides a particular pedagogical perspective on national *sumud*. *Sumud* acts of young Palestinians practiced outside and against the formal and oppressive educational system seem to enable them to insert alternative voices into educational processes and structures that otherwise alienate.

In line with the growing body of scholarship that has established the centrality of hip hop in the study of LC in South African contexts, the notion of *sumud* as offered by Big Sam shows the relevance of LC elsewhere. The sociolinguistic treatment of selfhood from the perspective of *sumud* offers a new framework and terminology for analysis, aligning with calls to diversify the theories and methods in sociolinguistics (e.g. Levon 2017). Moreover, localizing LC by connecting it to *sumud* as a decolonial semiotic strategy extends the application of LC to broader contexts, demonstrating a range of other transformational processes. Put differently, *sumud* pedagogy offers a new framing of linguistic citizenship as a decolonial pedagogy by drawing attention to the way marginalized groups, including young Palestinians in Israel, redefine themselves by reclaiming space and 'learning to unlearn' colonial fear. Importantly, the use of chronotopical narratives to recontextualize and refigure space offers an innovative avenue for carving out new forms of self-relationalities and existences through exercising *sumud* as a linguistic citizenship practice.

N O T E S

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¹See the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics at <https://www.cbs.gov.il/en/Pages/default.aspx>.

²See <https://www.facebook.com/ShababHaifa/about/>.

³The Right of Return for Palestinians is a central issue to be resolved in a political solution between Israel and the Palestinians. Conversely, under the Israeli Law of Return, the Right of Return refers to the

right of all Jews worldwide to make *Aliyah* ‘immigration’ to Israel and receive immediate Israeli citizenship.

⁴The term *al-qadiyya* ‘the problem’ is used to refer to the Palestinian problem in describing the struggle between two national movements: Zionism (embodied since 1948 by Israel) and the Palestinian national movement. See Khalidi 1991 for an extensive review of the ‘Palestinian problem’.

⁵See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hGf6dawDwrA>.

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