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The Interaction of L2 Teachers' Culturally Resonant Ideologies of Language and Teaching and L2 Policy Interpretation: A Narrative Analysis

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Education

by

Thomas Andres Déus

August 2013

Dissertation Committee:
Dr. Begoña Echeverria, Chairperson
Dr. Douglas Mitchell
Dr. Muhamad Ali

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2013

The Dissertation of Thomas Andres Déus is approved:

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Committee Chairperson

University of California, Riverside

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The momentous endeavor of this work would not have been possible without the help and guidance of many people, and I would like to take a moment to thank them for their support.

First, I would like to thank my wife, Sofia. I cannot imagine having finished this effort without her unwavering love and support. Her patience and understanding have no limits. I would also like to thank my son, Zaid, for his love and support, as well as his patience with a father who was often absent, even at times when he was present. I would like to thank my mother and father as well for instilling in me the tenacious discipline I often needed during the last few years.

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DEDICATION

For Sofia and Zaid, my inspiration and joy.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

The Interaction of L2 Teachers' Culturally Resonant Ideologies of Language and Teaching and L2 Policy Interpretation: A Narrative Analysis

by

Thomas Andres Déus

Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in Education
University of California, Riverside, August 2013
Dr. Begoña Echeverria, Chairperson

With English language education increasingly viewed worldwide as an important mechanism for global economic development, many policy makers in developing countries are promoting the English language as the vital skill necessary for successful competition in an ever changing world (Seargeant & Erling, 2011; Seidlhofer, 2005; Tan & Rubdy, 2008). Perhaps nowhere is this phenomenon more momentous than in the United Arab Emirates, where the Emirate of Abu Dhabi has committed its vast economic resources towards a new curriculum mandating the change from Arabic to English language instruction in core subjects like Science and Math. To date, few studies have emerged from the Middle East examining the roles teachers play in the growing phenomenon of globalized education reform. Conducted in a small, suburban secondary school in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), this dissertation investigates the ways teachers' beliefs impact how they interpret, and subsequently implement, the official

curriculum. More specifically, this study examines how teachers' beliefs about *the nature of teaching* and *the role of language in the world* impact their interpretations of a government-mandated English language curriculum.

Drawing on extensive interview and participant observation data, this study focuses on how teachers use narratives to both construct the role of the teacher and to negotiate the value of the English and Arabic languages. The findings indicate that although teachers at the Najah Boy's High School incorporated their beliefs in often unpredictable ways, particular beliefs shared common structures corresponding to shared cultural frameworks. Drawing from cognitive anthropology, this study found that two such structured belief systems manifested through the utterances and behaviors of teachers at Najah: *the teacher as enthusiastic motivational speaker* and *the teacher as familial role model*. The findings also indicated that although the contextual constraints teachers encountered in the school setting (including the mandate that they follow the curriculum verbatim) impacted their interpretations of the school curriculum, teachers' beliefs, in particular those linked to one or more poignant episodes in a teacher's past, had the capacity to trump the impact of contextual social constraints on their interpretations of the curriculum. The findings of this study suggest that teachers are the key to the realization of educational policy. Instead of treating teachers as obedient automatons, policy makers must find ways to include them in the change process.

In Chapter One, I discuss the significance of the research and research questions, the concepts pertinent to this research, as well as the historical context of teaching and language learning in the UAE. In Chapter Two, I review the relevant research literature to this study, focusing on two areas of anthropological research: cognitive anthropology and language ideology research. I then draw from Bourdieu's (1977, 1990) theory of practice to discuss teachers' beliefs and teachers' practice together. In Chapter Three, I discuss my methods of data collection and analysis, as well as my research site. Incorporating methods gleaned from cognitive anthropology and language ideology research, I argue that the qualitative study of teachers' ideologies necessitates a narrative inquiry approach. In Chapters Four and Five, I discuss the findings corresponding to my first three research questions. I argue that teachers at the Najah Boy's High school professed specific culturally resonant ideologies concerning the nature of teaching and the value of English and Arabic. In Chapters Six and Seven, I discuss the findings that respond to my final research question. In Chapter Six, I analyze the numerous documents and public statements related to the New School Model Curriculum (NSMC). Chapter Seven details case studies of each of the seven teachers who participated in this research. I argue that the teachers' interpretations of the curriculum were mediated by the correlational relationship between their beliefs and the contextual restraints they experienced within the context of the Najah Boy's High School. These case studies resulted in seven unique curriculum stories which often differed considerably from the stated intentions of the

formal written curriculum. Finally, in Chapter Eight, I summarize the significance of these findings, discussing their implications for further research. I argue that this study complicates our understanding of the complex ways teachers' beliefs impact their practices in the classroom. In so doing, this study adds to the literature concerning how teachers function as language policy actors within the context of schools.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Goodlad (1977) calls the curriculum an "in escapable rock in the school's culture," in that "everyone must come to terms with it in some way" (p. 5). He posits that understanding the ways teachers perceive the curriculum is paramount to studying schools "comprehensively and holistically" (Goodlad, 1977, p. 5). Few would deny that investigating the ways teachers interpret their school's curriculum—essentially, understanding teachers' *practice*—necessitates the study of teachers' personal beliefs (Fenstermacher, 1979; Munby, 1982; Nespor, 1987; Pajares, 1992). However, "belief" is a difficult construct to define. This difficulty, arising from definitional as well as operational ambiguity, has led to a scarcity of research aimed at understanding teachers' beliefs (Pajares, 1992; Clark & Peterson, 1986).

Conducted in a small, suburban secondary school in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), this dissertation investigates the ways teachers' beliefs impact how they interpret, and subsequently implement, the official curriculum. More specifically, I examine how teachers' beliefs about *the nature of teaching* and *the role of language in the world* impact their interpretations of an English language curriculum. The unique setting of the UAE, where teachers and students from five countries converged to implement a state-mandated globalized curriculum, enabled me to assess how teachers drew from their

unique personal experiences as well as from culturally resonant repertoires to make sense of their school's official curriculum. Teachers told narratives about their experiences, narratives which shaped new stories about how they implemented the curriculum in their classrooms.

Examining these *narratives of personal experience* (Clandinin & Connelly, 1996), I argue that teachers at the Najah Boy's High School drew from two specific culturally resonant beliefs—*the teacher as enthusiastic motivational speaker* and *the teacher as familial role model*—to define teaching and learning. Teachers drew from these beliefs to understand the role of English and Arabic in their students' lives as well as to rationalize their implementation of the curriculum in their classrooms. Drawing from cognitive anthropology, I also argue that these beliefs are scripted—or *schematic* (D'Andrade, 1995; Rice, 1980; Fillmore, 1975)—understandings of teaching and learning, organized representations of the world both ascribed upon and manifested through the minds of individuals. Through their interpretations of the school's curriculum, teachers at Najah functioned as *policy actors* (Brown, 2010; Trujillo, 2004), shaping the curriculum anew within the context of their classrooms.

In the next section I will discuss the significance of the research and research questions, the concepts pertinent to this research, as well as the historical context of

teaching and language learning in the UAE. Following these topics, I will summarize the arguments in each chapter of this dissertation.

1.1 Significance of the Research and Research Questions

Capturing teachers' experiences in this way—that is, understanding the ways teachers' beliefs impact their practices—is significant on several fronts. First, it complicates our understanding of *how* teachers' experiences are important to their practice. In his comprehensive study of school teachers, Lortie (1975) stresses that teaching is an "unusual" (p. 65) profession as those who become teachers have had ample time to observe other teachers. He notes that teachers generally have "sixteen continuous years of contact with teachers and professors" (Lortie, 1975, p. 61), and during that time they undergo an "apprenticeship of observation" (Lortie, 1975, p. 61), being "impressed by some teacher actions and not by others" (Lortie, 1975, p. 62). Lortie (1975) laments that teachers primarily learn about teaching through intuition and imitation, often leaving them ill-equipped to face the realities of the changing classroom environment. However, Lortie offers little insight into how or why these ubiquitous processes take place. More research is needed examining the specific ways these impressions occur. This dissertation systematically investigates these processes.

Second, examining the ways teachers' beliefs impact their interpretations of the curriculum enhances our understanding of how L2 teachers' practices in their classrooms

affect the realization of governmental education policies. Research in second language teaching reveals the ways teachers often function as *language policy actors* within their classrooms (Brown 2008; Trujillo, 2004). As an example, Trujillo (2004) illustrates how the ideology of "maintenance bilingualism" (p. 71) in South Texas public schools was slowly abandoned (by the late 1970s) in favor of a *transitional* bilingual program (from Spanish to English). This transition occurred gradually as teachers ignored the "official" policy of maintenance bilingualism in favor of "transitional bilingualism" (p. 71). Brown (2008) also argues that through their behaviors in the classroom, teachers, "simultaneously reproduce and challenge" (p. 298) the prevailing language policies in their schools. My research examines these processes in depth, offering an important contribution to this literature.

Moreover, with English language education increasingly viewed worldwide as an important mechanism for global economic development, many policy makers in developing countries are promoting the English language as the vital skill necessary for successful competition in an ever changing world (Seargeant & Erling, 2011; Seidlhofer, 2005; Tan & Rubdy, 2008). Perhaps nowhere is this phenomenon more momentous than in the United Arab Emirates. The Emirate of Abu Dhabi has committed its vast economic resources towards a new curriculum prioritizing English language instruction. It has hired thousands of teachers and advisors from native-English-speaking countries in an effort to

completely reform its education system. However, to date few studies have examined this particular reform effort on the ground. By offering a first look into the social processes underpinning an extraordinary case of education reform in the Middle East, my research contributes to our understanding of how globalized policies potentially impact local schools in this region.

Finally, the present study also contributes to Bourdieu's (1977) theory of practice, particularly how it relates to the social reproduction of linguistic value through education, by complicating our understanding of the school as a formal institution. Bourdieu (1977) argues that the mechanism of symbolic domination of one linguistic variety over another requires that the linguistic market be "unified" (p. 652). He locates this unified market within schools as formal institutions: "The educational system is a crucial object of struggle because it has a monopoly over the production of the mass of producers and consumers, and hence over the reproduction of the market on which the value of linguistic competence depends" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 652). However, factors such as notions of group solidarity and economic advantage have been shown to trump the influence of institutionalization in determining language prestige. Woolard (1985) for example, shows that although Castilian had enjoyed 40 years of full institutional domination in Spain under the Franco regime, Catalan still retained a high amount of prestige among speakers of both Castilian and Catalan. She suggests that language

prestige is more determined by "face-to-face encounters" than it is by schools and other formal institutions[1] (Woolard, 1985, p. 742). My research complicates our understanding of the roles that teachers, as *interpreters* of official doctrine, play in these processes.

Four questions guided this investigation:

1. What ideologies do the teachers in the Najah Boy's High School English department profess about the nature of teaching?

2. How do these ideologies interact with the teachers' ideologies concerning the role of language in the world?

3. How do these teachers' ideologies impact their perceptions of their own and their L2 students' behaviors in the classroom?

4. What role do these ideologies play in these teachers' conceptions of their use of ADECs curriculum guidelines concerning the teaching of the English language in the classroom?

[1] Woolard (1985) shows that the economically well off were native Catalan speakers while the workers were Spanish speakers from Andalusia. Irvine (1989) makes a similar observation, citing her research of Wolof villagers in Senegal where the French language enjoyed institutional and political dominance. Irvine (1989) notes, however, that despite French's legitimate position, Wolof villagers did not recognize this legitimacy, instead turning to Arabic, which is the language of the dominant religion of the Wolof: Islam (pp. 255-256).

1.2 Pertinent Concepts

Pajares (1992) suggests that the scarcity of literature aimed at understanding teachers' beliefs stems from two sources. First, teachers' beliefs are difficult to define. Citing Clandinin and Connelly's (1987) similar attempt to define teachers' beliefs, Pajares (1992) notes myriad terms, including, "teachers' teaching criteria, principles of practice, personal construct/ theories/ epistemologies, beliefs, perspectives, teachers' conceptions, personal knowledge," (p. 309) and "practical knowledge" (p. 309). Second, given the problems in defining them, teachers' beliefs are seen as too unwieldy and difficult a concept to operationalize for research study.

Despite this difficulty, efforts in the cognitive sciences, in particular cognitive anthropology, have led to fruitful progress in defining and operationalizing teachers' beliefs. Drawing from Abelson (1979), Nespor (1987) defines the "prototypical character" (p. 10) of beliefs through comparing "beliefs" (p. 10) and "belief systems" (p. 10) to other forms of knowledge. He argues that beliefs have four "distinguishing characteristics" (Nespor, 1987, p. 11) which he uses to mold a prototypical definition: "'existential presumption,' 'alternativity,' 'affective and evaluative loading' and 'episodic structure'" (Nespor, 1987, p. 11). Existential presumptions, what Abelson (1979) calls "existence beliefs" (p. 361), are the taken-for-granted beliefs that we all hold regarding the reality of the self and the physical and social world. Abelson (1979) points

to beliefs in magic or in ESP. However, Nespor (1987) argues that these can be more mundane such as a teacher's belief in the existence of specific student characteristics like apathy or maturity. Alternativity is belief in "'alternative realities'" (Nespor, 1987, p. 12), where a teacher might strive to create an ideal world in his or her classroom, one which can differ from reality. Beliefs are also affective, evaluative and episodic in that they often operate independently from other forms of knowledge, deriving from "feelings moods and subjective evaluations" (Nespor, 1987, p. 13), and are connected to episodes or unique experiences in a teacher's life.

The cognitive sciences have also provided adept methods to operationalize beliefs in ways that render beliefs amenable to empirical investigation. The concept of the *cultural schema* (D'Andrade, 1995; Rice, 1980) arose as a way to describe beliefs in terms of organized networks of relationships that formed, "culturally shared mental constructs" (D'Andrade, 1995, p. 149). By examining participants' beliefs about the *salience* of particular relationships (e.g. cancer and bronchitis are related to old age), cognitive anthropologists were able to identify specific cultural beliefs. Beliefs could now be studied in terms of the salience or *resonance* of these relationships.

Even with these innovations in defining and operationalizing beliefs, critics argued that studying teachers' beliefs in a vacuum gave little insight into how these beliefs impacted teachers' practice (Wuthnow, 1987; Pajares, 1992). For example,

Nespor (1987) argued that "teachers' 'experience'" could only be understood "through a dialectical relationship between 'beliefs,' and the contextual constraints encountered in the work contexts of teaching" (p. 2). Another field in anthropology—*language ideology research*—offers a fitting solution. Utilizing the term "ideology" instead of belief, enables anthropologists to define and operationalize beliefs in one fell swoop. Wuthnow (1987) defines ideologies as the "observable correlates of beliefs" (Wuthnow, 1980, p. 146), in that they represent *utterances and behaviors* of individuals. As these utterances and behaviors occur within the context of teaching, they firmly ground the study of subjective beliefs within the objective social world. Thus, in explaining their use of the term "language ideology," Woolard and Schieffelin (1994) point to the appropriateness of the concept "ideology" as it "signals a commitment to address the relevance of power relations to the nature of cultural forms" (p. 58).

My use of the term *culturally resonant ideologies* in this dissertation follows these anthropological traditions. Through containing my investigation within the study of how teachers' ideologies concerning *the nature of teaching* and *the role of language in the world* impact their interpretations of the curriculum, my study encompasses the subjective and objective worlds of teachers in a way that proves, "viable and rewarding" (Pajares, 1992, p. 308).

1.3 The Historical Context of English Education in the UAE

In this section I describe the rapid evolution of the curriculum in the UAE, simultaneously outlining its ideological presuppositions. Since the first push for reform in 2005, English language education in the UAE has been characterized by the ideology of *linguistic instrumentalism*, where vast resources of the UAE government have been channeled toward the promotion of English language education for its perceived *usefulness in attaining economic development* (Tan & Rubdy, 2008; Wee, 2008). Conversely, Arabic has been ascribed the role of *non-instrumental* (Wee, 2008) language—that is, as not useful for achieving economic mobility. Instead, Arabic is ideologically promoted as a mother-tongue language, and as such it is ascribed value as an integral link to Emirati cultural identity and maintenance. It will be seen that such a polarized view of languages in the official curriculum has led to ideological debates in the UAE surrounding the allocation of governmental resources to English and Arabic. These debates also traverse overarching ideologies concerning the nature of education.

Like the country itself, the educational system in the UAE has undergone a profound evolution over the course of the past forty-two years since it was first founded. As I will show, the UAE's educational reform programs, first implemented in 2005, were largely tied to its economic ambitions to develop as a "modern" country capable of competing in the emerging global marketplace. Along with the education system,

teachers in the UAE, primarily made up of pan-Arab expats, have been subject to enormous pressures to adapt to the ever-changing environment. They now find themselves being replaced in large numbers by native-English speaking teachers from Western countries as the UAE continues its ambitious reforms.

Before the formation of the UAE in 1971, formal education in the area known as the Trucial Coast[2] was largely sponsored by educational foundations from other Arab countries. In 1953, the educational foundation of Kuwait opened the first school in the Emirate of Sharjah. After that, with funding from Egypt, Qatar, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia, schools were opened across the Trucial Coast. The countries that funded these schools generally staffed them and utilized their own curricula (Farah & Ridge, 2009; Abdullah, 1978).

[2] The history of the UAE since the beginning of the seventeenth century is intricately bound with the involvement of the British Empire. For two hundred years, the British interest in the area was trade; the East India Trading Company's involvement in the area remained relatively peaceful until 1819, when, reportedly due to a series of attacks on their ships, the British led a military campaign against various Qawasim (a ruling family in the area) ports on the coast of Oman (Abdullah, 1978). The attacks concluded with the appointment of a British Local Residency Agent in Sharjah (now one of the seven Emirates), and were followed by a series of treaties culminating in the 1853 Perpetual Maritime Peace truce. As a result of the treaty, the area, now known as the UAE, became the "Trucial Coast" (Abdullah, 1978, p. 23). Other than assuring a peaceful trade route, the British showed little interest in the internal affairs of the Trucial Cost. Later, due to Russian, French and German imperial interests in the area, the British, fearing the loss of political control, became more involved in internal politics; this resulted in the signing of an agreement in December of 1887, where "the [ruling] sheikhs bound themselves, their heirs, and their successors […] undertook on no account to cede, sell, mortgage or otherwise give for occupation any part of their territory save to the British Government" (Abdullah, 1978, p. 25). The British control over the Trucial Coast was complicated and challenged in the twentieth-century by anti-British feelings due to British involvement with the treatment of the Palestinians, and by the discovery of oil in the 1950s, preceded and followed by interference from competing imperial forces. In 1971, the British relinquished control of the Trucial States, seven of which were united by the efforts of Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan (then ruler of Abu Dhabi) to form the United Arab Emirates.

In 1972, after the UAE was founded, the newly created Ministry of Education (MOE) made efforts to unify the curriculum from the various Arab countries. However, a new curriculum for secondary schools was not fully implemented until 1985 (Farah & Ridge, 2009). The new curriculum consisted primarily of textbooks[3], and lacked a system of standards or outlines framing the skills students were expected to attain (Farah & Ridge, 2009). Although this new curriculum included new textbooks, its implementation was largely based on the practices of the other Arab countries in the region; as the textbook was designed to match the state tests given at the end of each trimester, the teacher was obliged to follow the textbook verbatim (Farah & Ridge, 2009). This situation, where the textbook matched the information on the state tests, continued for over twenty years.

In September of 2005, the president of the UAE and ruler of Abu Dhabi, His Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, signed *Law no. 24*, establishing the Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC). ADEC subsequently became the administrative branch of the Ministry of Education (MOE). Law no. 24 tasked ADEC with "modernizing" education in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi:

[3] The public education system in the UAE, including primary (grade kindergarten to grade five), middle school (grade six to grade nine), and secondary education (grade ten to grade twelve) is free to all Emirati citizens (non-citizens must attend private schools, or pay a small fee to attend public schools). Boys and girls are separated (in different schools) in all public schools, through all grade levels. Despite strict segregation, no differences exist in the textbooks for boys and girls (ADEC, 2013).

> It [ADEC] shall conduct studies and make suggestions on how best to develop education, vocational training and uplift all educational institutions and their staff in order to be at par with modern development in all areas. It shall also provide technical and material assistance to educational institutions, boost relations between the latter and the private sector, improve the standard of education and vocational training for graduates through training. (WAM, 2005)

The President did not comment publically about the rationalization behind the creation of the new council. However, in November of that same year, the government of Abu Dhabi, in association with the *Oxford Business Group*, published a business review entitled, "Emerging Abu Dhabi 2006." The review, which consisted of a series of articles outlining Abu Dhabi's economic development, received further impetus in January of 2006 when *Forbes Magazine* included Abu Dhabi in a list of seven "Emerging Global Cities" (Forbes, 2006). Mohammed Al Bowardi, Secretary General of the Abu Dhabi Executive Council[4], speaking on behalf of the President, offered this comment about the purpose of the review:

> With globalization, we need to carve out a place for ourselves in the international arena, and we are confident that we can do this. We do not think we lack any of the resources needed to place us among the world's most developed nations. Our target is that within 20 years, we will be considered a developed country. (WAM, 2005)

[4] Formed in January of 1974, the Abu Dhabi Executive Council is the executive authority of Abu Dhabi. Similar to a cabinet branch of the government, this council assists and advises the President and ruler of Abu Dhabi, His Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al-Nahyan. Consisting of fourteen members of primary government agencies (e.g. Water and Power, Transportation, etc.), the Executive council is chaired by the Crown Prince, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

ADEC's Vision Statement echoes this global-economic outlook: "[To be] Recognized as a world class education system that supports all learners in reaching their full potential to compete in the global market" (ADEC, 2013).

Following these events, in August of 2007, the Abu Dhabi Executive Council published a comprehensive economic mandate entitled, "Policy Agenda 2007-2008: The Emirate of Abu Dhabi." The agenda laid out the economic vision for the emirate, noting its primary goal as, "The further social and economic development of Abu Dhabi" (EC, 2007, p. 9). Improving the education system was touted as a major part of Abu Dhabi's economic development: "Particular challenges include enhancing English language skills to facilitate further study, improving accountability, introducing innovative teaching methods tailored to the needs of students and involving industry" (EC, 2007, p. 29). The agenda also included new requirements for incoming teachers, mandating that they should hold a Bachelors degree and have, "an acceptable standard of English language skills[5]" (EC, 2007, p. 30).

[5] Although these English requirements are not specified in the Policy Agenda, ADEC would later require that Bilingual, native-Arabic-speaking teachers must obtain a score of 6.5 or above on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Standardized English test in order to teach Science, Math, or English (ADEC, 2012).

That same month, the Ministry of Education (MOE), in association with ADEC, launched a pilot program in specific schools[6] entitled, *Madares Al Ghad* (Schools of Tomorrow). The UAE Minister of Education, Dr. Hanif Hassan Ali, publically connected the new program to the Policy Agenda 2007-2008: "*Madares Al Ghad* are […] a part of the recently announced comprehensive development strategy; they are aimed at launching an advanced educational project across the UAE" (WAM, 2007). Dr. Hanif Hassan Ali also stated publically that the program aimed to create students who were bilingual in Arabic and English (Kannan, 2008), assigning specific ideological roles to each language: Arabic would connect students to, "their rich heritage and culture" (Kannan , 2008, np.), whereas English language instruction would produce students who were, "Skilled in the use of information and communication technology" (Kannan , 2008, np.). Thus, teachers in *Madares Al Ghad* schools were given a new English curriculum developed by the MOE, consisting of new English medium textbooks promoting, "student centered" (Farah & Ridge, 2009, p. 2) methods to replace rote memorization[7]. The English medium textbooks also covered Science and Math, subjects which had been previously taught in Arabic. Students would now study these subjects using both the

[6] The 50 schools chosen for this program consisted of both boys and girls schools of all grade levels. The schools were chosen for being generally high performing on the standardized state tests given at the end of each trimester.

[7] Before the *Madares al Ghad*, teachers taught classes through direct instruction. They often stood on raised platforms in front of their classes and delivered lectures to students directly from the textbook. The *Madares al Ghad* textbooks included activities promoting group work and the integration of ICT using "E-portfolios" (Tabib, 2008).

English and the Arabic medium textbooks. Teachers were also given new Arabic textbooks for teaching the Arabic language entitled "My Language My Identity" (Kannan, 2008) which emphasized phonetics and reading in Arabic.

Under the *Madares Al Ghad* program, bilingual (in English and Arabic) Arab teachers underwent extensive training and development sessions on a weekly basis. They were encouraged to incorporate other materials besides the textbooks in their classrooms, including flashcards and stories not found in the textbook. Although the program experienced some success[8], critics argued that as the standardized end-of-trimester assessment remained the same (e.g. the tests were still taken directly from the materials in the MOE textbooks), teachers were under tremendous pressure to, "return to the old teacher-centered, textbook-driven ways of teaching" (Farah & Ridge, 2009, p. 2). The *Madares Al Ghad* program also prompted concern from parents, teachers and principals who felt that English was being promoted at the expense of the Arabic language. In April of 2009, principals from *Madares Al Ghad* schools took their concerns to the Federal National Council (FNC), the legislative body of the government[9]. The principals argued that the English language should not be taught at the expense of Arabic (Khalaf, 2009). One principal remarked: "Arabic language should be the priority; it is the mother tongue,

[8] Initial standardized test results showed that students in the *Madares Al* Ghad generally scored higher than their counterparts in all subjects (Chadwick, 2009).

[9] Consisting of 40 members elected by both the UAE citizens and an electoral college of rulers from the seven emirates, the FNC is a legislative council which serves as advisors for His Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, president of the UAE and ruler of Abu Dhabi.

the language of our culture, and the language of our religion" (Khalaf, 2009, np.). Nevertheless, the *Madares Al Ghad* program continued, and is still operating today.

A year after the launching of the *Madares Al Ghad* program, in November of 2008, under the leadership of His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Chairman of the Executive Council, the Abu Dhabi Council for Economic Development (CED) published an extensive document entitled, "The Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030." The summary of the mandate noted that it was a continuation of the previously published "Policy Agenda 2007/2008," and included multiple economic reforms, "To create a comprehensive long-term economic vision, with explicit targets, to guide the evolution of the Abu Dhabi economy through to the year 2030" (CED, 2008, p. 1). Like the "Policy Agenda," the CED (2008) touted the development of education as one of its top priorities, envisioning a clear ideological link between education and the economy:

> Ensuring that high quality education and health services are available to residents is therefore of the highest priority. When it comes to developing the workforce, the Government aims to ensure the availability of a stable supply of high quality labor to staff the economy, and especially to encourage full employment among Nationals[10]. (p. 6)

[10] The concern for developing high quality education for nationals also reflects the perception in the UAE that the country's national sovereignty is under threat. The UAE is a country largely populated by expats from various countries. Census data show that expats largely outnumber Emirati citizens. As a result, Emirati sovereignty and Emirati identity are perceived as threatened (Bowman, 2010). Education in English is viewed as key to maintaining this sovereignty, through producing generations of Emirati citizens with professional degrees who can slowly replace the role of the expats. Among numerous foreign universities,

In June of the next year, ADEC launched the "Strategic Plan for P-12 Education (2009-2018)," which made explicit reference to both the "Policy Agenda 2007-2008," and the "Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030" (ADEC, 2009). In the Strategic Plan, ADEC announced the launching of the New School Model Curriculum (NSMC) in Abu Dhabi public schools. Its proposed goal was to raise the quality of public and private schools in Abu Dhabi to the level of "international standards" (ADEC, 2009, p.5) incorporating, "modern best-practice teaching standards" (ADEC, 2009, p. 2). In the NSMC, all core subjects save Islamic studies and Arabic language would be transitioned to English instruction (ADEC, 2009). Although ADEC did not specify the term "best practices," it laid these out in more detail in two publications the following year: the "Educational Policy Agenda" (EPA) and the "School Leadership Handbook" (SLH). The EPA specifies one of the New School Model's primary goals as, "Increasing the quality of teaching by, in part, attracting more qualified teachers and faculty, and employing modern curricula, teaching pedagogies, and learning environments" (ADEC, 2010, p. 14). Like the *Madares Al Ghad* curriculum, the SLH also promoted the transition from teacher-centered rote memorization strategies to, "student-centered learning techniques" (ADEC, 2010, p. 18).

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three major national universities exist in the UAE: the UAE University, the Higher Colleges of Technology, and Zayed University. The curriculum of each of these universities is in the English language. Additionally, many Emirati students attend universities in western countries, where they must be proficient in English. Currently, most of the Emirati students graduating from public schools must attend one or two years of foundation English courses in order to enter any of the three universities in the UAE. English language proficiency, therefore, is viewed as an imperative (Farah & Ridge, 2009).

The ideological framework of The New School Model Curriculum also clearly defined particular roles for Arabic and English. As the director general of ADEC, Dr. Mugheer al Khaili, put it:

> We want to have bilingual students, which still means that we must preserve our culture and religion and maintain the importance of the Arabic language. But we also need to concentrate on English. It is the international language of instruction, the language of science, business and technology. (Khalaf, 2009, np.)

Additionally, the New School Model Program included the contracting of numerous private education providers, companies that would work within the schools forming, "Public Private Partnerships (PPPs)" (ADEC, 2009). Members of these private companies, consisting primarily of native-English speaking advisors, were positioned in public schools across the emirate, and were tasked with implementing school improvement programs and overseeing the successful development of the New School Model Program (ADEC, 2009). The provider companies generally staffed four members in each school: a lead advisor, who worked directly with the principal, and three subject specialists, who served as the *de facto* heads of departments for English, Science, and Math within the schools. Along with the provider companies, ADEC also hired around 1,500 native-English speaking teachers who would initially work in cycle one (primary) and cycle three (grades 10-12) schools. These teachers would work alongside the Arab staff, and eventually replace many of them (Salem, 2010; ADEC, 2010).

The new developments presented many challenges for the existing Arab teachers in public schools across the emirate, who had to adapt to a new curriculum, new supervisors, and new standards and expectations. Arab High school English teachers bore the brunt of the changes. They were expected to attend weekly professional development meetings with their new advisors, implement new strategies for teaching and learning, and at the end of the school year score a 6.5 or above on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Standardized English test in order to receive a teaching contract for the next year.

Schools like the Najah Boy's High School, the site of the current study, underwent massive changes as a result of the New School Model Program. By the end of the 2010-2011 school year, all but one of the original seven Arab English teachers had been replaced by native-English-speaking teachers from Western countries. The school also received an additional Arab English teacher, transferred from a school in the city, who had maintained a 6.5 on his IELTs test. Under the leadership of the educational provider company, Franklin Incorporated, the school had also transitioned from a roaming teacher schedule to teachers being assigned their own classrooms. The eclectic English department was given new curricular content called the English Continuous Assessment Rich Task (ECART) to replace the English textbooks from the MOE.

Tan and Rubdy (2008) note that like the representatives of the state, administrators, teachers and students also "covertly or overtly ascribe value to each of the languages available to them and may sometimes differ on the values they so ascribe" (p. 5). In Abu Dhabi, the government's prioritization of the English language has met with controversy in recent years. As I have shown, the principals in the *Madares Al Ghad* schools agreed with the "official" ideology ascribing Arabic as the marker of culture and traditions. However, they contested the idea that their schools should be prioritizing English based on that *same* ideology. By prioritizing English, the government of the UAE also faced internal contradictions involving the place of Arabic as the country's official language, contradictions which flared in 2008 when the government announced that Arabic was the UAE's official language (Al Baik, 2008). Some viewed the legislation as odd, given that Article 7 of the UAE Constitution already declares Arabic the "Official language of the Union" (UAE, 2013). Many in the government and universities, however, hailed the move as a way to protect the national identity of the UAE; Dr. Ebtisam Al Kitbi, Professor of Political Science at the UAE University in Al Ain stated: "To my knowledge, there is no nation that allows an invasion of foreign languages in government institutions the way we did in the UAE. The move will correct the imbalance" (Al Baik, 2008).

Moreover, in a 2012 survey of over 50,000 parents of children in Abu Dhabi, 62% of them with students in public schools, parents voiced their concerns about the New School Model Curriculum, arguing that, "their language and culture [were] being neglected" (Ahmed, 2012, np.). The survey results, reported publicly by ADEC's head of research and planning, Dr. Masood Badri, showed that parents questioned why subjects like Science and Math were being taught in English instead of Arabic (Ahmed, 2012, np.). Finally, in a recent move that has yet to play out, members of the FNC, citing Article 7 of the Constitution, announced in March of 2013 that teaching English in UAE public classrooms is a, "a clear violation of the country's constitution" (Issa, 2013, np.). Dr. Mona Al Baher, head of the FNC's education, youth, media and culture committee, commented on the FNC's threat to take to court all schools and universities where English is taught in classrooms:

> It is not accepted to have a curriculum in any other language than Arabic, not because we reject other languages, but because all successful nations grew with their own languages […] we need to understand that the Arabic language is not an obstacle to development. (Issa, 2013, np)

Conflicting ideologies such as these characterize language education programs worldwide as governments make policy decisions presupposing education as an economic endeavor, and subsequently ascribing economic value to particular languages (Wee, 2008, Tan and Rubdy, 2008). Teachers, arguably at the forefront of implementing these policies in schools (Brown, 2010; Trujillo, 2004), bring their own ideologies with

them to their classrooms each day. More research is needed examining the roles conflicting ideologies play in observed discrepancies between governmental policies and their implementation in schools.

1.4. The School Site and Focal Teachers

Situated approximately thirty kilometers south of the island of Abu Dhabi, the Najah Boys' High School is in the beginning stages of implementing the massive school reform program currently occurring in Abu Dhabi. Najah is a two-story concrete building painted the color of the rolling sand dunes found just outside the small city of Bani Waleed. The building forms two large rectangles which encircle two open courtyard areas where students gather for school assemblies and their 30 minute lunch break. The larger courtyard is used for the morning assembly and both courtyards are covered with canvas tarps to protect against the fierce midday sun. The classroom windows, as well as the openings in the balconies above the courtyards, are shaped in rounded triangles, like the entrances to Bedouin tents or Persian palaces that might be depicted in the illustrations of an *Arabian Nights* collection. The windows, covered by iron mesh, are kept closed most days to protect against the build-up of sand that collects on the window sills and always seems to find its way into the classrooms in the form of a fine layer of dust covering everything in the room.

A typical day at Najah begins at 7:10 a.m. with the morning assembly. At this time groups of sleepy students line up in their respective classes by grade-level facing the middle of the large courtyard. Only about 100 students are normally present. The rest will arrive later in the morning. When the first bells ring—a multitude of thunderous metal bells sounding-off together like a chorus of unusually loud old-fashioned alarm clocks—Mr. Jamal turns on his hand-held microphone. Mr. Jamal, the Islamic Studies teacher and school proctor, is the well-established drill sergeant of the school. Without this tall, stocky, powerful man of Jordanian descent Najah would not function. It is Mr. Jamal who ensures the lines are straight. It is also Mr. Jamal who ensures that most of the students make it to class throughout the day. During my first year at Najah, in addition to his microphone, Mr. Jamal carried a stick called a *kazarana*. The *kazarana*, a thin, wooden stick curved at the end, is used by Emirati camel herders to gently direct camels to desired locations. Swinging the *kazarana* at the students' feet with the corresponding command, "*Yalla shabab!*" ("Let's go guys!"), Mr. Jamal would let the students know he meant business. The tapping of hurried sandaled feet and the laughter of the students' voices would signal that they got the message. Halfway through the year, however, Franklin Incorporated representatives, with the approval of the school principal, took Mr. Jamal's stick, leaving him only his microphone and his intrepid voice to encourage the students to action. It is difficult to ascertain whether this impacted Mr. Jamal's effectiveness, but from what I've noticed the students still run when they see him coming.

The morning assembly consists of playing the UAE National Anthem, for which one is expected to stand straight facing the flagpole at the front of the courtyard. After the anthem, a grade 12 student reads a verse from the Holy Qur'an. The student's beautiful voice is not impeded by the cracking and wheezing of the school's aging PA system. The school's principal (or Mr. Jamal if the principal is not present), will then give announcements concerning issues relevant to school functioning (e.g. reminding students to be on time for class, or the date of an upcoming exam). When the assembly is over, Mr. Jamal gives the order for the students to go to class, to which most of them comply.

The first two periods at Najah are often a wash. A normal first-period class will often consist of three to five students, of which at least one will put his head down on his desk to catch-up on sleep from the night before[11]. The majority of students at Najah

[11] Although I know little about what the students do in the evenings to make them such late risers, I have accompanied them to their homes on many occasions and have gained some insight into these behaviors. The exact details and origins of these behaviors are beyond the scope of this study; however, I will include here a brief description of what I have witnessed during a "typical" visit to one of their homes.

After school we head to the student's home. The student(s) inform me that they will usually have a meal and take a nap before heading to the *majlis* to plan the evening's activities. Most Emirati homes have a *majlis*, an Arabic term meaning "a place of sitting." These rooms are either attached to the house or in a separate structure in the yard. The *majlis* I have seen vary in size and elegance. Some are small, garage-sized rooms while others are the size of two or three garages and decorated lavishly like large Arabian tents. All of them have large sofas which span at least one wall and sometimes encircle the room, coffee tables, and a television. The students spend hours here drinking tea and coffee and conversing. Numerous visitors stop by, including neighbors, relatives and friends. The students' fathers will sometimes enter to meet me and converse, but then hurry off as they too seem to have busy agendas by night. The students are largely autonomous, and although this autonomy differs from family to family, I have been told by parents and other adult Emiratis that by age 15 an Emirati boy is considered a man. Although female maids of Ethiopian or Pilipino descent sometimes enter the *majlis* to bring fresh tea or coffee, I have rarely seen women in the *majlis*.

arrive between 8 and 10 in the morning, and by 10 a.m. the classes have become full and the school is bustling with activity. A walk through Najah during the day is experienced with all the senses. Mr. Jamal's bellowing commands on the PA echo above the students' jubilant voices. To walk by any person (student, teacher, or administrator) and make eye contact without greeting him is considered rude. The customary greeting is a handshake with the words, "*Asalamualaykum*" (translated as "peace be upon you"), to which one replies "*Alykum-salam*" (translated as "and [peace be] also with you"). A student might also greet another student, and sometimes other teachers, with the "nose kiss," where he will put his nose to his greeter's and make the sound of a kiss. This is considered a sign of respect and love. The hallways of the school are often filled with the smell of *bukhoor,* incense made from wood which teachers will burn in their classrooms. And a trip to the office often means that one will be offered sweet dates and tea by the school's counselor who sits in the office entryway and greets anyone who enters.

On any given day, whether it is class time or not, one will find students in the hallways and courtyards of Najah. Students squat together in groups chatting; they wrestle or chase each other through the hallways, or they stand around conversing in

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The students spend many hours in the *majlis*, talking in person or on their Blackberries, playing PlayStation or watching television. At a certain point a decision is made to leave and my students take me out to the desert to their camel farms where we will sit on platforms or on large carpets in the desert and the whole process (drinking tea, coffee, camel milk, and greeting visitors) will start all over again. My students always protest when, by around 11 p.m. or midnight, I announce that I have to go home. For them the night seems to be just getting started. When they reluctantly take me back to their homes so that I may retrieve my car, I notice other boys, some of them my students, sitting and conversing in circles on rugs or mats strewn on empty stretches of land between their houses.

Arabic. In the bathrooms during the lunch break one will find students in large groups, sometimes ten or more, gathering to smoke or chat. Students smoke a pipe called a *midwakh*. Although I have never tried it, I am told that it is like smoking five cigarettes at once and gives quite a buzz. In the bathrooms, students will sometimes use the stall doors for drums, beating a fluctuating rhythm and singing traditional Bedouin songs. Although the school day officially ends at 2:40 p.m., by 1 p.m. the school has cleared out considerably. Many students have simply gone home. When the last bells ring at 2:40, the school empties out rapidly. Students and teachers alike are gone in minutes, and the school returns to a quiet calm.

Najah serves approximately 495 male students, grades 10 to 12, ranging from ages 16 to 23 (ESF, 2010). The students attend 9, 55 minute classes per day, and must juggle 11 subjects strewn throughout a 45-period week (ESF, 2010). Although most subjects are visited for 2-3 periods per week, English Language, Mathematics, and Arabic Language enjoy the lion's share of the students' time with 8-10 periods of each subject per week (ESF, 2010). Najah's student population consists of approximately 73% UAE nationals (citizens of the UAE), and 27% non-nationals (permanent residents) (ESF,

2010). Each grade level offers two tracks, *Science* and *Arts*, the former being more rigorous[12]. Students are permitted to decide which track to join upon entering Najah.

Students at Najah are required to wear the Emirati traditional dress. This consists of the *kandura*, which is essentially a long, flowing shirt that reaches to their ankles, a *guthra*, or head scarf, and sandals. The traditional *kandura* is white. However, students also wear them in blue, black and tan colors. The color of the *guthra* also varies, and the students tie them around their heads in different configurations for different occasions. Commonly, the *guthra* is folded in half (in a triangle) and tied in a wrap-around fashion, but during parties or festivities they may lay them over their heads and flop two sides of the triangle over the middle. When they are sick, tired or depressed the students will often wrap the *guthra* around their faces, showing only their eyes. The students are required to keep their hair cut short (a rule that many of them break, hiding their long hair underneath their *guthras)*. Underneath their *kanduras*, the students wear a thin cloth called a *wizar* wrapped around their waists multiple times and stretching to their ankles. During football (soccer) matches in the school, the students tie their *kanduras* up around their waists, as their *wizars* are tied loose and allow them to run. They play these matches in bare feet, a display that always impresses me as they run furiously over the hard tiles of the school gymnasium.

[12] In addition to a heavier workload, Science students are required to take extra subjects, i.e. chemistry, geology and physics (ESF, 2010).

Najah faces numerous challenges; of the most prominent is its reputation with both ADEC and the Emirati community. The city in which it is located, Bani Waleed, is known for being the home of tribal disagreements and unruly, unsupervised children. On two separate occasions (one a wedding with Mohammad, my Emirati neighbor, and once having tea with Rashed, an Emirati businessman I met at a restaurant), when I mentioned that I worked in Bani Waleed my interlocutors laughed. I was told on both occasions that people in Bani Waleed are "crazy". The Emirati businessman related a story about the police trying to enter Bani Waleed after a knife fight between two youth and being repelled by teenagers throwing rocks at them. The reputation of Bani Waleed precedes it even to the farthest emirate—Fujairah (approximately 350 kilometers away). In 2010, I was stopped by a policeman while driving through that emirate, and when I told him I worked in Bani Waleed he smiled and said, "Oh, students in [Bani Waleed are] very difficult". Some representatives at ADEC have also heard the stories of Bani Waleed. As Ryan, a member of the Franklin Incorporated staff related to me, "We [Franklin Incorporated staff] were told [by ADEC representatives] that essentially we would be working out in the boondocks with country bumpkins".

The Najah School and its students also have a reputation for being unruly and unmanageable. The school acquired its nickname—the Najah Mall—a name it is called by both teachers and students alike, for being a place where students could come and go

freely without asking permission from teachers or staff. Much like shopping in a mall, students would often roam the hallways opening the doors to each classroom and peeking inside. If something of interest caught their eyes (a friend or relative, or perhaps a movie playing), they would enter and sit down. Other times they will simply leave the school. Halfway through my first year at Najah, in an effort to crack down on student absenteeism, the school administration began locking the students into the courtyard areas of Najah. This meant locking the big metal door to the school office, which was the only way in and out of the school. Students wishing to leave (either to go home or to get lunch) would gather at the door to the office banging and yelling. When a teacher needed to enter the office from inside the school he had to push his way through the crowd of students and inform the guard on the other side of the door that he was a teacher. This meant that the guard, a short, friendly man of Egyptian descent, would unlock the door, letting the crowd of enthusiastic students squeeze into the office. A fight to close the door again would ensue, where Mr. Jamal working from the inside, and the school guard working from the outside, would eventually, after much yelling and commotion, get the door closed again.

Another challenge faced by Najah is the discrepancy between test scores on state issued standardized tests and the marks students receive in all subjects. Students' total marks in each subject are calculated (in most cases) by averaging the marks they receive

from their teachers with those they receive from the standardized tests. As a result, most students at Najah successfully pass each grade level (in grades 10 and 11 a 50% total mark is needed to pass, and in grade 12, 60%). However, analysis of this data reveals striking differences between the test scores of students and the marks they receive in class. For instance, a student may receive 99% in physics from his teacher, but achieve on a 30% mark on his state exam. Figure 1.1 shows standardized test results compared with teachers' marks for the 2010-2011 school year at Najah.

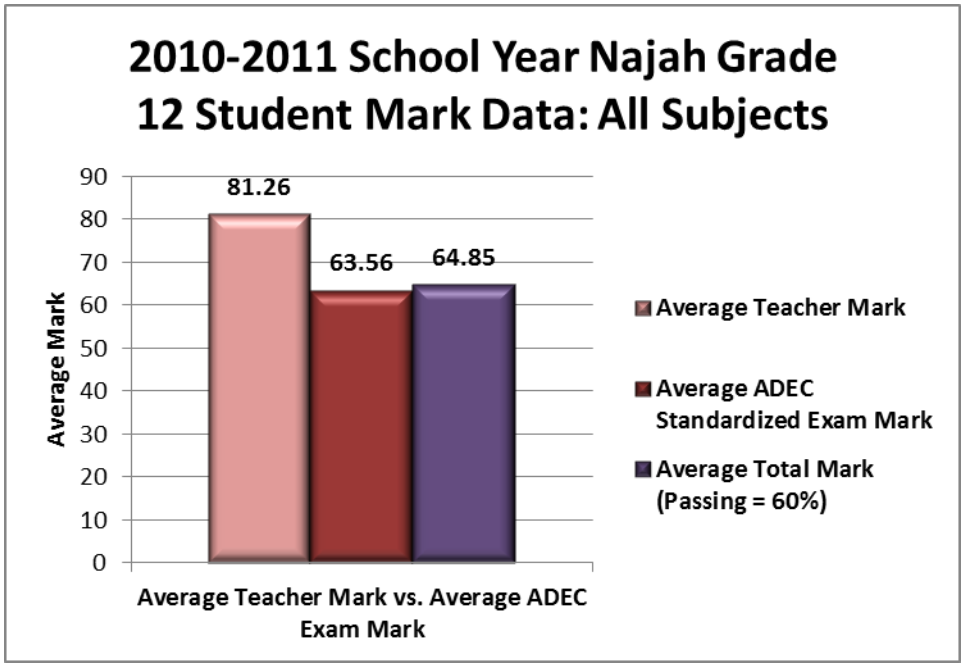

Figure 1.1 Najah School 2010-2011 School Year Marks Data for Grade 12 all Subjects
Source: ESIS (2010) ADEC Enterprise Student Information System https://ssoesis.adec.ac.ae/aal/aalMain.aspx

This discrepancy is more pronounced in English and Math, the two subjects representing the focus of ADEC's reform program (ADEC, 2008). Figures 1.2 and 1.3 show the grade 12 standardized test results compared with teacher-generated grades in English and Math for the 2010-2011school year at Najah. In both English and Math the average standardized test scores for students are below the official passing mark of sixty percent, yet the average total mark in English and Math is *passing* due to the marks the students received from their teachers.

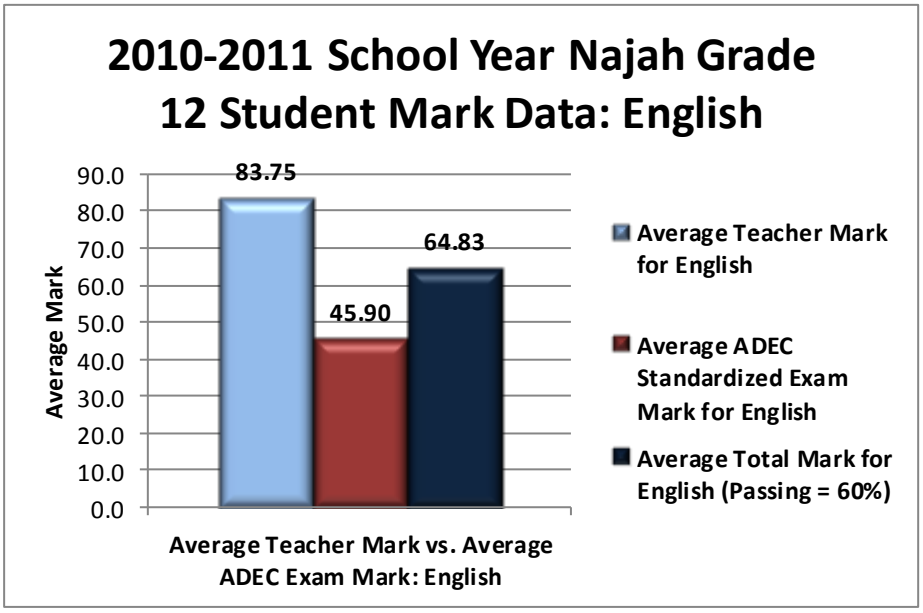

Figure 1.2 Najah School 2010-2011 School Year Marks Data for Grade 12 for English
Source: ESIS (2010) ADEC Enterprise Student Information System https://ssoesis.adec.ac.ae/aal/aalMain.aspx

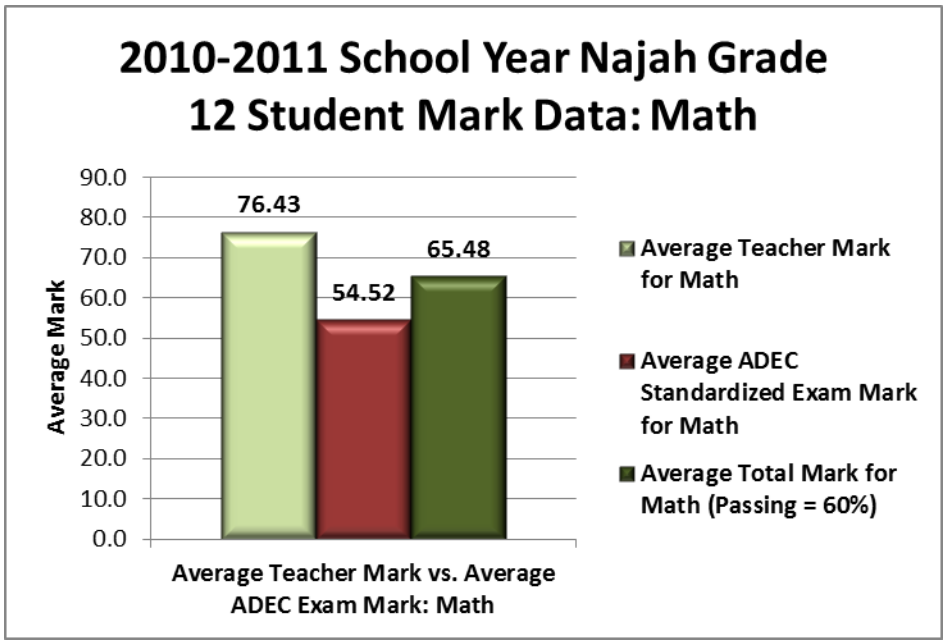

Figure 1.3 Najah School 2010-2011 School Year Marks Data for Grade 12 for Math
Source: ESIS (2010) ADEC Enterprise Student Information System
https://ssoesis.adec.ac.ae/aal/aalMain.aspx

The discrepancy between teachers' marks and students' exam marks came to the forefront at the end of the 2010-2011 school year when the school principal was asked a single loaded question by a visiting ADEC representative, one he subsequently asked his teachers during a school meeting: "Why does every student in Bani Waleed want to go to your school?" The ADEC representative had noted that although there are two high schools in Bani Waleed, he had received an overwhelming amount of requests from students and parents to attend Najah (even when attending Najah would require a much longer commute than the distance to the other school). During the same school meeting,

the principal added what he believed to be the reason for this phenomenon: "Teachers at Najah give high marks."

As evidenced by the marks data, Najah students have extremely low standardized test scores in English (an average total of 45.90). In the grade 12 English classes I have taught over the past three years, I have observed that (despite having taken English for the past 10 years) most grade 12 students in Art's track classes cannot read, write or speak in English. In the average Science track, grade 12 English class no more than five students (out of 20) can speak, read or write in English. I have also observed that students spend the majority of their day at Najah speaking Arabic, and even in English class rarely utter a word in English. When given a worksheet in English class (both tracks), most students will either leave it blank or wait until either the teacher or another student provides them with the answers. In most Art's track classes I have taught no more than seven out of twenty-eight grade 12 students could write their names in English without assistance.

Of the numerous changes instituted by Franklin Incorporated during the first two years of the PPP, perhaps the most striking has been the assignment of classrooms to individual teachers. Before September 2009, the entire school functioned under a roaming teacher schedule. When the bell rang for each new period, the teacher would gather his materials and move to the next classroom. The students remained in the same

classroom all day. Perhaps due to the roaming schedule, teachers exhibited little ownership of individual classrooms. They made no attempts to decorate the classroom walls or to look after the maintenance of classrooms. The classrooms remained in the *de facto* possession of the students. This was evidenced by the fact that students would frequently write graffiti in Arabic on the classroom walls and desks. During my first year at Najah, I would often enter a classroom where I was scheduled to teach English and I would notice new graffiti on the walls, or be surprised to see that a student had somehow written graffiti on the *ceiling* of the classroom. Students would often have the desks huddled in the back of the room and would be playing cards or chatting in Arabic. Upon seeing me they would begin to put their desks in rows facing the front. The classrooms were often in disarray; blinds would be pulled off the walls, and the wooden tops of desks would be torn off their metal frames. In June of 2010, Franklin Incorporated, with the approval of the school principal, announced it would be assigning classrooms to teachers and that the students would now move from room to room (the changes would take place starting September, 2010).

The assignment of teachers to their own classrooms presented many challenges for the teachers themselves, who were unaccustomed to the new responsibility. Having their own classrooms now meant that teachers could be held accountable for the look and upkeep of the learning environment. Teachers began to ask for money for posters and

other supplies, money which the school and Franklin Incorporated initially provided. Additionally, teacher assessments would now include the learning environment. Reaction to the changes was mixed. Some teachers welcomed having their own classroom, while others argued publically that it put too great a burden on the teachers. The students also had mixed reactions. Most argued that it would be too difficult to carry their books from class to class. As a result, Franklin Incorporated ordered new lockers for the students. Ultimately, the changes stood.

At the end of the PPP's second year, a new phase of the New School Model Program began, one that had important consequences for the majority of Najah's native-Arabic-speaking English teachers. The NSMP calls for all core subjects from Kindergarten to the 12th grade surrounding Science and Math, as well as English Language classes, to be taught by primarily native-English-speaking teachers (NSMP, 2010). Bilingual, native-Arabic-speaking teachers who were proficient in Standard English[13] were also permitted to teach these subjects. Social Studies, Arabic Language, and Religious Studies would continue to be taught by native-Arabic-Speaking teachers (NSMP, 2010). As a result, all but one of the original seven-member pan-Arab English department were either transferred to middle school or fired and sent to their home countries. They were replaced in September of 2011 (the beginning of the school year

[13] Bilingual, native-Arabic-speaking teachers must obtain a score of 6.5 or above on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Standardized English test in order to teach Science, Math, or English under the NSM curriculum (ADEC, 2012).

and the commencement of this study), by four American teachers, an Irish teacher, and a Tunisian teacher. All seven members of this eclectic, newly formed English Department became the participants in the current research study. I conducted weekly 50-70 minute interviews with each teacher as well as bi-weekly participant observations in each of their classes.

The first teacher participant was Mr. Williams, one of the four American English teachers. He had recently (2 months prior) arrived in Abu Dhabi. Mr. Williams was a Caucasian in his early fifties with dark brown hair, which was thinning but still an adequate covering of his scalp. He was petite, lean and fit; the latter two characteristics he attributed to his ardent vegetarianism and regular spin classes. He always wore slacks, a dress shirt and a tie, and on most days he was cheerful, friendly and kind. Within minutes after meeting anyone who spoke enough English, he would have committed to memory his interlocutor's name and at least one important fact about that person (e.g. "he has five brothers, one who lives in Bani Waleed"). Mr. Williams had spent time in the U.S. Air Force, and had traveled the world this way. On the first day I met him he told me that he "loves meeting new people, getting to know them, and learning about their culture." For the previous six years, Mr. Williams had taught middle school Language Arts in both Kansas and Illinois public schools.

Mr. Williams taught three grade 11 Art's track English classes. Most English classes were taught with a block schedule in back-to-back 55 minute lessons (110 minutes with a 5 minute break in between). When I would observe I would stay for the entire block period. I chose to observe each of the three classes at least once. Mr. Williams had informed me that class 2 was his "best class," and I made sure to visit it more often than the others in order to both determine why he gave it this designation and to compare my field notes to those from the other classes.

The next teacher participant was Mr. Hammond. He had also just arrived two months prior in Abu Dhabi. Mr. Hammond was a tall, stout African American in his early thirties. He too was balding, but had chosen to shave his head entirely. Although he had started the year wearing dress slacks, shirt and tie, as the school year progressed Mr. Hammond lost the tie, and would sometimes come in casual pants. He was friendly and courteous, and always ready for conversation, an activity he would often dominate with long, eloquent sentences and detailed knowledge of current events. He was, however, shy in large groups; he would often sit in the back during meetings or position himself in the back of a group of standing teachers during social gatherings.

Mr. Hammond had worked in a private school in England for two years teaching middle school English before returning to America. A year after his return he came to Abu Dhabi. Before his time in England, Mr. Hammond had taught middle school English

for three years in a private school in Texas. At Najah, Mr. Hammond taught two grade 10 Art's track classes, and one grade 10 Science track class. In the Science track class a couple of the students spoke enough English to aid Mr. Hammond in translation. I balanced my time between the Science class and the two Art's classes in order to compare differences between the Science class situation and the Art's classes, where none of the students could translate. I would observe these classes for the entire block period.

The third American teacher who had just arrived in Abu Dhabi was Mr. Drake. Mr. Drake was a muscular African American of average height. In his mid-fifties, he had spent the past twenty years teaching Language Arts in Texas inner-city public schools. Before that he had spent time in the Army. He too shaved his head, and on most days he wore dress slacks, a shirt, a tie and a button-up vest, from which his enormous shoulders and arms protruded. On Thursdays, Mr. Drake would wear a tight UAE-themed short-sleeved polo shirt, showing off his muscular arms. Although he was polite, Mr. Drake was often forceful, and would yell at students in the hallways, telling them to get to class. He also kept his distance from the other teachers, and would rarely spend time in the break room.

In public Mr. Drake was fierce and direct, often raising his voice or even yelling to make a point. However, in private, Mr. Drake was gentle, soft-spoken and reflective.

Mr. Drake taught two grade 11 Art's track classes and a grade 12 Art's track class. I balanced my time in his grade 11 and grade 12 classes to explore if grade was a factor in the behaviors I observed.

The final American teacher, Mr. Ramirez, had been teaching at another high school in Abu Dhabi a year prior to transferring into Najah. In his late forties, he was of average height and portly, but with thick, jet black hair, making him the envy of his hair-deprived Western colleagues (myself included). He often complained that living in Abu Dhabi (with ample time and money) had made his weight problem spiral out of control. Originally from El Salvador (his family immigrated to America when he was a child), he was bilingual in English and Spanish, and had over eight years' experience teaching Spanish in California public high schools prior to coming to Abu Dhabi. On most days Mr. Ramirez was quiet and sullen, yet approachable. One-on-one he would engage in conversation, even small talk, but in groups he was silent. He rarely talked at meetings or in the break room. When asked a question in the presence of more than one person, even simply "How are you?" he would respond with the shortest possible answer (e.g. "fine") and rarely anything more.

Mr. Ramirez taught two grade 12 Art's track classes and a single grade 12 Science track class. Many of the students in Mr. Ramirez's Science track class spoke enough English to engage in conversation with Mr. Ramirez. For this reason I spent much

of my time observing this class, taking careful field notes of the conversations that would occasionally arise. However, I also spent time observing his Art's track classes to examine how students' English ability might impact the classroom behavior I observed.

Mr. Abel, a Tunisian English teacher, had been teaching in the UAE for the past 16 years. Before that he taught English in Tunisia for three years[14]. Although he wasn't a native speaker, he was proficient in English. In his late forties, he was a thin, handsome man of average height. He had a thick head of black hair with salty gray roots, and a full mustache displaying the same characteristics. He was also a casual smoker and would often smoke in hidden corners on the school grounds. He never wore a tie and would sometimes come to work in blue jeans and an un-tucked button-down shirt.

Although he had raised his family in the UAE, he built a house for them in Tunisia. He often told me that he was anxious to return home one day and make a life for his family. His Masters' Degree, which he had achieved in Tunisia, was in Shakespearian Literature, and he would sometimes make reference to Shakespeare or other poets in casual conversation. Mr. Abel taught two grade 10 Art's classes[15]. I balanced my

[14] Mr. Abel had transferred into Najah about two months after the start of the school year. ADEC was supposed to be sending another American teacher, but the teacher had difficulties back home and had cancelled his trip to the UAE. Mr. Abel was sent in his place.

[15] The teaching contract for Arab teachers was twenty-hours per week, which meant that the Arab teachers taught only two classes (seeing them once a day, sometimes with a block period). The contract for Western teachers was a thirty-hour week, which meant that American and Irish teachers taught three classes (again seeing them once a day and often with block periods).

observations between these two classes. As Mr. Abel spoke native Arabic, I looked for instances of code switching (i.e. how often and when would Mr. Abel switch to Arabic).

Mr. Hassan, an Egyptian, was an original member of the seven-teacher English Department at Najah, and the only one with a high enough IELTs score to remain, according to the provisions in the NSMP. He was also in his late forties, of average height, and had a full head of black hair which he kept short and combed neatly. Mr. Hassan had no facial hair and possessed a stocky, well-fed physique. Although the first two years I knew him he never wore a tie, he took to wearing one for the third year. He too had been building a home in Egypt and had planned to move his family back there one day. He had taught English in Egypt for five years before coming to the UAE, where he had spent the past fifteen years (five of them at Najah) teaching English in UAE public schools.

Mr. Hassan had worked closely with the Franklin Incorporated staff over the past two years, and had started this year with the dual role of teacher and Head of the English Department (HOD). His duties included acting as a liaison between the teachers and parents, as well as between the teachers and students, and sometimes even between teachers themselves when a disagreement arose. He would also lead department meetings and work closely with Franklin Incorporated to keep teachers informed of new changes taking place in the school. In addition to his duties as HOD, Mr. Hassan also taught two

grade 11 Science track classes. I balanced my observations between these two classes. Like with Mr. Abel, I paid special attention to code switching practices in his classes.

The final teacher participant was the Irishman, Mr. Bartlett. Like his American colleagues, he had arrived in Abu Dhabi two months prior. He was a tall, Caucasian of average build. In his late twenties, he was balding profusely. He combed what little would grow on the top of his head forward to cover his scalp. His hair, quite thick on the sides, was a mix of red and brown. He was friendly with everyone at Najah and on most days he was cheerful and talkative. He wore dress pants, slacks and a tie, which was always loosened and hanging like a colorful necklace around his neck.

Mr. Bartlett had taught middle school in Ireland for four years before coming to the UAE. At Najah he taught two grade 10 Art's track classes and a single grade 10 Science track class. Like with Mr. Hammond, Mr. Bartlett's Science track class included a couple of students who could translate for him. I balanced my observations of this class with the two Art's track classes to examine differences in behavior impacted by the addition of students who could translate.

1.5 Outline and Arguments of Chapters

This dissertation examines how teachers' beliefs about *the nature of teaching* and *the role of language in the world* impact their interpretations of the New School Model

English language curriculum. In Chapter Two, I review the relevant research literature to this study, focusing on two areas of anthropological research: cognitive anthropology and language ideology research. I then draw from Bourdieu's (1977, 1990) theory of practice to discuss teachers' beliefs and teachers' practice together. I suggest that specifying the correlational relationship between *belief* and *practice* through the term *ideology* elucidates fruitful conceptual and methodological insights for the study of how teachers' ideologies shape their interpretations of curriculum guidelines.

In Chapter Three, I discuss my methods of data collection and analysis, as well as my research site. Incorporating methods gleaned from cognitive anthropology and language ideology research, I argue that as humans structure and organize their social experiences primarily in the form of narrative (Bruner, 1991; Clandinin & Connelly, 1996; Labov, 1972), the qualitative study of teachers' ideologies necessitates a narrative inquiry approach.

In Chapters Four and Five, I discuss the findings corresponding to my first three research questions: *What ideologies do the teachers in the Najah Boy's High School English department profess about the nature of teaching? How do these ideologies interact with the teachers' ideologies concerning the role of language in the world? and How do these teachers' ideologies impact their perceptions of their own and their L2 students' behaviors in the classroom?* I argue that teachers at the Najah Boy's High

school professed specific culturally resonant ideologies concerning the nature of teaching. These ideologies formed schematic—or scripted (D'Andrade, 1995; Rice, 1980)—understandings of the teachers' role. American teachers at Najah described teaching in terms of the teacher as *an enthusiastic motivational speaker*, in that the teacher's role was to convince his students to strive for economic success. Conversely, Arab and Irish English teachers described teaching as a form of mentoring: the teacher as a *familial role model* served as the protector of his students.

I also argue that these constructions reciprocally shaped teachers' language ideologies surrounding the roles of English and Arabic in their students' lives. For American English teachers, the English language, and the rational work ethic were the primary skills students had to acquire for worldly success. English, therefore, was constructed as the language of productivity, rational work and self-reliance, whereas Arabic, as the marker of culture and traditions, was the language of the students' roots and thus not an instrumental value in the global economy. Arab and Irish English teachers, however, conceptualized their students as vulnerable agents who would not learn if their needs were not met. Although they also described English as an instrumental skill, Arabic, as the marker of culture and traditions, took on more importance as the language of comfort and nurturing needed for learning.

In Chapters Six and Seven, I discuss the findings that respond to my final research question: *What role do these ideologies play in these teachers' conceptions of their use of ADECs curriculum guidelines concerning the teaching of the English language in the classroom?* In Chapter Six, I analyze the numerous documents and public statements related to the New School Model Curriculum (NSMC). I argue that in the NSMC, English is ideologically constructed as the instrumental skill (Wee, 2008) needed for success in the global marketplace. Arabic, being left out of this economic equation, is designated the role of cultural marker.

Chapter Seven details case studies of each of the seven teachers who participated in this research. I argue that the teachers' interpretations of the curriculum were mediated by the correlational relationship between their beliefs and the contextual restraints they experienced within the context of the Najah Boy's High School. Although their practices in the classroom often mirrored each other, the teachers at Najah *described* their behaviors differently—that is, they made sense of the curriculum through the two culturally resonant ideologies already manifested in their discourses: *the teacher as enthusiastic motivational speaker* and *the teacher as familial role model*. The American teachers argued in various ways that the teacher's role revolved around making students work hard in order to achieve specific skills related to self-reliance and future success. However, the Arab and Irish teachers saw their roles as caretakers, looking after their

students' needs in order to make them feel comfortable and develop close relationships with them.

The English teachers' unique past experiences also played important roles in their understanding of their teaching practice. Two of the teachers told stories relating painful experiences in their past where "the system" had let them down, and through these stories they rationalized their rejection of the curriculum. These case studies resulted in seven unique *curriculum stories* (Shkedi, 2009; Gudmondsdóttir, 1999), which often differed considerably from the stated intentions of the formal written curriculum.

In Chapter Eight, I summarize the significance of these findings, discussing their implications for further research. I argue that this study complicates our understanding of the complex ways teachers' beliefs impact their practices in the classroom. In so doing, this study adds to the literature concerning how teachers function as language policy actors within the context of schools. Finally, I argue that by illustrating the complex relationship between subjective teacher beliefs and their objective social relationships, this study makes a considerable contribution to Bourdieu's (1977, 1990) theory of practice, particularly in providing further insight into how the school functions as a formal institution.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I review the relevant research literature to this study, simultaneously examining its theoretical and methodological procedures and their implications. Although the considerable literature surrounding cognitive anthropology is concerned with language use in relation to its role in the organization of human knowledge, it rarely addresses *ideologies of language*—that is, it views language as primarily a neutral, symbolic system which merely denotes cultural features. However, language ideologies are already viewed by anthropologists and sociologists alike as part of larger cognitive frameworks (Gal, 2005; Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994; Mannheim, 1985). Hence, I first review literature on cognitive anthropology, followed by the literature on language ideology. I suggest that by addressing the relationships between cognitive frameworks and power relations—that is, by specifying the correlational relationship between *belief* and *ideology*—the synthesis of these two traditions elucidates a range of fruitful conceptual and methodological insights for the study of how teachers' ideologies shape their interpretations of curriculum[16] guidelines. Finally, bringing in

[16] Palfreyman (2005) uses the word curriculum to refer to "not only the planned content of the school's teaching activities but also its implementation" (p. 216). Here I am using it in the sense of the "official curriculum"—that is, the documents and public statements outlining the mandates of the state concerning the nature and activity of education in public schools.

Bourdieu's (1990) theory of *habitus* and *field*, I extend these insights into a more robust conceptualization of culture, positing that the cognitive frameworks underlying teachers' interpretations of the curriculum make up parts of habitus, where they represent both the objective context of cultural practice as well as the subjective cultural strategies that agents employ.

Culture and Cognitive Anthropology

Clifford Geertz's (1973) now famous definition of culture treats culture as an all-encompassing pool of material and symbolic artifacts; he writes: "[culture is] an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and their attitudes toward life" (Geertz, 1973, p. 89). For Geertz (1973), although the human mind plays a large role in the construction of symbolic representations of social phenomenon, the ethnographer's goal is not to examine the structure of these mental processes. It is instead to unravel the mind's representations, or "webs of significance" (Geertz, 1973, p. 5), in order to gain access to the "context" in which people conduct their lives (Geertz, 1973, p. 14).

Geertz's (1973) emphasis on context varies significantly from an earlier conception of culture, a view attributed to Ward Goodenough (1957). In an equally famous passage, Goodenough (1957) places culture squarely in the human mind:

> A society's culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members. Culture is not a material phenomenon; it does not consist of things, people, behavior or emotions. It is rather an organization of these things. It is the form of things that people have in mind, their models of perceiving, relating, and otherwise interpreting them. (p. 167)

These two seemingly contradictory definitions combined form the point of departure for a third understanding of culture, one emanating from the sociological interest in the causal relationship between culture and social action—that culture consists of "the publically available symbolic forms through which people experience and express meaning" (Swidler, 1986, p. 273). For Swidler (1986), culture influences human action by "shaping a repertoire or 'tool kit' of habits, skills and styles from which people construct 'strategies of action'" (p. 273). Following these authors, I define culture as the shared, contextually relative and cognitively structured symbolic frameworks through which agents strategically operate in social space.

This definition partially rests upon a conceptualization of culture borrowed from cognitive anthropology—that "culture is shared knowledge" (Quinn, 1982, p. 775). Originating in the late 1950s, cognitive anthropology grew out of an ongoing focus on the formal analysis of native thought processes or cognitive domains.[17] D'Andrade (1995) defines the current focus of cognitive anthropology as, "the study of how people in social

[17] See D'Andrade (1995) Chapter 2 for a more detailed analysis of this concern. D'Andrade (1995) defines a cognitive domain as "an area of conceptualization like space, color, the human body, kinship, pronouns, etc." (p. 34).

groups conceive of and think about the objects and events that make up their world" (p. 1). Two seminal papers on the semantic analysis of kinship terms published separately by Ward Goodenough and Floyd Lounsbury[18] in 1956 guided the methodological development of what is now modern cognitive anthropology. Goodenough (1956) and Lounsbury (1956) each developed step-by-step methods by which the kinship terms of a society (e.g. brother, sister, father, uncle) could be analyzed through their organizational relationship to each other (e.g. whether male or female, or the number of generations from the primary person, etc.). Although elegant and simple, these initial innovations presented anthropologists with a systematic way to identify cultural knowledge by organizing it into "'idea units,'" separate units which could be analyzed "*in terms of their relationship with other units*" (D'Andrade, 1995, p. 17).

Another important discovery that impacted the development of cognitive anthropology is the limitation of human short-term, or immediate, memory. Citing experiments where respondents recorded differences in positioning of stimuli, tastes, colors and sound, Miller (1956) found that the number of "unidimentional" (i.e. simultaneous) discriminations that humans can distinguish is limited to about seven (p. 90). In order to overcome this limitation, Miller (1956) shows that humans group or organize sequences of contrasting information into "units or chunks" (p. 92). D'Andrade

[18] See Goodenough's (1956) *Componential Analysis and the Study of Meaning*, and Lounsbury's (1956) *A Semantic Analysis of the Pawnee Kinship Usage*.

(1995) offers a clear example of this process. He posits that when people are presented the sequence "69325754," they have a difficult time recalling all eight digits simultaneously, but that if the same number of digits were put in another way—"19891990"—most people would see two *chunks* of data, "1989 and 1990," and thus be able to easily recall the numbers (D'Andrade, 1995, p. 44). He adds that language is an essential part of this process. As D'Andrade puts it:

> In general, for successive levels of chunking to occur there must be symbols of some type to hold the meaning of chunked information in a single unit. Thus there is a tight relation between the limitations of the human mind as an information processing system and the structure of language and human culture. *Complex human culture would be impossible if there were no linguistic symbols to help as chunking devises in making complex discriminations* [his italics]. (p. 45)

Returning to the feature analysis of kinship terms pioneered by Goodenough (1956) and Lounsbury (1956), the chunked information of human experience ("idea units") would now be extended to other domains beyond kinship, and analyzed in relation to other chunked units through respondents' use of analogy and similarity judgments (D'Andrade, 1995, p. 17). Studies recording the ways respondents related similarities in chunked information revealed interesting results, changing the focus of cognitive anthropologists from the defining attributes of features to the *salience* of those features—that is, to the beliefs of respondents concerning the most important features of a chunked unit. As an example, D'Andrade et. al. (1972) conducted a series of informal interviews

of American and Mexican respondents concerning the relationship between diseases and disease features. Utilizing a multidimensional scaling program, the results were plotted where the chosen disease features (e.g. skin disease, related to old age, etc.) were clustered around the related disease terms (e.g. cancer, bronchitis, etc.).

The results showed striking differences in the ways respondents related diseases to disease features. For example, the Mexican respondents grouped diseases in two main categories: internal complaints and contagious diseases (D'Andrade et. al., 1972). Conversely, the most salient features for Americans concerned the seriousness of the disease and the fact that it was contagious (D'Andrade et. al., 1972). That respondents categorized diseases based upon what they felt to be the most important features of the diseases and not their specific, critical attributes created the opportunity for the development of rigorous methodology with the capacity to recognize cultural differences through salience judgments.

As the focus of cognitive research shifted from kinship terms and disease features to more complex forms of human activity such as discourse and textual analysis, salience judgments between "idea units" or "prototypes" gave rise to extended analytical concepts (D'Andrade, 1995, p. 17). The concept of "schema" arose as a way to explain the complex patterns of categorization apparent in human cognition. Although Bartlett (1932) did not like the term, he is most often credited with its first use in the

conceptualization of memory and perception. Bartlett (1932) defined schema as, "an active organization of past reactions, or of past experiences" (p. 202). G. Elizabeth Rice (1980), a cognitive anthropologist, describes schema in its simplest terms: "A schema can be thought of as an abstracted pattern into or onto which information can be organized" (p. 153). Fillmore (1975) offers a clear example, one which is highly relevant to my current study. He notes that when interpreting a text,

> The first part of the text creates or "activates" a kind of creative schematic or outline scene, with many positions left blank, so to speak. Later parts of the text fill in the blanks (or some of them, anyway), introduce new scenes, combine scenes through links in history or causation or reasoning, and so on. In other words, a person in interpreting a text, mentally creates a partially specified world; as he continues with the text, the details of this world get filled in; and in the process, expectations get up which later are fulfilled or thwarted. (p. 123)

D'Andrade (1995) cites Fillmore's (1975) example of schemas from the English and Japanese languages, illustrating how the concept of salience can again be utilized to recognize cultural differences. The Japanese term *kaku* and the English term *to write*, although often used interchangeably in translation, represent two distinct schemas. D'Andrade (1995) notes that, "both schemas include a scene in which somebody guides a pointed-trace instrument across a surface" (p. 123). However, the English schema specifies that a person is writing some form of language where the Japanese schema leaves open the exact product—that is, with *kaku*, a person can be "writing" anything,

including a picture. Thus a schema, as "a highly organized framework of objects and relations which has yet to be filled in with concrete detail" (D'Andrade, 1995, p. 124), serves as an important methodological tool for recognizing parts or chunks of cultural *weltanschauung*, or worldview. Both the way the schema is organized and the way it is "filled in" become salient cultural attributes which underscore differences in the ways humans cognitively organize their experiences.

Moreover, schema theory also helped to explain the relationship between culture and the human brain. Schema theory evolved alongside attempts using computer models to simulate the way the human brain might work (D'Andrade, 1995). The standard artificial intelligence model utilized to simulate the brain as a processor since the 1950s has been the serial symbolic processing model (D'Andrade, 1995). D'Andrade (1995) describes the basic functioning of the serial symbolic processing model as follows:

> In this model, symbols are the basic objects of the computer/mind. The senses/input devises bring in information about the outside world which is encoded in symbols/binary bits so that a representation of the world can be created. Once this representation has been formed, the mind/computer manipulates the symbols/bits using the rules of logic (as in a syllogism) or in a heuristic search (as in searching for the best move in a chess game). The rules are applied serially, forming a chain of steps through which a decision is reached. (P. 137)

The serial symbolic processing model, however, proved insufficient to explain both the characteristics of schemas and the speed with which schemas seemed to operate. For instance, the schema concept included the existence of "well-formed, salient mental

representations involv[ing] strong expectations about what goes with what along with a powerful tendency to group such parts into a gestalt whole" (D'Andrade, 1995, p. 136). In the late 1980s a new artificial intelligence model arose which showed great potential to illuminate how these complex processes occurred in the human brain. The "'parallel distributed processing network,' or 'connectionist network'" (D'Andrade, 1995, p. 138) utilized a series of input or sensory units which were connected to a second set of "hidden" intermediate units (D'Andrade, 1995, p. 138). The intermediate units were connected to a single decision unit, and each of the connections was "weighted," meaning each transmitted a fixed degree of activation to the next unit (D'Andrade, 1995, p. 137). When a unit reached a certain sum of activation, it would "fire," sending the signal to the next unit (D'Andrade, 1995, p. 137). Figure 2.1 illustrates a simple example of the connectionist network model. The decision unit allows for simultaneous, parallel discriminations, activating when *either* input units *a* and *b* are activated or when *c* and *d* are activated, but not both.

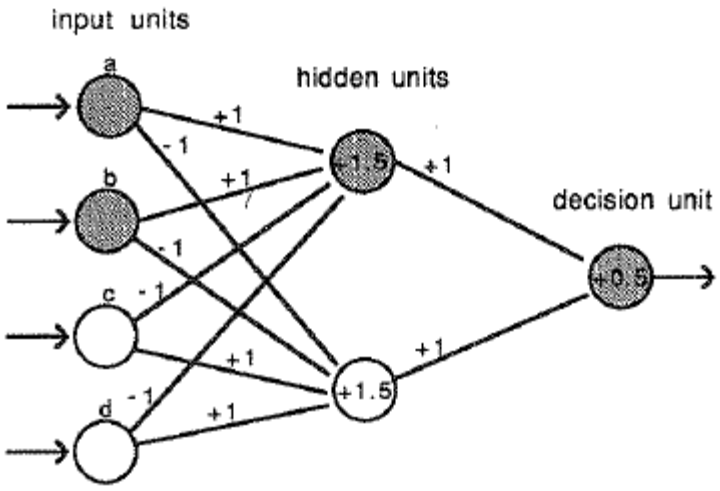

Figure 2.1 Simple Connectionist Network
Source: D'Andrade, Roy (1995). *The development of cognitive anthropology*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

The connectionist model was shown to respond to input stimuli with the speed and nuance of the human brain[19]. In this way it served as a fitting model for how schemas function as processors in the mind. As D'Andrade (1995) puts it: "Connectionist networks have a great capacity for 'filling in' missing inputs with default values. If parts of a pattern or configuration are missing, the network is not only likely to respond with the right output, but also to activate those hidden units which would normally be activated by the complete input pattern" (p. 139). D'Andrade (1995) cites Maurice

[19] In his analysis of the neuronal patterns of the human brain involved with sight, Reyes (2002) makes a similar distinction between parallel processing involved in human cognition and the sequential limitations of serial symbolic processing of a computer; he writes: "Within visual circuitry different modules analyze form, color, movement, and so on at the same time while a similar parallel processing is occurring with sound in auditory circuitry. This arrangement of neurons in parallel circuits distinguishes brains from computers, which work in a more linear fashion" (p. 1474).

Bloch's (1992) study of Zafimaniry farmers in Madagascar to illustrate how the connectionist model is far superior to the serial symbolic processing model to explain certain types of human cognition related to the schematization of information. D'Andrade (1995) explains that when a Malagasy farmer chooses a particular stretch of forest to clear for farming:

> In the symbolic processing model, such a task would be extremely complex, involving the integration of many kinds of information about vegetation, slope, surrounding countryside, hydrology, soil, etc. However, an average Malagasy farmer can do this in seconds […] connectionism is an alternative theory of thought which explains how such commonplace feats can be done. (P. 145)

Through the connectionist-schema model, schemas serve as mental-recognition processors. Some elements of schemas, known as "default values" (Rice, 1980, p. 155) or "prototypes" (D'Andrade, 1995, p. 124) represent taken-for-granted aspects of our experiences. Holland and Cole (1995) offer a simple yet fitting example of the roles default values play in the connectionist- schema model, explaining that:

> If we see something we think is a cat outside the door, the elements "breathes" and "warm-blooded" are likely default values. This is the case even if we have never seen the particular cat before. Unless the default values are directly called into question, as when we see a cat lying very still under a car, we simply assume that they are true. (p. 478)

Schema theory is also important for grounding the study of how people's beliefs impact their actions. For instance, *event schemas*, referred to as "scripts" (Nelson, 1981; Holland & Cole, 1995), specify the people, roles, objects and relationships that apply to a

particular event, acting as guides to how one should act in such events. In her study examining how children acquire and utilize event schemas, Nelson (1981) illustrates how scripts act like default-value schemas for a given event. She gives the example of the "restaurant script" described by a four-year-old participant (Nelson, 1981, p. 103):

> Okay. Now, first we go to restaurants at nighttime and we, um, we, and we go and wait for a little while, and then the waiter comes and gives us the little stuff with the dinners on it, and then we wait for a little bit, a half an hour or a few minutes or something, and, um, then our pizza comes or anything, and um, (interruption)…
> [So then your food comes…]
> Then we eat it, and, um, then when we're finished eating the salad that we order we get to eat our pizza when it's done, because we get the salad before the pizza's ready. So then when we're finished with all the pizza and all our salad, we just leave. (Girl 4; 10). (Nelson, 1981, p. 103)

Nelson (1981) notes that this participant's event schema includes a number of "component subscripts—entering, ordering, eating, and exiting" (p. 103). She notes as well that the subscript of *paying for the food* did not appear to be a salient part of the script, differentiating the script of a child from the restaurant script an adult might construct (Nelson, 1981). Thus, schemas like this one guide individual actions, inform as to what one should expect in a given situation[20], and help in making sense of new

[20] See Goffman (1959) for an examination of how such scripts function in social interaction. Goffman (1959) describes individual human behavior in an event schema as a "performance" –that is, as, "the activity of an individual which occurs during a period marked by his continuous presence before a particular set of observers and which has some influence on the observers" (p. 22). Goffman (1959) posits that an individual constructs a "front" through specific activity (using particular speech patterns, wearing particular types of clothing or insignias, for example) which serves to define the situation for those in observance (p. 22). He notes that a particular social front may become "institutionalized in terms of the

situations[21]. Script schemas also guide the interpretation of stories, as in Fillmore's (1975) example above where the words in a text "activate[s] a kind of creative schematic or outline scene, with many positions left blank, so to speak" (p. 123). Without default-value script schemas, it would be difficult, if not impossible, for readers to make sense of written stories. Each new scene in a text would have to be explained anew, as without these descriptions readers would have no reference from which to understand the actions of characters.

2.2 Ideology as a Link between Cognitive Frameworks and Social Context

Despite the important conceptual and methodological contributions of cognitive anthropology to the study of language and culture, few studies in cognitive anthropology attend to the relationships between cognitive frameworks and the *social contexts* in which those frameworks are expressed (Quinn, 1980; D'Andrade, 1995). Worldviews, including assumptions about the moral order,[22] are understood by cognitive anthropologists as part of larger cognitive frameworks—as part of *cultural schemas* (Quinn, 1980; D'Andrade, 1995)—and as such they are neutral social constructions; a concern for the ways these assumptions are shaped by societal power relations is largely absent in cognitive

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abstract stereotyped expectations to which it gives rise," a phenomenon he terms a "'collective representation'" (Goffman, 1959, p. 27).

[21] As previously discussed, Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) study of metaphors illustrates how metaphor is crucial to these processes, where one script is understood in terms of or in relation to another script.

[22] Wuthnow (1987) calls the moral order, "a set of definitions about what it is proper to do and reasonable to expect" (p. 14). It is in this sense that I am using it here.

anthropology research. To bridge this gap, *ideology* will be used as a binding concept that will inform this study. In this section, I will explore ideology as a social construction that is both cognitively organized and contextually actualized.

Ideology can be understood in terms of its relationship to tradition or common sense (Swidler, 1986; Wuthnow, 1987). Common sense traditions[23] are sets of assumptions that are so uncontested that they become taken-for-granted notions, what I refer to as *worldview*. However, *ideology* arises from worldview; as Wuthnow (1987) puts it, "it [ideology] consists of symbols that express or dramatize something about the moral order" (p. 145). Thus worldview and ideology form a "continuum" (Swidler, 1986, p. 279), ideologies being the *stated or enacted* referents to taken-for-granted notions arising from worldview. Ideologies represent behaviors, either utterances or actions of social actors, behaviors which are symbolic of beliefs. Although beliefs are difficult to objectively observe, Wuthnow (1987) notes that they can be "inferred from the frequency and force from which utterances are made and the kinds of bodily or social behaviors that accompany them" (p. 146). Ideologies can therefore be observed through recognizing the salience of the subjective, symbolic elements of human behavior.

[23] Swidler (1986) defines "traditions" and "common sense" separately in relationship to human consciousness. The former can be conscious or unconscious beliefs that are "taken for granted so that they seem inevitable parts of life," where the latter are "assumptions that are so unselfconscious as to seem a natural, transparent, undeniable part of the structure of the world" (p. 279). Unlike Swidler, I make no such distinction, as I view these beliefs, and the ideologies that arise from them, to be both conscious and unconscious. For this study, the important distinction between common sense traditions and ideologies is in the way they are manifested in social life, a point that Swidler (1986) also recognizes.

Additionally, ideology as a theoretical concept constitutes a link between subjective dispositions and the objective social conditions, including power relations, within which these dispositions arise. Wuthnow (1987) suggests a three-phase analytical model for considering this connection. First, a change or disruption in the moral order amplifies the *production* of varied ideologies. Swidler (1986) calls this a change from "settled" to "unsettled" lives (p. 279). It is a period in which occurs a "break with some alternative way of life" (Swidler, 1986, p. 279). One immediately thinks of turbulent historical periods such as the Protestant Reformation. However, this change can also be smaller in scale such as the uncertainties occurring from the experience of living or working within a new culture. The impact of such changes on ideologies is reciprocal. Ideologies represent propositions specifying the organization of social relations, and within these representations are propositions about how social resources (e.g. money, land, human labor, jobs, etc.) should be distributed (Wuthnow, 1987). To be maintained, however, ideologies also require social resources, even in the simplest form of social actors who subscribe to them. Thus Wuthnow (1987) notes: "Any disturbance of social resources that results in uncertainties about the nature of moral obligations is likely to result in some modification at the level of ideology itself" (p. 154).

The second phase of Wuthnow's (1987) framework involves the *selection* of competing ideologies. In this phase ideologies compete for scarce resources within a

social environment. Depending on the distribution and nature of these resources, some ideologies are selected while others are not (Wuthnow, 1987, p. 151). This competition is related to power relations within the social environment, for as Wuthnow (1987) posits, "the moral order conceived by one set of actors is likely to structure resources in a way that is inequitable or threatening to other actors" (p. 159). Thus selection of ideologies is an *interested* process both shaping and shaped by the concrete details of the social environment. Swidler (1986) extends this explanation, arguing that as "chunks of culture" (p. 283), ideologies are part of the "material from which individuals and groups conduct strategies of action" (p. 280). The study of ideology, therefore, is also the study of power relations within the social environment and the ways those relations favor—through the opportunity for resources—certain ideologies over others.

Wuthnow's (1987) third and final phase is the *institutionalization* of ideologies. Institutionalization denotes the allocation of new features, in the form of resources, to ideological forms. Institutionalized ideologies take many forms. Wuthnow (1987) offers the example of a church. Generally, a church has a system of organization for extracting and processing resources from the external social environment. This stable foundation gives it autonomy in its ability to channel those resources towards its own set of independent goals, and thus perpetuate its own ideologies (Wuthnow, 1987). The state also plays a crucial role in the institutionalization of ideologies as it has the power to

sanction certain ideologies as official doctrines. As it often has enormous resources at its disposal, the state can sometimes shift the balance of power from one ideology to another (Wuthnow, 1987). Thus the role of the state as a legitimizing force in the balance of power relations must be considered in any investigation of institutionalized ideologies.

This consideration of ideology illustrates its ability as a theoretical concept to bridge the gap between cognitive anthropology, which investigates shared, subjective worldview, and the concrete power relations within the context of the social environment. The study of cognitive frameworks should not be confined to the minds of human beings, but should be conceptualized as part of a reciprocal matrix of relationships between complex—thinking—strategizing human agents and their social environment. In the next section, I discuss the research literature on cognitive anthropology relating to the current study. Throughout this review I incorporate *ideology* as a conceptual lens to discuss the ways teachers' cognitive frameworks—or *schemas*— reciprocally shape their experiences in schools and classrooms.

2.3 Belief, Ideology and Teachers' Interpretations of the Curriculum: Cognitive Anthropology Research

In this section, I review cognitive anthropology research relevant to this study. Cognitive anthropology studies span a wide range through multiple domains of human cognition (Rice, 1980; Quinn, 1980; Nespor, 1985). Focusing primarily on the *structure*

and composition of human beliefs, cognitive anthropology research offers valuable insights into ways to define and operationalize beliefs. However, these studies rarely attend to the complex interaction between subjective beliefs and the objective power relations in the social environment (D'Andrade, 1995). As I will show, cognitive anthropology research in schools reveals the complex ways teachers beliefs impact their interpretations of their school's curriculum. I will argue that teachers' beliefs about the salient features of their practice (e.g. the characters of their students, the importance of imparting particular skills, etc.), as they are revealed through their *utterances and behaviors*, represent *ideologies*. They are symbolically enacted windows to worldview, dialectically related to the resources in the social environment of schools. Additionally, the official school curriculum, representing "the roles imagined for teachers and students" (Palfreyman, 2005, p. 216), is a resource, but one which has been legitimized through the power of the state. Thus, examining the ways teachers' beliefs shape their interpretations of the official curriculum is simultaneously an investigation of the ebb and flow of power relations in schools. I begin by examining cognitive anthropology research in domains outside of the school setting. I then turn to cognitive anthropology research in schools, examining the ways teachers' beliefs impact their interpretations of the curriculum.

As mentioned above, cultural schema theory elucidates the study of worldview by investigating chunks of human cognition as parts of a whole. Rice (1980) incorporates the

metaphor of a "parsing program," conceptualizing schema as "a set of rules or strategies for imposing order on experience" (p. 153). She emphasizes the role of schemas in perception, memory, and recall:

> In perception, schemata have an assimilation function: they work to recognize and process input. In memory, they provide organization for the storage of memories, and they may reorganize these memories in the face of new information or changing goals. In recall, schemata provide the rules of arranging memories, and for determining the "what must have been" for any gaps they detect. (Rice, 1980, p. 153)

Research in cognitive anthropology illustrates how words index schemas through acting as reference points to internal mental frameworks. Fillmore (1977) offers the example of "meanings relativized to scenes[24]," explaining, "a word like buy or pay activates the scene of the commercial event; that everybody who understands the word knows what are the various components and aspects of such an event" (p. 73). The various activities assumed to take place in a commercial exchange (e.g. that there is a buyer and a seller, something that is owned and is to be purchased, whether there is haggling involved, or whether money or credit is to be exchanged for goods or services, whether one smiles or not during the activity), can be examined as salient features of the

[24] Langacker (as cited in Quinn, 1980) calls this the "established functional assembly" giving the example of the noun "orphan": "It ["orphan"] tells a whole story in a single word, a story based on a functional assembly of kin relations and the life cycle .... This is an established functional assembly because people know that death occurs and often reaches both parents while their offspring is still relatively young. The word orphan designates an entity that plays a particular role in this conceptual complex . . . Not only is its designation restricted to the person in the offspring role, but it is further restricted to that person in a particular time frame, subsequent to the death of the parents but prior (say) to maturity (p. 778).

schema, and are often revealed through qualitative research (Fillmore, 1977). As an example, in a series of hour-long interviews with 11 American married couples, Quinn (1982) shows how the cultural schema of American marriage is revealed by its salient features. Within the course of 90 interviews, for instance, the word "commitment," occurred 283 times (Quinn, 1980). Further investigation revealed three subordinate terms associated with this feature: promise, dedication, and attachment (Quinn, 1980). The feature of "commitment," which is itself a subschema denoting a long term responsibility, thus revealed that schemata defining marriage were "goal- defining knowledge structures" (Quinn, 1980, p. 795). Such structures are both affective and evaluative as they invoke expectations about how one should act and what one should expect from others.

Similarly, research in schools and classrooms reveals that schemas marked by the verbs "teaching" and "learning" are also recognizable through salient relationships among features. Studies of teachers' beliefs illuminate the complex ways teachers' worldviews impact their actions in the classroom. In a two year study spanning three school districts, Nespor (1985) investigates the belief systems of eight teachers in American Junior High Schools. He finds that teachers' beliefs are often the means they use to "define [the] goals and tasks" of the written curriculum (p. 20). Thus Mrs. Richards, the 8th grade English teacher in Nespor's study, approached the state's spelling

curriculum throughout each week in different ways, each method designed for a different purpose: she assigned "warm-up" activities, to settle the students down as they entered the class, practice tests to alert the students of what would be on the Friday test, an in-class grading exercise to teach students responsibility (and to provide padding for their grades), and a Friday test to prepare the students to take the state-issued standardized test (Nespor, 1985, p. 134).

Although arguably these activities might lead to vocabulary attainment, Mrs. Richards assigned them for various other purposes given her beliefs about what the students needed. Surprisingly, in interviews Mrs. Richards stated that she did not believe that the students would retain the vocabulary words, emphasizing the attainment of writing and oral skills as the long term benefits of her instruction (Nespor, 1985, p. 134). Mrs. Richards's beliefs about the inability of students to retain vocabulary words impacted her use of the curriculum guidelines in important ways. Although she remained loyal to the curriculum guidelines—teaching the 36 vocabulary units required—her beliefs about retention and the needs of her students ultimately shaped her curriculum usage. Thus Nespor (1985) describes the "prototypical character" of beliefs as being "affective and evaluative" modes of cognition, describing them as "feelings, moods, and subjective evaluations in terms of personal preferences" (p. 20). The retention capabilities of her students can also be viewed as a salient feature of Mrs. Richards' schema of

teaching and learning—that teaching involves students who have limited ability to retain information, and learning involves the importance of writing and oral skills.

Moreover, Nespor (1985) illustrates the "episodic" character of teachers' beliefs, where "beliefs often derive their subjective power, authority, and legitimacy from particular episodes or events" in teachers' lives (p. 22). Another eighth grade English teacher, Mrs. Skylark, relates her teaching practices to experiences she had as a Junior High School student. In interviews she remembers being verbally scolded and ignored by teachers, as well as being bored and disinterested while in classrooms (Nespor, 1985, p. 123). Mrs. Skylark views her classroom as the antithesis of these experiences. Often at the expense of behavior problems, she tries to make her class fun and interesting, and rarely disciplines students. Like Mrs. Richards, when teaching subject matter, Mrs. Skylark doubts the students will retain the information in the lesson (Nespor, 1985). She views the students' level of interest in her lessons, however, as an indicator of how much they might retain. Thus Mrs. Skylark's beliefs about how a classroom environment should feel are salient features of a larger schematic of teaching and learning, and "are closely intertwined with her conception of the subject matter" (Nespor, 1985, p. 126).

Further, the examples from both Mrs. Skylark and Mrs. Richards illustrate a final characteristic of beliefs—what Nespor (1985) calls the "unbounded" nature of beliefs (p. 24)—that is, teachers' beliefs "formed repertoires of explanations or goals which could

be invoked to justify particular courses of action" (p. 161). That a teacher's beliefs are "unbounded" means that a teacher's relationship with the curriculum is mediated by individual beliefs, beliefs which are affective, evaluative and episodic in nature; Nespor writes: "What the concept of 'unboundedness' means, then, in plainer language, is that people read belief-based meanings into situations where other people wouldn't see the relevance of the beliefs" (p. 25). The unbounded nature of beliefs presents a problem for the study of shared cultural frameworks, one which is overcome through schematic analysis. Although Mrs. Richards and Mrs. Skylark differed in specific aspects of what they found important, the salient feature of *retention* as part of the schema of teaching and learning represents a shared worldview. Similarly, that both teachers placed emphasis on the *needs of students* positions this feature on par with or even above the feature of remaining loyal to the official curriculum guidelines.

Schemas defining teaching and learning can also be revealed through metaphor. For Lakoff and Johnson (1980), metaphors are the building blocks of our conceptual systems. They posit that our conceptual systems are "metaphorically structured and defined," and the evidence for this is the simple fact that that we have the capacity to utilize them: "Metaphors as linguistic expressions are only possible precisely because there are metaphors in a person's conceptual system" (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, p. 6). In its simplest form, the use of metaphor concerns "*understanding and experiencing one*

type of thing in terms of another" (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, p. 6). The phrase "I don't *have* the time to give you," therefore, denotes the metaphor of time as a commodity that can be offered or retained (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, p. 8). However, metaphors can also be "ontological," where our experiences can be understood in relation to a substance or an entity (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, p. 28). The phrase, "I made my money in business," for example denotes the domain of business as a "container object"—a "bounded area," in which specific activities take place (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, p. 30).

The concept of metaphor facilitates the feature analysis of cultural schemas in important ways. Cognitive anthropology studies surrounding analysis of metaphors in education illustrate the salient features representing the structure of teaching and learning schemas. As an example, Munby (1987) conducted intensive interviews of teachers in a Texas Middle School over a period of four months. Teachers were asked questions concerning specific topics such as teaching approaches, students in their classes, and the entailments of a typical day. Munby (1987) found that teachers understood teaching activity in terms of a "conduit metaphor," where information was viewed as a commodity which was sent along some conduit to the students (pp. 5-6). For instance, the History teacher named Alice spoke of information as something that was "broken down, got out, missed, picked up, needed, kept, thrown in…" (Munby, 1987, p. 6). Another History teacher, Bryn, utilized similar metaphors: "'I didn't catch what he said,' 'I give them my

opinion,' 'they took it as it came'" (Munby, 1987, p. 6). That these metaphors repeatedly occur in teachers' discourse underscores their salience as shared beliefs about the nature of teaching and learning—that teaching and learning involves the transfer of substances (e.g. skills, information, knowledge) from the teacher to the student through some conduit (e.g. giving, throwing, taking).

In a similar study conducted in the Ontario Ministry School of Education, Munby (1987) illustrates the dialectical relationship that exists between teachers' beliefs—expressed through metaphor—and the power relations of the school environment. Munby (1987) follows Mike, the Mathematics and Computing teacher in the penitentiary school. Mike's program was established through the institutionalized policy of the Penitentiary Service in Canada and the Curriculum called "continuous intake," where the school's programs must be accessible to every inmate at the beginning of his sentence (Munby, 1987, p. 8). In his lesson planning, Mike must also juggle the official curriculum guidelines promoted by the Ontario Ministry of Education. In interviews, Mike's interpretation of the curriculum induces the metaphor of "steps"; Mike explains, "When I start them [the students] off on (computer programming) I have to run through the basics with them…They go through the demonstration programs…We work through how to use the computer, how to use a disk, how to get a program started…" (Munby, 1987, p. 8). Munby (1987) illustrates that the metaphor as the curriculum as steps correlates with

Mike's belief that students must gain self confidence in order to learn; in another interview, Mike makes this clear: "It is important that they [the students] gain confidence using the computer and it is a confidence builder" (Munby, 1987, p. 9). Munby (1987) views this as an important example of how "the conditions of practice force a change in the official definition of curriculum" (p. 9). Mike's beliefs about what students need combined with the constraints of the continuous intake program resulted in the interpretation of the official curriculum as analogous to steps.

A final approach to the qualitative research of cultural schemas relevant to this dissertation is narrative inquiry. Bruner (1991) posits that humans structure and organize their social experiences primarily in the form of narrative. Narrative, in the form of myths, fairy tales, and other stories, acts as an "instrument of mind in the construction of reality" (Bruner, 1991, p. 6). Rice (1980) conceptualizes narrative as a complex schema which, like other schemas operates in the service of perception, memory, and recall. To examine narrative as an instrument of memory, Rice (1980) conducted research with 140 American informants. A total of 60 respondents were given stories that had originated in America and had been written by American writers, but that had been "systematically mistructured" by the researchers (Rice, 1980, p. 159). The remaining 70 respondents were given a combination of American and Eskimo stories, some of which had been modified by shortening, scrambling, or deleting parts of the sequence of events (Rice,

1980). Through statistical analysis measuring the "storyness" of the scrambled American stories, Rice (1980) showed that the first 60 respondents confirmed the existence of an American story schema, one which included a beginning-middle-end structure moving from an unsatisfactorily state of affairs to a satisfactory one (p. 161).

Both statistical analysis and qualitative interview data showed that the remaining 70 respondents were able to systematically recall the American stories at a much greater rate than the Eskimo stories: 32 percent for American stories, and 2 percent for the Eskimo stories (Rice, 1980, pp. 164-165). Additionally, the respondents also systematically modified the Eskimo stories to fit the schematic norms of American stories. In an Eskimo story where an orphaned brother and sister were taken in by another family, for instance, Rice (1980) found that 5 out of the 11 respondents recalled the children as "living 'happily'" with the new family, when no such distinction was made in the story details (p. 167). Rice (1980) posits that her findings illustrate the "assimilation to, or by, cultural schemata," is one way in which "cultural knowledge informs our perceptions of the world" (p. 168).

Conceptualizing narrative as a type of schema informs the study of teachers' relationship with the official curriculum in important ways. Given that the salient features of teachers' individual narratives in schools represent their beliefs about the nature of education, teaching, and learning, they simultaneously inform us about teachers' school

experiences, both past and present. Through an extensive narrative study in Bay Street School in Canada, for instance, Clandinin and Connelly (1996) incorporate narrative inquiry to illustrate how teachers' knowledge is shaped by the contexts in which they work. They posit that teachers negotiate school settings through stories, distinguishing four types of stories emanating from school experience: "teacher stories, stories of teachers, school stories and stories of school" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1996, p. 25). As an example, Stephanie, the primary school teacher, told a "teacher story" about herself and her practices that included the idea of the classroom as a home (Clandinin & Connelly, 1996, p. 25). Stephanie decorated her classroom with her own and her students' prized possessions, student work, and celebratory images from each of the holidays celebrated by her students (Clandinin & Connelly, 1996, p. 25). As a result of these practices, the "school stories" and "stories of teacher" by Bay Street staff about Stephanie surrounded comments about her classroom being "messy" and about her focusing "too much on celebrations" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1996, p. 25).

Clandinin and Connelly (1996) show, however, that these stories started to change as the school underwent reform. The "stories of school" surrounding Bay Street focused on Bay Street as a "racially mixed" and "racially troubled" school, told by principals of other schools, parents and school board officials (Clandinin & Connelly, 1996, p. 25). Attempting to change these stories, the school board hired Phil Bingham,

with a reputation for being a "community principal" and "an exemplary inner-city principal" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1996, p. 25). Through the efforts of Phil Bingham, the story of Bay Street was being "retold," where Bay Street would now be a "lighthouse school," supporting language learning instruction, racial sensitivity, community involvement, and professional development of teachers (Clandinin & Connelly, 1996, p. 26). These changes also shaped the school stories and stories of teacher about Stephanie, now seen as an important example of the school's new image. Stephanie's teacher stories, which saw the classroom as a home and the teacher the homemaker, now became indicative of exemplary practices. Clandinin and Connelly (1996) illustrate that Stephanie's teacher stories also changed, where she incorporated language learning more extensively into her teaching practices (p. 26).

In this section I discussed the importance of ideology as a theoretical construct to the study of teachers' cognitive interpretations of their experiences in schools. Cognitive anthropology approaches investigating words-as-scenes (Fillmore,1977), metaphors of teaching and learning (Munby, 1987), and teachers' narratives of experience " (Clandinin & Connelly, 1996) do more than illustrate the ways teachers schematically structure and organize their experiences; they also show how teachers' beliefs about salient features of a schema, as well as beliefs about analogies and similarities of different schemas, are forever intractably connected to the changing cultural context in which teachers live and

work. The literature illustrates that teachers' beliefs about the nature and needs of their students shape their interpretations of how to implement curriculum guidelines. However, the literature also suggests that teachers make these interpretations within the context of hierarchical power relations within schools (e.g. state-mandated curriculum policies, expectations of their colleagues). As the present study examines how teachers interpret official curriculum guidelines, I suggest that the cognitive frameworks from which these interpretations emerge are *ideological* in nature.

2.4 Language Ideology and Education Research: The Teacher as Language Policy Actor

In this section, I examine the literature from language ideology research relevant to this study. I begin by discussing how researchers have defined the term language ideology. I then discuss language ideology research in institutional settings, as well as the ways language ideologies operate through institutionalized policies. Finally, I turn to language ideology research in schools. I argue that language ideologies frame global debates surrounding educational policies while simultaneously shaping local discourses in schools and classrooms as teachers and students negotiate the value of particular languages.

The term *language ideologies*[25] refers to "the ideas with which participants and observers frame their understanding of linguistic varieties and map those understandings onto people, events, and activities which are significant to them" (Irvine & Gal, 2000, p.35). As these ideas are socially positioned, they are dependent upon and capable of influencing power relations in the social environment (Wuthnow, 1987; Gal, 2005). Thus, Woolard and Schieffelin (1994) point to the appropriateness of the term "ideology" as it connects speech and language with interested human activity: "The term ideology […] signals a commitment to address the relevance of power relations to the nature of cultural forms and asks how essential meanings about language are socially produced as effective and powerful" (p. 58). Although they are ideologies of a special type, language ideologies cannot be separated from other ideologies—that is, they are "never only about language […] and have semiotic properties that provide insight into the workings of ideologies more generally" (Gal, 2005).

Silverstein (1985), for instance, posits the existence of the "monoglot Standard" in America. He refers to the "hegemonic domination" of the concept of "The Standard" in American discourse (newspapers, media, and popular writing), whereas, no matter

[25] Woolard and Schieffelin (1994) note that as "there is no single core literature," and as "all terms are currently in play" they use the three terms associated with this body of inquiry—"linguistic ideology, language ideology, and ideologies of language"—interchangeably (p. 56). They constrain these areas, however, through illustrating that the term "linguistic ideology" is often used to denote "formal linguistic structures," where the last two terms are used to denote "representations of a collective order" (Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994, p. 56). Consequently, in this study I use the term "language ideology research" to describe the body of this research conducted within the context of societal power relations.

where one's political or ideological aspirations lie, the linguistic debate in America tends to focus on the "The Standard" versus some other option (p. 284). To illustrate what he calls the "interested ideology" used to rationalize the hegemonic domination of the standard (where other language varieties are only understood in terms of the standard, in contrast with it), Silverstein (1985) quotes Milton and Rose Friedman (1980), who describe the origination and use value of languages. It becomes obvious that the Friedman's view language as having a functional utility, a view which Silverstein argues dominates American discourse on language (p. 287). Here language is seen as being nothing more than a tool of denotation. Silverstein (1985) then posits that the outcomes—the linguistic codes and the denotational function of language—are viewed—or "doubly anchored"—in American discourse as being dictated by natural processes through rational choice (p. 289). Finally, Silverstein (1985) argues that due to the naturalization of the standard in the above example, there arises the "social phenomena with 'power to command' over language, such as 'government school systems'…as merely the natural, or rational, endpoint in concrete institutional form, of the otherwise timeless forces of denotational optimization" (p. 288).

Likewise, the naturalization of the Standard often renders non-Standard forms suspect, and utilizing newspaper commentaries depicting non-standard speakers, Silverstein (1985) illustrates how the standard becomes a way to identify social

differentiation (p. 295). Given the undesirability of speaking non-standard varieties, Silverstein (1985) posits that in American discourse access to the standard is viewed as a right of a "free people"; he writes:

> Valorized as an instrument of maximally clear denotational communication, and indexically associated with those to whom its use has made accessible highly-valued characteristics, Standard English becomes a gradiently possessible commodity, access to which should be the 'natural,' 'rational' choice of every consumer equal-under-the-law. (p. 295)

Learning the standard, in this view, becomes synonymous with freedom—with the rights of every free person. Thus the monoglot Standard has become the "cultural emblem" in American society, and through this it becomes infused with both political and economic significance (Silverstein, 1985, p. 301).

Language ideology research also illustrates how such standardization doctrines affect the lives of social actors living under such ideological umbrellas. Through describing two U.S. court cases in which he took part as a linguistic anthropological expert Haviland (2003) illustrates the impact of language ideology on legal cases in the United States. Inspired by Silverstein, Haviland (2003) initially posits that the U.S. legal system operates under a monoglot Standard, which encompasses certain "ideological principles about what counts as 'language' in the first place, how linguistic varieties are conceived to be interrelated, and who is entitled or obligated to use what varieties in what

circumstances" (p. 765). These principles include a three-fold ideology: first, "words are essentially vehicles for conveying 'referential meaning,' that is, propositions that are simply true or false"; second, the majority language as "a transparent vehicle for conveying such propositions"; third, the "detachability of this majority language from the social circumstances of its acquisition and deployment," to where it becomes a simple "'tool' of propositional transmission, to be picked up as needed" (p. 766).

To illustrate this phenomenon in U.S. court cases, Haviland (2003) cites his involvement in a Mixtec murder trial, where the defendant, a Mixtec Indian named Santiago V., is accused of murder. Although three languages are involved here (Mixtec, Spanish, and English), Haviland (2003) shows that the latter—English—was the only one which had legitimate status as the official language of the courtroom (p. 768). Haviland (2003) posits that within the courtroom, a philosophy of "referential transparency" dominates, where it is viewed that the only difference between one language and another is meaning, meaning "which is often reduced to 'what words refer to' or what propositions they putatively express" (p. 767). Haviland (2003) shows how the judge's official orders to the jury—to only count evidence that has been translated through the interpreter in English (even if a juror happens to speak Spanish, he or she is to discount anything other than the official translation)—are indicative of this philosophy. Likewise, citing Oregon state law regarding the right to a court interpreter, Haviland (2003) shows

how a non-English speaker in a court of law is viewed as having a "handicap," one remedied through having an interpreter present; Haviland (2003) writes: "Non-English speakers, in other words, suffer from an inability to put their words into the appropriate transparent medium (English words)" (p. 769). Ultimately, as Santiago V. spoke Mixtec better than he spoke Spanish, and as the court interpreter spoke only Spanish, Haviland (2003) illustrates how this essentially silenced Santiago V., and he was convicted of a crime he did not commit (he was later found innocent after spending five years in jail).

Given the interconnectivity between language ideologies and other ideologies, language ideology research extends to larger debates surrounding globalization. Globalization cannot be defined as a single process, but as a phenomenon consisting of smaller phenomena, or as a "term that encompasses a number of transnational processes" (Ritzer, 2003, p. 189). These processes, however, have a specific characteristic which is of interest to studies of language ideology and the (re)production of symbolic value: the massive realignment and movement of capital from previously stable hegemonic centers to new ones. Friedman's (2003) definition is perhaps the most salient: "Globalization is best understood as a phase of decentralization of accumulation, one that is accompanied by enormous dislocations and migrations, by class polarization and cultural fragmentation, and by the rise of new powerful regions" (p. 744).

That globalization is characterized by the movement of capital and often the destabilization of established hegemonic centers presents specific challenges for nation-states, particularly as the "economic bases of social and cultural reproduction are crumbling" (Heller, 2003, p. 474). These changes are often accompanied by changing language ideologies from "the earlier-established notions…such as national identity through language" to multilingualism as the norm, "because never before have there been more options in linguistic choices" (Tan & Rubdy, 2008, p. 2). Many nation-states must grapple with difficult choices as they balance globalized economic aspirations with the promotion of official languages ideologically linked with the identity and legitimacy of the nation-state. These dilemmas often result in the commodification of languages, a process which "renders language amenable to redefinition as a measurable skill, as opposed to a talent, or an inalienable characteristic of group members" (Heller, 2003, p. 474). Further, when languages become commodities they become skills which are often measured through ideologies of standardization, leading to competition between local and global constructions of linguistic value.

In a summation of a series of studies taking place over the course of six years Heller (2003) examines what she calls "shifts in ideology and practice of what it means to be francophone in Canada, and the discursive and material struggles involved in those shifts, under conditions of social, economic and political change" (p. 480). Through

interviews, document collection, and participant observation (across New Brunswick, Quebec, and Ontario), of provincial association and school board meetings as well as a four month daily ethnography in two call centers, Heller (2003) investigates these ideological shifts as they relate to changing economic conditions arising from "the globalized new economy" (p. 473). Heller (2003) illustrates how language and identity (the latter in the form of "authenticity") are socially constructed as marketable commodities within the current discourses arising from the globalized new economy (p. 480). These new ideological constructions impact discourse about who controls the commodity and what is considered an authentic commodity (i.e. the value of the commodity).

Through an interview with a manager from a call center in southern Canada, Heller (2003) examines the value placed upon francophone employees in southeastern Canada as a result of the growth of the call center industry. The manager explains that the call center chose the specific location (centered in a primarily francophone community) as both the English and French languages are needed on the phones (Heller, 2003, p. 482). Although this development would seem to offer new opportunities to bilingual members of the community, Heller (2003) points out that the call center industry is characterized by high turnover and limited upward mobility, where middle management jobs generally go to monolingual English speakers (p. 483). Additionally, the needs of

customers calling into the center (who often speak different vernaculars) are slowly moving the industry towards the standardization of French, which would privilege French learned in school over the "vernacular bilingualism" of the surrounding community (Heller, 2003, p. 484). Thus, although language has become a sellable commodity in this community, it also creates new forms of competition over the value of language, particularly international versus local varieties.

Wee (2008) investigates similar economic and ideological developments in Singapore, where "mother tongue" languages (Mandarin, Malay, and Tamil) are constructed as "repositories of cultural values," and contrasted with English which is treated as having "economic and technical" value (p. 31). Wee (2008) calls the process of assigning economic value (normally assigned to English) to mother tongue languages "linguistic instrumentalism," and he outlines the characteristics and consequences of these ideological constructions through analysis of newspaper articles and government speeches from Singapore, as well as through engaging current research on the commodification of language (p. 32).

Linguistic instrumentalism becomes problematic for nation-states hoping to foster economic development through language education, particularly when, as in the case of Singapore, the government has taken a "multiracial stance" promoting mother tongue languages as integral to preserving the nation's cultural heritage (Wee, 2008, p. 35). For

instance, Wee (2008) cites a speech given in 1985 by the Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore arguing for the promotion of the Mandarin language as its economic value increases due to China's new "open door" policy (p. 35). English and Mandarin are now ideologically assigned to the domain of economic advantage, where Malay and Tamil remain cultural markers. Wee (2008) illustrates how this move has led many non-Chinese parents in Singapore to desire and seek out Mandarin instruction for their children (p. 36). Linguistic instrumentalism, therefore, leads to a polarizing economic competition among languages, one which Malay and Tamil cannot win[26]. Research in India (where Tamil is spoken) and Malaysia indicates that business transactions in Malaysia and India are more likely to be conducted in English than in Malay or Tamil, and Singaporeans tend to be more impressed with the economic growth of China and the West than they are with that of Malaysia and India (Wee, 2008, P. 37).

Like Heller (2003), Wee (2008) also finds competition between the international and the local vernaculars of Mandarin. He shows that although Mandarin would seem to be in a privileged position through the linguistic instrumentalist lens, many Chinese parents in Singapore are sending their children abroad to "improve their command of the language" (Wee, 2008, p. 39). Thus linguistic instrumentalism although promoting

[26] See also Echeverria's (2003) study of language ideologies of Basque and Spanish in Spain. Echeverria (2003) finds that although Basque is promoted by the state in various ways, Spanish continues to be the language used for business and industry; consequently, "parents and students described Spanish as the more important language for students' future prospects" (p. 394).

bilingualism (and even multilingualism) often leads to the promotion of particular kind of bilingualism, what Wee (2008) calls "two unilingualisms" (p. 41).

Ideologies of standardization and purism (Silverstein, 1987; Haviland, 2003) also pervade second-language-learning (L2) educational environments. These language ideologies are revealed through teachers' and students' evaluations of their own language use both inside and outside the classroom. In a one year study consisting of focused interviews of 43 members (faculty, graduate students, and lecturers) of a university Spanish foreign language department in America, Valdes et. al. (2003) find a "discourse of monolingualism" in teacher and student talk about language usage (p. 14). Like the "monoglot Standard" English (Silverstein 1987), Valdes et. al. (2003) illustrate a discourse where "good" Spanish is "pure, formal, and error free" (p. 16). Respondents in interviews continually connected "academic" or "standard" Spanish with the varieties spoken by native speakers from Spain or Latin American countries (Valdes et. al, 2003, p. 18). These constructions not only underscore notions of linguistic value, where certain vernaculars are considered more valuable than others (Wee, 2008), but they also denote a definition of bilingualism where in order to be truly bilingual, one must speak the "standard" variety of each language (Valdes et. al, 2003, p. 18).

In addition to the valuing of the standard, "academic" variety of Spanish within the department, Valdes et. al. (2003) find a devaluing of the Spanish vernaculars spoken

by Latinos who grew up in America. U.S. Latinos in the study spoke of "embarrassment" or anxiety over their own varieties of Spanish (Valdes et. al, 2003, p. 20). Valdes et. al. (2003) posit that this leads to a "hegemonic" valuing of Spanish varieties which all members of the department subscribe to: "Native speakers of Spanish from Spain or Latin America were at the top of the hierarchy, followed by foreign language or non-native speakers," and "U.S. Latinos occupied the lowest levels of the power structure" (p. 23).

Moreover, studies of how teachers' language ideologies are expressed through narratives illustrate the dialectical relationship between teachers' "beliefs" and the power relations in the teaching environment, or what Nespor (1987) terms, "The contextual constraints encountered in the work contexts of teaching" (p. 2). In a study conducted in South Texas public schools, for example, Trujillo (2004) examines the narratives of Chicano teachers to explore these complex relationships. Trujillo (2004) documents the Chicano Nationalism movement in South Texas in the 1970s, most notably, the dominance of the school board in Crystal City, Texas by the *Raza Unida* Party (RUP), a Chicano nationalist organization. The Crystal City School District school board president from 1970 to 1972, himself a founding member of the RUP, instituted a series of educational reforms designed to promote the ideology of *maintenance bilingualism* in K-

12 instruction, to counter the "cultural imposition" (Trujillo, 2004, p. 57) of the English only curriculum.

Examining teachers' narratives as a form of "reflexive evaluation" (Trujillo, 2004, p. 67) of their experiences during the reform, Trujillo (2004) illustrates how the ideology of maintenance bilingualism in K-5 instruction was slowly abandoned (by the late 1970s) in favor of a *transitional* bilingual program (from Spanish to English). This occurred partly as a result of pressures from junior high school teachers and parents who complained that students in the maintenance bilingualism program were not entering junior high school with the English ability necessary to succeed in mainstream schools, a complaint that received further impetus from standardized English test results (Trujillo, 2004). Trujillo (2004) shows how teachers' narratives describing the change from a maintenance bilingualism program to a transitional one express both a feeling of regret as well as a rational justification for the change. As an example, Mrs. Rimares' a fourth and fifth grade teacher who previously taught in the maintenance bilingual program, relates her feelings about the loss of the maintenance bilingualism program and the adoption of the transitional one:

> I personally saw a need, maybe not necessarily to drop the Spanish, but there was a strong need for our students because they, the majority of the student population, I felt weren't fluent in either Spanish or English. We had some that were very fluent in both, but I felt that there wasn't enough to justify. Personally, that's how I felt. (Trujillo, 2004, p. 71)

Trujillo's (2004) analysis of teachers' narratives shows that teachers' ideologies concerning maintaining Chicano identity through maintenance bilingualism at times conflicted with other ideologies concerning the needs of students (e.g. the ideology that the purpose of education is to create students capable of entering mainstream American schools). That the ideology of transitional bilingualism ultimately dominated illustrates the complex dialectical interrelationships between teachers' subjective, interested ideologies and the objective power relationships characterizing teachers' work. It also illustrates how in making such determinations teachers simultaneously function as policy actors through individually and collectively interpreting the mandates of the school board.

In this section, I reviewed the literature that examines language ideologies as a particular type of ideology which extends to larger worldviews concerning the nature and value of language in the world. The literature suggests that language ideologies shape and merge with other ideologies, influencing the emergence of complex worldviews. It also suggests that language ideologies influence, and are influenced by, power relations and the competition for local and global resources in a world rapidly changing through globalization. In schools and classrooms, language ideologies often frame relationships between teachers and students as well as influence teachers' conceptions concerning teaching and learning. In the following section, by bringing in Bourdieu's theory of social

reproduction, habitus, and field, I show that language ideologies, being part of the "cultural raw material we face" (Haviland, 2003, p.764), are powerful and recognizable aspects of culturally shared and contextually relative cognitive frameworks, or *schemas*.

2.5 Culture and Language as Shared, Cognitive Strategies: Bourdieu's Habitus and Field

In the literature reviewed, ideology is represented by teachers' beliefs about the salient aspects of teaching and learning. This was helpful for illustrating the ways teachers' beliefs shape their interpretations of curriculum guidelines. Nespor (1985) showed how eighth grade English teachers' beliefs about the practical and emotional needs of their students impacted the ways they enacted the curriculum in their classrooms. Similarly, Valdes et. al. (2003) describe how professors and students in a university foreign language department enacted their beliefs about the superiority of specific Spanish vernaculars over other linguistic forms. A summation of the literature I reviewed underscores the correlative relationship between ideologies and larger worldviews. It also illustrates the complex web of relationships between teachers' ideologies and the power relations in the school environment.

That the theoretical perspective in this study is *relational*—that is, as it views the study of culture as the study of the relationships between subjective experience and objective context—prioritizes a more nuanced explanation of these relationships. To elucidate this perspective, I draw on Bourdieu's (1977) practice theory. Bourdieu's

(1987) concern with overcoming the opposition between what he called the "subjectivist" and "objectivist" sociological positions guided much of his work (p. 15). He took issue with the subjectivist notion that thoughts alone "determine behavior by motivating it," as well as the purely objectivist vision that "scientific knowledge can only be obtained only by means of a break with primary representations" (Bourdieu, 1989, pp. 14-15). Bourdieu (1977) overcame this opposition primarily through the delineation of two particular terms: *habitus* and *field*.

Habitus represents the "subjective" aspect of Bourdieu's (1977) practice theory. Bourdieu (1977) defines habitus as:

> Systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can only be objectively adapted to their outcomes without predisposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to obtain them. (p. 72).

Habitus can be understood in relationship to the concept of schemas in cognitive anthropology. D'Andrade (1995) notes that both habitus and schemas are "flexible, implicit recognition procedures, not rules, which are not necessarily consciously known" (p. 147). Like schemas, habitus represent shared perceptual schemes, appreciations, and ways of structuring human experiences. However, unlike schemas, which represent cognitive structures, habitus also represents a system of styles of behaving and acting

which are embodied both cognitively and corporeally. The structured dispositions of habitus are generative of strategies which agents employ to obtain "material and symbolic interests" (Acciaioli, 1981, p. 50). For Bourdieu (1986), these interests take the form of different types of capital.

Bourdieu (1986) defines capital through its relationship to power; he writes: "Capital is accumulated labor…which, when appropriated on a private, i.e. exclusive, basis by agents or groups of agents, enables them to appropriate social energy in the form of reified or living labor" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 241). Thus power which for Bourdieu (1986) "amounts to the same thing," is the symbolic correlate of capital (p. 243). Capital takes several forms, but Bourdieu (1986) introduces three types as its "fundamental guises": economic, social, and cultural (p. 243). *Economic capital* represents wealth in the form of money, where *social capital* represents the importance of who you know—that is, the power of social networking and the wealth it facilitates. Finally, *cultural capital* is the accumulation of valued knowledge, training, and skills which one acquires through social standing and education.

Of the three capitals, cultural capital is most relevant to this study as it is intricately connected to habitus. Bourdieu (1986) outlines three forms of cultural capital: the embodied state, which represents "long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body"; the objectified state, representing "cultural goods," like books, computers, and

dictionaries; and the institutionalized state, a type of objectification of cultural capital which legitimizes it through educational qualifications or certificates (p. 244). The embodied state of cultural capital is important to the concept of habitus; it represents knowledge and skills learned both implicitly and explicitly that influence the ways people understand and organize their experiences. Acciaioli (1981) describes this process as the "inculcation of schemes of opposition and apprenticeship through simple familiarization and through explicit and express transmission, producing a sense of limits or a sense of reality" (p. 50). Bourdieu (1977) notes that this sense of limits results in certain cultural forms becoming "misrecognized" as superior to other cultural forms (p. 652).

An example of this misrecognition can be found in research of language ideologies. Bourdieu (1977) specifies a particular type of habitus—*language habitus*—as "a permanent disposition towards language and interactions" (p. 655). Language habitus represents language competencies which function as *linguistic capital* given the character of the linguistic market; Bourdieu (1977) writes:

> In order for one form of speech among others…to impose itself as the only legitimate one, in short, in order for there to be a recognized (i.e. misrecognized) domination, the linguistic market has to be unified and the different class or regional dialects have to be measured practically against the legitimate language. (p. 652)

Returning to the study of Spanish foreign language departments in America I reviewed above, Valdes et. al. (2003) found that the linguistic varieties of native speakers

of Spanish from Spain or Latin America were misrecognized by professors and students as being objectively superior to the Spanish spoken by U.S. Latinos. Thus Spanish from Spain or Latin America occupied a higher symbolic position within this particular linguistic market—what Bourdieu (1977) calls a *field*.

For Bourdieu (1977) a *field* represents the objective power relations of a given setting. A field is bounded, constructed, and ordered by specific rules or organizational logic. In the above study, a Spanish foreign language department in America represents a specific "field of power" (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 16). As Valdes et. al. (2003) show, an agent's position within this field is dependent upon the organizational logic of the field and the agent's linguistic habitus, also functioning here as linguistic capital.

In practice, then, habitus and field reciprocally interact. As sets of dispositions, habitus shapes interests and behavior. As Bourdieu (1990) puts it:

> As the product of history, habitus produces individual and collective practices, and thus history, in accordance with the schemata engendered by history. It ensures the active presence of past experiences which, deposited in each organism in the form of schemata of thought and action, tend, more surely than all formal rules and all explicit norms, tend to guarantee the conformity of practices and their constancy across time. (p. 91)

Habitus shapes the formation of two types of strategies. The first order of strategies represent those which are "directly oriented toward the primary profit of

practice" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 22). Bourdieu (1977) gives the example of the prestige and position one might acquire from an advantageous marriage. The second type, which Bourdieu (1977) calls "second-order strategies," are those which, "give apparent satisfaction to the demands of the official rule, and thus to compound the satisfactions of enlightened self-interest with the advantage of ethical impeccability" (p. 22).

We can find a fitting example of these processes from the study in the Bay Street School in Canada above. Clandinin and Connelly (1996) illustrated Stephanie, the primary school teacher, understood the classroom setting as a home, and that this shaped the strategies she employed in her teaching. When the ideology underlying the story of Bay Street School was changed through the institutionalization of a new ideology—that Bay Street was now a racially sensitive "lighthouse school" promoting community involvement—Stephanie's strategies now became the legitimate way to run a classroom (Clandinin & Connelly, 1996, p. 26). Stephanie then enhanced this new adherence to the official rules by incorporating more language learning through her teaching (Clandinin & Connelly, 1996). Thus as a result in the change in the official ideology, i.e. a change in the organizational logic of the field, Stephanie's position within the field also changed.

Bourdieu's theory of practice is invaluable for the study of how teachers' ideologies impact their interpretations of official curriculum guidelines as it complicates our understanding of how teachers' beliefs reciprocally shape their practices. As a

theoretical framework it contributes to language ideology research by expanding our understanding of how language ideologies interact with larger worldviews. Similarly, it contributes to cognitive anthropology research by illustrating how cognitive frameworks are linked schematically to the larger social order. Incorporating Bourdieu's practice theory, this study contributes to these traditions by viewing them through the lens of a conceptualization of culture where ideology is an observable correlate of worldview, and worldview is relational to the power relations in the social environment.

Finally, the present study also contributes to Bourdieu's theory of practice, particularly how it relates to social reproduction of linguistic value through education, by complicating our understanding of the school as a formal institution. As mentioned above, Bourdieu (1977) posits that the mechanism of symbolic domination of one linguistic variety over another requires that the linguistic market be "unified" (p. 652). He locates this unified market within schools as formal institutions: "The educational system is a crucial object of struggle because it has a monopoly over the production of the mass of producers and consumers, and hence over the reproduction of the market on which the value of linguistic competence depends" (p. 652). However, factors such as notions of group solidarity and economic advantage have been shown to trump the influence of institutionalization in determining language prestige. Woolard (1985) for example, shows that although Castilian had enjoyed 40 years of full institutional domination in Spain

under the Franco regime, Catalan still retained a high amount of prestige among speakers of both Castilian and Catalan. She suggests that language prestige is more determined by "face-to-face encounters" than it is by schools and other formal institutions[27] (Woolard, 1985, p. 742). What roles, then, does the teacher as an *interpreter* of official doctrine play in these processes? How do teachers' beliefs about language, education, and their students impact these interpretations? How do these interpretations play out in schools and classrooms?

[27] Woolard (1985) shows that the economically well off were native Catalan speakers while the workers were Spanish speakers from Andalusia. Irvine (1989) makes a similar observation, citing her research of Wolof villagers in Senegal where the French language enjoyed institutional, political dominance. Irvine (1989) notes, however, that despite French's legitimate position, Wolof villagers did not recognize this legitimacy, instead turning to Arabic, which is the language of the dominant religion of the Wolof: Islam (pp. 255-256).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN

This is a narrative inquiry qualitative study centered in the English Department of an all-boys public high school in the United Arab Emirates. More specifically, I examine how L2 teachers' beliefs impact their practices in the classroom by combining two sometimes divergent anthropological approaches to the study of culture: *cognitive anthropology research*, which is often the neutral examination of subjective beliefs (D'Andrade, 1995), and *language ideology research*, which is often the critical analysis of ideological forms related to objective social power relations (Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994). I posit that conceptualizing *ideologies* as the "observable correlates of beliefs" (Wuthnow, 1980, p. 146) provides an operational linkage of the cognitive approach with the language ideology approach. This linkage allows us to benefit from the conceptual and methodological insights of cognitive theory while simultaneously permitting the examination of the social power relations in the environmental context imperative to language ideology research.

In this section, I outline the conceptual framework I have adopted to contextualize or "restory" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990) the narratives of experience gleaned from my participant observation, interview and document data. My reasons for conducting narrative analysis are two-fold. First, narratives, or "stories of experience" (Connelly &

Clandinin, 1990, p.2), represent specific types of schematic, cognitive frameworks, "mental templates" (Myers, 2007, p. 25), or "schemas" (D'Andrade, 1995, p. 124), through which humans organize their experiences. Second, narratives represent ideologies—observable utterances and behaviors that express beliefs. As Razfar (2012) puts it, "When human beings engage in various language practices (e.g., narrative), they are simultaneously displaying their beliefs about the nature, function, and purpose of language" (p. 63). Thus as schemas that express individual beliefs, narratives are instances of ideology. Conceptualizing narratives in this way permits the formation of "formal descriptions of cultural knowledge" (Rice, 1980, p.152) necessary for *theoretical validity*[28], and essential to interpretive qualitative research (Maxwell, 1992).

3.1 Narratives, Ideology and L2 Teachers as L2 Policy Actors

I conceptualize narrative as a particular type of language practice, one that expresses belief. Understanding beliefs in terms of their structure through schema theory is one way of operationalizing them. However, Wuthnow (1980) points to the difficulty inherent in making claims about the actual beliefs participants might hold; he writes:

[28] See Maxwell (1992) for a succinct outline of these two terms. Maxwell (1992) posits that *a valid qualitative theory* adequately addresses both, "the concepts or categories that that theory employs, and the relationships that are thought to exist among those concepts" (p. 291). Moreover, inspired by Maxwell (1992) I define *generalizability* as the extent to which a particular qualitative account can be extended to other accounts in other circumstances. Although there are certainly limitations to the generalizability of interpretive research (Maxwell, 1992), the schema concept I develop below, as it is drawn from current research in both cognitive anthropology (D'Andrade, 1995) and biological neuroscience (Reyes, 2002), presents the possibility of "external generalizability"—that is, schema theory can be generalized to "other communities , groups or institutions" (Maxwell, 1992, p. 293).

"[Beliefs] probably cannot be observed directly" (p. 146). Instead, beliefs can only be *inferred* from language practices, more specifically, from the utterances and behaviors of participants (Wuthnow, 1980).

Like Wuthnow (1980), I regard ideologies as "sets of statements that actually exist, now or in the past" (p. 147). As utterances and behaviors, ideologies occur and are stated in the presence of other social actors; they subsequently influence and are influenced by these relationships, relationships which are themselves characterized by power relations in the larger social environment. Drawing on Swidler (1986) and Bourdieu (1977), I conceptualize ideological statements as *strategic*, in that they represent the *interested* activity of actors who may or may not be cognizant of these power relationships. As an example, when teachers interpret their school's curriculum—those documents and statements representing the mandates of the state concerning the nature and activity of education in public schools—they do so within the context of their immediate and long-term interests, interests related to their individual beliefs (Nespor, 1987; Shkedi, 2009). However, through these interpretations, teachers (perhaps unknowingly) function as "policy actors" (Brown, 2010, p. 298) in that they appropriate the curriculum for their own purposes, sometimes changing it or even constructing it anew in the process (Shkedi, 2009). In this study, I examine these interpretations as

ideological statements expressed through teachers' narratives of experience. In the next section I discuss my research methods, including data collection and analysis.

3.2 Methods: Data Collection and Analysis

Research Setting and My Positionality

I conducted this study at the Najah Boys' High School, a public high school located in a small suburban city in the emirate of Abu Dhabi. I chose this site for two reasons. First, the emirate of Abu Dhabi has instituted a massive educational reform program—the New School Model Program (NSMP)—emphasizing English language instruction in all core subjects except Arabic Language, Social Studies and Religious Studies. This emphasis has compelled the Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC) to define what it deems as the purposes of both education and language, making the UAE, and particularly Abu Dhabi, an important place for the study of institutionalized educational ideologies. Second, the Najah High School is entering its third year in the NSMP; subsequently, it has replaced the majority of its native-Arabic-speaking English teachers with native-English-speaking teachers from America and Ireland. The sudden arrival of these five new teachers from Western countries, who will work alongside the two teachers from Egypt and Tunisia, makes Najah a fitting site for the study of how culturally resonant beliefs impact teaching practices.

Situated approximately thirty kilometers south of the island of Abu Dhabi, the Najah Boys' High School is in the third and final year of the Public-Private-Partnership (PPP), a program representing the first stage of the NSMP. The school is still in the beginning stages of implementing the massive school reform program currently occurring in Abu Dhabi. The Abu Dhabi Education Council, the administrative branch of the Ministry of Education (MOE), launched the PPP program in the Najah Boys' High School in September of 2009. As part of the PPP program, members of Franklin Incorporated, a British private company assigned to the school, worked closely with the principal of Najah to implement structured changes designed to improve the students' performance on standardized state tests in English and Math. The PPP program also facilitated the launching of ADEC's New School Model Curriculum (NSMC) in Abu Dhabi public schools as they transitioned from teacher-centered, rote memorization methods to "student-centered and critical thinking" methods while simultaneously emphasizing the English language in all core subjects (ADEC, 2010).

With the end of the PPP program, the school enters a new phase of the reform where the majority of the bilingual, native-Arabic-speaking English department staff has been replaced by native-English-speaking teachers from America and Ireland. Only one of the original seven-member bilingual, native-Arabic-speaking English department has

remained[29]. I joined the English department myself as an American English teacher in 2009, and I have had an opportunity to work with both the bilingual, native-Arabic-speaking English teachers as well as the native-English-speaking teachers as they became acclimated to their new positions. My dual role as teacher and mentor for the incoming teachers gave me unique access to them both on and off the school site.

Bourdieu (1986) reminds us that we are all located in class locations of a given field, and that our perspectives must be considered in relation to our "position[s] occupied in social space" (p. 21). My role as teacher, a role I occupied while simultaneously conducting research, gave me a specific location in the field of Najah. Although this position enabled me to develop trusting relationships with the research participants, it is also important to note that my role as a teacher had important implications for reflexivity, particularly in the area of the schemas of teaching. Malterud (2001) notes that, "A researcher's background and position will affect what they choose to investigate, the angle of investigation, the methods judged most adequate for this purpose, the findings considered most appropriate, and the framing and communication of conclusions" (pp. 483-484).

Indeed, when I began this study, I wanted to know how teachers' beliefs impacted the ways they interpreted and implemented their school's curriculum. I initially focused

[29] As I discussed earlier, the second Arab teacher in this study, Mr. Abel, was transferred into Najah two months into the school year.

on teachers' beliefs about language, as the context of my study was this situation where the English language was being utilized to replace the Arabic language in core subjects like Science and Math, subjects which had been previously taught in Arabic. Thus, my initial focus was on literature from a specific field of anthropology: language ideology research. As I began to analyze my data, however, I realized very quickly that there was much more to the story of how teachers at the Najah School were making sense of their experiences. The teachers in the study not only espoused beliefs about the role and value of language in the world, but they also espoused specific beliefs about the *nature of teaching*—that is, about what it meant to be a teacher. I also found that these beliefs were structured frameworks, corresponding to scripts, where the teacher and the students each had specific roles to play in the classroom. And there were significant differences among the participants, differences which corresponded with the *countries* from which the teachers originated. Given these discoveries, I then turned to another branch of anthropology which focused on the structure of beliefs and belief systems—*cognitive anthropology*—in an effort to discuss what I found.

My discovery of teachers' schemas of teaching, and my decision to investigate this further, was certainly connected in important ways to my position as a teacher at Najah. As an American, and as a teacher whose own ideology of teaching was closer to the schema I would come to call the *teacher as familial role model,* I was struck by the

ways my American colleagues were constructing the role of the teacher in terms of an *enthusiastic motivational speaker*. Although my discoveries were driven by the data, particularly the force and frequency with which teachers espoused and enacted both schemas, my role as an American teacher with divergent ideologies from my countrymen played a part in my highlighting this particular aspect of the teachers' experiences. This aspect of my discoveries cannot be ignored; however, the findings related to schemas of teaching were data-driven and as I have shown, had precedent in numerous studies of cognitive anthropology (Rice, 1980; D'Andrade, 1995; Nelson, 1981; Quinn, 1980).

Data Collection

In this study, I collected interview, participant observation and document data over a period of nine months (from September 2011 to June, 2012). The teacher participants in this study all had stories to tell, stories about how they became teachers, stories about how they came to teach in Abu Dhabi, stories about students and other teachers, and emergent about how and why they adopted certain behaviors in and outside the classroom. Inspired by Connelly and Clandinin (1990), who argue that narrative is "both the phenomenon and method" in narrative inquiry, I analyzed this data interpretively through narrative analysis to retell teachers' stories of experience (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). Using these methods, I endeavored to understand the ideological forms teachers' incorporated to make sense of their experiences and subsequent actions.

Ultimately, I strove to understand how these ideologies impacted teachers' interpretations of the official curriculum mandated by the state. In the following section, I discuss the methods of research and data analysis.

To examine the ways teachers' ideologies shape their interpretations of formal written curriculum guidelines I utilized a four-fold methodology. First, I conducted bi-weekly participant observations in each class. My role at Najah also permitted me daily contact with the participants during planning sessions both on and off the school site where I conducted informal interviews. Second, I conducted weekly 50-70 minute interviews in English which involved a single informant. In these interviews, I utilized "long interview" methodology (McCracken, 1988; Tan & Hunter, 2002). Third, I conducted "stimulated recall interviews" (Nespor, 1987), where teachers' lessons were videotaped, and teachers were interviewed (usually during or after school) where they were asked to examine the videotape and describe their thoughts at various intervals during the class period. Finally, I collected all documents relating to the NSM Curriculum, as well as teachers' lesson plans and samples of graded student work. In this section, I will outline my methods of data collection, including descriptions of the focal teachers and their classrooms.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) have suggested that the purpose of sampling in interpretive research is to "maximize information, not facilitate generalization" (p. 202).

As I will show, both the long interviews and stimulated recall interviews conducted in this research constitute time-consuming yet richly saturating methodologies necessary for narrative inquiry. As such, both methodological approaches suggest small sample size (Tan & Hunter, 2002; Nespor, 1987). The teacher sample for this study consisted of the seven-member English department at the Najah Boy's High School: four Americans, a Tunisian, an Egyptian and an Irishman. That all members of the English staff were either bilingual in English and Arabic, or were native speakers of English, and that English classes were taught primarily in English, facilitated participant observation and interviews, which were conducted in English.

Participant Observation

I conducted participant observation in each of the eight classrooms every two weeks. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) underscore the need for "active recording" (p. 5) of field notes during narrative inquiry, where the researcher reflexively remembers that simply by being present and recording the action he or she is an active part of the description (i.e. a character in the story). With this mindset, I recorded field notes with a dual intention: first, to gain an understanding of the classroom setting in preparation for the stimulated recall interviews; and second, to examine patterns of both language use and use of the written curriculum guidelines in the classroom, including code switching practices (for Arab teachers), explicit and implicit instruction concerned with speaking

and listening in English, and the use of or reference to curriculum tasks. Specifically, I examined classroom seating arrangements and appearance, the teacher's and students' use of the English and Arabic languages, when the students were encouraged to utilize English and Arabic during classroom instruction, the teacher's reference to curriculum goals and content, what aspect(s) of the curriculum the teacher engaged with during the lesson, and teacher and student interaction and behavior.

Long Interviews and Stimulated Recall Interviews

In addition to participant observations, I interviewed the seven focal teachers utilizing two interview strategies: "long interviews" (McCracken, 1988; Tan & Hunter, 2002) and "stimulated recall interviews" (Nespor, 1987). McCracken's (1988) "long interview" methodology facilitates the narrative inquiry approach, structuring the interview towards obtaining contextually rich stories from informants. The long interview elicits biographical and chronological stories through incorporating three types of questions—"grand tour," "floating prompt," and "planned prompt" (p. 37).

The long interview method initially begins with "grand tour" questions, where the informant is permitted to define wide perspectives concerning the substance of the interview in a non-directive manner (McCracken, 1988, p. 37). Measor (1985) comments on the importance of building initial rapport in qualitative research: "In our research, we operated with the idea that the quality of the data is dependent on the quality of the

relationships you build with the people being interviewed" (p. 57). The "grand tour" questions help to establish these relationships, both in their content and in the mannerisms of the researcher, mannerisms which present a, "benign, accepting, curious (but not inquisitive) individual who is prepared and eager to listen to virtually any testimony with interest" (McCracken, 1988,p. 38). Examples of grand tour questions I asked informants include: "What made you decide to become a teacher? What made you decide to come to Abu Dhabi? Do you have stories of individual teachers or experiences that you attribute to the teaching styles and strategies you have adopted?" (See Appendix 1 for entire interview protocol).

Grand tour questions were sometimes followed by "floating prompt" questions (McCracken, 1988; Tan & Hunter, 2002), where I made a decision to follow an aspect of the discussion in more detail (McCracken, 1988; Tan & Hunter, 2002). As an example, I would sometimes ask an informant what he meant by a certain word or to explain something he had just said in more detail. The final questions guiding my approach to the long interview were "planned prompt" questions (Tan & Hunter, 2002), which were initially derived from the literature review and conceptual framework. This category of questioning included questions like: "What level of English proficiency do you strive for in your students? How would you describe that level?" and "How would you describe your approach to the curriculum?" (See Appendix 1 for entire interview protocol). The

majority of these interviews were tape recorded, and I carefully documented participants' behaviors during the interviews, including facial expressions, speech intonation and stress, and body positions and postures.

The second type of interviews I conducted for this study were "stimulated recall interviews" (Nespor, 1987). Nespor (1987) posits that the use of "stimulated recall interviews" is invaluable for gaining understanding of "the ways teachers explain and justify their practices" (p. 221). During the stimulated recall interview, each of the seven teacher's lessons was videotaped, and interviews were conducted where the teachers' were asked to examine the videotape and describe their thoughts at various intervals during the class period. Each teacher participated in a single stimulated recall interview.

Nespor (1987) describes the important effects of camera placement on teachers' perspectives during the interviews. He suggests that placing the camera in the back of the room, facing the teacher often encourages the teacher to focus on feelings, moods and self-evaluation. Alternatively, camera placement at the front of the room facing the students prompts teacher attention to student behavior (Nespor, 1987). Following Nespor (1987), I placed the camera towards the back on the left side of the room for each recording to facilitate active movement between participants during the lesson. The camera was placed on a tripod and positioned to capture the teacher and students from the middle to the front of the classroom. I moved the camera when the teacher would move

out of frame or when a student in the back asked a question. During the filming I also took active field notes, recording both the teacher's and the students' behavior (facial expressions, body movements and interaction). I recorded approximately 30-40 minutes of each lesson.

The stimulated recall interviews were conducted in both a *directed* and *non-directed* manner (Nespor, 1987). They were *directed* in that I would stop the video at different intervals and ask the teacher specific questions. Similar to "planned prompt" questions, these questions were directly related to the literature review and conceptual framework. Examples of directed questions I asked included: "Can you elaborate on the decision you made here? Did any of the students' behavior or reactions prompt this decision? What aspects of the curriculum guidelines do you think best describe your objectives here?" (See Appendix 1 for entire interview protocol). These interviews were also *non-directed* in that I would let the participant stop the tape at any time and discuss aspects of the videotape he deemed to be important.

Document Collection

I collected all documents related to the 10th, 11th, and 12th grade English curriculum (mission statements, the "New School Model" reform documents, newspaper articles outlining rationale and the program initiatives, and the curriculum document itself). I also collected teachers' individual lesson plans and samples of graded student

work. I collected the New School Model reform documents with the specific intent of understanding textual information pertaining to the role of schools, the curriculum, teachers and students, and language in the new reform program. These documents included information and mission statements surrounding ADEC's "New School Model" program and the place of the curriculum within it: newspaper articles defining ADEC's goals, ADEC's "School Leadership Handbook," "Educational Policy Agenda," and "Strategic Plan," as well as Najah's School Mission Statement, Franklin Incorporated's mission statement and objectives, and other goal, objective and mission statement documents.

Additionally, to understand the tasks expected of teachers and students I collected the curriculum documents of both the New School Model and ADEC's 10th, 11th, and 12th grade English language curriculum. And to understand the standards linked with these tasks, I collected documents pertaining to ADEC's "Key Performance Indicators" (KPI's), which represent assessment standards for each grade level in the study, and ADEC and Franklin Incorporated's joint teacher evaluation forms. I also closely documented signs, notifications and posters in the focal classrooms and in the hallways of Najah to understand both the school setting and how the teachers' interpreted their roles in the school. Teachers were expected to decorate their walls with students' work, and I

documented the assignments and examples teachers posted to understand how teachers represented themselves and their own curricular standards within their classrooms.

Data Analysis

In this section I will discuss the ways the data I collected were analyzed. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) remind narrative researchers that analysis of narratives, which involves the writing of individual narratives, is "not accurately written according to the model of cause and effect but according to explanations gleaned from the overall narrative" where "one does not feel lost in minutia but always has a sense of the whole" (p. 7). This involves a delicate balancing act between the data (interviews, participant observation, and document analysis) and the themes relevant to the research findings. I analyzed this data through interpreting the "interplay between the data and the emerging themes" (Tan & Hunter, 2002, p. 3) in both teachers' narratives and in the written official curriculum. More specifically, I analyzed the data I collected through comparing the narrative themes (as ideologies of language and teaching) of the written curriculum with those emergent through teachers' interpretations of the curriculum.

Maxwell (2010) suggests that a key difference between qualitative and quantitative methods, a difference which often renders qualitative research unpredictable and sometimes politically dangerous, is that quantitative research "necessarily specifies in advance its hypothesis and methods and the types of data that will be collected" (p.

475). Qualitative researchers, however, often "refuse to limit their questions and methods in advance" (Maxwell, 2010, p. 465) as themes are often emergent and surprising and arise as the data are coded and analyzed (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). I initially coded the data I collected through organizing teachers' narratives into school, curriculum, and classroom stories, stories of teachers and students, and taken-for granted beliefs about language—that is, my initial focus was to analyze teachers' narratives in terms of *language ideologies*. However, as I coded and analyzed the data, new patterns emerged, and I realized that teachers' language ideologies mediated and were mediated by other ideologies surrounding *the nature and aims of teaching*. Subsequently, I reformulated my research questions, coding and analysis of data to examine teachers' ideologies about language *and* teaching.

Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995) remind researchers that when analyzing field data, they must "give priority to processes rather than to 'causes' or internal psychological 'motives"' (pp. 146-147). They recommend six questions for the analysis of research data: "What are people doing? What are they trying to accomplish? How, exactly, do they do this? What specific means and or strategies do they use? How do members talk about, categorize, and understand what is going on? What assumptions are they making? What do I see going on here? What did I learn from these notes? Why did I include them?" (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995, p. 146). I analyzed the participant

observation, long interview and stimulated recall interview data I collected utilizing these six questions.

Participant Observation and Focal Teacher Data

I initially analyzed participant observation data collected in the classrooms and hallways of Najah by carefully reading the field notes for emergent themes surrounding the stories they told about the individual classrooms or the school as a whole. I contained the categorization of these themes through organizing them under the four research questions. The categorized themes were stored in two encrypted computer files: one which brought the themes together into a gestalt whole, and the other which kept them separated by the individual teacher. This typology allowed me to look for emergent patterns for individual teachers as well as patterns within the school as a whole. Each time I conducted a new participant observation either in a classroom or other school function (e.g. meetings, lunches, or less formal discussions in the break room) I would repeat this process, allowing new themes to emerge.

In addition to the research questions, my coding typology was influenced by the theoretical constructs arising from the two anthropological approaches I adopted for this study: cognitive anthropology and language ideology. Drawing on D'Andrade (1995) and others (Nelson, 1981; Rice, 1980) I thoroughly examined my field notes for the participants' "default value" (D'Andrade, 1995) or taken-for granted schemas

surrounding the nature and aims of teaching. I also looked for language ideology schemas in the form of explicit or implicit statements about the value and role of language in the world (Wee, 2008; Olivo, 2003; Bourdieu, 1977). These theoretical constructs framed my first and second research questions: "What language ideologies do Native English and Bilingual (Arabic & English) teachers currently involved in the implementation of the ADEC Curriculum attribute to Arabic and English?" and "How do these language ideologies interact with the teachers' ideologies concerning the nature and aims of teaching?"

The teachers' behaviors during the lesson as well as the ways they organized and decorated their rooms were salient aspects of the coding process for the first two research questions. For example, when and how often teachers called on students to answer questions, whether they utilized direct instruction or group work, or when or if they exhibited anger or happiness in the classroom were carefully noted and coded as possible indicators of the expectations the teachers might hold concerning the nature and aims of teaching. Additionally, the themes emerging from the ways teachers decorated their classrooms (e.g. posters showing the use of the English and Arabic languages in the world, or with examples of "excellent" student work) and the teachers' use of language in the classroom (e.g. code switching for Arab teachers, or using Arabic translations or English–only instruction for Western teachers) were also coded as possible indicators of

teachers' language ideologies. These themes also addressed my third research question: "How do these teachers' ideologies impact their perceptions of their own and their L2 students' behavior in the classroom?"

The final research question was the source of additional coding: "What role do these ideologies play in these teachers' conceptions of their use of ADECs curriculum guidelines concerning the teaching of the English language in the classroom?" Themes such as the use of ADECs curriculum content (e.g. handouts and addressing curriculum rubrics) and incorporation of the New School Model Curriculum Standards (e.g. in lesson plans or posted on the wall and reviewed during the lesson) also guided coding of field note data. During the process of coding and data analysis I looked for data that both supported and disconfirmed emergent themes.

Long Interview and Stimulated Recall Interview Analysis

I coded and analyzed the long interview and stimulated recall interview data to answer all four of the research questions. Themes were also coded by the theoretical constructs surrounding schemas of language and teaching (D'Andrade, 1995; Nelson, 1981), language ideologies (Wee, 2008; Olivo, 2003) and the ways participants strategically incorporate these constructs (Bourdieu, 1977; Swidler, 1986). I paid special attention to body posture and discourse style (e.g. crossing of arms, waving of an arm or finger, or emphasis of particular words) as indications that a participant meant to stress

certain ideas. During the stimulated recall interviews, when a participant would stop the tape in certain areas I would record that location on the tape and review it several times along with the taped interview and transcripts for the event to gain an understanding of the participants' reason for emphasizing the event.

To aid in transcription and analysis I utilized Razfar's (2005) transcription conventions to document voice emphasis, or "'emphatic stress'" (Gee, 2011, p. 961), pauses in speech, and elongation of syllables[30]. Additionally, I constructed or "restoried" (Gudmundsdottir, 1996, p. 298) the teachers' narratives in the interview data using Labov's (1972) five structural features of a fully formed narrative, paying special attention to the ways teachers *evaluated* the narrative through their discourses. These methods were utilized to examine the "force" of the teachers' utterances and behaviors (Wuthnow, 1987, p. 146). I examined Wuthnow's (1987) second category of ideological inference—the "frequency" (p. 146) of utterances and behaviors—through quantitizing particular emergent themes in teachers' narratives which appeared more than once in both their individual and collective discourse. Inspired by Maxwell (2010) I utilized this quantified data to analyze regularities and patterns in the participants' discourse.

[30] See Razfar (2005) for an example of this usage. Drawing on Razfar (2005) I transcribed the interview data using the following conventions: Overlapping talk = [ ]; Description of nonverbal talk and actions = / /; Bold = Emphasis and louder voice; (.) = micro pause; Translation (italics); and :: = elongation of syllable.

Additionally, I also incorporated Labov and Waletzky's (1967) narrative structure methodology to contextualize the narratives of my research participants. In a seminal paper in 1967 (reprinted in 1997) Labov and Waletzky published findings from a study conducted in South-Central Harlem; analyzing the narratives gleaned from interview data of African American participants ranging from children to adults, they illustrated the existence of a general framework or common narrative structure in the narratives of their participants. Labov (1972) later elaborates on these findings; he defines narrative as "one method of recapitulating past experiences by matching a verbal sequence of clauses to the sequence of events which (it is inferred) actually occurred" (pp. 359-360).

Labov (1972) identifies five structural features of a fully formed narrative[31] important to the analytical framework of my current study[32]: abstract, orientation, complicating action, result or resolution, and evaluation (p. 370). The *abstract* often begins the narrative with a clause or two summarizing the entire narrative. Labov (1972) offers an example from the 1967 study of a participant's answer to the question "Where

[31] Labov (1972) explains that many narratives may not contain one or more of these elements, but they nevertheless serve as important structural features to guide narrative analysis. I have also slightly changed the order of these features from Labov's (1972) list to emphasize the importance of the "evaluation" feature to my study.

[32] Although I am utilizing Labov and Waletzky's (1967) structural approach to contextualize the narrative accounts of my participants' interview data, I am cognizant of the poststructural critiques of structuralist approaches as being predominantly focused on inner processes, most notably Foucault's (1981) caveat that, "We must not resolve discourse into a play of preexisting significations; we must not imagine that the world turns towards us a legible face which we would have only to decipher" (p. 67). Indeed, I am here making no claims concerning the universality of the narrative structure in the human psyche. Instead, drawing on Bourdieu (1977, 1990) I have been arguing for a conceptualization of culture that includes both *habitus* and *field*. In this way, I theorize culture as being "partially shared and partially diverse, partially contested and partially accepted, partially changing and partially permanent" (D'Andrade, 1995, p. 147).

you ever in a situation where you thought you were in serious danger of being killed?" (p. 363). The participant begins his narrative with the summative sentence: "I talked a man out of—Old Doc Simon I talked him out of pulling the trigger" (p. 363). The *orientation* is a description of the characters and setting. The *complicating action* is the main body of the narrative consisting of the series of events that are said to have occurred. The *result* feature of the narrative answers the question, "What finally happened?" (Labov, 1972, p. 370), where the narrator terminates the series of events.

As the narrative reaches its climax, the narrator's *evaluation* becomes important to answer the question "So what?" (Labov, 1972, p. 366). Here the narrator indicates "the point of the narrative" (Labov, 1972, p. 366). Labov (1972) lists three types of evaluation relevant to the current study. The first type is "external evaluation" (Labov, 1972, p. 371). Here the narrator might interrupt the narration in order to evaluate its significance. Labov (1972) offers the example of a respondent's comments made in the middle of her narrative relating a scare on an airplane, where the airplane almost didn't make its ascent over a mountain: "And it was the strangest feeling because you couldn't tell if they were really gonna make it" (p. 371). The second type of evaluation is "embedded evaluation" (Labov, 1972, p. 372), where the narrator will quote himself expressing evaluative sentiment *to* himself, as in "This is it!" (Labov, 1972, p. 372). The narrator may also quote himself expressing evaluative sentiment to someone else, as in this example from

one of Labov's (1972) participants: "I say, Calvin, I'm bust your head for that!" (Labov, 1972, p. 372). The narrator might also quote someone else expressing sentiment about the point of the narrative. The final type of evaluation is "evaluative action," where the narrator will describe the evaluative *actions* of the characters in the narrative. As an example, Labov (1972) cites a narrative where the participant explains, "I was shakin' like a leaf" (p. 373). The evaluative feature of narrative is important for pointing to those aspects of the narrative that participants might believe to be significant.

To contextualize the narratives of the participants' interview data, I utilized Gee's (1999) chunking technique of "stanzas" (p. 3550). Gee (1999) recognizes that "several focuses of consciousness" (p. 3550) are often contained within an informant's speech. *Stanzas* represent the chunking of "several sets of lines devoted to a single topic" (Gee, 1999, p. 3557) within an informant's discourse. I labeled these stanzas based upon Labov's (1972) five structural features of a fully formed narrative: abstract, orientation, complicating action, result or resolution, and evaluation[33].

[33] Inspired by Mishler (1990), who argued for the use of "exemplars" through which qualitative researchers "confirm and validate" their "collective work" (p. 125), I have displayed the full text of my informants' narratives structured in terms of stanzas and features of narratives. In this way, the data is "clearly defined and visible" (Mishler, 1990, p. 132), and my interpretation "is tied directly to the data" (Mishler, 1990, p. 132).

Document Analysis

I analyzed the official written curriculum (mission statements, the "New School Model" reform documents, newspaper articles outlining rationale and the program initiatives, and the curriculum document itself) in or order to both describe the "scene" of the research setting and to answer the final research question. The curriculum was analyzed and coded according to the narrative themes it conveyed concerning ideologies of language and education. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) posit that writing narrative analysis involves the structure of scene and plot (p. 8). Vivid or richly described scenes surround character and context, and plot involves the chronological structure of time, where "the past conveys significance, the present conveys value, and the future conveys intention" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, pp. 8-9). Writing the curriculum narratives involved the construction of scene (the UAE, the schools, the curriculum, the administrators, the teachers and the students), scene told through the various narratives surrounding the written curriculum (including the curriculum document itself). Past, present, and future gained significance in these narratives through plot—the stories of school reform (its intentions and referendums).

Moreover, drawing from Shkedi (2009), I conceptualized the written curriculum as a form of narrative[34]. Shkedi (2009) argues that, "Writing a curriculum is similar to writing a story, and understanding teaching and the curriculum is similar to interpreting a story" (p. 834). As such, Shkedi (2009) categorizes the curriculum through three narratives: "the curriculum frame narrative," "the curriculum task narrative," and "the curriculum meta-narrative" (p. 835). The frame narrative represents the syllabus, contents, and goals, where the task narrative lists the activities of teachers and students. Finally, the meta-narrative represents "the perceptions, theories and ideologies of the writers" (Shkedi, 2009, p. 835). I utilized these categories to contextualize and analyze the numerous documents related to the New School Model Curriculum.

I also analyzed teachers' lesson plans, handouts and graded work according to the themes that emerged from the other coded data sources. These documents were used to disconfirm or supplement the coded themes already emergent in the interview and participant observation, or they added new areas of inquiry if novel themes emerged.

[34]Shkedi (2009) refers to Walker's (1971) study of curriculum design, where he shows that curriculum design is a "temporal" process starting from taken for granted beliefs and ending with the curriculum design (p. 58). As such, it does not follow what Walker (1971) calls the "classical" or "means-ends" model (p. 58). Consequently, Shkedi (2009) argues that the curriculum represents more of what Bruner (1991) calls a "narrative," rather than a "logical" process (p. 4).

CHAPTER FOUR

THE TEACHER AS ENTHUSIASTIC MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER

In this chapter, I will show how the American English teachers at the Najah Boy's High School use narratives to construct the role of the teacher and how these constructions mediate and are mediated by ideologies concerning the role of English and Arabic in the world. My research indicates that American teachers at Najah share a cultural schema[35] that conceptualizes the teacher as a motivational speaker. As discussed earlier, language ideologies, representing schematically organized ideas about the role of language in the world, reciprocally interact with other cultural schemas surrounding teaching and learning—making up what I call "worldview". And drawing on Bourdieu (1990), I argue that worldviews represent parts of *habitus,* which shapes the formation of strategies agents employ within the context of power relations in the *field* of practice.

As I will show, American English teachers at Najah conceptualize teaching as a system of exchange: hard work in exchange for the obtainment of skills and future success. This exchange is infused with meaning as rational work[36] toward the ultimate goal of individual success in future economic endeavors. In this way, the teacher is

[35] Bloch (2012) defines cultural schemas as "default, familiar schema which have become accepted, largely unconsciously, among groups of people as the normal way 'things are'" (p. 3410). It is in this way that I am defining the term.

[36] As I will show, Weber's (1905) "rational ethics of ascetic Protestantism," most notably individual asceticism and work as a calling indicative of productive economic behavior, are alive and well in the ways American English teachers at Najah understand and describe educational activity.

metaphorically constructed as a *motivational speaker* in that he must convince his students to strive for economic success. In this model, the teacher, by talking *to* his students *convinces* them to do their work. I will also argue that the metaphorical construction of the enthusiastic motivational speaker reciprocally shapes the American teachers' language ideologies surrounding the roles of English and Arabic in their students' lives. For American English teachers, the English language, and the rational work ethic are the primary skills students must acquire for worldly success. Students are successful to the degree that they accept, or "take ownership of," these skills. English, therefore, is constructed as the language of productivity, rational work and self-reliance, whereas Arabic, as the marker of culture and traditions, is the language of the students' roots and thus not an instrumental value in the global economy.

In the following section I examine the narratives of the teachers from the English Department at Najah. As previously discussed, to restory these narratives, I utilized Gee's (1999) chunking technique of "stanzas" (p. 3550), where "several focuses of consciousness" (p. 3550) are grouped in "several sets of lines devoted to a single topic" (Gee, 1999, p. 3557) within an informant's discourse. I have also labeled these stanzas based upon Labov's (1972) five structural features of a fully formed narrative: abstract, orientation, complicating action, result or resolution, and evaluation. I begin with the narratives of the American teachers.

American Teachers

Over a century ago, Max Weber (1905) posited a correlation between the spirit of modern capitalism and the rational, ascetic ethic of Protestantism. Weber (1905) noted that although the pursuit of wealth had long been separated from its ethical and religious significance, the orientation toward asceticism, individualism, and work as a calling conducive to rational economic behavior still lingered in the minds of Americans "like the ghost of dead religious beliefs" (p. 124). This section will show that the ethic of *rational work towards success* still echoes in the ways American teachers describe teaching and learning, and that the metaphor of the teacher as motivational speaker emerges through this conceptualization. The analysis rests on the theoretical construct of *cultural schemas*, which are recognizable through examining the shared beliefs of participants—or *salience judgments* (D'Andrade, 1995)—concerning the most important features of a particular schema as well as the organization of those features within the schema (D'Andrade et. al., 1972). Cultural schemas are often exemplified through *metaphor*, where one type of thing is understood and experienced by participants "in terms of another" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 6), and *word-as-image*, where words activate schematically organized scripts or scenes (Langacker, 1979; Fillmore, 1975; Nelson, 1981).

The data indicate that American teachers metaphorically describe the teaching profession as a "container object"—a "bounded area," in which specific activities take place (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, p. 30). Lakoff & Johnson (1980) explain that human beings utilize ontological metaphors in order to "pick out parts of our experience and treat them as discrete entities or substances of a uniform kind" (p. 25). They argue that our usage of ontological metaphors arose out of our experiences with physical objects, beginning with our own bodies. Ontological metaphors, then, represent "ways of viewing events, activities, ideas, etc., as entities and substances" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 25), and through these means they allow us to quantify, group, and reason about these experiences. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) offer the example of a race, which is understood as being a "discrete entity" with "well-defined boundaries" (p. 31). This is exemplified by the question, "Are you in the race on Sunday?" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 31). For the American teachers, one enters *into* the teaching profession and stays there because of the skills he possesses. As I will show, in the American schema, through speaking *to* his students, the American teacher convinces them to take possession of these skills for themselves.

Several motifs emerge from the narratives of the American teachers which support this schematic—or "scripted" (Nelson, 1981)—conceptualization of teaching: the *importance of self-reliance*, the *virtue of hard work* and the *imperative of striving for*

success. As I will show, these motifs—"ideologies" (Wuthnow, 2003, p. 145) or "sub-schemas" (D'Andrade, 1995, p. 124)— interact with other ideologies surrounding the role(s) of language(s) in the world, impacting the ways teachers interpret and approach the official curriculum. The American teachers constructed English as the instrumental skill necessary for the achievement of the UAE's economic ambitions on the world stage. Conversely, Arabic, as the marker of culture and traditions, lacked this instrumental—or *economic*—value.

I asked the American teachers seven "grand tour" and "planned prompt" questions (McCracken, 1988, p. 37): What made you become a teacher? Why did you come to Abu Dhabi to teach? What is the nature of teaching? What motivates your students? Why is the government promoting English? What is the role of English in your students' lives? What is the role of Arabic in your students' lives? In addition, I also asked teachers individual "floating prompt" questions (McCracken, 1988, p. 37) to elicit more information or to clarify something they had said.

4.1 Journeys into Teaching

As previously discussed, the four American teachers at Najah are a diverse group of individuals with varying levels of teaching experience. Mr. Williams, a Caucasian, has six years teaching experience in public schools. Mr. Hammond, an African American, has five years' experience teaching in private schools. Mr. Ramirez is bilingual in English

and Spanish, and has over eight years' experience teaching Spanish in public schools. Finally, Mr. Drake, also an African American, has twenty years' experience teaching primarily in inner-city public schools.

When I asked Mr. Williams "What made you decide to become a teacher?" he responded with a narrative outlining his journey into teaching. In Mr. William's narrative, he explains how he always felt like he should at some point become a teacher, but that he didn't pursue it until he was laid-off from his job as a journalist (ln. 1-13).

Stanza 1: ORIENTATION[37]

01 Mr. Williams: Well, (.) um although I:: sta::rted a different career—I was in
02 journalism prior to teaching—I always had it in the back of my mind that I
03 would go into teaching someday.

Stanza 2: COMPLICATING ACTION

04 And for whatever rea::son during my undergraduate degree I—I didn't pursue
05 that—I went into journalism instead, and I have no regrets about going into uh
06 journalism, uh but you know once during the teacher—or uh I'm sorry during
07 the reporter layoffs

Stanza 3: EVALUATION

08 and uh newspaper cutbacks, um uh I:: [thought] uh well "you know this is a
09 good opportunity; if I never go into teaching **now** I never will," and that was
10 back in uh I think about 2003.

Stanza 4: RESULT

[37] As I stated previously, to contextualize these discourses, I utilized the transcription conventions adapted from Razfar (2005): Overlapping talk = [ ]; Description of nonverbal talk and actions = / /; Bold = Emphasis and louder voice; (.) = micro pause; Translation (italics). and :: = elongation of syllable.

11 And uh so um I decided to u::h um—I was laid off and then decided to go back
12 and get my master's **degree** and I got my masters in elementary education and
13 (.) and uh I fee::l that u::m having been in journalism I could uh teach students
14 uh you know good writing and vocabulary and grammar skills uh and, and
15 make use of my professional background.

Mr. Williams' use of the words "in" and "into" in *Stanzas 1 and 3* to describe the state of *being in* both journalism and teaching demarcates both jobs equally as professions that one enters *into*. Like journalism, which is a profession requiring skills, entering into teaching also requires that one is in the possession of certain skills. In *Stanza 4*, Mr. Williams' usage of the words "get" and "got" (ln. 12) and "make use of" (ln. 15) in relation to his skills and professional background denotes the skills he possesses as metaphorical *substances* (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 25). Additionally, in *Stanza 3* Mr. Williams validates his statement in the first stanza that he always considered going into teaching someday by explaining what he thought when he was laid-off: "if I never go into teaching **now** I never will" (ln. 9). In this way, through taking initiative and by following his life-long interests, Mr. Williams was able to maintain control of his own life, despite the unfortunate incidence of losing his job.

Mr. Williams continued to utilize these ontological metaphors, as well as the motif that following one's individual interests leads one to his destiny in the narrative he constructed while responding to my next question: "What made you come to Abu Dhabi to teach?"

Stanza 1: ORIENTATION

01 Mr. Williams: U::h, well I ha::d lived overseas once before (.) I had lived in
02 Greece when I was in the air force for uh an entire year, and uh for the last
03 several years I had been looking at pursuing somethi::ng that was very
04 different than what I had been doing although remaining in education, and um
05 I wanted to experience another culture agai::n.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

06 I had a terrific experience in Greece, partly because I made every effort I could
07 to **assimilate** myself into society there and getting to know as many Greeks as
08 I could […].

Stanza 3: COMPLICATING ACTION

09 So um the **other** reason is that um (.) whe::n I returned to Chicago and I was
10 subbing on a regular basis—and I was even requested on a regular basis to sub
11 by teachers— I hadn't found a full time position, and um that's when I started

Stanza 4: RESULT

12 looking seriously at—at going overseas. You know I wanted to experience
13 another **cultu::re** and uh (.) parleying my teaching experience into uh (.) an
14 overseas teaching uh position and um, and then I—I looked at—uh I was
15 looking at—I really didn't know what country I wanted to go to, but then I um
16 I came across positions in Abu Dha::bi [...]

In this narrative, Mr. Williams begins in *Stanza 1* by explaining that he had already been looking for a new experience while still "remaining in education" (ln. 4). In *Stanza 2*, Mr. Williams emphasizes why he was successful in Greece, and perhaps foreshadows his success in Abu Dhabi: "because I made every effort I could to **assimilate** myself into society there and get to know as many Greeks as I could" (ln. 6-8).

These two stanzas serve as an important introduction to the events in *Stanza 3*, where Mr. Williams could not find a full-time position even though he had been "requested on a regular basis to sub by teachers" (ln. 10-11). In the final stanza of this narrative, Mr. Williams' pursuit of his interests pays off, and he is able to find work in Abu Dhabi, which he describes as "parleying my teaching experience into uh (.) an overseas teaching uh position" (ln. 13-14). In addition to the ontological metaphors of skills and experience as substances which one utilizes "in" the profession of teaching, Mr. Williams uses his narrative to describe himself as a proactive, talented individual who overcomes adversity through initiative and pursuit of his interests. Mr. Williams begins and ends his narrative with the motif that pursuing ones natural inclinations ultimately leads one to success.

Similarly, Mr. Hammond describes himself entering "into" teaching when I asked him the question, "What made you decide to become a teacher?"

Stanza 1: ORIENTATION

01 Mr. Hammond: Actually, I was a **History** major and that just led into teaching
02 so I have my bachelors in **History** and then a minor in education, and (.) at that

Stanza 2: COMPLICATING ACTION

03 time [when he finished his degree] um for work I had been working at Boston
04 Market and HEB[38] and then eventually a friend of mine got me a job at the
05 YMCA doing enrichment progra::ms, and it was part of a government grant
06 to do after school programs (.)

[38] HEB is a supermarket chain in Texas.

Stanza 3: EVALUATION

07 and I just enjoyed it—you know I always found **school** to be a refuge for me
08 because uh you know that the way I grew up home life wasn't always **sta::ble**
09 for me and yada yada, so uh being able to (.) **help** other people always makes
10 me feel good, you know and being in the **school** (.) just felt very **na::tural** for
11 me and I—it seems like I am able to work with kids better than adults.

Stanza 4: RESULT

12 So (.) you know I got into the YMCA thing and (.) finished up my degree for
13 History and Education and then I've been teaching ever **since**, so (…) I have 6
14 years **solid** experience but really like (.) 10 or 11 years of working in schools
15 teaching, being around kids so it's just something I enjoy.

Mr. Hammond begins his narrative by explaining his qualifications. In his explanation, Mr. Hammond utilizes the same ontological metaphor as Mr. Williams—*into*—denoting teaching as a profession (ln. 1). In the next line, Mr. Hammond then outlines the qualifications he possesses utilizing the verb "have" (ln. 2). Like Mr. Williams, Mr. Hammond emphasizes his journey into teaching as an overcoming of adversity: "Home life wasn't always **sta::ble** for me and yada yada" (ln. 8-9). In *Stanza* 2, Mr. Hammond's naming of the companies he worked before indicate that he has had humble beginnings working in food service and retail and that his working these jobs eventually lead into teaching. Although the same sense of destiny is not present in Mr. Hammond's narrative as it is in Mr. Williams' journey into teaching, the statement that teaching "just felt very **na::tural**" (ln. 10) is pervasive in the third stanza. Mr. Hammond ends his narrative by repeating his qualifications as substances he possesses. The

narrative depicts Mr. Hammond as a hard-working, self-reliant, stable person who eventually found his calling as a teacher.

Mr. Hammond introduces a new motif—personal satisfaction—when I asked him, "What made you come to Abu Dhabi to teach?"

Stanza 1: ORIENTATION

01 Mr. Hammond: Well (.) unemployment you know I was looking at (.)
02 unemployment after this year. My previous job finished on the 3rd of **Ju::ne**,
03 and um as I was saying earlier there was a hiring freeze (.) and a wage freeze
04 so I would have been **unemplo::yed**. Um (.) but really when I came back from
05 being in the UK for 21/2 years and then living in Houston I just wasn't
06 satisfied, and I knew **immediately**—I knew before I even came home that I
07 wanted to go abroad again.

Stanza 1a

08 but then um I was happy to come home because I felt like (.) I
09 was running away from my family and I like to see them be there (.) within at
10 least 200 miles, you know /laughs/ that **le::ngth**, so I was glad to come home,
11 but I think both me and my partner knew that we wanted to go abroad again
12 because you know we just aren't **satisfied**. The experience of being um (.) a (.)
13 a black man in America I think is—and I don't really talk about race and I try
14 not to bring it in because it's not (.) completely objective—but um (.) the

Stanza 2: COMPLICATING ACTION

15 experience of being a black man in America, especially in the **South**, is
16 different than other people would experience, so (.) being in (.) Europe and
17 having that freedom from (.) the stereotypes of what people think you are—
18 there's preconceived **no::tions** and conclusions that people make about your
19 character and how you socialize and what your interests are before you've

20 even spoken a word. You know—and that's on **both** sides (.) for—blacks do it
21 to **blacks** and non-blacks cast those views upon (.) blacks, so

Stanza 3: EVALUATION

22 you know I was really apprehensive to come home because I knew I would
23 have to go through that again. And in **Europe** um they are more sensible (.)
24 they are very **sensitive** about talking about topics—talking about race is
25 politically incorrect, so they just ignore the problem which is a bad thing, but
26 in **Ame::rica**, everything is polarized—black and white, and (.) you know, it's
27 there's still some sort of (…) tension—you just never break through to people,
28 so you are either "oh you don't sound black you're too **intelligent** or how" you
29 know you are either a **spokesperson** or you are (.) one of them [a non-black],
30 so uh that was one reason I kind of wanted to go abroad again

Stanza 3a

31 (.) and then uh (…) I know that when I was teaching in **London** most of my
32 students were Muslim, but they were either assylees or refugees or they were
33 first generation British which—but still Muslim from Arab **countries** so um
34 being there in the UK and having that student population and having contact
35 with their parents (.) it um I learned that (.) I have **worth** and a teacher is
36 **valued** and a teacher is **respe::cted** and my opinion and what I do has **value**
37 and that gives me satisfaction and inspires me and I also know that I am
38 helping others.

Stanza 4: RESULT

39 So, going back to **America** [from London] I knew that [a teacher being
40 valued] probably wouldn't be the case […] so that was just **another** reason I
41 wanted to come over here [to Abu Dhabi].

Mr. Hammond chooses several examples to describe his dissatisfaction with the polarization he experienced in America, implying that as an intelligent African American he felt unfairly judged by other members of the African American community. Although

he could have chosen any polarizing stereotypes to list here, he chose four particular stereotypes. Mr. Hammond implies that in America he was told he didn't "sound black" (ln. 28), that he was "too **intelligent**" (ln. 28), or that he was "either a **spokesperson**" or that he was "one of them" (ln. 29). Gee (1999) reminds us that when interpreting an informant's speech, "every aspect of the choices a speaker has made has implications for the picture the listener is supposed to build in his or her mind" (p. 2117-18). His stress of the words "intelligent" and "spokesperson" is important as it implies that Mr. Hammond construes himself to be both intelligent and eloquent in speech (two qualities which he certainly displays), yet he does not want to be unfairly excommunicated from the African American community on their account.

Mr. Hammond's account of his experiences in America serve as a fitting transition to his discourse in *Stanza 3a*, where he describes the importance of feeling respected as a teacher and having his opinion valued. Mr. Hammond clearly links feeling valued and respected to a sense of personal satisfaction, a sense which he explains he cannot attain as an African American in America (*Stanza 4*). The motif of pursuing personal satisfaction, although obviously different in substance and individual experience, echoes Mr. Williams' motif of the importance of pursuing one's interests and natural inclinations in life.

Mr. Ramirez gave much shorter responses to the two initial taped interview questions: He responded to the question "What made you decide to become a teacher?" with a short exposition, forming the Abstract of a much longer story, one he at first didn't offer:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Ramirez: **U::m** (…) I thought that uh it would be a good chance to (.) uh
02 work with young **people** and instill good **values** in them like uh responsibility,
03 discipline, honesty (.) um, I just think it's important to eh (.) form good, honest
04 and productive citizens.

I then asked Mr. Ramirez a question in an effort to elicit a story from him:

Thomas: Do you have any past experiences that stick out—that kind of come to mind immediately—about what kind of teacher you want to be, or about how you came to teach?

Stanza 1: ORIENTATION

01 Mr. Ramirez: […] I had a teacher who um (.) um (.) was somewhat influential
02 in stee::ring me into the teaching profession (.) um (.)

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

03 I admired him greatly (.) uh first and foremost because (.) he is a combat
04 veteran of three **wars**—WWII, Korea, and Vietnam. He served in the
05 military for—for almost forty years. He was a naval officer (.) um and

Stanza 3: RESULT

06 (.) because of the fact that I was always very interested in **hi::story**, you know
07 this this man to me was a living hero, somebody that I could speak with about
08 America's past conflicts.

In his initial response, Mr. Ramirez focuses on the "good values" (ln. 2) he wishes to instill in his students: "responsibility, discipline and honesty" (ln. 2-3). That Mr. Ramirez uses the phrase, "I thought that uh it would be a good chance" (ln. 1), implies the motif of someone actively pursuing his interests that we have already seen with Mr. Williams and Mr. Hammond. Like his American colleagues, Mr. Ramirez also utilizes the ontological metaphorical construction of "into the teaching profession" (ln.2) emphasizing the importance of teaching as a profession with "well-defined boundaries" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 31).

However, in line 3 of his initial response Mr. Ramirez also likens teaching to *forming*, introducing a new motif of the teacher as an *active agent* who manipulates his passive students. This motif is echoed in Mr. Ramirez's second response where he describes the teacher who "was somewhat influential in stee::ring me into the teaching profession" (ln. 1-2). In Mr. Ramirez's construction, the teacher *forms* or *steers* his students. The teacher who steered Mr. Ramirez inspired him as he was "a living hero" (ln. 7).

Mr. Ramirez's use of the word "hero" in line 7 illustrates what Gee (1999) calls "situated meaning"(p. 4328)—that is, although there are many definitions of this word, Mr. Ramirez is using it specifically to refer to someone who has fought for his country. The hero teacher's effort and sacrifice in three wars also gave him the credentials to

speak about the subject of History. Mr. Ramirez makes no reference here to the teacher's academic credentials, implying that his service to his country was enough to qualify him as a source of inspiration. Thus, for Mr. Ramirez the teacher's role is an active one, where the teacher inspires students to follow their interests and become "good, honest and productive citizens" (*Stanza 1*: ABSTRACT, ln. 3-4).

Mr. Ramirez also gave a similarly short response to the taped interview question, "What made you come to Abu Dhabi to teach?" In his response, however, Mr. Ramirez emphasizes his qualifications:

Stanza 1

01 Mr. Ramirez: The—the honest answer to that is u::h (.) that I resigned from my
02 last position in the United States. I couldn't find anything **else**, so this was my
03 Plan B—to come here […] I got my Master's degree in **History** and I have
04 over eight years' now in—teaching Spanish as a foreign language (.) so I got
05 the interview to come here [to Abu Dhabi].

The ontological metaphor of being "in—teaching" (ln. 4), as well as his focus on the skills and experience he possesses mirrors the discourse of Mr. Ramirez's American colleagues. That coming to Abu Dhabi constituted a "Plan B" (ln. 3) also depicts Mr. Ramirez as a man-with-a-plan who is in control of his life, despite the unfortunate condition of the American job market.

In Mr. Drake's response to the question "What made you decide to become a teacher?" he echoes Mr. Ramirez's construction of an active teacher who *acts upon* a passive student. The interview began with my initial misunderstanding of his response:

Thomas: What made you decide to become a teacher?

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Drake: A teacher.

Thomas: Yeah. A teacher.

02 Mr. Drake: A teacher did.

Thomas: Oh, a teacher did, okay.

Stanza 2: ORIENTATION

03 Mr. Drake: Yes, I u::h went to school late—I went to college late. I was uh (.)
04 30—31 when I went to college. A::nd I went to a community college first—to
05 a 2 year college. And I didn't have the **skill sets** (.) in place (.) because I had
06 been out of school for about 14 years at that time.

Stanza 3: COMPLICATING ACTION

07 U::h I didn't have the skill sets in place to uh (.) do well academically (…) so I
08 had to do a lot of remedial classes. U::m (.) a lot of classes that were prep. and
09 m::y professor, John Franklin[39] (.) asked me what I wanted to:: major in (.),
10 and I was such a dumb ass I didn't know what to major in, or what I wanted to
11 major in, so I said "I don't **know**." I could **barely** write a sentence (.) I could
12 barely **read** a sentence (.) a::nd he uh (.) and the **sad** part about that was that I
13 had already taken a class at the uh (.) University of Maryland—**English** (.) and
14 got a **B** in **that** (.) but couldn't (.) really read or write to that grade level. I
15 **tested** at the 6th and 7th grade level. So then he **asked** me what I wanted to

[39] All names of people and places are pseudonyms.

16 major in—I says, “I don’t know.” He says, “well (.) you gonna major in
17 English.”

Stanza 4: EVALUATION

18 Now, anybody that had any sense would have said /laughs/ “no, no, no, no.”
19 But I was just that **dumb**. I didn’t know (.) any better, so I majored—uh (.)

Stanza 5: RESULT

20 I’m one of these people where I never even—**really**, I didn’t even declare a
21 major. I was just **given** something and I just **stuck** with it.

Mr. Drake’s narrative depicts himself as a passive, naïve young man who by chance met a well-meaning professor—John Franklin. The professor decides for Mr. Drake what direction his life will take. Mr. Drake’s stress of the words “**dumb**,” “**really**,” “**given**” and “**stuck**” with a louder voice illustrates that Mr. Drake is now dissatisfied—or even displeased—with his younger-self. In other interviews, Mr. Drake also referred to his younger-self as an “idiot” and “fool.” Mr. Drake’s image of himself as an ignorant young man plays an important role in his construction of teaching, one he alludes to when he laments that “the **sad** part” (ln. 12) about his lack of reading and writing skills was that he was given a “**B**” (ln. 14) in English. For Mr. Drake, the teacher’s role is to motivate students to learn the necessary skills for success in college. The teacher should also ensure that the students acquire these skills before passing them to the next grade level[40].

[40] As I will show, in his later narratives Mr. Drake links his experiences as a minority student being passed along without the necessary skills to institutionalized racism.

Thus the theme introduced in Mr. Ramirez's narrative of the active teacher influencing the passive student to take action is echoed in Mr. Drake's narrative.

When I asked Mr. Drake, "What made you come to Abu Dhabi to teach?" he offers a narrative explaining that he had been invited to come teach in Abu Dhabi:

Stanza 1: ORIENTATION

01 Mr. Drake: Teachaway[41] **contacted** me saying we got your (.) uh (.) we got
02 your **resume** in front of us and (.) you know, this looks good.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

03 Well, I was kinda **flattered** because I knew that when they first started this
04 program three to four years ago, they were only taking the **cream-of-the-crop**
05 teachers (…) **suppo::sedly** […] I knew **too** that there was probably a racial
06 element in there because they were only taking certain teachers with a **certain**
07 (.) look, ok (.) a::nd uh, so I was **flattered** that they even asked me. So I said,
08 "well I'll go through it," but I didn't really have (.) the intention of coming
09 here—to the Middle East. So they [Teachaway] **asked** me to apply. A::nd I
10 was **flattered** because I **knew** when they started this program (.) they were
11 only taking—**suppo::sedly**—the cream of the crop [teachers]—they were
12 really **pushing** that or making that (…) **appear** as if they were doing that.

Stanza 3: COMPLICATING ACTION

14 And so the::n um (.) I started this journey about (.) a year ago—**over** a year
15 ago now, because by the time I got here in August it had been over a **year**
16 from the time I got **started** and (.) got here.

[41] Teachaway is the headhunting agency that does most of the hiring for ADEC.

Stanza 4: EVALUATION

17 And um /clears throat/ then I said, "well I'm gonna take a **chance** on it." You
18 know it would be something **different**. I wanted to add something like this to
19 my resume […]

Stanza 5: RESULT

20 Um when I was **hired**, I was hired under the impression—I got the impression
21 that (.) **looking** back now maybe they [Teachaway representatives who hired
22 him] didn't tell me this, but they didn't (.) **stop** me from **believing** this—that
23 (.) you know, like I said I was looking at—I'm a numbers person—
24 **crunching**, getting results, showing that you have results. A::nd I was **hired**
25 thinking—**I** thought I was hired thinking they wanted me to help with the
26 higher level, and (…)

Stanza 6: EVALUATION

27 I didn't realize I was gonna have to come in here and—I never **taught** first
28 and second and third grade—fourth grade before.

In this narrative, Mr. Drake often evaluates each occurrence, offering insight into what he feels to be its important aspects. He first explains that he was contacted by the headhunting agency in Abu Dhabi (leaving out details about how they originally obtained his resume). Like his American colleagues, Mr. Drake emphasized his skills and experience (symbolized by his resume) as substances which he possessed and which enabled him to prosper in the profession of teaching. The metaphor of the resume as a cache of his skills and experience is repeated in *Stanza 1* and *Stanza 4* where this new experience of teaching in Abu Dhabi will be added to Mr. Drake's resume (ln. 19). Like Mr. Hammond, Mr. Drake utilizes specific examples as he evaluates being "**contacted**"

(ln. 1) by Teachaway. His use and stress of this word, as well as his stress of the words "**flattered**" (ln. 2) and "**cream-of-the-crop**" (ln. 4) in *Stanza 2* draws a "picture" (Gee, 1999, p. 2117) of a highly skilled professional who was surprised by a phone call inviting him to Abu Dhabi. The special nature of this phone call is underscored by what Mr. Drake perceived to be the "racial element" (ln. 5-6) in Teachaway's original recruits—that they were originally only choosing Caucasians.

The motif—salient in the narratives of the other American teachers—of pursuing something of interest emerges in *Stanza 4*, where Mr. Drake evaluates his decision to come to Abu Dhabi; he explains that he "wanted to add something like this" (ln. 18) to his resume. Mr. Drake's decision to come overseas, then, is not one of economic necessity, but one of a professional pursuing his interests. However, upon arriving in Abu Dhabi, Mr. Drake's narrative turns to the surprise he experienced upon realizing the low-level of English ability his students displayed. I wanted to know more about this and subsequently asked him about it in a floating prompt question:

Thomas: So that's what you are doing here [at Najah], then?

Stanza 1: ORIENTATION

01 Mr. Drake: Yeah […] I'm learning that [the students are at the level of first to
02 fourth grades]—it's very hard, because that's not the you know—I—I think

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

03 the only reason why I have been very lucky in teaching so **far** (.) is because uh
04 (.) Dr. Harry **Wong**—Elizabeth and Harry Wong[42] (.) I went to one of their
05 conferences—they **sent** me to one of their conferences at the time—**three**
06 **days**—Orlando. You know we stayed at some (.) five-star hotel there (.) um (.)
07 and—during **school** time, and I mean they (…) you get that first—uh what is
08 that, the first days of **teaching**? […] **Excellent** book—I've never gotten
09 through it. I got through maybe the first 18 pages or so. And that was **it**—but
10 that's all you **needed**

Stanza 3: RESULT

11 (.) and I—I **reali::zed** (.) that (.) I had (.) a **knack** for good classroom
12 management (…) from the **jump**. And I **didn't** understand that that was what
13 was missing in **a lot** of schools, even in the States (.) that a lot of teachers
14 complain that they can't **teach** until they get **that** under control. And, I had
15 that.

Mr. Drake began to answer my question about the low level of English his students displayed, but then he switches back to talking about his qualifications. The sudden change in the direction of Mr. Drake's narrative illustrates his control of his discourse and of his "performance" (Goffman, 1959, p. 22) during the interview. Mr. Drake began to explain that he was surprised and that the situation he presently finds himself in is difficult: "It's very hard, because that's not the you know" (ln. 2). However, rather than continuing with this discourse, which he perhaps felt might lead him to the construction of a different "front" (Goffman, 1959, p. 22)—or idealized representation of

[42] Harry and Rosemary Wong wrote the best-selling book, *The First Days of School*, a guide for teachers emphasizing the importance of setting clear rules and expectations during the first few days of K-12 instruction. Although Mr. Drake has Rosemary Wong's name wrong here, he told me that he was a "big fan" of the Wongs, and that he had attended one of their lectures while in the United States.

himself—from the one he had been constructing in his narratives thus far, he suddenly switches back to presenting his qualifications.

To introduce this new discourse about himself Mr. Drake mentions "Dr. Harry Wong—Elizabeth and Harry Wong" (ln 4) in the second stanza, and then later, "you get that first—uh what is that, the first days of **teaching**?" (ln. 7-8). He is making reference to a popular book among new teachers, Harry and Rosemary Wong's *The First Days of School*. The book is a guide for teachers emphasizing the importance of setting clear rules and expectations during the first few days of K-12 instruction. Mr. Drake's reference exemplifies what Gee (1999) calls "intertextuality," where "one text incorporates words from another in a great variety of different ways" (p. 1445). Through intertextuality one "text" (in this case Mr. Drake's narrative) is "given authority" (Gee, 1999, p. 1509) through reference to another text (i.e. Harry and Rosemary Wong's *The First Days of School*). By mentioning a well-known book about classroom management Mr. Drake establishes the argument that classroom management is of paramount importance to teaching, setting the stage for his next statement that, "(.) and I—I **reali::zed** (.) that (.) I had (.) a **knack** for good classroom management (…) from the **jump**" (ln. 11-12).

Further, Mr. Drake also utilizes the ontological metaphor of teaching as a profession one enters *into*, or that one is *in*: "the only reason why I have been very lucky in teaching so **far**" (ln. 3). And in *Stanza 3* Mr. Drake continues the metaphorical

construction that skills are possessed by the teacher—that the particular skill of classroom management was something that he "had" (ln. 11; ln. 14).

In each of their narratives, the American teachers depict themselves as hard-working, highly-skilled professionals who, through pursuing their interests and natural inclinations, eventually found their way into the teaching profession and ultimately to Abu Dhabi to teach English. The construction of *teaching as a profession*, one requiring a particular set of skills, is salient in these narratives. Another motif arising from these narratives is that of *personal choice*—or the importance of pursuing one's individual interests in order to take control of one's destiny. In the narratives of each of the American teachers, when life gave them lemons (in the form of rising unemployment), by following their individual interests and desires they made lemonade. A final motif emerging from the narratives of both Mr. Ramirez and Mr. Drake, one which I will show is salient in the way all of the American teachers construct teaching, is that of the teacher *acting upon* his initially passive students. The teacher *speaks to* his students in order to convince them that they must work hard and take control of their own destinies.

4.2. Defining Teaching: The Teacher as Motivational Speaker[43]

When I asked the American teachers about the nature of teaching, they continued to incorporate the ontological metaphor of skills as substances. However, the teachers took this metaphor further as they described the process of teaching. Through these representations, activity within the teaching profession consists of giving or transferring these skills to students. Teachers "equip" students with skills. Students take possession of these substances—they "take responsibility and ownership," or they "grasp" or "grab" these skills through consistent effort or hard work. The teacher's role as motivational speaker is to convince students to take these actions.

When I asked Mr. Williams about the nature of teaching, he began with an exposition which became the *Abstract* to the broader narrative he would tell about his experiences teaching at Najah.

Thomas: What would you say is the nature of teaching, in general?

01 Mr. Williams: Anywhere in the world?

Thomas: Yeah, like to you (…) what are you doing when you're teaching?

[43] In the discourses that follow, in some cases the teachers did not construct complete narratives—that is, certain elements of Labov's (1972) narrative structure are not present. However, in some cases teachers told incomplete stories (e.g. only the Abstract and Orientation) about their experiences teaching at Najah or about their students, and in other cases they simply summed-up a broader story (e.g. an Abstract) about these topics. See Hazel (2007) for a broader discussion of narrative structure. Hazel (2007) shows that this is often common in narrative discourse, where "sometimes the structure [of a narrative] may be determined by the complexity of the events being represented, or the evaluation may be widely dispersed throughout the narrative" (p. 4).

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

02 Mr. Williams: Um (.) as a teacher in **general**, and not just applicable
03 here [in Abu Dhabi], I'm trying to (.) u::m…I'm trying to um (.) to nurture
04 the student along so that they can get to a point where they can take
05 responsibility for their own learning. Uh they can be in (.) uh they can take
06 responsibility and **ow::nership** for their own learning and not rely on me so

Stanza 1a

07 much, and get them to understand that that (.) um that (.) learning is a process
08 that doesn't just occur in the **school**. Uh, and if you had that attitude then then
09 you're (.) you're not um uh gonna learn as much as you are capable of. That
10 learning is is something that takes place uh you know 24 hours a **day**, and even
11 when you get **out** of school it uh (.) learning is something you should be
12 continually striving to do. Whether it's improving your vocabulary (.) uh on a
13 regular basis uh uh your gra::mmar—that's not just something to be done in
14 the classroom. I want students to uh to uh practice those kinds

Stanza 1b:

15 of things on on their uh own time in daily situations. I think that's uh um uh a
16 more difficult target to reach **here** than it would be uh in American schools.

Mr. Williams continues to describe skills metaphorically as substances (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), constructing teaching as an activity which involves getting students to take possession of these substances for their own use. In his initial response, Mr. Williams emphasizes the importance of his students taking the initiative in their studies. He describes teaching as nurturing "the student along" (ln. 3-4), with the aim of getting his students to "take responsibility for their own learning" (ln. 4-5). He then repeats the phrase "take responsibility" (ln. 5), adding to it the phrase, "[take] **ow::nership** for their

own learning" (ln. 6), this time emphasizing the word "ownership" with a louder voice and an elongation of the initial vowel sound.

For Mr. Williams, the process of taking ownership involves hard work, both in and out of school. Mr. Williams explains that students must acquire new dispositions involving rational work towards success. In *Stanza 1a*, Mr. Williams explains what he means by taking responsibility and ownership: "That learning is is something that takes place uh you know 24 hours a **day**, and even when you get **out** of school it uh (.) learning is something you should be continually striving to do" (ln. 9-12). In Mr. William's discourse the teachers' role is to "get them [students] to understand" (ln. 7) that they must constantly strive to learn—even when they are not with the teacher.

I wanted to know why Mr. Williams thought this process was more difficult at Najah, so I asked him a follow-up question, to which he responded with a narrative about students at Najah:

> Thomas: Why would you say it's [getting students to understand the learning process] more difficult here?

Stanza 2: ORIENTATION

> 17 Mr. Williams: Uh (.) because of the apathetic attitude among most u::h
> 18 students. And again, I only have a handful who **truly** care about asse::rting
> 19 themselves and learning. And uh the others are just uh (.) are just uh here to
> 20 get their mark and and to buy **time** and and to get **out** so that they can get into

21 the—so they can be hired by the police or the military and be making twice as
22 much as we are now /laughs/.

Stanza 3: EVALUATION

23 Especially since I have all humanities [Art's track] courses—classes. But, but,
24 but I don't want that to to um (.) eh uh, but at the same **ti::me**, although those
25 are my feelings I—I'm **still** trying to uh (.) to to (.) you know, help as many
26 kids as I **can** and try to get them to change their mind about education (.)

Stanza 4: RESULT

27 and in the end if they if they don't uh, uh if they still don't **care**, at least I've
28 helped those who truly do care.

In his response to my second question, Mr. Williams explains that many of his students are apathetic. He relates this apathetic attitude to what he perceives as a culture of dependence upon the government in the UAE. Wuthnow (1987) illustrates that regardless of their individual or psychological manifestations, ideologies should be understood as "inherently social in nature" (p. 154)—that is, ideologies delineate propositions concerning the nature of moral obligations: "obligations of patrons to clients, clients to patrons, of members to communities, of citizens to states, and of state representatives to citizens" (p. 154). Mr. Williams posits that due to their position as Emirati citizens many of his students will go on to be accepted into the police or military, careers which do not require proficiency in English. He also believes that their starting

salaries in these fields will be much higher than that of a teacher[44]. That he laughs after making this statement indicates Mr. Williams' perception of this as a violation of moral obligations. Thus for Mr. Williams the subschemas or motifs concerning the importance of hard work and self-reliance function ideologically to define both the relationship between the teacher and the student as well as the relationship between the state and the individual.

Indeed, Mr. Williams made a similar observation in a later interview where I had asked him, "What would you say are some threats to the completion of the reform?" In his response, Mr. Williams constructs an ideological linkage between the state and the school, explaining that the reform would be threatened by, "The government [of Abu Dhabi] continuing to give their—their citizens everything they can possibly **want**" (ln. 15). He posited that this creates a situation where, "there's very little **incentive** to improve oneself," and where, "they [the Emiratis] don't **feel** either like they have to work uh in school or even finish school" (ln. 17).

Mr. Williams's explanation illustrates the salience of the motifs of hard work, self-reliance, and success to the American schema of teaching. In Mr. Williams's discourse, by making life too easy on their people, the government of Abu Dhabi is

[44] In fact, the starting salary for Western teachers ranges from 13.000 AED to 20,000 AED (about $3,500-$5,000) a month. The starting salary for police or military ranges from 15,000 AED-20,000 AED, depending on position and qualifications.

undermining the imperative relationships between *individual work* and *success* necessary for motivating students to learn. Nevertheless, in *Stanza 3* Mr. Williams clarifies that although he might understand this to be the case—that his students have no incentive to learn—he still tries to "help" as many students as he can by trying "to get them to change their mind about education" (ln. 26). He finishes his narrative by reiterating the motif that he is determined to motivate "those [students] who truly do care" (ln. 28).

In his reaffirmation of the teacher-as-motivational-speaker, Mr. Williams is demonstrating what Rice (1980) calls "assimilation to, or by, cultural schemata" (p. 168), where "cultural knowledge informs our perceptions of the world" (p. 168). In Mr. Williams's schema of teaching, it is wrong for a student to get something for nothing. Thus the teacher's role is to convince the student about the value of hard work. Despite the peculiar situation he finds himself in at Najah, Mr. Williams holds tight to these ideas.

Like Mr. Williams, Mr. Hammond answers my question "What is the nature of teaching?" with a narrative commenting on the situation he finds himself in at Najah.

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

> 01 Mr. Hammond: A teacher (…) teaches students what they need to know, or a
> 02 **teacher** tries to equip the student with whatever skills would be **necessary**,
> 03 useful, or **vital** for them […]

Stanza 2: ORIENTATION

04 So uh (…) most of the time [teaching at Najah] I mean I'm **dissatisfied**, and
05 I'm just trying to stay positive and make do with what I'm able (.) **to** but

Stanza 3: COMPLICATING ACTION

06 um […] well, the students aren't interested in any of the curriculum I have to
07 offer, so we'll try to deliver curriculum—we'll try to deliver **English** skills and
08 you know the **social** etique::tte and just getting them familiar with Western
09 mannerisms—expectations and what not (.) through any **topic** that they are
10 interested in.

Stanza 4: EVALUATION

11 Which I **can't** say really has worked or not [teaching the students this]
12 […] that they learn that, ok, in the Western world this isn't ok (.) you know (.)
13 some of them maybe one day they will **work** with Westerners or—for a private
14 (.) **company**—which (.) might be Western, or, so uh, perhaps maybe they're
15 becoming aware of that now and it would save them from embarrassment in
16 the future.

Stanza 5: RESULT

17 […] I think just (.) I'm now even more aware of the fact that (…) in a **simple**
18 definition a teacher's job is to (.) give the students knowledge that's useful to
19 them.

In *Stanza 1*, Mr. Hammond uses the word "equip" to describe the process of teaching. For Mr. Hammond, the teacher's role is to equip students with the "**necessary**, useful, or **vital**" (ln. 2-3) skills they will need to be successful in the world. He then explains that he is "**dissatisfied**" (ln. 3) with teaching at Najah, emphasizing this word with a louder voice. In *Stanza 3* Mr. Hammond links this word with his perception that

the students don't seem to be interested in the "curriculum" (ln. 6) he is offering, and he concludes this stanza by explaining what skills he believes the curriculum is trying to impart: "We'll try to deliver **English** skills and you know the **social** etique::tte and just getting them familiar with Western mannerisms—expectations and what not" (ln. 7-9). That Mr. Hammond sandwiches these lines between the repeated statement in *Stanza 5* that the teacher's role is to give students "useful" (ln. 18) knowledge indicates his taken-for-granted or "anchored" (Silverstein, 1985, p. 289) beliefs that English skills and Western mannerisms are indeed the necessary and vital skills students must acquire.

The idea that the teacher must make students "aware" (ln. 15) of Western mannerisms and expectations involving work habits in order to motivate them to change their ways is salient throughout Mr. Hammond's narrative, as is the ontological metaphor of skills as substances which an active teacher "equips" onto an initially passive student. Mr. Hammond explains in *Stanza 4* that these Western mannerisms and expectations he believes it is the teacher's role to impart stand in stark opposition to what the students presently know, and that they involve working with Westerners or for private companies. He posits that the teacher must impart these skills to the students to "save them from embarrassment in the future" (ln. 15-16), underscoring the idea that his students are horribly underprepared for their futures.

As if in lock-step with his American colleagues, Mr. Ramirez also related a broad narrative lamenting that his students were not "motivated" to learn. In response to the question "What is the nature of teaching?" Mr. Ramirez explained:

Stanza 1: ORIENTATION

01 Mr. Ramirez: Well, I'll give a two-fold answer for that **one**. For **me::**,
02 teaching (.) in the context of North America (…) is presenting a curriculum
03 given in a clear, comprehensive, thorough manner so that it is accessed by
04 every student in cla::ss (.) so that they will be able to **learn** and—and—and
05 what not. In the context of uh this **country** [the UAE] (.) u::h you just uh got to
06 learn how to play a silly game called survival, particularly in this school. Uh (.)
08 because here no matter what you **do** (.) it doesn't matter because

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

09 these guys are not (.) uh (.) motivated to **learn** anything. They don't want to
10 **learn** anything.

Stanza 3: RESULT

11 And, pedagogically, with these guys here at **this** school, at Najah I'm at a loss
12 because they don't seem to (…) they don't engage u::h—for **me** anyway—
13 that's the experience that I—they don't engage no matter what you try to do
14 with them, so (…) that's my answer for **that.**

Mr. Ramirez begins his discourse by defining teaching as "presenting a curriculum" (ln. 2) in such a way that it can be "accessed by every student in class" (ln. 4). He then situates (Gee, 1999) his discourse squarely at Najah, explaining that "particularly in this school" (ln. 6) teachers must "play a silly game called survival" (ln. 6). He clarifies the metaphor of the "silly game" by explaining that Najah students aren't

"motivated to **learn** anything" (ln. 9). In *Stanza 3* Mr. Ramirez says that this is the case "no matter what you try to do with them" (ln. 13-14), implying that he has already tried every technique he knows to motivate the students, but that they simply will not learn. As Mr. Ramirez emphasized the word "learn" in lines 4, 9, and 10, I wanted to find out what he believed specifically the students should be motivated to learn—that is, what material the teacher was supposed to present. I therefore asked him a follow-up question (Mr. Ramirez responded to my next question in an exposition which I have considered to be part of *Stanza 1* in his initial response):

Thomas: So, okay—so basically, then, a teacher is a presenter of (…)?

Stanza 1a

01 Mr. Ramirez: Well, for **me**, for me, there—there are many functions of a
02 teacher in a classroom and uh so of course the role of the teacher has changed
03 over the past uh (.) 25 years or **whate::ver**, but uh, but—but for me a teacher
04 should be knowledgeable on the subject and it should be presented in a clear,
05 comprehensive manner so (.) kids understand it […]

Stanza 1b

06 I think that—the teachers […] teach kids values like uh responsibility and self-
07 discipline and uh **honesty**, and uh (.) so kids eventually will hopefully use
08 these uh (.) these things learned from teachers to become uh decent, honest and
09 productive citizens. […]

Stanza 1c

10 For **me**, for me as a **teacher** I think that—what I can tell you what **I** think, and
11 again you may you may get different answers from whoever (.) but for **me::**
12 (…) a teacher should be knowledgeable on their subject area, and they should

13 be able to convey that knowledge in a clear, comprehensive manner so that
14 kids are able to grasp and understand the material (.) and **learn it** (.) and thus
15 be successful in class.

Like his American colleagues, Mr. Ramirez's schema of teaching represents what Quinn (1980) calls "goal-defining knowledge structures" (p. 795), structures which invoke expectations about how one should act and what one should expect from others. In his response, Mr. Ramirez repeated that teachers must "present" (ln. 4) the subject matter clearly. He explained that he hoped his students would "use" the subject matter presented by the teacher "to become uh decent, honest and productive citizens" (ln. 8-9). Thus in the American schema of teaching, the teacher must possess particular skills related to the subject matter and convey this information in a "clear, comprehensive manner" (ln. 13). Students take possession of the subject matter for themselves, in a process that for Mr. Ramirez represents "successful" (ln. 15) activity in class.

The student's role in the American schema of teaching is to "use" or "grasp" specific skills in order to achieve future success—that is, the student must understand and appreciate the need to actively work for this success, i.e. the need for responsibility and self-discipline. Mr. Ramirez clarified this point in a later interview when I asked him, "Do you think that the teacher's role is to sometimes make students do things that they don't like?" In his response, Mr. Ramirez outlined the rational disposition students are expected to acquire in the American schema of teaching, explaining: "Well, it's just a

general fact a general **fact** of everyday life that there are many things that human beings don't **like** (.) and we have to do them anyway. We all have to get up to go to work. We all have to pay taxes. We all have to do certain **things** that we don't like" (ln. 17). Thus, in the American schema of teaching, the student must learn to be responsible and self-reliant if he wishes to become successful. The teacher's role is to convey these facts to their students in a manner that motivates them to take action.

Responding to the question "What is the nature of teaching?" Mr. Drake also utilizes metaphors of grasping at skills and success:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Drake: Well for me—and **I'm** (…) I'm not that intellectual, but I—I'm
02 gonna lay it on the line. For me, the nature of teaching **is** (…) u::m (…) really
03 it's just (.) helping your (.) fellow **man** (...) um (.) /sighs/ **maintain** (.) and
04 um—um (.) try to grab (.) **some type** of success in this world—in this
05 environment, in this **community** […]

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

06 I—I—I've never looked at teaching other than (.) u::m (…)—I'm pretty (.)
07 good at **sports** (.) but I'm not the **best** (.) at it (.) u::m (…) but I—I **could** add
08 to:: (.) this young man's **life**—to help this (.) young man be (.) **better** than **I**
09 was. /Clears throat/ It's almost like a passing of the **baton**. You know I've—
10 I've—I—on days now (.) I'm **pretty** fast as a athlete, runner or what not (.) uh
11 I—I'm **definitely** not as fast as these kids anymore (.) and (.) but then I know
12 some **tricks** to make them a little bit **faster**.

Like Mr. Ramirez, for Mr. Drake the teacher must help the student to metaphorically grasp at the skills needed for success. In *Stanza 1*, Mr. Drake defines

teaching as "helping your (.) fellow **man**" (ln. 3) to "try to grab (.) **some type** of success in this world" (ln. 3-4). In *Stanza 2*, Mr. Drake clarified the word "helping" as "to help this (.) young man be (.) **better** than **I** was" (ln. 8-9). The metaphor of grabbing is also made prominent by the metaphor Mr. Drake introduces in Stanza 2: "It's almost like a passing of the **baton**" (ln. 9). In Mr. Drake's discourse, the teacher passes the skills he possesses to the student who must take action by grabbing those skills.

Several motifs emerge from the discourses of the American teachers concerning the nature of teaching. In these discourses, the teacher's role is one of *convincing* students to take action on their own behalf. For Mr. Williams, the teacher must "get them [students] to understand," that they must "take responsibility and ownership" of their learning. Mr. Hammond explains that the teacher must "equip" students with skills and make them "aware" of specific expectations. Mr. Ramirez posits that a teacher must try to "motivate" students, convincing them to "grasp" specific skills. And Mr. Drake echoes these motifs with the metaphor of "passing of the baton" and getting students to "grab some type of success" in order to become better than he was.

Additionally, for the American teachers, the subject matter they are presenting consists of more than simply the English language. It also consists of a specific set of values—a particular *habitus*, in Bourdieu's (1990) terms—surrounding the motifs of self-reliance and hard work. For Mr. Williams, those values concern "responsibility" and

working to improve oneself both in school and at home. Mr. Hammond asserts that in addition to English he is also teaching the "social etiquette" and "Western mannerisms" needed for working with Westerners or in a private company. Mr. Ramirez wishes to impart values such as "responsibility," "self-discipline" and "honesty" in order to create "decent, honest and productive" people. For Mr. Drake, he wants to make the students better than *he* was, so that they surpass the success that he has achieved.

Both in their personal narratives about how they became teachers and in their definitions of teaching, the American teachers construct a cultural schema, or a "storyline" (Gee, 1999, p. 1558) connected with the metaphors of hard work, self-reliance and success. According to this construction, anyone can achieve success if he works hard and follows his personal interests and natural inclinations; thus, a person is solely responsible for his own success or failure. This cultural schema is not new to American discourse. Weber (1905) has famously espoused that the ethic of hard work is salient in the American psyche. And D'Andrade (1984) has documented the acceptance by many people in America of the "domain of success" (p. 95) where, "In American culture, success is a personal characteristic of great importance for most people" (p. 95). However, the American teachers have packed this storyline with them in their suitcases and brought it to Abu Dhabi. In the discourses of the American teachers, the role of the teacher as a motivational speaker is linked with this schema of success. In the next

section I will show how these cultural schemas impacts their discourses about their students at Najah.

4.3 Najah Students: "Living for the Moment"

When I asked Mr. Williams "Have you figured out what makes your students tick, what motivates them?" He responded by summing up the "story" of his students as he understood it:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Williams: They're [the students] um (.) /sighs/ what (…) I'm I have a lot
02 more to learn myself to find out what motivates them. Again this is just very
03 new to me uh (.) if you were to uh—I mean I'm glad to be **speaking** with you
04 right now but, but if you uh, uh spoke to me waited a year or something when
05 I've had a chance to acclimate **myself** into this country I would know a lot
06 more about my students, but, but um so I—I don't really have a good
07 understanding yet of what motivates them.

Stanza 1a

08 Their i::nterests, uh—it's **not** English—uh (.) their their um (.) I—I think their
09 interests are **gi::rls** uh uh (.) technology uh uh the latest cell phones um (.)
10 their uh (.) they're interested in their **farms**, uh their **animals**, uh especially
11 since this is Bani Waleed.

In his response to my question about his students, Mr. Williams admits to knowing very little about them. In *Stanza 1*, however, Mr. Williams explains that he is confident that given enough time he will eventually learn how to motivate his students. In

Stanza 1a he takes a stab at my question and lists the items he is confident the students find interesting: girls, technology, cell phones, farms and animals (ln. 9-10). However, in line 8, Mr. Williams asserts that English is not one of his students' interests, and he emphasizes "not" with a louder voice. I was curious about this and asked him the following question:

> Thomas: You mentioned the students are not interested in English? Why is that? Why is the students' English ability so poor?

Stanza 1: ORIETATION

> 01 Mr. Williams: They [students] just don't (.) feel English is important in their
> 02 **lives**. They don't think that they're going to need it, and they can follow uh (.)

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

> 03 uh—the example their parents have set is you know, "We'll just rely on
> 04 Westerners to do everything for us /laughs/ and uh, uh to fix everything for us,
> 05 uh we'll rely on our **servants** to do this and that," and uh, so.

In his response, Mr. Williams ideologically links the English language to the motifs of rational work and self-reliance, and he judges the moral obligations (Wuthnow, 1987) of the parents against this standard. He begins by explaining that the students feel they aren't going to need English. He then evaluates this assumption, bringing into his evaluation the legacy he feels the students' parents have set: "We'll just rely on Westerners to do everything for us" (ln. 4). That he laughs after this remark and then stresses the word "servants" with a louder intonation indicates sarcasm. Mr. Williams is

linking the students' lack of interest in English with their lack of work ethic, a disposition he also links with the students' heritage through their parents.

Mr. Hammond began answering the question "Have you figured out what makes your students tick, what motivates them?" while answering a previous question. When I asked Mr. Hammond, "What do you think the students are getting out of your lessons?" in his response, he reflected on what students might want out of life, drawing a clear distinction between "Western" culture and what he witnessed during his time in Abu Dhabi:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Hammond: What do these kids [his Emirati students] want? Because, they
02 might already have very nice material things, or they might **aspire** to have nice
03 things as any human does, but then if these things go awa::y, or if they have
04 them and lose them, or if they never **achieve** them, I don't think that would be

Stanza 1a

05 the end of the day for them. Whereas for **myself**, and **Westerners**, we aspire
06 for something—a certain lifestyle, a certain (.) materia::l or a tangible goo::d
07 or societal (.) **status**, and if we don't **get it** then you know we're not
08 successful, you know we haven't progressed […] so you know (.) I know
09 that's **off** the **path** but […]

In the first stanza, Mr. Hammond compares the outlook of his Emirati students with the Western outlook as he understands it. That he emphasized the two words "aspire" and "achieve" with a louder voice indicates their salience to the point he is

trying to make: that the aspirations of his students, if they even exist, seem to be evanescent or at least not as important to them as they are to "Westerners." In *Stanza 1a*, Mr. Hammond then brings in the motif of success, connecting it to both the aspirations of the Westerners and the concept of "progress" (ln. 8). Seeing an opportunity to ask him about his students, I then proceeded:

> Thomas: No, actually that was my next question: What do you think makes your students tick?

Stanza 1: ORIENTATION

> 01 Mr. Hammond: I don't **know**. Yeah, I don't know. I don't know. They're [his
> 02 Emirati students are] very **so::cial**, in the moment type (.) people (.) very (…)
> 03 oral, (.) and I know they like **Blackberries** and they like cars,

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

> 04 but **I** like technology and **I** love high-powered cars also—it's just an interest—
> 05 and I don't **have** any of those things, but I don't—if I had the **money**, I doubt I
> 06 would even **spend it** on those things,

Stanza 2a

> 07 so (.) I don't know what makes them tick. I don't know what **motivates** them.
> 08 I have **no::** clue. I have no idea. It's a mystery to me (.) yeah. As a—as a
> 09 **collective** group of **Emirati** students, or **Arab** (.) students, or **Gulf** (.)
> 10 students—I have no clue (.) what motivates them. […]

Stanza 2b

> 11 They live like today's the last day on the Earth, you know, and a lot of the—
> 12 the way that people drive and (.) you know. They take the most out of the
> 13 moment, which can be a **great** thing. So I don't know what motivates them.
> 14 Strange.

Mr. Hammond begins by summarizing the "story" of his students, and then spends the rest of his discourse evaluating that summation. He begins and ends his discourse with the statement that the students are "in the moment" (ln. 2) people, emphasizing his earlier observation that unlike Westerners, they don't seem to care too much about the future. In this discourse Mr. Hammond continues to compare himself to his students, explaining in *Stanza 2* that although he shares many of the same interests as his students, he differs from them in that he would not spend his money on those items. Although he seems adamant in *Stanza 2a* that he does not know what motivates his students, the themes that the students live for the moment and spend their money on unnecessary items are salient in Mr. Hammond's discourse. Later in the interview, when I asked him "Is there anything else you want to add about what motivates your students?" Mr. Hammond clarified that the students' attitude of living in the moment is not conducive to the success of the reform program, lamenting that, "I don't see the [reform] program being successful until someone **realizes** that it's important that they [the students] learn, so (.) **someone's** got to convince these kids that it's important that they learn, or (.) **someone's** gotta realize that learning is important, but until that happens (.) I don't know" (ln. 10).

In both the discourses of Mr. Williams and Mr. Hammond concerning their students, the motifs or *subschemas* (D'Andrade, 1995; Quinn, 1980) surrounding the

importance of hard work, self-reliance and success support the schema of the teacher as motivational speaker. For various reasons, either because they have been given too much by their government, or because of their disposition of living in the moment, the students do not know the value of hard work and the importance of success. Thus, the teacher's first duty is to convince students of these values.

When I asked Mr. Ramirez the question "Have you figured out what makes your students tick, what motivates them?" he responded by relating a narrative about a particular student, contrasting this student with the majority of his students:

Stanza 1: ORIENTATION

01 Mr. Ramirez: Well with this particular student. He is very much interested in
02 learning **English** because that comes from his father's influence because his
03 father is a very **Westernized** man. He's lived and worked in a number of
04 Western countries including the United States (.) because of his **work**. Uh (.)

Stanza 1a

05 and um this particular gentleman [the father] is very interested in the bilateral
06 relationship between the United States and the UAE. Uh (.) he's [the father is]
07 very interested in the cooperation, particularly the military (.) governmental uh
08 cooperation that exists between our countries. He's [the father is] very
09 interested in **that**—he's very knowledgeable about that.

Stanza 2: RESULT

10 Uh, and he **has**—this particular student—he has expressed his desire to—to—
11 to—to work for ADNOC[45] in what capacity I don't know. He [the student]
12 says that he's not scientifically inclined (.) so (...), but nevertheless (.) given
13 the influence of his father he could probably do something for him. Maybe
14 something in public relations—

Stanza 3: EVALUATION

15 I think he'd be very good at that. He speaks […] very fluent **English**.
16 But uh as far as the rest of the **students** (.) uh, what makes them **tick**? Uh (.)
17 I—I really don't know. I really have to figure that one out.

Stanza 3a

18 Because the old (.) one of the old **trite** things that we're taught back West is
19 that you know you have to try to (.) figure out what student interests are to
20 quote "**hook** them" into the curriculum, you know I—I think—I've never
21 bought that, but (.) I think that (…) given the fact that these students are so
22 **complacent**—because everything's given **to** them, again they [the other
23 students at Najah] have very little incentive to want to do anything or want to
24 learn anything.

Mr. Ramirez's initial description of the ideal student, one who is motivated to learn, is linked with his perception that the student is aware of his potentially bright and successful future. In *Stanza 1,* Mr. Ramirez attributes this awareness to the student's father, who worked in "Western countries" (ln. 4), and is an executive for ADNOC. In this discourse, then, the student's motivation is a product of his knowledge of, and his striving for, his future success.

[45] ADNOC stands for Abu Dhabi National Oil Company, and is one of the biggest oil companies in the Emirate. The student's father in Mr. Ramirez's narrative is the Executive Vice President of ADNOC.

Like Mr. Hammond, Mr. Ramirez asserts that he doesn't know what motivates his students, but then he argues that his students "have very little incentive to want to do anything or want to learn anything" (ln. 23-24). And like Mr. Williams, he attributes this lack of incentive to the students' complacency stemming from his impression that the students have been given too much by both their parents and the government[46]: "Because everything's given **to** them" (ln. 22). Mr. Ramirez also introduces the idea that students should be interested in the curriculum, an idea that he "never bought" (ln. 20-21). I wanted to know more about this, so I asked him a follow-up question:

> Thomas: So you mentioned that the students need to have—to be linked to the curriculum—is that what you said?

Stanza 1: ORIENTATION

> 01 Mr. Ramirez: Well yeah the old **adage** that—the old line that—that uh—when
> 02 I was uh (.) in several of my credential classes in the United States, you know
> 03 several people you know told us that uh (.) we should design the curriculum
> 04 **arou::nd** the interests of the students in order to quote "**hook them**" so they
> 05 become interested.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

> 06 Um (…) I don't really (.) buy that (.) I don't really believe in that. Um (.) the
> 07 curriculum is the curriculum **as it is** (.) and—and sometimes you know—like I
> 08 used to tell my kids in North America, is that (.) you are gonna have to take

[46] In an informal interview, Mr. Ramirez told me another story about visiting this student's father at the ADNOC headquarters. He and the father were upstairs looking down into the lavish lobby of the ADNOC Building where 20 young Emiratis were sitting, and as Mr. Ramirez put it, "playing on their Blackberries." Mr. Ramirez asked the father who the boys were and he was told that these were all high school drop-outs and that they were entering a training program to work for ADNOC where they would make a starting salary of 25,000 AED a month (6,700 USD).

09 certain things that you are not gonna like (.) so my advice to you is to just keep
10 an open mind and do the best you ca::n. Get help from your teachers—ask for
11 it—that's what we're here for—to help you succeed. So don't have a negative
12 attitude, it's not good for you, so (.) **don't** get yourself into trouble (.) go to
13 class every day. Ask your teachers for help. Behave and be respectful. Try to
14 do the work (.) and at the end of the four years you'll have your high school
15 diploma.

In Mr. Ramirez's discourse, the teacher's role is not to worry so much about whether students are interested in the curriculum, but it is to convince students to work hard for their future success. In *Stanza 1* Mr. Ramirez elaborates on the idea of "hooking" students into the curriculum "so they become interested" (ln. 4-5). He posits that he was told this "**adage**" in his credential classes in the United States, an adage which he derides by calling it "the old line" (ln. 1). He then evaluates this "line" in *Stanza 2*, explaining that he doesn't believe it and relating what he tells to his students. The schema of the teacher as motivational speaker is cogent in this stanza, and Mr. Ramirez even offers an example of a motivational speech; he tells his students that they may not like some of their subjects, but that the teacher is there to help them "succeed" (ln. 11). He tells them as well to keep a good attitude and to "go to class every day" (ln.12-13) and "try to do the work" (ln. 13-14).

When I asked Mr. Drake the question, "Have you figured out what makes your students tick, what motivates them?" he explained that his students were "outdoorsman":

Stanza 1: ORIENTATION

01 Mr. Drake: **Wow**! That's—that's a **ha::rd** one because (…) no I **haven't**. I—
02 I—I **noticed** that I haven't either because (.) u::m (…) it's not money—well
03 **yeah** I do. I know what makes them tick. U::m (…) these kids are like
04 **outdoo::rsman**. Uh (.) **animals** in that they connect with **animals** or they—
05 they almost **do** the same things that animals do. They'll get outside here and
06 get in their little groups—congregate in their groups sitting out on the floor and
07 everything **else**. Um (…) so

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

08 (.) I—I—I **think** that's what it is, and that just does not happen to be **me** (.) but
09 at the same time, uh (.) I think that (…) we need to **find** some ways t::o
10 incorporate (…) fold **into** their (.) academics (…) the world **they** come from.

Like his American colleagues, Mr. Drake initially responds by asserting that he doesn't really know what makes his students tick, and then he offers a more detailed answer, beginning with what he knows the students *aren't* interested in: "it's not money" (ln. 2). He then elaborates on this by explaining that his students are "**outdoo::rsman**" (ln. 4) and much like the animals they care for, the students "get in their little groups—congregate in their groups sitting out on the floor" (ln. 6). He then says that teachers must relate the world the students come from to their academic experience. I wanted to find out more about this, so I asked Mr. Drake the following question:

> Thomas: So, they [the students] seem to be interested in these outdoor activities. So are there specific things that you would say motivates or could motivate possible if we could tap—tap into them, or specific examples of things that you might (…)?

Stanza 1: ORIENTATION

01 Mr. Drake: [Sheikh] Zayed is uh really **considered** (.) by most of the kids
02 **I've** seen—I've talked to (.) it's almost like he's **alive** he's just gone away for
03 a week or so, he's—he's—he's in another **room** or something sleeping. He's
04 not **dead**. They [the students] don't refer to him [Sheikh Zayed] in the past
05 tense **at all** […] they [the students] don't really understand (.) u::m (.) or
06 maybe they do but I'm not getting the impression they understand (.) um (.)
07 **death** or **passing** and stuff like that.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

08 And then and then **too** it's almost like, "well I don't—I can live for the
09 moment." I find too many of them living for the moment (.) and not (.) living
10 for (.) tomorrow.

Stanza 2a

11 And that's been—that's been kinda (.) bred **into** them and that (.) you know at
12 the end of the day five minutes before class is out they want they want an **85**,
13 90 [percent mark] and they haven't done anything to even get a (.) 20.

In Mr. Drake's discourse, the teacher's role is to talk to students in an effort to convince them to strive for their futures. This involves making students aware of the importance of hard work. Mr. Drake proceeds in *Stanza 1* to answer my question by referring to Sheikh Zayed, the founder of the United Arab Emirates. Mr. Drake asserts that teachers should try to bring Sheikh Zayed into their discussions with students, and even have students write about him, practices which I will show Mr. Drake often attempted in class. He posits in *Stanza 1* that his students love Sheikh Zayed to the point where they speak about him as if he were still alive. For Mr. Drake, this seems to signify

that perhaps his students don't "understand (.) um (.) **death** or **passing** and stuff like that" (ln. 6-7). And like Mr. Hammond, he relates this phenomenon to another problem he notices with his students: that they "live for the moment" (ln. 8-9) and not, as he posits they should, "for tomorrow" (ln. 10). Mr. Drake also relates this attitude, of living for the moment, with the students' heritage—that this attitude has been "bred **into** them" (ln. 11)—and he argues that this attitude is responsible for students wanting to get a high mark without having worked for it.

The discourses of the American teachers concerning their students continue the same motifs emerging from the American schema of teaching, where the teacher as motivational speaker convinces his students to take control of their futures in order to achieve success. The American teachers critique their Emirati students' behavior through this lens. For the American teachers, the work ethic in Abu Dhabi seems to have been flipped on its head, where their students have been given too much and *rely* too much on the work of others. They also attribute this phenomenon to the problematic legacy their students have inherited from their parents. Thus Mr. Williams laments that his students feel they will not need English in the future and that they can simply depend on their "servants to do this and that" (ln. 5), a problem he attributes to "the examples their parents have set" (ln. 3). Mr. Hammond compares the "Western" outlook with that of his Emirati students, positing that unlike Westerners who aspire to achieve "a certain

lifestyle" (ln. 6) or material good to show that they are successful and have "progressed" (ln. 8), his Emirati students live "in the moment" (ln. 2). For Mr. Ramirez, his Emirati students are "complacent" as "everything is given to them" (ln. 22). He compares the majority of his students to a single "motivated" student whose father is a successful, westernized man. And Mr. Drake finds "too many of them [his students] living for the moment" (ln. 9), an attribute that he concludes has been "bred into them" (ln. 11).

In this section I have shown that the American schema of teaching as motivational speaking, which includes the motifs of *self-reliance*, *hard work* and *the achievement of success*, impacts the ways American teachers talk about their Emirati students. In the next section I will show how these schemas interact with other ideologies surrounding the nature of language in the world. I asked the American teachers why the government of the UAE is promoting English as well as what they understood to be the role(s) of both English and Arabic in their students' lives.

4.4 English Language as Instrumental Skill

In their discourses about the English language, the American teachers construct English as an "instrumental" skill (Wee, 2008, p. 31), one which they connect with the economic ambitions of the Emirati people, as well as with their students' achievement of success. When I asked Mr. Williams "Why is the government promoting English?" He offered this exposition summarizing the story of the reform:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Williams: They [ADEC]—I believe they are trying to uh (.) to um (.)
02 bring their schools up to international standards,

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

03 and uh (.) um and u::h I think that that ADEC has the right **goal** in mind.
04 They truly believe—or **ADEC** truly believes—it wants its students to uh be
05 proficient in English so that they can be contributing members towards society
06 and uh (.) uh be representative of—in in the global marketplace.

In this discourse, Mr. Williams associates the English language with both pedagogical and economic progress. He begins by positing that ADEC is promoting English in order to "bring their schools up to international standards" (ln. 2). He then connects English as a prerequisite to his students becoming "contributing members towards society" (ln. 5), and he "contextualizes" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1996, p. 27) his statement within the broader story of the "global marketplace" (ln. 6). Thus Mr. Williams constructs English ideologically as the instrumental skill which is imperative to productivity and economic stability in the modern world.

When I asked him, "What is the role of English in your students' lives?" Mr. Williams responded by noting the importance of English on the world stage:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Williams: Um, well, I think it's [English has] a very salient uh role that a
02 student needs to take seriously, but I think unfortunately many of these
03 students do not take it seriously.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

04 After all, uh (.) English is the um is the uh, you know it's the language spoken
05 by mo::re people in this world than any **other**. Uh, there may be uh, there may
06 be more (.) Arab—there may be more countries that **speak** Arabic than
07 English, but in terms of total population sizes it's English. And also English is

Stanza 2b

08 the international language specifically of Science and Math. Uh and and so uh
09 (.) if they're [the students' are] to become (.) uh if they're to enter professional
10 **roles** like uh engineers like uh then then they really have to be proficient in
11 English because that's the language of Science and Math.

In his response, Mr. Williams described what Tan and Rubdy (2008) call the "brave new world where languages are learnt to gain economic advantages" (p. 1). He begins in *Stanza 1* by explaining that his students don't seem to realize the importance of English. He argues in *Stanza 2* that English has become the *lingua franca* of the world, and in *Stanza 2b* that English is "the international language specifically of Science and Math" (ln. 8). Mr. Williams clarifies the importance of this role in the world as it relates to his students' lives in *Stanza 2b*. He posits that students who aspire to enter "professional **roles** like engineers" (ln. 10-11) will have to learn English. This ideological description of English as an instrumental value (Wee, 2008) mediates the schema of the

teacher as motivational speaker, where the teacher must convince students of the value of English.

Mr. Williams continued the same discourse, telling me a story to illustrate the mistaken notion the students have that they won't need English:

Stanza 3: ORIENTATION

12 And uh uh (.) uh um (…) also the the the role of English in their [the students']
13 li::ves— they, they—everywhere they **go** they may think uh (.) they can just
14 live out the rest of their lives and uh and speak Arabic and, and, and to a
15 certain extent they may be **correct**, but, but they, they are going to encounter
16 struggles uh throughout their life [if they don't learn English] even if they
17 don't [live outside the UAE], even if they remain in this **country**.

Stanza 4: EVALUATION

18 I—I think I shared with you before everywhere I go—I go out to eat
19 sometimes—and everywhere I go, uh (.) I see that Emiratis are forced to have
20 to order in in English I—you go to a Subway and there's nobody who works at
21 a subway restaurant who speaks Arabic, or they they're (.) they're from
22 Southeast Asia—South (.) South Asia, uh I'm right there with Emiratis behind

Stanza 4a

23 me and in front of me and they have to speak **English** to order. And that's at
24 that's at Chili's **restaurant** that I've been to it's at virtually every restaurant
25 I've been to unless it's someplace like uh (.) you know unless it's some type of
26 an—an Arab restaurant uh (.) […] you know I of course if it's an Arab
27 restaurant then that's **fine** they don't need to [use English]—but they're—

Stanza 4b

28 they're **going** to be going to other restaurants where they're gonna have to be
29 forced to speak English to order. And if they don't know enough English then
30 they're gonna have to rely on a buddy of theirs who knows better English who
31 can help order for them. Unless they just want to avoid those restaurants
32 entirely.

Aside from its role in the professional aspirations of his students, Mr. Williams asserts in this discourse that without English his students will "encounter struggles" (ln. 15-16), even if they stay in the UAE. He evaluates this claim with the example of going to a commercial restaurant in the UAE where the customer service representatives don't speak Arabic. Mr. Williams posits that his students (the majority who can't speak English) will be "forced to speak English to order" (ln. 29). The result will be only two choices: don't go to those restaurants, or "rely on a buddy of theirs who knows better English" (ln. 30). Gal (2005) reminds us that language ideologies are "never only about language" (p.) but that they "have semiotic properties that provide insight into the workings of ideologies more generally" (p.). In Mr. Williams's responses, English as the instrumental skill linked with the global marketplace, is the language of productivity, professional careers, and of being self-reliant.

When I asked Mr. Hammond "Why is the government promoting English?" he offered several hypothetical storylines positing the government's reasons for the reform effort:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Hammond: I think [the government is promoting English] to diversify the
02 economy and there's a lot of **opinions** you know some of the LTs say that you
03 know, in the **larger** scope of history the Emiratis are looked at as **ignorant**,
04 tribalized people (.) who have nothing to show for (.) because they don't have
05 any—there's no **Damascus** here (.) there's no thousand-year-old city, uh they
06 are not known building or inventing or making **anything** other than **poetry** (.)

Stanza 1a

07 and apparently they have really good poetry, but compared to their Arab
08 counterparts that they're **backwards** and arrogant (.) and that's what some of
09 the LTs say they (.) have heard or have **read**. So it could be that **ambition** that
10 Dubai:: and Abu Dhabi **compete** you know trying to impress the Arab world
11 now that they have **money** and earn that respect and get **sovereignty** on an
12 international level.

Like Mr. Williams, Mr. Hammond ideologically links the English language to self-reliance, hard work and productivity. He paints an image of the Emiratis as a people hungry for respect and dignity. In this first part of his discourse, Mr. Hammond posits that the UAE government is prioritizing the English language as a way to earn respect amongst their "Arab counterparts" (ln. 7-8). He argues that the Emiratis have nothing except their poetry to show for thousands of years of history, and that they are seen by other Arab nations as "**backwards**" (ln. 8). In the final stanza, Mr. Hammond relates the UAE's interest in the English language to their "**ambition**," which he clarifies as their desire to "impress the Arab world" (ln. 10), and gain "respect" and "**sovereignty** on an international level" (ln. 11-12). In Mr. Hammond's discourse, the English language is one

way for the Emiratis to become builders, inventors and makers, and it's a way to gain respect on the world stage.

Mr. Hammond then continued with his discourse, hypothesizing what Sheik Zayed, the founder of the UAE, and his son and current ruler of the UAE, Sheik Khalifa Bin Zayed, might have been thinking about the citizens of their country:

Stanza 1b

13 Could be (.) uh (.) it could be that uh Sheik **Za::yed** just really had the
14 foresight to see that my people—"this **oil** will not last forever and my people
15 uh are not **maximizing** their potential as **humans**," um it could be that (…)
16 with (.) global economies changing (...) Sheik Khalifa Bin **Za::yed** [the current
17 ruler of the UAE] and maybe his advisors have realized that there's an

Stanza 1c

18 opportunity for us to build a **metropolis** here—to have people come **live** here
19 and to make this the new place of **finance**, tourism (.) you know just a
20 global hub, and (.) I know that unemployment is an issue amongst Emiratis
21 who don't have the family book[47]—because I do read some things that say that
22 they don't have access to the jobs they want—some people.

Thomas: And you think English will help with that (…)?

Stanza 2: EVALUTION

24 Mr. Hammond: I believe so, yeah (.) I think it's necessary for the aspirations
25 they [the Emiratis] have, I think it's necessary (.) but uh, if they don't have it

[47] Some Emiratis from powerful families will keep a "family book" showing pictures of family members going back many generations. These books will also include pictures of family members standing or sitting next to famous people, like Sheikh Zayed. These family books can and do serve as credentials for certain government jobs. It is not uncommon to look in the "Jobs" section of the *Gulf News* in Abu Dhabi and to find jobs advertised specifically for Emiratis which include the line "bring family book to interview."

26 [English] they'll still be **succe::ssful**, but it seems (.) like this Emirate [Abu
27 Dhabi] is very **ambitious**, so (.) having English would help them in their
28 ambitions.

In the second part of his discourse, Mr. Hammond continues to ideologically connect the English language to the motifs of productivity and hard work. He links English to the UAE government's desire that their citizens maximize "their potential as **humans**" (ln. 15), arguing that English will help the UAE government to "build a **metropolis**" (ln. 18), or a "global hub" (ln. 20) for finance and tourism. In *Stanza 2*, Mr. Hammond evaluates these statements, positing that although the Emiratis don't necessarily need English, given its value as an instrumental skill (Wee, 2008) it will certainly help them to achieve what he perceives as their goals.

However, when I asked him, "What is the role of English in your students' lives?" Mr. Hammond explains that his students don't find English important:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Hammond: For most of them I don't think it's [English is] very important
02 at **all**, so (.) yeah I don't (.) I don't get the impression that it's very important
03 at all.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

04 For non-Emiratis [non-National students] who have **money**, I guess they can
05 go to **Europe** or to university elsewhere if they have the opportunity or the
06 money. For **Emira::tis** (.) who know they won't get into the colleges **here**
07 because they don't have English skills (.) I assume they can go to Europe **also**

08 (.) and go to school there. But do they have what it takes to get in? I don't
09 **know** […]

In *Stanza 2*, Mr. Hammond evaluates his students' apparent lack of interest in English, differentiating between national and non-national students. He argues that non-National students (who will have a more difficult time than Emirati Citizens to get into a university in the UAE), can go to college in Europe or somewhere outside the country, but that this will take "opportunity" or "money" (ln. 5-6). Conversely, Emirati students who don't have English skills[48] can also go to Europe, but he wonders, "Do they have what it takes to get in?" (ln. 8). As his students already cannot get into UAE universities due to their poor English skills, it seems like the answer to this final question is obvious. Mr. Hammond is implying that even with the vast resources his students have they will eventually be stopped in their tracks due to their lack of English. Thus, in Mr. Hammond's discourses, the English language is the instrumental skill which is the key to both productivity and the achievement of economic and social ambitions on the world stage.

In response to my question ""Why is the government promoting English?" Mr. Ramirez also described English ideologically as an instrumental skill linked with the global economy:

[48] In fact, many Emiratis who wish to attend universities in the UAE will be admitted (if their marks are above 80%), but they will be required to take 1-2 years of *Foundation English* courses within the university before they will be permitted to start their Baccalaureate degree programs.

01 Mr. Ramirez: Well I suppose [the government is instituting educational
02 reform] because (.) the UAE is a very wealthy country and (.) I guess that
03 they—they—they [the Abu Dhabi government] know that English is a very
04 important **language** and English— English is the language of everything
05 nowadays, whether its business and finance and **commerce** and industry and
06 technology—English is the language and they [the Abu Dhabi government]
07 want their people to be able to use that that medium [English], for the good of
08 their country.

Like Mr. Williams and Mr. Hammond, Mr. Ramirez ideologically constructs English as the language of the global economy, or in Tan and Rubdy's (2008) terms, as the "commodity" that students must "invest in and await capital gains in time" (p. 3). In this initial response, Mr. Ramirez calls the English language the "medium" that the Emiratis will "use" for their own good (ln. 7-8). In this discourse, the value of English comes from its being "the language of everything nowadays," including "business and finance and **commerce** and industry and technology" (ln. 4-6). I wanted to know more about how Mr. Ramirez understood the specific role of English, so I immediately asked him:

Thomas: Do you think they could do as well if they didn't focus on English—if they were to focus on getting the Najah students to learn subjects like Physics and Algebra in Arabic?

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Ramirez: Well, they—they [the government] could approach it [the
02 reform] by **ste::ps**. But English is just a **part** of it, and—and—and (.) English
03 has always been a **part** of it (.) but uh (…) they can approach it however they

04 want, but again it's just gonna take uh (…) take somebody who has the
05 courage and valor to really put it—to really see that it **occurs**.

Stanza 2: ORIENTATION

06 If I would be if I would be in the upper echelons of this government, I would—
07 I would—**I** would go into every single classroom in the Emirates (.) and
08 explai::n (.) the vision of education of the Emirates to students so they know,
09 so they would get on board maybe. So (…) you know I don't think—I don't
10 think they [those in the government] really have busy **agendas** (.) so it might
11 be all the Sheikhs (.) and all the people and ADEC—all the Sheikhs and maybe
12 **Mughee::r**[49] uh (.)

Stanza 3: EVALUATION

13 I would—I would—I would go to every single classroom in every school of
14 the Emirates to explain what we are trying to **do**—to emphasize the
15 **importance** of education—the importance—in order to be productive citizens
16 (.) in this country. To make the most of their **wealth** (.) so they can be positive
17 ambassadors on the world **stage**. So they can partake in the world community.

In *Stanza 1*, Mr. Ramirez makes it clear that he understands English to be a necessary part of the reform program, that English "has always been a **part** of it" (ln. 3). It is here where Mr. Ramirez connects the schema of the teacher as motivational speaker trying to convince students to take possession of certain skills with his construction of English as the instrumental skill necessary for success in the modern world. He tells a story about what he would do if he were "upper echelons" (ln. 6) of the UAE govern**m**ent. Mr. Ramirez explains that he would try to motivate students to get "on board" (ln. 9) by explaining "what we are trying to **do**" (ln. 14). In this motivational

[49] His Excellency, Dr. Mugheer Al Khali is the director and head of all ADEC's operations.

speech, Mr. Ramirez explains that he would "emphasize the **importance** of education" (ln. 14-15). He would tell the students that education will make them "productive citizens" (ln. 15) who can "make the most of their **wealth**" (ln. 16), bringing in the motif of *rational work toward success* that we have already seen throughout the narratives of the American teachers.

When I asked him "What is the role of English in your students' lives?" Mr. Ramirez continued the theme of English as an instrumental language important in the global economy:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Ramirez: I would think that (.) u::m in the context of Najah (.) I would
02 think that um (…) uh (.) English would be the vehicle for them to expose them
03 to the popular culture of the West. Whether it be uh movies or television shows
04 or music (.) I—I think really that's the—that's the only—only English
05 exposure they have received.

Stanza 1a

06 Uh (.) but as far as utilizing **English** for anything **else** (.) uh I think that uh (.)
07 that is not the case. Uh though I **think** though—though there are some students
08 (.) uh (.) whose **fathers** in particular are affluent who come from—are affluent
09 businessmen—they might have a lot of **camels** or date farms and uh these
10 gentlemen **have** been out West—whether it's to the UK, Canada, or the United
11 States (.) they might have even **studied** there (.) a::nd they want u::h their **sons**
12 uh (.) to—to—to have (.) **English** under their belts

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

13 because they [the students' fathers] understand that English is the global
14 language (.) of everything—technology, finance, banking business (…) so (.)
15 these fathers understand that because they have been **exposed** uh—uh
16 themselves, so they want their sons also to follow in the same steps.

Like his American colleagues, Mr. Ramirez ideologically constructs English as the commodity students must acquire in in order to become contributing and productive members of society who can compete in the global economy. In *Stanza 1*, Mr. Ramirez describes English as a "vehicle" (ln. 2), which exposes students to "the popular culture of the West" (ln. 3). He then explains in *Stanza 1a* that it can also be much more to students with fathers who have "been out West" (ln. 10), and know its importance. That Mr. Ramirez uses the phrase "under their belts" (ln. 12) continues the metaphor of the English language as a substance (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980)— an instrument –that one can use in "technology, finance," and "banking business" (ln. 14). Mr. Ramirez's reference to the importance of the students' successful fathers continues the motif of striving for future success. As successful businessmen, these fathers already understand the need to acquire particular skills, a need that must be communicated to students.

Mr. Drake offered a lengthy discourse in response my question "What is the role of English in your students' lives?" In his response, Mr. Drake related a narrative he tells to his students, where he explains both the reason why English is important and why the government is promoting English:

Stanza 1: ORIENTATION

01 Mr. Drake: **This** is what I came up with right away and (.) I—I shot this off to
02 them [his students] right away. I—I start this off with a (.) with a little story to
03 (.) kinda (.) prep and **prompt** the kids into buying in—to **buy** in. I told them
04 from **my** (.) u::h (.) perspective. I said uh this country is a small country (.) I
05 said (.) 60 years ago it was very (.) **poor**—very **backwards**—and very—very
06 disrespected by **e::verybody** anybody. Pakistanis (.) had more power and
07 control around here you know as far as uh (.) reputa::tion and anything else
08 and they didn't think you could talk to the Emiratis, okay (.)

Stanza 2: COMPLICATING ACTION

09 They—**they** looked **down** on them [the Emiratis] (…) 60 years ago. I said um
10 (.) when they [the Emiratis] (.) found this oil and what not (.) they really didn't
11 know what to **do** with it—then (.) they didn't know how to uh (.) utilize it—
12 well. **40** years ago—getting into the 70's and there was a big oil crisis and you
13 had a big oil crisis in the states they didn't—they [the Emiratis] become a very
14 influential (.) person—I **told** this to the class. I had someone translate it.

Stanza 2a

15 I said—speeding up a little bit—you have **grandparents** and great-
16 grandparents who are alive right now who understand what it was to be very
17 very poor. Where they would go—**nomads**—going from place to place (.) you
18 know, um making a—**scratching** out a living (.) picking up **dates** and stuff
19 like that to **sell** and weaving the **baskets** and all this other stuff […] **pearl-**
20 **diving** in this area. And I says [to his Emirati students], and **the::n** all of a
21 sudden they have **money**—they get this money—this **oil** wealth—money (.)
22 and now they're [the Emiratis are] **stationary**.

Mr. Drake's narrative exemplifies the complex ways the schema of the teacher as motivational speakers mediates and is mediated by the ideology of English as

instrumental skill. Much like the Mr. Hammond's narrative, in the first part of Mr. Drake's motivational story, he describes the Emirati people as poor nomads who were "very **backwards**" (ln. 5). Mr. Drake explains that the Emiratis were looked down upon at this time and that they were under the influence of the Pakistanis. When they found the oil, Mr. Drake describes the rags-to-riches story of the UAE, where the Emiratis went from nomads to being a "**stationary**" (ln. 22) people. He emphasizes this word as it will be part of the point he will now make to the students about how quickly life in the UAE has changed:

Stanza 3: EVALUATION

23 So **you ki::ds** [his Emirati students] don't really understa::nd what it's like to
24 today be **here** and a month from now be over here /he moves his hand from
25 one side of the table to the other/ and travel around like that. You [his Emirati
26 students] don't even know the **circuit** now.

Stanza 4: RESULT

27 Your **parents** have (.) now you are driving around in SUVs and what not. I
28 says (…) but the oil is only about 100 years—that's what they **say**—100 years,
29 which in **my** mind means that it's probably **less** (…) **less** than 100 years—
30 probably **50**—probably **half that**. Alright, to be quite honest. I said [to his

Stanza 4a

31 Emirati students] just think—your **parents** now have **seen** them go from
32 impoverished to very, very **wealthy**—to one of the wealthiest countries in the
33 Middle **East** if not the world now. **Now**, that can all go away (…) with the oil.
34 That can also go away if someone tries to come in here [to the UAE] and bully
35 you [the Emiratis]. Alright.

In the second part of Mr. Drake's discourse he concludes the story by emphasizing how fast life has changed for the Emiratis, and thus how fast it *can* change again for the worse. He tells his students that they don't understand what life was like before, and in *Stanza 4* that their newfound wealth may be running out, and that it "can all go away" (ln. 33). Mr. Drake clarifies this remark by explaining that "someone," perhaps another country, can "come in here and bully you" (ln. 34-35). Although these warnings starkly differ in gravity from Mr. Williams' caveat about relying on a buddy to order food at a restaurant, Mr. Drake's examples of the oil wealth running out and control from outside the country echo Mr. Williams' concern surrounding the importance of self-reliance. Mr. Drake concludes his story by emphasizing the importance of education, finally arriving at the reason why the government has implemented the reform:

Stanza 5: EVALUATION

36 That can go away if you do not start to **dive::rsify**, and we talked about words
37 like diversify, I said, if you [his Emirati students] don't start to **spread out**.
38 Spread out not only your money but also your intelligence your intellect and
39 everything else and do some **different** things (…) because the oil's not going

Stanza 5a

40 to be there […] I says, **now**, your **Sheik** [Zayed], I didn't know the man I wish
41 I could have met him. Uh (.) Sheikh Zayed (.) I don't know **who** advised him,
42 who gave him this advice, but he had a **brilliant** mindset to (.) implement
43 education—to educate. And by educating he was going to give his country a
44 chance to survive outside of that oil that was not going to **be there** (.) and I
45 think that's a brilliant move.

Exemplifying the teacher as an enthusiastic motivational speaker, Mr. Drake's speech to his students underscores his belief that they need to start thinking about their futures. In *Stanza 5*, Mr. Drake reiterates the warning that the students' oil wealth "can go away" (ln. 30). He emphasizes the need to "diversify" (ln. 37) which he defines as "spread[ing] out" (ln. 37), both their money and their "intelligence" (ln. 38). And in *Stanza 5a*, Mr. Drake underscores the "**brilliant** mindset" (ln. 42) of Sheikh Zayed for implementing the education reform. He argues that this was implemented as a way "to survive outside of that oil" (ln. 44), again emphasizing the need for self-reliance through hard work. He continued his discourse, now bringing in the importance of English (Although the following is part of the above response, I am considering it a separate discourse as the subject is now specifically the relationship of the English language to the reform):

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Drake: I told them [his Emirati students] that English (…) is very
02 important for you because you are going to be the leaders.
03 You **all** a::re—you have the **money** and right now you have people that are
04 going to **work** for you. You have to **understa::nd** how to communicate with
05 them. You go to **China**, you go to **Russia**, you go to (.) **Africa**, you go to
06 Egypt—anywhere—and (.) English is the language that's being **u::sed** to
07 communicate (.) because it's not **my** language—it's a **world** language.

Stanza 1a

08 You [his Emirati students] just happen to speak **another** language
09 [Arabic] and didn't (.) bother with this [English], but we have a lot of words

10 that are Arabic, you know (.) have the same **meaning**, some of them don't
11 have the same meaning—same **spelling**, uh some of them have different
12 **sounds** and whatnot (.) and this is a world **language** now. I says, **you** need to
13 **know it** (.) because you need to be able to be much more efficient—

Stanza 1b

14 [Mr. Drake says to his students] "How many of you all want to go into
15 business?" and they're all, "**ah** business." I says, well your business is not
16 going to be **good** (.) if you don't know how to (.) talk to the people that you are
17 (.) going to be working with.

Stanza 1c

18 The **computer** is 80—I think 85 percent (.) **English**. Science, you learn
19 Science—that's in **English**, that's—why? Not because we're the best country,
20 but because it's the easiest language to communicate with everybody with.

In *Stanza 1*, Mr. Drake tells his students that as future leaders they will have people who work for them, and he introduces the idea that English is a "**world** language" (ln. 7). In *Stanza 1a* he repeats this idea, elaborating that because English is a world language, the students need to learn it in order to be "much more efficient" (ln. 13). And in the next stanza Mr. Drake clarifies what he means by "efficient," telling his students that in order for their business to be "**good**" (ln. 16), they will need to be able to talk to the people who they will be working with, who will, as Mr. Drake implies, be speaking English. He then argues in *Stanza 1c* that English is the language of science because it is "the easiest language to communicate with" (ln. 20).

In this discourse, Mr. Drake describes English ideologically in terms that echo what Silverstien (1985) and Haviland (2003) describe as the "monoglot standard." As previously discussed, Haviland (2003) defines the monoglot standard as including a three-fold ideology: first, "words are essentially vehicles for conveying 'referential meaning,' that is, propositions that are simply true or false"(p. 766); second, the majority language is "a transparent vehicle for conveying such propositions" (p. 766); and third, the "detachability of this majority language from the social circumstances of its acquisition and deployment" (p. 766), to where it becomes a simple "'tool' of propositional transmission, to be picked up as needed" (p. 766). Mr. Drake's explanation to his students (who speak Arabic as a first language), is strikingly similar. He argues that English is the extremely useful instrument which will help them in many aspects of their life including using computers, understanding science, and ultimately attaining economic success.

The theme that English is the language of rational work—contribution, productivity and efficiency—is salient in the American teachers' discourses about the English language. Mr. Williams linked the English language with his students' ability to become "contributing members towards society" (ln. 5), whereas Mr. Hammond connects English with his students' ability to maximize "their potential as humans" (ln. 15). For Mr. Ramirez, English is the language of productivity, and for Mr. Drake, efficiency. Each

of the American teachers connected this theme to a second motif, linking the English language to commerce, finance and business. In these discourses, English is constructed as the instrumental skill needed for success in these areas.

The American teachers also connect the English language with the motif of self-reliance. Mr. Williams relates the difficulty students without English will face trying to order food at a restaurant—that they will have to "to rely on a buddy of theirs" (ln. 30) to order for them. For Mr. Hammond, learning English will ensure respect and "sovereignty" (ln. 11) for the Emiratis. Mr. Ramirez argues that the aim of the reform program is to create "positive ambassadors" (ln. 16-17). And Mr. Drake tells his students that the reform program is a way to guard against the UAE being bullied (ln. 34) by other countries.

Further, the schema of the teacher as motivational speaker also impacts the ways the American teachers ideologically construct the English language. Mr. Williams argues that English has an important role in his students' lives, one that he doesn't believe they take seriously, even though they should. Mr. Hammond also explains that his students don't seem interested in learning English, but he implies that his students who want to go to universities don't realize how important it might be. The motif that the students need to be made aware of the importance of English is salient in both Mr. Williams' and Mr. Hammond's discourses. Mr. Ramirez asserts that if he were a member of the government

he would go into every classroom and explain the vision of the program to the students. Mr. Drake actually offers an example of a motivational speech he has already delivered to his students, explaining that he "had someone translate it" (ln. 14) to make sure that his words were being communicated to the students. In the following section I will show how the American teachers describe the Arabic language quite differently, assigning it to the domain of cultural marker.

4.5 Arabic Language as Cultural Marker

In the discourses of the American teachers, the "story" of the Arabic language in their students' lives is one of cultural marker. When I asked Mr. Williams "What's the role of Arabic in your students' lives?" he offered this short response:

> 01 Mr. Williams: I think that that the role of Arabic is is is **very** important in their
> 02 [the students'] lives because they're trying to uphold their traditions and their
> 03 **customs** (…) and they [the Abu Dhabi government] don't want students to
> 04 forget their roots and where they came from and that's after all important in
> 05 any country.

In his response, Mr. Williams connects the Arabic language to the students' "roots" (ln. 4), explaining that it's important the students don't forget "where they came from" (ln. 4). Mr. Williams has assigned Arabic to the category of cultural marker (Wee, 2008). That it represents their traditions and "where they came from" (ln. 4) also

delegates Arabic to the past, to a place that the students will be leaving behind while of course not forgetting.

Mr. Hammond gave a similarly short response to my question, "What's the role of Arabic in your students' lives?" also describing Arabic as a cultural marker, but one with the potential to become an instrumental skill:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Hammond: The Qur'an is in English, so (.) I mean the Qur'an is in
02 **Arabic**, sorry (.) and um it's their [the Emirati students'] mother **tongue** and to
03 communicate with their elders (.) who probably don't speak English they'll
04 need a mastery of Arabic (.)

Stanza 1a

05 and you know (…) maybe, I've never researched if there's um (.) you know
06 (…) prominent (.) prolific Arab universities, but there's **got to be** universities
07 where Arabic is (.) **taught** and all the subjects are done in Arabic and people
08 come out (.) and they become **doctors** and (.) **enginee::rs** and you know

Stanza 1b

09 in order to have **any::** higher level job you need to have (.) very good language
10 skills no matter what your language is so (.) I think that Arabic is very
11 important to them. I—I think that is **should be**, but I don't know if it **is**.

Mr. Hammonds explanation exemplifies the clear delineation between "instrumental" and "mother tongue" languages, a division which Wee (2008) calls the "pragmatic view of languages" (p. 30), where languages are ideologically redefined as countries position themselves in the globalized world economy. In *Stanza 1*, Mr.

Hammond explains that Arabic—his students' "mother **tongue**" (ln. 2)—is also a cultural marker linking students to the past through their "elders" (ln. 3). However, in *Stanza 1a* Mr. Hammond asserts that if there are universities where the instruction is in Arabic and where people can still graduate and become successful as for instance "**doctors** and (.) **enginee::rs**" (ln. 8), then people should have "very good language skills no matter what your language is" (ln. 9-10). Mr. Hammond is perfectly willing to accept that Arabic could be an instrumental skill needed for economic success, but he is uncertain if such a reality exists.

In his response to my question, "What is the role of Arabic in your students' lives?" Mr. Ramirez compared the students' interest in Arabic with their interest in English:

> 01 Mr. Ramirez: Well (.) **Arabic** would obviously be their everyday language (.)
> 02 uh and (.) u::h it would be the conduit to their culture—to—to their **religion**
> 03 (.) obviously. Uh (.) so uh I—I would think that Arabic would be important
> 04 and—and students have expressed um (…) their **opinions** as far as saying that
> 05 uh Arabic is important (.) because of this and English is **not**.

Mr. Ramirez initially explains that Arabic is the "conduit to their [the students'] culture" (ln. 2). He posits that due to this, the students have told him that Arabic is more important than English. I wanted Mr. Ramirez to elaborate on this fact, so I asked him the following question:

Thomas: Well uh well then given that [the students think Arabic is important] why do you think that this reform exists—why do you think that they instituted this reform?

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Ramirez: Well I think the—the—the purpose of the reform is certainly
02 **noble**. Uh (.) uh (.) I—I and—and **I** think—**I** think it's a very good **idea** (.)
03 that the leaders are trying to implement this reform and they just want (.) their
04 **citizens** to be **bilingual**.

Stanza 1a

05 Uh (.) and—and now (.) given the fact that (.) you know the world now is a
06 small pla::ce and—and you know and—and given the fact that the UAE is (.)
07 you know has large reserves of oil and—oil and **gas** (.) uh and they've [the
08 leaders of the UAE] been able to transform their country (.) uh from a desert
09 into an oasis and—in a matter of 40 **years** (.) uh (.)

Stanza 1b

10 and you know they—they—they [the leaders of the UAE] want the best for
11 their citizens. They want them—again (.) this goes back to the fact that
12 **English** (.) is the language of the global **economy** and of every major facet
13 of—of—of (…) whatever. So (.) you know they **want** their citizens to be
14 **bilingual** (.)

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

15 and I think that there's nothing—there's nothing **wrong** with that. I think it's a
16 very good idea (…) to—for—for—for them to learn **English** for—so they can
17 be—so they can partake uh—u::h (.) **globally** in the world's economy and
18 other things (.) so they can be **positive** ambassadors of their country and their
19 culture (.) while on the other hand **retai::ning** their Arabic (.) which is the
20 backbone of their culture, history and religion.

In this summation of the "story" of the reform, Mr. Ramirez explains that the purpose of the reform is to create bilingual citizens. He posits the reason for this, demarcating clear roles for the English and Arabic languages. Like in Mr. Hammond's construction, Mr. Ramirez ideologically assigns English as the "language of the global **economy**" (ln. 12), whereas Arabic is the "backbone of their [the Emiratis'] culture, history and religion" (ln. 20).

When I asked Mr. Drake "What is the role of Arabic in your students' lives?" he again explained what he tells his students about Arabic, designating it as a private language that people aren't currently trying to learn:

> 01 Mr. Drake: I said [to the students] this is a benefit for **you**—you know
> 02 Arabic. Now when you know **English** (.) then you can actually talk to **me** and
> 03 you can keep **yourself** private. So it's really an advantage for **you** to learn **my**
> 04 language (.) because it's easier for you to understa::nd (.) but it's **also** an
> 05 advantage because not too many people are trying to learn **Arabic** right now—
> 06 right away. And so you can still keep a lot of business private.

Wee (2008) suggests that the narrative of linguistic instrumentalism, where languages are valued differently based upon their usefulness in the global marketplace, often prompts new narratives where attempts are made to assign economic value to languages formerly assigned to the place of cultural marker. In Mr. Drake's speech to his students, he tells them that learning Arabic will allow them to keep themselves "private" (ln. 3), which he argues is important when doing business. He argues again that English is

an easy language to understand, and he emphasizes his point about privacy by explaining that "not too many people are trying to learn **Arabic** right now" (ln. 5). Like Mr. Hammond, Mr. Drake attempts to work Arabic into an ideologically instrumental view of language.

In the same response, after a brief period of silence, Mr. Drake reflects on the teachers' role in the students' lives. In his reflection, Mr. Drake brings up what I will show in Chapter 5 is a point of contention between himself and Mr. Hassan—the idea that teachers should care about their students' feelings:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Drake: I **don't** think they've [his Emirati students] actually **bought in** (.)
02 with **my::** (…) I think they see the passion but I don't think they've bought in
03 with uh my:: **love** and **concern** for them (.) in the classroom yet (…) for their
04 **future**. I don't think they've bought into that yet […] I just don't think they've
05 bought in yet.

Stanza 1a

06 And I think a lot of this has to do with (.) how we [teachers] (…) have to
07 sta::nd firm in certain **areas** (.) and—and they have to and—ok they're [the
08 Emirati students are] going to **hate us** for a minute (…) but this is how it's got
09 to be. /laughs/ I don't know. I—I—I—I don't know about this about—this (…)

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

10 I'm **trying to** Thomas but I just don't know about this you know having loving
11 and all this other—I just don't know about that, because that happened to
12 **me**—in school (…) yeah, I loved a couple—a couple of teachers. I ended up

13 getting out of school thinking I was all that and a bag of **chips** and find that I
14 couldn't read or write in my own—you know.

As discussed previously, Nespor (1987) suggests that teachers' beliefs are both "affective and evaluative" (p. 13) in that they often regulate and define goals and tasks as well as impact teachers' perceptions of their students. Mr. Drake's passionate discourse about his students illustrates the salience of his beliefs that the teachers' role is to motivate students to take action. In *Stanza 1*, Mr. Drake expresses his concern that the students don't yet grasp the caring he has for them. However, in the next line he clarifies this love and concern, explaining that it is "for their [the students'] **future**" (ln. 3-4) emphasizing this word. Mr. Drake wants his students to have bright futures, and he laments that they don't understand this fact. In *Stanza 1a*, he explains that out of love for their students' futures, teachers must "sta::nd firm in certain **areas**" (ln. 7) and accept the temporary hatred of their students. In *Stanza 2* he then relates these feelings to his own experience in school, explaining that although he "loved a couple—a couple of teachers" (ln. 12), they didn't properly provide him with the skills he thought he should have been given. These experiences are extremely salient in Mr. Drake's construction of the teachers' role, and later in an informal interview, Mr. Drake elaborated a bit more with this narrative:

01 Mr. Drake: I had many teachers in high school—teachers with white faces just
02 like yours [Thomas]—who acted like they cared about me—they passed me
03 along and gave me good marks, but even though they smiled and all this lovey-

04 dovey—at me they didn't care. I was passed through the system without
05 learning anything.

In Mr. Drake's discourse, true caring for teachers is ensuring that students acquire the skills they need in order to be successful in the world. This requires that students are made to understand that they have to do certain tasks—to *work*—in order to acquire the necessary skills. That Mr. Drake mentioned "white faces," links a teacher acting like he cares to the systematic racism Mr. Drake experienced as an African American growing up in the America in the 1970s, where as Mr. Drake put it in the same informal interview, "They [the white teachers] really didn't want you to learn anything".

In their discourses concerning the Arabic language, the American teachers ideologically assign the Arabic language to the category of cultural marker. Although it has value as the marker of culture and traditions, in this construction Arabic does not necessarily have instrumental—or economic—value, unless, as in the case of Mr. Hammond's discourse, it can be used to attain a professional job. English, however, is an instrumental skill connected by the American teachers with success in the global economy. Although its significance is perhaps more salient due to his specific experiences, Mr. Drake echoed the constructions of his American colleagues in their earlier interviews: that getting the students to *buy in*—or to accept the need for these instrumental skills—is the teacher's primary role. In the next chapter I will show how the Arab and Irish teachers construct the role of the teacher and how these constructions

mediate and are mediated by their ideologies surrounding the English and Arabic languages.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE TEACHER AS FAMILIAL ROLE MODEL

Arab and Irish Teachers

In contrast to the American conceptualization of teaching as a metaphorical container representing a unique *profession*, the two Arab English teachers and the Irish English teacher at Najah construct a schema of teaching where the teacher is metaphorically a *familial role model*. In this schema, skills are described by the Arab and Irish teachers as *substances obtained through activity over time*. Like the American schema, these substances are transferred from the teacher to the students. However, this transfer occurs through an osmotic process caused by the teacher's propinquity—or *nearness*—to the student. The students are constructed by the Arab and Irish teachers as vulnerable, impressionable children—active agents who orbit the teachers like satellites. The transfer of skills occurs when the teacher draws close to the students, both physically and emotionally. The teacher facilitates this closeness by catering to his students' immediate, emotional needs. Under this cognitive structuring one does not enter into the teaching profession, but he *becomes* a teacher.

As previously discussed, Mr. Hassan, an Arab teacher of Egyptian decent, has two years teaching experience in Egypt, and has been teaching in the UAE for twenty years. Mr. Abel, the Arab teacher of Tunisian decent, has three years teaching experience in Tunisia, and has also been teaching in public schools in the UAE for twenty years. The

Irish teacher, Mr. Bartlett, has four years' experience teaching in public schools in Ireland. As I have already mentioned, I will be discussing the data from these three teachers together because of striking similarities in their discursive conceptualizations of teaching and the teaching process.

I asked the Arab and Irish teachers the same seven "grand tour" and "planned prompt" questions (McCracken, 1988, p. 37) that I asked the American teachers: What made you become a teacher? Why did you come to Abu Dhabi to teach? What is the nature of teaching? What motivates your students? Why is the government promoting English? What is the role of English in your students' lives? What is the role of Arabic in your students' lives? Like my interviews with their American colleagues, I also asked the Arab and Irish teachers individual "floating prompt" questions (McCracken, 1988, p. 37) to elicit more information or to clarify something they had said.

5.1 Becoming a Teacher

When I asked the Irish and Arab teachers "What made you decide to become a teacher?" in their responses they utilized the phrase, "be a teacher."

Thomas: What made you decide to become a teacher?

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Hassan: Well, **actually** I have a role model (.) who encouraged me to be a
02 (.) teacher—an English teacher.

Stanza 2: ORIENTATION

03 This (.) teacher (.) taught me in grade **12**.

Stanza 3: EVALUATION

04 In grade 12 I loved **English** (.) and that's why he—he also encouraged me to

Stanza 4: RESULT

05 join u::h the faculty of Education, and become a teacher.

In *Stanza 1*, Mr. Hassan explains that he became an English teacher as a result of another teacher's influence in the twelfth grade. Although the events in his narrative mirror those in Mr. Ramirez's and Mr. Drake's narratives about becoming teachers, Mr. Hassan describes the teacher's influence differently than his American colleagues. For Mr. Ramirez his mentor teacher "steered him" in the right direction, and for Mr. Drake, whose teacher told him "you gonna major in English," he was "just given something" and he "stuck" with it. However, in Mr. Hassan's narrative, the teacher "encouraged" (ln. 1) him to become a teacher. Mr. Hassan repeats this word at the end of his narrative, emphasizing its significance in his construction of this mentor teacher's role. In *Stanza 3*, Mr. Hassan evaluates this role, implying that the mentor teacher was quite aware of Mr. Hassan's love for the subject of English, and for this reason he encouraged Mr. Hassan to become a teacher. Additionally, unlike his American colleagues, Mr. Hassan does not emphasize teaching as a profession that one enters into. Instead, in *Stanza 1*, Mr. Hassan explains that he was encouraged to "be a teacher" (ln. 1-2). And in *Stanza 4*, Mr. Hassan

utilizes the phrase "become a teacher" (ln. 5). Thus in his narrative, Mr. Hassan describes the teacher as something one *is* or *turns into*.

When I asked Mr. Hassan "Why did you come to Abu Dhabi to teach?" he explained that he came to the UAE for both steady work and a higher salary than the one he would have received in Egypt:

Stanza 1: ORIENTATION

01 Mr. Hassan: You:: know I—I first came not to Abu Dhabi specifically—in
02 **specific**, but I came to the United Arab Emirates (.) you see. Because I first
03 worked in (.) u::h Sharjah[50]. U::h (…). You know, after graduation I worked (.)
04 for two years in **Egypt**.

Stanza 2: COMPLICATING ACTION

05 Then I read an advertisement (.) for recruiting more teachers in the UAE (.) **so**
06 I decided to come to the UAE for work.

Stanza 3: EVALUATION

07 Of **course** there will be—the **salary** is (.) much, much higher than the one I (.)
08 got in Egypt.

Stanza 4: RESULT

09 So that's why I (.) decided to—to (.) **resign** in Egypt and come to work
10 here in the UAE. It's work (.) and (.) **high** salary.

Unlike his American colleagues, Mr. Hassan does not emphasize his skills and experiences as substances he possesses; instead he describes them in terms of time worked, explaining in *Stanza 1* that "I worked (.) for two years in **Egypt**" (ln. 3-4). Mr.

[50] Sharjah is another Emirate of the UAE situated about 200 kilometers to the east of Abu Dhabi, just past Dubai.

Hassan describes his decision to come to the UAE as being one of looking for work, and in *Stanza 3* he evaluates this decision by explaining that the salary he receives in the UAE is "much, much higher" (ln. 7). than his salary was in Egypt. He then sums up his reasons for coming to the UAE in *Stanza 4* as "work (.) and (.) **high** salary" (ln. 10). In contrast to the American teachers, who described themselves as pursuing satisfaction and personal interest, Mr. Hassan explains that his main interest was in finding steady work and a higher wage. I wanted him to elaborate a little more on this, so I asked him a follow-up question:

> Thomas: Work and high salary. So that's the reason why you came to the UAE?
>
> 01 Mr. Hassan: You know, I got married (.) I got children (.) u::h **there** are other
> 02 reasons behind being in the UAE.
>
> Thomas: Oh, remaining here.
>
> 03 Mr. Hassan: Remaining here. U::h for example (.) my daughter (.) now she's in
> 04 cycle **three** [high school]. She has to finish cycle three before going back to
> 05 Egypt, so (.) whe::n you (.) **live** here and the years pass and pass so:: (.) there
> 06 are different reasons that push you to stay in the—in the UAE.

Mr. Hassan emphasized his family as one of the "reasons that push[ed]" (ln. 6) him to stay in the UAE. He explained that he is now remaining in the UAE because of the needs of his family, specifically his daughter who has to finish high school. He then implies that he will be heading back to Egypt when his daughter graduates in order that she may go to college. Mr. Hassan finally arrived at the subject of his skills and experience when I asked him the following question:

Thomas: So before you came to the UAE you worked a little bit in Egypt?

01 Mr. Hassan: Yeah, yeah. But **all** my experience is—are here in the UAE. Uh
02 it's now twenty years of experience uh—I:: (.) taught different curriculums
03 u::h (.) I taught different cycles—cycle two, cycle three. I worked in the
04 Ministry of Education and I worked in Abu Dhabi Education Council, so (.)
05 different **systems** different curriculum (.) different books, different students.
06 Yeah.

Although it is obvious that Mr. Hassan possesses his skills and experience, he doesn't describe himself as *having* them. Instead, he continues to describe his "twenty years of experience" (ln. 2) in terms of his *actions*—that is, as time that he "taught" (ln. 2) or "worked" (ln. 3). He emphasizes that he has had experience working with different organizations, repeating the word "different" to perhaps emphasize the wide variety of experiences he possesses. Much like his American colleagues, through his narrative Mr. Hassan establishes the "front" (Goffman, 1959, p. 22)—or idealized definition of himself—as a highly skilled professional, yet he is going about it in a strikingly different way. Rather than emphasizing his independence and pursuit of individual interests, Mr. Hassan underscores his commitment to his family which obliges him to remain in the UAE.

In his answer to my question "What made you decide to become a teacher?" Mr. Abel echoes the motif of *becoming* a teacher:

Stanza 1: ORIENTATION

01 Mr. Abel: Because I **like** the job—I like to be with young people, and I **feel** (.)
02 my mission in this life is **just** to **help** (.) people get educated, and that's why
03 I've chosen to be a teacher.

Stanza 2: COMPLICATING ACTION

04 And also because in Tunisia—**English**, and at that time there were not **so**
05 many people who teach English—we used to have only those (.) **Palestinians**
06 who come to teach us.

Stanza 3: EVALUATION

07 And I said, "**Why not**?" That means—as a Tunisian—**be** the person who
08 teach[es] my fellow citizens.

Stanza 4: RESULT

09 And that's why—and also because to some extent it's a safe job. And that's
10 why I've chosen it.

Like Mr. Hassan, Mr. Abel also uses the phrase "be a teacher" to describe his metamorphosis *into a teacher* rather than a move *into the teaching profession*. In *Stanza 1* Mr. Abel offers a preliminary definition of what it means to be a teacher, explaining that he became a teacher because he likes "to be with young people" (ln. 1) in order to help them "get educated" (ln. 2). He then explains the second reason why he become a teacher—to help his fellow Tunisians—and he evaluates this decision emphasizing his desire to teach his countrymen: "'**Why not**?' That means—as a Tunisian—**be** the person who teach[es] my fellow citizens. (ln. 7-8). Mr. Abel ends his narrative with the third and

final reason he became a teacher: because teaching is "a safe job" (ln. 9). Mr. Abel connects becoming a teacher with his sense of "mission" (ln. 2) to help young people as well as his duty to his county.

Mr. Abel emphasized a more practical concern—security—when I asked him, "Why did you come to Abu Dhabi to teach?"

Stanza 1: ORIENTATION

> 01 Mr. Abel: The first thing—let me tell you about my background. I was (.)
> 02 working at the university [in Tunisia]. A::nd I had a very good job—very good
> 03 money as well[51]. It's not just like Abu Dhabi, but it was up there. And also at
> 04 the same time I:: (.) had another **job**. I used to be a tour guide. So I was
> 05 getting—the **problem** is (.) something happened at the university (.) and that's
> 06 what made me (…) **feel** unsecure—back home in my country. That was in
> 07 1993[52].

Mr. Abel explained that the reason he came to Abu Dhabi had to do with a specific experience he had in Tunisia while he was working as a teacher. This experience made him "**feel** unsecure" (ln. 6), and he realized that in order to ensure his safety he must leave the country. I have left out the transcript of the narrative in order to protect Mr. Abel. Suffice it to say that Mr. Abel related to me that "the system" in Tunisia under the Ben Ali regime was extremely "corrupt". Mr. Abel was systematically harassed by

[51] At the time Mr. Abel was working at the university as a teacher of foundation English courses (before the students entered their "Diploma courses"). He was also conducting research for the equivalent of a PhD which he did not complete.

[52] Mr. Abel was in Tunisia during the dictatorship of the Bin Ali regime, which came to power in a bloodless coup in November 1987. Ben Ali was forced to go into exile in Saudi Arabia after the Tunisian Revolution in 2011.

representatives of the state for his loyalty to a friend and fellow teacher who had been labeled a dissident and jailed. Mr. Abel explained that these experiences, which were at times terrifying and humiliating, made him realize that "most governments are corrupt and ignorant." Although he never again talked about the specific traumatic experiences he endured in Tunisia, Mr. Abel would often discuss what he called the "stupidity of governments" along with "the stupidity of the system," in his discourses about the UAE. For Mr. Abel, the inadequacies of "the system," which I will show he later utilized to signify the education system in the UAE, was a manifestation of governments which were "out of touch with the needs of their people." Mr. Abel continued his narrative, explaining that his experiences in Tunisia ultimately led to a decision to leave his home country:

Stanza 4: RESULT

27 So, **I** got really worried. I had a conversation—and my wife is wearing the (.)
28 hijab [Islamic headscarf] at that time—so I said [to his wife] "What's **wrong**
29 with this **bloody** country I'm living in. I don't feel **free**" […].

Stanza 4a

30 And then I decided to emigrate to the States [America]. I had a contract in u::h
31 Los **Angeles**. I had a contract work in **translation**. So I wanted to go to the
32 States—so there was the States, at that time. And because I had worked [in the
33 past] in the UK it was possible for me to go to the UK at that time, I had a
34 National Insurance Number [for the UK]. So I can go, just settle down, and
35 then bring in my **wife**. Because I could apply for permanent residency [in the
36 UK]. I told my wife, "I'm not ready to live in this bloody country **anymore**." I
37 started to hate it. Because I did not feel secure. So (.) my wife at that time
38 [said] "Why don't we go to the UAE. There's an (.) application if you want to

39 **go** to work there on secondment." Do you [Thomas] know what's "*un*
40 *secondments*?"

In *Stanza 1*, Mr. Abel related the conversation he had with his wife after the incident. Like Mr. Drake's use of intertextuality (Gee, 1999), Mr. Abel utilizes his wife's voice to lend authority (Gee, 1999) to his decision to come to the UAE instead of the United States or the United Kingdom. He explained that he was worried and that he told his wife that he didn't "feel **free**" (ln. 29) in Tunisia anymore. Mr. Abel also included the fact that his wife was wearing the hijab, an Islamic headscarf, at the time, which seems like a mundane detail given the fact that Mr. Abel's wife is a Muslim. However, this statement becomes important in *Stanza 4a* to explain his wife's suggestion that they move to the UAE and not to the UK or the USA. In this stanza, Mr. Abel makes it clear that at the time he had many options, having opportunities in both the United States and Great Britain, but he decided to move to the UAE based on his wife's suggestion.

Like his colleagues from America, Mr. Abel described himself as a skilled professional with many choices, and one who made the choice of coming to the UAE. However, the theme of Mr. Abel's narrative is not one of a skilled professional following his individual interests, but of a skilled professional who was fleeing oppression in his home country. In fact, Mr. Abel ultimately followed the advice of his wife, who was interested in moving to an Islamic country, a detail he explained *through his wife* in the final stanzas of his narrative. In these final stanzas, I answered Mr. Abel's question about

"*un secondment*," a question he asked me in order to perhaps emphasize both his open options and his deep-felt link to Tunisia:

> Thomas: Yes. It's [*un secondment* is] like—you are still on your job, but (…).

Stanza 5: EVALUATION

> 41 Mr. Abel: Yeah. That's my—I am still *un secondment* here. [Mr. Abel's wife
> 42 continues] "And it's an Arab country—it's a Muslim country—it's an Arab
> 43 country—it's a Muslim country. And then we'll **see** if you could manage **there**
> 44 (.) for one year." So (.) because my job will be **secure** whenever I want to go
> 45 back there [to Tunisia]. [Mr. Abel's wife again] "Who **knows**? Things may
> 46 change. So whenever we want we can go back." So (.) we had an **a::nchor**
> 47 there, so I can—now I can go whenever I want to and get my job.

Stanza 5a

> 48 [Mr. Abel's wife said] "And then if we didn't like it [the UAE] we will just go
> 49 to the **States**, or go to the UK and settle down **there** and forget about Tunisia
> 50 and the Islamic **world** and the Arab **world** /waving his open hand/ and all
> 51 this." And I **really** liked it [his wife's plan]—she convinced me—so we **came**
> 52 to the UAE and (.) the first two to three months were a bit difficult, but then (.)
> 53 we started to settle **down** and have kids—and then you find yourself in a
> 54 bottleneck. You (.) don't want to go [out of the UAE] because your kids are at
> 55**school**. And that's it—that's how, from 1993-94 up till **now**.

> The importance of following the desires of his wife is taken-for-granted in Mr. Abel's discourse. In *Stanza 5*, Mr. Abel evaluates his wife's suggestion that they move to the UAE. In the narrative, his wife explains that the UAE is an "Arab country—it's a Muslim country" (ln. 43) and she repeats this in the next line. Thus, for Mr. Abel, his decision to come to the UAE instead of a Western country was based upon his wife's desire to move to a Muslim or Arab country.

Although Mr. Abel has left Tunisia, his discourse conveys a deep feeling of belonging to Tunisia and a desire to return there some day, a desire which Mr. Abel has related to me many times in informal interviews. He underscores the importance of *un secondment*, ironically using the word "**secure**" (ln. 44) again, and emphasizing it with a louder voice to describe his link to Tunisia, the place he left because he felt insecure. He clarifies this feeling of security in the next lines, metaphorically describing the *un secondment* as an "**a::nchor**" (ln. 46) to Tunisia.

In addition to his identity as a Tunisian, Mr. Abel's narrative emphasized the importance of his familial relationships, particularly his relationship to his wife. In *Stanza 5a* Mr. Abel returns to his wife's words, underscoring her original reasons for moving to the UAE: her wanting to live in an Arab and a Muslim country. His wife tells him that if it doesn't work out in the UAE, they can finally move to a Western country and "forget about Tunisia and the Islamic **world** and the Arab **world**" (ln. 49-50). And like Mr. Hassan, Mr. Abel explains that they have lived in the UAE for twenty years now due to his children who are all in school in the UAE.

Although his identity as a Tunisian is salient in Mr. Abel's narratives, he echoes Mr. Hassan in describing teaching as profession that one *does*—or *becomes*—as opposed to the American teachers' construction of a career that one enters *into*. Additionally, in both Mr. Hassan's and Mr. Abel's narratives, the importance of practical concerns—

having security and a stable job—is paramount, as is the importance of family relationships and their individual roles as breadwinners. The motif of following one's individual interests is absent in both teachers' discourses, as is the description of skills and experience as substances that a teacher *possesses*.

When I asked Mr. Bartlett "What made you decide to become a teacher?" he also described the teacher as something one turns into or becomes:

Stanza 1: ORIENTATION

01 Mr. Bartlett: Ehe::m (.) I:: (.) when I was in schoo::l I suppose I enjoy::ed it,
02 and (.) e::h ever since I was young I thought, you know, that I would like to be
03 a teacher, you know a::nd as I got older it just became (.) **stronger** and
04 stronger. I actually (.) wanted to be a **high school** teacher or a **secondary**
05 **school** teacher as we [in Ireland] call it, a::nd—when I was in secondary
06 school, and then

Stanza 2: COMPLICATING ACTION

07 I went and done my **Arts** degree with a view to doing that and then (.) I ended
08 up working as a supply teacher for a year in primary school (.) and I **changed**
09 and then became a primary school teacher.

Stanza 3: EVALUATION

10 And now somehow (.) u::h (.) **fate** /laughs/ has u::h (.) conspired against me

Stanza 4: RESULT

11 /laughs/ and I'm a secondary school teacher—or a high school teacher again—
12 yeah.

Like Mr. Hassan and Mr. Abel, Mr. Bartlett describes becoming a teacher as a type of metamorphosis rather than a journey *into* a profession. In his narrative, Mr. Bartlett explains in *Stanza 1* that he wanted to "be a teacher" (ln. 2-3) ever since he was a young boy. He repeats this phrase in the same stanza, specifying the grade level he wanted to teach. In *Stanza 2* Mr. Bartlett explains that he began working as a substitute teacher, and then he eventually "became a primary school teacher" (ln. 9). This act of doing or *changing* also applies to Mr. Bartlett's description of his skills and experiences, in the form of his credentials to teach. In *Stanza 2*, Mr. Bartlett explains that, "I went and done my **Arts** degree" (ln. 7), and then that he initially "ended up working as a supply teacher" (ln. 8). Mr. Bartlett's description of his skills and experience mirrors those of Mr. Hassan's, where credentials are acquired through *doing* or *working*.

Mr. Bartlett laughed when describing the fact that fate had conspired against him, making him a high school teacher and I wanted to know more about his feelings surrounding this change, so I asked him the following question:

Thomas: What do you enjoy more [primary or secondary]?

Stanza 1: ORIENTATION

01 Mr. Bartlett: E::h (.) well (…) I don't—it's hard to **say** because (.) I enjoyed
02 the primary school, but maybe I'd enjoy (.) a secondary school (.) **once** (.) I get
03 (.) either into a **routine** and become—feel like I'm (.) having some success
04 **here** [at Najah] or in another (.) secondary school if it wasn't as difficult.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

05 Yeah, because if you (.) well, because I suppose (.) where I was **before** [in
06 Ireland] if you tell (.) 10 kids to sit down they all go and sit down. Whereas
07 **here** if you tell the kids to sit down 2 kids sit down and 8 don't understand
08 what you're **on** about (.) and wondering why you're looking **angrily** at them.
09 You know? E::h (.) and also (.) as **well** I think (.) in the primary school setting
10 the teacher is more u::h (.)—has more authority.

Mr. Bartlett answered my question by beginning a narrative where he compares his primary school experiences teaching sixth grade in Ireland with his experiences teaching at Najah. He suggests that the difficulty he faces in the classroom stems from two sources: the language barrier and the authority, or lack thereof, of the teacher in the classroom. In *Stanza 1*, Mr. Bartlett implies that he doesn't yet feel comfortable in his new position as a high school teacher at Najah. He implies that he considers Najah to be perhaps more difficult than another school in the Emirate. In *Stanza 2* he evaluates these statements, giving the example of telling students to sit down and having only two out of ten comply. He then elaborated on the subject of authority, continuing his evaluation:

Thomas: More what? I'm sorry.

Stanza 2a

11 Mr. Bartlett: **Authority**. Although maybe it's just (.) the (.) culture **here** [at
12 Najah] or whatever, but (.) they [the students at Najah] don't seem to kinda
13 **jump to** like when they see a teacher. You know like you walk into a
14 bathroom [at Najah] and there's five guys smoking **pipes** (.) and they just look

15 at ya as much to say, “Do you want a shot?” or, (.) “We’ll be finished here in a
16 minute” /laugh/.

Stanza 2b

17 So (.) like (.) where I was **before**, like if—don’t get me wrong kids will be
18 **smoking** even if it was (.) only elementary school, but they’d [kids in Ireland]
19 be (.) very quick to hide it and you know, [kids in Ireland would] know that
20 they’d get into **trouble** from the teacher, and **here** [at Najah] they [the
21 students] don’t seem to care, so.

In these final two stanzas, Mr. Bartlett clarifies his point that the teacher should have authority over his students, a facet of teaching he posits that at Najah doesn’t seem to exist. In *Stanza 2a* he suggests that students should “**jump to** like when they see a teacher” (ln. 13) and that the students at Najah seem quite comfortable smoking in front of teachers, perhaps even offering them a hit of their pipes[53]. In *Stanza 2b* Mr. Bartlett then compares these behaviors with those he experienced in Ireland where students would be “very quick to hide” (ln. 19) their smoking, knowing that the teacher had the authority to punish them. His laughter at the end of *Stanza 2a* indicates that he finds it surprising that Najah students “don’t seem to care” (ln. 21) about getting into trouble or about the hierarchical relationship between the teacher and the students.

Mr. Bartlett considers the teacher’s authority to be an important aspect of teaching practice, and he relates this authority to the teacher’s ability to develop close relationships

[53] On multiple occasions I have come across students at Najah smoking their midwakhs and have been offered a hit, an offer which I have yet to accept.

with his students. In a later interview, when I asked him, "Do you have any stories of teaching, or of teachers who influenced you as a teacher?" Mr. Bartlett related the story of a teacher he had observed in Ireland who had won several awards for teaching and who had "unbelievable control of his class" (ln. 9-10). Mr. Bartlett explained that this model teacher used silence and subtle movements to establish authority over his students. He evaluated these methods, adding, "But (.) **first** in order to (.) I think (.) for that to **work** /clears throat/ he [the good" teacher] had to build up a **rapport** (.) with the students so that they didn't feel like, "Oh, what an asshole or whatever" (ln. 16-18). Thus for Mr. Bartlett, the teacher's authority is achieved through building report with students.

Like Mr. Hassan and Mr. Abel, Mr. Bartlett also emphasized practical reasons over pursuing personal interest when I asked him, "Why did you come to Abu Dhabi to teach?"

Stanza 1: ORIENTATION

01 Mr. Bartlett: Ehe::m (.) Ireland is having uh (.) an economic **recession** and uh
02 (.) teacher's wages are (.) now **less** than what they were four years ago when I
03 started teaching. Uh (.) because there's been about three or four pay cuts.

Stanza 1a

04 I have a **permanent** job which means I can take a career break for up to ten
05 **years**, and uh (.) it'll [his job in Ireland] be waiting for me when I choose to
06 come **back** (.) so:: (.) I decided that now (.) would be a good **time** (.) to go (.)
07 somewhere else in the world while my job was **safe**.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

08 All the (.) **wages** are poor in Ireland, **and** actually (.) the atmosphe::re in
09 **schools** in Ireland is kinda not as good as it was, you know (.) there's not as
10 many resources—it's not as much **fun**, then people are losing their **jobs**, and
11 it's just—it's not a fun place to **be** right now.

Stanza 2a

12 And (.) e::h (.) my **wife** as well had no (.) uh (.) job **security**, e::h so (.) it was a
13 good time—it was a good time to **go** and try to do something else you know.
14 And the **wages** are **higher** here /laughs/. And the **weather** is better.

Mr. Bartlett's explanation for coming to Abu Dhabi emphasizes the importance securing a living wage. That he repeats the word "wages" in three stanzas emphasizes this reason as salient to his decision. In *Stanza 1*, Mr. Bartlett explains that teachers' wages in Ireland have gone down. He evaluates this phenomenon in *Stanza 2*, equating lower wages with fewer resources for teachers and the fact that many teachers are losing their jobs. In *Stanza 3*, he explains that both the wages and the weather are better in Abu Dhabi. That he laughs when he says this, and his emphasis on "fun" in *Stanza 2*, emphasizes Mr. Bartlett's linkage of personal happiness and contentment with higher wages.

The importance of job security is also salient in Mr. Bartlett's narrative. In *Stanza 2*, Mr. Bartlett explains that being on a career break means his job will be waiting for him back in Ireland, and he emphasizes the word "safe" with a louder voice. Additionally, in *Stanza 2a* Mr. Bartlett emphasizes that his wife had no job security. Taken together, these

stanzas underscore the importance of job security, which Mr. Bartlett connects with his obligation towards his wife. Like the Arab teachers, the pursuit of personal interests and the overcoming of adversity through personal initiative espoused in the narratives of the American teachers is absent in Mr. Bartlett's discourse.

The themes emerging in the discourses of the Arab and Irish teachers differ from those of their American colleagues in important ways. The American teachers emphasized the importance of personal choice and initiative in their descriptions of both how they became teachers and how they came to Abu Dhabi to teach. They described teaching as a profession that one enters *into* due to his possession of particular skills and qualifications. Conversely, the Arab and Irish teachers emphasized practical concerns surrounding the motifs of *job security* and *familial obligations* to describe their decisions to become teachers and come to Abu Dhabi. They also described the teacher as an entity that one *turns into* or *becomes*. In this construction, skills and qualifications are described as *actions performed* at some point in the past, actions which enabled them to become and remain teachers.

Additionally, in these initial narratives the Arab and Irish teachers implied the importance of the teacher's relationship with his students, a relationship where the teachers' role involves *talking with* his students rather than *talking to* them. For Mr. Hassan, his mentor teacher was aware of his love for English and he therefore

"encouraged" (ln. 1) him to become a teacher. Mr. Abel explains that he became a teacher because he liked to "be with young people" (ln. 1). And Mr. Bartlett argues that in order to maintain authority over students the teacher has to "build up a **report**" (ln. 16) with them. In the next section, I will show how these statements are markers of an Arab-Irish schema of teaching where the teacher is understood as a *familial role model* and protector of students.

5.2 Defining Teaching: The Teacher as Familial Role Model

When I asked Mr. Hassan, Mr. Abel and Bartlett about the role of the teacher, in their responses they described a schema of teaching where the teacher develops protective, familial relationships with his vulnerable students. In this schema, the student has particular needs, both academic and emotional, that the teacher must fulfill if the student is to learn. By drawing close to his students the teacher fulfills their needs and simultaneously becomes a role model for them. The transfer of skills occurs through this modeling process.

When I asked Mr. Hassan "What would you say is the nature of teaching?" he responded by relaying the story he tells his students about how he became a teacher:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Hassan: I tell them [his students] there should be mutual respect
02 between **us** (.) so **even** if you are slow or **weak** in English I'm going to help
03 you. It's not a (.) default or (.) something wrong.

Stanza 2: ORIENTATION

04 I give them the example of **myself**. I was very weak in grade 10 and 11, but

Stanza 3: COMPLICATING ACTION

05 because I (.) got interested in **myself** and I worked on **myself** and I had a role
06 model in my life—he was (.) teaching me in grade 12. He (.) he was tutoring
07 me in English. U::m (.) I—he was my role model.

Stanza 4: RESULT

08 I (.) decided to be like him (.) a teacher of English.

Stanza 5: EVALUATION

09 **So** it is possible to go from weak to strong, but **respect** is the key word here.

Mr. Hassan frames his narrative with the word "respect," arguing in *Stanza 5* that it is the "key word" (ln. 9) in his conceptualization of the teacher's relationship with his students. Mr. Hassan utilizes the word "role model" in *Stanza 3* without offering a definition. His usage of these words is an example of what Gee (1999) calls a "situated meaning" (p. 94)—that is, "an image or pattern that we assemble 'on the spot' as we communicate in a given context, based on our construal of that context and on our past experiences" (p. 94). Being a role model in this context is of course related to being someone that students want to emulate, but Mr. Hassan's sandwiching this concept

between the word “respect” signifies his emphasis on the importance of “mutual respect” (ln. 1). in this process of emulation. In this schema of teaching, only through mutual respect can the teacher help the student “go from weak to strong” (ln. 9), and this is accomplished by the students accepting the teacher as a role model.

As I have shown, Mr. Drake took issue with the concept of caring for students’ needs espoused by Mr. Hassan as initial advice to the incoming American teachers. For Mr. Drake, the teacher’s role is to motivate and convince students to take control of their futures. This means that at times the students might even hate the teacher who is pushing them to work. Mr. Hassan’s narrative reminded me of a piece of advice I was offered on my first day at Najah—that it is important to make the students love you as a teacher. I wanted to know his thoughts about his so I asked him the following question:

> Thomas: So I remember when I was first hired, Mohammad [one of the previous English teachers] told me “Make them [the students] love you.” What do you think about this?
>
> 01 Mr. Hassan: Yeah. You **know** when someone is in trouble and you help him.
> 02 You see that he is not in the right mood **today** and you—you get close to
> 03 him—“What’s wrong with you? Why?” This **creates** or builds a good
> 04 relationship between you and your students.

Mr. Hassan’s response underscores the taken-for-granted subschema (D’Andrade, 1995; Quinn, 1980) or motif surrounding the *importance of close relationships between teachers and students* within the Arab and Irish schema of the teacher as familial role

model. For Mr. Hassan, when a student is in trouble the teacher must draw close to him. Only in this way can the necessarily close relationships be forged for learning to occur.

Wanting to understand the situated meaning of "relationship" in Mr. Hassan's response, I asked him a follow-up question: "What would you compare that relationship to?" Mr. Hassan likened this "closeness" to that of a parent and child, constructing a narrative where he related his experience with his own daughter:

Stanza 1: ORIENTATION

01 Mr. Hassan: From my own **experience**, um (…) I used to treat my daughter
02 uh (…) as a child, and I'm responsible for her, and when I **see::** her doing
03 something wrong (.) I used to (.) deal with her in a very **aggressive** way.

Stanza 2: COMPLICATING ACTION

04 And I had trouble with her and she doesn't respond to my instructions or her
05 mother's instructions. U::h (.) when we **consulted** uh (.) me—a specialist on
06 **that**, he told us that she's [his daughter] now **grown up**. You have to (.)
07 respect her behavior and (.) give her self-confidence and let her talk to **you**::
08 and **accept** anything from her (.) and think of yourself when you were in her
09 **age** (.) and how you **beha::ved**.

Stanza 3: RESULT

10 So (.) I changed my **way** of dealing with her (.) and my wife also changed her
11 **way** (.) and we started **dealing** with her as if (.) we are friends. I started asking
12 her, "okay what's your opinion—something happened at **school** and the
13 students did something and I [she] did something."

Stanza 4: EVALUATION

14 So (.) the relationship between a teacher and his students is **similar** (.) to that
15 between a father and his (.) **children**.

In his narrative, Mr. Hassan draws a metaphorical analogy between teaching and parenting. He also repeats the theme of respect leading to self-confidence that he posited in his first narrative where he told his students, "It's [being "weak" in English is] not a (.) default or (.) something wrong" (ln. 3). In Line 7 Mr. Hassan draws a clear link between respect and self-confidence, implying that the teacher must accept the student to the extent that a parent accepts his child if the student is to gain self-confidence. Mr. Hassan continues with the motif of self-confidence at the end of this interview, when I asked him, "Is there anything else you want to add about teaching or the teaching process?" After a short pause he related the above passage to a second narrative where he applied these ideas in the classroom with a student:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Hassan: I would say that (.) there are different **ways** of (.) dealing with the
02 students (.) according to their **abilities** or according to their (.) personalities.

Stanza 2: ORIENTATION

03 If you take this student [a shy student in his class] as an example, I see that this
04 one is very **shy**. […] He's afraid of speaking in front of his (.) peers

Stanza 3: COMPLICATING ATION

05 so sometimes I (.) come near to him (.) a::nd I tell him, "Okay what you did [in
06 class] is **good** (.) it's **okay**," and I ask him to—to make a sentence.

Stanza 4: RESULT

07 I give him **confidence** in himself (.) and then he can show his ability to the
08 students.

Stanza 5: EVALUATION

09 So (.) it's very important to (.) to be close with your **students**.

Mr. Hassan offers what for him represents a "prototypical simulation" (Gee, 1999, p. 95) surrounding a moment of teaching. Gee (1999) points to the importance of such prototypical stories to understanding cultural discourse models (Gee, 1999) or cultural schemas (D'Andrade 1995). A prototypical simulation is a type of scripted formula we will run in our heads when we "take a situation to be 'typical'" (Gee, 1999, p. 95). Mr. Hassan's narratives imply that when a student is having trouble in class or in learning material, most often this trouble is emotional in nature. The teacher's role in this schema is to draw near to the student in order to "give him **confidence** in himself" (ln. 7).

In his response to the question, "What would you say is the nature of teaching?" Mr. Abel offered this discourse emphasizing the human need to understand the world:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Abel: It [teaching] is broadening the **mind** of the people—the
02 **receive::rs**—that means **your** audience. You are there just to **help** them
03 understand (.) the world, understand what's **around** them, and (.) **provide**
04 them with **tools** (.) that help them (.) u::h **analyze** what's happening all around
05 them.

Stanza 1a

06 It is **not exactly**—that means just something to **fill** (…) now—it is just helping
07 **them** [the students], being with them (.) to **broaden** their mind and
08 understanding (.) of different cultures, different concepts, and life (.) and that's
09 what I think education (.) is **a::ll** about: adding **something** (.) to what God has
10 provided us with.

Stanza 1b

11 There's something natural—that means **we can** speak, we can talk, we can
12 understand, but with the help of others because **all the time** sometimes we
13 need assistance. I think this help is **provi::ded** by the instructor who is
14 giving this. As humans we are **so::** (.)—we cannot live on our own, so we need
15 others, and also we need **the help**. So for (.) **learning** something (.) you need
16 to **build** (.) on what the others have done.

Stanza 1c

17 And I think (.) the teacher (.) **can** make the process very fast (.) in
18 understanding concepts, ideas, the world, cultures, other cultures (.) and that's
19 his role.

Mr. Abel repeats the word "understanding" five times throughout his response, emphasizing it as a salient aspect of his schema of teaching. In Mr. Abel's explanation, the teacher's role is to "**provide**" (ln. 3) students with "**tools**" (ln. 4) of analysis so that they can better understand the world around them. God also "provided" (ln. 10) certain tools, but the teacher must add something. Thus the teacher's role fits into the "natural" (ln. 11) order of things. In *Stanza 1b*, Mr. Abel emphasizes the natural needs of human beings and by extension the needs of the students. Thus the relationship between the student and the teacher is metaphorically likened to the relationship between man and

God, i.e. those in need and the one who provides. Like Mr. Hassan, Mr. Abel understands the teacher's role in connection with activity surrounding meeting the needs of his students.

In Mr. Abel's discourse, the students are both the receivers and the "audience" (ln. 2), and the teacher offers them the tools they need by "being with" (ln. 7) them. I wanted Mr. Abel to elaborate on his use of the word "tools", so I asked him a floating prompt question: "Do these tools include moral values, or are they purely analytical? Is the teacher responsible for teaching moral values to students?" In his response, Mr. Abel emphasized the need to recognize the teacher's position as a role model:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Abel: Yes, because the teacher is still a model (.) to follow […] **still** (.) in
02 many communities the teacher is a personality (.) who is **rea::lly** respected (...)
03 in society and (…) **so::** many students they consider him as their model (.)
04 because (.) he **has** something (…) at the same time he is **giving** (.) because he
05 has knowledge (…) but **still** [in these communities] the teacher is considered
06 as a role model students can follow.

Stanza 1a

07 So we **need** to (.) **develop** this idea [the teacher as a role model] at the same
08 time by (.) educating **more**, but why not by (.) **developing** (…) the teacher (.)
09 himself to be a role model to students.

Like for Mr. Hassan, Mr. Abel's schema of teaching includes the script of the teacher as a role model for students to follow. Nespor (1985) suggests that teachers'

belief systems are "often concerned with 'alternative worlds' or 'alternative realities'" (p. 12). He showed that teachers often described "particular types of interactional systems" (Nespor, 1985, p. 12) as the ideal, an ideal which they often had not actually experienced themselves. In Mr. Abel's discourse, the teacher should be held up as the "role model students can follow" (ln. 6). He describes ideal communities where this state of affairs is "**still**" (ln. 1) the case. His emphasis on the word "still" with both repetition and with a louder voice indicates that Mr. Abel does not find this to be the case at Najah. He expresses his hope in *Stanza 1a* that teachers will reclaim this lost position as role models for their students.

Mr. Bartlett utilized the phrase "provide an example" and the word "show" in conjunction with the word "mold" to describe the role of the teacher when I asked him, "What would you say is the nature of teaching?"

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Bartlett: Yeah, um (.) yeah (…) what is teaching? It's probably not
02 something I'd try to put a (.) one line answer on, but it' s **probably** (…) u::m
03 (…) teaching is probably— in **my** mind—it's trying to **mold** (.) the student in
04 your **care** (.) to be the **best** (…) e::h (…) to be as **good** and—the **best** they can
05 be, eh, while they're—while they're (.) while you have them in your care.

Stanza 1a

06 Eh (.) and—and beyond that. Like it's everything from—it's educational (.)
07 u::m (.) behavior, social (...) e::hem (.) yeah—it's just trying to show them (.)

08 u::h (…) **certain** (…) e::h (.) **soci::etal** norms or something that u::h we feel
09 are **positive** maybe or whatever.

Stanza 1b

10 [A teacher is] trying to provide an **example** and trying to uh—to **mold**
11 the young kids and all. You try to uh (…) you try to show them what's **right**
12 and what's **wrong** and all that sorta thing.

Mr. Bartlett repeats specific words in his discourse, making them salient aspects of this conceptualization of teaching: "**mold**" (ln. 3; ln. 10), "care" (ln. 4; ln. 5) and "show" (ln. 17; ln. 11). His emphasis on the word "mold" with a louder voice and by returning to it at the end of his discourse indicates an active teacher shaping a passive student, echoing the American schema of education. However, Mr. Bartlett defines "mold" in a way that is more in line with the conceptualization of his Arab colleagues. For Mr. Bartlett, the students are in the teachers' "care" (ln. 5). Part of this caretaking involves *showing* the students specific behavior designed to teach him right from wrong. Mr. Bartlett emphasizes this role, explaining that the teacher must "provide an **example**" (ln. 10) for students.

Mr. Bartlett continued to describe the teacher as a role model when I asked him the follow-up question: "So the teacher is a (…) what? What is a teacher anyway?"

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Bartlett: A **teacher** should be (…) a teacher should, what—well in a
02 **teaching** classroom, should be (…) **everything** (.) uh (.) fo::r his or her

03 students, like (.) everything from (.) a **role** model (.) u::h (.) a **leader** (.) an
04 educator (.) a **nurse**, a janitor (.) a **psychologist**, uh(…) **coach** (…) **everything**
05 that (.) uh the kids need (.) u::m, in every situation that arises (…) a tour
06 guide—**everything**, man.

Stanza 1a

07 u::m (.) a teacher in **society** should be somebody who (.) um (.) society (.)
10 regards **highly** (.) u::h, like really if society are serious about the education of
11 their young people, they should actually start uh having **more** regard for their
12 teachers and (.) placing more respect on them,

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

13 but that's [society not regarding their teachers highly]—that's not our fault. I
14 think that's just the way society is.

Stanza 2a

15 But u::m (.) yeah, a teacher is **very** very important. Everybody has to have one,
16 e::hem, or have **several** of them in their lifetime, and it's always during (.)
17 formative years, so (.) that's why I think that teachers are very important.

In *Stanza 1* Mr. Bartlett uses several metaphors to describe the role of the teacher, which taken together form the image (Fillmore, 1977) or picture (Gee, 1999) of the teacher as a holistic caretaker of students. Like Mr. Abel, Mr. Bartlett describes an alternative world (Nespor, 1985) where the teacher is a role model, someone society regards "**highly**" (ln. 10). He continues the construction of the teacher molding the student in *Stanza 2*, explaining that students and teachers interact during the students' "formative years" (ln. 17). For Mr. Bartlett, the molding or forming of students occurs in

an environment of holistic caring, where the teacher models or shows students what they need to learn.

Although of course different in descriptive details, the Arab teachers and the Irish teacher at Najah construct a strikingly similar schema of teaching, one where *meeting the needs of students* is paramount to the teaching process. This motif necessitates that the teacher *forms close relationships with his students*. Only when these requirements are met can the teacher become a *role model* for students and the teaching process commence. For Mr. Hassan, when a student is having trouble in class, the teacher must "get close" (ln. 2) or "come near" (ln. 5) to him in order to instill him with confidence. Mr. Abel explained that students "need assistance" (ln. 13) and the teacher's role is to provide students with what they need. Both Mr. Abel and Mr. Bartlett described the teacher as a role model, and they lamented that this idealized role is not the present reality. In the next section I will show how the schema of the teacher as a role model, with its supporting motifs of meeting students' needs and the importance of teacher-student relationships impacts the Arab and Irish teachers' perceptions of their students.

5.3 Najah Students: Younger Brothers with Special Needs

When I asked Mr. Hassan, "What motivates your students? What kinds of things are they interested in?" he responded with a broad narrative summing up the "story" of Najah students:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Hassan: **First** of all (…) you have to treat them [students at Najah] as an
02 adult—grown up. Because (.) as you know students here [at Najah] are from (.)
03 different **tribes**. And u::h they are accustomed when they are at the age of
04 15—for example—16 (.) they are considered **men** (.) and their families depend
05 on them a lot—on u::h (.) different **matters**.

Stanza 1a

06 So (.) **when**—whenever they come to school (.) you have to **accept** them first,
07 and the::y are convinced of your personality and (.) character as a teacher—
08 you have to treat them as (.) grown-ups—an adult. You:: have to deal with
09 them with great respect (.) and (…) in return they will **do** the same with you.
10 And they will be convinced of your instructions and everything. So:: (.) this is
11 number one.

Stanza 1b

12 And this is the **key** for them [the students at Najah] u::h (.) idea (.)—you have
13 to—you have to make them (.) **like** you. In this case u::h (.) you know, they
14 [the students] will be convinced of what you are **saying** and Uh convinced of
15 everything—because (.) some students u::h get reluctant (.) uh get **bored**
16 because they are (.) internally (.) convinced that they will never **learn**.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

17 [The students say to themselves] "I—I am now 11 years in the field of
18 **education** and I haven't been—**learned** anything." So:: the second idea is to
19 let them like you. In this case they will be convinced of (.) whatever you
20 arrange with them.

Mr. Hassan's description of his students depicts them as discerning adults who want to be "convinced" (ln. 7) about the teacher's character before they will be convinced to follow the teacher's instructions. Mr. Hassan repeats the word "convinced" five times

in this initial part of his discourse, making it a salient feature in his understanding of Najah students. Unlike the American schema of teaching, where the teacher has to convince students to work hard for their future success, in Mr. Hassan's discourse, the situated meaning (Gee, 1999) of "convince" involves the teacher convincing the students about *himself*—about the goodness of his character and personality. In order to do this the teacher must first "**accept**" (ln. 6) the students by showing them "great respect" (ln. 9). Ironically, although Mr. Hassan posits that the teachers must accept his students as adults, he describes the *de facto* Najah students like vulnerable children who are easily discouraged.

Mr. Hassan continued his response, underscoring the teacher's role as an example for students:

Stanza 2a

21 Mr. Hassan: U::h (.) sometimes I tell them [the students] my own personal
22 experiences (.) in **learning** English. For myself—an Arab teacher (.) I'm an
23 Arab (…) person like them and (.) it's [English is] my second language and I
24 told them that, "**English** was (.) very difficult for me in cycle two [middle
25 school] and in grade 10—in grade 10. **But** (.) because I liked my teacher in
26 grade 11 (.) **espe::cially** in grade 12 (.) I was fully convinced of my teacher
27 and I was u::h **motivated** from my teacher that I—he [the teacher] **even**
28 convinced me to be (.) u::h (.) a **teacher of English**.

Stanza 2b

29 I think—from my **own** u::h (.) **point-of view**, also it [students' motivation]
30 depends on what you present to them /raising hand pinching fingers/ and the

31 **way** that you **get** your students—bring them from down. U::h (.) **know** your
32 students first. **Know** them—**know** their level. And start giving them (.) uh
33 tasks (.) that suit their abilities—and try step-by-step—you can (.) **build-on**
34 stuff you will give to them later.

Stanza 2c

35 So:: (.) the students (.) **have** to know that (.) English is a second language (.)
36 but you can (.) manage it if you follow these steps. And I'm an example for
37 you. And you may give [the students] some other example of this kind. U::h (.)
38 and when you know their level and their abilities and you start building on
39 what they really **have** (.) it will also encourage them to—to learn.

Stanza 2d

40 U::h (.) I know some students who are **excellent** (.) but when they are afraid of
41 their teacher (.) u::h they don't learn—they don't do well. So:: you have to
42 know them and they have to **like** you and show them respect—always show
43 respect. Also, **praising** them—praising their performance (.) u::h whenever
44 they do something (.) good. So all these things raise the motivation of the
45 students.

Mr. Hassan repeats the word "convinced" two more times as he describes how he became "fully convinced of" (ln. 26) his grade 12 teacher. In *Stanza 2a* Mr. Hassan links the word "convinced" with a new word "**motivated**" (ln. 27). In this prototypical (D'Andrade) schema of teaching, only when teachers "know" (ln. 42) and understand their students can they motivate them. At the same time, teachers must also make students *like them* through showing them respect. For Mr. Hassan, successful teaching requires developing relationships with students, and he implies that the ideal relationship

between the teacher and the student is one where the teacher serves as an "example" (ln. 36) for the student.

As the distinction between the student as an "adult" and Mr. Hassan's assertion in an earlier interview that the teacher's relationship to his student was like a parent to a child seemed ambiguous, I asked him this floating prompt question:

> Thomas: You mentioned that—you earlier compared the relationship between the teacher and the student as that between a parent and a child. If you treat them [students] like adults can you still be the parent in that situation?

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

> 01 Mr. Hassan: Actually I don't like teachers to deal with uh their students as
> 02 parent and son.

Stanza 1a

> 03 They [students] from my experience with these students here and in (.) Egypt
> 04 as friends or as older brother and younger brother—as brothers. You consider
> 05 your students as (.) your **brothers**. You see, it's difficult to talk to my parent
> 06 (.) about **everything** (.) but it's easy to tell my **brother** (.) what I'm thinking.

Stanza 1b

> 07 Sometimes I (.) uh interfere with their [the students'] **personal** conversations
> 08 and I tell them that I (.) faced such experiences before. With all different types
> 09 of conversations or (.) between (.) **themselves**.

Stanza 1c

> 10 So:: u::h (.) I don't like to treat them as a father and sons but (.) as brothers—
> 11 he's my (.) younger **brother** (.) or uh as friends. Of course as friends it's

12 difficult—it's the (.) **highest** point [as friends] you can reach—it's [more like]
13 **brothers**.

Although Mr. Hassan seems to be contradicting his earlier statement that the relationship between the teacher and the student is like that of a parent to a child, he is actually only *refining* it. Gudmundsdottir (1996) reminds narrative researchers that when they are asking informants to talk about their experience, "oftentimes it is the first time they had to describe it" (p. 297). Refinements may be necessary because as Gudmundsdottir (1996) explains, teachers' experiences are like a "gray, undefined mass of feelings, attitudes, and 'bag of tricks' all drenched in values" (p. 297). Mr. Hassan replaces the metaphor of the teacher-as-parent with the teacher-as-older-brother in order to better describe the close relationship the teacher must have with his students. The formality of a parent-child relationship might get in the way of the close and honest relationship the teacher must have with his students in order to act as their role model.

Mr. Abel began to answer my question about what makes his students tick when I asked him a previous question: "How is teaching at Najah different than other places [in Abu Dhabi] you've experienced?" In his response, Mr. Abel suggests that the students in Bani Waleed are treated differently from the students in the city of Abu Dhabi:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Abel: **Teaching** at Najah is totally different from other classes, **especially**
02 at the level [of the students].

Stanza 1a

03 **Then** (…) I think the main difference (.) is in **wha::t** the students have (.)
04 **learned**. So if you take as an example a student who has been learning
05 **English**—who has been taught (.) English for something like 10 or 12 years,
06 and at the end of the process (.) he **doe::sn't** (…) **get** (.) what you intended to
07 give him (.) that means—that means maybe people had **very** good intentions to
08 teach them, but what have they learned? To some extent (.) it's **really** really
09 minimal.

Stanza 1b

10 If I try to compare (.) a student at Najah (…) who has been **learning** English
11 for (.) 10 **years** (.) it is **exactly** what a student (.) on the **island**—in Abu Dhabi,
12 let's say for example at [he names two schools in Abu Dhabi] students at that
13 time have got this [the course content] only in something like 3 or 4 years. So
14 that's the **difference**, and **I** think

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

15 (…) that **doesn't mean** that students— students are students everywhere (.)
16 **but** because of—Why has why has this **happened**? I think because of **so::**
17 many factors. Student who are living far away (.) from downtown [Abu Dhabi
18 city] (.) most of the time are ignored—are ignored, and the rules (…) the
19 [school] rules are not (.) implemented. For example they may be absent for so
20 many days, but at the same time (.) because **the** (.) **central** power the central
21 uh—**ADEC** itself, they do not control this (.) or they try to ignore this (.) due
22 to the (…)

Stanza 2a

23 there are some things which are specific to Bani Waleed—that means they live
24 far away and the majority are Bedouins, and Bedouins (.) are **not rea::lly**
25 interested in **lea::rning**. They are interested in other things. And that's (.) why
26 the difference. And also because (.) as decision (.) **takers** or all the decision
27 takers, they [ADEC] **do not try** to cater for the **needs** of students. **I** think
28 students have different needs.

Stanza 2b

29 Students in Bani Waleed—in Najah—and **students** in (.) u::h—on the island—
30 **I feel** that they have different interests. As the others [students on the island]
31 used to live **in the town** (…) in the city center, and they are exposed—I'm
32 talking now only about English—and they are exposed to:: (.) English **a lot**—
33 a lot more than those who are living in Bani Waleed.

Mr. Abel laments that ADEC is not taking care of the special needs students in Bani Waleed require. His discourse exemplifies how motifs or subschemas (D'Andrade, 1995)—in this case *the importance of meeting students' needs*—form ideologies, or propositions specifying "how social relations should be conducted" (Wuthnow, 1987, p. 154), and therefore how social resources should be distributed through and by institutions. Mr. Abel suggests that as the students in Bani Waleed are seen as being out-in-the-boondocks, and as being "Bedouins" (ln. 24) ADEC does not commit resources to regulating school rules and behaviors. This is problematic as the students' needs are subsequently not being met. Mr. Abel also implies that teachers at Bani Waleed need to pedagogically approach students at Najah differently than they would approach students in the city of Abu Dhabi as they have completely different interests. I wanted to know more about this, so I transitioned into a question about his students:

> Thomas: You mentioned that the kids are interested in other things. What are those other things that the kids are into? What motivates your students?

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Abel: **Here** [at Najah] (.) you have to **choo::se** your topics.
02 If you **choose** your topic for example about (…) I mean choose the topics that
03 they [Najah students] **really** need. **Here** (.) most of them are interested in the
04 military, so try to introduce things which are related to this. Talk about it. That
05 will interest them.

Stanza 1a

06 Other things (…) **here** [at Najah] the:: students (.) you try to impose—impose
07 and **I mean**—**I mean** it—you try to impose a curriculum [the ADEC English
08 curriculum] which is **comple::tely** (…) not important to the students—**Why**?
09 Because they could **no::t** (.) talk about it.

Stanza 1b

10 **Now** what the students need, if I **want** (.) to **help** them, they need (.) basic
11 skills. Because they do not have these basic skills. They cannot read. If you [as
12 a teacher] want to talk about for example "around the **wo::rld**" and you talk
13 about for example different cultures, they [the students] do not have the **tools**.

Stanza 1c

14 So let's first provide them [the students] with the **tools** (.) and **then** we can
15 discuss the theme. And then they [the students] do not have tools they cannot
16 even **read**. If they can't read and you [the teacher] are talking about or you are
17 trying to introduce a topic—you want to discuss (.) you want to criticize, you
18 want to analyze—they [the students] do not understand the topic itself. So they
19 [the students] **need** to **learn** how to read (…)

Stanza 2: EVALATION

20 so **if** I were responsible here I would introduce **phonics** (.) at this point even at
21 this point. It's not ever too late to learn. I would introduce **phonics** (.) for these
22 students and will consider them as **adult** learners (.) of English—**starters**, and
23 then start from the beginning.

Stanza 2a

24 It is the same thing (.) if I start talking to you [Thomas] for example, in Arabic
25 even if you **rea::lly** like Arabic, but I try to **read** (.) a passage from Al
26 Mutanabi who is a poet (.) after (.) **two** or three minutes (.) I will **lose** your
27 interest and I cannot draw your attention.

In his explanation, Mr. Abel underscores the importance of taking care of the needs of his students, asking me to put myself in their shoes. Mr. Abel argues that the English language curriculum at Najah is inappropriate for Najah students because it does not meet their interests or their needs. As his students do not have basic English skills, Mr. Abel argues that the curriculum should offer this to them before it asks them to discuss or analyze abstract topics. He offers a concrete example of an alternative curriculum involving phonics before returning to the motif of meeting students' needs. In *Stanza 2a* Mr. Abel asks me, a native English speaker, to consider how hard it would be to pay attention to a lecture conducted in Arabic.

Mr. Abel continues this discourse, now putting himself in his students' shoes:

Stanza 2b

28 Mr. Abel: If I go now to a Chinese lecture with a **pe::rfect excellent** teacher,
29 after (.) some time (.) my span of concentration—I'll **try** to understand first.
30 **But** (.) after some time I lose concentration because I **do not understand a**
31 **word.**

Stanza 2c

32 That does not mean that the teacher is not good, or I'm not **good.** But the
33 **system** is **rea::lly** bad.

Stanza 2d

34 Give me what I **need**. I need to know the basics. **No::w** […] if you **teach** me
35 the basics, **then** (.) after some **time** (.) I can understand. I can **develop** with
36 you, with your help. You are the teacher, **you** help me. But you say "okay I
37 have a curriculum to implement. I will teach you for example about social life
38 in China and this is a text." I will not understand it. Why? Because I do not
39 know the **words** which are there.

Stanza 2e

40 And **what's** education after all? What's learning? **Learning** (.) as **so** many
41 scholars have defined it, is **L+1**. What's **my** level? Add to it. **Help me** (.) add
42 to it. So for me (.) learning—catering for the needs of students—first thing (.)
43 diagnose their level—**know** where they are. It doesn't matter—forget about
44 ADE::C, forget what they are **talking**. Teach them poetry—**I like** poetry but
45 teach them poetry according to their level.

Mr. Abel's response offers a window into his approach towards the curriculum, and as I will show, foreshadows his eventual rejection of it. The metaphors of the Chinese lecturer and his curriculum symbolize the English staff at Najah and ADEC's English language curriculum, which asks students similar tasks (i.e. examine social issues in the UAE). The basic problem with the curriculum is clear: it is written in a language the students do not know and thus does not meet their basic needs. Like Mr. Hassan, who argued that Najah students need to feel convinced about both their teachers and about their own abilities, Mr. Abel posits that students' needs must be met if they are to learn. He drives this point home in *Stanza 2d* by giving his students a voice: "Give me what I **need**" (ln. 34).

In the final stanza of Mr. Abel's discourse he defines education: adding to what students already know. This can only be accomplished by first taking care of their needs. D'Andrade (1995) illustrates how schemas "can be hierarchically structured" (p. 124)—that is, "simpler schemas can be 'embedded' within more complex schemas" (p. 124). In the Arab/ Irish schema of teaching, the motif of "catering for the needs of students" (ln. 42) is embedded within and supports the schema of the teacher as familial role model.

When I asked Mr. Bartlett, "What motivates your students? What kinds of things are they interested in?" he also focussed on the importance of catering to their needs:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Bartlett: What motivates them [the students at Najah] probably is uh (.)
02 probably u::m (…) they want to feel that you:: [the teacher] are **rea::lly** (.)
03 you're attentive to **them** (.)

Stanza 1a

04 Like (.) if you're talking down to 20 [students] (.) uh (.) they [the students]
05 might pick up one **word**, but if you:: are (.) discussing with them on a one-to-
06 one basis about something that **they're** interested in they might pick up four or
07 **five** words, or they might they might—they'll **try** that **fifty**-percent harder than
08 they would if you asked them uh in a group like, you know.

Stanza 1b

09 U::h and they're interested in the things that **they're** interested in like **jeeps**
10 and **cars** and **phones** and (.) they want to talk about that—**those** sort of things.
11 They **don't** really want to talk about like (…) I don't know the meaning of the
12 word **relations** or something (.)

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

13 but (.) if you start asking about **their** cousins (.) and somehow try and blend
14 the use of the word relations into **that**, "So these are your relations?' /in a
15 rough voice/ "Yes, these are my relations." Where do your relations live?" /in
16 the same rough voice/ "My relations live in Al Ain." You t know, but that's—
17 but before that they would just shout out /in a loud rough voice/"**Cousin**! Al
18 Ain!" You know, "**Big house**!" or something you know, but to try to get them
19 to talk about (.) something you need to bring it down—bring it to **them**. Bring
20 it **home**.

Like his Arab colleagues, Mr. Bartlett focused on the importance of meeting his students' needs. He begins by positing that Najah students need to feel like "you're attentive to **them**" (ln. 3). He argues that talking to his students "one-on-one" (ln. 5-6) is more effective than talking to a groups. And like Mr. Abel, Mr. Bartlett argues that the topic of discussion must be something that interests the students. He offers an example of a one-on-one conversation where the teacher makes the lesson about the student himself—his relations. Mr. Bartlett's initial discourse continues the motifs of building close relationships with students and of meeting students' needs. He continues his discourse, using these motifs to critique ADEC's English language curriculum:

Stanza 2a

21 Yeah that's **all**—that's all I can (.) see so far you know. I'm constantly trying
22 to make uh (.) make—to **match** things to uh (.) to themselves, you know—to
23 each **individual** student. Yeah, u::m (.) and then the thing is like some of them
24 [the students] are—some of them are wealthier than others. They're not all
25 they're not all the **same**—they're not all Emiratis.

Stanza 2b

26 Which I find is (.) uh (…) it's a bit **stupid** like to make (.) **Jordanian** kids (.)
27 doing ECART and "Proud to be an Emirati"[54] /laughs/. You know, u::h (…)
28 like they're [the non-Emirati students are] not Emiratis. They're probably
29 **happier** to be in the Emirates than in the other countries or whatever, but (.)
30 u::m (…) yeah, "Proud to Live in the UAE" might have been a **better** u::m (.)
31 **title** or whatever.

Stanza 2c

32 Yeah the ones [the students] that don't really understand, it doesn't **matter** to
33 them, but I know there's a couple of Palestinian guys and Jordanians and
34 different uh (.) guys—guys with (.)—half—**half** Yemeni or whatever, who (.)
35 are probably like, "Well I'm not an Emirati." They are **familiar** with Emirati
36 culture and all, but when I'm really trying to **drill** this [the ECART
37 curriculum] in (.)

Stanza 2d

38 I just feel like this is—this is—this is like telling an Irish guy like, "**Why** are
39 you proud to be English?" You know /laughs/. Yeah, when they—when they
40 [the Irish people] **really** shouldn't be like (.)

Stanza 2e

41 or they [the non-Emirati students] can say they're really happy to be living
42 **here** and they can **still** (.) show all the things about the Emirati culture and
43 their understanding of it and all, u::m (.) but they—they don't need to pretend
44 that they're Emiratis or we **don't** need to be trying to (.) **talk** to them [the non-
45 Emirati students] as if they are [Emirati] or **convince** them that they are, like
46 you know. I think that—that's a bit unusual.

In his response, Mr. Bartlett incorporates his experiences growing up in Ireland to exemplify his belief that teachers should take care of their students' needs. Nespor (1987)

[54] One of the themes of ADEC's English (ECART) curriculum is "Proud to be Emirati."

argues that teachers' beliefs are "unbounded"—that is, teachers will often map their personal experiences onto other (sometimes seemingly unrelated) aspects of their teaching practice; Nespor (1987) writes: "What the concept of 'unboundedness' means, then, in plainer language, is that people read belief-based meanings into situations where other people wouldn't see the relevance of the beliefs" (p. 25). Mr. Bartlett argues that ADEC's English curriculum, which contains the topic "Proud to be Emirati," is not meeting the needs of students who are non-Emirati and who, Mr. Bartlett suggests, might not feel the same national pride as a student who is an Emirati citizen. His own feelings about the importance of freedom of choice concerning national identity mediate Mr. Bartlett's beliefs that teaching involves catering to students' needs.

Mr. Hassan, Mr. Abel and Mr. Bartlett each told the "story" of their students through the schema of the teacher as familial role model. Although other unbounded (Nespor, 1987) beliefs entered their discourses, the Arab and Irish teachers' perceptions of their students were mediated by the sub-schema or motif that he teachers' role is to protect and take care of his students[55]. Unlike their American colleagues who argued that

[55] See Gee (1999) for a wider discussion of schematic models spread across multiple discourses. Gee (1999) uses the term "discourse models" (p. 95) to describe schemas, suggesting that discourse models "are usually not completely stored in one person's head" (p. 95). Instead, these constructions are "distributed across the different sorts of expertise or viewpoints found in the group, much like a plot to a story (or pieces of a puzzle) that different people have different bits of and which they can potentially share in order to mutually develop the 'big picture'" (Gee, 1999, p. 95). In the current study, the discourse model or schema of the teacher as familial role model is shared by informants from different cultures—Arab and Irish. However, the reasons for this similarity, as well as the origins of this model, are beyond the scope of this study.

the problems with Najah students arose from a culture of dependence upon the government and a legacy of reliance upon Westerners, the Arab teachers and the Irish teacher at Najah posited that these problems were caused by lack of attendance to the particular needs of their students. For Mr. Hassan, the teachers' role is to "convince" (ln. 14) his students that the teacher is sincere. Only through mutual respect and by meeting his students' needs can the teacher give them confidence in their own abilities. Mr. Abel argues that teachers can only help students when they are attentive to "what the students need" (ln. 10), and he critiques both ADEC and the English curriculum through this lens. Likewise, Mr. Bartlett also criticizes the English curriculum as it is not attentive to the needs of non-Emirati students.

The Arab teachers and the Irish teacher also embodied their students through their discourses, putting themselves in their students' shoes. Mr. Hassan voices his students' frustration that they haven't learned English after eleven years in school. Mr. Abel explains that if he were to go to a lecture in Chinese, he would feel the same way his students do now. And Mr. Bartlett puts himself as an Irishman in the shoes of his non-Emirati students. These empathetic discourses of the Arab teachers and the Irish teacher contrasts with the more bootstrapped stance taken by their American colleagues, where students had to learn the importance of hard work and self-reliance in order to be successful. It also presupposes the motifs of building close relationships with students

and attending to their individual needs which we have already seen support the schema of the teacher as familial role model. In the next section I will show how these discourses reciprocally impact the ways the Arab teachers' and the Irish teacher at Najah talk about the English and Arabic languages.

5.4 English and Arabic: Competing Language Ideologies

Like their American colleagues, when I asked Mr. Hassan, Mr. Abel and Mr. Bartlett, "Why is the government promoting English?" as well as "What is the role of English in your students' lives?" they described English ideologically through the lens of linguistic instrumentalism (Wee, 2008)—that is, they described English "in terms of its usefulness in achieving specific utilitarian goals such as access to economic development or social mobility" (Wee, 2008, p. 32). They also assigned Arabic the role of cultural marker or "mother tongue." However, in their discourses they continued to empathize with their students, stressing the importance of meeting students' individual needs, needs which naturally prioritize the students' native language—or mother tongue—over English, despite the obvious economic advantages of English.

When I asked Mr. Hassan, "Why is the government promoting English?" after a short pause he responded by focusing on ADEC's process of replacing native-Arabic-speaking English teachers with native-English-speakers from western countries:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Hassan: You know when **ADEC** (.) think of the idea to bring LTs to the
02 UAE (.) they are thinking positively for the sake of the UAE **students**. You
03 see?

Stanza 1a

04 U::h (.) they [ADEC] have an experience in their **mind** that (.) some students
05 spend 16 or 14 years (…) actually 12 years (.) of **learning**—of **education**, and
06 by the end of the 12 years he has no English—little, poor English. But when
07 this student is sent to uh (.) abroad—sent abroad to any (.) English speaking
08 country, uh spending there three:: or six months (.) they come with (.) some
09 skills of English—listening and speaking, they are good at these skills, okay (.)

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

10 so (.) they [ADEC] thought of the idea: "Why don't we bring (.) **in** all these
11 LTs [i.e. "Licensed teachers," or native-English-speaking teachers] to teach
12 our students here?" So eh (.) **bringing** or (.) **hiring** LTs to (.) teach in the UAE
13 is a great idea.

Stanza 2a

14 Some—some— some of m::y (.) colleagues I know—they are Arab teachers
15 and (.) they were (.) cancelled [their contracts were not renewed] or (.) for any
16 **reason** (.) transferred to any other schools, **but** (…) I agree with this idea.
17 This is their [the Emiratis'] **country** (.) and they would like to make their
18 students the **best** in English.

Stanza 2b

19 **But** (…) what is the problem now? The problem is with the students
20 themselves—their **families**—their families and (.) there there's no follow-up
21 from the families—from parents to their students, especially here in secondary
22 schools. They consider their (.) children as adults now. [The parents believe
23 that] they [the students] are responsible for their **learning**—their own learning,

24 so there is **no** follow-up (.) uh (.) no (.) follow-up for their—[the parents] to
25 come to the **school** and ask about **them** [the students].

Stanza 2c

26 U::h (.) students' level of English is very poor, and the::y don't have self-
27 confidence in themselves (.) u::h (…) to learn. We would like to motiva::te
28 them, and this is the **grea::t** challenge—how to motivate them [to] learn
29 English. Because before they had bad experiences of learning English—it's
30 difficult so they cannot **learn it**—and so and so.

Mr. Hassan approves of ADEC's program of replacing native-Arabic-speaking English teachers with native-English-speakers because he concedes that the previous program, which included only native-Arabic-speaking English teachers, was not successful. His example of sending students abroad to English-speaking countries presupposes the idea that by simply being around native-speakers of English students will naturally pick up more English skills than they would being taught by native-Arabic-speaking English teachers for whom English is a second-language. Mr. Hassan's response echoes what Valdes et. al. (2003) term a "discourse of monolingualism" (p. 14) where the "pure" (p. 18) or "standard" (p. 18) variety of a language is ideologically constructed as being superior to the non-standard variety (in this case the second-language variety of English spoken by native-Arabic-speaking English teachers).

Mr. Hassan's discourse also illustrates the ways that schemas of teaching—representing complex ideologies about teaching—mediate and are mediated by ideologies surrounding the purpose and value of language in the world. Mr. Hassan concedes the

importance of learning English, but he does so focusing on the needs of his students. For Mr. Hassan, having the native-English-speaking teachers in place represents the first step towards Najah students' successful learning of English. Now the parents have to get involved. The students' parents can no longer make the students themselves solely "responsible for their **learning**" (ln. 23). Mr. Hassan argues that because they had "bad experiences of learning English" (ln. 29) Najah students have no "self-confidence in themselves" (ln. 26-27).

I asked Mr. Hassan to elaborate on his feelings about why the previous system, which incorporated native-Arabic-speaking English teachers, was unsuccessful:

> Thomas: You mentioned this 12 years of instruction. What would you describe as the reasons why after 12 years of English instruction they [Najah students] don't speak any English?
>
> 01 Mr. Hassan: In my opinion i::t's […] **teachers** in cycle one, **especially** cycle-
> 02 one [grades K-5]. Those teachers should, uh (.) are supposed to be intelligent
> 03 enough (.) [to] make their students love the subject—love **English**, u::h love
> 04 themselves—love the teacher themselves—to communicate with them, and (.)
> 05 that's why I:: **hope** they [cycle-one teachers] should be **selected** (.) in an
> 06 **accurate way**.

In his response, Mr. Hassan emphasized the importance of close relationships between teachers and students. Mr. Hassan blames the cycle-one teachers for not fulfilling their responsibilities as their students' role models. In this schema, the teachers'

responsibility is to "communicate with" (ln. 04) his students to make them love the subject being taught, and to love both themselves and the teacher.

When I asked Mr. Hassan, "What is the role of English in your students' lives?" he responded by emphasizing English as an instrumental skill:

Stanza 1: ABTRACT

01 Mr. Hassan: Actually a::s we know now English is a global language. It's
02 spoken everywhere. So (…) **concerning** our students, the::y use English in the
03 hospital. Most—most u::h (.) doctors and nurses are foreigners in the hospital
04 so they should deal with them in English. U::h (…) shopping **malls** (…) uh
05 **even** if they would like to spend some time in the **cinema** (.) to book a ticket
06 or (…) it's—it's important to learn some **English**.

Stanza 1a

07 So u::h **even**—this has **happened** actually—when u::h (.) some students don't
08 like to complete secondary school (.) so they join the police (.) before they
09 graduate they join the police for work, and leave education. While they are
10 moving between—a—a—an **accident**—they went to an accident, they find the
11 driver is a foreigner. So how can they (.) give him [the driver] a ticket of
12 **speed**? Or a (.) ticket of (…)?

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

13 So English is very important in their lives. It's taught in (.) schools—it's a
14 **subject**. It's used in malls and hospitals, and shopping. Even for entertainment.
15 They use it in PlayStation—play—Play Station Two or Three. It's very
16 important for them also. **Compu::ters** and internet use it also u::h (.) and most
17 of them use computers now, and most of them use the internet in a very active
18 way.

Stanza 2a

19 You **see**, even they [the students] **listen** to some u::h Western songs in English.
20 Sports (…) if you ask them [the students] about their famous players and what
21 are their famous clubs (.) they know that in **English**. So English is **very**
22 important (.) to **all** students now.

Like his American colleagues, Mr. Hassan explained that English is a "global language" (ln. 1), and like Mr. Williams he offers concrete examples of how a lack of English skills will handicap students as they go about their lives. He offers the concrete example of students who drop out of school to enter the police, only to realize that they should have learned English. Mr. Hassan reiterated the importance of English in a later interview, when I asked him "Do the students need English in their lives?" relaying a story where his students returned to him with regret:

01 Mr. Hassan: I know a lot of students who **finished** [high] school (.) with lower
02 marks, but they **finished**. After school they came back to me (.) and said,
03 "We were **sorry** that we didn't learn English. You [Mr. Hassan] were a good
04 **teacher** you (.) supported us a lot but we were **ignorant**. We can't make use
05 of (.) **you**. Now we are joining institutes to learn English again." Because they
06 need English in **every** field of life now.

In voicing his students' regret, Mr. Hassan also emphasizes the role of the "good" (ln. 3) teacher as someone the students "make use of" (ln. 4-5), and as a figure who supports his students.

Despite noting its importance as an instrumental value—or in Bourdieu's (1991) terms, despite Mr. Hassan's recognition of the *linguistic capital*[56] embodied in English, when I asked him "What is the role of Arabic in your students' lives?" he assigns a different yet no less important role to Arabic:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 You **know** I see English as a (.) means of **communication**, but Arabic also is
02 very important for us. We shouldn't forget about (…) this is our first
03 **language**. It's our (.) **tongue**—mother tongue. So it's very important for us to
04 (.) to take **care** of our—I don't like English to be more important than **Arabic**.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

05 Arabic is more important (.) than English […]. You **know** Arabic is—first
06 of all for Arab **people** (.) Arabic is very important because it's the language of
07 the Holy Qur'an. So this is uh one point and (.) a very important one. It is the
08 language of our **families** (.) our families cannot speak English, so we should—
09 our people we should talk (.) to them in Arabic. So (.) Arabic is **also** important
10 in **communica::tion**. It is the language of **Islam**, u::h (.) the Holy Qur'an, so.

Stanza 2a

11 U::h (…) and if you have look on other **people's** (.) views towards their
12 language they appreciate their language **a lot.** We should be proud of our—
13 Arabic language. You see. And it's very important (.) to memori::ze poems, to
14 memorize the Holy Qur'a::n, to (.) try to write essa::ys in—to use **Arabic** (.) in
15 every—in **all** fields. I see English as a means of earning **money** (…) u::h a
16 means of **communication** in some situations, but English is not **all** our life.

[56] Bourdieu (1991) defined linguistic capital as a form of cultural capital, one that involves the mastery of a certain language or language skills. One attains power if his or her linguistic capital (i.e. the language or dialect one speaks) is valued (or seen as legitimate) on the linguistic market (representing the rules for valuation existing in a given field such as a classroom or school).

Although Mr. Hassan assigns different roles to English and Arabic (i.e. English is an economic value, Arabic is a cultural marker), he ideologically assigns greater value to Arabic than English. This assignment of conflicting values to languages is not unique to the UAE. Noting the position of the English language in Japan, Tan and Rubdy (2008) suggest that although the Japanese government promotes English in schools, the English language has not been embraced by the Japanese people: "Despite the rhetoric of a globalized world, it is interesting to note that English is kept at arm's length in Japan" (p. 2). Tan and Rubdy (2008) argue that this phenomenon represents a "challenge to globalization," one where "English as the global language is accepted in Japan, but not before taming it" (p. 2). Thus, despite Mr. Hassan's description of the English language as important to his students' futures, he rejects the idea that this makes English "more important than **Arabic**" (ln. 4). His rejection is based upon the fact that Arabic is used for both "**communication**" (ln. 1; ln. 10; ln. 16), and for memorizing the "Holy Qur'an" (ln. 7; ln. 10; ln. 14). That he repeats both of these reasons three times throughout his response makes them salient to his ascription of value to Arabic.

When I asked Mr. Abel "Why is the government promoting English?" he also focused on the instrumental value of English:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Abel: Because English is **really** important for Najah students. You know
02 because they **need** it for their careers because if they don't speak English they
03 won't have a **job**. It is as easy as that.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

04 That's why it's really **hard** (.) for them [students at Najah].

Mr. Abel also ascribes economic value to English, but he does so through the lens of the teacher as familial role model. He focusses on the needs of students, explaining that their situation is "really **hard**" (ln. 4).

I wanted him to elaborate on the need for English, so I asked Mr. Abel, "What about those students who will go into the military? Will they need English?" In his response, Mr. Abel echoes Mr. Hassan in voicing his students' regret for not learning English:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Abel: **Even** for the military. They won't be accepted (.) only if they (.)
02 speak English. If they don't speak English they won't be accepted [to the
03 military].

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

04 **So:**: many of them [the students he's taught in Abu Dhabi] most of the time
05 come to express regret. And they express regret that they haven't done well
06 when they were in school. And they just wanted some **help**. After some time,
07 especially when they [the students] graduate, and they are applying for a job (.)
08 they may come [to Mr. Abel] for help if they need something for their

09 **reports**—for a recommendation letter, or they just come in [come back to Mr.
10 Abel] just to say **thank you**. Just to say, "We [his former students] regret that
11 we haven't done our best. We were **fools**."

Like Mr. Hassan, Mr. Abel empathetically voices his students' regret, focusing on the teachers' role in supporting his students. He reiterates the motif of the teacher taking care of students' needs, explaining that the regretful students, "just wanted some **help**" (ln. 6). That Mr. Abel frames this explanation with his students expressing regret that "they haven't done well" (ln. 5) and that they haven't done their "best" (ln. 11) links the students' need for "**help**" (ln. 6) with their achievement in school. Like Mr. Hassan, Mr. Abel is implying that the teacher has also failed his students by failing to properly "help" them.

Mr. Adel responded to the question "What is the role of English your students' lives?" in a similar way, emphasizing its importance for his students' future success:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Abel: English is **very** important in their [the students'] lives.

Stanza 1a

02 If they want to go to the university, or to get a good job they need English.

Stanza 1b

03 Many students will need English in **so::** many areas of their lives, but they
04 don't realize it.

As did his American and Arab colleagues, Mr. Abel ideologically described English as the commodity (Tan & Rubdy, 2008; Wee, 2008) students need in order to be successful in the global marketplace. However, when I asked him, "What is the role of Arabic in your students' lives?" Mr. Abel joined Mr. Hassan in challenging the value of English, asserting Arabic as being more important than English in his students' lives:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Abel: Arabic is the language they [the students] communicate to each
02 other with. Of course it is their language. We should not forget this (.) it is the
03 language they **know** and **love**. Arabic is **more** important than English **in** the
04 students' lives. It is their **mother tongue**. If they do not know **Arabic** it is a
05 pro::blem. It is their native language.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

06 But (.) for the future (.) the students feel that it is not important that's why
07 they are not working **hard**.

Thomas: The students feel that Arabic is not important?

08 Mr. Abel: Yes. Their [the students'] **Arabic**. Because they [feel they] won't
09 need it. And that's **why**—that means if you compare the **results** of their
10 fluency of u::h (.) English and **Arabic** (.) you will see that in Arabic they are
11 not improving.

Stanza 2a

12 They [the students] thought, "Why should I study Arabic—to learn Arabic?"
13 They won't (.) **need** it. And that's why […] the [students'] results [on the
14 standardized tests] are really **awful**.

Thomas: What you do think about that?

Stanza 2b

15 Mr. Abel: **I think** that we need get them [the students] more interested in
16 Arabic. And that's—also the ways of teaching Arabic—the **approaches** (.) are
17 different from teaching English. That's why they think it's boring and they are
18 not interested.

For Mr. Abel Arabic is also a cultural marker (Wee, 2008), and because of this it has more value than English. Mr. Abel laments that the students feel they don't need Arabic anymore, an idea he ideologically rejects. A salient theme throughout Mr. Abel's response is the importance of taking care of students' needs. This includes finding ways to get students "more interested in Arabic" (ln. 15-16). Thus Mr. Abel also argues that the teaching approaches in Arabic classes are "boring" (ln. 17) for students.

I then asked Mr. Abel to describe the usefulness of Arabic:

Thomas: So, what will the students need Arabic for?

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Abel: They'll need it for their life—that means it's a **life skill.**
02 Any book they are going to read (.) any documentary they are going to
03 watch—it's in **Arabic** (.) it's not in English. It is literary Arabic which is **not**
04 (.) the Emirati language. It's [the Emirati language is] different from literary
05 Arabic. Someone who speaks **Emirati**—the Arabic **dialect**—can't understand
06 literary Arabic.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

08 And of course (.) they can't understand the Qur'an if they don't understand
09 literary Arabic.

For both Mr. Hassan and Mr. Abel Arabic is a mother tongue—that is, it is part of their identities as Arab people. It is also connected to the importance of Islam and the Qur'an in the students' lives. Although this language loyalty (Hidalgo, 1986) is ideologically part of their identity as Arabs and Muslims, it is also mediated by the schema of the teacher as familial role mode, as the teachers' role is to cater to the needs of his vulnerable students. The students need English for their economic wellbeing, but they also need Arabic for their spiritual and cultural wellbeing.

When I asked Mr. Bartlett, "Why is the government promoting English?" he responded by telling me what he has told his students—that English is a global language:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Bartlett: Because (.) u::m (…) in one of the things I've said [to his
02 students] like (.) "There are more English speakers in the world than anything
03 else, so you'll [his students] be able to—able to (.) converse with people," or
04 whatever you know. Because some of them [the students] just **would not** be
05 able to right now, you know.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

06 If you dropped some of them [his students] in (.) central Europe now you—**yes**
07 the people of central **Europe** would be able to speak English to them but they
08 wouldn't be able to speak English **back**. They'd be—they'd be screwed
09 /laughs/.

Stanza 2a

10 Whereas I—if **I** was dropped somewhere in the world, there'd probably be
11 someone who'd be able to speak English to me, you know. You know, which

12 is **lucky** for me, not because of the fact that I know a lot of languages (.) it's
13 just there always seems to be somebody somewhere who has (.) **English** (…)

Stanza 2b

14 but in another way, it's [the ADEC curriculum is] **no** way of learning English
15 for students that have—if you have students with better **English** they could
16 probably (.) learn a lot from doing a project like that [the ECART project
17 within the ADEC curriculum]. Uh (.) but when you have [students with] the
18 level of English **we** have, uh you're only **spoon-feeding** them. It goes over
19 their head. They're not learning very much.

Like all of his colleagues at Najah's English department, Mr. Bartlett ideologically constructs English as the world's *lingua franca*. Mr. Bartlett's speech to his students also seems to echo one of Mr. Drake's discourses, where has told his students that they will need English, giving them a hypothetical example. However, unlike Mr. Drake, who told his students that they will need English for their *businesses*, Mr. Bartlett tells his students that they will need English to "converse with people" (ln. 3). This difference is subtle yet important as it shows more concern for the *immediate needs* of students, who Mr. Bartlett argues would be "screwed" (ln. 8) in this hypothetical situation, than it does to convince them that they need English in order to have successful economic *futures*.

Mr. Bartlett's critique of the curriculum, which I have shown he has voiced more than once due to its inability to meet the needs of his students, also echoes Mr. Abel's concern that it consists of tasks which represent more than the students, with their limited

English abilities, can handle. I next asked Mr. Bartlett the question, "Why **is** ADEC asking teachers to teach English through a curriculum like ECART [which asks the teacher to focus on the theme of the "Proud to be an Emirati"]?" In his response Mr. Bartlett ideologically links the teaching of English in Abu Dhabi with his experiences as an Irishman:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Bartlett: I think it's [teaching English through ECART] because ehe::m
02 (…) it's because within ADEC there's probably these Emirati guys as well—
03 still, and they'd be **afraid** that these guys [the Emirati students] would learn
04 English (.) and **not** (.) through an Emirati (.) cultural perspective,

Stanza 1a

05 like **that's** what I get the impression of what "Proud to be an Emirati" is
06 anyway. It's um (.) it's uh (.) dealing with—trying to—trying to make children
07 (.) uh (.) able to speak or **write** or **talk** about (.) Emirati culture through
08 English. Why is there one on "Healthy Eating"? Well because an Emirati
09 problem right now is (.) **obesity**, and all that, so (.) it's a—it's an issue. Uh
10 what other one's are there? There's one [ECART theme] about **green** like uh
11 recycling and all that sort of thing. That's an Emirati issue—they're [the
12 Emiratis] the worst greenhouse rates or whatever in the world (.)

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

13 so I think all—I'm not sure—I'm not familiar with all the ECART topics, but I
14 get the impression that somebody [who created the curriculum] said, "Okay,
15 these are the things that are important to the Emiratis, so when they're learning
16 English they will do it (.) uh (.) and be able to talk about these things" (.) yeah,
17 so that you're not—and it means that you're not teaching them about like, (.)
18 oh u::m I don't know like things that happened in **England** and **America** and
19 **Australia** and all (.) uh, that they're not kind of (…) losing their own culture

*Stanza 2*a

and becoming—you see the thing about it is like in Ireland as well at the minute (.) u::m (…) with—with—with—with Sky **News** and with (.)—the **BBC** is very available in Ireland and Sky News and the **Sun** Newspaper and all (.) **people**—conservative people—and they're probably right, would say that Irish kids, sometimes don't know—sometimes think they're **English**—up to a certain age. They think like—they talk—they hear about the **Queen** on the news or they see stuff in the papers and think that's **their** Queen, or they think that uh (.) they think that u::m (…) Ireland was in World War Two. Because you know you might have these remembrance things on the front of the **paper**. But the English newspapers in Ireland **won't** bother to **change** the front page (.) u::h (…)

Stanza 2b

and like if we start teaching **them** [the Emirati students] stuff that we would teach to kids in England and America and wherever (.) like their [ADEC's] **fear** is probably like these guys [the students] might get mixed up in their culture and (.) lose—lose some of their identity or whatever. And like it is—it is valid in one way.

Mr. Bartlett posits that ADEC's ideology of valuing the "standard" (Silverstein, 1987; Valdes et. al, 2003) varieties of English over non-standard ones, an ideology which is ironically the source of his current employment, might also lead to the valuing of other cultural products linked with the English language. He maps his experiences growing up in Ireland, where the danger is that kids "sometimes think they're **English**" (ln. 24), onto what he perceives as the cultural dilemma ADEC currently faces given the influx of so many western teachers. Thus Mr. Bartlett's unbounded (Nespor, 1987) beliefs about the importance of maintaining cultural identity as well as the schema of the teacher as

familial role model reciprocally impact his ideologies surrounding the English language. Mr. Bartlett's answer to a follow-up question "What are some potential threats to the completion of the reform program?" exemplifies these relationships:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Bartlett: E::hem (.) one of the potential threats is probably like the—the
02 Emiratis or people of the country like would just (.) uh (.) gro::w (.) impatient,
03 or frustrated (.) by (.) u::h (.) the LTs being here and (.) not accept them [the
04 western teachers] anymore, you know.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

05 Like, you know. I don't know how high the level of acceptance is anyway, you
06 know. Like (.) sometimes I think the students (.) are uncooperative (…) not
07 **bluntly** uncooperative but just maybe (.) e::h a little bit less cooperative than I
08 think they would be with a—with an Islamic teacher.

Stanza 2a

09 And I think that's due to the fact that (.) your [the teacher is] a Westerner. Or
10 just maybe do to the fact that you're trying to teach them English maybe. Or
11 just maybe the fact that you're trying to teach them English and maybe they're
12 not (.) **that** (.) eh (.) **bothered** about it or whatever.

Mr. Bartlett's discourse differs from Mr. William's response to the same question in important ways. For Mr. Williams, the threats to the reform program revolved around the culture of dependency he perceived in the UAE. He argued that the government of the UAE gave "their citizens everything they can possibly **want**" (ln. 15), and that this led to his students' lack of incentive to do their work. Conversely, Mr. Bartlett worries that the Emiratis will grow tired of the Westerners and send them home. He views his

students' reluctance to work as a manifestation of their reaction to having Western teachers, and believes they would be more cooperative with an "Islamic teacher" (ln. 8). For Mr. Bartlett, the motif that teaching involves meeting the needs of students mediates his previously stated beliefs about the important links between language and cultural identity.

Mr. Bartlett also underscores the needs and feelings of his students when he considers the impact of the English language in his students' lives, describing it as a "hindrance" when I asked him the question "What is the role of English in your students' lives?"

Stanza 1: ABTRACT

01 Mr. Bartlett: U::m (.) **right** now the role of English is probably **limited** in their
02 [the students'] lives, like it's u::m (.) it's actually probably a **hindrance** (.) for
03 about 60% of them I'd say.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

04 E::m (…) although actually thinking about that again (.) they [the students] go
05 and watch **movies** in English. U::m (…) a lot of things they're interested in are
06 probably in English.

Stanza 2a

07 And **then**—then they probably do feel like they'd like to know more, but uh (.)
08 sometimes when—when they're forced to sit in the classroom and learn it,
09 u::m it probably—it probably is a hindrance.

Mr. Bartlett frames this discourse with the word "hindrance" (ln. 2; ln. 9), emphasizing it in the first instance with a louder voice. His response echoes the same empathetic stance towards his students that Mr. Hassan and Mr. Abel expressed, where he puts himself in the shoes of his students who are "forced to sit in the classroom" (ln. 8) and learn English. Likewise, when I asked him, "What is the role of Arabic in your students' lives?" Mr. Bartlett describes Arabic as having more importance for his students than English, utilizing the metaphor of a "thorn in their side" to describe the English language.

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Bartlett: I'd say the role of **Arabic** in their [the students] lives is uh (.)
02 huge.

Stanza 1a

03 It's like—it's probably like what English would be in **our** lives at home [in our
04 home countries]. You know, **now** Arabic has a bit of a role [for us] because
05 we're seeing it—we're **hearing** it, but u::m (.) they're [the students] **they're**
06 probably—it's—it's—the role of **Arabic** in our [the teachers'] lives now is
07 probably bigger than the role of English in theirs [the students].

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

08 There's—there's a kind of an **incentive** for us to try—to pick up a bit of it
09 [Arabic], you know and try to become familiar with it, but sometimes I wonder
10 if there's **any** incentive [to learn English] for them [the students]—uh, for the
11 ones that haven't picked up on the (.) fact that it [English] might open some
12 doors for them it's a—I think it's [English] a (…) almost a thorn in their **side**,

13 you know to be learning it. And no amount of, Sheikh Zayed wants you to
14 learn this /laughs/ is gonna convince them [the students] otherwise /laughs/.

Like his Arab colleagues, when it comes to his students, Mr. Bartlett ascribes more importance to the Arabic language than the English language. However, he does this without sharing the Arab teachers' sense of language loyalty (Hidalgo, 1986)—that is, Mr. Bartlett is of course neither an Arab nor a Muslim. As I have shown, Mr. Bartlett shares the schema of the teacher as familial role model with his Arab colleagues and along with it motifs surrounding the importance of building close relationships with students and catering to their needs. This schema, along with Mr. Bartlett's ideologies surrounding language and cultural identity, ideologies shaped by his experiences as an Irishman, impact his perceptions concerning the value of the Arabic language in the context of the UAE.

Writing about the impact of globalization on ideologies of language, Tupas (2008) explains that, "Linguistic instrumentalism is a later addition to a previously existing view that treats language as a marker of cultural identity and authenticity, resulting in a tension that is not yet reconciled" (p. 91). Indeed, the discourses of the Arab teachers and the Irish teacher at Najah concerning the English and Arabic languages are a testament to this fact. Mr. Hassan, Mr. Abel and Mr. Bartlett assigned similar roles to English and Arabic as their American colleagues. English has instrumental value and can open doors for students to universities and jobs. For the Arab teachers, Arabic represented a link to both

Arab culture and Islam, or in Hidalgo's (1986) terms, a symbol of "group loyalty" (p. 196). For Mr. Bartlett, Arabic is the language of comfort for his students and thus was more important in their lives than English. A striking empathy towards their students' struggles with learning, consistent with the schema of the teacher as familial role model, was salient throughout these teachers' discourses about language.

CHAPTER SIX

THE NEW SCHOOL MODEL CURRICULUM

So far, I have discussed how the L2 English teachers at the Najah Boy's High School constructed the role of the teacher through their narratives about themselves, their teaching practices and their students. The American English teachers described the teacher metaphorically as an *enthusiastic motivational speaker*, where the teachers' role is to motivate students to work hard towards the goals of self-reliance and future economic success. However, the Arab teachers and the Irish teacher constructed the teacher as a *familial role model*. Through this construction the teachers' role includes motivating students to love themselves, the subject and the teacher, goals which are manifested through building close relationships with students and taking care of their immediate, emotional needs. I have also showed how these constructions mediate and are mediated by the unresolved tension between two ideological discourses concerning the purpose and value of English and Arabic in the world. All of the teachers assigned to English the role of instrumental (Wee, 2008; Tan and Rubdy, 2008) or economic value. Likewise, they assigned Arabic value as a cultural marker (Wee, 2008; Tan and Rubdy, 2008) lacking economic value.

In this chapter, I examine the ideological narratives in ADEC's New School Model Curriculum. These ideologies are shaped by an economic vision where Emirati students emerge from college ready to compete in the global economy while at the same

time maintaining a strong sense of cultural identity. The New School Model Curriculum describes these goals as separate but equal, and like the English teachers at Najah it views English as representative of the former goal and Arabic of the latter.

The New School Model Curriculum Narratives

In educational reform programs, the formal written curriculum, one approved and delivered to schools by the state, represents the vision of the state for the education of its citizens, a vision which includes the roles that schools and school participants will play in the implementation of educational reform (Palfreyman, 2005).Palfreyman (2005) uses the word "curriculum" to refer to "not only the planned content of the school's teaching activities but also its implementation" (p. 216). I utilize the term "official curriculum" to represent the documents and public statements outlining the mandates of the state concerning the nature and activity of education in public schools. The *New School Model Curriculum* consists of numerous documents including ADEC's Educational Policy Agenda (EPA), Strategic Plan for P-12 Education: 2009-2018 (SPE), New School Model Policy Handbook (NSMP), School Leadership Handbook (SLH), English Continuous Assessment Rich Task (ECART), and the Academic English Language Handbook (AEL). In addition to these sources are numerous interviews and statements made by His Excellency, Dr. Mugheer Al Khali, the director and head of all ADEC's operations, by His Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahayan, the President of Abu Dhabi and

Ruler of the UAE, and through ADEC's numerous media press releases, concerning the purpose and aims of the New School Model Program.

As previously discussed, Shkedi (2009) categorizes the curriculum through three narratives: "the curriculum frame narrative," "the curriculum task narrative" and "the curriculum meta-narrative" (p. 835). The frame narrative represents the syllabus, contents, and goals, where the task narrative lists the activities of teachers and students. Finally, the meta-narrative represents "the perceptions, theories and ideologies of the [curriculum] writers" (Shkedi, 2009, p. 835). Thus the curriculum contains both explicit and implicit ideologies about the value of language and the purpose of education. Explicit curricular ideologies in the form of mission statements, directives and tasks embody the *curriculum frame* and *task narratives* (Shkedi, 2009), and implicit ideologies represent *curriculum meta-narratives* (Shkedi, 2009).In this section, I will discuss the curriculum frame narratives and the curriculum task narratives of ADEC's New School Model Curriculum, while simultaneously exploring their meta-narrative discourses, discourses representing implicit ideologies of language and education.

6.1 Frame Narratives in the New School Model Curriculum

The frame narratives of the New School Model Curriculum revolve around ADEC's economic vision for the future of the UAE. ADEC aspires to create innovative, knowledgeable citizens who can compete in the global economy while at the same time

maintaining their culture and traditions. ADEC's (2010) "Educational Policy Agenda" outlines the mission and vision of the council for the future of education in Abu Dhabi:

> [To] equip all students with the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes necessary to embark on further education, enter the workforce, and become lifelong learners; and prepare students to contribute to and be competitive in the global society while preserving national identity, local culture, and tradition. (p. 4)

The mission statement of the EPA presupposes an ideology—or a *curriculum meta-narrative* (Shkedi, 2009)—of dualism, encapsulating an optimistic vision of the future where the *modern* and the *traditional* are understood as opposites with differing, yet equal values. Students will be inculcated with the skills and attitudes—or *habitus* (ala Bourdieu, 1977)—to compete in the global marketplace. At the same time they will be able to preserve "national identity, local culture, and tradition" (p. 4). Although constructed as equally important[57], the two goals are understood as separate and not complimentary.

Moreover, the New School Model Curriculum ascribes the English language as the vehicle for Abu Dhabi's economic aspirations. As an example, ADEC's (2009) "Strategic Plan for P-12 Education: 2009-2018," shown here in Figure 6.1, outlines the merging of economic outcomes and educational goals:

[57] The New School Model Policy Handbook describes the aim of the New School Model Curriculum as one where students receive instruction that is "50% in Arabic and 50% in English" (p. 38), starting in kindergarten.

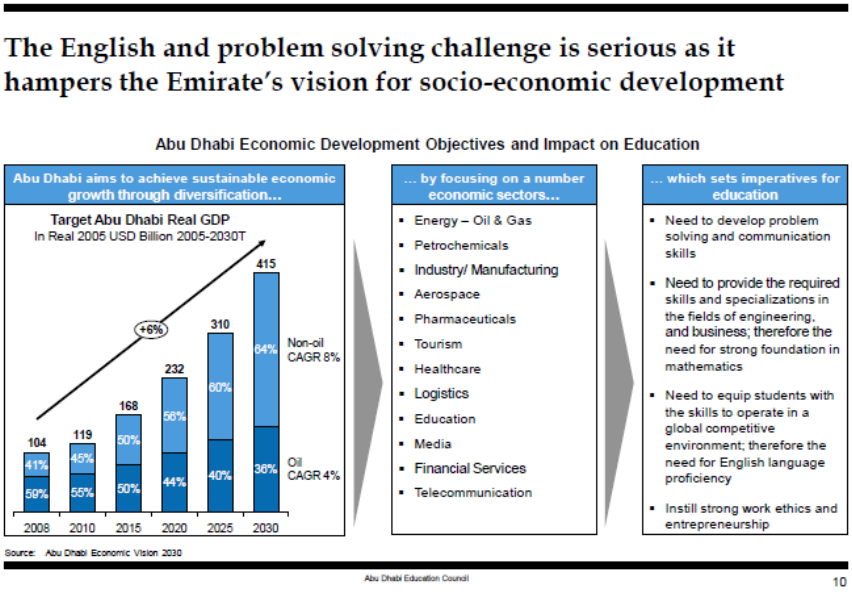

Figure 6.1: ADEC's Strategic Plan for P-12 Education: 2009-2018

Under the New School Model, which has been nicknamed "The 2030 Plan," English is ideologically constructed as the instrumental skill (Wee, 2008) needed for success in the global marketplace. Through this meta-narrative, education, language and economy merge into an organized plan for success. Arabic, being left out of this equation, is designated the role of cultural marker, a demarcation clearly delineated in ADEC's press release concerning the training of Arabic-speaking teachers in primary schools: "The training session comes in line with ADEC's New School Model (NSM)

vision to support pedagogical methods and maintain national identity through the support of learning Arabic" (ADEC, 2012).

As previously discussed, Heller (2003) has suggested that the designation of a language as *instrumental* leads to a process of commodification, where language becomes a "skill set" (p. 475) which can be measured and assessed through the medium of standardization. The same phenomenon has occurred in Abu Dhabi, where the New School Model Curriculum calls for all core subjects from Kindergarten to the 12th grade, including Science, Math, and English, to be taught by primarily native-English-speaking teachers (ADEC, 2010). Thus, native-English-speaking teachers from western countries have been brought in to replace the bilingual native-Arabic-speaking teachers who formerly taught these subjects. The EPA also stipulates that those native-Arabic-speaking teachers who are proficient in Standard English are permitted to teach these subjects, provided they score a 6.5 or above on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) standardized English test. Social Studies, Arabic Language, and Religious Studies, however, will continue to be taught by native-Arabic-Speaking teachers (ADEC, 2010).

With its assignment of instrumental purpose to specific languages and its explicit focus on standardization, the frame narratives in ADEC's New School Model Curriculum construct conflicting meta-narratives surrounding the value of English and Arabic as well

as what it means to be a bilingual citizen. As an example, the "New School Model Curriculum Policy Handbook" explicitly states that, "All students will be taught in both Arabic and English" (p. 38), and that, "The goal is for instruction to be provided50% in Arabic and 50% in English by the end of KG2 [Kindergarten]" (p. 38) implying equal status to both languages. However, in the next paragraph it specifies that, "English-speaking licensed teachers will provide instruction in English Language, Math, and Science" (p. 38), the specific subjects that ADEC has deemed necessary for economic competition in the global marketplace. The subjects to be taught in Arabic—"Arabic Language, Islamic Studies, and Social Studies" (NSMP, 2010, p. 38)—are more in line with the specific purpose of cultural marker.

Further, the separation of Arabic and English with specific purposes and the push for standardization for English teachers presupposes the ideal of a particular type of bilingual person. Despite being themselves bilingual, the native Arabic-speaking English teachers do not represent the ideal. Hence, ADEC is replacing them with Standard-English-speaking teachers, implying the superiority of the standard over the second-language variety. As discussed earlier, Valdes et. al. (2003) describe the same ideology in university Spanish foreign language departments in America, where they found a "discourse of monolingualism" being reproduced through teacher and student talk about language usage (p. 14). They argue that this discourse leads to the unrealistic ideal of

"two monolinguals in one person" (Valdes et. al., 2003, p. 18)—that is, a bilingual person who speaks the standard variety of both languages.

6.2 Task Narratives in the New School Model Curriculum

Like the frame narratives, the task narratives in the New School Model Curriculum construct an orderly progression where students in Kindergarten to the fifth-grade become proficient in English, develop this proficiency in grades six through nine, and then begin to analyze and academically evaluate the world around them through English in grades ten through twelve. ADEC's (2008) Academic English Language Handbook outlines this progression:

> In Grades K–5, students learn to read, write, talk and listen in English. They gain a sound grasp of language structures, punctuation, spelling and grammar. They learn about how language varies according to context, and how to communicate with a range of audiences for different purposes. They learn to read in English for information and pleasure.
>
> In Grades 6–9, students extend their ability to talk, listen, read and write, using English in real-life contexts that interest them and are appropriate for their age and stage of development. They revisit previously learnt language skills to reinforce and extend their mastery of these skills. They engage with and explore a wide range of texts, including literature of past and contemporary societies.
>
> In the 10–12 Academic English Language Curriculum, students cultivate a sound knowledge of the structures and functions of the English language and develop sophisticated English communication skills. They respond to and compose texts critically and imaginatively. They develop the ability to

> perceive, understand and evaluate their world from a variety of perspectives. These skills enable students to participate in tertiary training before moving into professional work and the various roles and responsibilities of adult life. (p. 13)

The AEL stipulates that by the time the students reach the tenth grade they will have the English skills to critically respond to a variety of English texts and be able to critically evaluate the world around them through English. By making reference to the "sophisticated English communication skills" (p. 13) in this section, the AEL continues ADEC's (2009) meta-narrative merging education, language and Abu Dhabi's economic aspirations, specifically the "need to develop problem solving and communication skills" (Figure 6.1). This level of sophistication is implied in the title "Academic English Language," a title differentiating the curriculum from the *Applied* English language curriculum the students will experience from Kindergarten to the ninth grade. The AEL makes this distinction clear:

> Academic English Language is different from the Applied English Language course in that it focuses more on higher-order thinking skills and a broader range of texts. This learning challenges students, and stimulates imaginative and critical thinking.
>
> As a result of studying Academic English Language, students will become skillful and versatile users of English, and will be ready to participate in those areas of tertiary education and professional and public life requiring advanced English skills and knowledge. (ADEC, 2008, p. 5)

Several ideological meta-narratives emerge from the initial goals specified in the New School Model task narratives. First, the task narratives imply a neat and orderly progression of second-language learning where students enter the school system speaking Arabic and emerge twelve years later with both Arabic and English. Like the ideologies upholding the "monoglot standard" (Haviland 2003; Silverstein, 1985), the AEL describes English language learning as an activity that is detached "from the social circumstances of its acquisition and deployment" (Haviland, 2003, p. 766). English is constructed as a simple "'tool' of propositional transmission" (Haviland, 2003, p. 766), one which, it is assumed, will be embraced and learned in a gradual and steady manner by the student population. Secondly, the task narratives of the AEL echo the taken-for-granted ideology that English is the instrumental skill (Wee, 2008)—the commodity (Heller, 2003)—needed for professional jobs. Thirdly, the AEL presupposes that English is the language of "higher-order thinking skills" (ADEC, 2008, p. 5), skills which are also viewed as commodities in the global marketplace.

For grades ten through twelve, the New School Model Curriculum leaves considerable license to the teacher to develop his own tasks. However, this license is constrained by a specific set of rubrics and goals called the English Continuous Assessment Rich Task or ECART. The ECART comprises 60% of the students' class grade. Within the ECART are two Integrated Stand Tasks (ISTs), each worth 20%,

making up the remaining 40% of the students' total class mark. The ECART delineates three specific aims for student achievement: "to communicate in English effectively", "to compose and respond to a range of texts in a range of media", and to "value and enjoy English as a language in which to express ideas and feelings" (ADEC, 2010, p. 2). These aims are "supported and developed" (ADEC, 2010, p. 2) through the students' engagement in "deep inquiry of topics/themes/ideas" (ADEC, 2010, p. 2) and "applying higher-order thinking skills" (ADEC, 2010, p. 2) which are meant to "incorporate essential skills for students' 21st century futures" (ADEC, 2010, p. 2). In addition to these aims is a final specification that the ECART must relate to the students' heritage and culture. This caveat (as seen in Figure 6.2) is printed in the largest type and is the most prominent image on the "Aims" page:



Figure 6.2: Links to Culture and Heritage from ADEC's (2010) ECART

That the ECART tasks must be made to support Emirati culture and heritage meets the second requirement in the curriculum frame narratives: "preserving national

identity, local culture, and tradition" (ADEC, 2010, p. 4). However, it also creates an interesting contradiction. Students will now learn about their culture and heritage through a language foreign to that culture and heritage. Further, that the majority of English teachers will now be expatriates from western countries means that students will be taught about their culture and heritage from teachers who are themselves strangers to Emirati culture. This peculiar situation arises through what I have already shown are taken for granted ideologies in the curriculum that view the English language as a "transparent vehicle" (Haviland, 2003, p. 766) for conveying information. As I have discussed earlier, Heller (2003) and others (Wee, 2008; Tan and Rubdy, 2008) have documented the commodification of the English language in the "globalized new economy" (Heller, 2003, p. 473). Conducting research in Canadian call centers, Heller (2003) illustrates what she calls a "shift from understanding language as being primarily a marker of ethno-national identity to understanding language as being a marketable commodity on its own, distinct from identity" (p. 474). Through this shift, cultural identity is also commodified, and is measurable through "authenticity"—that is, in the ways cultural identity can be "constructed as linked to a timeless past" (Heller, 2003, p. 473). In the case of New School Model, the onus is on the teachers who must create tasks which make authentic links to the "Emirati world."

In the New School Model Curriculum the teacher is responsible to provide evidence to ADEC that he or she has assigned tasks which meet each of the criteria specified it the ECART rubrics. The ECART delineates six rich task "components" (ADEC, 2010, p. 11) which the student must accomplish throughout the course of a trimester: context, research, strategies, reflection and review, organization and ICT integration. At Najah, Franklin Incorporated, the educational provider company assigned to the school, has created the specific tasks for each of these components, working it all into a small, tidy booklet that is handed out to the students at the beginning of each trimester. Figure 6.3 is an example of a "Process Rubric" from one of these ECART booklets for the tenth grade:

Marks awarded:	4 *All*	3 *Most*	2 *Some*	1 *Few*
CONTEXT Narrative reading with completed questions & exercises Thinking on many levels *(highlighting to show which activities were completed)* Video brainstorm – Healthy Choices Research questions				
RESEARCH Visual research Interview research Website research Any other research / sources used				
STRATEGIES Vocabulary sketches Thinking about my learning #2 *(making connections)* Thinking about my learning #3 *(peer discussion)* Reading Log				
REFLECTION AND REVIEW Thinking about my learning #1 *(K/W/L chart)* Thinking about my learning #2 *(making connections)* Thinking about my learning #3 *(peer & teacher discussion)* Self-evaluation				
ORGANISATION Brochure planner Completed checklist Well organized, complete booklet Completed on time				
ICT INTEGRATION				

Figure 6.3: Process Rubric from ECART Booklet

The ECART "Process" section of the rubric comprises 30% of the total ECART grade. For full marks, the student is expected to complete each of the worksheets designated under the first five categories. The final category, "ICT Integration," is left to the teacher's discretion and is usually based upon specific tasks done on the computer such as conducting research. In the "Process" section, students are expected to brainstorm on the specific theme, write research questions, learn new theme-based vocabulary, conduct research, and reflect on what they have learned. Students are expected to complete each of these tasks in English.

Each of the three trimesters the ECART themes change, representing specific links to Emirati culture or social issues facing the UAE. For all grades, teachers are given one "free" theme in the second trimester, where they are permitted to choose the theme on their own. However, the first and third trimesters are chosen for the teacher. For tenth grade, the first and third trimester themes are "The Cultural Family" and "The World around Us," for eleventh grade, "A Healthy Society" and "Citizenship and Civic Responsibility," and the twelfth graders focus on the themes of "Ancient World Modern World" and "Exploration and Discovery" (ADEC, 2010). After completing the "Process" section of the ECART, students will then start an end-of-the–term project showing what they have learned. The students can choose from a variety of formats for their projects, including a brochure, a poster, a movie, a Power Point presentation and many others. The

students are also expected to present their projects to the class in English. A separate rubric is used to mark this "Product" section, which comprises the remaining 30% of the student's ECART mark. Figure 6.4 is an example of a "Product Rubric" created by Franklin Incorporated:

4	3	2	1
• Product shows deep knowledge and understanding • Product clearly relates to significant issue • Product is original and authentic	• Product shows knowledge and understanding • Product relates to significant issue • Product is authentic	• Product shows some knowledge and understanding • Product loosely relates to issue • Product is mostly authentic	• Product relates to the general topic • Product lacks authenticity
• Product clearly addresses the focus statement	• Product addresses most aspects of the focus statement	• Product addresses some aspects of the focus statement	• Makes a statement
• Appropriate vocabulary from the theme is used in the product • Vocabulary is accurate and sophisticated	• Appropriate vocabulary from the theme is used in the product • Vocabulary is accurate and may be sophisticated	• Vocabulary from the theme is used in the product • Vocabulary may not be appropriate	• General vocabulary is used in the product • Vocabulary may not be appropriate

Figure 6.4: Product Rubric from ECART Booklet

In addition to the ECART tasks are two "Integrated Stand Tasks" or ISTs, which are meant to support the ECART process by serving as preparatory tests and assignments which both introduce the ECART topic and familiarize the students with a wide variety of texts in English. The ISTs comprise the remaining 40% of the students' marks. These specific tasks can be chosen by the teacher, but must consist of one of twelve categories: "Compare and contrast," "Creative writing," "Reading and /or listening for meaning," "Analyze language and structure," "Writing for purpose," "Editing," "Telling stories," "Adapt spoken language," "A narrative study," "Persuasive speaking ," "Synthesis – write and graphically represent", or an "Electronic task" (ADEC, 2010, pp. 54-58). These tasks must also be completed in English.

The ECART and IST task narratives neatly complete the merging of economy (through developing communication and critical thinking skills), language (being conducted in English), and education (with its specific rubrics and student tasks) that we have already seen in the frame narratives of the New School Model Curriculum. These tasks also echo the ideology where the English language is detached from identity and culture. English is understood as a simple medium of inquiry and communication, one which, it is assumed, students will be able to adeptly yield by the time they reach the tenth grade. The metanarratives in these tasks also presuppose that teachers from western countries, many of them having been in the UAE for only a few months prior to starting

work, will be able to adequately guide their students as they inquire about Emirati culture and heritage, as well as social issues facing the UAE.

The specific focus on "Academic English Language" in the ECART tasks presents many challenges for English teachers at Najah. Perhaps the most profound challenge stems from the fact that the AEL stipulates that by the tenth grade students should be proficient in English to the extent that they can conduct sophisticated inquiry projects. Indeed, as the New School Model Curriculum was officially launched in 2009 and is set to be completed in stages by 2016, the current student body at Najah has not completed the first two stages of the New School Model program—that is, they completed Kindergarten to the ninth grades under the *previous* program. ADEC (2009) was well aware of this fact when it initially launched the NSM. In the EPA it estimated that 67,000 students would graduate high school without having experienced the complete New School Model Program. This is indicated in Figure 6.5:

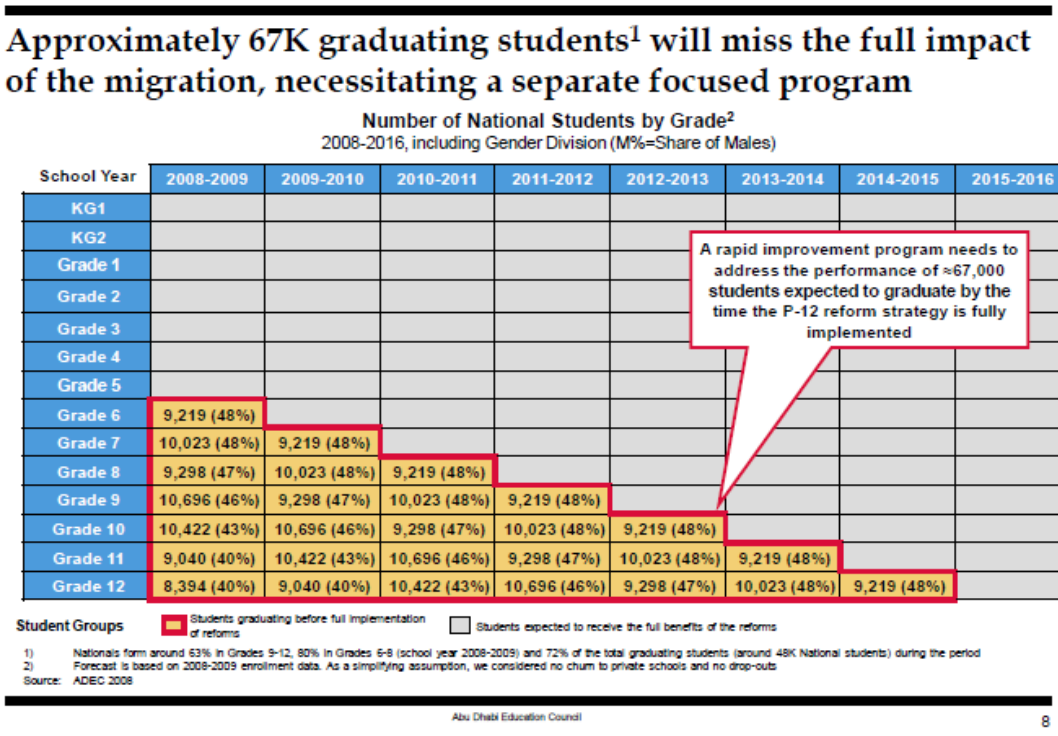

Figure 6.5 Planned School Migration from ADEC's Educational Policy Agenda (EPA)

In Figure 6.5 the EPA report designates a "rapid improvement program" designed to offer the 67,000 students an opportunity to benefit from specific reform measures. ADEC (2009) then clarifies the goals for these students as including better preparation for higher education, equalizing their academic performance, and improving their scores on international standardized English tests (as seen in Figure 6.6):

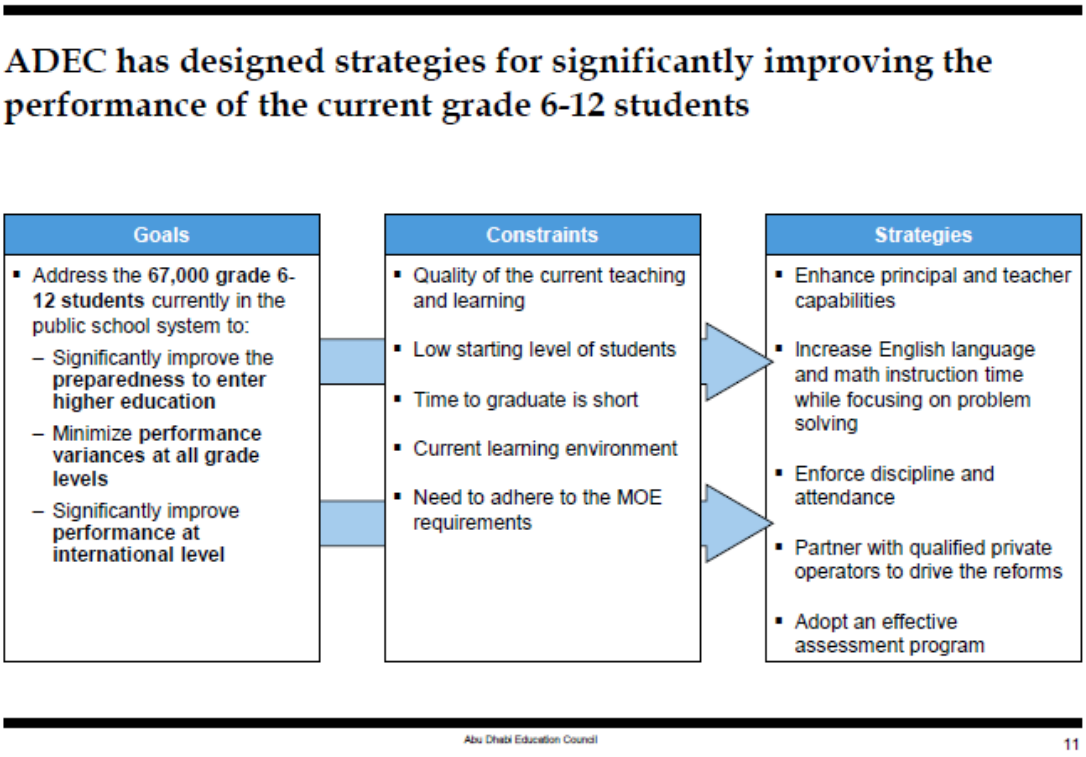

Figure 6.6: Rapid Improvement Program from ADEC's Educational Policy Agenda (EPA)

Although ADEC's (2009) "Strategies" designate a "partnership" with private educational providers, in the *de facto* plan at Najah the implementation of the other four strategies was left to the private educational provider—Franklin Incorporated—which was tasked with improving the overall quality of the school through conducting professional development meetings for teachers and administrators and implementing a "School Improvement Plan." The content of the curriculum for grades ten through twelve, which is not specified in ADEC's strategies, would be the ECART in its current form. This specification was communicated to the private education providers in private

meetings at ADEC's headquarters. Thus the English teachers at Najah were tasked with implementing the final stage of the New School Model Curriculum to students who had not completed its first two stages.

Taken in their entirety, ADEC's New School Model Curriculum task narratives convey the ideology that improving educational outcomes involves better training of teachers and administrators, better organization of the instructional environment, and longer hours dedicated target subjects. The students themselves are left out of this equation. In the case of Najah, the students have not gone through the first two stages of the neatly planned New School Model Curriculum. However, it remains to be seen if this requirement would yield the results designated in the AEL of proficient English speakers by the tenth grade. As discussed previously, Woolard (1985) has shown that the institutional domination of a language (through schools and curriculum) is not a prerequisite for its acceptance, or even for its acquisition; she writes: "The test of legitimacy [i.e. of one language being more important or superior to another] is the extent to which the population that does not control that variety acknowledges or endorses its authority, its correctness, its power to convince and its right to be obeyed" (Woolard, 1985, p. 741). That the students at Najah have already received eleven years of English instruction and have still not acquired English engenders the possibility (at least at Najah) of what Woolard (1985) terms, "resistant consciousness, as a form of accommodation to

coercion" (p. 741). Thus, the NSM Curriculum assumes that collaboration of Emirati students, students who may not accept the need to learn English. In the next chapter I will turn to the teachers' interpretations of the NSM Curriculum.

CHAPTER SEVEN

TEACHERS' INTERPRETATIONS OF THE CURRICULUM

In this chapter, I will examine how the English teachers at Najah interpreted and implemented ADEC's curriculum. As I will show, all of the English teachers at Najah found fault with the curriculum frame and task narratives[58] for being too advanced for Najah students. However, the teachers generally took two approaches to this problem. The first was to muscle through the ECART curriculum, or in Nespor's (1985) terms, to "ignore the problem" (Nespor, 1987, p. 153) and to "drill the students on the facts and statements in the book, whatever the usefulness or relevance of such activity might be" (Nespor, 1987, p. 153). The American teachers, Mr. Williams, Mr. Hammond and Mr. Ramirez, as well as the Irish teacher, Mr. Bartlett and the Arab teacher, Mr. Hassan, all took this route. This course of action manifested in various forms, but for the most part resulted in the teachers offering students readymade material to copy into their ECART booklets. However, the Arab teacher, Mr. Abel, and the American teacher, Mr. Drake took a different route altogether. They both essentially threw the curriculum in the trash,

[58] As previously discussed, Shkedi (2009) categorizes the curriculum through three narratives: "the curriculum frame narrative," "the curriculum task narrative" and "the curriculum meta-narrative" (p. 835). The frame narrative represents the syllabus, contents, and goals, where the task narrative lists the activities of teachers and students. Finally, the meta-narrative represents "the perceptions, theories and ideologies of the [curriculum] writers" (Shkedi, 2009, p. 835). It is in this sense that I am utilizing them.

ignoring its tenets and instructions, or as Nespor (1985) puts it, they layered a "supplementary system of goals and aims over the course content" (p. 153).

I will also show that despite the similarities in their practical implementation of the curriculum, the teachers at Najah described their behaviors differently. Although taking strikingly different forms, the teachers primarily rationalized their behaviors through the two schemas I have already shown to have manifested in the teachers' narratives at Najah: *the teacher as enthusiastic motivational speaker* and *the teacher as familial role model*. The American teachers argued in various ways that the teacher's role revolved around making students work hard in order to achieve specific skills related to self-reliance and future success. However, the Arab and Irish teachers saw their roles as caretakers, looking after their students' emotional needs in order to make them feel comfortable and develop close relationships with them.

Through these schemas, the English teachers at Najah constructed narratives explaining their implementation of ADEC's curriculum. As previously discussed, Shkedi (2009) posits that every teacher has a "curriculum story" (p. 211) which he describes as referring to a teacher's, "set of beliefs, values, understandings, and assumptions" (p. 211), assumptions which represent, "a way of thinking about the teaching profession" (p. 211). Each teacher at Najah constructed his own curriculum story surrounding the ECART,

which although unique to each teacher, also included the culturally resonant ideologies inherent in the two schemas described above.

Curriculum stories are derived in part from teachers' personal experiences, which Shkedi (2009) and others (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Gudmondsdóttir, 1999) argue take the form of narratives. These narratives embody, "the critical medium by which teachers make sense of their work" (Shkedi, 2009, p. 836). In order to understand these narratives, I first asked the teachers to define the word "curriculum." I then asked each teacher to describe the specific curriculum he encountered at Najah. Finally, after examining the teacher's behavior within the context of his classroom, I asked each teacher to talk about those behaviors and how he believed they related to his conceptions of the curriculum. The resulting case studies each run about ten pages long. These relatively short studies obviously cannot capture the totality of each teacher's beliefs or his practices in the classroom. Instead, they are intended to offer the reader an overall feeling of the teachers' behaviors within their classrooms and how they understood those behaviors[59].

[59] Likewise, although the teachers continued to describe their roles through culturally resonant schemas, I am not arguing that American teachers don't care about their students' feelings or that Arab and Irish teachers don't care about independent learning or getting work done; instead, I would argue that when teachers talk about teaching and learning, and likewise the curriculum, they partially draw from culturally resonant repertoires to give meaning to their behaviors and the behaviors of their students.

I first look at those teachers who muscled through the curriculum in various ways. Three American teachers, Mr. Williams, Mr. Hammond and Mr. Ramirez, as well as the Irish teacher, Mr. Bartlett, and the Arab teacher, Mr. Hassan, all completed the ECART curriculum tasks by having students copy readymade material in various forms. I then examine the two teachers who chose to throw out the curriculum altogether, ignoring its tenets and tasks: the Arab teacher, Mr. Abel, and the American teacher, Mr. Drake. My findings indicate that although their behaviors in the classroom often overlapped, the teachers explained them differently based in part upon different schemas of language and education.

Muscling through the ECART: "Copy, Copy, Movie, Movie"

7.1. Mr. Williams Talks about the Curriculum

This was Mr. Williams' first year teaching at Najah. He had arrived in Abu Dhabi in July, two months before starting school. Mr. Williams had spent the previous six years teaching middle school Language Arts in Illinois and Kansas public schools. At Najah, Mr. Williams was assigned three grade 11 Art's track English classes. On most days, Mr. Williams was friendly and welcoming. He was also good at remembering people's names, and he prided himself on his ability to remember specific facts about the people he met in an effort to "make them feel comfortable". I first asked Mr. Williams to define

the word curriculum, followed by questions about the specific curriculum at Najah and his approach to it.

When I asked Mr. Williams "What is the curriculum? How do you define the word curriculum?" he answered by calling it the "sum" of the skills students must acquire:

Stanza 1: Abstract

01 Mr. Williams: /Sighs/ Um (…) I think **curriculum** is the:: (…) for lack of a
02 better way of describing it (.) the um (.) uh (.) the—the **sum** o::f—of uh (.) of
03 what (.) students are uh (.) expected to know, uh—and that's related to the uh
04 to the uh student uh standards, uh and uh every state has standards on—on
05 what students are prescribed to know by the end of that year and so the
06 curriculum is the sum of—of the uh (.) **skills** that we are trying to instill in uh
07 students.

Mr. Williams' definition of the curriculum draws from the schema of the *teacher as motivational speaker,* where the teacher's role is to deliver skills to students who must take ownership of them for their future success. For Mr. Williams, the curriculum represents the totality of these skills, skills which he describes metaphorically as *substances* (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). When I asked him "What is the curriculum here at Najah?" Mr. Williams continued this construction, describing the curriculum metaphorically as the container holding the skills which are to be transferred to students:

Stanza 1: Abstract

01 Mr. Williams: Well (…) for **one** thing is u::h (.) there is u::h (.) um (.) **quite** a
02 discrepancy betwee::n what's in the **curriculum** which I started to review last
03 **summer** prior to coming here and uh (.) what the students here [at Najah] uh—
04 uh what the level—what the English proficiency skills of students **here** are,
05 a::nd uh (.) I believe that every student can (.) **learn** under the right
06 **circumstances**, bu::t the::y it—it—it's [the curriculum as Najah] a **big**, big
07 leap for—for many of these students to achieve (.) **what** u::h ADEC says they
08 should know by the end of 11th grade—English.

Stanza 1a

09 And uh—uh um (.) I—I think I'm the antithesis of some of those teachers—
10 **well** a few teachers—who uh (.) might (.) say, "Oh the—the—there's no way
11 students can achieve that, or there's no way uh a student is capable of making
12 that much progress." You know, I—**I'm** one who believes student **can** uh (.)
13 you know can uh learn much in a short period of time given the right
14 conditions, uh (.) **nevertheless** it's—it's [the curriculum] a **huge** uh leap from
15 where the students are now in their skills and what they're supposed to know
16 by 11th grade.

Mr. Williams' use of the phrase "what's in the curriculum" (ln. 1) completes the ontological metaphor of the curriculum as a container object (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), one which holds the skills students are expected to acquire. However, for Mr. Williams the skills contained in the curriculum are far too advanced for his students. As previously discussed, Shkedi (2009) posits that when presented with a new curriculum, teachers sometimes, "find suggestions that they view as invalid" (p. 211). When this occurs, a teacher will often construct a new "curriculum story" (Shkedi, 2009, p. 211) to replace what they deem as an unsatisfactory one. For Mr. Williams, the curriculum he was

presented with at Najah was challenging his curriculum story involving the belief that any student can learn. In order to examine how Mr. Williams dealt with this challenge, we must look at Mr. Williams' implementation of the curriculum in his classroom, and how he talked about this practice.

7.2 Mr. Williams' 11th Grade English Classroom

Mr. Williams' classroom was orderly and clean. On the walls of the room were several ECART posters from the year before, put there by the Arab English teacher who had previously occupied the room. On the back wall, above the bulletin board were bright color pictures of the ruling Sheikhs[60]. Mr. Williams kept the chairs and desks in straight rows facing the front of the room where he often stood waiting for students to arrive. On the table next to where he stood he kept a cup-container full of sharpened pencils next to a stack of ECART booklets, which he would hand out to his students who carried neither pencils nor paper with them. Like all of his colleagues' students, Mr. Williams' students would begin to arrive approximately eight minutes after the official class start time and would continue to trickle-in for twenty minutes after that.

Mr. Williams' classroom routine usually began with much chaos and noise, and would eventually settle down as the students got to work. His students would enter the

[60] All of the English classrooms had pictures of the ruling Sheikhs placed in the following order: the late Sheikh Zayed Al Nahayan in the middle flanked by his son Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahayan, the ruler of Abu Dhabi and the president of the UAE on the left, and Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the ruler of Dubai and vice president of the UAE on the right.

room with loud greetings (e.g. “Hello teacher!”) and would shake his hand. Sometimes they would pull him in to complete the gesture with a nose kiss, to which Mr. Williams would reluctantly comply. After such greetings, the students would sometimes take their seats and begin greeting other students next to them, talking in Arabic for a minute or two. Others might stand over already seated students and hold longer conversations in Arabic. Seated students would either start new conversations in Arabic or sit and read text messages on their Blackberry phones. During this time Mr. Williams would walk around giving out pencils and ECART booklets. He would make several unsuccessful attempts to quiet students by putting his finger over his mouth and saying “Shhhh—okay.” After about five minutes, when most students had their pencils and their ECART booklets, Mr. Williams would call for their attention: “Okay everybody! Listen up! Eyes up here!” He would often point to the rule on the door written in Arabic and English which said “Listen while the teacher is talking.”

Although some students might continue their conversations in Arabic, most of them would now be looking at Mr. Williams. Mr. Williams principally taught the ECART by having students copy sentences that he had previously written on the white board into their ECART booklets. He would often pick a student who could speak enough English to translate the sentence into Arabic. The student would come to the board and write the Arabic sentence underneath the English sentence. This process,

however, was not without its controversy, as often times other students would disagree with the initial translation and it would have to be revised multiple times.

After the translation was settled, the students would begin copying the sentences, or at times paragraphs, into the proper page in their ECART booklets. Mr. Williams might pick out a word or two from the written text and explain its definition in English. He would then instruct the students to copy the text into their ECART booklets, walking around to inspect their work. Thus, Mr. Williams' class was characterized by a routine of seatwork as students copied the material needed to complete their ECARTs. On most days Mr. Williams would reward his students for their efforts by putting a movie on the LCD projector. Often it was a "Pink Panther" cartoon, but at times he might play a longer feature, mostly Disney Pixar films (e.g. *Despicable Me* or *Over the Hedge*). His students seemed to like seeing movies and would sometimes ask for them upon entering the classroom (e.g. "Teacher, movie?") only to be reminded by the teacher that they must first complete their classwork.

When I asked him "How do you approach the ECART?" Mr. Williams explained his practices in the classroom, making reference to his students' low level of English:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Williams: /laughs/ We::ll, uh (.) let's see, uh (.) **I've** (.) pretty much just
02 been (.) u::h (.) I—I mean with the level of my students just uh being so **low** (.)
03 uh (.) the::y (.) and having all three Arts Track classes, I (.) pretty much am—

04 am doing the ECART **myself** and uh having the students u::h (.) copy it down.
05 I have a few uh student **translators** uh who go around and help with the other
06 uh students and u::h as long as they're copying it [the ECART] **down**.

Stanza 1a

07 I mean uh when I have **time** I—when I have time I—I uh (.) try to go through
08 some of the (.) uh (.) try to get them [the students] to understand what it **means**
09 and maybe have uh (.) other students uh translate, but really trying to get this
10 **ECART** done there hasn't really been a lot of time for **that**.

Mr. Williams' initial laugh when I asked him about the ECART, his hesitation in this passage, and his pointing to his students' low level of English denote a feeling of discomfort with the subject of how he teaches the ECART in his classroom. That he relates his feeling rushed to complete the ECART in *Stanza 1a*, and his lamenting that he often doesn't have the time to make sure the students are comprehending the material also speak to Mr. Williams' feeling that there is something wrong with his delivery of the ECART, or with the ECART itself. He makes this clear in his answer to my next question: "What do you feel that the students are getting out of this [copying the ECART]?"

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Williams: They're—they're [the students are] receiving more experience
02 in—in uh (.) writing English letters, a::nd (.) uh (.) they're starting to make
03 some (.) **connections**—I think they're—they're **building** on their vocabulary
04 ever so **slowly** uh (.) u::h (.) as they see—get exposure to more English (.)
05 **words**, especially when we translate them to Arabic (.) for example, a few of

06 those pages [in the ECART] ask them to write down a difficult English word
07 and then translate it into Arabic (.) and so I think that's **useful**.

Stanza 1a

08 U::h (.) u::h (.) **but** I—I still, as other teachers feel, that (.) especially for this
09 **school** (.) the—the ECART is uh very difficult uh (.) for them [the students]. I
10 have to uh walk them **throu::gh** just about (.) **everything** (…) I—I do **like** the
11 content of the ECART, it's just—I think it's—I just think that it's too **difficult**
12 for most of my students, or for **most** of them.

Mr. Williams believes that the ECART is too advanced for his students. However, he rationalizes his implementation of it by arguing that through copying the material, and through occasional Arabic translations, students are slowly acquiring English skills. Shkedi (1998) posits that when teachers view parts of a curriculum to be difficult or impossible, they often fill in the missing pieces with their own solutions, solutions with represent their personal "attempts to transform an inadequate curriculum story into a more complete, compelling, and convincing one" (p. 211). In the case of the ECART, Mr. Williams posits that his implementation of it has value for the students, value which is realized through their *work* (e.g. copying and sometimes translating the material). He also explains the shortcomings of the ECART through the motif of *self-reliance*, explaining that due to its difficulty he has to walk his students through, "just about (.) **everything**" (ln. 10). Thus Mr. Williams has developed a new curriculum story, one based upon his students copying prewritten material into their ECART booklets. The motifs supporting the schema of the *teacher as motivational speaker* surrounding of the

value of hard work and the *importance of self-reliance* are subtle aspects of this new curriculum story, and are emphasized in the following narrative that Mr. Williams related to me in a stimulated recall interview[61] about a student who refused to complete his ECART:

Stanza 1: ORIENTATION

01 [There is one student] who a—who a (.) I tried to **remind**—well […] he tried
02 to get me to change it [his low grade]—he would keep coming up to me after
03 reports [grade reports]—after reports had already gone ou::t (.) uh (.) and he's
04 [the student with the low grade] is trying to (.) uh (.) get me to change his
05 grade (.) and he's [the student with the low grade] going, "**Why**? Why? Why
06 [do I have a low mark]?"

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

07 And I said—remember he's the **one** that—that u::h (.) he didn't (.) really come
08 very often the **first** trimester (.) uh (.) and he uh—he actually di::d come to
09 class u::h (.) a few days before the end of the trimester when we were done
10 teaching—we were just grading and—and planning […] And (.) he just
11 **dropped-up** uh for a few minutes to say hi /mimicking student in a low voice/
12 "**Hey** Mr.—Mr. Williams."

Stanza 3: COMPLICATING ACTION

13 And then—and then I said, "Well, Ahmed uh (.) as long as you're here why
14 don't we take a look at your **ECART**—see if you have it **done**?" And uh (.)
15 and (.) I—I looked at my checklist and he was missing one of the **ISTs** (.)
16 a::nd—and then I gave him an opportunity to take **tha::t**—he—he—you know

[61] As previously discussed, in the stimulated recall interviews, teachers' lessons were videotaped, and teachers were interviewed where they were asked to examine the videotape and describe their thoughts at various intervals during the class period.

17 I put it on the de::sk—he –he didn't even sit down—he didn't want to (.) and I
18 said, "You—you want to take a look at the ECART booklet?"

Stanza 4: RESULT

19 He only had **four** pages of the ECART booklet finished—and I said,
20 "You know," I told him, "You are going to **fail** if cannot get this **do::ne**." […]
21 and uh I said [to Ahmed], "I will make it easy for you. My book is **completed.**
22 I will **give** you my book—you just **copy**—copy. And sit right here—there's no
23 other students (.) okay (.) there's no other class." And he [Ahmed] (.) uh (.)
24 just said /squinting his face/ "Na::h." He couldn't be bothered.

Mr. Williams' indignation with Ahmed's behavior is apparent in the way he describes Ahmed as being oblivious to the obvious fact that his ECART is not completed. The motif of the enthusiastic teacher trying to convince a reluctant student to take responsibility for his learning is salient in this narrative. Although the student would simply be copying what the teacher wrote, Mr. Williams is willing to offer a grade for the students' willingness to work. When I asked him "What do you make of that [Ahmed's behavior]?" Mr. Williams returned to the motif of self-reliance, explaining that as the student has been given everything by his government, he has no desire to work for his own benefit:

Stanza 5: EVALUATION

01 Mr. Williams: We'll (.) he's just apathetic about education as—as **most** of
02 them [Najah students] are (.) and—and uh (.) he doesn't see the importance of
03 (.) uh (.) education and he [Ahmed] sees even less importance to **English** (.)
04 and u::h (.) he's just comfortable with his own **life** and he knows uh he's got it
05 **made** (.) uh (.) for the rest of his **life**, and /laughs/. You know, he'll live a good

06 **life** and he's just uh you know (.) cruising **along** /laughs/. So (.) uh (.) I mean
07 he's **nice** to me—he's even given me a **nose kiss** before, but he's uh /laughs/.

Although he believes that the curriculum story of the ECART is inadequate given its being too difficult for the students, Mr. Williams has drawn from his own experiences (i.e. through the schema of the teacher as motivational speaker) to "create a better story" (Shkedi, 1998, p. 211). In this new story, copying the ECART material helps students acquire English skills, and as such completing it represents the students' embracing self-reliance and hard work.

7.3 Mr. Hammond and the Curriculum

Like Mr. Williams, Mr. Hammond had arrived in Abu Dhabi in late July and had started teaching at Najah two months later. Before coming to Abu Dhabi, Mr. Hammond had taught middle school English classes for two years at a private school in London, England. Before that he had taught the same grade and subject in another private school in Houston, Texas. Mr. Hammond was friendly, quiet and reserved most days. As he had taken a few Arabic classes in Texas, he would often try out his Arabic with his students, accepting their corrections with a smile and a handshake. He often stated that as an African American he felt out-of-place in the American South, where people had "stereotypes" and "preconceived notions" about African Americans. At Najah, Mr. Hammond taught two tenth-grade Arts track classes and a single tenth grade Science track class.

When I asked Mr. Hammond "What is the curriculum? How do you define the word curriculum?" he described it as both "tangible" and "conceptual":

Stanza 1 ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Hammond: Uh (.) I think curriculum is (.) **hard content**, so there's a (.)
02 **tangible** part of curriculum which might be a book, it might be an **activity** it
03 might be an **assessment** it might be—it's just something that you can touch—
04 the curriculum, but then **matched** with that is uh (.) **conceptual** (.) **concepts**
05 which (…) you know (.) **concepts** are hard to (.) **explain** and (.) to **rationalize**
06 and (.) to **wrap** your mind around and absorb it so (.) u::m (.)

Stanza 1a

07 What is the curriculum? Curriculum is—has a **tangible** component and then it
08 has a **conceptual** (.) component which (.) when you think about **key words** (.)
09 some of them are just (.) you know, "**arm**, **leg**, **hand**, **chair**," but then you
10 have things like, "**freedom**, **democracy**, **traditions**," and so on and so forth,

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

11 so (.) I think (…) the **ultimate** goal of curriculum should be to make an
12 independent learner.

Mr. Hammond's description of the curriculum includes task narratives which he conceptualizes as dualistic, and a meta-narrative, where he ascribes a specific purpose to the curriculum. For Mr. Hammond, the ultimate purpose of any curriculum is "to make an independent learner" (ln. 11-12). The motif of *self-reliance*, supporting the schema of the teacher as motivational speaker, is a salient facet of Mr. Hammond's conceptualization of teaching, and he ascribes it as the "ultimate goal" (ln. 11) of his curriculum story.

I then asked Mr. Hammond "What is the curriculum here at Najah?" In his answer he described the ECART as a frame narrative, offering direction to teachers for how to proceed:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Hammond: For the English department I don't (.) think there's a
02 curriculum. I think everyone [in the English department] knows that we have
03 (.) **ECART** (.) which is based on either (.) **healthy living** or a comparison of
04 (.) **ancient** world versus the modern world (.) and um—the Emirati family (.)
05 so (.) that is (.) the **topic** (.) and then through that students are (.) to be
06 equipped with (.) the **skills** that (.) you [the teacher] access in the integrated
07 task [the ISTs].

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

08 So (.) there's not **actually** a physical curriculum, but at least there's some
09 direction in what the theme is—in what the scope and sequence is (.) and what
10 (.) the **expected** outcomes are (.) even though (.) the assessed outcomes (.) uh
11 (.) really don't have anything to do with the (.) [English] **skills** that students
12 have **built**—so (.) that's my take on it—so it's better than **nothing** (…)

Stanza 2a

13 And (.) within that I guess we're [the teachers are] given the professional
14 liberty and trust that we (.) come up with lessons that (.) **address** the
15 curriculum but also build you know the **vital** English skills that the students (.)
16 need (.) so (.) [the ECART is] **better** than nothing /laughs/.

Like Mr. Williams, Mr. Hammond argued that the ECART curriculum doesn't match the reality of his students' level of English. That Mr. Hammond laughs when he calls the ECART "**better** than nothing" (ln. 16) illustrates his belief that the ECART is

only a partial curriculum—a frame narrative which is meant to guide the teachers as they deliver English skills. It is not a complete curriculum as he described it above, but only an incomplete guide. As such, the ECART is not a compulsory script, but permits the "professional liberty" (ln. 13-14) of the teacher. Moreover, Mr. Hammond echoed Mr. Williams in referring to the transfer of skills from teacher to student. In Mr. Hammond's curriculum story the teachers' role is to equip students with specific skills. His use of the phrase "**vital** English skills" (ln. 15) in *Stanza 2* echoes the ideological construction that he espoused in Chapter Four, where he ascribes English as the instrumental skill (Wee, 2008) needed for students' future success. In the next section I will show how Mr. Hammond enacts the ECART in a strikingly similar way as Mr. Williams.

7.4 Mr. Hammond's 10th Grade English Classes

On most days, Mr. Hammond's classroom would start out in the morning with desks straightened and floors swept and would end up by the end of the day a chaotic jumble of tables and chairs. The floors would be covered with the discarded remains of sunflower seed shells and gooey *niswar*, a type of green chewing tobacco used by many students at Najah. This state of affairs would occur slowly throughout the day as each of Mr. Hammond's three classes made their marks on the room. The walls of Mr. Hammond's room were orderly and colorful. Much of the decorating had been done the year before by the Arab teacher who previously occupied the room. On the back wall

were the three ruling Sheikhs, and below them was a decoration that read "Learn to love reading!" Besides the whiteboard, Mr. Hammond's room had a bulletin board displaying students' ECART posters from the year before. To the right of the whiteboard was a smaller whiteboard which listed the "key words" for each day. Like Mr. Williams, Mr. Hammond had a cup full of pencils on the desk in front of the whiteboard.

As with all of the English classes I observed, students would begin arriving eight to ten minutes late to Mr. Hammonds' classes. The behaviors I observed were the same for both his Arts Track classes and his Science track class. Mr. Hammond's students would enter his classroom in the same manner I observed with Mr. Williams. Some would yell, "Hello teacher!" or "Teacher, movie?" as they made their way to their desks. Others would enter with a quiet "*Asalamualaykum*" (peace be upon you) for which Mr. Hammond would answer "*Alykum Assalam*" (and also with you). Most students would shake Mr. Hammond's hand and then make their way to their seats. The tenth grade students, however, were often unpredictable. Sometimes a student might have an argument with another which would turn into a wrestling match or a chase around the room. Other times students would push each other into desks, knocking them over with a thunderous crash. In each class the students would take at least twenty minutes to settle down and begin working, and on some days they never settled down. On these difficult days work would commence amid a chorus of clamorous voices. Students who were on

task would get annoyed and yell out to the others to sit down, or they would move seats to quieter areas of the room and continue their work. Despite the students' behavior, Mr. Hammond primarily kept a calm and cheerful demeanor in class.

Mr. Hammond began his year standing up and directing students to their desks. He would walk around the room and check students' work. However, as the year progressed, Mr. Hammond took to sitting behind his desk and directing the students from his chair. He never raised his voice, and to encourage compliance would often offer ultimatums (e.g. "If I'm happy—movie."). Mr. Hammond primarily taught the ECART by projecting Microsoft Word documents on the whiteboard which displayed the information students were to copy into their ECART booklets.

As a starter activity, students were expected to enter the room and take a book from a small bookshelf on the back wall. They should then sit and read for approximately ten minutes until a small egg-timer that Mr. Hammond kept on his desk would go off. Students were then expected to retrieve their ECART booklets from a file in the back of the room and then to sit down and begin copying the material projected onto the board. These tasks were performed, if at all, with reckless abandon. The books, which consisted mainly of large picture books, would be ripped and torn and sometimes thrown about the room. Students might sit and look at the pictures, or they would simply leave the book unopened in front of them as they carried on conversations in Arabic or read text

messages on their Blackberry phones. Retrieving the ECART booklets was equally chaotic. Students would often complain that pages of their booklets had been stolen by other students. Many couldn't read their names in English and had to be assisted by other students. The result was much yelling, arguing and talking in Arabic and little desk time.

After a certain amount of time had passed, if he was indeed happy with their work, Mr. Hammond would put on a movie. The students would then rearrange their desks in noisy jubilation into a large mass by the front of the room. They would sit on chairs and desks, and sometimes on the floor, and watch the movie, offering loud commentaries in Arabic. Like Mr. Williams, Mr. Hammond's movie selection consisted mainly of Disney Pixar films, but he would occasionally show a more violent action film for which the students would be thoroughly enthralled. All of the films had subtitles in Arabic language. By the middle of the year, Mr. Hammond conducted most of his classes from his seat behind his computer.

When I asked Mr. Hammond, "How do you approach the ECART?" he offered this narrative:

Stanza 1: ORIENTATION

01 Mr. Hammond: We::ll (…) if I have the first lesson off I (.) write everything
02 [for the ECART page] on the **board** or in a [Microsoft] Word document (.)
03 u::h (.) look through the ECART [booklet] to see (.) how much we could do in

04 one lesson and when the kids come in (.) they do their ten minutes reading (.)
05 or—or um (.) alphabet worksheet (.) and then they **copy** the ECART.

Thomas: So they [the students] copy down what you write?

Stanza 1a

06 Mr. Hammond: They copy down what I write—with some (.) difficulty. You
07 know you have to show them [the students] how (.) it's pretty much identical,
08 but you have to show the kids where—**what** (.) they need to copy—what goes
09 where.

Stanza 2: COMPLICATING ACTION

10 First I used to put the **mega-template** (.) where I put all the questions [from
11 the ECART pages] with the answers below (.) but then they'd [the students
12 would] write (.) the **questions** in the spot for the answers (.) even though their
13 paper [the ECART page] was exactly the same. So now I just write the
14 answers on the **board** (.) and I try to space it [the information to copy] as the
15 (.) ECART packet is spaced (.)

Stanza 3: RESULT

16 they [the students] fill it in [copy the information into their ECART booklets]
17 and then we're done (…) show a movie /laughs/.

Mr. Hammond's explanation of how he teaches the ECART, at least in practical application, is strikingly similar to Mr. Williams. His inclusion of the students' inability to differentiate the questions on the ECART page from the answers that he offers them serves as a blatant reminder of Mr. Hammond's belief that the ECART questions are too advanced for his students, most who cannot read or write in English. His laugh at the end of this narrative signifies his discomfort with this particular curriculum story, a discomfort he verbalized when I asked him the next question:

Thomas: How do you feel about this [the ECART] as a curriculum tool? What are the students getting out of it?

Stanza 4: EVALUATION

18 Mr. Hammond: It's **not** very effective, you know. As a human (.) you feel like
19 you're doing something (.) **immoral**, but it's **not** a very effective teaching (.)
20 technique or tool.

Stanza 4a

21 (…) I think that for year [grade] **ten** (.) the ECART is too complex (.) because
22 the kids [the students] have—they lack even basic (.) **English**—functional
23 English, so (.) um (.) it's [the ECART] not something that we can use (.) with
24 the **themes** and the **key words** and (.) the (.) **topics** it's not something that (.)
25 u::h **allows** the students to **practice** or do the work on their own or me to
26 instruct them (.) in learning (.) **basic** (.) English. So (.) that's its [the
27 ECART's] biggest shortcoming. It stands in the way of teaching the kids (…)
28 **English**.

As previously discussed, Wuthnow (1987) calls the moral order, "a set of definitions about what it is proper to do and reasonable to expect" (p. 14). He posits that moral commitment involves the construction of or *belief in* "symbolic boundaries" (Wuthnow, 1987, p. 78) which help to define the moral order for groups and individuals. For Mr. Hammond, those boundaries are characterized by the motifs of *hard work* and *self-reliance*, salient features of the schema of the *teacher as motivational speaker*. Thus the ECART is flawed because it does not permit his students to "do the work on their own" (ln. 25).

Mr. Hammond laments that having to implement the ECART in his classroom has led to behavior he feels is "**immoral**" (ln.19) and violates his sense of moral purpose as a teacher. This "moral crisis" (Wuthnow, 1987, p. 78) had led to Mr. Hammond's practice of sitting behind his desk for the entirety of the class period, as he explained in a stimulated recall interview:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Hammond: I've taken to **anchoring** behind my desk, because walking
02 around is pointless, **teaching** from my desk—which I never did before [the
03 UAE]. But it's **pointless** to walk around and check for understa::nding or to (.)
04 **redirect** student ate::ntion (.) or (.) to:: you know (.) try (.) one-to-one
05 instru::ction. It's completely pointless.

During the same stimulated recall interview, Mr. Hammond explicated his feelings of discomfort with the situation he finds himself in at Najah. Unlike Mr. Williams, who tried to find meaning in his students' copying the ECART material, Mr. Hammond finds it to be "pointless" (ln. 5). He continued with this narrative, relating his feeling that he is trapped between an impossible curriculum task narrative (Shkedi, 2009) and his belief that as a foreigner he is expected to be polite and accommodating with his students:

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

06 Mr. Hammond: Now, I'm actually not comfortable (…) in that situation [the
07 classroom situation]. I'm **trapped** in the container of these clothes. I'm not
08 comfortable at all. I've been poli::te (.) and (.) I've made concessions to try to
09 (.) uh (.) **deliver** a curriculum that (…) you know—[would] be advantageous
10 to the students. It's still not (.) you know (.) what I would like to be able to be
11 doing—or within my (.) **comfort** zone, so (…)

Thomas: What would you like to be happening?

Stanza 2a

12 Mr. Hammond: I'd like for class to run on **ti::me**—you know— I'd like them
13 [students] to get real work done (…) I'm always having to contain my **tongue**
14 and my (.) **interactions** with people (…) my **opinions** (.) simply (.) to make
15 **peace**. Even in the **classroom** with the kids coming in late (.) you know (.) I
16 might look like I don't mind, but it's actually not—not really comfortable.
17 Yeah. I feel like I'm **repressing** (.) myself, so (…)

Stanza 2b

18 I'm—I'm (.) **apprehensive** when I come to work now. Not that I'm reluctant
19 there's just some tension within me (…) I haven't been able to get any of my
20 classes (…) to—they don't understand that (.) "Once everyone's quiet (.) then
21 I can (.) **say** what you're expected to do," and that someone can translate [Mr.
22 Hammond's instructions to the class].

Stanza 2c

23They're [the students] a::ll asking fifteen different times at (.) different times
24 throughout the lesson, "What are we doing?" You know? [To the students] "If
25 you'd **come** on time you'd know. If you'd **be** quiet you'd know. If you'd
26 u::h (.) **listen** to what your peers are saying you would know."

Stanza 2d

27 So now I just say [to the students] "Ask him [another student] ask him. "If you
28 would listen you would know. And at the end it's [the whole
29 interaction]—is all so you can (.) copy it [the class work] anyway."

Stanza 2e

30 (…) because (.) at the end of the day (.) you're [the teacher is] still a **fool.**
31 That's how I feel about (…) coming to work, (…) I just think this is Uncle
32 Tom **foolery**—that's what I mean. My interactions with students, you know.
33 I've put on a show—a tie (.) and a shirt (.) and a **happy,** smiling teacher.

Stanza 2f

34 He's [the teacher is] familiar with your [the students'] Bedouin ways, and (.)
35 everything's **okay**. I'm willing to accommodate your shortcomings because
36 this is your world (.) and your culture. And I'm not going to press the envelope
37 on—on **anything** (.) you know. As long as you're [the students are] compliant
38 within (.) the **base** minimum.

Like Wuthnow (1987), I view ritual as a "symbolic act" (p. 99) that expresses something about the moral order. Mr. Hammond's sitting behind his desk is a form of ritual, one which for him symbolizes his dissatisfaction with what he believes are his students' expectations that he be polite and kind with them at the expense of their learning anything. As an African American, Mr. Hammond's use of the term "Uncle Tom **foolery**" (ln. 31-32) in *Stanza 2e* is striking as it expresses his belief that he is the willing participant in a meaningless and humiliating activity, one which violates his sense of purpose as a teacher. Thus Mr. Hammond's curriculum story at Najah includes the ideal

of equipping students with vital English skills—skills they acquire through "real work" (ln. 13)—juxtaposed against a reality of moral indignation and helplessness.

7.5 Mr. Ramirez Discusses the Curriculum

Unlike his fellow American colleagues, Mr. Ramirez had been teaching in Abu Dhabi a year prior to the commencement of this research study. Before he came to Najah, Mr. Ramirez had been teaching tenth grade students at a secondary school in the city of Abu Dhabi. He had transferred to Najah to start the new year as a twelfth-grade English teacher, teaching two Arts track classes and a Science track class. Having immigrated to America from El Salvador when he was ten years old, Mr. Ramirez was bilingual in English and Spanish. In California, Mr. Ramirez had taught both Language Arts and Spanish at the high school level for eight years. A man of few words, Mr. Ramirez would often keep to himself. He was friendly and warm when approached, but rarely smiled.

When I asked Mr. Ramirez "What is the curriculum? How do you define the word curriculum?" he described it as being topical and thematic:

> 01 Mr. Ramirez: Well **curriculum** I would sa::y is the—the (.) the **different** u::h
> 02 (.) **topics** (.) um the different uh (.) **topics** that students are expected to learn—
> 03 the different **themes**. It can be thematic. It can be **topical** (.) and within that
> 04 are—are the different skills. So that's how I would define curriculum.

Like Mr. Williams, Mr. Ramirez described the curriculum in terms of a container metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), one organized through topics and themes. Contained

within the curriculum are the sum of the skills "that students are expected to learn" (ln. 2). As previously discussed in Chapter Four, through the American schema of the *teacher as motivational speaker* skills are transferred to students in exchange for their hard work. For Mr. Ramirez, the curriculum organizes these skills under topics and themes.

As did Mr. Williams and Mr. Hammond, Mr. Ramirez critiqued the curriculum as being too advanced for his students when I asked him: "What is the curriculum here at Najah?"

Stanza 1: ABATRACT

01 **Well** (…) it's [the curriculum is] asking me to teach certain (.) **skills** and—
02 and—and **that**—that for the (.) **students** here (.) in this situation [at Najah]
03 u::h is too difficult.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

04 Uh (.) the—the curriculum is designed for native speakers of **English** not for
05 (.) uh (.) second-**language**-learners of English. So uh (.) some of the things that
06 (.) they [ADEC] want children [the Najah students] to do are—are—are way
07 too difficult for them.

Stanza 2a

08 In the scenario that we are now [at Najah] I think there's—there's a **significant**
09 area of improvisation [with the curriculum]. Again because the—the
10 curriculum as it is (.) in this particular **venue**—**school—**is just completely
11 unrealistic and **unsustainable**—to carry out the curriculum (.) again because
12 of the fact that again the curriculum is designed for native speakers of **English**
13 and in this school—these kids—these students in this particular **school** (.)
14 their—their English capacity is extremely **low**.

For Mr. Ramirez, the frame narratives of the ECART curriculum, and with it the meta-narratives, are fundamentally flawed within the context of Najah. From these flawed narratives arise task narratives that he believes his students simply cannot do given their current level of English. As discussed previously, Shkedi (2009) finds that in making sense of a curriculum—that is, when integrating a curriculum into their unique curriculum stories, teachers often construct what is essentially an entirely new curriculum, one "which is not necessarily congruent with the [curriculum] writers' intentions" (p. 836). Shkedi (2009) posits that this occurs in part because teachers often feel little or no obligation to follow the directives listed in the curriculum frame or task narratives. For Mr. Ramirez (and indeed for Mr. Williams and Mr. Hammond as well), the ECART curriculum cannot be practically implemented at Najah. Consequently, like Mr. Hammond, Mr. Ramirez feels that the ECART curriculum offers him room for professional liberties. In the next section I will show how Mr. Ramirez takes these liberties in his classroom.

7.6 Mr. Ramirez's Twelfth Grade Classroom

Mr. Ramirez's classroom was clean and tidy most of the time. He was a charitable person and has once paid Najah's janitor, who was from India, a thousand dirham (about $270) upon learning that the janitor's mother had been diagnosed with cancer. For this act of kindness, Mr. Ramirez's room was kept in a constant state of cleanliness. His

floors were mopped daily (sometimes twice a day) and his students' desks, kept in straight rows, received a thorough cleansing each night. As a result, on any given day Mr. Ramirez's classroom smelled like a newly cleaned bathroom. On his walls Mr. Ramirez had posted colorful, poster-sized comic strips that his Science track students had completed as part of their integrated strand tasks (ISTs). They consisted of six colorful drawings in square boxes with a simple sentence underneath each drawing telling a story (e.g. about going to the cinema, or driving through the desert, or visiting family in Oman). Mr. Ramirez had corrected most of the grammar in these comic strips and had personally paid to have them laminated so that he could tack them to his classroom walls. These shiny posters made his room seem bright and cheery and served as impressive conversation pieces whenever a visiting teacher, or an ADEC representative on an impromptu visit, occasioned to stop by.

For both Arts and Science track classes Mr. Ramirez kept the students' ECART booklets on the teacher's desk in front of the room. Like his other colleagues, he also kept a cup full of sharpened pencils at the ready next to the ECARTs. Mr. Ramirez's demeanor with his students (both Arts and Science tracks) was gentle and calm. For the first eight to ten minutes of the class, while waiting for students to arrive, he would pace slowly in front of the door, and when a student would enter he would approach him with a slurred "*Asalamualaykum*" (peace be upon you), shaking the student's hand. He would

then lead the student over to the teacher's desk, hand him his ECART packet, and ask him to sit down with a pat on the back.

Every student who entered Mr. Ramirez's room received the title "*Shabab*" (young people), which is a collective Arabic noun properly used to address a group of students. However, Mr. Ramirez would call any student in front of him *shabab* (e.g. "Here you go, *shabab*. No problem, *shabab*. Sit down, *shabab*," etc.). Although his interactions with his students were cordial, Mr. Ramirez often spoke to them in a slow, condescending tone. If a student asked to use the bathroom, for instance, Mr. Ramirez would say to him, "Okay *shabab*, you go bathroom then you come sit with Blackberry." Despite these interactions, his students would smile and follow his directions. Mr. Ramirez's classes were generally well behaved. Although often carrying on quiet conversations in Arabic, his students would stay in their seats and most participated in each day's class work.

Mr. Ramirez never used a starter activity. The students were expected to get to work on their ECART booklets right away. On the teacher's desk in the front of the room Mr. Ramirez kept photocopied sheets of each page of the ECART booklet in separate stacks of thirty, enough for every student in the room. The ECART sheets would have

each section (i.e. research questions, brainstorming activities, etc.) already completed[62] with the proper responses. Mr. Ramirez would write the pages to be completed each day on the whiteboard in the front of the room. The students would take those pages to their desks, find the corresponding page in their ECART booklets, and begin copying the material into their booklets. This activity would sometimes take half the period. If a student would finish early, Mr. Ramirez would go through the student's ECART booklet, and if the student had a blank page that the class had already completed, Mr. Ramirez would tell the student to find that page from a stack on his desk and to copy it. On days when many students needed to catch up after being absent, Mr. Ramirez's classroom resembled an orderly assembly line as students completed pages and went back for new ones. If the entire class finished early, Mr. Ramirez would play a movie.

I observed both Mr. Ramirez's twelfth grade Arts track classes as well as his twelfth grade Science track class. Unlike what I observed in Mr. Hammond's tenth grade classes, where Mr. Hammond's practice remained the same for both his Arts and Science track classes, Mr. Ramirez's behavior differed slightly depending on whether he was teaching an Arts track class or a Science track class. With his Arts track classes, Mr. Ramirez did little talking. He would walk around the room patting boys on the back and directing their work. However, with his Science track class, Mr. Ramirez would address

[62] Mr. Ramirez explained to me that he takes home the ECART booklet at the start of each quarter and completes it himself. He then makes photocopies of the separate pages to disseminate to his students.

the class before they began work on their ECARTs. He would often ask them questions about the day's assignment to check for understanding, sometimes explaining the concepts they were expected to learn. The ECART booklets began with a narrative essay, and once a trimester Mr. Ramirez would ask particular Science track students to read the essay. During these readings he would stop after each paragraph to explain its meaning, often drawing pictures on the whiteboard to aid in this explanation. At the end of these lessons, students were still expected to copy the material from the completed worksheets on the teacher's desk into their ECART booklets, an activity for which they cheerfully complied.

When I asked Mr. Ramirez, "How have you been teaching ECART?" he reiterated his previous statement that the ECART is impossible to teach at Najah:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Ramirez: Well (.) it really isn't **possible** to teach it [the ECART] because
02 the level of the students in English is virtually **zero** (.) so what I was doing
03 every day was—I was just having them copy uh (.) a page or two [of the
04 ECART booklet] every day, and (.) that was the process I've been following—
05 in order to fill out the **packet**.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

06 Again, given—given their [the students'] limited (.)English (.) uh (.) ability,
07 that's the reason why I approached it that way. However, I think with (.)
08 higher speaking English students I think it would be possible to do something
09 more productive with it [the ECART].

Mr. Ramirez's belief that the curriculum does not match his students' English ability formed the rationale in his curriculum story—that is, this flaw is the *curriculum meta-narrative* that gives meaning to his practice of having his students copy the readymade ECART material into their booklets. In his response, Mr. Ramirez differentiated between normal students and what he termed "higher speaking English students" (ln. 8). He developed this idea in more detail when I asked him, "What do you think he students are getting out of this [your approach to the ECART]?"

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Ramirez: **Well**, it's [the ECART]—it's—it's—it's not helpful at all. It's
02 not helpful at all (.) for **them** [the students]. I think it's just something that has
03 to be done.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

04 I think it's something that—**again**, in the context again of the environment
05 here [at Najah] with—with the level of these students and their interest in
06 English I think it's just a total waste of time doing—doing something like
07 ECART here.

Stanza 2a

08 **However**, I would say that (.) maybe—maybe—maybe they [ADEC] should
09 u::h (.) maybe they should only **give** the Arts [track] students some kind of
10 another ECART project or another (.) **task** instead of an ECART, but I think
11 that nevertheless I think the students—the Science [track] students might get
12 something out of it. I think you can probably do some of it with the Science
13 students (.) **given** their higher level of English and their more (.) **academically**
14 inclined responses.

Unlike Mr. Hammond, whose belief that the ECART was "pointless" led to a "moral crisis" (Wuthnow, 1987, p. 78) manifested in his practice, Mr. Ramirez seemed content with the fact that although it is a "total waste of time" (ln. 6), the ECART was "just something that has to be done" (ln. 2-3). His contentment stemmed partially from his rationale that the *curriculum* was the problem. However, Mr. Ramirez also found satisfaction in teaching his Science track students, who he believed were "more (.) **academically** inclined" (ln. 13-14) than his Arts track students. He elaborated further in a stimulated recall interview:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 These boys [Science students]—in comparison to the Arts [track]—are
02 engaged in the process of learning (.) and they want to **learn**. Uh (.) they
03 want—at **times** they will need clarification (.) uh (.) for some word they might
04 not **know** (.) so uh (.) we have to pause and do that for them. But at **least** (.) as
05 you can observe (.) all these guys [the Science students] are fairly engaged—in
06 the learning—they're—they're learning—they're asking questions.

Stanza 1a

07 On the other hand—the **ARTs** [track students] u::h (.) for the most part have
08 total apathy. U::h (.) I don't know if it's because of the language barrier (.) but
09 u::h (.) what I have seen is (…) uh not very **much** (.) uh (.) **will** or desire to
10 want to learn anything.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

11 I enjoy these guys [the Science track students] more because I can **teach** them.
12 I can go through the process of teaching (.) so the **gratification** of doing my
13 job as a teacher—of (.) **teaching** something and then getting something in

14 return from these guys—it's just (.) **production**—of—of—of whatever it [the
15 assignment is] I can get a product **back** from them.

Stanza 2a

16 Whether it's (.) **spoken** form or whether it's **written** form (.) or whatever it is
17 (.) there—there—there—it's possible for me to interact with them **more** in the
18 process of learning (.) because (.) their [the Science track students'] language
19 skills in English are so much higher.

Stanza 2b

20 And I would say that overall their [the Science track students'] academic **skills**
21 are much higher as well—their overall attitude towards school is better. They
22 want to succeed academically—they want to do well (…) uh (.) and therefore
23 (.) uh (.) it is easier—more—**enjoyable** to work with these kids because these
24 reasons. And they have language skills—they want to **learn** and so you can
25 pretty much do **anything** with these boys.

The schema of *the teacher as motivational speaker*, where teaching is constructed as a form of exchange is salient in Mr. Ramirez's discourse about his Science track students. The metaphor of "getting something in return" (ln. 13-14) in the form of a "product" (ln. 15) supports this cognitive structuring of teaching as exchange and learning as production. As previously discussed, Wuthnow (1987) defines a person's "moral code" (p. 66) as a "set of cultural elements that define the nature of commitment to a particular course of behavior" (p. 66). In Mr. Ramirez's moral code of teaching students who did not take part in the exchange—like his Arts track students—were apathetic and did not wish to learn. Mr. Ramirez also related the apathy of his Arts track students to their lack of English language. He argued in *Stanza 1a* that students who

wanted to learn showed this by "asking questions" (ln. 6). Ironically, the Arts track students, who lacked basic English skills, could not ask questions and therefore could not *show* a desire to learn English.

In this section I have shown that despite their conflicting feelings about the ECART curriculum, Mr. Williams, Mr. Hammond and Mr. Ramirez approached it in similar ways. Each teacher believed that the curriculum at Najah was too advanced for the students, and they solved this dilemma by muscling through the material. Although their solutions took slightly differing forms, each of these teachers "taught" what they believed to be an impossible curriculum by having students copy readymade material into their ECART booklets.

I have also shown that each of these teachers constructed new curriculum meta-narratives, or new *curriculum stories* (Gudmondsdóttir, 1999; Skhedi, 2009) about their teaching practices at Najah, stories partially derived from the schema of the teacher as motivational speaker. In the next section I will show that although the Irish teacher, Mr. Bartlett, and the Arab teacher, Mr. Hassan, also took similar approaches to the curriculum, they rationalized these approaches differently, drawing primarily from the schema of the *teacher as familial role model* to explain their behaviors.

Irish and Arab Teachers

The Irish teacher, Mr. Bartlett, had arrived in Abu Dhabi in July, and had started teaching at Najah two months later. At Najah, Mr. Bartlett taught two tenth grade Arts track classes and a single tenth grade Science track class. Before arriving in Abu Dhabi, Mr. Bartlett had taught middle school English in Ireland for four years. On most days Mr. Bartlett was cheerful and friendly. He was always ready to listen to a good story and would often tell his own stories about his adventures in Abu Dhabi. Mr. Bartlett was in his mid-twenties.

7.7 Mr. Bartlett and the Curriculum

When I asked Mr. Bartlett, "What is the curriculum? How do you define the word curriculum?" he described is as a type of guidance:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Bartlett: U::m (.) curriculum is **probably** (…) it's probably the **guidance**
02 that u::m (.) a **department** of education or an education **council** (.) gives to its
03 teachers to:: (.) **direct** them or to (.) **guide** uh the way—the way they teach. I
04 think that's what a curriculum is (.) a guide or even (…) a **stronger** word
05 might be instruction.

Unlike his American colleagues, Mr. Bartlett does not define the curriculum in terms of a repository, or organized container of, skills to be transferred to students. For Mr. Bartlett, the curriculum is a set of guidelines for teachers. However, Mr. Bartlett

shares with his American colleagues the belief that the curriculum is not a compulsory script—that is, although he may feel the need to be "loyal" (Shkedi, 2009, p. 842) to the formal written curriculum, his response implies that the teacher still has the liberty to interpret its guidelines as he sees fit.

When I asked Mr. Bartlett, "What is the curriculum here at Najah?" he responded by drawing a clear distinction between the ECART and the curriculum:

Stanza 1: ORIENTATION

01 Mr. Bartlett: E::m /laughs/ I'm **not** (.) e::h (.) I haven't mulled over the
02 curriculum. I **probably** haven't studied enough and used it to direct my
03 planning yet in terms of (.) the first month [of teaching]. I was just trying to do
04 [to teach] some **English**—just some dialogue and some **basic stuff** that I
05 thought maybe (.) I might be able to get these guys [the students] to u::h (.) to
06 be able to **speak** with me and understand **me** (.)

Stanza 2: COMPLICATING ACTION

07 and uh (.) now we're straight into **ECART** (.) and I haven't even (.) haven't
08 even e::m (.) had a chance to (.) to **study** the curriculum and to use it to (.)
09 produce my [lesson] plans from it.

Stanza 3: EVALUATION

10 And u::h **that's** probably one thing that's—that's **worrying** me, but every
11 evening when I go home I'm like now I have to concentrate on (.) **ECART**.
12 And all the time I'm trying to come up with new **ways** of uh (.) behavior
13 **management** (.) u::h (.) that I haven't been able to **actually** sit down and **read**
14 a lot of those things [the curriculum].

Stanza 4: RESULT

15 And therefore I haven't actually (.) u::m (.) **used** the curriculum to guide **my**
16 panning as much as I should have (…) and that's just being honest (…) and
17 **right** now until I get this **ECART** done I don't know if I'm gonna get around
18 to it either you know.

In his response, Mr. Bartlett continued to describe the curriculum as a guide, this time in terms of helping him develop his lesson plans. Mr. Bartlett later informed me that by "curriculum" he meant the Academic English Language Handbook (AEL), which has a section called "English Language Curriculum." Mr. Bartlett understood this as a frame narrative from which he would construct lesson plans. That he laughed when he began his narrative, and his expression of worrying about not using the curriculum in *Stanza 3*, imply a sense of obligation to utilize the AEL as a guide, an obligation which he feels he is shirking.

Moreover, in Mr. Bartlett's narrative, the ECART enters as if it were a distraction to his actual teaching. The ECART seems to distract from two salient aspects of Mr. Bartlett's definition of teaching: communication and classroom management. Mr. Bartlett's stressed his first concern—teacher-student communication—in *Stanza 1*, linking it with the teaching of English. Mr. Bartlett's concern with his students being able to "speak with" (ln. 6) and "understand" (ln. 6) him—that is, his concern with his students' *immediate needs*, is a salient feature of the schema of the *teacher as familial role model*. As discussed previously, in this schema the teachers' role is to take care of

his students' immediate needs in order to draw close to them. Learning commences when the student feels comfortable with and confident in himself and the teacher.

Mr. Bartlett had already stressed his belief in the importance of his second concern—classroom management—in Chapter Four, which he described in terms of authority. In Chapter Four he posited that authority can only be accomplished through developing close student-teacher relationships. Mr. Bartlett laments in *Stanza 3* that having to teach the ECART is taking away from his ability to develop these classroom management strategies. In the next section, I will examine how Mr. Bartlett approaches the ECART in his classroom as well as how he talks about this approach.

7.8 Mr. Bartlett's 10th Grade Classroom

Mr. Bartlett had been given a newly renovated classroom at Najah, one which had not been previously occupied by an Arab English teacher. For this reason, Mr. Bartlett was solely responsible for decorating his own walls. Despite this difference, Mr. Bartlett's classroom was as colorful and bright as the rooms of his other colleagues in the English department. There was a large bulletin board on the wall opposite the windows which Mr. Bartlett had covered with yellow paper. Over the paper, Mr. Bartlett had stapled laminated printouts of regular and irregular verbs with their conjugations. On the back wall were more verb conjugations, and above them the colorful ruling Sheiks. To the left of his whiteboard, Mr. Bartlett had large charts (one for each of his three classes)

displaying his students' names next to blank spaces marked, "Points." If students displayed good behavior during a class session, Mr. Bartlett would mark an "X' in the "Points" section. The best student each week was awarded with a small certificate that Mr. Bartlett would print himself, thanking the student for his good behavior. Mr. Bartlett had also created laminated labels for each of the large objects in his room (e.g. "whiteboard," "teacher's desk," "window," "air conditioner," etc.).

Like Mr. Ramirez's classroom, the students' desks in Mr. Bartlett's room were orderly and in straight lines. On the upper right hand corner of each desk Mr. Bartlett had taped the names of the three students from each of his three classrooms who sat in those desks throughout the day. Mr. Bartlett's classes began with silent reading, and for most lessons he would stand by the door holding a small book[63] (the same book his students were expected to read) and greet his students as they entered. As with the students of his colleagues in the English Department, Mr. Bartlett's students would arrive about eight to ten minutes after the class had officially started and would continue to arrive for up to twenty minutes later. As his students entered, they would great him with "*Asalamualaykum*," a handshake, or an occasional nose-kiss, for which he would respond in kind. He would then hand them a book and ask them to sit down in their seats, a

[63] Mr. Bartlett used a book given to all the LTs by Franklin Incorporated called "Learning to Love Reading." Published in the UAE, the book had short stories and article (about a page or a page and a half long) about Emirati culture as well as word search and crossword puzzles in English.

request for which most of them complied. Mr. Bartlett also kept a cup full of pencils on his desk.

Although Mr. Bartlett taught the same grade and sections as Mr. Hammond, his students' behavior was quite different. For the most part, Mr. Bartlett's students (both Arts and Science tracks) would remain in their seats. They talked and whispered in Arabic, and played on their Blackberries, but if the decibel level got too high, Mr. Bartlett would admonish them with a stern, "Hey, be quiet now," which for the most part proved effective. Mr. Bartlett's room had a bathroom next door, and the students would often ask to be excused to use it, sometimes in pairs. They were permitted one at a time and would often go in succession, returning ten minutes later smelling of cigarette smoke. If students took too long, Mr. Bartlett would sometimes send other students to retrieve them, explaining to the class, "I am going to mark him [the student in the bathroom] as absent." Occasionally students from other classes would peak their heads into the room. Mr. Bartlett would gently push them out and shut the door.

Mr. Bartlett changed his behavior when teaching Arts tracks classes and Science track classes. For Arts track classes he had his students sit quietly at their desks during silent reading. He would walk around the room and reprimand students who talked too loud or who made no attempt to hide their Blackberries as he walked by. However, with his Science track students he would sometimes ask student to read sentences aloud,

checking for understanding by asking them questions about specific vocabulary words. In both Arts and Science track classes, if the students became too loud Mr. Bartlett would threaten to lower their grades, a threat which worked most of the time.

Like Mr. Hammond, Mr. Bartlett taught the ECART by projecting a readymade dialogue or response on the whiteboard which the students were expected to copy into their ECART booklets. However, Mr. Bartlett differed from Mr. Hammond in that in his Science track class he had particular students read the readymade answers. He would stop them during their reading and explain specific aspects of the response, using specific students to translate the explanations to the class. With his Arts track classes, Mr. Bartlett would sometimes arrange to have an eleventh grade student translator come into the class and translate specific parts of the readymade answers to the students. On days when there were no translators (about half the time), for Arts track students, it was a straight copy job. On these days, students who were unsure of the assignment would yell out, "Teacher, copy paste?" for which Mr. Bartlett would answer in the affirmative. On most days, if students had completed all of their work, Mr. Bartlett would reward them with a movie on the overhead projector. However, if certain students became too loud or left their seats, he would pause the movie until they behaved, or until the collective anger of their peers forced their compliance.

When I asked Mr. Bartlett, "How do you approach the ECART?" he told me the following narrative underscoring a particular day in his Science track class when his student translators were absent:

Stanza 1: ORIENTATION

01 I'm trying to have some discussion (.) with the stronger ones [students who
02 have higher English skills] e::hem who—who in turn **translate** to the weaker
03 ones and I try to make the weaker ones **say it** [the translated discussion]
04 **themselves** so that—so that they [the students with lower English skills] can
05 **say** different sentences. And then we [the class] try and write—write down—
06 they [the students] transcribe off the board what I've written on the board—
07 there's a lot of that going on.

Stanza 2: COMPLICATING ACTION

08 Like (.) one day last week—or **this** week—[to himself] was it yesterday or the
09 day before yesterday? I had one of my [Science track] classes with (.) **without**
10 (.) sa::y the (.) couple of kids in the class that I would rely on (…) a::nd (.) it
11 [the lesson] was a **disaster**.

Stanza 3: EVALUATION

12 I just realized [that day] how bad—how bad—in **need** [of the translators] we
13 were. Well, there was a **few** more [students in the class] who would normally
14 speak up but didn't have the confidence or something (.) u::h (.) or whatever (.)
15 but without those couple of guys [the translators] who I would normally uh (.)
16 **push** for answers—they'd [the student translators would] normally—they'd
17 normally volunteer answers anyway (.) so when things were—when the **chips**
18 were down like they'd uh (.) they'd keep the thing [the lesson] going but uh (.)
19 then [without the student translators] the other ones [the other students] just
20 didn't have a clue.

Stanza 3a

21 And then halfway through the lesson I (.) **felt** the need (.) to explain ECART
22 again and what was expected of them [from the lesson] because some of them
23 seemed to be off the **mark** a bit (.) and u::h I just couldn't uh (.) get it **across**
24 to them without these—these couple of **guys** [the absent translators].

Stanza 4: RESULT

25 So I had to go and get u::h (.) a child—a student out of Mr. Hassan's class (.)
26 to come in [and translate] because I said "this [the lesson] **has** to be clear." But
27 it's [teaching the ECART] definitely **tough** like (.) it's **tough** (.) insane like.

In his curriculum story about teaching the ECART, Mr. Bartlett continued to stress the teacher's role in meeting the needs of his students. Throughout the narrative, Mr. Bartlett emphasized his desire to have students understand what they were copying. The narrative of a day without student translators, where Mr. Bartlett's lesson "was a **disaster**" (ln. 11), is an example of *a story within a story*, in Gee's (1999) terms "intertextuality"—that is, it's a story that Mr. Bartlett has introduced in order to support, or to give meaning to, the curriculum story where his students copy readymade material into their ECART booklets. Starting in *Stanza 2* the narrative of the day without translators underscores Mr. Bartlett's belief that all of his students should be able to understand what they are copying in order for the lesson to be meaningful. Mr. Bartlett's comments that he "**felt** the need" (ln. 21) to go over the ECART again, and that the lesson "**has** to be clear" (ln. 26) also emphasize this belief. Although his students are

simply copying material from the whiteboard into their ECART booklets, Mr. Bartlett believes that by providing student translators he is making an attempt to *meet their needs.*

Moreover, Mr. Bartlett's explanation of the students who didn't "speak up" (ln. 14) and help him translate on the day of the lesson speaks to his belief *that students need to feel confident in order to participate in class*, a second motif supporting the schema of the *teacher as familial role model*. Whereas Mr. Williams and Mr. Ramirez explained their students' reluctance to participate in terms of apathy, for Mr. Bartlett, this behavior was a symptom of the student's lack of confidence. And unlike Mr. Williams, who lamented that the ECART was flawed due to the fact that he had to walk his students through it, Mr. Bartlett's narrative presupposes that part of the teacher's role is to do just that—to hold students' hands through the ECART material so that they feel confident with themselves and enjoy the experience. Mr. Bartlett continued with this line of reasoning when I asked him: "What are the students getting out of the ECART?"

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Bartlett: The annoying thing is it's impossible to do all this [the ECART]
02 when you have (.) maybe **fifty**—sixty percent of them [the students] who—
03 who don't understand you, you know. They're [the students] not learning
04 anything.

Stanza 1a

05 The **stronger** ones [the students with higher levels of English] are, you
06 **know**—they're learning **new** uh (.) vocabulary and all (.) u::m and the weak—

07 weaker one's [students with lower levels of English] are just there copying and
08 sitting in a **daze**—they might pick up some things (.) but they're kinda—
09 they're kinda just doing it [copying the ECART] uh (.) as a **means** to an end—
10 to get it done (.) and get the marks—not to actually pick up anything—they're
11 not getting **involved** in it [the ECART] you know, they're not taking anything
12 from it I don't think—I don't think anyway.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

13 Yeah there's a distinct impression that uh (.) [the student say] "We just need to
14 **do** this we just need to get it done," not (.) "I can't wait to (.) uh (.) do that
15 interview thing. I'd say we're gonna enjoy that," or "**God**, I really liked (.)
16 reading that piece."

Stanza 2a

17 If they don't understand it [the ECART] (.) **what's** the point like. **E::ven** if it's
18 translated to them (.) they—it's not the same as reading it themselves and
19 understanding it, you know. They don't know which word was **which** (.) in the
20 translation probably or whatever, and (…) I don't—it's [the ECART] **not** a
21 good way. It's not a good way.

Mr. Bartlett's discourse displays the same empathy towards his students that I have already shown in Chapter Four to be characteristic of the schema of the *teacher as familial role model*. In this schema of teaching, the teacher's role involves catering to his students' needs. Students learn when they like both the teacher and the subject being taught, and when they have confidence in themselves. Like his American colleagues, Mr. Bartlett believed that the problem with the ECART was that it was too advanced for his students. However, Mr. Bartlett *explained* this problem in terms of *how it made his students feel* rather than whether or not it permitted them to work independently. Hence,

Mr. Bartlett's voicing his students' feelings in *Stanza 2* presupposes that students should enjoy and like doing their work.

Mr. Bartlett also explained the behavior of his Science and Arts track students in a different manner than his American colleagues when commenting on a noisy Science track class during a stimulated recall interview:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Bartlett: You know it's strange like (.) their [the Science students] ability
02 is—is a lot **more** obviously, but sometimes it's hard to settle them (.) or to stop
03 them from **talking**, you know. It's always been hard to quiet them down.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

04 There's such a high level of **noise** in that class because so many of them [the
05 students] are trying to get involved. Whereas (.) you know (.) sometimes with
06 the ARTs [track] class (.) you're relying on three or four kids (.) for all your
07 feedback and (.) attention or whatever, and (…) you know, some of the other
08 ones [students] will be talking among themselves, but sometimes they'll be
09 just **sitting** there /pretends to be using a Blackberry/ looking at their
10 Blackberry or whatever, not—not actually doing anything.

Stanza 2a

11 So that's why (.) these ones [the Science track students] are actually hard to
12 keep quiet because they are (.) **bright** and sparky, you know—but actually
13 really I'd rather **that** than (…) um (.) than kids that aren't really there, you
14 know.

Stanza 2b

15 You have to get them [the Arts track students] psyched-up like you know. So
16 (.)when they don't understand **anything** like you know. If I could (.) I don't

17 know, if I had enough Arabic to make a **joke** and (.) **mess** with the Arts [track]
18 classes or whatever (.) to get them to interested—you know the way kids if
19 you're making jokes and all that, they kinda listen just in case there's another
20 **joke** coming, you know.

Stanza 2c

21 And that's what I always do in Ireland—I'll (.) **dance** around the classroom
22 looking stupid just to get their attention (.) u::m (.) but here—you know like I
23 don't have the **language** ability you know—and I **have** been using as much
24 Arabic as I can (.) e::h just—just to—because they [the students] think it's
25 **funny** when they hear me saying stuff in Arabic, you know. Like if a kid
26 comes in and says, "Sorry I'm late," I'll say "*mafi mushkila*" ["no problem"]
27 and then they [the student] go "**ah**" /making thumbs up with his hands/
28 because (.) they hear me saying it.

Mr. Bartlett initially explained his students' behavior in the same manner as Mr. Ramirez, who argued that his Science track classes were more academically inclined than his Arts track classes. However, whereas Mr. Ramirez explained the behavior of his Arts track students in terms of apathy of a lack of will to want to learn, Mr. Bartlett's discourse presupposes that the problem with the Arts track students *lies with the teacher*. Through this schema, the onus is on the teacher to learn the students' language in order to entertain them and thus entice their involvement in class. The story of Mr. Bartlett entertaining his students in *Stanza 2c* represents another incidence of intertextuality (Gee, 1999), where Mr. Bartlett relates his practices of dancing around the classroom in Ireland to using Arabic with his Emirati students, practices which represent what he believed to be characteristic of the teacher's role in the classroom. These examples stand in stark

contrast to Mr. Hammond's assertion that catering to his students' "Bedouin ways" (ln. 34) represented "Uncle Tom foolery" (ln. 31).

7.9 Mr. Hassan Talks about the Curriculum

Mr. Hassan worked as both a teacher and the Head of the English Department (HOD) at Najah. An Egyptian, Mr. Hassan had taught high school English for five years in Egypt before coming to the UAE. In the UAE, Mr. Hassan had been teaching English in public high schools for the past fifteen years. He had been at Najah for five of those years, and was the only remaining member of the original English department made up of pan-Arab teachers. Although he was serious when it came to school issues, he was always friendly and welcoming. Mr. Hassan taught two grade 11 Science track classes.

When I asked Mr. Hassan "What is the curriculum? How do you define the word curriculum?" he posited that curriculum should meet students' needs:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Hassan: Curriculum is (.) the **content** you teach (.) to the students (.)
02 according to **their** level (.) okay, a::nd (.) that **suits** their abilities—their needs
03 (.) and this curriculum content also should (.) suit their [the students'] customs
04 and traditions. So:: (.) it's [the curriculum is] the **content** (.) taught by the
05 teacher. There are some **conditions** (.) to this content which uh (.) are (.)
06 maybe (.) that (.) **suits** the:: (.) **level** of students (.) and at the same time (.) uh
07 (.) suits the:: (.) **society**—customs and traditions.

Although Mr. Hassan's response echoes the American teachers, who described the curriculum in terms of tangible skills, Mr. Hassan's definition also includes a curriculum meta-narrative mandating that the curriculum meet the specific needs of students. Quinn (1982) and others (D'Andrade, 1995; Rice, 1980) found that schema often operate as structures which define aims and goals for individuals. Thus Nespor (1985) argues that teacher's beliefs are often the means they use to "define [the] goals and tasks" (p. 20) of a curriculum. For Mr. Hassan, the ultimate goal of any curriculum must include taking care of students' needs, both meeting them on their level of ability and being suited for their culture and traditions. As I have already shown in Chapter Four, Mr. Hassan also defined *teaching* in terms of *meeting students' needs*, a salient feature of the schema where the teacher is metaphorically understood as a familial role model.

As the HOD, Mr. Hassan had participated in classroom observations of the English teachers, and he was aware of their practices and implementations of the ECART. He also received reports from students on a regular basis about the goings-on in other classes. When I asked Mr. Hassan, "What is the curriculum here at Najah?" he discussed what he knew to be the practice of having students copy readymade material in many of the English classrooms:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Hassan: ECART (.) But I'm sure what's inten—**intended** by ECART
02 was—is completely different (.) from what we are doing (.) in **our** school.
03 ECART depends on (.) research (.) **learning** (.) you see. U::h there is (.)
05 visual **research** (.) uh information research, book research—even intervie::ws.
06 The students themselves should think about the questions—they are going to
07 think about—get the information, summarize the **information**.

Stanza 1a

08 U::h what happens [supposed to happen in the ECART] is completely different
09 from what is being **done** [at Najah]. U::h (.) what happens now (.) u::h—the
10 ECART from—we—most teachers. I—I—I'm teaching the Science section—
11 in the Science section is a little bit—different learning strategies. But (.) for
12 Arts [track] section just (.) what I see that most teachers (.) u::h (.) do the work
13 for the students (.) and students just **copy** to fill in the ECART booklet.
14 They—they [the Arts track students] didn't do any **research** or any
15 summarization or (…) **everything** is readymade for them [students].

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

16 Maybe because (.) our students are not accustomed to (.) the **ECART**—they
17 are not familiar with that. U::h (.) their [the students'] (.) **standard** of English
18 is (.) not suitable to—for grade twelve or eleven, and actually they [the
19 students] are level **three** or two (.) so they need the help.

Mr. Hassan's evaluation of what is occurring at Najah is interesting as he admitted that many of the English teachers were not following what he understood to be the spirit of the ECART. However, in *Stanza 2* he seemed to excuse the teachers for these practices based upon the overriding principle (i.e. the meta-narrative Mr. Hassan revealed above) that the students "need the help" (ln. 19). As previously discussed, Shkedi (2009)

argues that teachers "intuitively use a narrative to bring order to what they consider a disjointed curriculum" (p. 836). Mr. Hassan absolved the English teachers of their curricular sins based upon three narratives surrounding the purpose of teaching, the purpose of the curriculum, and the nature of the students at Najah, and these narratives arise from the schema of the teacher as familial role model. In the next section I will examine how Mr. Hassan enacts the ECART in his eleventh grade Science track classes.

7.10 Mr. Hassan's 11th Grade Classroom

Mr. Hassan had kept the same classroom that he occupied for the previous two years at Najah. His classroom was always neat and orderly and full of color. There were two large bulletin boards, one on the side wall opposite the windows and one on the back wall, which Mr. Hassan had covered with red paper with a bright yellow trim. On these boards he displayed class schedules with his students' names for each class, various diagrams about the writing process, and lists of commonly used English words. Above the board on the back wall were other posters displaying verb conjugation and adjectives. Next to the whiteboard was a smaller whiteboard where Mr. Hassan had listed the goals for each day, the date and specific exercises making up the day's class work. He always kept his desks arranged in groups of four, positioned diagonally facing the front of the room. Above the whiteboard in the front of the room were the three ruling Sheikhs, and

to the right of the whiteboard was a map of the world with countries and cities listed in English.

Like his colleagues in the English department, Mr. Hassan's students would start arriving eight to ten minutes late to his class. They would greet him with *Asalamualaykum* (Peace be upon you), for which he would respond with *Alykum Assalam* (and also with you). He would shake their hands and tell them in Arabic to go retrieve their ECART booklets from a stack on a filing cabinet in front of the room. Like his other colleagues he also kept pencils on his desk ready for students in need. Mr. Hassan's initial correspondence with all of his students was in Arabic, telling them to get to their seats and open their ECARTs to specific pages, or addressing specific students who might need to leave the room for a few minutes for various reasons (e.g. to talk with another teacher or to call home, etc). His demeanor was always calm, and he addressed students with a smile, holding them in a handshake until the conversation was complete. About fifteen minutes after the bell marking the start of class, most students were in their seats ready to work. Students sat in groups of four facing each other.

Mr. Hassan taught the ECART on most days using an overhead projector, on which he projected a specific aspect of the ECART (e.g. a short reading, a poem, or a brainstorming activity). He would initially begin explaining these exercises in English, but would inevitably switch to Arabic as students raised their hands and asked him

questions using this language. Sometimes Mr. Hassan would have particular students read an article he had projected on the whiteboard (e.g. about civic responsibility, for instance), but would often resort to reading it himself if no students volunteered, or if the student reading it had too much trouble. After the lesson was complete, Mr. Hassan would put the students to work. They would have to complete the questions on a specific page of the ECART booklet, for instance, or might have to fill in bubbles on a brainstorming chart about a specific topic.

During their seatwork, Mr. Hassan moved from table to table, directing students as they worked. These conversations were always in Arabic, and Mr. Hassan would sometimes get flustered when students from other tables would get up and approach him needing assistance. However, he was always patient, giving them the cultural sign to wait, which consisted of pinching the thumb, forefinger and middle finger together. Most tables had a particular student (usually only one) who, after consulting with Mr. Hassan in Arabic, would complete the assignment on his own. The other students at the table would wait for this occurrence and then copy the material from the liaison student into their ECART booklets. Sometimes students at tables with ineffective or absent liaisons would switch tables in order to copy the proper material into their ECART booklets. They did this quietly and without causing disruption to the class. Students sometimes used their Blackberries at the table, but would do so discretely. If Mr. Hassan saw this he

would tell them in Arabic to put their Blackberries away, a command for which they would smile and comply. If it was late in the day (i.e. during the last two classes of the day), Mr. Hassan would reward his students with a movie on the overhead projector, or he might even allow them to leave early.

When I asked Mr. Hassan "How do you approach the ECART?" he emphasized the importance of group work:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Hassan: With ECART I prefer group work (.) and I:: (.) classify or (.) u::h
02 (.) make students sit u::h in groups according to (.) u::h (.) they [the students]
03 are **mixed** level groups. Um (.) there is a leader—the best one who makes as—
04 he works as a shadow teacher (.) and three or two (.) **weak** students—
05 according to their level.

Stanza 1a

06 And at sometimes there is also a **needy** student. I don't like them [the
07 needy students] to (.) to—to—to (.) **sit** together. They are Science students, but
08 at the same time there are (.) slow learners. You know u::m—and I see that
09 most [of these] students are (…) **weak** in grammar. They [the Science
10 students] know English (.) and the::y (…) they—they have a lot of **vocabulary**
11 (.) but at the same time they cannot write a complete (.) uh (.) a complete
12 grammar (.) uh (.) a complete sentence—**grammatically** correct.

In keeping with his rationalization about his Western colleagues' practice of having students copy readymade material, Mr. Hassan described his own practice where students copy from *each other* in terms of stronger students helping weaker students.

Hence, although Mr. Hassan doesn't mention anything about students copying from each other, he implied this through the process where a "leader" (ln. 3) student helps his weaker companions. Mr. Hassan's description of his teaching presupposes the need for students to work collectively, a need he elaborated on when I asked him: "What are [the students] they getting out of this [the way you teach the ECART]?"

Stanza 1: EVALUATION

01 Well in groups there are a lot of (.) benefits. You [the student] are—you have
02 someone who is (.) uh (.) **assisting** you—giving help to you [the student]. You
03 will feel more comfortable. U::h (.) second one [benefit] you are reducing or
04 managing the class. And number three [benefit] they [the students] are helping
05 each other—helping the other students. So—but sometimes I (.) resort to (.)
06 individual work (.) when there is something everyone is going to write about—
07 a special task or (.) a special task (.) u::h (.) **some** individual questions.

Mr. Hassan evaluated his method of group work, which I have shown was essentially a way for students to copy from one another, through the schema of the teacher as *familial role model*. Thus, Mr. Hassan emphasized the importance of making students feel "comfortable" (ln. 3) in class through having other students assist them. Like with Mr. Bartlett, empathetic caring about students' immediate feelings is a taken-for-granted, or "anchored" in Silverstein's (1985) terms, feature of Mr. Hassan's schema of teaching. Mr. Hassan continued to empathize with his students when I asked him the following question about his code switching to Arabic in class:

Thomas: Now sometimes you will switch to Arabic when you are talking to them [the students]. At what times will you switch to Arabic?

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Hassan: U::h (.) [I switch to Arabic] especially when giving instructions.
02 But while [the students are] on task I:: (.) I go in English. But u::h (.) with
03 instructions (.) sometimes I **resort** to Arabic—use Arabic as uh (.) a **way** of uh
04 (.) **helping** weaker students. They [the weaker students] need Arabic (.) to **help**
05 them.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

06 Even—even—I see that if you are an LT [a Western teacher] and—a native-
07 speaker [of English] teacher (…) and you are giving them [Arts track students]
08 instructions (.) they [the students] cannot understand your instructions—the::y
09 (.) **go** to their colleagues [peers] and ask for **translation** and ask (…) what's
10 the task—what type to have—"what should we do (.) in this task?" **So** (.)
11 instead—I am seeing this (.) **point** and I give instructions in **English** (.) and for
12 the weaker students I give them (.) in Arabic.

Stanza 2a

13 The weaker students who need instruction (.) **how** could they understand what
14 they need to do? So they go to their colleagues (.) and ask.

For Mr. Hassan, then, learning English was not primarily a matter of using the English language in class; it was a matter of whether the students *understood* the tasks they needed to accomplish. Mr. Hassan linked this importance to the students' feelings about the teacher in a stimulated recall interview:

Stanza 1: ORIENTATION

01 Mr. Hassan: Sometimes the students come to me (.) uh (.) during [their]
02 English classes (.) and they say to me, *usteth* [teacher] I don't understand him
03 [the Western teacher (LT)]. I don't understand **anything**." This—this happens.

Stanza 2: COMPLICATING ACTION

04 And when I (.) attended some (…) fellow teachers [LTs' classes] I found that
05 (.) they [the LTs] resort to a translator [another student] (.) a translator—to
06 translate to his [the student translator's] colleagues [his peers] what they have
07 to do.

Stanza 3: RESULT

08 So:: (.) **again** we (.) go back to [the way of] the bilingual [Arab] teachers (…)
09 and I found out also something which is related to those good students [the
10 student translators]—sometimes do not understand what the teacher [LT] is
11 saying (.) so they translate things according to their own understanding (.) not
12 actual translation of uh [the teacher's instructions].

Stanza 4: EVALUATION

13 And a lot of problems happen because of misunderstanding (.) uh (.) the
14 teacher. This makes the students—they—they dislike the teacher (.) and they
15 can't take anything from him.

In Chapter Five, I showed that Mr. Hassan ascribed more value to Arabic than to English. He argued that Arabs should be proud of their language and continue to speak to each other in Arabic. In the above narrative, Mr. Hassan elaborated on this assertion, implying that the bilingual Arab teachers who were replaced by the monolingual Western teachers were perhaps better suited to teach the students at Najah. The frustration students

feel when they cannot understand the teacher's instructions led them to "dislike" (ln. 14) their teachers, and for Mr. Hassan this meant they will not learn.

In this section I have examined how the majority of English teachers at Najah implemented ADEC's curriculum in their classrooms. Although the teachers found fault with formal curriculum, their practices and theirs narratives about those practices presupposes the feeling of obligation to produce a particular curricular product. Although their behaviors in the classroom often mirrored each other, I have shown that these teachers *interpreted* those behaviors differently through cultural schemas surrounding the nature of teaching. In the next section, I will examine those teachers who rejected the curriculum in its entirety.

Throwing Out the Curriculum

The second category of teachers were those who ignored the curriculum altogether, choosing to teach what they each felt their students needed. Like their colleagues, these teachers believed that ADEC's curriculum was too advanced for their students. However, instead of muscling through it, these teachers felt no loyalty to the curriculum whatsoever, and threw it out. As I have shown in previous chapters, these two teachers each talked about poignant and sometimes painful experiences in their lives where "the system" had let them down in some way. For Mr. Abel, it was his experiences as a teacher in Tunisia under the oppressive Ben Ali regime, and Mr. Drake believed that

through systematic racism he was permitted to graduate high school without acquiring the skills he needed for success in life. For these two teachers, their beliefs about what their students needed as well as their unique personal experiences trumped the mandate that they should follow the rules and produce a specific curricular product.

7.11 Mr. Abel Talks about the Curriculum

Mr. Abel, a Tunisian, had been teaching English in the UAE for the past sixteen years. Before the UAE, he had worked as an English teacher in both high school and teaching foundation courses at the university level in Tunisia for three years. Mr. Abel loved a good conversation and would listen attentively before offering his insight, which would often consist of a statement of fact followed by a humorous commentary utilizing references to famous Western writers (i.e. Shakespeare, Chaucer, etc.). In his late forties, Mr. Abel had raised his entire family in the UAE and was looking forward to his youngest daughter's graduation from high school in two years. After this event, Mr. Abel had plans to return home to Tunisia, where he had built a house for his family to live. Mr. Abel taught two tenth grade Arts track classes.

When I asked Mr. Abel, "What is the curriculum? How do you define the word curriculum?" he described it as a road map utilized for a better society:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Abel: A curriculum (.) is a **road map** (.) **provided** by (.) **those** who are (.)
02 in—in power. It's a road map (.) to be followed (.) **by::** (.) **students** and
03 teachers to take them (.) to a **safe** place, to **help them** achieve their goals. At
04 the end we'll have well educated **citizens** (.) u::h (.) they (.) u::h (…) they
05 [well educated citizens] are—the society will **need** them so they will need—
06 they—they will provide service (.) so this **road map** (.) at the end (.) it [the
07 curriculum] will take us to the **safe land** (.) **where** everybody has a role in uh
08 so—in the society.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

09 So what we need—for example if we need people who can (.) **read** and write,
10 okay, we'll provide this. We need people who think (.) **critically**, so we
11 provide this in the curriculum. We need people **who** (.) uh (.) a::re technical
12 minded (.) that means for—because we need technicians in the society at the
13 end—we need technicians so we'll provide—we need teachers, so the
14 curriculum will guide us through this path to heaven.

For Mr. Abel, his curriculum meta-narrative had profound implications for society. The metaphor of the "**road map**" (ln. 1; ln. 6) is important as it echoes Mr. Abel's Islamic beliefs about a "path to heaven" (ln. 14). The first *surah* [chapter] In the Holy Qur'an, entitled *Al Fatiha* [the opening], also makes reference to such a path:

سورة الفاتحة *Al Fatiha* [Chapter 1: "The Opening"]

1:1 بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَـنِ الرَّحِيمِ
1:2 الْحَمْدُ للَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
1:3 الرَّحْمَـنِ الرَّحِيمِ
1:4 مَـالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ
1:5 إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

1:6 ـــا الصِّرَاطَ المُستَقِيمَاهدِنَـ
1:7 صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنعَمتَ عَلَيهِمْ غَيرِ المَغضُوبِ عَلَيهِمْ وَلاَ الضَّالِّينَ

1:1 Bismillaah ar-Rahman ar-Raheem
1:2 Al hamdu lillaahi rabbil 'alameen
1:3 Ar-Rahman ar-Raheem
1:4 Maaliki yaumid Deen
1:5 Iyyaaka na'abudu wa iyyaaka nasta'een
1:6 Ihdinas siraatal mustaqeem
1:7 Siraatal ladheena an 'amta' alaihim Ghairil maghduubi' alaihim aladaaleen

1:1 In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.
1:2 Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds,
1: 3 The Beneficent, the Merciful.
1: 4 Master of the Day of Judgment,
1: 5 Thee (alone) we worship; Thee (alone) we ask for help.
1:6 Guide us to the straight path,
1:7 The path of those whom Thou hast favored; Not the (path) of those who earn Thine anger nor of those who go astray.

Often compared to the "Lord's Prayer" in Christianity, every Muslim memorizes this chapter of the Holy Qur'an, and it is recited at least seventeen times per day as part of the five obligatory prayers Muslims must pray. In verses 1:6 and 1:7 Muslims supplement to God, asking to be guided on the "straight path." For Mr. Abel, education is part of this "straight path" when it provides each member of society a role in which they can contribute to its betterment. Mr. Abel continued with the metaphor of the path to heaven when I asked him, "What is the curriculum here at Najah?" arguing that ADEC's curriculum represents a faltering from the path:

Stanza 1: Abstract

01 Mr. Abel: The **actual** curriculum is something (.) which is brought from (.) uh
02 (.) **Queensland** University (.) from Australia[64] (.) **parachu::ted**—parachu::ted
03 in the UAE (.) so (…) it's a **very** goo::d curriculum in intentions. That means
04 the intention is **e::xcellent** (.) **but** is it the roadmap that will take us to the safe
05 land we are talking about? I don't think so.

Stanza 1a

06 They [ADEC] **have** provided—they have taken something from a different
07 country (.) **people** [Australians] with a different mother tongue—that means it
08 was for example **designed** (.) this curriculum in **Queensland** (.) this
09 curriculum was designed first for **those** [people] whose mother tongue is
10 English (.) not **Arabic** or Urdu or anything (…) so this curriculum is **designed**
11 for **people** who are not predominantly **Muslims**. We should never **igno::re**
12 this [that the curriculum is designed for non-Muslims] because we **like** it or
13 **not** (.) **people** [teachers and students] have this in mind that means when they
14 come to school they have this in mind.

Stanza 1b

15 The **third** thing is that this curriculum is for people who have **learned** the
16 **language** [English] (.) **at least** for six years (.) before coming to school—
17 because it's their mother tongue, so when you start discussing you have a
18 stored language—a **stored** knowledge that you can rely on.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

19 And then it [the curriculum] is being (.) **parachu::ted** and taken as a whole.
20 So I think that [implementing the curriculum] will be a total (.) **fiasco**. It will
21 **ne::ver** (.) succeed. For the roadmap—you cannot start a **roadmap** [the reform
22 program]—if you want to follow the roadmap, you have to start from the

[64] As previously discussed, the English Continuous Assessment Rich Task (ECART) and the Academic English Language Handbook (AEL), two prominent parts of ADEC's curriculum frame and task narratives, were developed in cooperation with the State of Queensland, particularly the New South Wales School District.

23 beginning. If I just **drop** you in the middle of the road (.) it will be **very**
24 difficult because you do not have anything to build on.

Drawing on Clandinin and Connelly (2000), Skhedi (2009) argues that teachers' curriculum narratives are "the critical medium by which teachers make sense of their work" (p. 836). For Mr. Abel, the curriculum that ADEC had asked him to implement utterly contradicted his belief that the curriculum should guide teachers and students on a path to a better society. The curriculum was contradictory for two specific reasons related to the schema of *the teacher as familial role model*. First, as it was designed for Western, non-Muslim students, the curriculum was not suited for the students of public schools in the UAE, who are all Muslims. Second, the curriculum is designed for native-English speakers and thus does not meet the needs of UAE students who are second-language speakers.

Moreover, the metaphor of the parachute is a poignant description of Mr. Abel's belief that ADEC's curriculum represented a form of coercion. That Mr. Abel called the curriculum a "**fiasco**" (ln. 20) that will "**ne::ver** (.) succeed" (ln. 21) signified his utter rejection of it, as well as his belief that he had no obligation to follow it. Like Mr. Bartlett and Mr. Hassan, Mr. Abel found fault with the curriculum frame and task narratives due to their being too complex for Najah students, and he described these faults in terms of *the teacher as familial role model*, where the curriculum did not *meet the needs of his students*. However, Mr. Abel chose to completely reject the curriculum, describing it as a

type of oppression from above that has landed on the heads of students and teachers in the UAE.

Mr. Abel's rejection of the curriculum is also significant as it reflects his unique experiences, experiences he described in Chapter Five, where he was harassed by members of the Ben Ali regime. In this narrative describing how he came to the UAE to teach, Mr. Abel ultimately rejected his government's coercion, leaving his country behind for a new life in the UAE. In numerous informal interviews, Mr. Abel related his belief that most governments were corrupt and incompetent. He also related his belief that the education system in the UAE represented the incompetence and ineptitude of the UAE government, a belief which I will show he reiterates in the narratives below. Thus, Mr. Abel's curriculum story echoes his own life experiences, and involves resistance to what he believes to be the coercive implementation of a foreign curriculum. In the next section I will examine how this plays out in Mr. Abel's classroom.

7.12 Mr. Abel's Tenth Grade Classroom

Upon his arrival two months into the school year, Mr. Abel was given a classroom that had been previously used as a storeroom. It was a bit smaller than his colleagues' classrooms, but was clean and well-lit. Mr. Abel had designated one of the walls of the room as the "Poetry Corner." On this wall he had arranged laminated printouts of poetry terms as well as various examples of poetry in English from famous poets, both Western

and Arabic. Like his colleagues, Mr. Abel had two large bulletin boards on his walls, one on the back wall and the other on the wall next to the poetry corner, facing the windows. He had placed dark green paper over these boards and used them to display class schedules, more laminated printouts of conjugated verb forms and the Oxford list of the one hundred most commonly used words. To the left of the large whiteboard at the front of the room, Mr. Abel would write the learning objectives for day's lesson. Above the whiteboard were the three ruling Sheikhs. Unlike his colleagues, Mr. Abel did not keep a cup-of-pencils on his desk, which was often a mess with a sea of scattered papers. Like Mr. Hassan, Mr. Abel kept his students' desks in groups of four, with the students facing each other.

Mr. Abel's students arrived the usual eight to ten minutes late. His students entered with the familiar "*Asalamualaykum*" ("peace be upon you") for which Mr. Abel would respond, "*Alykum Assalam"* ("and also with you"), and then "How are you today?" in English, followed by a handshake and a motioning of the same hand for the student to take his seat. The students for both classes were generally well behaved. One rarely saw a Blackberry, and if it was present, the student used it surreptitiously before quickly placing it back into the pocket of his *kandura*. Unlike his colleagues, Mr. Abel's students were not given ECART booklets, and were rarely given a piece of paper. They sat attentively, chatted quietly in Arabic, and waited for the teacher to begin his lesson.

Mr. Abel taught class primarily from the front of the room. As his students rarely wrote anything down, there was no need to walk around and check their work. He would occasionally approach a group if the noise level rose too high and admonish them in Arabic, asking them to quiet down with a stern, "*Sota, sota, shabab*" ("Voices, voices, guys"). Mr. Abel's lessons were mostly oral. He would tell the students in both English and Arabic that, "Today we will be practicing verb conjugation," or, "Today we will be practicing constructing a complete sentence," for example. Mr. Abel would use the whiteboard heavily, writing down examples of what he wanted students to learn. He would then ask them questions in both English and Arabic concerning what they already knew about the subject. He expected a high level of participation from his students, which he received, as students would yell out answers to his queries, and then correct those answers out-loud until gaining the satisfaction of the teacher. Although the students often raised their hands, they wouldn't wait to be called upon and would shout out an answer with their hands waving furiously. Occasionally the noise level would peak and Mr. Abel would tell the students in Arabic to speak one at a time, a request which might be headed for a brief period but often fell on deaf ears.

Mr. Abel often used his LCD projector to project short cartoon movies, like Pink Panther episodes, onto the whiteboard, but he wouldn't play these for a reward or entertainment. He would integrate the cartoon into his lesson, stopping the video at

intervals and asking the students in English what they saw. If students answered in Arabic they would be reminded by the teacher, and by the snickering jabs of their peers, that they should be answering in English. Most students participated in these question-and-answer sessions, and if a student stayed quiet too long, Mr. Abel would address him directly, asking him a specific question (i.e. "what color is the man's [in the video] car?"). Occasionally, Mr. Abel would hand out paper and ask the students to write down five vocabulary words from the lesson, but these occasions were rare.

As Mr. Abel made it clear to me in interviews that he does not teach the ECART, I asked him, "How do you approach teaching in your class?" for which he responded by emphasizing the oral nature of his lessons and his use of short videos:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Abel: We mostly talk. Also (.) I'm **choosing** to use movies. This is
02 because you [the teacher] try to cater for the needs of students, and what they
03 like and how they **learn**. That means—I discovered that the majority of them
04 [students] are (.) **visual**—visual learners. They learn when they watch—and
05 they **like** things—they like movies. So I try to **use** this (.) just to teach them
06 something. So for me I chose—what's their [the students'] level? So I try to
07 add to it. It's not the **level** (.) according to ADEC curriculum **but** (.) it is **their**
08 [the students'] level.

Stanza 1a

09 [With movies] You can pause it and you can discuss. And even sometimes you
10 can (.) **teach** them [the students] some strategies of reading. For example,
11 there's a word [in a movie] (.) there's a word for example which comes like
12 "**camera**"—they [the students] don't know the word camera or what it

13 **means**—"What's this word?" So (.) you are developing the strategy of
14 **predicting** the word from the pictures [in the movie]—from the **context**. So
15 this is a strategy—this is movie this [the picture in the paused movie] is a
16 passage, and the reading [the word camera] is a passage. The only difference is
17 these are pictures and (.) they have a **script**. And also from the script—from
18 the **context** they [the students] can try to:: (.) **get** the meaning (.) of the word.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

19 [Discussing the way the students try to read the word in the paused movie]
20 Have you seen how they [the students] try to read the words? They just read
21 them as **pictures**—some of them—that means that I do this [pause the film]
22 on **purpose** (.) they [the students] are reading the words. **Those** who know—
23 that means—how do they know it? They are just using their stored language.
24 Like they said, "the Pink **Pantera**," I don't know, one of them said. Some of
25 them [the students] were trying to **read** the words "P-ink P-an-ther" (.) so that
26 was interesting—that gives you a clue of the level of students and **where** they
27 are exactly.

Stanza 2a

28 See they are reading words just like **pictures** (.) and that's the fi::rst **ste::p** in
29 **lea::rning**—that means, these people [the students] have been going to school
30 for **ten** years, but they haven't learned anything. They [their previous teachers]
31 were **teaching** them, but did they [the students] learn anything? No. Why?
32 Because everybody [teachers] starts from the fifth step and not from the **first**
33 step—if you don't start from the first step—that means, they [the students]
34 won't learn. Because it's [the content is] **above** their level, so here they [the
35 students] are trying to read these words.

For Mr. Abel, teaching involves meeting the needs of his students, a belief which trumps his obligation to the formal curriculum. This belief also presupposes the need for a teacher to recognize his students' ability levels and develop lessons based upon those levels. As the ECART didn't meet students at their level, Mr. Abel replaced it with his

own lessons that did, or in Nespor's (1987) terms, he "layer[ed] some supplementary system of goals and aims over the course content" (p. 153). Thus as Mr. Abel believed that his students were visual learners, he created visual lessons for them. Mr. Abel rationalized this course of action through the schema of *the teacher as familial role model* when I asked him, "What are your students getting out of this [your lessons]?"

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Abel: They [the students] are gaining **much** more than they do in
02 ECART—classes with ECART. When I talk to the **majority** of them [the
03 students] (.) they have this **feeling** (.) they are not **really** bad—not—but they
04 have the **feeling** (.) classes like this [ECART classes] (.) they have the **feeling**
05 that (.) they are **dumb**. They don't understand **anything**.

Stanza 1a

06 So they were given this feeling (.) and nobody tried (.) to **help** them (.) **believe**
07 in themselves. For them they—they are—they **believe** that they know nothing
08 (.) that they are not good for **learning** and that's it. So (.) the time when (.)
09 they **fee::l** that they are doing something, so their confidence is built (.) and
10 they **try** to learn. And by trying they become active and so.

Stanza 1b

11 They don't have to write anything [in Mr. Abel's class]. I'm just giving them
12 confidence (.) and then (.) **trying** (.) to make sentences—I know that means
13 they will make some errors. And whenever they err—it's **really** important—I
14 try to (.) draw their attention or try to **rephrase** the word—rephrase the
15 sentence so that they say it correctly (…) **without** trying—without (.) u::h (.)
16 **offending** them or making them worried about making mistakes. And then (.)
17 they feel that they **know** they are **lea::rning** (.) and that's why they participate.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

18 U::h (.) your role as a teacher—you **try** to find something that **really** addresses
19 them [the students] (.) and (.) the **thing** that they need—these kids **need** (…)
20 your job as a teacher—you have to **build** their [the students'] confidence that
21 they are smart and they can **learn**.

Mr. Abel repeated the words "feeling" and "feel" six times throughout this discourse, emphasizing the word "feeling" three times in relation to the way his students learn. Thus, making students "feel that they **know** they are **lea::rning**" (ln. 17)—and "**believe** in themselves" (ln. 6-7)—are salient features in Mr. Abel's construction of the teacher's role. Likewise, part of making students feel confident is to make sure that they understand what they are doing and what is required of them, and like Mr. Hassan, Mr. Abel described his use of Arabic in terms of helping students understand the material and instructions:

Thomas: Now sometimes you will switch to Arabic when you are talking to them [the students]. At what times will you switch to Arabic?

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Abel: Because the level of students' [in English] is very low (.) and so you
02 switch to Arabic to explain some concepts (.) to make things really clearer.
03 And that's the—that the only reason for the use [of Arabic].

Mr. Abel believed that the ECART curriculum was not only useless as a teaching tool, but that it was ultimately harmful to the teachers and students in ADEC's reform

program. He elaborated on this belief in a narrative he related to me in a stimulated recall interview:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Abel: So here these people [ADEC] they have **very** good intentions to
02 **develop** (.) but what's the outcome? The outcome is nothing.

Stanza 2: ORIENTATION

03 That reminds me of (.) **Chomsky**[65] (.) who said something. **This** man gave us
04 **gave** an anecdote once. He said, "We used to have uh (.) **rats** in the house, and
05 we want to get rid of rats. Is this a noble goal? Yes. They have **rats**. They want
06 to get rid of rats. What's the **first** thing to (.) **do** to get rid of rats? What's the
07 enemy of the rat? **Cat**. So let's bring in a **cat**."

Stanza 3: EVAUATION

08 So still (.) does he have very good intentions this person [who brings the cat]?
09 **Yes**. My intention is to get rid of rats. So they have brought in—so here I'm
10 giving you this anecdote to say (.) there is a big difference between intentions
11 and outcomes.

Stanza 4: COMPLICATING ACTION

12 That means—**then** they brought in the cat. So (.) whenever the rat (.) goes out,
13 so this man—Chomsky was talking about—**brings in** the cat. The cat sees the
14 rat /snaps fingers/ but it doesn't go [the cat doesn't go after the rat]. So what
15 does this man do? He just **hits** the cat. Why did he hit him? Because he has
16 very good intentions—he wants **him** [the cat] to go and catch **these** rats.

[65] Despite my best efforts I haven't been able to track down the source of the story that Mr. Abel relates in this discourse. However, suffice it to say that its symbolism and what it means to Mr. Abel are more important in the context of this study than the source of the story itself.

Stanza 5: RESULT

17 The rats are growing—growing—growing (.) and the cat also gets older—
18 older (.) after some time (.) the rats are still there (.) and **whenever** the cat sees
19 the rats /snaps fingers/ he flees. He doesn't go to them. And unfortunately (.)
20 **that** man was one of the teachers (.) of Chomsky.

Stanza 6: EVALUATION

21 This man when you look at him (.) what did he **try** (.) to teach the cat? To kill
22 the rat. But **actually** (.) what **did** he teach him [the cat]—the reality? To run
23 away every time he sees a rat. Why? Because his [the man's] manners were
24 **bad**. Because by **hitting** him [the cat]—you wanted to teach him something
25 but you taught him something else (.) **without** knowing, and that's the
26 problem.

Stanza 6a

27 These people have very good intentions here in ADEC. They want
28 to do something (.) but without **knowing** they will do something else. They
29 will make—by providing a curriculum just like **this one** (.) first thing, you are
30 going to put pressure on teachers to make them (.) **be** good teachers, okay (.)
31 so we have to admit this—the majority of [English] teachers are **cheating**.

Stanza 6b

32 That does not **mean** that they are **bad**—it's the **system** itself. Because they
33 [the teachers] are trying to survive. You have provided them with something
34 [the ECART]—you want you want evidence okay you want **evidence**. You
35 [ADEC] don't want them [students] to **copy** (.) you want them to think
36 **critically**, okay, [the teachers say to the students] "Copy—copy, kids."

Stanza 6c

37 And that happens in (.) **so::** many schools here [in the UAE]. The teacher (.)
38 **needs** to **survive**. He doesn't like that [making students copy readymade
39 material]. He knows that this is **wrong**, but he's doing this. Now (.) you have

40 **destroyed** the teacher as a role model (.) because these kids [the students]
41 **know** what he's doing.

Stanza 6d

42 By **provi::ding** a curriculum like this they [ADEC] will make the students
43 **hate** the subject—hate the subject (.) because they [the students] go there [to
44 school]—they are not getting anything. So they [the students] are **wasting** their
45 time. We do not want to admit this, but the students are (.) **feeling** that they are
46 wasting their time. And (.) **if** he is wasting his time you do not have his
47 attention anymore. You have lost him.

Although Mr. Abel's narrative speaks quite clearly for itself, I will nevertheless trouble the reader with a bit of further analysis. When speaking of moral commitment, Wuthnow (1987) argues that although it is "in some ways deeply personal and subjective" (p. 78), moral commitment also involves, "symbolic constructions" (p. 78) or, "boundaries" (p. 78), which define social relationships and the nature of moral obligation for the individual; further, Wuthnow (1987) posits that "these boundaries provide strategic locations for seeking potential areas of moral crisis or erosions of moral authority" (p. 78). Like for Mr. Hammond, who believed that copying the ECART curriculum was pointless and foolish, the ECART also represented a "moral crisis" (Wuthnow, 1987, p. 78) for Mr. Abel. However, whereas the symbolic boundaries for Mr. Hammond involved students coming to class on time and working to obtain English skills, for Mr. Abel those boundaries revolved around the teacher's role as a role model for students. Whereas Mr. Hammond was concerned that the students were *actually* wasting their time, Mr. Abel lamented that the situation made the students *feel* as if they

are wasting their time. Both teachers may indeed have been concerned about the same thing—that the students and teachers were wasting their time—but they talked about this problem in strikingly different ways. Thus, for Mr. Abel, although the ECART may have been implemented with good intentions, by putting teachers and students in an impossible situation it destroys the relationships between them, relationships which form the core of Mr. Abel's beliefs about the teacher's role.

Likewise, for Mr. Abel, the New School Model Curriculum also represented the "stupidity of governments," a phenomenon I showed he linked in Chapter Five with "the stupidity of the system." Thus Mr. Abel argued that the teachers weren't flawed, but that it was the "the **system** itself" (ln. 32) that had let everyone down. Having been the victim of a corrupt system himself, Mr. Abel chose, through his actions in the classroom, to reject the ECART in its entirety.

7.13 Mr. Drake Discusses the Curriculum

Like his fellow American teachers, Mr. Drake had just arrived in Abu Dhabi two months prior to starting work at Najah. Mr. Drake had spent the last twenty years teaching Language Arts in Texas inner-city public schools. Some of that time he had also worked as an assistant vice principal at the middle school level. In his mid-fifties, he had spent four years in army before becoming a teacher, and he sometimes reminisced about his experiences serving at his post in Japan. Mr. Drake would also talk about his

experiences as an African American growing up in America in the 1970's, relating the racism he and his family experienced to his teaching practices. Although stern and direct in public, Mr. Drake would take on a gentle demeanor in private, reflecting carefully on a topic before offering his commentary. Mr. Drake taught two eleventh grade Arts track classes and a single twelfth grade Arts track class.

Like Mr. Abel, Mr. Drake initially described the curriculum as guidance to a more satisfactory place when I asked him, "What is the curriculum? How do you define the word curriculum?"

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Drake: U::m (.) well for **me** the curriculum is (.) almost like a um (.) an
02 indicator or guide (.) as to (.) where we are trying—where we're trying to go.
03 We're trying to get—I—I look at it as—as a **general** (.) overview and then
04 almost like what you [Thomas] are doing for your research (.) it becomes
05 seminal. You start to streamline it (.) and fine (.) **tune** it.

Stanza 1a

06 For me the **curriculum** (…) it's funny because I've been in situations where
07 they [the school he taught in America] have not—they've (.) had **classes** and
08 started teaching before they—without a curriculum. And **that's**—that doesn't
09 **seem** like it—it—it should even be. It's [starting teaching without a
10 curriculum] almost like (.) we're going to uh (.) we're going to buy a **buggy**
11 with no horse—nothing to pull it with (.) and—and yet (.) we're still going to
12 expect it to **move**. Alright? A::nd move in a **uniform** (.) **way**.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

13 The **curriculum** (.) is more a—for me it's more a (.) a—a (…) **guide** (.) but
14 it's also (.) more of a **standard**. U::m (.) I believe strongly that you should be
15 able to—particularly in teaching—you should be able to (.) to uh (.) have some
16 **autonomy** and some—and some **latitude**, but within these boundaries.

Stanza 2a

17 Like, for example, my (.) **autonomy** and latitude would be within the **confines**
18 of this [the curricular boundaries] (.) but that would be the curriculum. The
19 curriculum is **this** and then u::m for **me** (.) there would be a couple of steps (.)
20 there would be certain steps that you would have to **make** or maintain or have
21 to (.) **touch bases** with and—and what not. In order for that [curriculum steps]
22 to (.) **keep** going forward—moving forward.

Mr. Drake constructed several metaphors in his discourse as he attempted to define the curriculum, each of them important to his curriculum story. Taken together these metaphors exemplify Gudmundsdottir's (1996) description of teachers' experiences as a, "gray, undefined mass of feelings, attitudes, and 'bag of tricks' all drenched in values" (p. 297). First, like Mr. Abel, Mr. Drake envisions the curriculum as a type of map to a better place. Next, it is the engine or "horse" (ln. 11) that pulls teachers and students in the right direction. Finally, like Mr. Williams, Mr. Drake described the curriculum through a container metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), one whose boundaries contain specific standards. Thus, for Mr. Drake, the curriculum represented a frame narrative—that is, a set of standards from which teachers draw inspiration and guidance. Salient in this conception of the curriculum is the construct of *movement,*

particularly, moving in a "**uniform** (.) **way**" (ln. 12), which Mr. Drake links in *Stanza 2* with the idea of a "**standard**" (ln. 14) in the next stanza. That Mr. Drake stresses these words with a louder voice presupposes his belief that teaching and learning represent *moving in uniform and standard way*, a construct which I will show is important to his unique curriculum story as well as to the motif of the *importance of hard work*, a subschema of *the teacher as motivational speaker*.

Moreover Mr. Drake defined the teacher's obligation to the formal curriculum five times throughout his discourse. He argued that teachers should be able to "streamline" (ln. 5) and "fine (.) **tune**" (ln. 5) the curriculum, and then emphasized the teacher's "**autonomy**" (ln. 16; ln. 17) and "**latitude**" (ln. 16) in regard to the curricular boundaries with a louder voice. As discussed previously, Shkedi (2009) finds that although many teachers express an obligation to the frame narrative of the formal written curriculum, they often feel little obligation to follow or utilize its task narratives. Mr. Drake's discourse implied a similar understanding as he expressed a desire to follow the curriculum frame narrative, but with the caveat that teachers should have autonomy to construct their own curriculum tasks.

I then asked Mr. Drake, "What is the curriculum at Najah?" and he immediately expressed his dissatisfaction with what he understood as ADEC's curriculum frame narrative:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Drake: I've actually **looked** at it[66]. **Mike** [from Franklin, Inc.] (.) gave it to
02 me. The vision (.) u::m (…) to me it doesn't—it seems more (.) an **ADEC**
03 vision. It's not it's not **centered** to our specific—it's not specific to Najah. It's
04 more of a sterile, general vision for (.) the entire program. Alright?

Stanza 1a

05 I didn't really **see** one for Najah—specific to Najah. **Uni::que** to Najah.
06 **That's** what they [ADEC] need. That's what they need. They need one unique
07 to this [Najah] (.) and—and I think with **our** (.) kids [Najah students] and
08 coming from the areas they are (.) I'm **listening**—and I'm a **dumb-ass** (.) to
09 some extent—but I **do** understand common sense.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

10 I think we should be working (.) **more** on—and grading these kids [Najah
11 students] and evaluating these kids more on **sociability** skills. And—and—and
12 **less**, at this point—at this juncture—on academics. You put a **sociability** (.)
13 uh—uh component in there [in the curriculum] that we can—we can **access**
14 and grade (.) and (.) that's how we should deal with these kids.

Thomas: So base much of the grade on (.) behavior?

Stanza 2a

15 Mr. Drake: Yeah—**almost**—almost—behavior (.) **conditioning** (.)
16 understanding they [the students] need to get moving. Yeah—yeah—**structure**
17 (.) uh **consistency** (.) u::m (.) things like that are—I think—are going to be
18 **needed** for these kids because (.) they're going to be—I keep stressing that—

[66] Mr. Drake told me that he was referring to the Academic English Language Handbook (AEL) and the section called "English Language Curriculum" within the AEL.

Stanza 2b

19 I—the one sign I have up there [in his classroom]—it says (.) uh (.) **welcome**
20 to:: our **future leaders** (.) and—and I'm **saying** that [that the students are our
21 future leaders] and I—I truly **meant** that (.) but it's **sad** because if this [the
22 students he sees at Najah] is the **indication** of—of—if this is how we're **doing**
23 (.) it's—we have to **worry** about it.

Stanza 2c

24 We're—as soon as the money runs out [for the UAE] a lot of things are gonna
25 run out. As soon as any type of finances—as soon as a financial catastrophe
26 [hits], this place [the UAE] will—will crumble under its own weight. They're
27 [the Emirates are] **small** (…) they're u::h—they can be easily **led—bullied**—
28 the whole nine yards. You can have a—**I** would (.) **really** suspect it would be
29 another Middle Eastern country that comes in here and **bullies** them.

Like Mr. Abel, Mr. Drake's problem with the formal curriculum was that it was not created for the students at Najah. However, Mr. Drake described this problem in a starkly different way than Mr. Abel. For Mr. Abel, the curriculum wasn't *meeting the needs of students* at Najah, resulting in students feeling a lack of confidence, hating the subject and distrusting their teachers. Whereas Mr. Drake described the problem with the curriculum in terms of it not allowing teachers to teach students about the importance of *hard work* and *self-reliance*, constructions which I have already shown are motifs supporting the schema of *the teacher as motivational speaker*. Hence, for Mr. Drake, students of the UAE must be conditioned to "get moving" (ln. 16) in order that their country can remain independent during times of financial crisis.

As Mr. Drake hadn't mentioned the ECART, I asked him a question about it:

Thomas: What about the ECART? Do you consider that part of the curriculum?

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Drake: **No**. No. And the **ECART** I believe is **not** necessarily a **waste** of
02 time, but it is **a lot** of time—it's taxing (.) it's **taxing**. It's not really a **waste** of
03 time in that (.) it's showing the kids **some type** of structure or semblance to—
04 to—to what we need to do, but (.) at the **same** time it's **so::** much—it's so
05 **laden** with **copying** and um (.) **plagiarism** that it's not really **useful** to us
06 [teachers] (.) as far as uh (.) as far as helping them [students] to—to—to **sit for**
07 and—and—and uh (.) and **work** towards these tests. The CEPA and the (.)
08 **ADEC**[67]—these tests. It's not really—it's not really helping us there.

Thomas: So you feel like that's the **spirit** of the curriculum—that's what ADEC is requiring? Did you get that sense?

Stanza 1a

09 Mr. Drake: Yeah, I get the sense that **ADEC** is—is—is uh—uh trying to get
10 these kids closer and closer—inching them closer to uh (.) being able to sit for
11 (.) and—and—and **show** results on the CEPA.

Like Mr. Abel, Mr. Drake also rejects the ECART for its unwitting promotion of copying readymade material. However, where Mr. Abel's concern revolved around the undermining of the teacher as a role model, Mr. Drake finds fault with it as it doesn't allow students to "**work** towards" (ln. 7) and "**show** results on" (ln. 11) the two state exams he believed they would have to take. That he emphasizes these two words with a

[67] As previously mentioned, all Najah students were required to take a standardized test at the end of each trimester. Although ADEC referred to this test as the "State Exam," Mr. Drake is here calling it the "ADEC test." Likewise, twelfth grade students who wanted to attend universities in the UAE were required to take a second test called the "Common Educational Proficiency Assessment" or *CEPA*.

louder voice speaks to Mr. Drake's belief that the purpose of his teaching revolved around getting students to work with the desired aim of being successful on standardized tests—that is, *to work toward their future success*. I wanted to know more about Mr. Drake's use of the word "**plagiarism**" (ln. 5) in *Stanza 1*, so I asked him a another question:

> Thomas: Why do you think ADEC has something like the ECART, then, if it's—if it is just copying and plagiarism?

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

> 12 Mr. Drake: Uh (.) this [ECART] is the **dog**-and-pony show. This is where we
> 13 have to show **something**—I mean if you think about it, if they [ADEC] don't
> 14 have the **ECART** in place (.) **what** can you **show** (.) other than some horrible
> 15 grades on—on—on **two** major tests—on the **CEPA** (.) and then on the ADEC
> 16 test?

Stanza 2b

> 17 Other than **that** [horrible grades on the two tests] you can't really **show**
> 18 anything—you can't **demonstrate** (.) uh (.) you have nothing **tangible** to
> 19 where you can say, "look (.) the kids you know **attempted** this or initiated this,
> 20 or started this."

Stanza 2c

> 21 So (.) I said to myself, "You know I'm not going to give a **shit** what Franklin
> 22 [Inc.] and them [ADEC] think I should be doing. I know that (.) I need—I—**I**
> 23 figure that I'm an expert to a certain degree, and what these kids **need** and
> 24 what they [Franklin Inc. and ADEC] want to **see** (.) **may** be two different
> 25 things.

Mr. Drake emphasized the word "**show**" (ln. 14; ln. 17) again in this discourse, adding to it the word "**demonstrate**" (ln. 18) in relation to what the students are producing. For Mr. Drake, the problem with the ECART is that it represents a *different kind* of show—one which produces fake results and allows students to pretend rather than do the work. Ironically, Mr. Drake utilized the words, "what these kids **need**" (ln. 23) a phrase in stark contrast to the way Mr. Abel utilized it. For Mr. Abel, the students needed to feel comfortable and to like the subject, whereas in Mr. Drake's construction, the students needed to work in order show "**tangible**" (ln. 18) results. In the next section I will examine how Mr. Drake implements these ideas in his classroom.

7.14 Mr. Drake's Eleventh and Twelfth Grade Classes

Mr. Drake had inherited the largest of the English classrooms at Najah. It had formerly belonged to the previous head of the English department, a Jordanian teacher with fifteen years' experience who had failed to score the required 6.5 on the IELTS test and was subsequently fired and sent home. Mr. Drake's classroom had almost double the space of his colleagues' classrooms. Instead of separate desks, the classroom had six large round tables, around which five students could sit comfortably. To the right of the students desks was a *majlis* sofa set, consisting of two Arabic style couches with a matching cushioned chair and a glass coffee table. These items had been procured by the previous owner of the room years ago. The walls of Mr. Drake's classroom were

decorated with large posters displaying quotes from Arabic poets in English and Arabic as well as framed pictures of forest scenes and an enormous carpet displaying the quilted image of Sheik Zayed, al Nahayan, also placed there by the previous Arab teacher.

Mr. Drake's additions to the impressive classroom were mainly concentrated in the front of the room on and around the whiteboard. These were colorful, hand-printed posters written by Mr. Drake himself. There was a poster outlining the daily schedule, broken down by ten minute intervals with different colored circles (e.g. listening—ten minutes, writing—ten minutes, speaking—ten minutes, and reading—ten minutes). Next to these circles were designated twenty-five points that Mr. Drake gave for each interval. There was also a poster congratulating particular students for having perfect attendance for a two week period. Above that was a poster displaying the words, "Welcome to our future leaders of the UAE!" Below the whiteboard, Mr. Drake had taped posters he had purchased at a local teacher's store displaying the English alphabet in capital and lower-case letters, and one the same letters with small cartoon pictures next to each letter (e.g. "M" for "moon," "Q'" for "queen," etc.). On the whiteboard itself, Mr. Drake would draw two sections, one for learning objectives, and one displaying the key words for the day.

Mr. Drake taught both his eleventh and twelfth grade classes in the same manner. He was extremely active both before and during his classes. Each class period started

with an alphabet worksheet that Mr. Drake had designed himself. These worksheets consisted of copies of white sheets of paper with lines and examples of the letters to be copied for that day. Before the students arrived, which was about eight minutes after the bell, Mr. Drake would busy himself straightening the chairs in the room and cleaning off the tables with a spray cleaner and rag. As the students entered, Mr. Drake ignored them until they approached. He would then hand each student an alphabet practice sheet, and tell them, "Let's go. Get to work. You got five minutes." He would tell this to each student who approached him. His students rarely said hello to him, and when they did offer an "*Asalamualaykum*" ("peace be upon you") he would respond with a quick "*Alykum Assalam*" ("and also with you"), following it up with, "You got five minutes," while handing them the alphabet sheets. About ten minutes into class, when most of the students had arrived, Mr. Drake would note the time on his watch, add five minutes to it, and write that time on the whiteboard. As his students got to work, he would point to this designated time and remind them: "Let's go. You got five minutes. If you do not finish, so what, I will grade it."

Mr. Drake also kept pencils on his desk. If a student approached him asking for a pencil he would receive a stern reproach (e.g. "You've been in school for three weeks now and you don't have a pencil?" or "It's my job to get you a pencil?"). He would then go to his desk, retrieve a pencil and give it to the student. Although they entered noisily,

within about five minutes the classroom was silent as students went to work copying the letters on their worksheets. Each student was given a number designation (from one to thirty). Students who entered the room after the standard ten minutes would be told, "Quickly! You're late. What's your number? You got only five minutes to finish this!" and handed a worksheet. Mr. Drake carried a clipboard with a list of student's names and number designations, and he would record the student as being late. His students were generally well-behaved, rarely leaving their seats. If a student talked during a lesson or left his seat without permission, Mr. Drake would yell at him until the behavior was corrected (e.g. Hey! I'm the teacher. I'm talking now. You don't talk!"). If the behavior persisted, Mr. Drake would yell, "Okay, get out! Get the hell out. Go somewhere else!" pushing the student towards the door. On these rare occasions, the student would either leave the room waving his arms above his head and uttering an insult in Arabic (e.g. "*Howwa majnuun*," [he's crazy"]") or apologize with, "I'm sorry, teacher," and sheepishly sit down.

Mr. Drake would walk around the room during the warm-up time answering questions or acknowledging the correct format as students showed him their work. If a student told him, "Teacher, finish," Mr. Drake would grade the paper at the table with a red, felt tipped pen. His standards for this activity were high. Students were expected to copy the letters neatly and accurately, a task which often proved difficult for many of

them. If he was dissatisfied with the student's work, which was quite often, Mr. Drake would point out various faults before writing an "F" on the paper, ignoring the student's protests, which would come in both English and Arabic. After about ten minutes had passed (sometimes longer), Mr. Drake would begin handing out the reading for that day, telling the students to put their numbers on their papers next to their names and the date. The students would then pass their papers to a single student who would hand them to the teacher. During this process, Mr. Drake would read the names of students' names who had perfect attendance for that week, asking them to stand up. He would then applaud them, soliciting applaud from the rest of the class, which he received.

Mr. Drake never taught the ECART, primarily utilizing two books for his lessons. The first was the "Learning to Love Reading" book, the same text that Mr. Bartlett used for his warm-up activities. The other was a CEPA test preparation book, also published in the UAE. This book was mainly handed out to twelfth graders (those who wanted to take the test as it was optional) who were expected to take it home for personal study. Mr. Drake never gave these to his students to take home. He would pass them out and collect them, and he utilized them for both his eleventh and twelfth grade classes. Before the reading, Mr. Drake might give some initial information on the subject. For instance, for a reading comparing Vietnam to the UAE, he held up a laminated map and had particular students come up and point to these countries on the map. Mr. Drake would also right a

particular question on the board related to the reading. In the case of the Vietnam reading, for example, Mr. Drake wrote, “There are four million people living in the UAE. How many people live in Vietnam?” Although the students would be expected to come across the answer to these questions during the reading, certain students would quickly scan the reading for the answer and shout it out (e.g. “Teacher, 19 million.). Mr. Drake would ignore these responses and ask particular students to read. If no one volunteered, which was often, Mr. Drake would read it himself, eventually stopping when he came across the answer to his initial question. He might also pause to explain a passage or to check for understanding.

After the reading, Mr. Drake would hand the students their homework assignments, which often consisted of more alphabet writing or practicing writing their names in English twenty five times. Students were expected to bring these assignments in the next day and place them on Mr. Drake’s desk before sitting down. At the start of the school year, most of Mr. Drake’s students completed and passed in their homework. However, as the year progressed, fewer and fewer students did their homework, and Mr. Drake admonished his classes with warnings about failing grades, which he handed out copiously.

The number of students failing Mr. Drake’s class peaked at over fifty percent during the first trimester, and after receiving a number of complaints from angry parents,

a special meeting was held with Mr. Drake, members of Franklin Incorporated and the school principal to see about raising his grades. Mr. Drake argued bitterly to keep his grades as they were, and upon realizing he was fighting a losing battle (i.e. after being threatened with being transferred to another school), Mr. Drake changed the grades. However, in what he would later describe to me as a form of protest, Mr. Drake gave all of this students exactly the same mark: 72%.

Like Mr. Abel, Mr. Drake had told me that he did not teach the ECART, so I asked him, "How do you approach teaching in your class?" for which he responded by comparing his class to a machine:

Stanza 1: ABSTRACT

01 Mr. Drake: I've been **teaching** off the—the off of what I believe the standards
02 are, and also the **CEPA**. So I've been pretty much following the CEPA book.
03 You know looking through the first part of it. The—the table of contents, a::nd
04 (.) since I have—the students who are seniors or **12th** graders, I've
05 been asking them the majority—to **gear** up—what I think might be **questions**
06 that might be asked on the CEPA.

Stanza 1a

07 **And** I've been trying to emphasize **writing**, okay (.) and I've pretty much **told**
08 my students (.) u::m (.) **mandated** that they have to uh (.) attempt the essay in
09 order to get **any marks**—any points. I've just been following like I said the
10 um—what I see in the CEPA—the CEPA (.) and—and going from there.

Stanza 1b

11 I also use a lot of **uniformity**—getting these kids to realize (.) they need to
12 move (…) the uniformity—it's like a **machine** if you (.) notice when you
13 come in (.) it's—it's [the interactions between teacher and student] a
14 machine—it's boom, boom, boom /making the motion of passing out papers/.
15 It's a lot of "hurry up and get to your place [the students' place]" and whatnot.

Stanza 2: EVALUATION

16 And (.) to some—some teachers that's not really **teaching** (.) that's more
17 instruction. Uh (.) the military was good for that. It's more instruction instead
18 of **teaching**, but it's teaching them [the students] a system, okay (.) where you
19 don't waste time.

Stanza 2a

20 If you don't—if you don't give them [the students] a ti::me (.) they go on—
21 they'll go on **Emirati** time /laughs/ which will be as long as they want to
22 /laughs/ (…) I'm trying to get them [the students] to **think** (.) and not get (.)
23 not get (.) **complacent**. They—they need to [the students say] "Oh—oh no I
24 need all day [to do the work]." Because they've [the students] done that. I
25 mean when we started this /holding up an alphabet practice sheet/ (.) just doing
26 one letter of the alphabet took them the **whole** damn period.

Stanza 2b

27 It's [uniformity is] a **comfort zone** that I have (.) for (.) getting things over to
28 the students. And (…) I feel (.) **comfortable** in—that they're [the students]
29 being—it's a **uniform** that they [the students] understand. So like (.) right
30 away (.) they [the students] had (.) very **simple** homework assignments—
31 extremely simple. Really (.) the **big key** is (.) really just (.) going through the
32 motion of (.) **doing** it [the homework assignment] and bringing it in.

Mr. Drake's explanation of his teaching, although based in part on his experiences in the military, was largely derived from the schema of *the teacher as motivational*

speaker. The construction of teaching as *transferring skills to students through their hard work* is salient in Mr. Drake's discourse. Like Mr. Hammond, who explained the transfer of skills to students as "equipping" them, Mr. Drake used the words "**gear** up" (ln. 5) and "getting things over to the students" (ln. 27-28) to describe the process of teaching. The metaphor of the class as a "**machine**" (ln. 12; ln. 14) is also important in this discourse, as it supports Mr. Drake's belief that the students should not waste time or get "**complacent**" (ln. 23). As in his discourses about the curriculum, the concept of "motion" (ln. 32), in the form of *student productivity*, is a salient feature of this discourse, and supports the metaphor of the class as a machine in *Stanza 1b*.

Interestingly, Mr. Drake also talked about comfort, but in reference to his own comfort as a teacher, a strikingly different priority than Mr. Abel's concern for his *students* feeling comfortable. For Mr. Drake, his students should not feel comfortable in class, a point he elaborated on when I asked him, "What are the students getting out of your lessons?"

Stanza 1: ORIENTATION

01 Mr. Drake: They're [the students are] learning things that I think—I **know** they
02 need. So I am taking a **piece** of this [teaching style] from when I was a kid (.)
03 **too** much of that (.) giving kids **autonomy** (.) giving them too much autonomy
04 and giving them too much (.) uh (.) **latitude** (…) it didn't work for me (.) it
05 didn't work for (.) **me** in (.) **particular** because I didn't have that **formal**
06 training.

Stanza 2: COMPLICATING ACTION

07 So (.) when I **had** that [autonomy] I was scooting through life—and I was
08 scooting through—I didn't **want** to (.) I was **hoping** the teacher would call on
09 me— push on me. And they **didn't** (.) they let me scoot through and I got to be
10 a **romantic** not knowing the hell what I was doing.

Stanza 3: RESULT

11 And it wasn't until **I** settled down and got to college that I realized that I didn't
12 know what I was doing—that those teachers that let me just sli::de (.) they
13 really didn't do me (.) too much good.

Stanza 4: EVALUATION

14 So (.) [my style is] **instructional** (…) there's **very** little room for (.)
15 **autonomy**—for creativity (.) if you notice (.) this is not **creative**—there's no
16 **room** to let the student (.) create. It's all pragmatic. That's what these
17 [Emirati] kids **need**—that's why I shy away from all this lovey-dovey stuff.

Like Mr. Abel, Mr. Drake also expressed concern for what his students needed. However, Mr. Drake believed that his students needed someone to "push on" (ln. 9) them rather than let them slide by without learning anything. As previously discussed, Nespor (1985) describes the "prototypical" (p. 10) character of teachers' beliefs as "affective and evaluative" (p. 13)—that is, beliefs are often manifested as, "feelings, moods, and subjective evaluations in terms of personal preferences" (p. 13), impacting the ways teachers make sense of and enact teaching in their classrooms. Mr. Drake believed that not pushing on his students represented a shirking of his responsibility as a teacher, and he rationalized this through echoing his earlier discourses in Chapter Four, where he related his experiences growing up as an African American in the American South. For

Mr. Drake, the teachers who let him graduate high school without properly equipping him with the skills he needed for success in the world had done him a great disservice. Thus Mr. Drake found the "lovey-dovey stuff" (ln. 17) he sees between teachers and students at Najah to be suspect.

Nespor (1985) also argues that beliefs are "episodic" in nature, citing their organization around specific episodes and experiences in an individual's life (p. 15). Over the course of the school year, Mr. Drake related several narratives underscoring his feelings of betrayal and helplessness as a young high school graduate upon realizing that he had not been properly educated. As an example, Mr. Drake related a poignant narrative to me during a marking session[68] at Najah. Although I didn't record the narrative, I left the room and quickly wrote it down. Thus I will have relate Mr. Drake's narrative below in the third person:

In his mid-twenties, Mr. Drake had finished his stint in the military and had returned to Japan to play for an American football team (Mr. Drake was an avid American football player, and actually earned a spot on the American football team in Abu Dhabi). Mr. Drake was interested in working for a small newspaper in Japan as a

[68] At the end of each trimester, all English teachers were required to stay after work and mark the state exam, what Mr. Drake called the "ADEC test." As much of this work was repetitive, there was ample time for talking, and talk we did. Mr. Drake related this narrative to me in a room full of teachers. When he had finished, a silence took over the room as the other teachers reacted to what most agreed was a sad and disturbing experience.

sportswriter and had procured a letter of recommendation from his head coach, a letter he thought would make him a shoe-in for the job. On the day of the interview, Mr. Drake sat in the newspaper office and filled out the lengthy application for employment. It included a short paragraph outlining his qualifications and his reasons for seeking employment. The interview went incredibly well, and Mr. Drake was sure that he had clinched the job, as he explained, "I knew I had nailed it." Upon walking out of the office, Mr. Drake suddenly realized that he had forgotten to give the interviewer the all-important letter of recommendation. He returned to the interview room to find the man who had interviewed him laughing with his colleagues while correcting the numerous grammar and spelling mistakes on Mr. Drake's resume. While marking up the unfortunate document, the interviewer uttered these painful words: "Look at these monkeys. They don't know anything."

Mr. Drake related the above narrative to me while discussing the fact that it was the teacher's responsibility to make sure the students learn what they needed to know, even if it meant treating the students harshly in the classroom. For Mr. Drake, it was better that the students realized they knew nothing now than to find it out later in their lives. Nespor (1985) argues that it is episodes like Mr. Drake's that give teachers' beliefs their effective and evaluative characteristics. Thus like his American colleagues, Mr. Drake found little value in the ECART curriculum task narrative as it did not permit

teachers to transfer English skills to students. However, unlike his American colleagues, Mr. Drake made no attempt to muscle through the ECART, choosing instead to throw it in the trash. He rationalized this behavior through relating his particularly poignant experiences as an African American growing up in the 1970's.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this research study was to examine the ways teachers' beliefs impacted their practices in the classroom and how these processes shaped the realization of the official curriculum. My findings indicate that although teachers at Najah incorporated their beliefs in often unpredictable ways, particular beliefs shared common structures corresponding to shared cultural frameworks. Drawing from cognitive anthropology, I showed how two such structured belief systems manifested through the utterances and behaviors of teachers at the Najah Boy's High School: *the teacher as enthusiastic motivational speaker* and *the teacher as familial role model*. Calling these *culturally resonant ideologies*, I discussed how they played a primary role in the ways teachers talked about their behaviors in their classrooms.

My findings indicate that the contextual constraints teachers encountered in the school setting also impacted teachers' behaviors in the classroom. However, I showed that teachers' beliefs, in particular those linked to one or more poignant episodes in a teacher's past, had the ability to trump the impact of contextual social constraints. Finally, I discussed how these complex processes mediated teachers' interpretations and implementation of the official curriculum at Najah. In this chapter, I summarize my findings discussing their implications for further research and future school policy.

8.1 Cultural Schemas of Teaching and Language

In this study, I showed how teachers came to the Najah Boy's High School with particular cultural frameworks which they incorporated to define teaching and learning. For American teachers, teaching involved convincing their students to take possession of the skills teachers offered them in the classroom. Through hard work and self-reliance students would take possession of the skills needed for economic success. Conversely, the Arab teachers and the Irish teacher at Najah described teaching as a form of mentoring, where the teacher catered to students' needs in order to convince his students to trust him as a role model. In the former model, the teacher, by talking *to* his students *convinces* them to do their work, whereas in the latter model by talking *with* his students the teacher *shows* them that he has their best interests at heart, and this motivates them to work.

Such cultural frameworks can be discussed in terms of what D'Andrade (1995) and others (Rice, 1980; Fillmore, 1975; Quinn, 1982) call *schemas*. According to D'Andrade (1995), a schema represents a, "a highly organized framework of objects and relations which has yet to be filled in with concrete detail" (D'Andrade, 1995, p. 124). Schemas also function in the social world as *scripts* (Nelson, 1981; Holland & Cole, 1995), specifying the people, roles, objects and relationships that apply to a particular

situation, and serving as guides to how one should act in such a situation. Cultural schemas represent particular scripts that are shared among individuals or groups.

The teachers in this present study incorporated such cultural schemas when they told me stories about their teaching experiences. These schemas were supported and maintained through specific *subschemas* (Holland and Cole, 1995; D'Andrade, 1995; Quinn, 1980), what Rice (1980) calls, "default values" (p. 155) and Nelson (1981) refers to as, "component subscripts" (p. 103). For the American teachers, these subschemas formed three specific motifs within their narrative discourses: the importance of *self-reliance* and *hard work*, and the imperative of *striving for success*. I have shown that the American teachers at Najah talked about teaching as a profession that one enters into because he possesses particular skills. They discussed their journeys into teaching in terms of following their personal interests or desires, emphasizing the motif of *self-reliance*.

The American teachers utilized two ontological metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) to describe this process. First, they constructed the teaching profession as a *container*, one they were currently "in" or have entered "into". Second, the American teachers described the skills they possessed as *substances* which were transferred to students. They described teaching as a form of exchange, where they offered those skills to students in exchange for their *hard work*. Mr. Hammond, for example, explained that

teachers "equip" students with the skills they needed for economic success. Mr. Ramirez described this transfer in terms of the teacher "convey[ing]" material to students, who would then "grasp" it for themselves. The students, in exchange for *their* efforts, received the skills to ensure their *future economic success*. The teachers' role was to facilitate this exchange by convincing the students to take action. Mr. Williams wanted to get his students to understand that they needed to "take responsibility and ownership" of their learning. For Mr. Drake, teaching was like "passing the baton" to his students, and convincing them to surpass him in their success.

In contrast, the Arab teachers and the Irish teacher at Najah discussed entering the teaching profession in terms of metamorphosis or change. Mr. Abel, for example, explained his reasons for wanting "to be a teacher," whereas Mr. Bartlett relayed a narrative where he "became a primary school teacher." Rather than listing their credentials as possessions which qualified them to teach and enabled them to make independent choices in life, Mr. Hassan, Mr. Abel, and Mr. Bartlett also primarily described their decisions to become teachers in terms of obligations to family and economic necessity. Although the motif of *self-relian*ce was implied in their responses, it was not made explicit as it was in the American discourses.

I have shown that the Arab teachers and the Irish teacher at Najah elaborated on the motif of *teaching as being or becoming* through their discourses. In their narratives,

the teacher became a *role model* for his students. Mr. Hassan, for instance, defined his own teaching practice in terms of his experiences as a student, where he "had a role model" in high school who "encouraged" him to be a teacher, and Mr. Abel called the teacher a, "model to follow." Likewise, Mr. Bartlett described the teachers' role in terms of "provide[ing] and example" for students. Like their American colleagues, Mr. Hassan, Mr. Abel, and Mr. Bartlett also talked about the transfer of skills to their students. However, this transfer was described as a process where the teacher "showed" or "modeled" skills for students, standing in stark contrast to the American model of "getting [students] to understand" or "making [students] aware of" the need to take possession of skills.

It was seen that the Arab and Irish cultural schema was supported by two related subschemas in their discourses: *the importance of building close relationships between teachers and students*, and *the imperative of catering to students' needs.* I showed that through their narrative discourses about teaching, the Arab teachers and the Irish teacher at Najah described a *picture* of teaching, or in Fillmore's (1975) terms, each of them constructed a "creative schematic or outline scene" (p. 123), where the teacher developed close relationships with his students, catering to their emotional needs. For Mr. Hassan, when a student was having trouble he would "get close" or "come near" to him. Mr. Abel lamented that ADEC did not "cater for the needs" of his Bedouin students, and Mr.

Bartlett argued that students needed to feel that the teacher was "really attentive to them." Figure 8.1 illustrates the cultural schemas described by the teachers at Najah.

	Teacher's Role	Student's Role	Process	Aims
Teacher as Enthusiastic Motivational Speaker (TMS)	Convince students to take possession of particular skills. Impell them to work.	Work hard. Be self reliant.	Exchange	Future (primarily economic)
Teacher as Familial Role Model (TRM)	Build close relationships with students. Cater to their emotional needs.	Be confident. Enjoy the subject.	Osmosis	Immediate (primarily relational)

Figure 8.1 Ideologies of Education at Najah

I also showed that the schemas of *the teacher as enthusiastic motivational speaker* and *the teacher as familial role model* mediated the ways teachers talked about their students. Drawing from Abelson (1979), Nespor (1987) posits that teachers' beliefs are characterized in part by what he calls, "existential presumption"—that is, the "belief in the existence of certain student characteristics such as 'ability,' 'maturity,' 'laziness'" (p. 11). Rather than being adjectives teachers used to describe student behavior, these beliefs, "corresponded to entities which holistically characterized the students" (Nespor, 1987, p. 11). The American teachers in the study described their students as being inherently "apathetic" and "complacent," relying too much on foreign workers and government handouts, and not enough on themselves. Conversely, the Mr. Hassan, Mr.

Abel and Mr. Bartlett constructed their students as being vulnerable and in need of close, familial relationships.

In addition, the cultural schemas manifested at Najah mediated and were mediated by the teachers language ideologies surrounding the role of English and Arabic in the world. Tan and Rubdy (2008) and others (Rassool, 2007; Wee 2008) argue that many governments wishing to compete in the global economy make educational policy decisions based on the "polarization of languages" (Tan and Rubdy, 2008, p. 5), where particular roles are ascribed to different languages. English, for instance, is often understood as an "instrumental" (Rassool, 2007; Wee 2008) language in that it is perceived as useful for achieving particular economic goals. It was seen that the teachers in the study all described the English language in this way, assigning the Arabic language as non-instrumental, but as having value as a mother tongue or marker of culture and tradition.

However, I have shown that important differences arose in the ways the teachers described the *symbolic value* of these languages. The American teachers described their roles primarily in terms of the English language, in that English was the skill they were offering to the students in exchange for the students' efforts in the classroom. In this construction, Arabic, as the marker of culture and traditions, remained a "private" language for the students, who would retain it as a link to their cultural roots.

In contrast, although accepting that English was the instrumental skill needed for economic success, the Arab teachers and the Irish teacher at Najah prioritized the role of Arabic in their students' lives. Unlike their American colleagues, who related their students' perceived disinterest in English to the constructs of apathy and complacency, the Arab and Irish teachers empathized with their students, blaming other teachers and the educational system for their failures to meet the students' needs. Noting its link to students' needs related to communication and Islam, Mr. Hassan and Mr. Abel also argued that Arabic, as a cultural marker, was more important that English in their students' lives. Mr. Bartlett also made this assertion, calling English a "hindrance" in his students' lives, and comparing his students' experiences to those of Irish students under the British imposition in Ireland. Figure 8.1 illustrates the mediating relationship between ideologies of education and language at Najah.

	TMS	TRM
Arabic as Cultural Marker and Mother Tongue	***Secondary Role*** **(Links students to their past)**	***Primary Role*** **(Language of comfort and understanding--linked to immediate aims)**
English as Economic (Instrumental) Skill	***Primary Role*** **(The skill to be imparted through instruction--linked to future aims)**	***Secondary Role*** **(Important as one subject of study among many)**

Figure 8.2: Mediating Relationships between Ideologies of Education and Language at Najah.

8.2 The Role of Teachers' Beliefs in Teachers' Practice: Interpretations of the Curriculum

I have also shown that the teachers in this study incorporated cultural schemas in their interpretations of the curriculum. Nespor (1987) showed that when teachers are faced with an impossible curriculum, they generally take two routes. First, they often try to teach it anyway, no matter how difficult the endeavor. The American teachers, Mr. Williams, Mr. Hammond and Mr. Ramirez, as well as the Irish teacher, Mr. Bartlett and the Arab teacher, Mr. Hassan, all took this route, muscling through the ECART

curriculum with their students. This course of action manifested in various forms, but for the most part resulted in the teachers offering students readymade material to copy into their ECART booklets. The second course of action teachers take is to replace the curriculum with their own aims, goals and content (Nespor, 1987). The American teacher, Mr. Drake, and Arab teacher, Mr. Abel, both took this course, creating their own tasks and content to replace what they argued was an inadequate curriculum.

It was seen that, although taking strikingly different forms, the teachers primarily rationalized their behaviors through the two schemas already manifested through their narrative discourses: *the teacher as enthusiastic motivational speaker* and *the teacher as familial role model*. Through these schemas, the English teachers at Najah constructed narratives explaining their implementation of ADEC's curriculum. Each teacher at Najah constructed his own curriculum story (Shkedi, 2009) surrounding the ECART, which although unique to each teacher, also included the culturally resonant ideologies inherent in the two schemas described above.

Three of the American teachers, Mr. Williams, Mr. Hammond, and Mr. Ramirez, as well as the Irish teacher, Mr. Bartlett, each created readymade material for their students to copy directly into their ECART booklets. For the Arab teacher, Mr. Hassan, it was slightly different; he would help particular students construct sentences for their ECART booklets and then let the rest of the class copy from those students. I have shown

that the American teachers rationalized these behaviors through the schema of *the teacher as enthusiastic motivational speaker.* I showed how Mr. Williams criticized the ECART curriculum through the motif of self-reliance, arguing that as the curriculum was too advanced for his students, he had to "walk them through everything." However, Mr. Williams molded a new curriculum story involving the ECART where he linked the routine of copying the readymade material to the motifs of *self-reliance* and *hard work.* Mr. Williams related the example of a student who was given "an opportunity" to complete his ECART booklet (by copying the teachers' book), lamenting that the student, "couldn't be bothered," to get it done. For Mr. Williams, this behavior represented a form of apathy which he related to the fact that the student had been given everything too easily in life.

I showed that although Mr. Hammond also had his students copy material he had written for them into their ECART booklets, he described his teaching experience at Najah as "pointless," lamenting that his students weren't getting "real work done." He took to sitting at his desk as a way of silent protest against what he termed, "Uncle Tom Foolery." Mr. Ramirez, who had streamlined a system where his students copied material from readymade handouts into their ECART booklets, described teaching and learning in his classroom in terms of exchange. He described the "gratification" he felt teaching his Science track classes in terms of "teaching something and then getting something in

return" in the form of a "product." However, he related the perceived disinterest of his Arts tract students to their apathy.

In contrast, Mr. Bartlett and Mr. Hassan emphasized their desire for students to understand their instructions, relating this desire to the imperative of students feeling interested or involved in class. Mr. Bartlett, who also had his students copy readymade material into their ECART booklets, wanted his students to "enjoy" what they were doing, and he critiqued the ECART through this lens. Unlike Mr. Ramirez, he put the onus for the disinterest of his Arts track students on the teacher, arguing that teacher needed to make more of an effort to entertain his students and keep them involved. The Arab teacher, Mr. Hassan, also described his belief that students needed to feel "comfortable" and understand what they were doing. He rationalized his heavy use Arabic in his classroom through this lens. Although the majority of his students also copied readymade (from other students) material into their ECART booklets he critiqued the native English teachers for their inability to speak Arabic. He argued that when students didn't understand the teachers' instructions, they "disliked" the teacher, and for Mr. Hassan, this shut down the learning process.

In addition to revealing the ways cultural schemas materialized through teachers' discourses about their practice, this study also showed how particular beliefs, when linked to poignant or painful experiences in a teacher's pasts, can trump the influence of

contextual constraints in the school setting. Although being instructed by administrators that they needed to follow the ECART, two of the teachers in the study, the Arab teacher, Mr. Abel, and the American teacher, Mr. Drake, refused to use the curriculum in their classrooms.

Nespor (1987) notes that teacher beliefs can be distinguished from other forms of knowledge in that they sometimes share an "'episodic structure'" (p. 11), often linked to "'critical episodes'" (p. 15) in teachers' lives. These episodes serve to "color and frame" (Nespor, 1987, p.15) how a teacher perceives events in the classroom. Beliefs are also characterized through "'affective and evaluative loading'" (Nespor, 1987, p. 11), where, "feelings, moods and subjective evaluations in terms of personal preferences seem to operate more or less independently of other forms of cognition" (Nespor, 1987, p. 15). The Arab teacher, Mr. Abel, and the American teacher, Mr. Drake, each threw out the curriculum, implementing their own content and strategies. Although they continued to described these behaviors in terms of the two cultural schemas described above, their decisions to ignore the curriculum were "color[ed] and frame[ed]" (Nespor, 1987, p.15) by painful experiences in their pasts where "the system" had let them down in some way. These experiences formed the backbones of new curriculum stories, stories where the official curriculum had no place.

Thus I showed that Mr. Abel refused to teach the ECART in his classroom. Mr. Abel explained his behavior through the schema where the teacher is a familial role model. He argued that as the curriculum was designed for Australian students who were neither Muslim nor second-language speakers, it didn't meet the needs of the students at Najah. That he described the curriculum as "parachuted" down on the heads of the teachers and students speaks to his perception that the curriculum was a form of coercion. Mirroring his reaction to the coercion he described in an earlier interview, where he was harassed by the government in Tunisia, Mr. Abel rejected the curriculum. Instead he taught primarily oral lessons in his class, noting his attention to his students "feelings" and his desire to have students, "believe in themselves." In his final critique of the curriculum, Mr. Abel argued that as it was forcing teachers to "cheat," it was undermining the teachers' role as "model" for students to follow.

Mr. Drake's rejection of the curriculum was no less interesting. He relayed a painful experience where he realized too late that he hadn't been given the skills he needed for success in life. After thinking he had clinched an interview with a small newspaper, Mr. Drake returned to the office to find the interviewer having a laugh while correcting the numerous spelling and grammar mistakes on his job application. Mr. Drake incorporated experiences like this to rationalize his rejection of the curriculum at Najah. In lieu of the curriculum, Mr. Drake drilled his students on handwriting and molded his

own content out of booklets from standardized English tests. He explained these behaviors through the motifs of *hard work* and *self-reliance*, arguing that students needed to "work towards" and "gear up" in order to pass the end of the year standardized English tests. By forcing students to "get moving," Mr. Drake believed he was molding "future leaders" of the country, an imperative if the UAE was to remain independent and not be "bullied" by other countries in the region.

8.3 Implications of the Findings for Research

This study has shown the complex ways teachers' beliefs impact their implementation of their school's curriculum. As other researchers have suggested, this study revealed that *teachers'* practices in the classroom are influenced not just by their experiences and their beliefs about those experiences, but also by the contextual constraints they encountered in their work environments (Lortie, 1975; Nespor, 1987; Shkedi, 1998, 2009). For the teachers in this study, these constraints partially involved the disparity between the low level of their students' English ability and a curriculum that included tasks far beyond that ability. The teachers also faced the perceived expectations of their administrators that they produce a particular curricular product. That five of the seven teachers in the present study expressed a sense of obligation to complete the ECART confirmed the profound role that these contextual constraints, or in Bourdieu's (1989) terms, the "field of power" (p. 16), plays in the realization of the official

curriculum. However, that two of the teachers in the study felt no obligation to follow the curriculum guidelines illustrates the ability of teachers' beliefs to trump contextual constraints in determining educational policy.

One of the implications for research is that understanding teachers' practice requires that we attend to teachers' beliefs. Nespor (1987) posits that if the goal of research in teacher education is to create models of best practices for teachers, we must first complicate our understanding of teaching as a "heterogeneous or entangled domain" (p. 172). The present study indicates that although the contextual constraints teachers encounter in schools impact how they implement the curriculum in their classrooms, teachers' beliefs play a primary role in the ways teachers make sense of those behaviors. Research aimed at examining what goes on in classrooms must attend to the fact that teachers are complex, unique, sense-making individuals as much as they are homogeneous "cultural" agents (i.e. middle class, Caucasian teachers).

Another implication for research is that defining and operationalizing teachers' beliefs requires that we study teachers' beliefs about particular domains (e.g. teaching, language) in relation to the contextual constraints they encounter in schools. The findings in this study indicate that even when certain teachers professed different beliefs, they essentially did the same things in their classrooms (i.e. having students copy from readymade materials). These activities manifested through the teachers' beliefs about the

necessity of following the rules on the one hand and the incongruence between the curricular content and their students' abilities on the other. However, two of the teachers in this study believed that the rules were made to be broken. In these cases the teachers' professed beliefs manifested through their activities in the classrooms more directly than in the classrooms of their colleagues. As this study suggests, the contextual constraints teachers encounter in schools reciprocally mediate their beliefs in determining teachers' practice.

Finally, this study contributes to Bourdieu's (1977) theory of practice in two important ways. First, these findings illustrate the complex relationships between Bourdieu's (1977) *habitus* and *field*. The teachers' culturally resonant ideologies make up part of what Bourdieu (1977) calls *habitus*—that is, "systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures" (p. 72). The limitations within the *field* of practice at Najah (i.e. students' low level of English ability and ADEC's requirements that teachers produce specific curricular products) rendered possible only a small number of pedagogical approaches (Nespor, 1985). Thus Nespor (1985) argues that a teacher's experience "operates through the dialectical relationship between 'beliefs' and contextual constraints encountered in the work contexts of teaching" (p. 2).

Bourdieu posits that habitus shapes the formation of two types of strategies within the context of a particular field. The first order of strategies represent those which are "directly oriented toward the primary profit of practice" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 22). The teachers' approaches to the New School Model Curriculum represent these strategies. They allowed the teachers to organize and conduct their classes within the field of practice at Najah. The second type, which Bourdieu (1977) calls "second-order strategies," are those which, "give apparent satisfaction to the demands of the official rule, and thus to compound the satisfactions of enlightened self-interest with the advantage of ethical impeccability" (p. 22). The teachers' explanations of their approaches represent this second type of strategy. Given the unique situation at Najah, where teachers from different countries worked alongside each other, the "official rule" took on different culturally resonant forms as each teacher constructed his unique curriculum story.

This study revealed that teachers' strategies seemed to follow these rule—that is, teachers drew from culturally resonant ideologies, or in Swidler's (1986) terms, a "repertoire or 'tool kit' of habits, skills and styles" (p. 273)— to explain their practical behaviors in the classroom. For five of the teachers, their practical behaviors—that is, their *first order strategies*—were heavily mediated by the contextual constraints at Najah. However, two of the teachers held beliefs, based on their past experiences, which they

utilized to explain their *rejection* of the official curriculum. These findings illuminate an important contribution to Bourdieu's (1977) theory in that they complicate our understanding of, "the primary profit of practice" (p. 22). For Mr. Abel and Mr. Drake, their beliefs constituted primary mediating factors in *both* their first and second order strategies. This is an important distinction as it underscores the power of belief to impact—and even overrule—the contextual constraints in the school environment. It is this potential of the individual to act as an agent of change that Ortner (2006) argues is an important, yet often ignored, element of practice theory: "The idea that the world is 'made'—in a very extended and complex sense, of course—through the actions of ordinary people also meant that it could be unmade and remade" (p. 16-17).

The second way this study contributes to Bourdieu's (1977) practice theory is related to the first: it elucidates our understanding of how schools function as formal institutions. Bourdieu (1977) argues that the mechanism of symbolic domination of one linguistic variety over another requires that the linguistic market be "unified" (p. 652), and he locates this unified market within schools as formal institutions. However, other factors s such as group solidarity (Hidalgo, 1986), economic advantage (Echeverria, 2003) and, "face-to-face encounters" (Woolard, 1985, p. 742) have been shown to undermine the influence of formal institutions in promoting the importance of particular languages. This current study showed that although the teachers may have agreed with

official ideologies concerning the role of particular languages in the world, they often differed in their beliefs about of the *value* of those roles in their students' lives. As teachers also showed the capacity to ignore and reject the official curriculum, the linguistic market at Najah was anything but unified. More research is needed into the complex ways these processes play out in schools and classrooms.

8.4 Implications for School Policy, Particularly Globalized Education

The findings in this study suggest that teachers are the key to the realization of educational policy. Governments wanting to institute educational policy must include teachers in their decisions. It should not be assumed that a teacher's silence means compliance. Policy makers should also make efforts to understand what and how teachers believe before making important educational reform decisions. Instead of treating teachers as obedient automatons, policy makers must find ways to include them in the change process, encouraging collaboration and abhorring mere accommodation. When the classroom door closes, the teacher becomes the policy maker.

Another important implication of this research for school policy specifically applies to governments in developing countries whose native-language is not English: be wary of the cookie-cutter concept of curriculum. This study shows that the official curriculum at Najah was designed and modeled after curriculum originally developed for students in Australia. Although changes were made to the curriculum to adapt it for Abu

Dhabi Schools, it was a sore fit in the classrooms at Najah. The teachers in the study found themselves with few choices: either institute a copy-paste routine, ignoring the inquiry process it called for, or throw it out completely, and risk administrative consequences. In keeping with the argument in the preceding paragraph, curriculum development should involve teachers.

Finally, policy makers should consider the language ideologies presupposed through their curriculum narratives. Although it may seem logical for a developing country to promote a particular language like English, as it is perceived the *lingua franca* of the world, language learning does not occur in a vacuum. It is a sticky business. The present study showed that teachers brought their own language ideologies with them to schools and that these ideologies impacted the ways they understood and implemented the curriculum in their classrooms. Developing countries should consider the contradictions that arise when they promote certain languages as markers of particular social or economic roles.

8.5 Possibilities for Further Research

This study was conducted at a small suburban school thirty kilometers south of the island of Abu Dhabi. The student population consisted of students who were described by their teachers, and others on the island, as "Bedouins." A more comprehensive study, inclusive of other schools on the island, some of which are

populated primarily by non-national (permanent resident) students who (due to their permanent resident status) must achieve high marks to enter universities, might produce differing results. A comparative study might shed more light on how teachers' beliefs impact their interpretations of the curriculum.

Moreover, as the current study sought to understand teachers' beliefs, little attention was paid to how students perceived the behaviors of their teachers. Examining students' beliefs about their teachers and the curriculum in combination with teachers' beliefs, would complicate our understanding of the school as a formal institution. A study like this one, inclusive of students, could illuminate how schools as formal institutions function to reproduce linguistic value.

Finally, further research might illuminate the roles that both religion and gender play in how teachers' beliefs impact their practices in the classroom. Although the two Arab teachers in this study invoked Islam when discussing the value of the Arabic language, their discourses revealed little about how they perceived the complex relationship between education, the Arabic language and Islam. These constructions might also be impacted by gendered interpretations. Given that this study was conducted at an all-boys high school, the school setting gave little room for examining how the teachers' utterances and behaviors might be mediated by the fact that they were all men. Although both males and females have the same access to the Holy Qur'an, the Qur'an

assigns differing roles for males and females. For instance, in Islam, only males are permitted to lead the Friday prayer service, called the *khutbah*. Differences like this, where males and females occupy differing places in social space may also lead to differing ideological constructions concerning the nature of education in female schools. Likewise, although females are also encouraged to learn to recite the Holy Qur'an, it is generally deemed appropriate for only males to recite the Qur'an in *public* when other men are present. This fact may lead to important differences in the valuing of the Arabic language in female schools. More research attending to the ways both male and female Muslim teachers understand their experiences would be an important contribution to research aimed at understanding how teachers' beliefs impact their practices.

APPENDIX 1

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

What made you become a teacher?

Why did you come to Abu Dhabi to teach?

What is the nature of teaching?

What motivates your students?

Why is the government promoting English?

What is the role of English in your students' lives?

What is the role of Arabic in your students' lives?

What is the curriculum?

What is the curriculum here at Najah?

How do you approach the ECART?

What do you feel that the students are getting out of your approach to the curriculum?

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