THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF ARABIC POST 9/11: LATE MODERNITY AND POSSIBILITIES FOR CHANGE IN LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS

A Dissertation Presented

by

SAWSAN OMAR ABBADI

Submitted to the Graduate School of the

University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

September 2011

School of Education

www.manaraa.com

UMI Number: 3482573

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS
The quality of this reproduction is dependent on the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript
and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed,
a note will indicate the deletion.

UMI 3482573

Copyright 2011 by ProQuest LLC.

All rights reserved. This edition of the work is protected against
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 - 1346

www.manaraa.com

© Copyright by Sawsan O. Abbadi 2011

All Rights Reserved

www.manaraa.com

THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF ARABIC POST 9/11: LATE MODERNITY AND POSSIBILITIES FOR CHANGE IN LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS

A Dissertation Presented

by

SAWSAN OMAR ABBADI

Approved as to style and content by:

_____
Margaret Gebhard, Chair

_____
Mary Wilson, Member

_____
Laura Valdiviezo, Member

_____
Christine B. McCormick, Dean
School of Education

www.manaraa.com

DEDICATION

To my family, for their prayers, sacrifices, and love.

www.manaraa.com

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to extend my utmost gratitude to the teachers and students who allowed me to be part of their classrooms and worlds. I sincerely thank all for their time, support, and trust.

I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to my advisor, Margaret Gebhard, for her valuable feedback, constant support, positive reinforcement, and investment in my work. I also extend my thanks to Mary Wilson and Laura Valdiviezo for their enthusiasm and support throughout the process. I'm grateful to Pat Paugh for her support in the early stages of my work. My appreciation goes to all the other students of the LLC who have been wonderful humorous support to me during my doctoral work.

Finally, my gratitude goes to my family and friends for all their love, prayers, patience, encouragement, great advice, and endless sacrifices.

www.manaraa.com

ABSTRACT

THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF ARABIC POST 9/11: LATE MODERNITY AND POSSIBILITIES FOR CHANGE IN LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS

SEPTEMBER 2011

SAWSAN OMAR ABBADI, BA., UNIVERSITY OF JORDAN AMMAN

M.Ed., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

Ed.D., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

Directed by: Professor Margaret Gebhard

In this current era of postmodernity, globalization, and new technological and social conditions, new approaches to literacy teaching are being introduced and examined. Studies that explore complexities of language teaching and learning in discourses of postmodernity as they relate to college contexts are significant for educators, researchers, and policy makers. This study employs a critical ethnographic lens to examine Arabic teaching and learning practices in one college campus in the United States post 9/11. It explores the dialogic construction of critical literacy events in the Arabic classroom where modern and postmodern discourses collide.

Three questions guide the research: who are the students of Arabic and what are their investments in learning Arabic, how do uses of the Arabic language textbook shape curriculum instruction in the Arabic foreign language classroom in contexts of late

www.manaraa.com

modernity, and how can teachers of Arabic instantiate critical dialogues and allow a space for negotiated interpretations of modern textbooks in late modern classrooms.

To address these issues, the study draws on post structural and sociocultural theories of language. To analyze ethnographic classroom data, the study adopts broad analytic strategies from interdisciplinary critical language approaches (Dyson, 1993; Fairclough, 2001; Janks, 2010; Rampton, 2006).

Analysis of the data shows that the Arabic language learners relate to the social world through a mosaic of identities and investments influenced by contexts of postmodernity. The data also points to the role of the teacher in opening a space for the construction of plural voices of language learners that disrupts traditional perspectives of schooling.

Implications of the study point towards a need for a new pedagogy that embraces new literacy practices informed by contexts of postmodernity. With new channels of multimodal communications, heterogeneous multicultural societies, and contexts of globalization, foreign language teaching and learning at the college level is in need for vital update that meets the new challenges (Byrnes, 2010; Kramsch, 2009; New London Group, 1996).

www.manaraa.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS v

ABSTRACT vi

LIST OF TABLES xiv

LIST OF FIGURES xv

CHAPTER

1. STUDY OVERVIEW 1

Introduction 1

Statement of the Problem 4

Conceptual Framework 8

Purpose of the Study 12

Methodology 14

Data Collection 15

Data Analysis 17

Overview of Chapters 21

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE 22

The Context for Change 23

Modernity and Postmodernity 24

www.manaraa.com

Politics of Language and Texts 32
The Text in Context 38
Politics of Knowledge and Curriculum 45
Modern and Postmodern Ideologies of Curriculum 46
Foreign Language Education 54
The Case of Arabic as a Foreign Language 65
Conclusion 70
3. STUDY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY 73
Approach and Rationale 73
Critical Ethnography 74
Ethnography and Postmodernism 76
Challenges of Ethnographic Research 77
Data Collection 78
Overview 79
Fieldnotes 80
Open-Ended Survey 82
Semi-Structured Interviews 83
Classroom Instructional Materials 84
Data Analysis 84

www.manaraa.com

Overview 84

Coding 85

Comparative Analysis 86

Textual Analysis 87

Role of Researcher 89

Ethical Matters 90

Limitations of the Study 91

4. RESEARCH CONTEXT 92

The University Arabic Program 93

Research Participants 94

The Researcher 95

Mr. Edward, the Arabic Classroom Teacher 96

Portraits of Students 97

Alice 98

Andrew 99

Chris 101

Christopher 102

Clara 104

Debbie 105

Eden 107

Ethan 109

Isaq 110

www.manaraa.com

Jane…… 112
James…….. 113
Joy……. 115
Lara……. 116
Rafia……. 119
Rula……. 121
Shawn…… 123
Thomas…… 126

Conclusion: Dialogic Voices 128

5. THE TEXTBOOK IN CONTEXT: *Elementary Modern Standard Arabic1* 132

The Text in Context 132

Thematization of the Textbook 135
A Historical Perspective 145

The Modern Arab World (1950s-60s) 146

Arab Societies at the Age of the Nation-States 147
Nationalism and Arabism 149

The United States 151

Foreign Languages Post World War II 152
Incentive for Arabic in the United States 152

An Institutional Perspective 157

www.manaraa.com

The Instructional Approach: The Audio-lingual Method 158

Modern Standard Arabic and Vernaculars..... 160

Conclusion: The Textbook and Traces of Modernity 162

6. CONSTRUCTION OF SOCIAL SPACES:

POSTMODERNITY AND PLAYFUL INTERACTIONS WITH TEXTS 165

Teacher- Students Talk: 165

Texts, Meanings, and Playful Interpretations 165

Constructing a Collage of Performances 167

Interaction 1: "The Bedouins" 169

Introductory Analysis 169

Commentaries on Interaction 1 179

Interaction 2: "Tunisia" 183

Introductory Analysis 183

Commentaries on Interaction 2 194

Interaction 3: "A Foreign Reporter in Tunis" 198

Introductory Analysis: 198

Commentaries on Interaction 3: 209

Interaction 4: "Edward Lane" 212

Introductory Analysis 212

www.manaraa.com

Commentary on interaction 4 220

Conclusion 223

7. SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS 226

Revisiting the Research Questions 226

Summary of Findings 227

Implications for Teaching and Research 242

APPENDICES

A: (ELEMENTARY ARABIC II) STUDENTS SURVEY 247
B: (INTERMEDIATE ARABIC I) STUDENTS SURVEY 249
C: THE BEDOUINS 251

REFERENCES 2534

www.manaraa.com

LIST OF TABLES

Table Page

1.1: Data Sources 17
4.1: Self-Reported Arabic Learners Demographics 131
5.1: Excerpt from Lesson 24 "The Suez Canal" 136
5.2: Lesson 18 "The River Nile" 137
5.3: Lesson 6 "Studying in America" 139
5.4: Excerpt from Lesson 17 "Stages of Education in the Arab World" 139
5.5: Lesson 19 "The Bedouins" 140
5.6: Lesson 16 "The Modern Arab Woman" 141
5.7: Lesson 22 "An Opinion on the Status of women" 142
6.1: "The Bedouins" 173
6.2: "Comprehension Passage" *EMSA 1* 188
6.3: "A Foreign Reporter in Tunis" 202
6.4: Comprehension passage, *EMSA 1* 215

www.manaraa.com

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure Page

1.1: Thomas's Foreign Language Knowledge in America 2

2.1: Language as Discourse-Texts in Contexts 39

4.1: Jane's timeline as an Arabic Learner Arabic Learner 113

4.2: Contributor's to Lara's Arabic learning 118

4.3: Thomas's Journey to Egypt 126

4.4: Foreign Language Knowledge in America 127

www.manaraa.com

CHAPTER 1

STUDY OVERVIEW

Introduction

Since people did not recognize Arabic script,

the assumption was that it must be Hebrew.

Thomas, 2005

The above lines are taken from conversations with Thomas[1], an Arabic college learner at the campus of study. A senior with a double major in Political Science and Physics, Thomas spent four years in Egypt due to his mother's professional work at the American University in Cairo. The discourses that constructed his identity and investments in learning Arabic across time and space are multiple and complex. Through such a process of language learning, Thomas' changing sense of identity in relation to his native culture, and to the target language and culture, is visibly pronounced through his words, drawings, and reactions.

Thomas speaks of his dissatisfaction with the American ignorance and lack of knowledge to other languages and cultures, with particular focus on Arabic. He refers in the above two lines, to a personal incident when he was carrying a book with Arabic titles. Approached by other Americans, he was asked whether he was a Jew. They assumed that since they can't read the Arabic script, it must be Hebrew.

Interestingly, using graphic multimodal imagery, Thomas expresses his feelings

[1] All names provided for participants and/or institutions of study are pseudonyms.

www.manaraa.com

towards American's general lack of knowledge of other languages--especially with the national calls to learn Arabic post 9/11--as follows:

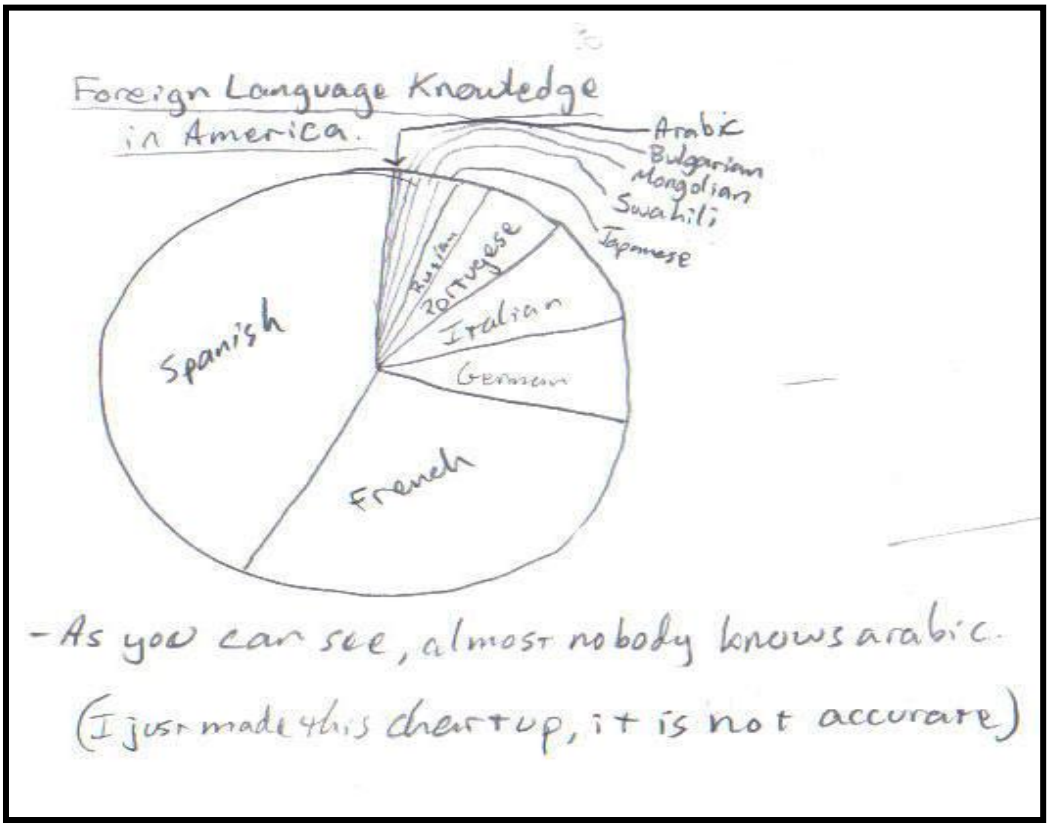


Figure 1.1: Thomas's Foreign Language Knowledge in America

The study starts with this snapshot of a participant language learner, Thomas, to bring into focus the complex representation of identities, and investments of language learners, in association with the social, cultural, and political contexts of learning a foreign language like Arabic, especially in a post 9/11 context in US college campuses (Kramsch, 2005; Norton, 2000). With changes of time and discourses, from contexts of modernity to contexts of postmodernity, social institutions--including educational institutions--are witnessing important micro and macro forces of change. Some of these changes have visible influence on the learning contexts, processes of learning, educators,

www.manaraa.com

curriculum, and the learners themselves. This investigation hopes to shed light on some of these changes as they relate to the teaching of foreign languages in college education, particularly Arabic, post 9/11.

Discourses of modernity in language studies, as Rampton (2006) argues, refer to orthodox structuralist linguistics with its commitment to a "system-in-language" (p. 16). Language is viewed as an output or a product of systematic unified arrangements of forms, governed by a set of grammar and phonology, following mental processes and social conventions. Modernism finds its echoes in defining standard languages as markers of well defined and homogenized nation states and in a structural Saussurian understanding of language. Modernism emphasizes a scientific attitude to studying language and therefore attitudes towards langauge teaching and methodologies, as Chapter 2 will elaborate.

By discourses of postmodernity, I refer to "changes to social structures, communication, culture, and so forth as a result of new conditions of work, economy and political structure" in a state of late capitalism (Pennycook, 2006, p. 60) and globalization (Rampton, 2006). In language studies, postmodernity interrogates the very understanding of language as "a product" of the "modernist states" with its own grammar, structure, and boundaries (p. 66). In other words, languages are no longer approached as "natural entities" (Rampton, 2006, p. 15). Hence, as opposed to unity and structure, postmodernism thrives on plurality, ambivalence, difference, and skepticism (Rampton, 2006, p. 22). Pennycook (2006) also argues that postmodernity brought about new "work practices" and "new technologies" which had a clear impact on language and literacy

www.manaraa.com

education as in discussions of multiliteracies[2] (p. 60).

Therefore, the focus shifts from viewing language as a reflective of one's identity to an identity that is performed through words. As Pennycook (2006) states:

> What we therefore have to understand is not how this "thing" called "language x" or "language y" does or does not do things to and for people, but rather the multiple investments people bring to their acts, desires, and performances around these language effects (p. 71).

Statement of the Problem

> A post 9/11 world affords the language profession a much-needed opportunity to revise its notions of the role of language in the public sphere…For no cultural and linguistic world have the events of 9/11 and its aftermath affected views of "the other" more dramatically than for the Arabic speaking world, often lumped together with the Islamic world, often lumped together with uncivilized societies and terrorism.
>
> Byrnes, 2004, p. 267

There is little doubt that the teaching of foreign languages, or modern languages[3], and their cultures has been affected in the aftermath of 9/11 in terms of learning about the "others" (Byrnes, H., Edwards, J.D., Scollon, R., Allen, R., Wesche, M., Allen, W., & Pratt, M.L. 2004; Kramsch, 2005). Historically, interest in the teaching and learning of particular languages and cultures has surged at moments of political crises. In 1957, the successful Russian launching of Sputnik I disturbed America's sense of national security

[2] Multiliteracy is a term coined by the New London Group to refer for a new kind of literacy needed due to the new ways people communicate as a result of new technologies.

[3] See Reagan (2002) for replacing 'foreign languages' by 'modern languages'. The terms "foreign languages" and "modern languages" will be used here interchangeably.

www.manaraa.com

and military competence. Accordingly, interest in learning Russian reached its utmost during the cold war (Allen, 1992; Kramsch, 2005; Welles, 2002). Typically, this interest in learning the language of the "adversary" dies out gradually and the number of students interested in learning the language declines, as the political crisis gets resolved.

The situation of teaching Arabic as a foreign/second language in the U.S. is both similar and different. On the one hand, in a post 9/11 context, Welles (2004) reports a 92.3% increase in Arabic student enrollment in the U.S. between 1998 and 2002. A number of U.S. newspapers reported that post 9/11, many U.S. colleges, universities and even middle and high schools have started offering Arabic, some for the first time, many with a huge flux of learners (Allen, 2004; Edwards, 2004; Scollon, 2004). Apparently, as is the case with other foreign languages (Kramsch, 2005), a heightened sense of "security," "patriotism" and "the fight against terrorism" has also been part of the package of learning Arabic as the language of the "adversary." For instance, learning Arabic has been introduced in some newspapers--in a post 9/11 context--as a tool in the hands of those who will track "terrorists." Richard Brecht, a former Air Force Cryptographer, was quoted in the New York Times, June 16, 2004, as commenting: "five billion dollars for an F-22 will not help us in the battle against terrorism. Language that helps us understand why they're [terrorists] trying to harm us [Americans] will."

On the other hand, the interest in learning Arabic and the negative representation of speakers of Arabic--although more obviously and publicly manifested post 9/11--have not been a new or immediate consequences of the terrible events of 9/11. First, Arabic has been termed "critical" by the National Defense and Education Act (NDEA) as early as the aftermath of World War II (Allen, 1992, 2004). As McCarus (1987) points out, the

www.manaraa.com

need for "infantrymen and intelligence personnel to function in and do research on the Arab world" (p. 14) gave recognition to the importance of proficiency in Arabic. Second, the sociopolitical and cultural context of teaching Arabic has always been influenced by inaccurate and prejudiced views of Arabs and Muslims (Allen, 2004). As early as during the colonial era of the 19th century, all the way to the recent media coverage of the aftermath of 9/11, the representation of Arabs--often lumped with Muslims--has been characterized by exaggerated stereotypes, prejudices, and misinterpretations (Said, 1997, 2003). Images of violence and terrorism among Arabs and Muslims have dehumanized the Arab world, its language, and cultures.

With this in mind, the teaching of Arabic has inherited an ambiguous and uneasy relationship between an interest in learning the language of the "other" and a long history of prejudice towards the Arab and Islamic world. Some believe that Arabic is gaining more global interest recently because it is the language of "Islam" (Dahbi, 2004, p. 630). Edward Said (2003) argues that Arabic is "terribly misrepresented. It's thought of as being first of all a controversial language because it is the language of Islam. And it is considered to be a violent language" (p. 165). It is not surprising, therefore, that there is very little that is known about Arabic and Arabs apart from the connection to a "violent" Islam. In interviews with Said (2003), Barsamian noted that "all that many Americans know about Arabic is the myth that there are a thousand words for knife" (p. 165).

The current complexities that surround teaching and learning Arabic post 9/11 can be characterized by a polemic debate. On the one hand, to learn the language is a tool in the global fight against a "decentralized and dispersed" terrorism (Brand, 2005, p. 7). On the other hand, Kramsch (2003) and others (e.g., Allen W., 2004; Wesche, 2004) argue

www.manaraa.com

that part of teaching and learning a foreign language, in general, is improving intercultural communication and developing a more human understanding of the "other." In this context, attention to language teaching and learning is significant because it "expresses…embodies…and symbolizes cultural reality" (Kramsch, 2003, p. 3). Therefore, the danger of misrepresenting the "other" is emphasized.

Hence, although foreign language learning has sometimes been tailored for the service of national and federal workforce (Kramsch, 2005), as is clearly the case with Arabic, 9/11 has allowed other opposite ideologies to emerge that raise questions of "what's going on in the world" (Chomsky, 2005) inside and outside the United States.

The field of teaching Arabic as a foreign languages is, therefore, influenced by the institutional politics of teaching foreign languages in the U.S.. In addition, the field is highly influenced by social and philosophical contexts of change in contemporary society from contexts of modernity to contexts of postmodernity. Such conditions have impacted attitudes towards interpretations of concepts of language and language teaching/learning. This includes discussions around politics and ideologies of curriculum and textbooks as archetypes of modernity, discussions around the identity and investments of language learners, challenges facing teachers and methods of teaching, and other debates surrounding politics of language and texts in a new global postmodern social world (see e.g., Apple, 2004; Canagarajah, 2004; Fairclough, 2001; Gebhard, 2000; Gee, 1992; Hargreaves, 1994; Janks, 2010; Kramsch, 1993, 2005; Luke, 1991, Pennycook, 2001; Norton, 2000; Wallace C., 1997).

This study attempts to shed light on language in late modern contexts as it relates to Arabic teaching and learning in one college campus in the U.S., with an

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

exploratory and critical look into the world of the Arabic classroom as being constructed in negotiation with and reaction to micro and macro sociocultural and political changes in contemporary societies. Such changes are investigated in relation to the students and the teacher of the Arabic classroom in becoming critical "literacy" participants (Janks, 2010). In the following pages, the conceptual framework of the study will be introduced, followed by the purpose and significance of the study, and the methodology of data collection and analysis.

Conceptual Framework

This study has been informed by the work and research undertaken from poststructural and sociocultural critical theories (Bakhtin, 1981; Bourdieu, 1999; Bourdieu and Passerson, 1977; Fairclough, 2001; Gee, 1992; Luke, 1996; Pennycook, 2001, Rampton, 2006). Post structuralism in reference to language and cultural studies emerged generally as a critique of structuralism/modernism. For instance, the intellectual works of Derrida, and his work on deconstructionism, is one of the major theories of post structuralism. Such theories have tremendous effect on problematizing concepts related to language, literacy, and cultural studies including the concepts of language, identity, and investment, which are underscored in this study as the following chapters illustrate.

In reference to "language," recent years have witnessed tense debates in literacy and language studies that resist the modern theoretical studies of the history of language that have been informed by a Suassurean understanding, as explained in Chapter 2. In explanation of this division between a structural and a post-structural understanding of language, Zappen (2000), adopting a Bakhtinian line in here explains:

www.manaraa.com

> Whereas traditional disciplines such as the philosophy of language, stylistics, and linguistics had studied *language* as an abstract system--sentences as decontextualized lexical and grammatical forms--Bakhtin proposes to study *communication*, that is, language as extralinguistic or metalinguistic-utterances situated within the framing context of their dialogic interrelations with other utterances" (p. 10-italics in origin).

This study benefits from a Bakhtinian understanding of "language" in cultural theories in which language "appears not as indifferent medium of social exchange but as a form of social exchange, susceptible to political and moral evaluation like any other…language in general becomes an activity which can be criticized and even improved" (Hirschkop, 1989, p. 5). In his discussion of literary theory, Bakhtin (1981) refers to dialogic versus monologic works of literature which is also applied to understanding language in general. The term dialogic indicates that every language utterance is a response to what has been said and an anticipation to what is coming. Hence, language and the meanings communicated are dynamic allowing different voices to interact and respond to each other (Dyson, 1993).

In this line of argument, texts, linguistic or "postlinguistic", are constructed as embedded with purposeful assumptions and intentions (Fairclough, 2001, p. 2). A text positions the reader in particular ways based on the design of the author and vice versa. Janks (2010) uses the word "design"[4] to describe how "texts have designs on us as readers, listeners or viewers" enabling texts to be "positioned and positioning" (p. 61). As language becomes "more than words," it intrinsically becomes "constitutive of and constituted by" one's identity (Norton, 2000, p. 13).

A critical perspective into approaching texts in contexts (Fairclough, 2001;

[4] Design: a word used by the New London Group in their discussion of multiliteracies as new form of literacy designed, in reaction to globalization and new technologies, to incorporate multimodal forms of communication (the New London Group, 1966).

www.manaraa.com

Gebhard, 1999) in language classrooms would encourage a model of learning that requires an interrogation of texts and their ideological assumptions. In other words, reading against the texts and their assumed constructed values. Such values in the language curriculum are questioned in relation to social, cultural and institutional contexts of interests.

As explained in Chapter 2, curriculum is to be understood, following Apple (2004), as a partial selection of an imagined representation of a culture. Deliberate choices of inclusion and exclusion are imposed to meet an ideological interest (Apple, 2004). A critical language teacher would then help learners pose questions to disrupt and rewrite the texts in new meanings (Byrnes, 2010; Janks, 2010; Kern, 2003) especially with the current demands of new multimodal technological advances (The New London Group, 1996). Another important debate related to curriculum and education is the concept of permeability (Dyson, 1993). A permeable curriculum incorporates the learners' voices and texts, the unofficial texts, into classroom official discourses. Hence, learners become active agents in producing their learning curriculum.

In relevance to debates on the relationship between the language learner and the social, cultural, and political world, language research studies are constantly challenged by new debates that integrate understandings of identity to power relations that influences the integration of the language learner into social interactions, and thus, social contexts. In this study, I make use of Norton's (1995, 2000) definition of identity to refer to "how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future" (p. 5).

www.manaraa.com

Language, therefore, becomes a means of negotiation to the understanding of one's relationship to self and others. It is a means of access into a membership to a social world (Kramsch, 1998). Such membership is constructed through attaining "symbolic and material resources," which validate power relations among individuals in particular communities (Norton, 2000, p. 7). Building on the concept of "cultural capital" by Bourdieu, Norton (2000) defines symbolic resources as those that refer to "language, education and friendship," while materials resources include "capital good, real estate and money" (p. 7). In this study, Chapters 4 and 6 explore Arabic language learners' identities, as influenced by such symbolic resources which in return play a role in the learners' investment in the foreign language.

Investment in language learning as used in this study is also defined through Norton (2000) as:

> The socially and historically constructed relationship of learners to the target language, and their often ambivalent desire to learn and practice it…The notion presupposes that when language learners speak, they are not only exchanging information with target language speakers, but they are constantly organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world (pp. 10-11).

With this understanding of identity and investment to the social world of learners, foreign language learners construct new social identities in interaction and dialogue with the "Other" even if this Other is only "imagined" or "idealized" (Kramsch, 2009, p. 15). Theorizing identities as social constructs allows me to utilize the concept of "footing" as employed by Goffman (1981), as it points to the framing and constructing of different social roles in relation to a context. Identity is then multiple, discursive, and socially constructed. "Doing with words" and using the foreign language is a new way of

www.manaraa.com

communicating into a new boundary (Kramsch, 1993; New London Group, 1996). In other words, learning language is a means of "exploring various possibilities of self in real or imagined encounters with others" (Kramsch, 2009, p. 15).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to examine the contexts of learning Arabic as a foreign language post 9/11 in college contexts in the United States, as shaped by the historical, institutional, and political contexts in which learning occurs (e.g., Al-Batal, 2007; Allen, 2004; Alosh, 1997; Kramsch, 2005). Such contexts in this study are mainly described as influenced by cues of postmodernity. The field of second and foreign language studies has been witnessing hot debates over the influence of late modernity on language studies, theoretically and practically (Fairclough, 2001, 2003; Rampton, 1997, 2006; Norton and Toohey, 2004).

This study seeks to investigate classroom talk in an Arabic language classroom where interactions among the teacher, the learners, and the textbook are shaped by debates on collision between contexts of modernity and postmodernity in understanding language and language teaching and learning. The study also seeks to investigate the relationship between the learning context and the identities of the Arabic language learners, while paying attention to the manner in which their identities are constructed through their own investments in learning Arabic. The study raises the following questions:

1. Who are the students of Arabic at the college level and what are their investments in learning Arabic in a post 9/11 context?

www.manaraa.com

2. How do uses of the language textbook shape curriculum instruction in the Arabic foreign language classroom in contexts of late modernity?
3. In a post 9/11 context, how can teachers of Arabic instantiate critical dialogues and allow a space for negotiated interpretations of modern textbooks in late modern classrooms?

As will be discussed in Chapter 2, most Arabic foreign language research has centered around main topics like the teaching of culture, debates on current methods of teaching and assessing language skills, the role of the dialects, and technology assisted learning contexts (e.g., Abuhakema, 2004, Al-Batal, 2006, 2007; Alosh, 1995; Elkhafaifi, 2005; Rammuny, 1990). Very few studies conducted to date have examined Arabic classroom discursive practices from a critical perspective (e.g., Lahlali, 2007). This study, therefore, is important in contributing to a critical analysis of classroom talk as discourse, and to an analysis of classroom interaction and the identities of the Arabic language learners in relation to the context of learning as influenced by cues of postmodernity. This study is also important in contributing to the field of Arabic as an ethnographic study. While recognizing the limits of study described in Chapter 3, I know of no ethnographic studies of Arabic classroom talk in college contexts in the United States in a post 9/11 context.

In the current politics in the United States, the need for critical literacy and critical language studies, with an emphasis on Arabic, is highlighted. Janks (2010) argues that "the USA is an excellent example from the political North of the continue need for critical literacy. Here discourses of patriotism, fear and dangerous Other were harnessed

www.manaraa.com

to win support of a war against Iraq…innocent civilians in Afghanistan" (p. 204).

Ten years after 9/11, the year 2011 has brought about dramatic changes in the Arab World and therefore a more pronounced political agenda for the West-East relations. With the unrest in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Yemen, Syria, and Bahrain, the teaching and learning of Arabic in the United States is becoming even more critical. In addition, the killing of Usamah Bin-Laden, the leader and founder of Al-Qaeda, has brought about stories and sentiments of 9/11 back into a critical focus. Polemic debates on needs and investments in learning Arabic are in need of further discussion with perspectives on national needs, economic and political competition, and a cross-cultural understanding of the Other--the Arabs and Muslims. Hence, more ethnographic and post-structural studies in the field of Arabic that problematizes classroom learning contexts in connection to the social and political worlds of the learners are needed.

Methodology

An ethnographic approach was used in collecting and analyzing the data (Carspecken, 1996; Thomas, 1993; Lather, 2007; Spencer, 2007; Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2007). In adopting a critical approach in ethnographic research, I had to be considerate to my stance as a researcher, claims of knowledge and validity, and values and biases of the researcher and the researched contexts. In connection to postmodern perspective, truth claims and values are further questioned as possibilities for heterogeneous interpretations and the world views that are constructed.

www.manaraa.com

Data Collection

As I elaborate in Chapter 3, I worked at this campus of study for about four years as a teaching assistant for Arabic. This study took place over a full semester of data collection in the Intermediate I Arabic classroom in fall 2005. Data were collected over a course of about 15 weeks. Prior to conducting the study, I had worked with the same focal students for a period of a year during their enrollment in Arabic Elementary I and II. The emic perspectives I have gained in becoming close to those learners, has helped me tremendously during my phase of research. The data collected were multiple in sources, as Table 1 summarizes, including fieldnotes, surveys, formal and informal interviews, and a collection of classroom materials.

To minimize the risks of biases and claims of truths, I worked on triangulating my data sources (Fielding & Fielding, 1986). Triangulation does not by default guarantee an increase of validity to the research. In this understanding, I take Maxwell's argument that validity is a "goal rather than a product" (2005, p. 105). He argues that, assuming that methods of doing research in collecting and analyzing data, a guarantee for validity is but a remnant of the "positivism" (p. 105). I tried, then, to get a tacit understanding of the participants' perspectives not only through what they said during my observations of classroom events. Naturally, what we may say does not always reflect what we do and what we believe in. Therefore, I use my journals, formal and informal interviews and chats, my notes as a participant-observer, and surveys to help me get more credible understandings of the participants.

With particular focus on field notes, I attempted, as described in Chapter 3, to build a record of "thick" notes and description (Geertz, 1973, p. 5). As Carspecken

www.manaraa.com

(1996) argues, components and qualities of thick descriptions include (p. 47-Italics in original):

- *Speech acts, body movements and body postures.*
- *A low-inference vocabulary*
- *The time is recorded quite frequently*
- *Occasional use of brackets and the "OC" code*[5] *are employed*
- *Context information*
- *Verbatim speech acts are put in italics*
- *The record is typed into a word processor*
- *A simple diagram*…when one is describing areas of the site or the movement of people

[5] OC, as referenced in Chapter 3 of this study, stands for 'observer comment'

www.manaraa.com

Table 1.1: Data Sources

Data Sources			
Observations (Dialogic Notes)	**Semi-Structured Interviews**	**Open-Ended Survey**	**Instructional Materials**
Extensive detailed accounts of the students' words and actions during class time. Accounts are both descriptive and reflective of my own thinking as I write down the notes in dialogue with myself and other participants in the class.	Classroom Teacher Focal Students A professor who has been part of the very beginning of the Arabic program on campus	Complied information on: • Students' demographics • Past educational experience as Arabic learners • Investments • Their knowledge and impressions about the Arabic program in the research setting • Formal or informal events that contributed to their becoming learners of Arabic	Syllabus Tests Instructional handouts The Arabic textbook of use

Data Analysis

This study adopts a critical ethnographic lens and uses tools from the broad field of critical discourse analysis to examine and analyze contexts of learning languages--Arabic in particular--in postmodern social contexts. Chapter 3 reflects on methodology used in the study. Here, I will only provide a concise overview.

www.manaraa.com

Throughout the data analysis process, my intention was for data to unfold and speak for itself in theorizing my interest in situated language use in the Arabic classroom, and provide insights on its connection to sociocultural and political contexts outside the classroom world. Adopting a postmodern perspective into research, I attempted to understand the culture of the participants from within, looking "for meaning and rationality in practices that may seem strange at first/from the outside" (Rampton, 2006, p. 391). The Arabic classroom in its interesting classroom talk and interactions with peers, the teacher, and the textbook, looked unfamiliar to me at first glance. Therefore, I had to be aware of my values and biases, be open to data, be aware of over-simplification and/or generalizations, and do justice by understanding the different cultural levels influencing the participants' activities (Carspeken, 1996; Coffey & Atkinson, 1996).

Throughout the process of examining the data, I was challenged by two main tasks. On the one hand, I had to remind myself of the attempt to look for systemic patterns and structures that unfold into categories and later formulate concepts and theories. On the other hand, I had to be open to the peculiar and complex data that may not seem to fall into expected patterns on interactions, an attempt to find meaning to such moments by contextualizing them in their own cultural and social contexts.

In speaking of the "problem of representation" in ethnographic research, Loon (2007) warns against a speedy description and analysis of ethnographic practices without a careful attempt to understand such practices as "they happen" and "reflect the sensibilities of those engaged in those practices" (p. 281). He emphasizes that "[E]thnography requires …a deferral of judgment--a deferring of perspectives--and a patience to be surprised" (p. 281).

www.manaraa.com

In my study, the data analysis began "simultaneously" with the very first process of data collection, as I started preliminary examining of data, as long as I was in the field of study (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p. 2). As such, the process has been reflexive and cyclical. Writing down my thoughts and memos and allowed me to go back to the field with more questions and further points of interest to be explored and understood. My field notes therefore were open ended and changing in style and depth based on the depth of "local knowledge, emerging sensitivities and evolving substantive concerns and theoretical insights" (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2007, p. 355).

The first steps of deep reading and re-reading of my set of data was the most challenging, as I let data unfold into categories and topics that provide insights on what is going on in the Arabic classroom. I made sure that my categories are "taken from participants' own words" providing an emic perspective (Maxwell, 2005, p. 97).

The second steps of reconnecting those emerging categories and codes required a comparative analysis on two levels. The first step was to 'cross-site' my data, examining each set in relation to another set of data--fieldnotes, observations, transcripts, diagrams, and others. I looked for coherence across patterns and themes, and noted a need to go back to the field when peculiarities aroused. This dialogic process of reading data against itself, against my understanding, and then re-examining emerging concepts with the perspectives of the participants in the field of study, was highlighted (Carspeken, 1996). The second step was to examine the relevant literature in association with my emerging concepts. I was able to allocate the voices and perspectives of my participants in literature, which helped to further theorize my concepts.

As my interest in the study has been motivated by an exploration of text-context

www.manaraa.com

and micro-macro relations in the world of language learners, I adopted tools from the broad field of critical discourse analysis, which helped to situate my concepts in contexts of language in postmodernity (Bloome & Egan-Robertson, 1993; Fairclough, 2001, 2003; Gee, 1992; Janks, 2001, 2010; Pennycook, 2001). With particular focus on classroom talk and interaction, and participants' structures as documented in the fieldnotes, I constructed a unit of analysis made up of small, interconnected vignettes and narratives named "dialogic notes." These interaction units were further coded to reflect the main theoretical concepts of analysis and discussion of influences of postmodernity in Arabic language classrooms. Chapter 3 further elaborates on the process.

In sum, this study revolves around three main questions, each examined in a separate chapter. The first question probes into the learners' identities and investments as they are becoming Arabic learners. Analysis of the data provides, in Chapter 4, portraits of the participants and their complex social and political world and context of learning. The second question addresses the Arabic language textbook as an archetype of modernity. In Chapter 5, I analyzed the textbook, as a text, in context-- in connection to the Arab World as the textbook attempts to represent, and in the context of the United States as the context of audience and learners. The third question focuses on classroom talk, and the role of the teacher in constructing a space for learners to negotiate the learning context, where collision of modernity and postmodernity in curricular practices are highlighted. Critical discourse analysis has provided me with broad tools to examine concepts of language, culture, power, and questionable knowledge assumptions. A postmodern and critical ethnographic lens, guided the study in every step of data collection and analysis, as I attempted to construct congruency between my research

www.manaraa.com

questions and methods of investigation.

Overview of Chapters

The purpose of the next chapter is to provide a review of literature on concepts of modernity and postmodernity as social conditions of contemporary societies and how they impacted the attitudes towards social, cultural, political, and linguistic practices (Hargreaves, 1994; Harvey, 1989). The chapter narrows its focus into politics of language and texts in postmodern contexts of language teaching and learning (Fairclough, 2001; Kramsch, 1993; Pennycook, 2001; Rampton, 2006).

Chapter 3 moves into description of the methodology of the study, adopting critical ethnographic lens onto data collection and analysis. Chapter 4 analyzes the research context and provides detailed illustrative portraits of the participants with attention to their identities and investments in relation to their learning context (e.g., Norton, 2000). Chapter 5 analyzes the Arabic language textbook and its modern pedagogical apparatus, focusing on its content and method of teaching, as constituted by the micro and macro social, institutional, and political ideologies at the time of its production.

Chapter 6 brings classroom daily talk and interactions to life, where collision of modern concepts of teaching and learning collide with postmodern perspectives of learning participants in contemporary societies (e.g., Fairclough, 2001; Rampton, 2006). Finally, Chapter 7 discusses implications for teaching and research in critical language and literacy studies, Arabic foreign language teaching, and teacher education and curriculum studies.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter is composed of four interconnected sections. The first explores the context for change in social life in contemporary postmodern societies. It briefly explains modernity and "late" modernity (postmodernity) as major philosophical and social conditions that have deeply impacted the attitudes towards and interpretations of social, economic, political, linguistic, and scientific practices. The second section investigates politics of theorizing 'language and texts' in relation to critical social theory. In current textually mediated social life, the politics of representation become critical and need to be understood by situating texts in institutional and larger historical, political, and economic contexts. The third section then discusses politics of knowledge and curriculum exploring key concepts of modern and postmodern ideologies of educational curriculum. Narrowing in on language education, I discuss debates regarding historical and wider political and economic contexts of world language education and the challenges posed in the new global postmodern social order. The emphasis is on the traditional and critical views of language and culture, methods of language teaching and learning, and the roles of textbooks, teachers, and students. Finally, the fourth section provides a brief review examining Arabic as a world language in the context of the United States. The chapter presents the challenges teachers of world languages, including Arabic, face in the changing of world order to conditions of post or late modernity and globalization. Such challenges are reflected in defining concepts of language and culture, the roles of teachers and students, teaching methods, and the critical dialogues in line with and opposition to textbooks as artifacts of particular institutional and societal contexts.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

The Context for Change

> Schools are not businesses. Children are not products. Educators aren't usually out to make a profit. Schools and corporations, however, are not absolutely unalike...delineated hierarchies of command, divisions of specialized responsibility, demarcations of tasks and roles, and challenges to achieve consistency and coordination.
>
> Hargreaves, 1994, p. 22

Under the subtitle, *pretext for change*, Hargreaves (1994) argues that social organizations, such as schools, are witnessing powerful professional discourses of change. He points out that challenges facing schools and teachers are not confined to micro pretexts within the school system itself, but rather rooted in the macro sociohistorical transition from modernity to postmodernity.

For teachers, as "social learners" (p. 11), such changes entail certain choices as to how to respond to these new postmodern conditions. In a current context of teaching, not only at basic grade levels but including college, the triangulation of teachers, students, and curriculum is situated within a confrontation between the resonances of modernity and the new challenges of postmodernity. A modernistic education system is confronted by a postmodern world "characterized by accelerating change, intense compression of time and space, cultural diversity, technological complexity, national insecurity, and scientific uncertainty" (p. 3).

In the following section, I will summarize some arguments that provide various definitions for the contexts of modernity and postmodernity from a philosophical perspective. The purpose is to introduce major characteristics of these two social conditions or attitudes in viewing the world. This overview is

www.manaraa.com

essential to analyze the wider contexts of change surrounding teachers and learners as will be addressed in the other sections.

Modernity and Postmodernity

The concept of postmodernity has been to the moment a controversial and elusive concept to interpret. As a term, it is slippery although unavoidable in the scholarship and research related to social and cultural theories. Harvey (1989) points out that postmodernism "has become a concept to be wrestled with, and such a battleground of conflicting opinions and political forces that it can no longer be ignored" (p. 39).

In his seminal contribution to understanding postmodernity, Harvey (1989) argues that an inquiry into the origins of cultural, political, and economic changes in the last few decades could be understood in connection to the emergence and rise of new concepts of space-time compression due to the conditions of postmodernity; transitioning from Fordism and belief in corporate power to flexible accumulation of capitalism. Harvey poses the question whether we can reasonably speak of ourselves as living in a postmodern condition or postmodern culture. Although the question remains controversial, he is inclined to argue in favor of a change that started to emerge around the early 1970s.

In line with the editors of the architectural journal PRECIS 6 (1987), Harvey states:

> [The editors] see postmodernism as a legitimate reaction to the 'monotony' of universal modernism's vision of the world. 'Generally perceived as positivistic, technocentric, and rationalistic, universal modernism has been identified with the belief in linear progress, absolute truths, and rational planning of ideal social orders, and the standardization of knowledge and production.' Postmodernism, by the way of contrast, privileges 'heterogeneity and difference as liberative forces in the

www.manaraa.com

> redefinition of cultural discourse.' Fragmentation, indeterminacy, and intense distrust of all universal or 'totalizing' discourses (to use the favoured phrase) are the hallmark of postmodernist thought. (p. 9)

The above quote situates modernity and postmodernity as two oppositional philosophical and social attitudes, realities, or visions of interpreting the world. Modernism is the guardian of reason, rationalism, and universalism. Postmodernism, on the contrary, rejects these ideals, problematizes the scientific basis of knowledge, and questions its attempt to organize the heterogeneous and pluralized cultural and social discourses.

Harvey locates modernism and postmodernism as two antithetical conditions to social and cultural discourses and thus the use of 'post' marks a separation from the priori condition of modernity. However, in many respects, Harvey poses the question himself, "does postmodernism…represent a radical break with modernism…is postmodernism a style…or should we view it strictly as a periodizing concept" (p. 42). In answer of himself, Harvey makes it clear that postmodernism is not "simply a version of modernism" (p. 44). While modernity attempts to rationally organize conditions of the world, postmodernity does not attempt to "transcend" or "counteract" the fragmented and the chaotic elements of life. Rather, postmodernity simply lies in total acceptance of disorder (p. 44).

Harvey (1989) traces the passage from modernity to postmodernity both as a philosophical and aesthetic worldview starting with the age of Enlightenment. The main line of argument relevant to this research centers on the question of representation. How does modernity and postmodernity represent the world? Harvey states that modernism was "preoccupied with language, with finding some special mode of representation of

www.manaraa.com

eternal truths" (p. 20). This could only be possible by "freezing time and all its qualities" (p. 21). However, by the time of World War II, it was apparent that the condition of modernity was mythically grounded. Counter representations were clearly recognized through the 1960s and 1970s that resisted the hegemony of modernist scientifically based social and cultural representation of the world. Poststructuralist movements declared rage against modernist rationalization of the world. In a condition of postmodernity, different complex realities can "coexist, collide, and interpenetrate" (p. 41).

The debates on pretexts and means of transition from modernity to postmodernity have been controversial for almost two decades. Delanty[6] , a sociologist, (2000) argues that such a transition can be addressed within two main concerns: first, changes on the level of "the prevailing model of knowledge" in regard to "cultural changes in the worldview of society" and second, "changes in the social, economic, and political structures of modern society" (p. ix). What Delanty suggests is that the transition to postmodernism should not be understood only in regard to the capitalistic economic and industrial changes. The cultural and societal changes are highly influential as well.

Delanty (2000) strongly argues that our current period cannot be "reduced" to either modernity or postmodernity (p. 5). He argues that seeds of postmodernity have long started to contribute its impulse within the discourses of modernity. Thus, according to Delanty, there is no rupture or a beginning of a new transitional phase through the passage form modernity to postmodernity. His central argument is that "postmodernity is deeply rooted in the culture of modernity, just as modernity itself was rooted in the premodern worldview" (p. 4). What is significant is that Delanty recognizes the

[6] Gerard Delanty is a professor of sociology and Social & Political Thought at the University of Sussex, UK

www.manaraa.com

postmodern condition as not bound by a definite period defined by time or space but rather with a shift whereby "new cultural logics emerge" (p. 4). Such shifts are salient in the cultural view of the world and transformations of perceptions to knowledge.

To support his argument, that resonances of postmodernity can be found within the discourses of modernity, Delanty (2000) analyses the main arguments of some modernist thinkers who critically addressed the crisis of modernity. For example, he discusses, among others, Nietzsche and his critique of Enlightenment and Weber and his sociological theories of modernity. Nietzsche rejected the "emancipatory power of reason and science" embodied in the Enlightenment (p. 22). Weber argued that modernity had "exhausted the possibilities of cultural renewal" (p. 27). Though it sounds deterministic and probably pessimistic, Weber's theory emphasized the fact that making meaning is "underpinned by the subjectivity of the actors" (p. 27). In this light, the view of culture according to these thinkers is becoming contested. Delanty's premise is that the work of these thinkers could be interpreted as laying the ground for early impulses of postmodernity as the work "reflects a gradual turn to a vision of culture that embraces reflexitivity and skepticism" (p. 8).

An influential contributor whose theorizing of postmodernity influenced western philosophy is Lyotard. One of the earliest to use the term postmodernism, Lyotard was skeptical of the premises of modernity that designates science as a source of legitimizing itself with regard to metanarratives or grand narratives. Lyotard defines metanarratives as philosophical narratives or conclusive stories that attempt to rationally explain and therefore legitimize historical experiences or forms of knowledge in the world. In

www.manaraa.com

rejection of metananratives, Lyotard defines postmodernity as "incredulity toward metanarratives" (2004 [1979], p. 355).

In an attempt to understand postmodernity, de Alba, Gonzalez-Gaudiano, Lankshear, & Peters (2000), define it in comparison to modernity in two main domains: aesthetic and philosophical. As a philosophical perspective, de Alba, et al (2000) refer to the belief "in the advancement of knowledge and human progress premised on experience and scientific method" (p. 2). In light of postmodernism, an aesthetic use implies a shift and reaction to the modern style of arts including the attitudes of the artists.

The historical/ philosophical sense, which is crucial to this research, is related to the "ethos" of the postmodern and the condition of postmodernity (p. 3). Following Lyotard, de Alba, et al (2000) use the term postmodern to refer to the transformations in the state of knowledge in regard to science, literature, and arts. Such transformations broke with the rules of science as "foundations of modern institutions" (p. 5). They quote Lyotrad's response that postmodernism is:

> Not modernism at its end but in the nascent state, and this state is constant. I have said and will say again that postmodernism signifies not the end of modernism, but another relation to modernism. (p. 7)

In conjunction with the previous argument of Delanty, the above quote indicates that postmodernity is not something that comes post or after modernity but "entertains an ambivalent relations to modernism" as "an episteme, a philosophical stance, or historical periodization" (p. 7).

Taking a strong stand towards the social and cultural changes that demarcate the end of the 20th century, Lyon (1994) describes the term postmodernity as multilayered. Some of these changes include technological innovations, emergence of social and

www.manaraa.com

political movements and concerns including crucial issues related to gender, the environment, ethnicity and race. Consequently, 'reality' and how it is understood, interpreted, and/ or contested is a core debate in postmodernity.

In line with Lyotard, Lyon (1999) describes postmodernity as an "idea, a cultural experience, [and] a social condition" (p. 6). He pronounces his preference to use the term 'postmodern' as opposed to 'late modern' in describing our current social condition. His rational is that 'post' is a more modest terms to use compared to 'late'; the latter, according to theorists who prefer this term, indicates that modernity's days are "numbered" (Lyon, 1999, p. 3). While recognizing the debate on labeling the current conditions, in this research, I use 'late' and 'post' interchangeably.

Lyon puts forward two central alerts in attempting to describe modernity and postmodernity. First, warning against confusion of labels, Lyon distinguishes between postmodernism, "when the accent is on the cultural" and postmodernity "when the emphasis is on the social" (p. 9). Although he draws attention to the distinction, he accentuates the fact that the social and the cultural aspects are not at odds. Rather, they "imbricate with and inform" each other (p. 10-11). Second, Lyon advises against a reductionist comprehension of modernity in reference to achievements only in science or technology. He states that modernity visibly affects our daily life with heated debates: "'who says?'-authority questions, and 'who am I?'-identity questions" (p. 26).

Lyon provides some examples of major achievements of modernity that influenced different disciplines. An example is rationalization which adores calculation to create control and mastery of aspects of life. Another example is urbanization whereby cities flourished as sites for industrial production due to migration from rural areas.

www.manaraa.com

Moreover, discipline was a marked achievement of modernity whereby a bureaucratic system of discipline, self control, and keeping order was apparent in industry, the military, and social institutions like prisons, hospitals, and schools.

In the face of the pressures of postmodernity, the modernist concepts of skills and competencies required for systematic production and efficiency in an industrial world were challenged by globalization. Lyon (1999) offers two oppositional views on globalization. The first one views globalization as a consequence of modernity. This view tends to see "capitalist developments continuing in linear fashion, producing uniform and standardized results…the western way tends to predominate…with the result that uniformity becomes more universal" (p. 62). Examples include McDonaldization and hegemony of English as an official language. The second alternative views the world as becoming heterogeneous socially, culturally, and economically. As such, "the global and postmodern circumstances are intertwined [whereby] each contributes to the development of the other" (p. 63).

To summarize, this section on the meanings of modernity and postmodernity, as two colliding social conditions, attempted to shed light on the conditions of change as they broadly shape the contemporary social human condition. Such social conditions provide substance and urge for change in the realm of education, as an institutionalized field shaped by current postmodern debates, in regard to the roles of the teachers, students, and the curriculum in a context of late modernity. In the introduction to this section, Hargreaves (1994) compares between schools and corporations as influenced by the transition from modernity to postmodernity. The dynamic struggle between the two social conditions of modernity and postmodernity can be summarized through a concise

www.manaraa.com

overview of their accomplishments. In analysis of modernity, such events constitute (see, Hargreaves, 1994; Jones, 2003):

- Economically: Mass production based on factory work at an age of industrial revolution. The factory system involved rationalized systematic organization and control over specialized processes of production. Monopoly capitalism was manifested through bureaucratic structural organization and focus on efficiency and productivity.
- Politically: Emergence of the national-state as the centralized form of modern governments with a dominant political discourse that defines citizenship and establishes control over education and social welfare.
- Personally: A capitalist economy that links identity to occupation and therefore class membership, that is, a collective sense of identity.
- Global effects that include urbanization, secularization of knowledge and particularly science, military development, western domination of the world.
- Philosophically: Assertion of reason, truth, foundationalism, certainty, and progress.

In comparison, some markers of postmodernity are oppositional to modernity and constitute:

- Economically: A shift to global capitalism which is not currently confined to the western world but part of the global economy that transcends national state governments. There is a change towards small goods and a shift towards productivity, consumption, and consumerism of information and services through advertising.

www.manaraa.com

- Politically: Decentralized decision-making structures and blurred boundaries.
- Personally: Rejection of universalism in favor of difference and fragmentation as is the case in understanding the Other and increase awareness of personal empowerment.
- Philosophically and ideologically: Advances in telecommunications, mass media, and electronic dissemination of information rejected traditional concepts of scientific certainties and therefore credibility.

In conclusion, the perspectives provided above agree that we are witnessing a clear transition to a compressed and complex world. Though defining and understanding the particularities of modernity and postmodernity are still in debate (e.g., Hammond, 2007), the literature recognizes the collision between modernity and postmodernity and the influence on the sociocultural, economical, linguistic, and political views of the world. In relation to education, this collision presents distinctive challenges to teachers who work within school systems that are symbols of modernity. In the next section, the crisis of modernity is discussed in relation to politics of language and texts. That is, the discussion focuses particularly on theorizing language under the influences of modernity and postmodernity.

Politics of Language and Texts

The theoretical side of postmodernism is connected to deconstruction; the theoretical method of poststructuralism. The poststructuralist thought is associated with a number of thinkers including Derrida and Foucault who offer a number of critical debates on discourses and practices in critique of structuralism (e.g., see Cherryholmes, 1988 Chapters 2 and 3). Structuralists considered language essential to social and cultural

www.manaraa.com

analysis. From their perspective, language "must concern itself with uncovering the deep structures of linguistic signification … [language] is a system of closed signs which can be analyzed as a system of logical structures" (Delanty, 2000, p. 139). Opposed to the structuralist view of language as a closed system, poststructuralists radicalized such a prevailing thought by giving a vital role to the signifier (medium) as opposed to the signified (what is being said). Thus, deconstruction, at the textual level, was "a method of textual interpretation which greatly stressed the impossibility of closure" (Delanty, 2000, p. 140).

Deconstructionism which is mainly associated with Derrida is a theoretical position on approaching, reading, and interpreting texts. It assumes that writers intertextually build on other texts while writing their own. Rather than defining meaning through "binary distinctions or oppositions" as structuralists do, Derrida understood meaning as "caught in a *play* of references" (Cherryholmes, p. 36-italics in origin).

In the same light, cultural life, "as a series of texts" is continually "intersecting with other texts, producing more texts" (Harvey, 1989, p. 49). Thus, meaning cannot be reduced to a neat relationship between a signifier and a signified. The lively and dynamic nexus of intertextual texts and therefore meanings are beyond what the writer intends to convey. In Harvey's words, he argues that this process of "interweaving" (p. 51) of texts and meanings are beyond control, a fact that urges the deconstructionist to dig deeper into texts and attempt to understand how they build upon each other. Following Derrida's deconstruction, and his declaration of the 'death of the subject', postmodernists raise serious doubts on the logical relationship of meanings as attributed to a system of signs rather than to a speaker.

www.manaraa.com

For postmodern discourses, Derrida's textual heterogeneity deconstructs the authoritative power of the writer and allows the reader to impose a continuous meaning and "narrative" or a "double reading" (Harvey, 1989, p. 51). Thus, the mythical understanding of language as a closed system according to the structuralists falls apart. Citing Foster (1983), Harvey argues that the continuity of reading fragments of texts as they intersect with other texts allows for a constant tracing of such fragments as they transfer from "production to consumption" (p. 51).

In light of the above respect, postmodernism is grounded on a particular theoretical orientation towards language and communication. As mentioned earlier, contrary to the modernist view that assumed a neat and "identifiable" relationship between the signified and the signifier, or what is being said and how it is being said, poststructuralists argue that such relationships are "continually breaking apart and re-attaching in new combinations" (Harvey, 1989, p. 49). In line with Derrida, Harvey builds on Lyotard's argument that social bonds are connected to plural number of linguistic threads, what he calls " language games" (p. 46). Thus, these flexible webs of language games mean that one "may resort to a quite different set of codes depending upon the situation in which we find ourselves (at home, at work, at church, in the street or pub)" (p. 46). As such Lyotard "accepts the potential open qualities of ordinary conversations in which rules can bend and shift so as to encourage the greatest flexibility of utterance" (p. 47).

In accordance with an understanding of language from a postmodern perspective, the theoretical framework that informs this study in understanding the politics of language and text in a condition of postmodernity draws on the work of Norman

www.manaraa.com

Fairclough (2001, 2003). However, before I outline the relationship between text and context in a postmodern view, I believe it is important not to neglect a focused clarification on the perception of language from a structuralist point of view. This will elucidate the difference in regard to the linguistic epoch or the "linguistic turn" in recent social theory (Fairclough, 2001, p. 2).

In his discussion of approaches to language study, Fairclough (2001) refers to the major limitation of these earlier approaches that failed to notice the relationship between language, language use, and power. He adds that such limitations redeemed these approaches as unsatisfactory in analyzing or describing language in actual practice from critical perspectives or within critical language studies in a broad sense (p. 5).

Linguistics, for example, is informed by the founder of linguistics, Ferdinand de Saussure whose contributions to language studies demarcates the beginning of structuralism (Pennycook, 2001). According to Rivkin and Ryan (2004), Saussure argues that language "should be studied as if it were frozen in time and cut transversely like a leaf" (p. 53). In consequence, a study of language utterances assumes that spoken utterances are a "manifestation of the rules of the system that lend order to the heterogeneity of language" (p. 53). Saussure also argues that words are signs and thus the conception of language is made up of linguistic signs. Each word has two faces: a signified, "the ideational component" and a signifier, "the phonic component" (p. 54).

Culler (2004 [1975]) points out another major contribution of Saussure to structuralism in distinguishing between "speech acts (*la parole*) and the system of a language (*la langue*)" (p. 57-italics in origin). Culler adds that *langue* is a "system, an institution, a set of interpersonal rules and norms, while… [*parole*] comprises the actual

www.manaraa.com

manifestations of the system in speech and writing" (p. 57). *Langue*, according to (Fairclough, 2001), is the concern of mainstream linguistics which assumes that the language of a certain group or community of speakers is invariant which therefore justifies the study of language as a "static system at a given point of time, not dynamically as it changes through time" (p. 6).

In review, Ferdinand de Saussure summarizes his theory in relation to linguistics in his *Course in General Linguistics*, published in 1916 as assembled by his students from class notes:

> Language is not a function of the speaker; it is a product that is passively assimilated by the individual… Speaking, on the contrary, is an individual act. It is willful and intellectual…these are the characteristics of language: (1) language is a well defined object in the heterogeneous mass of speech facts…the individual must always serve as apprenticeship in order to learn the functioning of language. (2) Language, unlike speaking, is something we can study separately…the science of language is possible only if the other elements are excluded. (3) Whereas speech is heterogeneous, language, as defined, is homogenous. It is a system of signs in which the only essential thing is the union of meanings and sound images, and in which both parts of the sign are psychological (2004 [1916], p. 59).

Saussure's contributions to structuralism were adopted by many disciplines besides linguistics including sociology, anthropology, literary studies, and philosophy. For example, the anthropologist Lévi-Strauss applied Saussure's concept of language to the study of culture as a "system characterized by an internal order" (Rivkin and Ryan, 2004, p. 53). This view of language and therefore culture has isolated them from social, cultural, or historical contexts that crucially shape them. Such views certainly found a ground in language and culture education. Fairclough (2001) critiques an "asocial" way of studying language, and culture if we define language as culture (e.g., see Kramsch,

www.manaraa.com

1993), that does not contribute to understanding the relationship between language, ideology and power (p. 6).

Sociolinguistics, another approach of studying language, builds on the social and anthropological understanding of language and culture as influenced by structuralism. Although sociolinguistics does not neglect the social conditions of language use (*parole*), Fairclough (2001) critiques its positivist conceptions in two regards: first, it focuses on 'what' questions, rather than 'how' and 'why' questions. That is, it describes what is observed in the use of language in a society and falls short on exploring and problematizing why and how things are happening in a particular way at a particular context. Second, it is concerned with assumed 'appropriate' forms of language to be used in certain situations with the danger that they may lend themselves as the legitimate linguistic forms for a particular social situation. For instance, sociolinguistics contributes to describing differentiation of dialects and the phenomenon of language standardization. Nonetheless, it fails to contribute as to why and how language variation and the declaration of one variety as the national standard language are ideological and reproduce power relations. In addition, it fails to explain how and why particular language forms are more appropriate than others in a speech event. Clearly, the language teaching profession has been highly shaped by the structurally influenced linguistic and sociolinguistic debates in modern schooling.

Pennycook (2001) adds that sociolinguistics has been harshly critiqued for its "static" view that assumes a reflective view of society (p. 17). That is, describing language use as reflective of a fossilized social reality waiting to be discovered and

www.manaraa.com

described. He further quotes, in agreement, Cameron (1995) who compared between the perspectives of sociolinguistics and critical theory on the social aspect of language.:

> Whereas sociolinguistics would say that the way I use language reflects or marks my identity as a particular kind of social subject…the critical account suggests language is one of the things that constitutes my identity…Sociolinguistics says that how you act depends on who you are; critical theory says that who you are (and are taken to be) depends on how you act. (1995, pp. 15-16- quoted in Pennycook, 2001, p. 53)

Moving towards a critical view of language, Pennycook adds that using, speaking, teaching, and learning a language becomes a "form of social and cultural action; it is about producing and not just reflecting realities" (p. 53). World (or foreign-see footnote p. 4) language textbooks with focus on Arabic during the1950s and 1960s have been shaped by the conception of language, language and teaching and learning in mainstream linguistics and sociolinguistics as I will argue in Chapter 5.

The Text in Context

In this research, I build on the critical perspectives of language studies as informed by conditions of postmodernity to understand the challenges the teachers of a world language, like Arabic, face in their constant collision with modernity as embodied in textbooks, methods of language teaching and learning, and teaching institutions. In order to explore how classroom practices in Arabic language classrooms are shaped by modern schooling conception, that is, situating the text in context, I follow the theoretical framework of Fairclough (2001, 2003) in exploring classroom practices from an institutional perspective whereby the macro discourses at institutional levels shape the micro discourse within the classrooms (Gebhard, 1999, 2000). In a current social

www.manaraa.com

condition that is continuously changing by globalization, late or postmodernity, information technology, and new capitalism, language as a social discourse is interconnected with diverse elements of social life (Fairclough, 2003; Gebhard, 2004).

Pennycook (2001) poses the question of how we can relate a text, or a discourse, to broader sociopolitical contexts and how ideology operates to impact the way we make meaning of texts in contexts. In response, Figure 2:1 below refers to the discourse view of language according to Fairclough (2001) and his interpretation of texts and contexts. (See Gebhard (2000) for analysis of texts in contexts in second language studies as an institutional phenomenon).

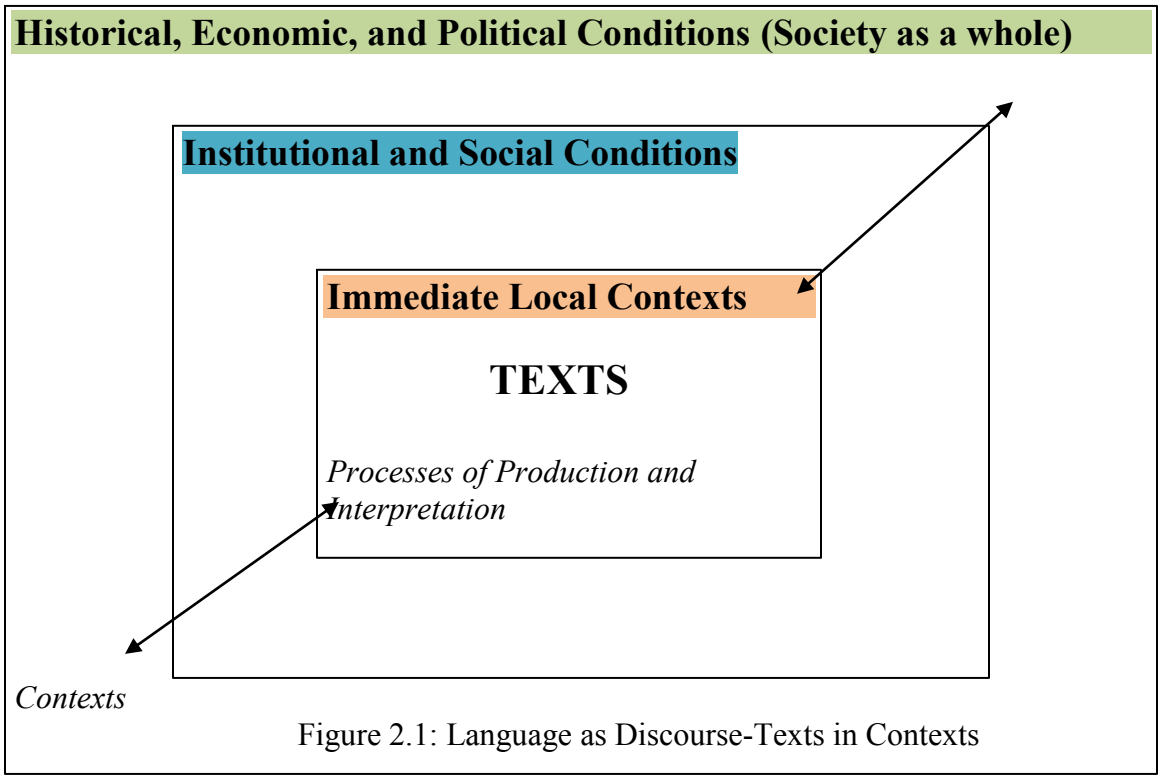


Figure 2.1: Language as Discourse-Texts in Contexts

Fairclough (2001) presents a discourse view of language as a form of social practice. This implies a number of features: First, language is an internal part of society, that is, they are dialectically interconnected. Second, the process of producing and

www.manaraa.com

interpreting language is a social one that is defined and affected by social conventions. Third, language is socially conditioned by other linguistic and nonlinguistic societal features.

The concept of 'discourse' is defined in different ways in critical social theory. Foucault defines it in relation to the historical changes in the "internal" characteristics of a discursive formation and "the institutional conditions and social problems which facilitate the emergence, organization and survival of particular discourses" (Crossley, 2005, pp. 61-2). In other words, he is concerned with why, how, when, and where certain forms of discourse "assume the social importance that they have" (p. 62). In contrast, Habermas defines discourse as the analysis of the taken for granted key assumptions that need to be called into question in habitual communicative activities (p. 63). This research aligns with Fairclough's view which seems to be combining both views whereby a "continuum from the micro-details of specific exchanges through to the broader social history of the contexts and conditions under which discourse is produced" (p. 63). That is, I intend to understand discourse as shaped by the institutional and societal contexts that produce and shape it.

In attempting to define what is meant by a 'text', Fairclough (1995, 2001, 2003) provides a number of significant points. First, he makes extensive use of the work of the functional linguist Halliday in defining the spoken and written texts. Contrary to the traditional definition of a text as a whole or complete "piece of written language," Fairclough adopts a broader concept that builds on linguistic and cultural analysis (1995, p. 4). A shopping list or a printed newspaper article is a text, so are transcripts or fieldnotes of classroom conversations "in which language learners, their peers, and their

www.manaraa.com

teachers interact" (Gebhard, 2000, p. 41). As such, "any actual instance of language in use is a 'text'" (Fairclough, 2003, p. 3).

Second, texts are not limited to spoken or written texts only. Rather, they include visual images and sound effects. In connection to writers of postmodernism, some claim that "visual images are ousting language" referring therefore to "postmodernist culture as 'postlinguistic' (Fairclough, 2001, p. 2). Therefore, texts do not need to be linguistic. A picture, an image, a photo, a cartoon can all be texts which is supported by the argument that our current societies are becoming increasingly multi-semiotic.

Third, a text is "a product rather than a process- a product of the process of text production" (Fairclough, 2001, p. 20). Fairclough defines two kinds of processes that constitute a discourse as social interaction: processes of production, in which a text is a product, and processes of interpretation, in which a text is a resource. Accordingly, every text carries "cues" or traces of the processes of production and interpretation (p. 20). In this research, I use the term 'text' in two situations; first, in reference to and analysis of the Arabic textbook as a written text (see Chapter 5), and second, in reference to and analysis of classroom talk as a text. By classroom talk I refer to the dialogic interactions between the classroom teacher and the Arabic students in playful readings of passages from an Arabic textbook. That is classroom talk through triangulation of the teacher's talk, the students' talk, and the textbook (see Chapter 6).

Fairclough argues that discourse analysis cannot be reduced to analysis at the level of texts without situating processes of production and interpretation within their social conditions or contexts. He categorizes these social conditions into three levels:

> The level of the social situation, or the immediate social environment in which the discourse occurs; the level of the social institution which

www.manaraa.com

> constitutes a wider matrix for the discourse; and the level of the society as a whole. (pp. 20-21)

This framework becomes a means for exploring the intricate nexus between language and social practices within institutions on the one hand, and the relationships with macro or broad social, political, and historical structures as Figure 2:1 explains. In other words, it is a process of constant linking between the micro local contexts of texts production, consumption, and interpretation to the macro societal and cultural levels, a process that is ideologically discursive.

Debates around the concepts of ideology and power are widely documented in literature. Ideology as a construct is far more complex to analyze because it is intricately intertwined, whether explicitly or implicitly, in our social practices. Some of these practices are unquestioned and rather taken for granted as the natural way for things to be. A number of theorists and intellectuals have approached 'ideology' from a variety of perspectives in terms of theoretical and analytical frameworks: critical literacy (Luke 2004; Wignell, 1995), critical pedagogy (Wallace, 1997, 2003), post structuralism, critical language awareness (Clark & Ivanic, 1997, 1999; Janks, 1991, 2000, 2010), deconstruction, multiliteracies, and others (Pennycook, 2001).

Ideologies, or implicit assumptions, are in competition over the shape of texts, their meanings, and how they are responded to. In understanding ideologies, I am in line with Gee (1992) who defines ideology as "any theory that involves assumptions (however tacit they may be) about the "value" (prestige, power, desirability, centrality) of experiences, things, or people" (p. 8-quotes and brackets in origin). In critical recognition of ideology, becoming ideological according to Freedman and Ball (2004) is not a hidden inner process. On the contrary, it is a visible process that could be subject to an empirical

www.manaraa.com

study because it is materially presented "as a thing uttered, written, printed, whispered, or thought" (p. 29).

Drawing on the work of Fairclough (1992, 1995, 2001, 2003), ideologies are closely connected to power. Moreover, they are assumptions that are intimately associated with language to "legitimize existing social relations and differences of power" (2001, p. 2) through naturalization or common sense conventions. He adds on that the concept of ideology should not be used in a "neutral way…as virtually synonymous with 'worldview' " but rather in critical way that ties ideology to social relations of power (1995, p. 17-single quotes in origin).

In relations to institutions of learning, ideologies of schools as factories in conditions of modernity are shaped by goals and concepts of world language teaching and learning. These institutional conditions are in turn embedded in and influenced by the wider hegemonic historical, economic and political goals on the structuring of world language education as a "call for action," or an educational challenge in support of competitive job markets and national interests (Kramsch, 1993, p. 256). Naturally, such hegemonic institutional and societal conditions are subject to degrees of resistance since neither teachers nor learners are "agentless" (Gebhard, 2000, p. 46). In focus on Arabic as a world language, particularly at current political times in post 9/11 context, this research will explore the possibilities of allowing postmodern or late modern spaces for teachers and students in modern contexts of teaching.

So far, I have attempted to define what a 'text' means in the broader sense. It is of significance now to define the way 'context' is used in this research as informed by sociocultural and critical language studies. In line with Fairclough, Kramsch (1993)

www.manaraa.com

accentuates the dialectical relationship between texts and contexts in language studies in general and in world language studies in particular. Theoretically, the view of language as 'discourse' can better capture the dynamics of forces and interactions working between "the learner and the language, between the teacher and the learner, and among learners" in the construction of meanings (p. 11). As informed by Halliday and Hasan (1989, p. 117), Kramsch cites their argument in the relationship between text and context. The quote critiques the dichotomy between a view of language as an individual expression and language as a reflection of a social order as rooted in structuralism:

> The notions of text and context are inseparable: text is language operative in a context of situation and contexts are ultimately construed by the range of texts produced within a community…one commonsense conception is…that our ideas, our knowledge, our thoughts, our culture are all there- almost independent of language and just waiting to be expressed by it. This attitude is deeply rooted that it finds its expression, for example, in our theoretical writings about language. (Kramsch, 1993, p. 10)

The question then is briefly what is in a context. In the above review, the emphasis has been on adopting a framework that transcends the dichotomy of mapping either the micro or macro relations and rather exploring "how the classroom, text, or conversation is related to broader social, cultural, and political relations" (Pennycook, 2001, p. 114). This is achieved through a deep analysis of the contextual situatedness of texts. Drawing on Pennycook, a classroom as a context cannot be narrowly defined as a neutral educational site of knowledge transformation. Rather, it is a site for political and cultural struggle where the micro societal and institutional relations are reproduced.

In exploring the notion of context in language teaching in specific, I am informed by Kramsch (1993) who refers to five axes: "linguistic, situational, interactional, cultural, and intertextual" (p. 46). In terms of how contexts are shaped, the linguistic axis refers to

www.manaraa.com

the choice of particular linguistic forms over other possible ones. The situational refers to the 'footing' or orientation authors of text might take toward audiences in the classroom. The interactional refers to shared knowledge and presuppositions participants of a dialogue, for instance, bring in or draw from to accomplish certain interactional needs. The cultural refers to ideological knowledge shared by the individuals participating in a speech event. And finally the intertextual refers to the relationship between a text to other present and past texts. In conclusion, the context should not be viewed as a "natural given, but as a social construct" (p. 46).

In the next section, I address this point in relation to educational curricula in modern schooling which is based on truths about a particular understanding of the world. The section will address possibilities for articulating alternative views and questioning canonical educational realities in conditions of postmodernity. Accordingly, the main argument of this research is not about a simplistic critique of schools, teachers work, or textbooks. Instead the orientation I adopt is that of situating educational practices within political, economic, and social contexts of modern schooling and exploring possibilities for change in conditions of postmodernity and globalization.

Politics of Knowledge and Curriculum

In keeping with the review on knowledge and the state of knowledge in a condition of postmodernity in the postindustrial West, this section narrows the focus on knowledge and education within debates on curriculum, textbooks, and language teaching. The purpose is to highlight the challenges of the rapidly changing global

www.manaraa.com

economy, national concerns, and information technologies on traditional modern schooling. By interrogating the limits of modernist rationality and universal claims of truths, the curriculum, methods of teaching, and the roles of teachers and students become part of the political view of a postmodern pedagogy.

Modern and Postmodern Ideologies of Curriculum

In line with arguments around the meaning of postmodernity and postmodernism discussed above, Soltis (1993) points out that postmodernism means different things to different people. Nonetheless, he acknowledges a consensus that manifests itself in the challenge to impose new ways of thinking about the world. In relation to the curriculum, he refers to Doll's[7] framework of open and closed systems. Postmodernism offers a framework that is associated with "open" systems compared to the modernist "closed" systems (p. ix). Open systems are enriched by "multiple interpretations" and "alternative patterning… [as] the basis for understanding and constructing meanings" (p. x). In other words, open systems are challenged not to bring a "process to closure" (Doll, 1993, p. 15). To clarify more, Doll writes:

> Closed systems, being centered, stable, and looping back on themselves, in a mechanistic, cause-effect, "negative" (equilibrium seeking) way…the current curriculum syndrome of setting goals, planning implementations, and evaluating results fits well within a closed systems model. Contrarily, open systems *require* disruptions, mistakes, and perturbations-these are the "chaotic moments" to be transformed (p. 14-quotes and italics in origin).

Doll discusses modernity and postmodernity in relation to the curriculum in general terms with a focus on a cognitive sense. Modernism is a "historical" (p. 2)

[7] Doll is the Vira Franklin and J.R. Eagles Professor of Curriculum at Louisiana State University, where he co-directs the Curriculum Theory Project and coordinates the Holmes Elementary Education teacher education program.

www.manaraa.com

paradigm "framed American intellectual, social, and educational thought" and is based on science (p. 1). With Newton's empiricism and Decarteś rationalism, education and curriculum studies were informed by such scientific paradigms.

For Newton, the universe is based on homogeneity and "systemic, rational order" and therefore the world is clearly defined by a beginning, middle, and end (Doll, 1993, p. 6). Decarteś, in the same line, emphasized the importance of empirically valid conclusions and the adherence to "methodological rules for directing reason in the search for truth" (p. 30). In modern curriculum theory, such a stable view of nature highlighted the linear sequencing and the graduated order or building blocks to learning. Curriculum was understood in a modernist paradigm as organized in "sequential steps" (p. 37). Doll describes this mechanistic curriculum as "measured" since the goals are "determined prior" to the "instructional process" (p. 28). Once set, the goals are "driven through" the curriculum with the teacher as the driver and the students as passengers situated on the margin of any possible meaningful interaction around the planning or goals of the curriculum (p. 28).

Rejecting the autonomous modern curriculum, postmodernism, in Doll's view, redefines nature as flexible where both order and chaos coexist forming a "new type of order…multilayered" (p. 29). Learning cannot be reduced to linear units to be mastered and accumulated. On the contrary, curriculum is a "complex mosaic" where learning is transformative and "composed of complex and spontaneous interactions" (p. 38).

According to Doll, the infatuation with science, rationality, and measured progress has been highly influenced by the post World War II adoption of technical rationality and later by curriculum reform movements in early 1960s shortly after

www.manaraa.com

launching the Russian Sputnik I. The technical rationality model associated with efficiency in an industrial era soon influenced the scientific reform models of the curriculum. Doll argues that World War II "provided America with an opportunity to demonstrate visually the value of technical efficiency both on the battlefield and on the production line" (p. 43). In application to curriculum, schools adopted the notion of technical efficiency and thus started the scientific model of formulating smaller measured units of teaching, fixed assessment standards, and controlled standardized instructional class time.

Shortly after the Sputnik, a similar devotion to connecting science and education was at its highest. Doll states that the 1960s was characterized by the belief that adopting "professional" and scientific knowledge would help Americans defeat the Russians and compete scientifically, economically, and politically. In line, the prevailing perspective of education, including world language education, was that of programmed learning and a teacher-proof curriculum overseen by professionals. Professionalism, in the modern sense, is based on "technical skill", "theoretical knowledge on which the skill is premised", and "acceptance by a community of other professionals" (p. 44).

In relation to language studies in particular, the concept of schools as factories was dominant within conditions of industrialism and modernity. The preoccupation with standardization and efficiency at work permeated the American thought in relation to curriculum. For instance, citing Bruner (1973) and Bobbitt (1924), Doll critiques learning models that were based on the pervading hypothesis of "deficit" learners, culturally, linguistically, and socially. Students were diagnosed in terms of language abilities to check their weaknesses and measure the gaps between their deficiency performance

www.manaraa.com

compared to what constitutes linguistic and social appropriate efficiency. Focusing exclusively on students' errors, the professional recommendations would target the training required to improve such weaknesses in comparison to a mythical ideal standard.

Such a rationale cannot be understood without situating language curriculum within behavioral objectives that were dominant during the early 1960s which defined 'behavior' as determined. Education, in an industrial epoch, produced the right kind of skilled labor and behavior. Tending to job market needs was a serious underlying basis for "curriculum inspiration" focusing on the "skills, knolwedges, attitudes students should acquire" (Doll, 1993, p. 54). In connection to the prior discussion of a closed version or system of curriculum, good teaching was framed as transmitting of knowledge that is stable, certain, and attained through right reasoning. Knowledge is assumed to be somewhere out there to be discovered.

To summarize, Doll's vision, as he reiterates, is based on a constructivist concept of the mind. His educational perspective as influenced by postmodernity is clearly a cognitive model. He argues in favor of multiplicity and heterogeneity of interpretations and meanings that are mostly related to the work of the mind. He provides a strong argument of the passage from modern to postmodern curriculum in relation to science. However, in relation to critical language studies framework (e.g., Fairclough, 2001; Kramsch, 1993, 2009) Doll fails short in situating his vision of curriculum within the wider political and social contexts of power in reaction to modern nation state concepts. Moreover, he does not address ideological construction of the multiple identities and subjective positions of teachers and students that characterize the condition of postmodernity.

www.manaraa.com

Unlike Doll, de Alba, et al (2000) foregrounds the politics of knowledge and the curriculum. In their exploration of curriculum in the postmodern era, they talk of the need to reflexively situate such a curriculum in its political, historical and philosophical contexts. They offer different available perspectives in which educators approach a curriculum. One perspective might focus on content and skills in terms of "*what* students are (expected) to learn and *how* they are expected to go about learning, *what* teachers are to teach and *how* they are to teach it" (p. 7, italics in origin).

De Alba, et al (2000) provide three lines of inquiry that would help draw attention to postmodern perspective of the curriculum. First, the curriculum needs to be situated within the neoliberal governmentality. That is changes in the curriculum need to come in terms with changes in global economy. Second, curriculum needs to be understood in relation to information economy as prevailing feature of postindustrial societies. Third, curriculum need to be in line with the new challenges of multiculturalism, hybrid identities, and immigration. This includes coexistence of different cultures and a more critical representation of the 'Other'.

The sociocultural, economic, and political contexts in discourses of postmodernity have revolutionized discussions on curriculum. Inspired by the intellectual work of Apple (2004) on ideology and curriculum, Dimitriadis, Weis, and Mccarthy (2006) argue that two main changes can be recognized in the contemporary world: First, a wide scope transformation that is influencing social and cultural life inside and outside the classrooms brought about by globalization, "new electronic media," and new understanding of the self and others (p. 8). They explain that globalization can be witnessed through accelerated processes of "movement of people, images, ideas,

www.manaraa.com

technologies, and economic and cultural capital across national boundaries" (p. 8). Second, the shift in economic landscape, or in the global economy, in the contemporary world has its deep impact not only on the industrialized nation, but also on new sites like China and other countries. Such economic shifts have spurred a great change in "schooling, identity formation, and cultural production" (p. 9).

Recognizing the multiplicity of communication channels brought about by multiculturalism, globalization, and multimodalism, the New London Group (1996) introduce a new perspective into literacy and therefore curriculum called "multiliteracies." This pedagogy addresses the linguistically and culturally diverse postmodern societies by enabling learners to participate in designing literacy practices that can be applicable to the world they live and work in. In other words, multiliteracies "give sense to the ways in which literacy practice is colliding with new technological modes of representation and shifting heterogeneous demographics" (Cole & Pullen, 2010, p. 1). In a context of postmodernity, multiliteracies are about "doing literacy" whereby students are active agents of power "designing their social futures" through engagement in multimodal texts selection, analysis, and representation (Cole & Pullen, 2010, p. 4).

Such a view of literacy and curriculum is a turning point compared to that of modernist contexts. A new kind of pedagogy is therefore designed that takes in consideration the manner in which the "digital media" is "changing the social relationships of learning" (Cope & Kalantzis, 2010, p. 87).

Educational institutions are then highly influenced by economic, political, and cultural power that ideologically defines educational curricula. Covertly and overtly, the ideological interplay of these contexts is manifested through school curriculum that

www.manaraa.com

reproduces normative notions of legitimate or official knowledge (Apple, 2004; Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Luke, 1991). The historical, economic, and political "ideological management" of teaching and the curriculum (Spring, 1991) are represented by the kind of knowledge to be taught in textbooks, whose knowledge is legitimized as official, interpretations of knowledge, inclusion and exclusion in terms of content, and methods of teaching and evaluation.

Textbooks, as one of the challenges facing teachers in a late modern condition, are a visible outcome of the political, sociocultural, and institutional negotiations in defining knowledge and the social construction of language, culture and society (Apple, 2000; Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; McKinney, 2005). According to Venezky (1992), a textbook is a cultural *artifact* as it represents "a particular state of the printing craft and a particular mode of production" (p. 437) including its marektization. He further describes it as a surrogate curriculum in reference to its "reflection of a sometimes undocumented curriculum" (p. 437). In regard to the content of textbooks, a surrogate curriculum refers to a hidden curriculum and the selection of particular views of the world. As such, there is a purposeful selectivity of content. According to Venezky, it also refers to the "pedagogical apparatus" of the textbook in terms of "its arrangement of topics [and] its presentation techniques" (p. 438). In relation to knowledge, textbooks play a major role in validating particular beliefs about knowledge, "reify specific types of knowledge" and its mode of transmission (Leeman & Martinez, 2007).

Schrag (1992) presents possible links between epistemologies of 'defining knowledge' and 'how it is transmitted' through curriculum in educational settings. He adds that such identifications are useful though not always clearly visible. In connection

www.manaraa.com

to curriculum, the question is whether schools, curriculum, and textbooks do more than transmission. Hence, what societal, economic, political, and cultural underpinnings are embodied in what constitutes knowledge, its production, and reception in instructional materials? He refers to embodiment of knowledge in curriculum under three subheadings: conceptualizing knowledge through the selection of "certain portions…as worthy of transmission in school", how curriculum documents "reflect ideas about the acquisition of knowledge", and finally, the organization of this knowledge. As such, the curriculum reflects particular "educational aims" and "attitudes towards self and others" (p. 277).

Discussions of postmodernity in relation to the curriculum are still open for more controversies and paradoxes. Certainly, there is recognition of a transition into new complex conditions that are highly of influence on education and teaching. The belief systems of factory like modern schooling characterized by standardization, a top down professionalism, and a distinctive pattern of efficiency and production are under criticism. In conjunction, Hargreaves (1994) argues that confidence in universal belief systems, credibility of traditional scientific bases of knowledge, and validity of curriculum based on scientific ideologies of expertise are collapsing. He states:

> The knowledge explosion…has led to a proliferation of expertise…this has begun to reduce people's dependence on particular kinds of expert knowledge but also created a collapse of certainty in received wisdom and established beliefs. (p. 57)

Hargreaves concludes that the ramifications of such shifts on education are influential. The validity of modern based curriculum is becoming "less credible" in a postmodern world where "process of inquiry, analysis, and information gathering and other respects of learning-how-to-learn in an engaged and critical way become more important" (p. 57). Consequently, teaching strategies and methods which are deeply

www.manaraa.com

rooted in philosophical and historical debates are questioned, reformed, and resisted. Moreover, the narrow modernist belief in "school effectiveness" as dependable on the triumph of science and conventional definition of effectiveness is regressing. Attempts to impose control on teachers, teaching methods, textbooks, and curriculum implemented through "bureaucratic intervention by educational demonstrators", as representatives of the academy, face degrees of resistance in postmodern contexts (p. 61).

Foreign Language Education[8]

The debates over conditions of modernity and postmodernity have become a critical part of world language education especially in a rapidly changing cultural and sociopolitical world. In this section, I present an overview of selective insights on modern and postmodern views of language, language teaching, and the representation of people and culture in the field of world language education.

In understanding the traditional view of teaching language and culture, such a view can be historically mapped within positivist modern ideologies of schooling and the concept of modern society. Cameron, Frazer, Harvey, Rampton, and Richardson (2006) describe positivism as:

> 'Hegemonic' position, the one scientists have generally been taught to regard not as a scientific method but as *the* scientific method…positivism entails a commitment to study of the frequency, distribution and patterning of observable phenomena, and the description, in law-like general terms, of the relationship between those phenomena…positivism is strongly committed to the obviousness and unproblematic status of what we *can* observe: observations procured in a scientific manner have the status of value-free facts. (p. 134)

[8] See Reagan and Osborn (2002) for replacing 'foreign languages' by 'world languages'. The rationale is that using the term 'foreign' accentuates the 'foreignness' of these languages which further alienates the speakers and cultures of such languages. See also Kubota and Austin (2007) for encouraging the use of the term 'world languages'.

www.manaraa.com

Critical approaches, on the other hand, are situated within postmodern conditions. The term critical here is not in reference to the common use of the term in association with critical thinking. Rather, it draws from critical inquiry insights like critical literacy, critical pedagogies, and critical discourse analysis (Pennycook, 2001).

Such critical approaches according to Byrnes (2010) rejects the modernist understanding of language learning "in terms of syntagmatic notions of rules being adhered to in relation to a structuralist understanding of grammaticality" (p. 31). In line with the early discussion on understanding texts in contexts, Byrnes (2010) argues for establishing connections between language forms and "specific social settings and contexts" (p. 22). That is, teachers and students are invited to engage with the linguistic textual forms as connected to content and culture. Students learns how language "comes to mean what it means in its sociocultural contexts and, in turn, what that means for them as citizens in a global and multicultural/multilingual world" (Byrnes, 2010, p. 22).

Kramsch (1993) argues against a simplistic traditional view of language teaching as "the teaching of forms to express universal meanings" and takes as a point of departure in her argument an approach interested in "recognition of complexity" (p. 2). She critically points out that educational philosophies and methodologies have been shaped in "reactions to larger social and political events" (p. 2). She adds that this reaction has mainly been presented through dichotomous reductionist formulae that include among others: grammatically based versus functionally based syllabus, teacher -centered classrooms versus students-centered, focus on language versus culture. Such dichotomous trends are deceptive since contexts of teaching and learning a language are heterogonous and "capturing this variability in any methodical way" is impossible (p. 2).

www.manaraa.com

Kramsch (1993) lists a few examples of these dichotomies. For instance, a traditional debate in language education centers on teaching skills versus content. Language is viewed as a set of skills that, upon mastering, learners can move into using those skills to express intellectual and academic ideas. The responsibility of the language teacher, then, is to encourage students to talk and write fluently while depth of content is dealt with in other subjects. Kramsch argues that it is a fallacy to assume that students are not acquiring content at the same time as they are learning language forms. She warns against trivializing the field of world language teaching through this dichotomy that raises controversial concerns in relation to teaching culture as well.

Another example is associated with traditional views that emphasize teaching language four skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening with culture as if an additional separate "fifth skill" (p. 187). Kramsch (1993) draws on critical views of language that defines it as a social practice which centralizes the relationship between language and culture. That is, teaching language is "indissociable from the creation and transmission of culture" (p. 9). In this view, culture does not merely refer to cultural information (statistics, literature, folklore) and national culture (generalized set of behavior or cultural anthropology) but also to culture as a "social construct, the product of self and other perceptions" (p. 205). In other words, the relationship between language and culture, in any communication context, is complex. Language "expresses" cultural reality by reflecting ideologies and attitudes of participants. Language also "embodies" cultural reality as it creates meaning to people's experience through verbal and non-verbal language aspects. Finally, language "symbolizes" cultural reality as a marker of symbolic social and cultural identity (Kramsch, 2003, p. 3).

www.manaraa.com

Kern (2003) argues for moving away from the orientation of teaching the four language skills into an orientation that focuses on a literacy-based curriculum that is compatible with national standards of foreign languages. He refers to the curriculum as a "conceptual map" that "encodes decisions about *what* to teach (i.e., content), *how* to teach it (i.e., methods and sequencing), and *why* (i.e., goals)" (p. 6).

Therefore, what kind of foreign language curriculum better fits discourses of postmodernity? Kern (2003) argues for a literacy-based curriculum that:

> "aims to prepare learners to interpret multiple forms of language use… in multiple contexts…, fosters communicative ability…, integrate communicative approaches to language teaching with more analytic, text-based approaches…, incorporates a range of written, spoken, visual, and audiovisual texts…, problematizes discourses…, and encourages students to take an active, critical stance to the discourse conventions we teach them" (p. 7).

In describing curricular components that fit well within a literacy-based curriculum in our contemporary postmodern world, Kern (2003) refers to the work of the New London Group (1996) focusing on four major components: situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing, and transformed practice. By situated practice, the emphasis is on "immersion in language use" (p. 9). An overt instruction requires developing "explicit metalanguage" to talk about "meanings in communication" (p. 9). Critical framing equips students with a "reflective, analytical dimension" to help students critique "systems in terms of power, ideology, and values" (p. 9). Finally, transformed practice allows students to "reshape texts" and "create" new ones along the process of designing meaning (p. 9).

Historically, the teaching and learning of foreign and second languages has been shaped by the American education history during the industrial period. In line with the

www.manaraa.com

arguments in the beginning of the chapter, Kramsch (1993) argues that the focal purpose of education in industrial countries has been the "development of the mind" in an "intellectual discipline" through accumulation of knowledge (p. 187). Since World War I, the objective of schooling has been to "prepare students for the duties of life, educate citizens for their responsibilities in the community, and increase their chances of employment" (p. 187). As influenced by modern conditions, education in general and language education in particular have been evaluated for their economic utility and scientific progress. During the following years after World War II and the launching of the Sputnik in 1957, the drive to learn world languages has continued to be shaped by economic and political competitive concerns of the world market. As such, it continues to be associated with "business and industry" (p. 187).

An approach to contextualize world language education socially and historically within the history of the United States Education is of immense benefit. Watzke (2003) adds that this contextualization needs to be enriched by a focus on the shifts and progress of educational policy and practice as well. In line with Kramsch, Watzke frames world language education as call for action politically, economically, and educationally. He historically specifies two epochs of the 'fall and rise' of world language education in the United States. The first refers to the World War II and the Cold war, the second, to Educational reform and global economy.

In regard to the first epoch, post World War I era witnessed an immense decline in interest in regards to world language education (Thompson, Christian, Stansfield, & Rhodes, 1990). Due to military service, a large number of high school students did not continue into higher education. A number of colleges and universities pushed language

www.manaraa.com

studies into a secondary focus. In contrast, World War II brought about the realization that the nation lacks sufficient competent speakers of world languages. The military "quickly addressed" this shortcoming (Watzke, 2003, p. 45). For instance, in 1941, with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the military responded by establishing intensive Japanese language programs at the universities of Harvard and California. These courses focused on speaking and listening skills, this method later developed and reformulated to be part of the educational system known as the audio-lingual method. The paradoxes of world language education continued as such between defining the place and goals of world language education as a call to the nation and as a valued subject of its own.

In 1957 and the launching of the Russian Sputnik, the nation was inspired into a new education reform to address the nation's needs of competency in world languages and international studies. The Modern Language Association (MLA) with support from the United States Commissioner of Education looked into the status of world language education. Funding was provided under the National Defense Education Act of 1958. The NDEA provided significant reform to world language education which includes (See Watzke, 2003, for detailed statistical enrollment figures):

First, a methodological change suggested the implementation of the audio-lingual method of instruction. This method, which stressed the active versus passive use of language, attempted to reflect first language learning by emphasizing early exposure to speaking and listening while reading and writing came later. Grammar was indirectly taught through dialogue practice. In the early 1960s, this method was widely adopted with the support of "structural linguistics and behavioral psychology" (Watzke, 2003, p. 49).

www.manaraa.com

Second, enrollment in world language increased as considered vital to the national defense needs. For instance, enrollment in languages like Russian and Chinese reached its peak during the 1960s.

Finally, educational reforms supported teaching modern rather than classical languages. During the 1960s, higher education and college enrollments continued to rise with a shift of enrollment towards modern languages like Spanish and German as opposed to large drop in Latin. The national interest as well as preparations for higher education provided a distinctive status for world language education in terms of external goals and internal reforms.

The second epoch of 'fall and rise' of foreign language educating according to Watzke (2003) occurred between the end of 1960s and early 1980s. The decline in funding and support of world languages was reflected on a major drop in students' enrollment (p. 53). The reason can be attributed to educational restructuring reforms which are shaped by wider sociopolitical and economic contexts.

At the institutional level, education reforms during the late 1960s and 1970s were influenced by the civil rights movements which shifted the attention of the public from national defense that characterized the first epoch to "issues of alienation and equality" that had an impact on curriculum reform (p. 54). This era witnessed a disappointment with the NDEA funded audio-lingual method of instruction which reflected the modernist view of science. In reaction, a shift to "theoretical" rather than "structural" linguistics in second language research entailed alternative pedagogical approaches to language instruction (Brown, 2007). NDEA funding continued to support world language education at particular domains especially at advanced language levels and teaching of

www.manaraa.com

less commonly taught languages with "focus on performance in language use" (Watzke, 2003, p. 58).

At the societal, political, and economic contexts, in the end of 1970s and early 1980s, a number of educational reports were published that declared the nation at risk in a number of educational subject matters including world languages and international studies (Kramsch, 1993). One of these is the 1979 President Commission on World Language and International Studies (PCFLIS) titled *Strength through Wisdom: A Critique of U.S. Capability*. In reference to the nation's place in the world, the report states:

> Nothing less is at issue than the nation's security. At a time when the resurgent forces of nationalism and of ethnic and linguistic consciousness so directly affect global realities, the United States requires far more reliable capacities to communicate with its allies, analyze the behavior of potential adversaries, and earn the trust and the sympathies of the uncommitted. Yet, there is a widening gap between these needs and the American competence to understand and deal successfully with other peoples in a world in flux. (PCFLIS, 1979, p. 3)

The report proposed amendments to improve and encourage the nation's competency in world language study. Recommendations need to be endorsed not only by diplomacy and legislators, but also by schools districts, colleges, and universities (see critique in Kramsch, 2005):

> National security moreover cannot safely be defined and protected within the narrow framework of defense, diplomacy and economics. A nation's welfare depends in large measure on the intellectual and psychological strengths that are derived from perceptive visions of the world beyond its own boundaries... In our schools and colleges as well as in our public media of communications, and in the everyday dialogue within our communities, the situation cries out for a better comprehension of our place and our potential in a world that, though it still expects much from America, no longer takes American supremacy for granted. (PCFLIS, 1979, p. 3)

www.manaraa.com

As such, more cooperation between the academy and the government resulted in serious recommendations to be implemented across the United States concerning the schools involvement in world language learning at all education levels (Kirch, 1980). During the 1980s, enrollment rates in world language education started to increase and new methodological reforms based on the proficiency movement and cultural studies were supported. Therefore, the interest in world languages and international studies, which "may have hit its nadir," has found a market within this mission of national needs (Burn, 1980, p. 2). Arabic, being one of the critical languages, has received its share of such recommendations.

So far, the concept of 'modern nation' seemed to have major influences on defining the concept of language and therefore language instruction in the field of world language education. The view of language is sometimes coined as 'language nationism' – a rather "linguistic utopia" (Kramsch, 2003, p. 72-73). The modern nation is imagined as a "sovereign" state limited by "finite" boundaries with a view of language as a"shared patrimony, a self-contained, autonomous, and homogeneous linguistic system" that mirrors an assumed "homogeneous social world" (p. 73). This image, as Kramsch argues, entails a utopian cultural entity that contributes to a person's national identity expressed through "an artificially created standard language" and defines outsiders and insiders of a speech community (p. 74). The standard language, usually a written form, serves different political, sociocultural, and ideological interests for the nation.

Kubota and Austin (2007) argue that world language education has inherited the ideology of "*one nation one language*" that reflects the sense of nationalism in modern societies (p. 74-italics in origin). In response to the challenges of postmodern conditions,

www.manaraa.com

critical researchers interrogate the belief in a "positivistic objectivity" related to how people learn a language and best teaching practices (p. 75). Rather, the emphasis is on problematizing the nature of learning and teaching language and culture, purposes and interests served, and the taken for granted questions of knowledge as shaped by wider ideological, historical, and institutional contexts. This includes the representation of language and culture in instructional materials and in classroom interactions between students, teachers, and textbooks (Kramsch, 1987).

In line with the aforementioned, Rampton (1997, 2006) discusses the effect of late/postmodernity on modernist linguistic assumptions. He argues that modernist/structuralist linguistics is mainly descriptive and committed to "system-in-language" as opposed to the relationship between language and language use in a communicative event (2006, p. 16). He adds that concepts like 'linguistic competence,' 'speech community,' and 'ideal native speaker' that have been essential for modernists linguistics are collapsing. The declining impact of "homogenizing nation-states" and the cultural diversity in contemporary global contexts push towards plurality, context sensitive, and value laden discussions of second and world language research that fit better with postmodern assumptions (p. 22).

Second and foreign/world language instruction and research have been instrumentally shaped by structuralism and behaviorism as dominant schools of thought during the 1940s and 1950s. The structural descriptive school of linguistics, as appears in Skinner's thought for example, "prided itself in a rigorous application of the scientific principle of observation of human languages" (Brown, 2000, p. 8). Accordingly, language is considered a system that could be "dismantled" into smaller units which are

www.manaraa.com

overtly observed and described scientifically (p. 9). Skinner argued that the notion of meaning is fiction and the "speaker is merely the locus of verbal behavior" (p. 9).

Similar to structuralism, behaviorism focused on the observed responses. Adhering to the scientific methods, it relied on empirical approaches to objectively study the observed human behavior. Mental domains of inquiry were excluded as "illegitimate" (p. 9). Behaviorism has a deep impact on concepts of language, theories, and methods of teaching and learning a second or foreign/world language. Language learning is perceived as similar to any other human behavior which can be described as a stimulus to a response following Skinner's Stimulus-Response hypothesis (Omaggio Hadley, 1993). Learning is based on "imitation, practice, reinforcement (or feedback on success), and habit formation" (Lightbown & Spada, 2003, p. 35). In other words, both the structural linguist and the behavioral psychologist were interested in answering "what" question of human behavior relying on the measured observable performance that is empirically analyzed in controlled conditions (Brown, 2000, p. 10-12).

By the close of the twentieth century, the field of second and world language education witnessed radical reformation in regard to sociocultural theories of language that informed research and methodologies of classroom instruction. Given the changing contexts in postmodernity, the challenges of globalization on teaching and learning, new technologies, students' investments, and the political and economic societal needs, critical educational research attempted to address changes and challenges (e.g., Cope & Kalantzis, 2010; Kramsch, 2005, 2007; Kumaravadivelu, 2003). In addition, more recent research appears on critical inquiries in classroom contexts and school reforms, implications of sociocultural conditions on language use, resistance to truth claims in

www.manaraa.com

curriculum, ideological analysis of textbooks and their cultural representations (Gebhard, 2004, 2005; Herman, 2007; Kumagai, 2007; Leeman, 2005; Leeman & Martinez, 2007).

In the following last section, I present a selective review of literature on the teaching and learning of Arabic as a world language in the United States. As informed by Gebhard (1999, 2000), I attempt to explore the influence of institutional, sociopolitical and economic contexts on the field of Arabic instruction. The focus is on the role of Arabic in the 'call for action' agenda of world language education as shaped by political and economic global world competition. The focus is also on the institutional role of educational reforms in terms of national and modernist view of language in regards to standard varieties and instructional methods.

The Case of Arabic as a Foreign Language

> Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor provides a compelling historical analogy for the September 11 attack itself…The war on terrorism…is open ended and murky on many scores, but the enemy does have a face. The enemy is Muslim, the enemy is Middle Eastern, the enemy is an Arab. (Gerwin & Osborn, 2005, p. 106)

September 11th attacks, identified mostly as 9/11, are series of attacks organized by Al-Qaa'ida, a fundamentalist group in Afghanistan, upon the United States. The attacks targeted the Pentagon as well as the World Trade Center in New York City. The United States reacted by a declaration of war on terrorism. Gerwin and Osborn (2005) argue that in contrast to Pearl Harbor, "guilt by association" has not been the wide policy of nation, as was the case with the internment camps for the Japanese, due to the influential role of critical language and multicultural educators (p. 106). Nonetheless, 9/11 has instrumentally influenced the very concept of learning about the 'other' in world

www.manaraa.com

language education. In the case of Arabic, the Arab world has been lumped together with the Islamic under the label of terrorists (Byrnes, 2004).

In his introduction to *Media, War, and Postmodernity*, Hammond (2007) speaks of the remarkable public discussions of postmodernity in reaction to the 9/11attacks. Such discussions included among others construction of reality, vulnerability of the modern system, global crises and possible cultural wars. While such discussions are of interest to the general public, for teachers and learners of Arabic this is by no means a marginal topic.

The national calls for learning Arabic post 9/11 are similar to Russian after Sputnik and Japanese after Pearl Harbor. The racialization of Arab and Muslims as 'terrorists' and their language as 'critical' perpetuated a number of institutions and organizations rationalizing a 'frame of fear' that shape the nation's understanding and response to the other (Kumashiro, 2008). Such a political context is a compelling example of the wide societal (historical, political, and economic) and institutional contexts that shape education at large and world language educational policy in specific.

In a context of late modernity, globalization, and post 9/11 era, the reasons for and investments in learning a world language including Arabic in particular, might look contradictory. For example, in universities and schools, Kubota and Austin (2007) refer to the different frames or rationales for learning world languages. Some are pragmatic reasons related to future career or business, national security needs, or simply college language requirements. Others are directed towards multicultural understanding of others, humanistic reasons, and general liberal arts purposes (e.g., Phillips, J.K., 2007).

www.manaraa.com

In the case of Arabic post 9/11, a widespread enthusiasm for teaching and learning Arabic has been invigorated (Allen, 2004; Byrnes et al., 2004; Edwards, 2000; Kramsch, 2005; Leeman & Martinez, 2007). The National Security Language Initiative, which has been introduced by President Bush in 2006, stated the rationale behind learning world languages and particularly those coined "critical-need" languages including Arabic (Taha, 2007). This initiative is not comparatively new in its declaration. Rather it is similar in goal to the 1979 Presidents Commission and the June 2004 National Language Center white paper titled "*A Call to Action for National Foreign Language Capabilities*." Consequently, funding for Arabic programs has been widely witnessed in new Arabic programs at various basic school levels, secondary education, and higher education. Enrollment levels in Arabic have increased, according to the Modern Language Association (MLA) report to 126.5 percent between 2002 and 2006 (Howard, 2007).

The challenge for teachers and learners of Arabic is that the governmental funding and sponsorship for Arabic programs dictates the specific investments in and purposes of learning it. The political incentives are shaping the field of learning and teaching Arabic, as has the historical condition always been, while at the same time the academic and humanistic values of learning about the 'other' linguistically and culturally as a value of its own is in need of support (Allen, 2007). As is the case with other world languages (e.g., Russian and Japanese), a heightened sense of 'security', 'patriotism' and 'the fight against terrorism' has also been part of the package of learning Arabic as the language of the 'adversary' (Kramsch, 2005). For instance, learning Arabic has been introduced in some newspapers, in a post 9/11 context, as a tool in the hands of those who will track

www.manaraa.com

'terrorists.' Richard Brecht, a former Air Force Cryptographer, was quoted in the New York Times, June 16, 2004, as commenting, "five billion dollars for an F-22 will not help us in the battle against terrorism. Language that helps us understand why they're [terrorists] trying to harm us [Americans] will" (Freedman, 2004).

The influence of the above described political, economic, and historical contexts can be traced or cued into the institutional educational contexts of learning Arabic. These include among others programmatic developments and educational policy plans that tend to students investments and future career plans, training teachers, and creating new instructional materials and textbooks that meet the current needs. Although new and critical initiatives to restructure the field of Arabic are very much welcomed, the transition to a contemporary late modern context needs to be addressed. Currently, there are new sets of standards for teaching Arabic K -16 using the proficiency guidelines and recent publication on professional standards for Arabic (cited in Al-Batal, 2007). A large number of workshops are funded to train teachers on what to teach and how to teach Arabic to ensure students high achievements and success in learning Arabic. There is little problematizing of how such standards and professional trainings are part of a discourse of control and management over teachers, students, and use of textbooks.

A large number of the literature on teaching and learning Arabic in the United States, from early 1980s to the present, focuses its interest on particular themes which mainly include: Teaching and evaluation methodologies in transition from grammar to proficiency based approaches and methods as explained through ACTFL (e.g., Allen, 1985, 1990, 1992; Taha, 1995; Parkinson, 1985; Heath, 1990; Rammuny, 1990), the language variety to be adopted in language instruction and the heated debates around

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

using dialects (e.g., Abu-Absi, 1991; Al-Kahtany, 1997; Areef, 1986; Parkinson, 1991; Ryding, 1995; Younes, 1990, 1995), curricular developments and models for teaching particular language skills (e.g., Al-Batal, 1995, 2006; Brustad, 2006; Elkhafaifi, 2001, 2005), Arabic learners' portfolios (e.g., Alosh, 2001; Belnap, 1995, 2006), relevance of culture (e.g., Abuhakema, 2004; Al-Batal, 1988; Attar, 1995; Rammuny, 1996), and incorporating technology (e.g., Alosh, 1995, 1997; Parkinson, 1995; Samy, 2006).

The resources mentioned are by no means exclusive. With the exception of a few, the majority of the aforementioned literature is informed by mainstream linguistics and sociolinguistic modernistic view of language and culture. Language is characterized as a neutral means of communication learned through gradual linear building blocks. These building blocks are compartmentalized within separate language skills with culture as a fifth component. The literature, although acknowledging challenges and controversies, attempts to generalize universal principles to legitimize some professionally accredited policies like standardization of the best teaching and learning approaches for maximum efficiency and other pedagogical implementations.

A few critical resources attempted to situate concepts of language, language use and varieties, and language instruction within a view of language that is challenged by the political, societal and ideological discourse in contemporary poststructural and postmodern thought (see e.g., Al-Haq in using 'penta-glossia' reference to language varieties in Jordan, 1998; Allen, 2007 on the politics of language in approaching literature about the others; Al-Wer, 1997 and also Ibrahim, 1986 on ideological social functions of language varieties in relation to identity; Harry, 1996 for using the term 'multiglossia').

www.manaraa.com

What has not been addressed in the literature so far, to my knowledge, is the dialogical encounters and teachers-students interaction around the use of a textbook in the Arabic classroom as an artifact of particular beliefs, attitudes, and ideologies about the concept of language, language instruction, and the representation of people and societies through culture. Such beliefs and therefore texts are contextualized within the institutional contexts that produce and market texts through formal education systems and within the wider political, cultural, economic and historical contexts that shape purposes and goals for learning Arabic in the United States.

This research attempts to contextualize the discourse of one Arabic textbook, titled *Elementary Modern Standard Arabic (EMSA)* and to explore the processes of negotiations and contestations by the teacher of Arabic and the students as they playfully respond to pivotal meanings and knowledge claims constructed in reading passages. Such dialogical encounters are shaped by poststructural and postmodern thoughts that approach the textbook as an open multilayered discourse which is selective in choices of knowledge to be delivered. Also the textbook signifies particular politics of language and culture, construction of reality, and possible ideological biases (Apple& Christian-Smith, 1991; Cherryholmes, 1988).

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, I have attempted to explore the transition from the conditions of modernity to postmodernity in relation to the social world order in general and education and language studies in particular. Modernity signifies the belief in progress and emancipation through scientific knowledge, values of reasoning, and

www.manaraa.com

rationalization, a belief that postmodernity doubtfully rejects as "not worth defending" and as "complicit with power" (Hammond, 2007, p. 5). The shifts in contemporary societies have been attributed to "changes in work organization and technology" and the collapse of the "nation state and of dominant national cultures" (Kumar, 1997). The power of nation states and its economic nationalism is over powered by global economy. Consequently, global influences have contributed to reshaping and transforming the political, economic, and sociocultural aspects of life.

In regards to education in particular, the chapter explored the transformations of nation state assumptions about mass education and industrial productivity and efficiency. The modern capitalist societies reinforced the concept of common culture that Habermas named technical rationality. This concept legitimized a sense of "social solidarity and social control" and forged a sense of homogeneity, assimilation, and therefore "loss of personal identity" (Brown, Halsey, Lauder, & Wells, 1997, pp. 2-3). Modern national educational institutions were shaped by this belief as they promoted the ideological hegemony of national cultures. The social transformations brought about by postmodernity accentuated the sense of pluralism, fragmentation, and a heightened sense of individualism. Education became a site of struggle and issues of knowledge, power, and pedagogy as related to politics and ideology dominated.

Classrooms, as such, are not isolated physical contexts where students sit in neat rows to receive an organized and selective content. In the field work of research that involves doing ethnography, adopting an ethnographic view, or making use of ethnographic tools, one is bound to weave interactions and talks in language classroom as "texts" which are embedded in local, institutional, and wider societal contexts as the

www.manaraa.com

chapter argues drawing on the work of Fairclough (2001, 2003) and Gebhard (1999, 2000). Similarly, Heath and Street (2008) argue that:

> Classrooms, like all sanctioned sites of formal education, receive their identities, spaces, times and instructional goals primarily from power resources beyond local participants. Pace, methods, and artifacts for display of skills and information…derive from core parameters of formal education…historical and political forces behind these parameters determine language, modalities, and norms of use for institutions of formal education. It is these to which the ethnographer must attend. (p. 17).

Foreign or world language education constitutes a visible site for struggle over representations of the self and others through language. As embedded in institutions of formal education, language researchers attempt to become aware of the influence of such institutions on language teaching inside the classroom as well as how such institutions are circularly shaped by larger economic, political, and historical contexts that define world language education within modern and postmodern discourses. As the metanarratives, using Lyotard's term, that define what language, culture, or a nation is in the social condition of modernity are in decline, teachers, as social learners, of world languages are constantly challenged to change their concepts of language and language instruction, methods and strategies of teaching, and critical uses of textbooks.

www.manaraa.com

CHAPTER 3

STUDY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Approach and Rationale

This study employs qualitative methods to illustrate the complexities of teaching a foreign language, specifically Arabic, at the college level, and uses ethnographic methods as "a way of seeing" in educational settings (Wolcott, 2002, p. 32). In this chapter, ethnographic methods of inquiry that inform the study will be introduced, highlighting the main tenets of ethnography, and in particular "critical ethnography" as a pivotal basis of the study.

This chapter also reflects on the centrality of ethnography in educational research. Conducting ethnography is a journey of reflections on the dialogic relationships between the researcher and the "Others" participating; as Madison (2005), a Professor of Performance Studies at Northwestern University, states, "We are not simply subjects, but we are subjects in dialogue with the Other" (p. 9).

Building on the focus on the impact of postmodernism on our world views and understanding of what constitutes knowledge in Chapter 2, this section attends to conducting ethnography in the postmodern era and the challenges involved.

Procedures of data collection and analysis, as well as data resources, are then discussed in detail, underscoring the phases of analyses that speak to the focus of the study. And finally, the roles of the researcher and ethical concerns are presented.

www.manaraa.com

Critical Ethnography

Over the last three decades, ethnographic approaches connected to educational settings have originated that, although diverse in scope and epistemological stances, are "characterized by first-hand, naturalistic, sustained observation and participation in a particular social setting…[in order to] come to a deeper understanding of how individuals view and participate in their own social and cultural worlds" (Harklau, 2005, p. 179).

Selecting ethnography as a method of inquiry situates the researcher as an active participant in dialogue with the research participants. As such, the ethnographer is not "a fly on the wall" (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995, p. 3). Using qualitative methods, the researcher/ethnographer is actively involved in the interpretation and articulation of what is observed in any event and attempts to communicate, in a reflexive process, an understanding of those observations while consistently questioning her assumptions about knowledge. As such, the researcher becomes more mindful of the complicated lens by which one observes, interprets, and represents other people and cultures.

When it comes to research on language, Rampton (2006) reflects on linguistic ethnography, a term that combines an interest in anthropological approaches to the study of language and remain open to other approaches derived from applied linguistics in contexts of postmodernity. Rampton (2006) arguers that such an ethnography looks at "situated language use" and "provide insights into everyday social and cultural production" (p. 385).

Critical ethnography, called the "new ethnography" by some (Goodall, 2000), calls for maintaining a critical stance regarding the self (researcher) and others. This study has its foundations in a broad sense of critical ethnography, which is distinguished

www.manaraa.com

from traditional ethnography principally by its questioning of authoritative knowledge, truth claims, and researcher biases (Carspecken, 1996, 2002; Gordon, Holland, & Lahelma, 2007; Kincheloe & Mclaren, 2002; Madison, 2005; Thomas, 1993).

In the preface of his book, *Doing Critical Ethnography*, Thomas does not locate critical ethnography in opposition to conventional ethnography, asserting that an ethnographer can be scientific as well as critical. What critical ethnography offers is "a more direct style of thinking about the relationships among knowledge, society, and political action" (Thomas, 1993, p. vii).

Critical ethnography maintains a subversive stance, raising questions of what knowledge is and what counts as knowledge. Kincheloe and Mclaren (2002) write:

> Critical researchers have begun to reexamine textual claims to authority. No pristine interpretation exists—indeed, no methodology, social or educational theory, and discursive form can claim a privileged position that enables the production of authoritative knowledge. (p. 97)

As such, another basic tenet in critical ethnography is its critical stance to truth claims and, as such, validity. The notion of validity in traditional philosophy refers to the soundness of the argument which determines the truth of the claims. Carspecken, drawing heavily on Habermas's view of validity, believes that we need to base our understanding of validity on "everyday human interaction" (1996, p. 58). Since truth claims are implicated in power relations, critical ethnography attempts to disrupt taken-for-granted claims that "obscure operations of power and control" (Madison, 2005, p. 5).

Truth claims are also connected to values—subjective, normative, and evaluative (Carspecken, 1996). The researcher's biases are underscored throughout the data collection and analysis process. As I, as researcher, attempt in this study to inscribe an

www.manaraa.com

observed culture, I recognize that my own biases will become part of the interpretation. I neither deny nor ignore who I am as a participant observer, and instead speak to my roles and my biography, predominantly in this chapter and the next.

In addition to maintaining critical attention to self, the mission of the critical ethnographer is to attempt to "challenge institutions, regimes of power, and social practices that limit choices, [and] constrain meaning" (Madison, 2005, p. 5). This study adheres to the notion that there are limitless possibilities for new agency and heterogeneity of understandings in classroom interactions. As such, the teacher's and the students' interactions in this research are interpreted using a critical lens—their interactions, and texts produced, are analyzed in wider social and political contexts. According to Carspecken (1996), criticalists are concerned with the "nature of social structure, power, culture, and human agency" that is directed towards "positive social change" (p. 3). As such, the data from this study is interpreted recognizing the challenges of language teaching and particularly world language education at the contemporary contexts of late or postmodernity. Such contexts advocate for allowing critical spaces in the classroom for alternative constructions of meanings, realities, and the representation of people, language, and culture.

Ethnography and Postmodernism

Lather (2007) provides a brief overview of postmodernism in relation to ethnography in general and to critical ethnography in particular. She quotes Foucault (1998) stating, "What are we calling postmodernity? I'm not up to date" (quoted in Lather, 2007, p. 478). Accentuating the work of Derrida on deconstruction, she highlights

www.manaraa.com

the conjecture that lack of knowledge becomes positively enabling, opening the door for innovations and negotiating new subversive forms and understandings.

In a context of postmodernity, traditional truth claims are undermined and the critical ethnographer operates in a realm of open possibilities for interpretation, plurality, and heterogeneity of world views. This entails breaking with the regular and orthodox means of defining a research context, a community of practice, a culture, and a language event.

A postmodern perspective also involves a critical, reflexive look at one's work, examining how the ethnographer's positionality and subjectivity influence the interpretation of the research. Foley (2002) describes the ethnographer in the postmodern era as a "living, contradictory, vulnerable, evolving multiple self who speaks in a partial, subjective, culture-bound voice" (p. 145). Carspecken warns against adopting a postmodern slogan without attempting to apply such a philosophical perspective to one's own work (2002, p. 84). Besides reflexivity and the need to situate the ethnographer as "part of the phenomenon that is being investigated," Spencer (2007) underscores the ethnographer's "responsibility for the consequences of a particular way of representing the words and practices of other people" (p. 450).

Challenges of Ethnographic Research

This study looks at some playful classroom interactions, intending to situate language-in-use events as part of or in resistance to a wider institutionalized social and political context. As I approached the research site, I thought I had read an adequate amount of literature about ethnography. However, I realized that it is only through

www.manaraa.com

conducting this ethnography study that I came to a level of understanding of my positionality in regard to my participants, my epistemologies, and my interpretation lenses. I was not aware, at the time, of any ethnographic research, with a postmodern framework, on Arabic classroom interaction in the United States. As such, one of my challenges was to develop a critical postmodern theoretical framework.

In addition, there were serious ethical issues to contend with in conducting the ethnography. As an insider participant observer, I witnessed a language of resistance to ideological and political representation of Arabic language and culture. Although I was interested in bringing this data to the fore, I was conscious of the problematic context amidst nationalistic calls post "9/11." I gained my participants' confidence but had to be careful not to cause harm by exposing their subversive voices. For example, some participants requested to read their transcripts after interviews to make sure how and what is included. I maintained awareness of the relationship between the micro classroom culture and the macro context of Arabic at the institutional and national levels. As such, it was a challenge to bring forth the participants' voices without depersonalizing them, while also making selections from the data that would be useful but safe taking in consideration the political national discourses and the racial targeting of some people and/or talk post 9/11.

Data Collection

> I sat in classes for days wondering what there was to "observe." Teachers taught, reprimanded, rewarded, while pupils sat at desks, squirming, whispering, reading, writing, staring into space…what should I write down in my empty notebook?
>
> (Spindler & Spindler, 1982, p. 24)

www.manaraa.com

The following section describes the multiple kinds of data collected during the study and reflects on the manner in which it was collected as well as the personal and professional growth of my position as a researcher throughout the process.

Overview

This study took place over a full semester of data collection at the Intermediate I Arabic classroom in fall 2005. I worked for four years as a Teaching Assistant of Elementary Arabic I and II at the university at which this study is situated. In the spring of 2005, as I contemplated the selection of my research site and my relationship to participants for this ethnographic study, I spent time in an Elementary Arabic II classroom (3hours a week as a TA). The large numbers of students in the class (more than 40), however, discouraged me from conducting my ethnography at that level having in mind that my duties as a TA may overlap with the focus I needed for the research. In addition, students at that level had fewer chances of classroom interaction, which made it more difficult to become part of their classroom culture as a participant observer.

Of importance, however, the emic perspective that I gained through my participation in this class. I had worked with these students as a Teaching Assistant, but as I was contemplating this class as my research site, I began to construct a new role of a researcher. I worked on gaining the trust of the class through informal chats and intentionally interacting with various students regarding miscellaneous academic and non-academic topics. Early in February 2005, I also conducted an initial open-ended survey (see APPENDIX A) to explore the identities and investments of the Arabic students. Specifically, I collected general demographic data and listed a number of open-

www.manaraa.com

ended questions that would allow them the chance to share their experiences in whatever form they liked (e.g., writing, drawing, diagrams). The questions covered the length of their study in Arabic (in both formal and informal settings), the kind of courses and contexts in which they were exposed to learning Arabic, their motivations, future investments, and the influence of 9/11 on their decisions and experience as learners.

My participation and observations in the Elementary Arabic II class helped lay the foundation for my ethnographic study that would be conducted in the following semester. By the end of spring 2005, my position as a trusted insider of the classroom community had been facilitated. This, and the understanding I gained regarding my roles and my relationship to the students, enabled convenient access to the Intermediate Arabic I classroom in fall 2005. This dissertation focuses on the ethnographic work conducted in this course, which met twice a week for an hour and fifteen minutes. I was a participant observer throughout the semester and compiled multiple types of data, fieldnotes, surveys, formal and informal interviews, and a collection of classroom materials.

Fieldnotes

I attended all of the course classes with the intention of being immersed in the participants' worlds and their classroom experiences as they unfolded (Emerson et al., 1995). My fieldnotes process entailed extensive written accounts of what I could observe, feel, and think about while I wrote and reflected on what I was inscribing. As I was never good at drawing, my notes were an attempt to be as descriptive and reflective as possible to capture "the slice of life" as vivid as a piece of art (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 119). As such, the fieldnotes included descriptions of the physical setting, portraits of the students, a narrative of certain events, and some dialogical encounters with students.

www.manaraa.com

The challenge in the data collection process was twofold. First, requests to videotape literacy events in the classroom were denied. In addition, permission to audiotape events was initially limited in terms of frequency and was based on the condition that none of the records be kept permanently. The quality of the initial recordings was poor. But attempts to correct this were unnecessary as, after a few recordings, the teacher reversed his decision, as he thought the audiotaping influenced the students' classroom interaction. Therefore, I had to record written "thick descriptions" of the classroom culture not only in terms of participants' dialogical events but also their behavior as an actuation of their social actions (Geertz, 1973).

Immediately after each class, I re-wrote, expanded, and typed my fieldnotes. Constantly, I meditated on my role as an "ethnographer "inscrib[ing]" social discourse" (Geertz, 1973, p. 190). The form of representation is "inevitably selective" in terms of what and who is included as significant; ethnographers inevitably "*present or frame* the events and objects written about in particular ways, hence 'missing' other ways" (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2007, p. 353-italics and quotes in origin).

After each class, I typed my notes observing transformations and interpretations. I typed what I initially noted in class, and what I learned and felt, what impressed me, my own confusions, reactions, and questions (Emerson, et al., 2007). I followed the example of Bogdan & Biklen (1992) and attempted to separate the descriptive data from my own reflective data by using "O.C." denoting observer's comments after every paragraph or two that applied. These comments could be questions posed, issues I'm struggling with, common threads I'm observing, or even simply notes of confusion and need to go back to the field. For instance, following a chat with the students of Arabic prior to the start of

www.manaraa.com

the class about their general interest in Arabic, I rewrote and typed my notes at home thinking about our early morning chat. In my fieldnotes (Nov 14, 2005), I included an "O.C." in bold as follows:

> **OC: students are aware of the shortcomings of Arabic speakers in the US. Where does this locate them as one of the few who are Arabic learners? What does that mean in terms of their emerging identities? How do they see themselves in relevance to the current job market, current politics, and language in globalization?**

I kept simple diagrams of students' seating and movement every class. There were moments of frustration while attempting to capture events as contextualized as possible while being aware of my "partial, partisan, and problematic" representations (Goodall, 2000, p. 86-87). Above all, I was learning to be sensitive to my stance as a critical ethnographer and to the truth and validity claims I started to construct each time I reflected on and inscribed the participants' social worlds (Carspecken, 1996).

Open-Ended Survey

In November 2005 (see APPENDIX B), I conducted another open-ended survey, comprised of valuable information about the students' demographics, past educational experience as Arabic learners, their investments, their knowledge and impressions about the Arabic program in the research setting, and formal or informal events that contributed to their becoming learners of Arabic. The students' writing was very natural and the tone was relaxed. For instance, they described their personal feelings, shared their memories, personal stories of racial profiling, humorous moments, and their reactions to the social, cultural and political context surrounding their learning of Arabic. Some students

www.manaraa.com

handwrote their surveys; others typed them. A few students included visual diagrams and sketches to express their thoughts and feelings as will be discussed in Chapter 4.

The open-ended style of the survey allowed students a choice and a space to inscribe their own worlds without the researcher's intrusion. It could be observed later that students open up when in their own worlds in a more relaxed manner than when asked for interviews. For instance, while interviews made students a bit careful in wording their responses to my questions, the survey enabled them to have a choice of expressing their thoughts through words, drawings, or any other multimodal means.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Besides informal chats, conversations, and casual interviews with the research participants, I conducted semi-structured interviews between November and the end of December 2005, including two interviews with the classroom teacher, of which neither were consented to be recorded. The teacher interviews covered topics such as the teachers' methods of teaching Arabic language and culture, historical situatedness of his experience in the field, the teaching of Arabic within an area study program, and his reflections on the culture of the Intermediate Arabic I classroom. In addition, an interview with a faculty member in the Judaic studies situated the development of the Arabic program historically. Four of the numerous student interviews were recorded. The purpose of these interviews was to help the researcher in representing and interpreting the dialogic interactions in the classroom, and the data was helpful in constructing the profile of the Arabic students in their own words and from their own worlds.

www.manaraa.com

Classroom Instructional Materials

During the semester-long span of the course, instructional materials were collected, including copies of all tests and quizzes, teacher-prepared worksheets and homework assignments, and the syllabus of the course. As I was an insider to the program, I carried the assigned textbook, *Elementary Modern Standard Arabic*, with me to allocate reference to pages covered. As the syllabus was not usually followed as suggested, I kept track of the lessons covered relying on my regular attendance. In Chapter 5, as a major contribution to this research, the textbook will be primarily analyzed within its historical context.

Data Analysis

Overview

As mentioned earlier, the data sources were observational, interview, and archival data (Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2005, p. 18). To analyze the data, having in mind a critical ethnographic lens in contexts of postmodernity, I used a mix of inductive analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992) and critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2001, 2003). The former involves a recursive analysis of data to allocate recurring themes generated through the preliminary continuous process of coding. The latter pays attention to linguistic and postlinguistic texts, interactions, and actions in relation to a social context. Therefore, inductive analysis pays more attention to the "macro" mapping of patterns in data while critical discourse analysis focuses on the "micro" patterns in specific texts and interactions (Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2005).

Commonly, deep reading of transcripts, observational notes, and other

www.manaraa.com

preliminary documents that I collected constituted my initial phase of analysis (Emerson et al., 1995) followed by writing down notes and memos to reflect, facilitate, and stimulate "analytic insights" (Maxwell, 2005, p. 96). With the study grounded in a critical ethnographic understanding, the following three main steps or phases of analysis have been utilized: Coding and categorizing, comparative narrative analysis, and textual analysis.

Coding

The initial cyclical step of analysis started during the process of collecting data, namely, categorizing data and generalizing codes. In analyzing the primary records, I looked for interaction patterns, subject positions and roles, and possible meanings embodied in words and actions (Carspecken, 1996). Allowing codes to "arise *from* analyzing data," I started with open initial codes and continued refining those codes by re-reading the data and crossing multiple resources of data, filed notes, transcripts, surveys, and diagrams, in comparison with each other (Charmaz & Mitchell, 2007, p. 165- italics in original).

The second step helped me take these emerging codes and allow them to grow into preliminary theoretical categories, that is, they became "processes to explore" (Charmaz & Mitchell, 2007, p. 167). I continued to look at my emerging codes with a critical eye, while simultaneously reviewing my aims of the study, and topics of literature relevant to the research's emerging interests. Echoing Coffey and Atkinson (1996), coding was "not the whole story," but the initial crucial step in labeling, categorizing, and indexing themes that grew into elaborate theories and frameworks (p. 52).

www.manaraa.com

Comparative Analysis

The second phase of analysis constitutes "connecting strategies" which aims at the constructing new categories and re-sorting of generated categories in an attempt to understand data as contextualized (Maxwell, 2005, p. 96). In this phase, I relied on Coffey and Atkinson (1996) in doing cross-site analysis and connecting categories to a coherent context and the available relevant literature. In sum, this phase builds on the previous step of categorizing and develops the analysis beyond understanding the participants or events on their own, but as part of a larger context.

I examined, therefore, each data set on its own and then cross-compared them to see if categories and themes emerging on one set of data share any themes from another set. For instance, when a set of data repetitively brought about notions of "identity," I coded the concept and looked for similar themes emerging across the students' classroom talk and discussions that may support or further elaborate on the concept. I used data from my observational notes, journals, transcripts, chats with participants, and even multimodal data like diagrams and drawings. Then, I examined contexts and settings in which such a theme occurred or was made apparent, as in reference to students' investments in learning Arabic or in negotiated classroom talk around the use of the Arabic textbook.

After that, I worked on conducting further interviews--formal and informal--and an open-ended survey for the learners to help me refine and reflect on my understanding of the analysis of the emergent categories. This process helped "expand" my themes and framework of analysis (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p. 30).

At this level, readings from literature on topics related to emergent themes, like

www.manaraa.com

for instance, postmodernity and identity, critical literacy and foreign language learning and identity (e.g., Fairclough, 2001; Kramsch, 1993; Norton, 2000), helped me further analyze the participants' narratives and voices. The language of the literature crisscrossed with the language and voices of the participants. I was then in the process of interweaving categories into deeper analysis or, a theorizing process.

Such interrelated processes of analysis have been an extreme help in examining students' identities and investments in becoming Arabic learners. Chapter 4 presents elaborate portraits of the participants' perspectives of who they are in relation to the social context of learning described. Chapters 5 and 6, which address collision between modernity and postmodernity as represented in the use of the textbook benefited from a third strategy of analysis drawing from critical discourse analysis. Naturally, the choice of methods and strategies for collecting and analyzing data matches the questions and aims raised by my investigation.

Textual Analysis

As my study seeks to understand relationships between the sociocultural and political context of the aftermath of 9/11 and the micro-culture of the classroom, I examined my data for recurring discourses and pattern structures that specifically were salient in classroom talk and interaction. Running through my transcripts and field notes again and again, I highlighted the episodes that motivated my interests. I decided in the beginning to select and categorize them in to smaller vignettes to be sorted under main categories, for example: language and ideology, counter narratives, 9/11 and media culture, etc. I changed my mind, however, as the selected episodes sounded short of life. They became dismantled and disconnected from the other episodes that feed into each

www.manaraa.com

other through interactions with the teacher, interactions with peers, and interactions with the textbook. Finally, after a few trails of categorizing, I decided on constructing the unit of analysis--used to address the third question of investigation in Chapter 6--as a full dialogic unit of classroom interaction which could run through several interconnected episodes.

I spent a few hours on every dialogic unit; four of them are analyzed in this investigation in Chapter 6. To connect my interest on matching the classroom talk and class culture with the wide social and political learning context, as influenced by postmodernity and in the aftermath of 9/11, I adopted broad analytic strategies from interdisciplinary critical discourse analysis approaches an interdisciplinary critical language approach (Bloome & Egan-Robertson, 1993; Fairclough, 2001, 2003; Gee, 1992; Janks, 2001, 2010; Pennycook, 2001).

Examining the dynamics of classroom interactions and classroom talk as texts, using discourse analytic concepts remained in line with my critical ethnographic lens trying to avoid generalizations, be careful with over-simplifications, and aware of my own biases and those of the participants (Rampton, 2006). Again, reading data in connection to literature facilitated the process of categorizing major theoretical concepts to be analyzed, as the classroom voices were articulated and reflected in the relevant literature in critical language research.

Going outside the data, to theoretical literature, added coherence to my initial analysis of this point. Continuously--in every interactional unit of classroom talk--after application of above phases, I would cross reference the theoretical literature to help me integrate data into major debates motivated by the interest in social, political, and

www.manaraa.com

institutional contexts of learning and association to classroom interactions.

Role of Researcher

> I am conscious of myself and become myself only while revealing myself for another, through another, and with the help of another.
>
> Mikhail Bakhtin, 1984, p. 287

During classroom observations and interviews, I assumed different roles that allowed me to be a participant observer of classroom talk and its discursive practices and an insider to the micro classroom world. I was positioned by the participants in diverse personal and professional subject positions: a point of reference by the teacher, a former teaching assistant and therefore a helper in the classroom by most students, a mother in conversation with a married student, an Arab in conversation with a heritage language student, a Muslim in talking with two Muslim students, and a researcher by most participants who would ask me about the progress of my data. In the end of the course, I had become part of an "extended family" (Madison, 2005, p. 131).

My challenge as an ethnographer was not in getting access to the site and building a trust relationship as an insider participant, but to be able to step back as an outsider to make the familiar unfamiliar (Spindler & Spindler, 1982). My challenge was to pull myself outside the boundaries of the comfortable space I had in the classroom and observe the innovative and different. For example, as being immersed into the Arabic classrooms as taught by this teacher in this institution for almost 4 years, I found it hard to look beyond the norms I thought I'm already acquainted with.

www.manaraa.com

Ethical Matters

In addition to the issues discussed in the ethnographic challenges section regarding maintaining safety for research participants, this study was conducted in ways that were transparent to those involved. Research participants were all asked to sign consent for voluntary participation in this study and were advised of the methodology of the study including specifics of data collection, purpose of the study, and its procedures. In addition, participants were informed that they had the right to withdraw from the study without any harm or prejudice.

To protect their confidentiality, participants were assured that their names would be substituted by pseudonyms during the analysis and future dissemination of the results of the study. They were also assured that no reference to the location of study will be disclosed as much as possible. Therefore, in the bibliography, I blacked out the reference to the town in which the study occurred whenever it appeared on cited website references. Also, both of the surveys reiterated the voluntary nature of the subjects' participation and the possibility of future dissemination of results in conferences and/or publications.

Although all participants initially signed consent for audiotaping classroom events, the Arabic teacher denied continuous audiotaping and the reserve of permanent records. As an ethical commitment to my participants, I respected this decision. Quoting a professor's words to his student ethnographer, I concur that, "our primary responsibility is to the people we study. When there is a conflict of interest, these individuals must come first" (Madison, 2005, p. 135).

www.manaraa.com

Limitations of the Study

The study at hand is a single case study of an Arabic classroom. Adopting an ethnographic lens and a critical understanding of research constituents entitled me to examine my role as well as those of the participants as situated in social contexts. The study is exploratory. With limits on conducting the research as examined in the ethical matters above, the study recognizes limitation in terms of findings and the snapshots of the participants it provides. The study is limited in its number of sites. Therefore, this is by no means representative of Arabic teaching in college campuses across the United States.

As a critical researcher, I'm aware that I don't aim at or claim any generalizations that may be at work in other Arabic language classrooms. The portraits of the research participants, the classroom interactions, and the contexts that shaped our experiences as participants are unique. The participants involved, the teacher and students, represent possibilities for dialogic interactions in classroom learning in contexts of postmodernity. The lens adopted in data gathering and analysis guide against any general assumptions.

www.manaraa.com

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH CONTEXT

> In the prison notebook Gramsci says: "The starting-point of critical elaboration is the consciousness of what one really is, and is 'knowing thyself' as a product of the historical process to date, which has deposited in you an infinity of traces, without leaving an inventory." The only available English translation inexplicably leaves Gramsci's comment at that, whereas in fact Gramsci's Italian text concludes by adding, "therefore it is imperative at the outset to compile such an inventory."
>
> Edward Said, *Orientalism*, 1978, p. 25

Gramsci's gate into critical thinking suggests that critically understanding ourselves requires consciously recognizing the micro and macro historical discourses that have shaped us to date. Therefore, it is imperative to ask questions about how we are shaped by and, circularly, shape the world's historical discourses. This study is invested in maintaining awareness of who I, the researcher, am, and in attempting to critically understand my participants as well. This is the means to confront and make sense of the challenges that exist in conducting research in this late or postmodern context. As such, in this chapter, the study participants (e.g., students, teacher, and researcher), and the related sociopolitical, cultural, demographic, and educational contexts are examined, constituting a considerable component of this ethnographic study.

To begin, the chapter presents a micro historical view of the Arabic program at the university, from its nascent development to its current state. Second, and most extensively, the chapter sketches profiles of the study participants including the researcher of the study, the Arabic classroom teacher, and the Arabic learners. These

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

sketches present the heterogeneity of students in terms of identities, sociocultural and demographic backgrounds, purposes and investments in learning Arabic. The chapter concludes with a summary regarding the heterogeneous and dialogic voices that make up the research context.

The University Arabic Program

Arabic is taught at the undergraduate level at the university within the Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies, which offers Hebrew as well. Arabic language studies were introduced to the campus in 1978, with the hiring of one Arabic professor, Dr. Edward. Initially, Arabic and Hebrew were offered through the History, and later Classics, Departments.

Dr. David, a professor of Hebrew at the university now, spoke with me about the humble beginnings and growth of Arabic language and cultural studies at the university. Initially, starting the program was a challenge in terms of hiring professors and establishing a common mission regarding offering Arabic. Based on the interest of both the students and teachers, Arabic was first offered as part of other areas of study, and as such, to students pursuing degrees in Middle Eastern Studies, Archeology, and Biblical Studies. Dr. Edward, the first professor of Arabic on campus, insisted on keeping Arabic nested within the department of Near Eastern and Judaic studies and strongly resisting the idea of moving Arabic to the department of Languages, Literatures, and Culture. According to Dr. David, the rationale for offering Arabic was to affirm its importance within the study of the Near East, analogous to offering Hebrew within Judaic studies.

Mirroring the practices of teaching other foreign languages, the Arabic curriculum focus was mainly textual in the beginning, using the grammar-translation teaching

www.manaraa.com

method. Later, Dr. David explains, with sociopolitical and economic shifts in the United States, especially after the launch of Sputnik I, the students of Arabic and their investments started to change as the need increased for more communicative, functional uses of Arabic. The job market was changing, offering more opportunities to work in occupations where Arabic would be useful (e.g., government, business, and entrepreneurship). As such, the Arabic program at the university gained more support throughout the years, and the program currently although has one professor, it draws around 80 students in its elementary level classes yearly.

Currently, Arabic classes are yearly based. Elementary Arabic I is offered in the fall and Elementary Arabic II offered in the spring. Upon completion of this level, students continue to intermediate and advanced levels, which are also yearly based. This setup allows little room for students to join Arabic classes during the spring semester. As such, students of Arabic progress from one level to the other as a unit that is culturally defined by a strong community sense.

Research Participants

As discussed in Chapter 3, conducting ethnographic research requires the researcher to examine and present the study participants with critical awareness of and transparency regarding who she is. Likewise, in order to present and analyze data effectively, the researcher must attempt to understand the study participants critically as well (Carspecken, 1996). In addition, the context of being in the United States post-9/11 is relative in terms of its effects on all of the participants and the study as a whole.

www.manaraa.com

First, a portrait of myself, author/researcher of the study, is presented (Dyson, 1993). Next, the classroom teacher is introduced. Then portraits of each of the students of the Arabic Intermediate I class are sketched, based on the images I observed and recorded. These glimpses of the participants' lives provide contextual basis for analysis in subsequent chapters, even though the actual pictures and live motion performances I witnessed could not be captured fully in written words.

The Researcher

An Arab American, I was born and raised in Jordan. I earned a bachelor's degree in English Language and Literature from the University of Jordan and taught English as a Foreign Language in a private elementary school in Amman. I moved to the United States with my daughter in 2001, two months prior to 9/11, and enrolled in a master's degree program and continued toward a doctoral degree, driven by my interest in critical language teaching. During graduate school, I worked as a Teaching Assistant of Arabic. This was the turning point in my life, when I realized how critical and political teaching any foreign language is. I had learned English in Jordan as a mandatory requirement that had been established within the post-colonial political context of the region. However, I had never deeply considered the hegemony of English or its relationship to Arabic in the context of Jordan. I had taken for granted that English was the linguistic capital needed for the job market and social prestige for a middle class Arab family before I began teaching at the university.

Coming to the United States and hearing people's reaction to the Arab and Islamic World post 9/11 also deeply affected me. As an Arab American Muslim, I was fortunate to be surrounded with diverse friends from a variety of linguistic, cultural, and

www.manaraa.com

religious backgrounds, all of whom were a great support to me. I never felt personally targeted after the events of 9/11, but surely heard and read stories of many hostile attacks on others assumed to be Arab and/or Muslim in other places. Such stories have been a clear indication, and present great concern in these times, about how little is known, particularly in the United States, about Arabs and about Muslims, who are typically identified as one group despite the fact that that is not the case. An Arab is a speaker of Arabic language regardless of religious affiliations while a Muslim is a follower of the religion, Islam (see Said, 1997, 2003; Suleiman, 2003 for ideological and political discourses in defining these terms in the Arab and Islamic World and the Western World). The politics of 9/11 stimulated interest across the academic settings in learning about Islam especially in regard to hidden assumptions and distorted representations of Muslims and Arabs.

Being aware of biases that I, and others, face as Arab American, furthered my commitment to critically examine my role/s and the other participants in this ethnographic study. I strived to teach myself how to better understand others different from me, how to try to perceive the world through their eyes, and how to come to terms with my own biases. I wanted to acknowledge the historical and cultural discourses that informed my thinking and attempt to see how these research participants make sense and meaning of their experiences as Arabic learners. Despite my attempts to conduct ethnography critically, I also acknowledge that remaining impartial is a challenge despite any researcher's best intentions.

Mr. Edward, the Arabic Classroom Teacher

www.manaraa.com

Associate Professor Mr. Edward is a Lebanese born and specializes in classical Arabic historiography and medieval and modern Arabic literature. He has taught for approximately 12 years at this campus. In addition, he is the director of the Middle Eastern Studies program and a strong advocate for incorporating cultural studies as an inseparable component of teaching a language, especially a foreign language. Not many learners of Arabic in the United States visit the Arab world or have much exposure to the complexity of the Arab world's cultural diversity, thus Mr. Edward believes that teachers are expected to be participants on their culture.

Mr. Edward summarizes that his teaching philosophy is a mixture of explicitly teaching grammar along with a content-based approach. He encourages students to build a linguistic and cultural repertoire to help them engage in communication using Arabic in the classroom. Working with Mr. Edward as a teaching assistant in the Elementary I and II levels for almost 4 years, I was impressed by his dedication to teaching Arabic and his safe friendly classroom atmosphere. As a researcher in his Arabic Intermediate I course during fall 2005, I was attracted to the strong sense of community that he and the students were able to build and sustain.

Portraits of Students

The following sketches of the 17 learners' profile primarily draw from the students' responses to the surveys conducted during the preliminary and actual phases of the study, as well as field notes and other records. The first survey was administered in February 2005. Fourteen of these seventeen participants were enrolled at the Elementary Arabic II course in which I worked as the Teaching Assistant. The second survey was conducted at November 2005 during the ethnographic study. Sixteen students

www.manaraa.com

participated while enrolled at the Intermediate Arabic I course. Only one student did not participate in either of these surveys. In the following, I introduce each learner in alphabetical order based on the first name. The pseudonyms make use of first names only as this allowed me to maintain a metaphorical and physical closeness to students as an insider participant observer.

As I planned to write down my portraits of the students, I surrounded my desk with organized piles of notes, surveys, class rosters, and fieldnotes arranged for each student. I have never viewed myself as an artist. However, throughout the sketching process of each student's portrait, I found myself mentally building up collages. These collages were composed of students' voices spoken in class, written in their surveys, and confided to me in formal and informal chats. They were also composed of their body language, smiles, hopes, and frustrations. At any given moment, there could be a cacophony of voices and identities. But this complex dissonance made the collages realistic, reflecting the postmodern discourses we, as the research participants, all draw from.

Some portraits could be longer and more elaborate than others. Some students were more vocal while others more silent, shy, and reticent in class. Some students opened up in conversation during interviews and/or surveys whole other chose not to. Therefore, the portraits below may not all share the same depth and analytic perspective.

Alice

While exploring my lenses as an insider-outsider of the Intermediate Arabic I course, Alice, a quiet, blonde student, makes herself comfortable at the furthest seat of the second (fieldnotes, 10/20/05) or third row (fieldnotes, 10/13/05) on the left side of the

www.manaraa.com

classroom, near the wide windows overlooking the main university square where college buses regularly pick up and drop off the students.

Enrolled at a leading women's college, part of the five college system in the Valley area, Alice commutes to this university by bus to learn Arabic. According to the university class roster of fall 2005, Alice is a non-degree student. This has been my first acquaintance with her as she learned elementary Arabic at another college. She is very calm during class participation, and her tranquil voice is barely noticeable among the other, louder voices of the students, whether during official or non-official class conversations. Besides sharing a smile with me once in a while, she keeps to her own, preferring to be a mostly silent participant during the Arabic class routines. Unfortunately, I have not gotten the chance to know about her investments in the class. However, even her silence is part of the class mosaic.

Andrew

Andrew is a senior majoring in Political Science, who identifies himself as White American with English as his native language. Although he does not suggest proficiency in other languages, he describes his first acquaintance with Russian during three of his high school years. Though, as he writes down, he was a C student in Russian, he has been continually motivated to continue learning Russian on his own. Andrew mentions that he has maintained an interest in pursuing learning languages that are challenging and out of the norm compared to those typically studied in the United States. His early exposure to Russian led him to his love of pursuing Arabic at university.

Andrew depicts his initial process of learning Arabic as "something fun" and a "rewarding hobby" (survey, November, 2005). He refers to his earliest informal

www.manaraa.com

acquaintance with Arabic during his freshman year, when he made a friend from United Arab Emirates and enjoyed listening to, and occasionally understanding, colloquial Arabic. Although Andrew speaks of the confidence he gains learning grammar in a structured classroom setting, when he reflects on his style of learning Arabic, he says, "Even though I enjoy the traditional way of learning Arabic in a classroom setting, I mostly still enjoy studying Arabic on my own and outside of class" (survey, November, 2005).

Andrew's investment in learning Arabic is twofold. Personally, he believes that one cannot fully understand someone without speaking his/her language. Professionally, Andrew writes of his interest in Information Technology and opportunities for business abroad, possibly the Gulf. He believes Arabic will be an asset in this regard.

My acquaintance with Andrew has extended over a year and a half, as Teaching Assistant in his Elementary Arabic I and II courses and then as researcher in his Intermediate I course in fall 2005. My new role as a researcher allowed me to see other perspectives of Andrew's identity that I had not noticed earlier. He often sits close to me. When I arrive, a few minutes early each class, Andrew is in constant dialogue with his classmates Shawn and James. They have been mostly arguing about the latest news headlines pertaining to the Middle East and the political and economic relations between America and the Arab World. On a few occasions, they invite me to commentate or as another participant in the dialogue. Even during class routines, Andrew seems to enjoy my listening to his comments, often looking to me and smiling as if seeking approval or recognition.

www.manaraa.com

Chris

Chris, a sophomore majoring in Philosophy, identifies himself as a white Caucasian American and speaks French and some Hindi. Chris has distinguished himself among his classmates as a determined, studious learner, whose proficiency in Arabic is noticeably better than the rest in the class. On more than one occasion, he is positioned by the teacher as the "expert" who has the correct answers (fieldnotes, 11/01/05). He usually occupies the furthest seat to the left at the first row of the class. As such, he is almost always picked up first by the teacher to answer questions, read sentences, or respond to drill exercises. His charismatic look, tall slim figure, and sophisticated expressions contribute to his appearance as having an expert status among his classmates. However, he is not as communicative with others, usually arriving early to the class but reading a book instead of participating in informal chats. Later in the semester, Shawn[9] tells me that he admires Chris's Arabic competency, but is convinced (incorrectly) that Chris is a student from another college due to his lack of interaction with the group.

Chris depicts his earliest acquaintance with Arabic to a particular time in 2000 when he read *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, commenting that the book accentuates the need to learn Arabic to understand Islam and refers to linguistic features of Arabic that attracted him. After enrolling at this university, Chris writes that finding out about the Arabic program was a "happy accident" that occurred when flipping through the course catalogue, and that his decision to pursue Arabic was "the best whim I've ever followed through with" (survey, November, 2005).

As a child, Chris reports that he loved reading and writing and spent hours in the town library until nearly closing time regularly. He would go then back home and write

[9] Shawn is one of the very vocal students in the class. He will be introduced later in this chapter.

www.manaraa.com

stories and poems of his own. He carried this love for creating into his process of learning other languages, striving to reach a level of proficiency that could enable him to understand the differences between expressing his ideas in English and in other languages. He admits he has not reached that level yet, neither in Arabic nor Hindi, however his motivation has always remained high.

Chris repeatedly professes that Arabic is a beautiful language. His investment in the language started with a simple attraction to the shapes and sounds of the language and then its linguistic features. Relating his reasons for studying Arabic to others was a challenging experience in a post 9/11 context; he refers to his constant frustration of attempting to explain that his rationale for learning Arabic was merely for personal enjoyment. As some found his justification hard to grasp, Chris confessed that he had to lie and say that he intended to work for the government.

Chris says that he loves learning about the Arab culture through his Arabic courses and other university courses offered about the history of the Middle East. He continues to practice reading occasional BBC Arabic articles and is a habitual reader of the Egyptian *Al-Ahram Weekly* and the *Middle East Times* English newspapers. From his perspective, such exposure helps him better understand the Arab culture and formulate opinions of his own. He is considering a possible job as a translator in the future.

Christopher

A senior majoring in Spanish, Christopher identifies himself as an Indo American with a Hindi Brahmin father and an Irish Catholic mother. Besides his native English, he also speaks Tamil and Spanish. Christopher describes his family diversity, in terms of language, religion, and culture as "unique" (survey, November, 2005). As such, he

www.manaraa.com

reports that he grew up with a sensitivity and open-mindedness that intrigued him to learn about others, particularly Arabs, and he pursued learning about their culture and the Arabic language.

In commenting on becoming a student of Arabic, Christopher discloses an early exposure to Moroccan Arabic while studying in Spain. There, he lived with three Moroccan roommates and fell in love with the sounds of Arabic and relished the opportunity to learn about a new culture and religion. Christopher admits his admiration, in conversations with me and in his written surveys, of the influence of Arabs on architecture, agriculture, science, and coinage of words in Spain.

A previous opportunity of exposure presented itself during the early 90s due to Christopher's father's Indian roots. While traveling to India together, Christopher learned more about linguistic characteristics of Arabic and Hindi, and he was introduced to a number of family friends who were Muslim.

In the year and a half that I have known Christopher, as teaching assistant and later as a researcher, he has been a rather quiet student with a serious look that speaks to a mature understanding of himself and others. He is not much of a speaker in the classroom; however, when he does speak, he usually shares an ironic remark that reflects his knowledge and critical thinking. For instance, during an Arabic class in the third week of November when the teacher and students share their plans and the reasons for celebrating the Thanksgiving Holiday, Christopher's input is concise and loudly spoken: "celebrating the massacres" (fieldnotes, 11/22/2005). His remark encourages others to carry on the dialogue over a dark part of American history.

www.manaraa.com

Christopher makes clear that he hates any connotations drawn between his learning of Arabic and 9/11. He writes, "Being of Indian descent, my father and I are profiled on buses, planes, and even walking down the street" (survey, February, 2005). His investment in the Arabic language and culture is intimately personal, as he hopes to open doors to travel and live in the Arab world and to pursue a professional interest in becoming a linguist.

Clara

Clara identifies herself as a white Caucasian American with proficiency in French, who is, age-wise, a non-traditional student, enrolled in one of the leading women's colleges of the area. She is about 27 years old and a parent of two little girls. In that regard, she opens up in her conversations with me as a mother and as somebody close to her age.

Clara's acquaintance with Arabic and her investment in learning the language can be traced to a number of factors. First, as an Art History major, her journey through her course work attracted her to register for Islamic Art and Architecture in 2003. She was fascinated by calligraphy and decided to explore that genre of art by pursuing a closer understanding of the Arabic characters. Second, building on that growing desire, Clara hoped she could invest her knowledge of Arabic language, culture, and art by establishing a business as an antique dealer and including Middle Eastern antiques. Third, Clara refers to her interest as a child who was an avid reader of National Geographic of becoming an archeologist in Egypt.

On a personal level, Clara's husband is of Palestinian origin. Although their conversations in Arabic at home are minimal, Clara shares her interest in communicating

www.manaraa.com

with her husband's family in Palestine. She believes that learning Arabic will "impress them" (survey, November, 2005).

In reaction to the politics of learning Arabic post 9/11, Clara believes that this incident "demonstrated how interconnected the world is… Our world is getting smaller. We need to understand each other better, and the best way to start doing that is through culture and language" (survey, February, 2005). Clara has not had the opportunity to visit the Arab world yet, but she is determined to learn more about the Arab culture, and sees this as a process requiring that she "seek it out" (survey, February, 2005).

Clara's attitudes about Arabic are pronounced in classroom discussions, mostly in response to the teacher's questions. She usually sits in a seat immediately next to mine. She turns her head towards me and asks for further linguistic clarifications when she feels the need. She positions me at different times in different roles, including an participant on Arabic language and culture, a mother, and a researcher. My Palestinian background helps her to open up about her husband's life and his difficult memories of his home. Conversations about her family life become a usual routine before class starts. Around Christmas, she invites me to her family Christmas dinner in case I have no place to go to for the holidays. Although I apologize that I cannot accept, my happiness regarding my relationship to my research participants is immense.

Debbie

Debbie is a junior majoring in Psychology with a minor in French. She identifies herself as a Caucasian American. Her cheerful smiles, sense of humor, and lively character make her presence in class very visible. She has completed a year of

www.manaraa.com

Elementary Arabic and is also an Intermediate student during this study in 2005. She plans to travel to France in spring 2006 for a semester abroad.

Debbie's interest in Arabic has been constructed through the political and economic resurgence of Arabic language in reaction to 9/11. She writes about being motivated by the current sociopolitical context in the United States and her understanding that there is a demand for Arabic speakers to work in the government. Interested in foreign affairs, and possibly international business, Debbie decided to take on the challenge of learning Arabic. In her own words, she describes this decision as "impulsive" (survey, November, 2005). Even though she refers to Arabic as one of the most difficult languages she has ever attempted to learn, she maintains her investment based on the relevance of Arabic as "hot on the job market" (survey, November, 2005).

Debbie's high proficiency in French gave her more confidence to pursue another language. She describes herself as a straight-A student in French, starting in 9th grade through college. As a learner of Arabic, she is sometimes reticent to speak up in class but is a keen listener and observer. Her attention focuses on the character of the Arabic teacher and his sense of humor. She confessed in early November that she has been compiling the teacher's jokes and humorous intervals since her Elementary Arabic classes (fieldnotes, 11/08/2005). She has never felt embarrassed sharing her opinion about her difficulty reading an Arabic newspaper, and even mimics reading one, displaying a jubilant face when recognizing one Arabic word every half page or newspaper column (fieldnotes, 11/10/2005).

Debbie attempts repetitively to share her frustration as a learner about a new culture through sarcastic remarks directed to the teacher as for instance on how to

www.manaraa.com

develop 'reading minds' ability to act and talk like a native speaker of Arabic. She clearly shares the fact that her knowledge of Arab culture is solely based on U.S. media, an experience she names as unfortunate. Her construction of who she is as an Arabic learner and her attempts to understand the others through her own cultural discourses seems full of challenge. She tells Mr. Edward, the Arabic teacher, that she cannot hear or think using Arabic as a native Arab can. Mr. Edward attempts to convey the message that learners do not need to be natives to get the feel of a language. Debbie sustains, with her self-mocking tone, that her language intuition may or may not mislead her.

Debbie is used to getting along with her classmates. One of her friends who introduced her to Arabic a year ago continues to take Arabic at this level as well. They tend to sit next to each other. However, as the classroom community often is divided into subgroups who feel comfortable in their seating arrangements, at one point, Debbie shares with me her frustration about the seating choices. She thinks that some students tend to cluster together based on their ability and fluency in Arabic. She occasionally cannot identify classmates' names and then refers to them by certain characterizations, like "best student."

In better understanding Debbie's investments, among other student's, I have come to recognize that the diverse interests and orientations in the classroom are more complex than I previously imagined.

Eden

In attempting to construct a portrait of Eden in my mental collage, I find myself short of memories. As an ethnographer, I celebrate the fact that I have gained the trust and confidence of most of the research participants. We are close enough that most of

www.manaraa.com

them tend to greet me and go on with their chats whenever they encounter me running my errands around the campus or downtown. I have attempted to see them through their own eyes, maintaining an awareness of the historical discourses that shape and reshape my identity.

Unfortunately, I have not been effective in reaching out to Eden. Although he greets me with smiles, he prefers to keep a distance and seems to appreciate his solitude. He willingly signs a consent form to allow me to gather my data but he excludes himself from being interviewed, exemplifying challenges common in conducting ethnography, where the researcher is left with a contextualized understanding of partial voices and with a continuous aspiration to hear more. Eden's voice is missing; he is not inclined to reveal more about his world in his own particular words. My eyes follow his movements and classroom interactions; I am acquainted with him more through his actions rather than his own portrayal of himself.

Although the class roster identifies him as a sophomore, Eden mentions that he is a junior majoring in Middle Eastern Studies and describes himself as an American of European descent. The student seating charts I have sketched in each class I observed allow me to construct an image of the students in the classroom when I go home to write and reflect on my notes. Eden consistently claims a seat in the very last row. Although students seated on either side change regularly, he typically is wedged in that seat between two colleagues and occasionally occupies the furthest seat in the corner. This appears to be his comfort zone.

For Eden, investment in these classes is not a matter of choice; Arabic courses are mandatory for him to specialize in Middle Eastern Studies. However, his personal

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

reading about the Middle East, especially controversial articles in the National Geographic, as he shares once in class, testifies to his general interest. Additionally, he jumps into a conversation enthusiastically one day when the topic of Lebanon and the Arab identity is introduced by Mr. Edward, speaking of genetic studies done in Lebanon that link bones of the dead to the Phoenicians (fieldnotes, 12/06/05).

Ethan

Early in the semester, I am very impressed with Ethan's willingness to share an earlier formal Arabic learning experience, even though it causes everyone to laugh. While visiting his uncle in Beirut in the summer of 2000, he joined an elementary school class, and had to sit with little children learning Arabic. Beyond the essentials of the story, Ethan reveals a playful side of his persona that was veiled behind his peaceful though pleasant personality. Ethan usually occupies the seat at the center of the class, interacting in a friendly manner with those surrounding him. Debbie almost always sits to his right, and Joy, who will be introduced later, typically sits to his left. Interactions with me are typically friendly, and he greets me courteously with a smile whenever our eyes meet at the start or end of class.

Ethan, a junior majoring in Political Science and Communications with a minor in Film Studies, identifies himself as an American of Irish and German background. Ethan's prior experience learning a foreign language was not as promising, when he attempted to take Spanish at the university, but failed the entry exam. Building on his earlier exposure to some Arabic language and culture, he decided to pursue Arabic. The Intermediate I course will be his last class in Arabic at this university.

www.manaraa.com

Early during his elementary year of Arabic at this university, Ethan shares the fact that he needed language as a course requirement. Still, he believes that Arabic is a useful language and has recognized its importance growing up in the United States. He hopes to become a journalist after graduation and specialize in news about the Middle East. He has visited Lebanon and Egypt as a tourist. His uncle is Egyptian, providing Ethan exposure to aspects of Arab culture, including informal ones. For example, he enjoys sharing his knowledge of "reading the coffee cup," a ritual performed by his mother's relative in Egypt (fieldnotes, 11/15/2005). Some women read coffee grounds because they believe it is a way to read the future, while others do so purely to entertain.

Isaq

Isaq, a junior majoring in French and Middle Eastern Studies, acknowledges an amalgamation of forces shaping his identity when he refers to himself as a Black North African Jewish American. In addition to his native English, he speaks French and Hebrew. Isaq reflects on his experience as an Arabic learner through the very personal venue of his family's lifestyle and traditions. For example, his father used to play old albums of "Abdul Al-Halim," an Egyptian classical romantic singer, which Isaq enjoyed listening to. Later on his life, Isaq befriended some Arabs, and his passion to know more about the Middle East increased.

Living in Chicago, which has approximately 14,777 residents of Arab ancestry according to the U.S. Census Bureau (2000), Isaq was fortunate to grow up in an Arab/Jewish neighborhood. His desire to be able to read street signs, stores labels, and to understand what people out on the streets were saying motivated him to learn Arabic. He describes growing up in his neighborhood as formative in his development, as he came to

www.manaraa.com

understand better his Arabic "history and identity," especially as many of the Arabic-speaking people also attended his "synagogue" (survey, November, 2005). He reiterates that here he gained an understanding of the deep cultural importance of Arabic language.

In this university context, Isaq started his language learning by taking Hebrew. He acted upon the advice of his Hebrew teacher, Dr. David, to enroll in Arabic soon after, as both languages belong to the same language family, the Semitic languages. As Arabic is offered within the Department of Judaic and Near Eastern Studies, I see Isaq quite often going in and out of his Hebrew class on the same floor.

I am impressed by Isaq's appreciation of the diverse factors that contribute to constructing his identity. He recognizes multifarious aspects of his character relating to language, religion, geographical space, and family ties. His participation in class alludes to this frame of mind, and he often responds to dialogues regarding relationships among language, religion, culture, and politics. For example, he poses a critical question about whether Arabic colloquial accents or dialects could be designated or classified based on the various religions of the regions (fieldnotes, 12/07/2005). Also, Isaq's knowledge about the history of the Middle East is reflected in class discussions. He recognizes the contribution of early Orientalists like Edward Lane, and points out in class that Lane learned Arabic through living with native Arabic speakers in Egypt before writing his scholarly Arabic dictionary (fieldnotes, 11/17/2005). Moreover, he maintains interest in news and events relating to Arabic culture and issues and shares information about Israeli Palestinian peace groups and a traditional Arab dance performance that is going to occur on campus (fieldnotes, 10/27/2005).

www.manaraa.com

Jane

A sophomore, white and 5' 10" tall, Jane distinguishes herself as an athlete, a prominent player (goalie) on the soccer team at one of the prestigious, competitive colleges in the area. Mr. Edward, aware of her participation in tournaments, asks Jane to update the class about her athletics and uses the topic as a resource for class, writing down Arabic vocabulary to express actions related to winning, losing, and competing against teams (fieldnotes, 10/18/2005).

Jane started her formal learning of Arabic in an intensive summer course at the University of California at Berkeley. She says she is motivated to continue learning Arabic because of its political relevance and her aspirations for a career in international affairs. She writes that 9/11 made the Arab world much more "present" in American foreign policy and American daily lives (survey, February, 2005). She acquainted herself with background information about the Middle East through history courses. She shares that she was exposed directly to the region when she visited Egypt in December, 1994, when she was in fourth grade. Even though she does not elaborate on the reason for the visit, her passion for a second trip is apparent, having planned to spend her spring 2006 semester abroad in Egypt, at the American University of Cairo.

Having a double major in Political Science and Asian Languages and Cultures with a concentration in the Middle East, Jane summarizes her history of acquaintance with Arabic through a timeline diagram (survey, November, 2005):

www.manaraa.com

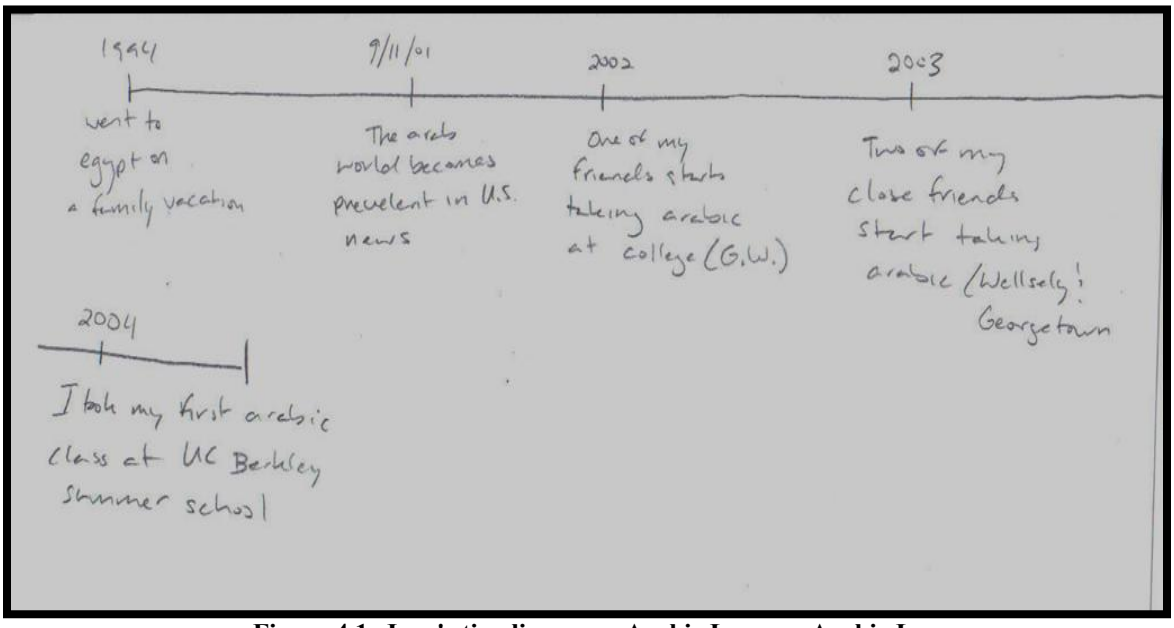


Figure 4.1: Jane's timeline as an Arabic Learner Arabic Learner

Jane habitually sits in the back row of class. She sits next to me in the beginning of the year and continues to identify me in my role as teaching assistant, despite the fact that I have begun data collection. When she misses a class, she approaches me instead of her Arabic teacher to help her understand the homework. She has a cheerful smile and feels comfortable telling me that I would make a great teacher of Arabic.

When Mr. Edwards leads an Arabic lesson questioning students about the other classes in which they are enrolled, Jane shares (in Arabic) that just prior to her Arabic class she takes a Women and Gender Studies course on domestic violence. The class reaction is mixed; some laugh, while others sound genuinely interested.

James

James, a senior majoring in Political Science, identifies himself as Caucasian American with a Canadian connection and distinguishes himself in class with his outstanding knowledge of the politics and history of the Middle East and his high level of

www.manaraa.com

classroom participation. His personality is a mix of seriousness about the topics he addresses and a sense of humor towards his teacher and classmates.

James began studying Arabic when he enrolled in the Elementary level at this university last year, motivated by his grandparents, who suggested there was a shortage of, and therefore demand for, Arabic speakers in the government. James aspires to work as an analyst for the CIA and indicates that while checking the CIA website he noticed an abundance of job opportunities for speakers of particular languages, including Arabic, Farsi, and Chinese. In addition, he believes that the high number of government analyst jobs available indicates that he will likely be able to secure his "dream job". James also remarks that 9/11 was a major factor in his decision to learn Arabic.

James has enrolled in a number of courses to sharpen his political and historical understanding of the Arab world (e.g., History of the Middle East, International Security, and a course that examines terror in relation to American and Middle Eastern modern policies). He expresses interest in continuing to read about Arab governments and Islam.

During class time, James is always full of energy. He is a close friend of Shawn (introduced later), and they sit together each class. James is one of those students who usually comes to class early and engages in heated dialogues with Andrew and Shawn about current news and politics. On occasion, they ask me to join in their discussions, which include topics such as current U.S. relationships with the Arab world, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the wall in the West Bank, the 9/11 job market, Chomsky's lectures, and government funding for Arabic studies.

I have become used to engaging in informal chats with James, and he often shares personal information with me, including: objections regarding a difficult homework

www.manaraa.com

assignment, a quiz, or a drill sheet that he thinks does not make sense; details about his holiday plans; his opinions about social relationships on campus and in town compared to other areas, his ambitions regarding graduate school; and his process of searching online for high-ranked Middle Eastern Studies graduate programs. He seems to appreciate my openness to listen to his complaints, and his casual manner of conversation with me allows me to feel very much a part of the class.

Joy

Joy, a South Asian senior at one of the outstanding women colleges of the area, is a studious learner with keen interest in acquiring a higher level of proficiency in Arabic.

Joy shares personal information about her exposure to Arabic. She reflects on her childhood growing up in Bangladesh, where, as a ten-year-old girl, she was learning to read the Quran, the central religious book for Muslims. Unable to understand Arabic, the Quranic texts remained incomprehensible. As she grew older, her faith became more important to her, and she developed an interest in learning Arabic in order to make better sense of what she was reading. She shares her annoyance regarding what she was taught as a young child about Islam and the interpretations she received for the Quranic texts. Joy admits that she prefers to read and understand these texts by herself. For her, this is the way she can become "a better Muslim" (survey, November, 2005).

Joy has chosen to major in both Economics and Arabic as an investment for her future career aspirations. She knows that Arabic is one of the United Nation's five official languages, and she hints at interest of working there. In addition to learning Arabic, Joy is fluent in Hindi, Urdu, and Bengali. During my research, Joy has several informal chats with me about her future plans. She talks about continuing to work

www.manaraa.com

towards her master's degree, ideas about schools she may attend, her application process, her GRE preparation, and later, even her scores. Identifying with me as a Muslim woman, she seems comfortable talking to me, particularly when she talks about more personal information including her acculturation as a Muslim in Bangladesh.

Mr. Edward positions her as top student in terms of her linguistic ability in using Arabic. She receives top marks on tests and quizzes, she responds correctly in class regarding grammatical issues, and she displays higher levels of reading and writing skills compared to her classmates. She regularly occupies the seat next to Rafia, a Muslim South Asian student (introduced later), or Alice, who is enrolled at the college she attends.

Throughout college, Joy has been friends with many students of Arab heritage, from whom she has learned about sociopolitical and cultural aspects of the Middle East. She has also tried Arabic cuisine in the new Lebanese restaurant in the area. Her exposure to Muslims from different geographical contexts has given her the opportunity to reflect on her identity, and she reports that her Arab friends have challenged her assertions about her experiences as a young Muslim growing up in the West. Joy attends a wide variety of Arab and Muslim events organized on this university campus as well as at the other area colleges. As such, she is a participant observer herself in the multiplicity of sociocultural and religious orientations within the Arab and Islamic worlds with which she is trying to identify.

Lara

Lara attends the same outstanding women's college in the areas that Joy, Clara, and Alice do. A senior majoring in Religion with a minor in International Relations, Lara

www.manaraa.com

identifies herself as a white, Caucasian American. She speaks Hindi and French. She shares briefly that she visited India once.

Lara is one of those students who can hardly be unnoticed. She dresses up in mix of colors with a sense of being carefree. She loves accessories that look gypsy-like or Indian. With her tall figure, short dark hair, and beautiful grin, she is lively and vigorous. Lara is an enthusiastic learner with a sense of curiosity towards topics and discussions related to art, religion, and women.

Her acquaintance with formal learning of Arabic started a year earlier with an Elementary Arabic I course offered in the fall at her own college. By spring 2005, she decided to enroll in the Arabic course at the university. Her passion for Arabic language and culture has been shaped by multiple factors. On the academic and professional side, Lara aspires to work in or with North Africa or the Middle East on issues related to governmental policies concerning development, human rights, and general welfare. Therefore, the events of 9/11 were a turning point for her, bringing to the fore issues and concerns of the Arab world as such topics became more "volatile" (survey, February, 2005).

For Lara, learning a language like Arabic means constructing a space that allows for a "different way of thinking" (survey, February, 2005). She takes seriously the need to immerse herself in the sociocultural and historical context of Arabic. She takes a range of courses covering diverse material, including Sunni and Shi'a Islam, fundamental and liberal philosophical perspectives on world politics in 21st century writings, and North African development.

www.manaraa.com

Her interest in Arabic has also been kindled in her family life. Lara's grandfather on the paternal side is a Syrian immigrant. She grew up observing certain Syrian sociocultural beliefs and practices because of her father, whom she describes as major contributor to her decision to learn Arabic. Moreover, her love for music also triggered great interest in Middle Eastern music and therefore the language and culture as well.

In her survey of November, 2005, she summarizes her contributors in this way:

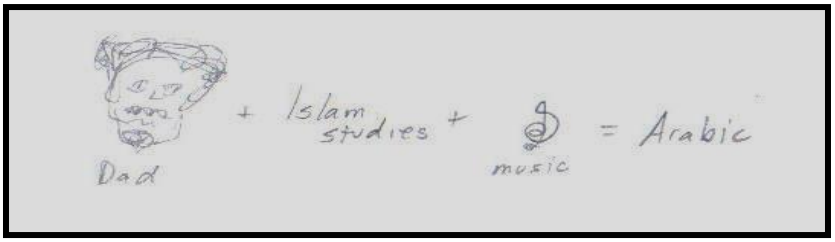


Figure 3.2: Contributor's to Lara's Arabic learning

Lara draws on her developing knowledge of other cultures in her classroom discussions. She seats herself comfortably in the front rows and jumps into conversations when the topics personally interest her. In one class, when Mr. Edward gives a brief orientation of the '*Ud*, a classical Arabic music instrument, Lara wonders how the '*Ud* is distinguished from the *Rababah*,[10] another Arabic string instrument. Lara talks about her experience watching and listening to the *Rababah* being played. Mr. Edward tells her that other than nomadic uses, the Rababah, which is typically reserved for formal occasions such as poetry readings, could be, sarcastically, used around "camp fires" (fieldnotes, 10/18/2005), and that, in fact, Lara was privileged, as not many people, including Arabs, have seen the Rababah played in real life scenarios. Mr. Edward taps on Lara's

[10] 'Ud is a string instrument, pear-shaped with five or six strings. It is played by plucking. The Rababah is a nomadic style fiddle with a single horsehair string and played with a horsehair bow. The Rababah usually accompanies Bedouin recitation of poetry. Retrieved June 2008, from http://www.al-bab.com/arab/music/instruments.htm

www.manaraa.com

knowledge during other class periods, especially when more religious themes are accentuated. When the *zikr*, a Sufi religious ritual, is referred to, Lara grins at being addressed "our expert" (fieldnotes, 10/27/2005).

Rafia

"I not only want to learn the language, I NEED to learn it."

A senior at the university, Rafia majors in Biology and identifies herself as South Asian with a Pakistani background. She grew up in America as a bilingual speaking Urdu and English and later learned Hindi and some German. The above quote from Rafia's survey in November 2005, capitalization in original, reflects Rafia's utmost desire to become a proficient Arabic learner. Her investments in Arabic are deeply rooted in her identity as a Muslim and her future professional plans.

Rafia, the only girl in the class with a head scarf, notes her faith as a major personal motivation for learning Arabic. She has always wanted to better understand her religion and disliked learning about Islam, and interpreting how to live, through reading translations. In addition, she has found it difficult not being able to comprehend half of what she would recite during her daily prayers.

The "beauty" of Arabic script and the "poetic" appeal of its sounds "infatuated" Rafia to learn the language as well (survey, November, 2005). And on a very personal level, she discloses that, for a short time, she was also motivated to learn Arabic when she was considering a possible marriage relationship with an Arab and wanted to be able to communicate with his family.

Rafia's exposure to Arabic has been through formal channels of learning at multiple settings. In 1998, Rafia learned some basic Arabic through the mosque she

www.manaraa.com

usually attended. She took classes on Sundays, learning some numbers and basic vocabulary related to the classroom setting (e.g., pen, book, desk). At the time, she loved the neat shapes of Arabic letters and felt proud to be able to recognize a few words and numbers from the poster at the wall of the mosque. Wishing to study in a more serious way, she spent four months in Syria learning Arabic at the University of Damascus. Rafia later joined the Arabic program at this university after hearing about it from a friend. She believes that studying Arabic stimulates her brain and increases her drive to study for her other classes.

Rafia's connection to Arabic culture is seen in the way she surrounds herself with other Lebanese and Palestinian friends who, as she recounts, share with her their own experiences and insights on Arab culture. Also, she talks about her second visit to the Middle East, when she headed to Mecca in Saudi Arabia for a religious trip. Although the region reflects a different sociocultural and religious context than Damascus, her visit to Mecca brought the world to her, given the diversity of Arabs and Muslims who come there to participate in the same religious ritual.

During class, Rafia speaks about how open and welcoming the Syrian people were to her during her visit (fieldnotes, 11/15/2005). I am impressed by her point because she sets it in contrast to the teacher's point of view. Mr. Edward has spoken briefly, and sometimes humorously, about the different cultural and social family relationships in the Arab world and the constant visitations from friends that allow little time for one to be alone with his/her own family. Rafia's opinion is contradictory. Her individual experience has been shaped differently. It is not as significant to me which position is

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

more accurate. What attracts my attention is that the classroom is a safe space for students to construct and play around with their opinions, as Rafia did.

I have come to know Rafia better through interactions outside of the classroom. When she needs help with Arabic prior to the final test, because she still positions me as teaching assistant due to my role in an earlier class, she seeks out my assistance, and we arrange for her to visit me at home to study. We have information conversations about herself during dinner together. Additionally, I encounter Rafia, as with Joy, at many of the Arab and Muslim events on the university campus. Rafia is very involved in participation at these events and, on one occasion, presents herself as a humorous, artistic Muslim entertainer when I see her perform in front of an audience of almost 300 (Muslim and non-Muslim).

Rafia reports that she is interested in living in the Middle East at some point and possibly working with the international humanitarian organization, Doctors without Borders.

Rula

The only heritage learner of Arabic, Rula is a junior majoring in Biology-PreMed, who identifies herself as an American born in Syria. She has spoken a colloquial Syrian dialect with her family, whom she describes as traditional, all her life. She enrolled in this course to learn the standard form of Arabic used mainly in reading and writing. Rula's immigration to the United States at the age of five dramatically affected her ability to speak Arabic. She said that her Arabic started to wear off and English became dominant.

Out of all of the Arabic students, Rula is the only one with no investment in learning Arabic for professional reasons; her only investment is connected to her identity

www.manaraa.com

as an Arab and, I learn subsequently, a Muslim. Although I have known Rula for a while, she has never spoken frankly of her religious identification, so I am very sensitive inquiring. I prefer to wait for students to open up in conversations with me and confide about their construction of who they are.

Rula says her decision to learn Arabic at the university was initially motivated by her family's plan to visit the larger family in Syria. She felt disconnected linguistically and regretted she might have trouble speaking to her relatives and being able to connect with them regarding many topics. In addition, Rula wanted to read the Quran on her own and learn more about her religion.

Towards the midterm of the course, Rula starts to engage me in conversations in colloquial Arabic before class starts. Prior to this, we have only exchanged a few smiles and greetings. I am happy that we are able to connect through dialogues about living in and visiting the Middle East, comparing the cultural and social life there to life in the United States. Identifying with me as an Arab American, Rula reveals more about her distinct mixed identity, informed by the East and West. She repetitively talked about her growing up with a sense of individuality and strong character developed through her American acculturation while attempting to fit in with the social and cultural practices of her Syrian heritage.

In class, Rula is a shy person offering minimum participation. She has a soft low voice and a face that blushes quite often. She wears make-up everyday to class and seems to pay considerable attention to her long straight hair that covers her back. She occupies the rear row in class, but this does not prevent Mr. Edward from engaging with her in

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

conversations, especially in sharing humorous comments about life in Syria. She takes the remarks lightheartedly and wraps up the dialogue with her beautiful beaming smile.

Shawn

> We know each other in Arabic and
> We are in the same boat…
> Having…a sort of thing in common
> I mean
> We don't have a college in common
> We don't have a cultural background…
> But we are all studying Arabic

This quote from Shawn's December, 2005, interview describes the culture of the Arabic classroom community toward the end of the semester. Shawn, a junior at the university majoring in Political Science and minoring in International Relations, identifies himself as being of European descent, a mix of Irish, Italian, and Bulgarian. His investments in Arabic are based on a mixture of personal reasons and future career plans. Shawn enjoys learning languages. He enjoyed studying Italian, Bulgarian and Latin, and even attempted learning Cyrillic. Learning Arabic, he asserts, is a serious challenge that he takes pleasure in. He likes Arabic script, describing it as "gorgeous" (survey, February, 2005). He finds Arabic script, as it appears in the background of newscast or mainstream media, "more visually appealing than English," (survey, November, 2005). His motivations are also a consequence of changes in the job market and the political context post 9/11. Shawn says he has heard there is high demand for translators in government and businesses with few translators available. Given his academic major, learning Arabic seems very relevant.

As a high school student, Shawn took a course in world history that introduced him briefly to the Arabic speaking world. Later as a freshman in the university, he

www.manaraa.com

enrolled in two courses about the history and culture of the Middle East. He discovered that these courses provided him with more "informative" compared to the "generally inaccurate" information from the mainstream media (survey, February, 2005). His interest to learn more about the region pushed him to write an independent honors paper on the education system of Jordan. Shawn says he felt a need to understand the Middle East, especially as he aspires to work for the CIA or FBI because he believes there are many "information holes in the FBI especially about the Middle East" and he would like to "amend them" (fieldnotes, 10/27/2005).

In his own words, Shawn summarizes his experience becoming a learner of Arabic as follows (survey, November, 2005):

> My earliest acquaintance with Arabic was admittedly a very unacademic setting. I am an avid player of video games, and a variety of titles that I played (and still play) almost 7 years ago are concerned with both ancient and modern Arab civilizations and conflicts. Although I wasn't aware of the Arabic I was hearing until I actually began to study the language in college, going back and replaying these games brought back memories of hearing Arabic but not understanding or recognizing it. My interest in pre-9/11 was not particularly acute but I had always had an affinity for military history, international relations, and the study of conflict. After September 11, it was clear to me that a new generation of conflict, important diplomatic talks, and possibly even military involvement was coming. In this way, taking Arabic was natural progression towards the core of my academic interests-spurred forth by 9/11.

I have been very impressed by Shawn, since I first met him as teaching assistant in the previous year. Throughout the time of this study, fall 2005, Shawn's humor, sarcasm, and ironic remarks are loudly heard in every class. Much of his humor is coated by a sociopolitical and critical tone. For example, he plays a pun on an Islamic term like 'Jihad' and then speaks loudly of its misuse (fieldnotes, 10/27/2005). As he is a good follower of the news, his early arrival to class often precedes heated discussions over the

www.manaraa.com

hot local, national, and international news. Sharing these conversations with James, Andrew, Debbie, and others who often just listen, Shawn and his classmates filter the news very critically. Their topics range from the relationship of the FBI to the top Academic universities offering Arabic and the funding available, their searches for graduate schools, critical lecturers visiting the town, to serious world issues such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Aware of my presence as a listener, they ask me to join in sometimes. At other times, I prefer to observe their interactions, the verbal and the physical, as they build together a community of their own as learners of Arabic.

Shawn, among his classmates, is the most concerned about the progress of my research. He promotes my role as a researcher to be a natural component of the class culture and community. He feels comfortable complaining to me about his annoyance with the textbook used in the Arabic class, noting its lack of lessons related to daily functions, such as interactions that would take place eating at an Arabic restaurant. He humorously mimics the text, presenting what it would be like to use very formal Arabic to order food or read a menu. He asks me about the colloquial dialects of Arabic and if he would be able to practice Arabic by visiting the Arabic restaurants in the surrounding towns.

Most of all, Shawn's willingness to be challenged attracts my attention all through the course. He reflects during his interview on December 14, 2005, upon the challenge of growing up merely learning about western culture and understanding other cultures from a western perspective. He admits that every class of Arabic has offered him some new understanding about the Arab world, a re-learning of a wrong idea he may have previously acquired about Arabs, and, most of all, an awareness of how much more he

www.manaraa.com

needs to learn. Meeting the challenge of learning the language and more about the target culture gives him a "great sense of accomplishment" (interview, 12/14/2005).

Thomas

Figure 4.3: Thomas's Journey to Egypt

With the above world map, Thomas reveals much about his personal acquaintance to the Arab world during his visit to Egypt when he was fourteen years old. Thomas draws this map in response to the survey of November, 2005, in regards to his process of becoming an Arabic learner. Thomas is senior graduating in the spring of 2006 with a double major in Political Science and Physics.

Thomas was not one of the students enrolled in Elementary Arabic I or II at the university campus. As such, I am new to him. Although we sit very close to each other in class, he is timid and reticent in the beginning talking to me about himself. Observing my interaction with others, Thomas soon opens up. He speaks of his mother's work at the American University of Cairo and of living in Egypt for four years, where he learned some colloquial Egyptian Arabic both through formal classes and the interaction with others.

www.manaraa.com

Thomas reports that his early motivation to learn Arabic was triggered by the fact that not many Americans know anything about the language. Although he affirms that this started to change after the events of 9/11. He shares that people have often wondered about the reason he lived in Egypt, commonly asking him if he knows "Egyptian," which to him is a sign of the ignorance about Arabic in America (survey, November, 2005). Thomas shares another example that reflects American's lack of knowledge about Arabic, when someone asks him if he is Jewish. He was carrying something with Arabic script on it, and, according to Thomas's analysis, since the person could not recognize the writing, the assumption was that it must be Hebrew. Thomas drew a diagram to visually explain to me his point of view on the general knowledge an average American has about Arabic

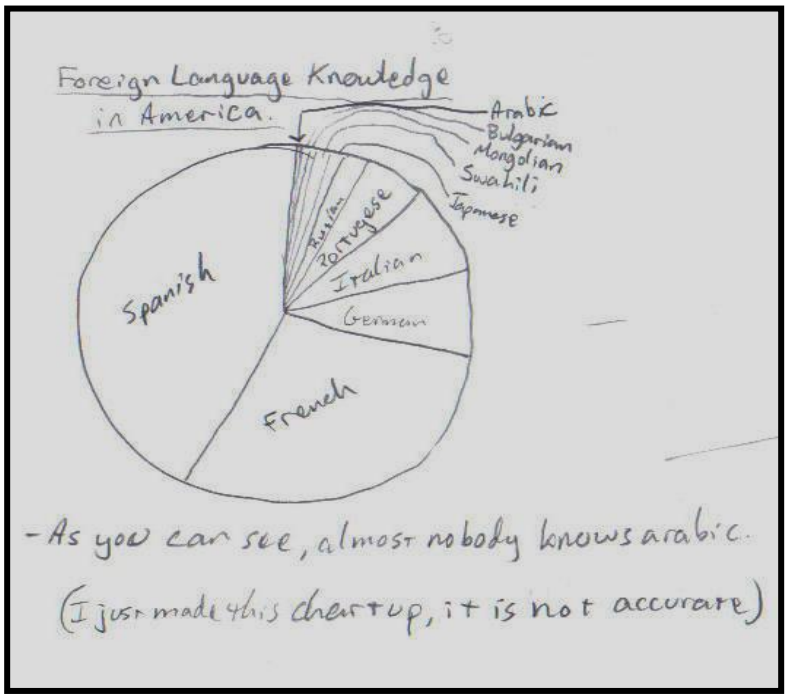


Figure 4.4: Foreign Language Knowledge in America

www.manaraa.com

Conclusion: Dialogic Voices

The diversity of the participants described in this chapter in terms of language, culture, social status, ethnicity, political views, and religion is complex. The historical, political, economic, and institutional discourses that continue to shape them as learners of Arabic are complex as well. The ethnographic research has made it possible to become a participant observant to understand better my situated self and that of others in the class. Each participant is positioned in his or her unique space, their subjective positions in dialogue with each other. Through this dialogue, each participant acknowledges the existence of other spaces and constructs his/hers in response to the self and others.

This chapter answers my first question and thought in approaching the site in regards to who the students of Arabic are, their purposes, incentives, and investments in learning Arabic, and their response to the political and sociocultural context in the United States in a post 9/11 era. The students' profile is diverse and rich. Their dialogues and meanings are constantly shaped in response to and negotiations with micro classroom interactions and the macro societal contexts.

The sketches of the students portray an image of "deviance" whereby students do not always abide by their lines as receptors of knowledge (Rampton, 2006, p. 83). They defy, respond to, contest and negotiate with the teacher's other lines. The classroom discursive talk and moves do not always follow traditional expectations as will even become clearer in Chapter 6. The teacher seems to trigger such untraditional moves and appropriate the negotiations and confrontational participation of the students in an atmosphere of humorous acceptance.

www.manaraa.com

The illustrative sketches of the students help recognize the "cultural context" and "interactional context" of the classroom as central (Kramsch, 1993). An ethnographic lens on the participants of the classroom events makes clear the ideological and background knowledge of these participants. Such knowledge becomes a core in observing the dialogical and dialectical interactions between texts and contexts, and between the teacher and learners in the Arabic classroom.

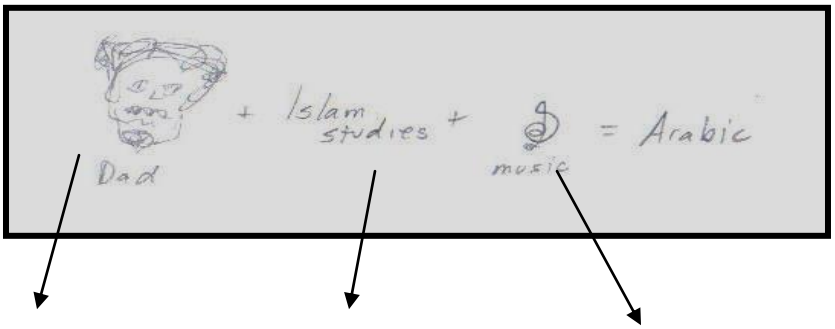
The data in this chapter is strong in presenting students' understanding of their identities as complex and multiple (Norton, 1995). Their investments in becoming Arabic learners and/or make connections with members of the target community as Andrew, Christopher, Clara, and Joy mentioned, is intricately connected to the changing of their social identities.

To quote from Rampton (2006), the students' sketches reveal the playful side and 'performance' of students within the official world of the classroom. The hybridity of their investments, backgrounds, and sociocultural and political orientations help construct a successful untraditional and sometimes disruptive classroom talk. As described in Chapter 2, in a contemporary postmodern global world order, this hybridity posts a number of issues in the field of language education including the challenge for the role of teachers and to contexts of modernity as embedded in textbooks and methods of teaching.

Students' awareness of their identity as a social construct is visible in the manner in which they expressed themselves in Chapter 4. Beyond the linguistic description which vividly points to their identities as sites of struggle, they also used postlinguistic means like drawings, diagrams, and graphs. Lara, for instance, used a graphic illustration, equation formula, to speak of those who contributed to her becoming a learner of Arabic.

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

She includes different multi semiotic means as follows:



drawing **writing** **symbols**

Lara used a mathematical formula to express her ideas in a manner where the word is understood in a visual media influenced culture, a very noticeable marker of postmodernity.

Table 4.1 below summarizes the students self reported demographics in terms of major/minor, ethnicity, nationality, and language.

www.manaraa.com

Table 4.1 Self-Reported Arabic Learners Demographics

Student	Major/Minor	Ethnicity (self-reported)	Nationality	Native/Other languages
Isaq	Middle Eastern Studies	Black/ N. African Jewish	American	English/French/Hebrew
Clara	Art History	Caucasian	American	English/French
Thomas	Political Science/ Physics	White/ Caucasian	American	English
Lara	Religion/ International Relations	Caucasian	American	English/French/Hindi
Rula	Biology/Pre Med	Syrian	American	Arabic/English
Joy	Economics	South Asian	Bangladeshi	Bengali/English Hindi/Urdu
Christopher	Spanish	Indo-American	Indian/Irish	English/Spanish/Tamil
Rafia	Biology	South Asian	Pakistani	English/Urdu
Chris	Philosophy	White	American	English/French/some Hindi
Shawn	Political Science	Italian/ Irish/Albanian	American	English/Bulgarian Italian/Latin
James	Political Science	Canadian/ English	American	English/Spanish
Jane	Political Science & Asian Languages and Civilizations	White	American	English/French
Andrew	Political Science	White	American	English
Debbie	Psychology/French	Caucasian	American	English/French
Ethan	Political science & Communication/Film studies	Irish/German	American	English/some Spanish
Eden	Middle Eastern Studies	European	American	English/Spanish

www.manaraa.com

CHAPTER 5

THE TEXTBOOK IN CONTEXT: *Elementary Modern Standard Arabic1*

The Text in Context

This chapter introduces the Arabic textbook, *Elementary Modern Standard Arabic (EMSA) 1*[11], used in the Arabic Intermediate I classroom in the campus of study. As discussed in the literature review of this study, textbooks' organization, content, and methods of teaching and pedagogical approaches, are constituted by the broader micro and macro sociohistorical, political, economic, and institutional ideologies.

This chapter attempts to situate the Arabic textbook in regard to its themes/ general content coverage and its methodology of teaching as emanating from the institutional and educational contexts of the time as well as deeply influenced by the political and economic context surrounding the teaching of Arabic as a foreign language in the United States during the 1950s and 1960s. Since the textbook attempts to construct a particular image or vision of the Arab World at the time, a historical review of the main events of the Arab world prior to the publications of the textbook will be provided here as it is considered one of the main resources influencing the thematization of the textbook.

The study will only allude to some of the themes of the basic reading and comprehension passages provided in the textbook. Such passages project particular images of the Arab World which might appear in the form of representing particular social groups, particular social and economic urban settings, and implicitly or explicitly

[11] The Arabic textbook will be referenced as *EMSA 1* for convenience.

www.manaraa.com

projecting meanings on the relationship between participants of a social event among others.

It is logical before delving into content details to start with a general overview of the *EMSA1* textbook in terms of its authors, audience, and students' interests and investments at the time of its publication. The *EMSA1* textbook was published by Cambridge University Press in 1968. Two main editors were the main contributors; Peter Abboud, a Professor of Arabic at the University of Texas Austin and Ernest McCarus, a Professor of Arabic at the University of Michigan. A number of other professors of Arabic have also contributed to the publication of the textbook as the book cover states. The textbook is divided into 30 lessons. The first five lessons has three main constituents; Basic Text, Vocabulary, Grammar and Drills. The rest of the lessons provide two additional components; Comprehension Passages and General Drills.

In order to provide information about the interested students of Arabic at the time of the book's publication, I rely on the personal electronic correspondence I had with one of the textbook's editors, Professor Ernest McCarus. Similar to the interest in foreign language education at large in the mid 1950s after the launching of the Sputnik, Arabic received its share as one of the less commonly taught languages at that time. Following the passing of the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) in 1958, the University of Michigan received a grant between 1960-62 to hire staff and produce instructional and curricular materials in Arabic. In regard to the students of Arabic in the 1950s and 1960s, McCarus writes:

> During those two decades our students were mostly graduate students who were more mature and had a professional interest in the Middle East or North Africa, although there was an appreciable number of undergraduates, including some who took it merely out of curiosity. Those

www.manaraa.com

> cohorts of students expected to work hard and usually did, without questioning things. The stage of development of the students ranged from beginning underclassmen to established instructors who came for an intensive summer course to fill out their competencies, such as adding a colloquial dialect (Levantine, Egyptian, Moroccan). We had a fair number of fellowships to award and we attracted some excellent students, many of whom have gone on to teach at the university level. (McCarus, 2008, email correspondence July 9)

Such a description of audience of Arabic as described by McCarus is echoed by Dr. David, one of the faculty members at the campus of study; a professor of Judaic Studies who witnessed the early start of the Arabic program in the campus of study. In a personal interview with him, he also comments on the students of Arabic in early decades compared to the recent audience of Arabic post 9/11 as follows:

> There has been a marked change – in the beginning it was mostly the students who were interested in the…sort of scholarly pursuits…the Middle East in general and archeology even in the Bible and stuff like that. Now, I think it is mostly language and culture and people who are hoping to work for the government or do some kind of enterprise xxx[12] become much more pragmatic- but this you know is very common …I mean people showed unbelievable interest in Russia after the Sputnik you know… and then once Russia is no longer the enemy, there is no interest in Russia. So, I think they are considering now the importance of xxx of knowing the adversary… but at the same time, a lot of people are also interested in xxx going and doing some business in the Middle East. (Interview with Dr. David, December 6, 2005).

The chapter as follows will be mainly made up of two main constituents. The first is concerned with thematization of the textbook and how this relates to conditions of modernity. To historically and politically contextualize the thematic content, a historical background of the modern Arab world and its relationship to the west will be provided. The second part focuses on concepts of language and

[12] Xxx: Denotes ellipsis

www.manaraa.com

teaching methodologies of the Arabic textbook as they relate to conditions of modernity. The implications suggest a need for change in the Arabic textbooks that better reflects our postmodern contexts.

Thematization of the Textbook

The Arabic textbook *EMSA 1* is composed of 30 lessons. On the campus of study, the first 11 lessons are covered during the first year of Arabic (elementary level). The Intermediate I level, which was the focus of this research, covers lessons 12-26. The thematic selection of the Arabic textbook targets a particular learning audience, specifically more academic or professional. The themes also portray a particular image of the Arab world and its relationship with the West. Multifarious reading passages reflect modernist achievements at the time cued into the choice of themes, understanding of language and language learning, and methodologies of language teaching. I will start by situating the themes of the Arabic textbooks as contextualized in modernist concepts. The following subheadings in this chapter will look into the textbooks' understanding of language and teaching methodology as reflecting conditions of modernity.

The *EMSA 1* textbook is an exemplar artifact of a modernist context. In terms of its thematic selection, it is influenced by the major achievements of the conditions of modernity summarized in Chapter 2. Some of these achievements include a rationalistic and universal vision of the world and a selective standardization of knowledge. In relevance to our textbook of study, a modernist cue is traced in the thematization of the book. Particular thematic content passages are presented for students of Arabic as "reading passages" which are assertions of legitimate themes to be presented for Arabic

www.manaraa.com

learners. These passages are situated in modernist accomplishments of the 50s and 60s as summarized by Hargreaves (1994) and Jones (2003). In the following, I provide some example of those content passages and connect them to achievements of modernity[13].

First, the emergence of national states is a major political achievement of modernity where centralized forms of government were in dominance and particular understanding of citizenship was demarcated. In the Arabic textbook, a number of reading passages focus on the newly formed Arabic states. Lessons 18 and 24 (*EMSA 1*, p. 338 and p. 463 respectively), "the Nile River" and "the Suez Canal", for instance, provide geographical and historical overviews of modern Egypt and its relationship with the Industrial western countries.

Table 5.1: Excerpt from Lesson 24 "The Suez Canal"

The digging of the canal was completed in 1869; those who supervised the digging of it were Egyptian and French engineers.

The Suez Canal Company was at first a Franco-Egyptian company, but the two nations that succeeded in gaining control of it after that were France and Britain. This control ended in 1956 when the company became state-owned.

The political and economic life of Egypt has been greatly influenced by the Suez Canal, especially in the time of the two presidents who governed Egypt after the revolution, Jamal Abd Al-Nasir and Anwar Al-Sadat.

[13] The Arabic textbook provides both the Arabic and English versions of the Basic Texts (see APPENDIX C for a sample lesson). To accommodate the English audience of the study, I will scan only the English version as examples.

www.manaraa.com

These two lessons provide a second important cue into modernity that is known as the global condition. This condition relates to the military development and western domination of the world. As will be soon clarified, the newly formed Arabic national states were militarily colonized by the West. Even after achieving their independence, the global relationship, politically and economically, was dominated by the west.

Table 5.2: Lesson 18 "The River Nile"

A. Basic text

The River Nile

The Nile is a very long river; indeed it is one of the longest and biggest rivers in the world. It is longer than the Amazon, and bigger than the Mississippi.

Important Egyptian cities are situated on the Nile. Among them are Cairo and Aswan. The city of Luxor is famous for its Pharaonic ruins.

The High Dam is a big dam near Aswan. The Egyptians expended great efforts in building it and some foreign countries joined them in this. This dam assists a great deal in the advancement of the Egyptian economy.

Egypt relies on the waters of the Nile to the utmost extent. Long ago, Herodotus said: "Egypt is the gift of the Nile."

As mentioned earlier, most students of Arabic in the 50s and 60s had a professional interest in the Middle East or scholarly path through their graduate studies or

www.manaraa.com

career focus. Those students were expected to be knowledgeable of the modern Arab national states and their connection to the west. In a postmodern era, such modernist representations of the Arab national states have dramatically evolved. Currently, global capitalism transcends closed national state governments. In addition, our political focus has shifted towards a more decentralized decision –making structures. Hence, the Arabic textbook as a classic modernist example is in need of a change in order to be harmonious with achievements of postmodernity, the social condition in which current students and teachers of Arabic live within.

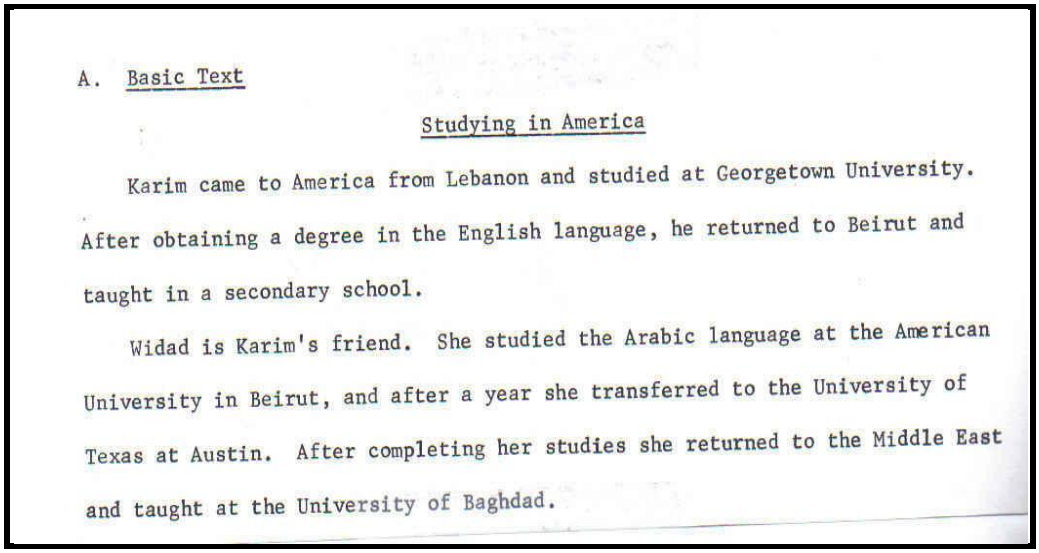
Third, another modernist global cue exemplified in these passages is the modern notion of economical progress at the age of industrial revolution. These Arabic reading passages refer to the industrialization of Egypt through the significant Suez Canal and the construction of dams along the Nile River. The Egyptians are reported as adopting the western ways and even relying on western help in industry. The passages also mention urbanization and the establishment of major cities as a result of the economic progress, which is another major achievement of modernity.

Fourth, modernity emphasizes scientific knowledge, professionalism, and standardization of technical skills manifested through education in schools and universities. The Arabic textbook is rich in references to school-based educational advancement, repetitive references to students in academic settings, acquiring of professional degrees in the Arab world and through traveling to the west, and finally relevance of educational goals to the industrial job market. Exemplar excerpts in the *EMSA1* Arabic textbook can be traced in Lesson 6 “Studying in America”, Lesson 7 “A Pair of Students”, Lesson 11 “University Students”, and Lesson 17 “Stages of Education

www.manaraa.com

in the Arab World."

Table 5.3: Lesson 6 "Studying in America"



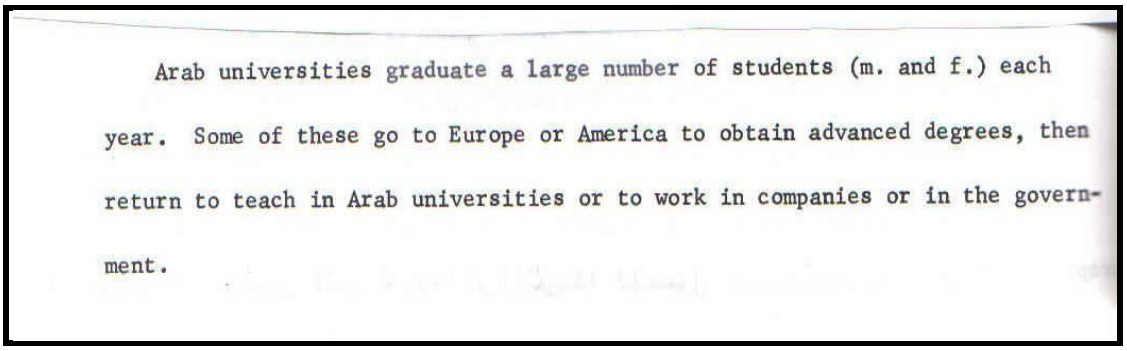
A. Basic Text

Studying in America

Karim came to America from Lebanon and studied at Georgetown University. After obtaining a degree in the English language, he returned to Beirut and taught in a secondary school.

Widad is Karim's friend. She studied the Arabic language at the American University in Beirut, and after a year she transferred to the University of Texas at Austin. After completing her studies she returned to the Middle East and taught at the University of Baghdad.

Table 5.4: Excerpt from Lesson 17 "Stages of Education in the Arab World"



Arab universities graduate a large number of students (m. and f.) each year. Some of these go to Europe or America to obtain advanced degrees, then return to teach in Arab universities or to work in companies or in the government.

Schools in modernist concepts, as aforementioned in the review of literature, are major institutions that hold authority, power, and control in defining values and what may be considered worthy of learning. The modern belief in progress through application of scientific and technical skills is established in educational institutions. Thus, the

www.manaraa.com

repetitive reference to importance of schooling is worth of attention.

Fifth, conditions of modernity brought about a particular sense of identity as collective. Therefore, one's identity is connected to class or career, for instance, resulting in a sense of uniformity or universality with others in that class or career. This understanding is in contrast to postmodern understanding of difference and personal empowerment. Lesson 19 "The Bedouins" (*EMSA 1*, p. 357-see APPENDIX C, p. 151, for a the full lesson scan) reflects a modernist vision of the Bedouins as a homogenous slice of the Arab society. The image is rather frozen in time, seems neutral, neat, universal, and rather classic. The passage portrays the Bedouins' daily rituals and their likely behavior in interactions with foreign visitors and city dwellers.

Table 5.5: Lesson 19 "The Bedouins"

A. Basic text

The Bedouins

The Bedouins live in tents and move about the desert from place to place to look for water. They are famous for their hospitality: if a visitor comes up to them they welcome him and hasten to honor him, and they offer him food and drink.

The Bedouin does not like the city because life there differs from life in the desert: the Bedouin prefers the freedom of the desert to the fetters of the city, but some Bedouins do go to the city at times to trade.

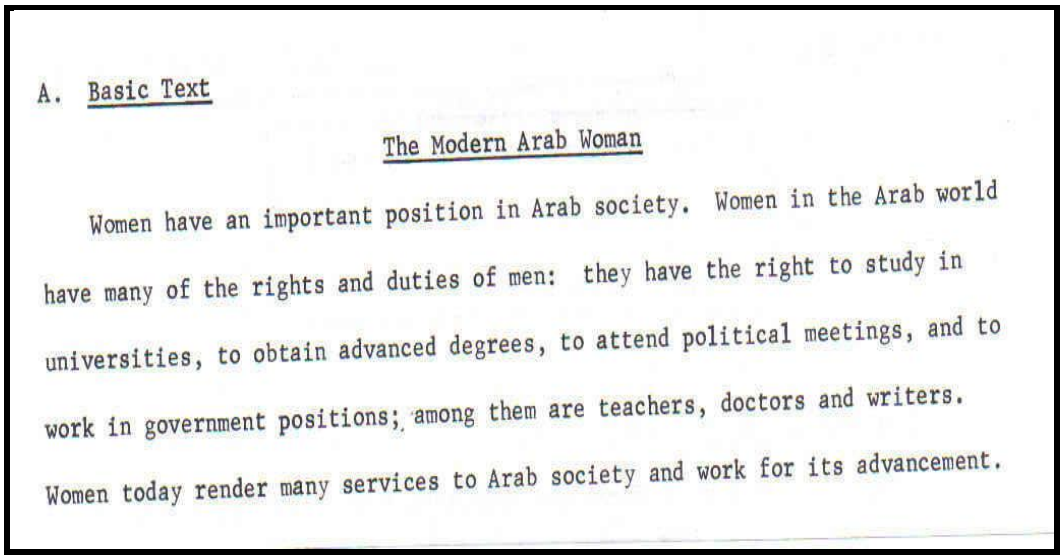
Interestingly, this is the only lesson in the whole textbook that addresses a

www.manaraa.com

different demographic slice of the society other than city dwellers, middle class managers and professors, students of schools and colleges, office assistants, among others, who all tend to work in a city and, as such, belong to a particular social, economic, and educational status. However, indirectly, this universal and even standardized representation of the Bedouins reproduces stereotypical image which may contradict a postmodern representation that underlines the social, cultural, and multilayered heterogeneity of one's and a group's identity.

Finally, a last theme connected to conditions of modernity represented in the Arabic textbook is gender representation. Women's role in the public sphere has evolved as part of the modern understanding of advancement in science and knowledge and the belief in economic progress.

Table 5.6: Lesson 16 "The Modern Arab Woman"



A. Basic Text

The Modern Arab Woman

Women have an important position in Arab society. Women in the Arab world have many of the rights and duties of men: they have the right to study in universities, to obtain advanced degrees, to attend political meetings, and to work in government positions; among them are teachers, doctors and writers. Women today render many services to Arab society and work for its advancement.

Urbanizations and schooling have impacted women's lives, encouraging more middle class women into education and the job market. For instance, Lesson 16 in the

www.manaraa.com

EMSA1 textbook (p. 307) titled "The Modern Arab Woman", and Lesson 22 (p. 426), "An Opinion Regarding the Woman's Status", project an image of the working woman whose contributions to the advancement of the Arab society is crucial, while also casting the message that much more work in relation to women's rights is still under work.

An indirect comparison between the Arab woman and the western woman is projected in those lessons with the attempt to put them equal to each other in terms of rights and duties. It is relevant not to forget the fact that it is only the middle class working woman or university female student that are referenced throughout the above passages and the entire textbook. Other women who do not fit within this modern representation are nonexistent in the textbook.

Table 5.7: Lesson 22 "An Opinion on the Status of women"

A. Basic text

An Opinion on the Status of Women

Dr. Nawāl Al-Sa'dāwi is a famous Egyptian writer. In her books and articles she speaks about the status of women in Arab society.

In one of her books she points out that the Arab woman has realized some progress in recent years, but her rights are still unequal to those of men. She says, "All the rights of men must be provided to Arab women in full measure. They must be given, for example, complete freedom of opinion and behavior, and society must permit them to obtain high offices."

Many Arab thinkers today do not differ in opinion with Dr. Nawāl Al-Sa'dāwi, for they demand that society grant women all their rights. Some of them, however, still believe that combining home and work is a very difficult matter, and that woman's function in her home is one of the most important functions of society.

www.manaraa.com

Clearly, cues of modernity in the textbook have emphasized the idealistic, standardized representation of the modern man and modern women. They are educated, interested in professionalism, acquiring technical and professional skills required for careers, and collectively connected through membership to their occupation or class.

Examining the relationship between the aforementioned themes in the Arabic textbook, and the target students of Arabic at the time of the textbook's publication in 1968, it is clear that the editors have been driven by modernist discussions and concepts of legitimate learning and curriculum in educational institutions. Those themes seem to be in harmony with students' academic and professional background, and investment in learning Arabic at the time. Casual communication and familial dialogues that transcends unity and asserts diversity had no value within modernist views of curriculum. Such curricular agenda shows the extent to which the thematization of the textbook attempts to influence the students' experiences and knowledge perspectives in relation to the target language and its speakers.

But why is this epistemological look into content and thematization of the Arabic textbook important in contexts of modernity? As discussed in the review of literature, a curriculum conveys through the textbook its role in defining what constitutes legitimate knowledge. According to Sleeter & Grant (1991), this is a means for social control that defines what is legitimate and dominant without offering alternative perspectives on the projected symbolic representations of knowledge. They say:

> The curriculum screens in and out certain ideas and realms of knowledge. Students are given selective access to ideas and information. This predisposes them to think and act in certain ways, and not to consider other possibilities, questions, or actions. (p. 80)

Textbooks are clear results of political, philosophical, and sociocultural

www.manaraa.com

negotiations in legitimizing the kind of knowledge to be taught. For the Arabic textbook, inclusion and exclusion of particular themes and content of a textbook is a manifestation of ideological management (Spring, 1991). It is an artifact of a modernist view of the world. In concurrence with Venezky (1992), the selectivity of the content of the Arabic textbook is purposeful. He refers to the notion as "surrogate curriculum," (p. 437) pointing to the hidden curriculum that presents particular views of the world as opposed to others.

The above excerpts of the textbook provide some cues to help contextualize the thematic selection of the Arabic textbook in its micro and macro historical, economic, education, and political contexts, which are hence identified as conditions of modernity. With this in mind, the editors have additionally adopted teaching methodologies that emanated from the conditions of modernity where scientific models dictated the teaching methodologies to be used.

In my interaction with the current students of Arabic at the campus of study, they often would wonder if the information provided in the *EMSA1* textbook resonates historically with the modern Arab world. Personally, reading through the textbook, what strikes me is the strong binding connection between the themes of the book and the political, economic, and sociocultural conditions of the modern Arab world at the time of the textbook's publication. The textbook attempts to historically situate itself as informative on a rather modern Arab world that is homogeneous, industrial, educated, and open-minded. In relation to the West, the Arab world seems to work in harmony and cooperation with each other, and western visitors, exchange students, and workers seem content with the Arab world.

www.manaraa.com

In the following, I will provide a glimpse of the immediate historical, economical, and political context from which the textbook cyclically have drawn its themes. With the change of kinds of students learning Arabic using this textbook and the change in their investments, the themes provided become burdensome as they require particular political and historical knowledge about the Arab World and an understanding of modernist concepts in approaching the texts. The argument, therefore, supports a radical change and a new critical revision of Arabic textbooks that better fits our current postmodern contexts.

A Historical Perspective

The *EMSA 1* will be first situated in relation the major political, economic, historical, social, and national linguistic events in the modern Arab world during the 1950s and 1960s. This contextualization is crucial for multiple reasons. First, the majority of the authors and contributors to the textbook are native Arabs who were born in the Arab world or non-natives who were directly connected through profession to the Arab world. Their experiences have been shaped, or partially influenced, by the discourses dominant in the Arab World at the time. Second, the modern Arab world during the 1950s and 1960s was beginning a new phase of independence from colonial powers, witnessing the emergence of a high sense of nationalism, and being actively involved in heated dialogues around Arabism and the role of Arabic language as a marker of Arab identity. Such changes have impacted education in general, and the sociocultural and political discourses of the values related to Arabic language and Arab culture. Third, the 1950s and 1960s witnessed an intensified role of the United States and its interests in the

www.manaraa.com

Arab World which created incentives to learn Arabic language.

The Arabic textbook will also be situated within the historical, political, and economic discourse in the United States in relevance to the interest in Arabic studies. The chapter will introduce the early interest in Arabic for theological studies, the influence of World War II, and the later developments that resulted in a vigorous interest of the United States in the modern Arab world. Such interest includes abundant funding resources that revolutionized Arabic studies inside and outside the United States.

These two contexts of situatedness are interrelated and cannot be ignored in any substantial understanding and analysis of the textbook. This chapter attempts to contextualize the textbook as being shaped by ideological explicit and implicit discourses locally, nationally and internationally. Thus, in turn, the textbook is also a factor in intertextually shaping the students' understanding of the Arab world

Based on the theoretical framework of the study introduced in Chapter 2, the link between language and society even at the abstract levels is very intricate. This includes both the internal and external levels of contact between language as society. Fairclough (2001) states that "language is a part of society; linguistic phenomena are social phenomena of a special sort, and social phenomena are (in part) linguistic phenomena" (p. 19).

The Modern Arab World (1950s-60s)

In the following, a short panoramic scene of the history of the Arab world is provided. I will briefly select distinctive key events of the Arab world during the 1950s and 1960s as documented in Hourani's book and other influential resources about the

www.manaraa.com

history of the modern Arab world (Cleveland, 2004; Hourani, 2002; Hourani, Khoury, & Wilson, 1993; Khater, 2004).

The main incentive is twofold. First, I draw attention to the social, cultural, linguistic, economic, and political discourses that are echoed in the themes of the Arabic textbook. These discourses are cued through the Teacher-Students classroom talk I observed through this study and their interpretation of the reading passages of the Arabic textbook. Second, this reiterates the intertextual links among our textbook of study, the Arab world, and the Western world. I emphasize some apparent markers of modernity related to the Arab world, especially the heightened sense of nationalism and its influence of standardization of Arabic language referenced as Modern Standard Arabic (MSA).

Arab Societies at the Age of the Nation-States

The period from the 1940s through the 1960s in the history of the modern Arab world is recognized as the age of the nation-states. With the gradual departure of the colonizing powers, the newly formed Arab nation-states witnessed a number of rapid changes. Conditions of modernity lead to a significant change in the socio-demographics of the modern Arab world that was related to the continuous growth of population and the move away from the land in search for new opportunities at the cities. As result of this "internal migration, most of the Arab countries were changing from mainly rural societies to societies where a large and growing part of the population was concentrated in a few large cities" (Hourani, 2002, p. 374).

To support the population needs, the newly formed modern governments were involved in stimulating the economy. Influenced by modern economic and technical progress, new machinery like tractors, and wide scale irrigation projects were introduced

www.manaraa.com

with aid from the western world. The governments encouraged private parties to invest in "consumer industry: food –processing, building materials, and textiles" (Hourani, 2002, p. 377). Since the governments did not have enough money to support themselves, a dependency on support from industrial countries and foreign investment was essential.

Politically, modernity brought about western domination and dependence on western assistantship. Foreign aid was given from France, Britain, the United States, and Russia, pending on the harmonious relationship between the Arab states and these industrial powers (Cleveland, 2004). The money was invested in support of the economic growth and infrastructure, as well as its political uses in supporting the military forces of the new Arab countries.

The discovery of the oil at this time was the "the most striking example of economic interdependence" between the Arab countries that own it and the industrial countries supporting its extraction (Hourani, 2002, p. 378). Although the highly skilled foreign employees dominated the extraction and exporting processes of the crude oil, by early 1960s, more locale employees were taking charge. The producing Arab countries started to gain strength in terms of securing agreements for the export of oil. By 1960, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) was established.

Socially, the rapid increase in population and the internal migrations to cities had a visible impact on urbanization. The gap between the rich and poor was a marked phenomenon. The power of the middle and bourgeoisie classes increased and their style of life changed in adoption of the foreign style, that of the western world (Cleveland, 2004). The newly rural migrants became part of the urban poor, a majority of whom were unemployed, suffering from epidemics and high infant mortality rates. Some cities were

www.manaraa.com

more fortunate than others. In some cities in Egypt, Iraq, and Morocco, the level of social services, public transportation, and education for the elementary levels remarkably increased (Hourani, 2002).

At the educational level, modern conditions greatly affected schooling in the modern Arab world. The life of the elite in the cities pushed for emphasis on literacy and higher education. Although the Arab world had historically well-known universities prior to the time of independence, the new times pushed for an extensive effort to start new higher learning institutions, many of them were "foreign-controlled" (Hourani, 2002, p. 389). Schools and universities witnessed an increase in number of students. A proportion of women joined the school systems although smaller in percent compared to men. Unfortunately, with the increased growth of population, a number of school-age children could not be accommodated. As such, illiteracy, in reference to basic ability to read and write, was at high rates as well.

Nationalism and Arabism

> The Arabs have always been exceptionally conscious of their language and proud of it, and in pre-Islamic Arabia they possessed a kind of "racial" feeling, a sense that beyond the conflicts of tribes and families, there was a unity which joined together all who spoke Arabic.
>
> Hourani, 1983-in Suleiman, 2003, p. 68-quotes in original

The above quote confirms a fact shared among Arabs in relevance to a 'linguistic unity' that, in reference to a standard form of Arabic, characterizes one of the most significant markers of the national identity across the Arab world. Arabic language has played a pivotal role in the Arab World that surpasses religion; the latter especially in reference to Islam has been mistakenly equated with being an Arab across media in the

www.manaraa.com

West (Said, 2003). That is, an Arab is a speaker of Arabic, emphasis on the standard form, regardless of what religion he/she believes in.

During the 1950s and 1960s, the concept of a 'Third World' that newly won its independence from the colonizing powers was a main incentive for the popular feelings of nationalism. This feeling was supported by a sense of unity among the Arab countries and the need to work collectively for the interests of their societies. Although Islam was the religion of the majority, the appeal to religion as a marker of nationalism was not emphasized compared to the emphasis on a common language, Arabic (Hourani, 2002, p. 406). As such, it was language, rather than religion, that "came to be the highest common denominator between the Arabs in national terms" (Suleiman, 2003, p. 141).

In terms of religious significance, Arabic is the language of the Quran, which is considered one of the "earliest surviving document of written Arabic" (Beetson, 2006, p. 3). The prestige of Arabic as the language of the Quran, and hence the language of Islam, has constructed an elevated status of Arabic as the 'best' or 'more superior' language (Suleiman, 2003).

In addition, Arabic has been a medium of cultural and national 'revival' in Arabic-speaking countries among Christians, as well as Muslims (Chejne, 1969; Cleveland; 2004; Khater, 2004; Suleiman, 1994). 'Arabism' as an "affirmation of Arab cultural identity" (Cleveland, 2004, p. 141) has witnessed a resurgence during the late 19th and early 20th century against the "Turkification" policy (Suleiman, 1994, p. 6) during the Ottoman occupation of Arab countries. Turkification refers to the attempt by the Ottomans to make Turkish the official language in the Arab countries under their rule, an attempt faced by a high resistance. Therefore, religiously, politically, and culturally,

www.manaraa.com

Arabic has a complex ideological value across the Arab world.

It is significant to point out that it was the standard form of Arabic that received the attention at the time, although calls for reform and use of vernaculars started to have its audiences. The topic of standardization of modern Arabic, the concept of a national language, and the disputes with colloquial dialects will be introduced in the linguistic analysis of the Arabic textbook later in this chapter.

The United States

According to Roos (1972), the political life in America during the 1960s was critical, not only in terms of presidential elections and centrality of government, but also in terms of its foreign affairs. He summarizes the key aspects of the changes of the 1960s in several points from which I quote two relevant arguments (1972, p. 49):

1. A corresponding shift of attention from Europe as the focus of concern to Asia and the Third World nations.
2. A continued blurring of available and adequate definitions of "legitimate interest" and "spheres of influence" in non-European Areas.

The above two key aspects mainly refer to the attention of the United States and its foreign policy towards non-European countries of interest, mainly in Asia and, what is used to be called, the Third World. Such interest, in Roos's opinion, seems blurry, confusing, and more complex than was common during the 1950s, where a clear cut between allies and enemies was more pronounced.

To locate the Arabic textbook of study within the context of the United States in a post World War II era I will first underscore the main events that contributed to funding initiatives for learning Arabic as a foreign language in the United States. Second, I

www.manaraa.com

accentuate the instrumentality of Arabic at the service of the economic and political interests of the United States in the Middle East. Detailed historical projection of foreign language learning in the United States has been earlier introduced in Chapter 2.

Foreign Languages Post World War II

As Chapter 2 has elaborately explained, in contrast to the view of foreign languages as a threatening symbol to the American nation during World War I, a post World War II era witnessed a drastic change of attitude in support of foreign language teaching and learning (Thompson, Christina, Stansfield, & Rhodes, 1990; Watzke, 2003). The interest in language was mainly political and in response to "international events and national attitudes" (Thompson et al, 1990, p. 22). Therefore, on the one hand, the goals and investments in foreign language education were constantly governed by such a political demand. On the other hand, the methods of language instruction were in alignment with the political investments at the time.

Incentive for Arabic in the United States

Ernest McCarus, one of the prominent contributors to the Arabic *EMSA 1* textbook, published an influential article on the historical development of teaching Arabic in the United States. McCarus (1987) traces the interest in Arabic for theological studies to a century prior to the declaration of Independence. Initially, Arabic was a complement to Hebrew and the studies of the Old Testament. Harvard was the first American academic institution to introduce Arabic to the Semitic languages around 1654. Soon after, other colleges and universities followed like Yale, University of Pennsylvania, Dartmouth, and Princeton.

www.manaraa.com

In Europe the situation was similar. Early theologians learned Arabic "to better understand the biblical texts" (Verteegh, 2006, p. 7). As opposed to reading the biblical texts in Greek or Latin, the interest was to study them in the original Hebrew. Arabic studies were awakened as "an ancillary to the study of Hebrew" (Verteegh, 2006, p. 7). In Cambridge, for instance, theological interests introduced studying Arabic language in 1632 (Dickins & Watson, 2006)

The second motivation for interest in Arabic was clearly for philological reasons. Philology is the historical study of language and its development, sometimes in connection to literary texts. Partially connected to the prior phase, philological motivations were associated to comparative Semitic studies. Wright (1976[1874]) confirms the role of Classical Arabic for Semitic studies. He states:

> My standpoint remains…the ancient Semitic languages-Arabic and Ethiopic, Assyrian, Canaanitic (Phoenician and Hebrew), and Aramic (so-called Chaldee and Syriac)-are closely connected with each other as the romance languages…in the relation of Latin (p. vi).

Language studies of the period focused on Classical Arabic, a highly inflected form as used in the Quran and earlier secular texts. The focus on this variety reflects the learners' interest in religious texts and Semitic studies. With the exception of very few, these Arabists "never had any contact with the Arabic–speaking world" (Versteegh, 2006, p. 7).

In sum, religious and philological investments were the impetus of learning Arabic language from the start of the 17th century (Abdalla, 2006). The picture started to dramatically change by early 20th century. The imperial colonization of the Arab world opened the door for direct contact with Arabs, their language and language

www.manaraa.com

varieties/dialects, and the diverse Arab and Islamic cultures (Dickins & Watson, 2006).

The post World War II era and the launching of the Sputnik in 1957 convinced the United States of its inadequate and ill-prepared foreign language capabilities (Perkins, 1979). More importantly, these major junctures changed the governmental and academic attitudes towards the goals, missions, and methods of teaching second and foreign languages in general including Arabic. This period witnessed new political, economic, and academic trajectories for teaching Arabic.

Politically, as McCarus (1987) pointed out, World War II revolutionized Arabic studies. The need "to train combat infantrymen and intelligence personnel to function in and do research on the Arab world revealed how woefully unprepared the nation was in terms of this and other languages in the world" (p. 14). As such, the war was "a major catalyst in a change of attitudes with in the U.S. government" in regard to competency in foreign and second languages (Allen, 1992, p. 223). The Army Specialized Training Program came into view with the interest in Arabic (Ryding, 2006). Other governmental and business related agencies also began teaching Arabic for their personnel. Funded centers at major research institutions introduced Arabic as part of the area of studies to help students pursue careers in diplomacy, international business, and government (Heath, 1990, p. 36).

Academically, funding was provided by the Ford Foundation in 1957 and 1962 to launch intensive courses of Arabic at a consortium of universities: Columbia, Harvard, Michigan, Princeton, SAIS/Johns Hopkins, UCLA, Georgetown, and University of Texas Austin. The end of 1950s and the 1960s were enthusiastic times for the growth of the Arabic language in the United States. Some of the remarkable building blocks that

www.manaraa.com

revolutionized the field of Arabic in the United States can be chronologically reviewed as follows (Allen, 1992; Heath, 1990; McCarus, 1987; Versteegh, 2006):

***National Defense Education Act (NDEA)*:** In 1958, the Congress of the United States Passed the National Defense Education Act (NDEA). Title VI of the NDEA strongly supported area studies including: Near and Middle Eastern studies, foreign language fellowships, teaching, training, research, summer programs, workshops and conferences nationally and internationally in the Middle East. NDEA adopted a characterization of some language groups as 'critical,' including Arabic.

Surfacing of modern Arabic: In late 1950s, prominent actions were considered by professionals of Arabic to simplify the Arabic language and adopt modern Arabic. This step was a departure from the classical and high literary Arabic taught and exclusively emphasized in a pre-WWII era. In 1957 and 1958, two main textbooks emerged promoting modern Arabic by focusing on the newspaper genre.

Vernaculars and colloquial Arabic: In 1962, the serious interest in Arabic dialects emerged. Debates around standard modern Arabic and colloquial Arabic were more pronounced.

The American Association of Teachers of Arabic (AATA): In 1963, the American Association of Teachers of Arabic was established. It started publishing a newsletter that developed later into the Associations' journal, *Al-^{C}Arabiyya*. On its website, the Association publicizes its mission to "facilitate communication and cooperation between teachers of Arabic and to promote study, criticism, research and instruction in the field of Arabic language pedagogy, Arabic linguistics and Arabic literature."

www.manaraa.com

Initiatives for new Arabic textbooks: In 1965-1967, several Arabic teaching workshops were conducted at Ann Arbor, Columbia, and Princeton. Participants emphasized the need to create teaching textbooks using modern Arabic, since it was an easier form of Arabic to use compared to the classical. Thus, Arabic was no longer taught as a dead language, as was the case during the theological interest in Arabic prior to WWII.

Center for Arabic Study Abroad (CASA): In 1967 the Center for Arabic Study Abroad (CASA) emerged with support from NDEA and a consortium formed of eight universities (The American University in Cairo, UC Berkley, UCLA, Chicago, Harvard, Michigan, Portland State, and Princeton). It was based at the American University in Cairo (AUC). CASA has had an influential impact on the teaching of Arabic in the United States as a teaching, training, and research institute.

***Elementary Modern Standard Arabic, EMSA* 1**: In 1968, the *Elementary Modern Standard Arabic* textbook, *EMSA*, was published with contribution from a number of Arabic professionals, both native and non-native speakers. This is the Arabic textbook I attempt to historically situate in this chapter. The textbook was a major contribution at the time, since it adopts the modern standard Arabic as the language of instruction as opposed to the older more classical form of Arabic used in religious and historical contexts. It also adopted teaching methods and goals to supposedly meet the needs of the audience of Arabic at the time.

In summary, the above historical contexts are an attempt to talk about the social, political, and historical factors that directly and indirectly influenced the thematization of the Arabic textbook of study. This reflexive contextualization is inescapable (Harvey,

www.manaraa.com

1989). In their book on *Curriculum in the postmodern condition*, de Alba et al., (2000) argue:

> To talk of the curriculum in the postmodern condition is to locate it within its appropriate contemporary historical and philosophical contexts…it is crucial that the curriculum both reflect its cultural age-its socio-historical; context- and at the same time provide some critical purchase on these developments. These statements sound like the formulation of the truism: when it comes to curriculum philosophy, always historicize! (p. 1)

An Institutional Perspective

Following the discussion on foreign language teaching as presented in Chapter 2, the institutional perspective here will be limited to discussion of the pedagogical teaching methodology adopted by the textbook of study. Influenced by the structural linguistics and the modernist concepts of science, the audio-lingual approach has been the adopted teaching methodology of the Arabic textbook. In connection to the historical and political contexts of the time, it was the United States Army who developed and adopted the audio-lingual approach to learning foreign languages in order to address the inadequacies and the urgent needs of speakers of foreign languages in a post WWII context. Moreover, the concept of 'modern nation' that has a one, shared, standard language variety has been an essential part of the instructional methodology of the Arabic textbook, mainly in legitimizing one variety--the Modern standard Arabic (MSA)--as the language of instruction, while disregarding other dialects or vernaculars commonly used for conversational functions among native speakers of Arabic. In the following, these two main themes will be further discussed.

www.manaraa.com

The Instructional Approach: The Audio-lingual Method

The preface of the *EMSA1* textbook cites the audio-lingual approach as the adopted method for language instruction. Transitioning from the Grammar-Translation method of teaching, this textbook adopted the structurally based audio-lingual orientation to teaching Arabic that emphasizes the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing through mechanical drills and repetitive chains of exercises for reinforcement of grammatical points and controlled vocabulary (Rammuny, 1990).

The structural approach of language teaching was influenced by the emerging theories of learning based on science and learning behavior. Byrnes (2010) critiques audiolingualism which was introduced as a "scientific" approach that is "worthy of intellectual esteem" (p. 2). According to Thompson et. al. (1990), the structural approach "merged with the behavioral principles to produce an approach to teaching that emphasized the primacy of listening and speaking skills, along with drills and exercises to develop proper speech habits" (p. 26). As such, habit formation, mimicking, and linear sequential learning patterns were implemented in teaching to help students develop "automatic" target language structures and speech habits (p. 27). Politically, the federal money poured into supporting the audio-lingual approach of teaching following the launching of the Sputnik in 1957. Language laboratories were used in teaching foreign languages. However, this approach did not help "produce students with actual, usable language skills" (p. 27).

Lessow-Hurley (2000) summarizes the assumption of learning languages through the audio-lingual approach under three main components: "practice and memorization of situation-based dialogues, drills to reinforce major patterns of dialogues, and

www.manaraa.com

conversation with a native speaker about the topic of dialogue" (p. 79). Although Lessow-Hurley believes that the audio-lingual approach might have been successful in certain aspects of language teaching, modification by teachers was part of the teaching process.

Theoretically, besides its connection to structuralism, the audio-lingual approach is connected to 'Behaviorism'; a psychological theory of learning that was prominent during the 1940s and 1950s. In application to learning first, second, or foreign languages, behaviorism adopted a view on learning, verbal or non-verbal, which is based on "imitation, practice, feedback on success, and habit formation" (Lightbown & Spada, 2003, p. 9). Behaviorists' explanations, however, were "incomplete" in accounting for the complexity of language learning (p. 36). In other words, the behaviorist understanding of language focuses on the apparent production of a correct response to a particular stimulus. As such, a language learner produces a correct linguistic response through reinforcement.

Skinner, who was well known in experimenting with animal behavior, contributed to language learning and education, during this period of time, through his experiments on "teaching machines and programmed learning" (Brown, 2000, p. 22). According to Skinner, verbal behavior is based on conditioning and reinforcement through empirical observations and scientific methods. A number of critics in the years following have reacted to such behaviorists' theories of language learning that fails to take in consideration the social, cultural and contextual factors that affect language learning and teaching.

The Arabic textbook *EMSA1* has been highly influenced by the structural and

www.manaraa.com

behavioral concepts of knowledge discussed above in regard to defining language, language learning, and teaching. The book, being a product of modernist concepts of language teaching and learning, adopted a structural view of language and strongly adhered to the audio-lingual approach as a pedagogical strategy. With the exception of the electronic correspondence with one of the book editors provided earlier, there has been no literature to provide the editor's theoretical views on language and learning (see similar comment on lack of literature in Alosh, 1997, p. 221).

Modern Standard Arabic and Vernaculars

Arabic is one of the few languages that are characterized by what Ferguson coined 'diglossia' (Ferguson, 1996). The term refers to situations where two varieties or forms of the language are used side by side. In Arabic, the 'standard' and 'colloquial' forms of the language are simultaneously used, although in different contexts. This study is neither concerned with debates around the prestigious variety, (see e.g., Alosh, 1997; Al-Wer, 1997; Ibrahim, 1986) nor with the arguments around the heteroglossic nature of language (see e.g., Harry, 1996). This section is intended to briefly familiarize the reader with the concept of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and its connection to the modernist concept of one nation, one language mentioned earlier.

Abboud and McCarus (1983) provides in the introduction to the Arabic textbook *EMSA1* a definition of the standard and colloquial varieties of Arabic and their functional use:

> MSA is a universal form of Arabic learned in schools across the Arab world; it is opposed to dialectical or colloquial Arabic, of which there is a particular variety for each community and differs according to region and such social factors as religion, socio-economic status, etc. The dialects are

www.manaraa.com

> used for all non-formal situations--at home, at work, social occasions. (p. v)

The teaching of Arabic as a foreign language in the United States has been occupied with the big question: what variety of Arabic to teach? Needless to say, such a heated debate cannot be easily summarized. These differences in opinion appear in literature over the appropriateness of teaching the standard only and the pedagogical fallacy this may cause the learners, since the standard Arabic is not the medium of conversation in any native Arabic country. Other debates argued in favor of colloquial dialects, but disagreed on the dialect to adopt. Others tried to reconcile the matter by teaching both the standard and one dialect of choice, or advocating for a middle stance of Arabic that is not as formal as the standard, but still sound conversational (e.g., Al-Batal, 1995; Alosh, 1997; Ryding, 2006; Younes, 1995).

The Arabic textbook *EMSA1* focuses solely on teaching the standard form of Arabic (MSA), as this seems to work in harmony with the purpose of instruction. The book was intended originally for a particular audience and particular academic interest in the language. As such, vernaculars or dialects were not a major concern. Students of Arabic relied mainly on study abroad to learn the dialect of their choice. In addition, the two decades prior to publishing the book had witnessed the peak of Arabic nationalism and the sense of an Arab unity based on one form of Arabic, which is the standard variety (MSA).

www.manaraa.com

Conclusion: The Textbook and Traces of Modernity

As discussed earlier in the review of literature of this study, modernism as a condition is based on the premise that human progress, in regard to knowledge, can be achieved through scientific experiment and advancement in technology. However, socially and culturally, modernism is also a condition that does rationalize knowledge and human life into a linear uniformed and standardized style of life.

In application to education and language profession, the Arabic textbook *EMSA1*, is influenced by modernity as it carries cues to some characteristics traced to modernity in regard to foreign language education. These cues have been discussed throughout this chapter and will be summarized here.

First, the textbook's concept of language is defined through a structural view of language that assumes a neat relationship between words and their meanings. Students of this textbook are provided with controlled set of vocabulary provided in particular arbitrary defined contexts. The interest in language as an invariant system is manifest. In contrast, a postmodern context opens up a space for the learner to be an active participant who is engaged in critical double readings of the texts.

Second, the adoption of the audio-lingual approach as a pedagogical teaching approach defined the goal of language instruction. The aim was clearly reaching a level of competency that suits the efficiency standards required to serve in particular jobs determined by the political and economic job market at the time. In harmony with the philosophy of education in the industrial modern period, teaching Arabic in this context seems to be demarcated by the same industrial goals of creating particular minds for particular jobs. That is, a close connection is visible between Arabic education and

www.manaraa.com

business industry. In particular reference to Arabic, it is apparent that politics, as well as economic interest, have been closely connected to Arabic instruction. This is still the case in a post 9/11 world.

Third, adopting the audio-lingual approach of teaching may have defined the roles of teachers and students in the eye of professionals. After WW II and the launching of the Sputnik, the audio-lingual approach was a salient result of connecting science, technology, and education in an attempt to become 'professional'. Professionalism, in regard to education in contexts of modernity, was mostly based on technical skills and methods of teaching approved by a community of professionals. As such, adopting the audio- lingual approach of teaching restricted the roles of teachers to mere trainees and learners as mere receptive bodies.

Fourth, the concept of language, as assumed in the Arabic textbook, is mainly associated with a reductionist view of teaching the four language skills with cultural notes provided through the reading passages. The relationship between language and culture is narrowed to using language as reflective of some cultural aspects, without recognition of the complexity of teaching language as culture.

Finally, a main theme to be mentioned is the concept of language nationalism and the belief in a universal homogeneous national variety of language that defines one nation, one group, or even a race. The Arabic textbook adopts the modern standard Arabic and totally ignores the significance of Arabic colloquial dialects used for real language communication in the Arab world. The adoption has, as mentioned earlier, ideological, historical, and religious lines of reasoning. The students, on the other hand, have to accept an artificial standardized variety to be implemented for oral

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

communication with natives who do not use this particular standard variety in their real life dialogues.

In the end, the textbook's interest in language as a system has hindered a real interest in the connection between language and language use in authentic communicative events. Therefore, it has minimized chances for critical interweaving of possible meanings through the multilayered reading with and against language texts. Naturally, the textbook is a product of the historical, political, ideological, and institutional contexts that shaped language education at the time carrying traces of modernity as a social condition.

www.manaraa.com

CHAPTER 6

CONSTRUCTION OF SOCIAL SPACES: POSTMODERNITY AND PLAYFUL INTERACTIONS WITH TEXTS

This chapter focuses on classroom interactions in the Intermediate Arabic I class and the ways in which these student-teacher-textbook interactions illustrate how postmodernity permeates and informs the teaching and learning process. Since restrictions were posed on recording data, these texts were selected for their clarity of details and their expository nature of the social positioning adopted by the students and the teacher of Arabic. These selected interactions amplify the triangulation among the teacher, student, and texts. By reflecting back on the study itself, the data attempts to shed light on the dilemma faced by the Arabic teacher in a postmodern, post 9/11 context in instantiating critical dialogues and allowing a space for negotiated interpretations of modern textbooks in postmodern classroom.

Teacher- Students Talk:

Texts, Meanings, and Playful Interpretations

As discussed in Chapter 2, texts, oral or written, do more than communicate information to an audience (Gebhard, 2005). Fairclough (2001, 2003), for example, describes how texts create and reflect the social positions and relationships among people who are involved, which cyclically reflect their social worlds. According to Fairclough

www.manaraa.com

(2001), language is part of society and therefore "a socially conditioned process" (p. 19).

The Arabic written texts around which the four interactions occur are taken from the Arabic textbook *EMSA 1*. Two of these texts are labeled in the textbook as "Basic Texts" and two as "Comprehension Passages." Basic texts are provided both in Arabic and in English translation, while comprehension passages are provided in the *EMSA 1* textbook only in Arabic. The introduction of the Arabic textbook mentions that the purpose of the Basic Text is:

> To present new lexical and grammatical materials in a context that is meaningful and suitable for intensive oral work…the student should make every attempt to familiarize himself or herself thoroughly with it up to the point of memorizing it…the earlier texts are functional in nature…later texts are narrative or expository and deal with the culture, society, history, geography, economics and politics of the Arab World; they also include literary selections…the subjects are basically non-controversial; needless to say, however, they do not necessarily represent the personal opinions of the authors. (p. vi-viii)

And the purpose of the Comprehension Passages is:

> To give students the opportunity to use what they have learned in reading for pleasure and practice in reading and aural comprehension. (p. viii)

In line with the textbook's teaching approach discussed in Chapter 5, the audio-lingual, oral skills are prioritized through drill and repetition of basic texts to the point of memorization. Students are expected to adopt the phrases and sentences of the basic texts to be used in potential future conversation. The roles of the teacher as the trainer and students as trainees are clearly pronounced. Both the teacher and the students adopt passive roles, which follows a positivistic approach to learning language that is *say what the text says*.

The content of the basic texts are not intended to be controversial. They are pure

www.manaraa.com

linguistic triggers to practice reading and aural skills. Connections to culture are invisible. The tradition of the Arabic textbook is to adhere to tenets of the modern concepts of language teaching, the influence of mainstream linguistics and its view on language. The purpose of the Arabic texts as quoted above illustrates a dichotomous relationship between language and culture.

Ironically, in a postmodern classroom where diverse interpretations and social roles are provoked through texts, adhering to the premise of the textbook in assuming a non-controversial text content is impossible as the classroom interactions will show. In addition, those texts assume new contexts vocalized by the teacher and students of Arabic when juxtaposed with the social, political, and economic current Arab world post 9/11.

Constructing a Collage of Performances

The dialogic notes, performances, and sketches provided in this chapter offer rich incidents and a flavor of the classroom environment in which the teacher's and students' voices interact gracefully with the textbook. These performances or playful interactions become a source for other verbal and non-verbal texts echoed across the classroom space. In this chapter, four interactional moments will be presented as short glimpses into the life of the participants in their Arabic classroom. While I acknowledge that a number of analytical viewpoints and footings could be used to approach those interactional moments, I selected the one that adopts a critical look into the classroom trying to highlight its postmodern perspective.

I should also mention that these units do not necessarily follow a neat timeline in terms of the dates on which these interactions occur. For instance, the first interaction

www.manaraa.com

occurred in November, while the second happened in October. This is due to several reasons. First, I followed my own sense of attachment to texts and occurrences as they became my "happy accidents," to borrow a term used by one of the students in the Arabic class, Chris, in describing his excitement to find Arabic taught on the campus of study. Second, I invite the reader of the study to look deeper into those interactions in a non-linear manner rather than being hierarchical structures of the students' language development. Finally, this non-sequential presentation of the interactions forces the reader to think recursively, trying to recognize traces of late modernity and reinterpret my own analysis and construct possible newer meanings.

In my hope to simplify the process of reading this chapter, I organize every interactional unit as composed of several constituents (I use organizational guidance from Bode, 2005):

1. A title for the interactional unit that corresponds to the title of the Arabic reading passage in the textbook of study,
2. a diagram illustrating selective focal cues to postmodernity as found in every interaction,
3. an introductory analysis,
4. a scanned image of the Arabic lesson (in original English translation when provided by the textbook and my own direct translation when unavailable),
5. the dialogic notes of the interactional unit (change of font to Courier) and,
6. brief summary and commentaries.

My intention is to present multiple voices of the participants in one larger performance or interactional unit--a collage format--without attempting to isolate those voices in single formats. This exploratory nature better highlights the intricate nexus among the texts and voices created around them. This organizational choice also makes

www.manaraa.com

the overlap and layering of the participants insights more visible. Each interactional unit illustrates how late or postmodernity is informing the teaching and learning practices in the Arabic classroom, and how such a postmodern stance collides with the Arabic textbook as an artifact of modernity. Hence, these units attempt to shed light into my third research question (though part of the question will also be addressed in the last chapter on implications for teachers) which asks: *How can teachers of Arabic instantiate critical dialogues and allow a space for negotiated interpretations of textbooks in late modern classrooms?*

Interaction 1: "The Bedouins"

- *Cultural identity*
- *Counter narratives*
- *Language construction*
- *9/11*
- *Micro/macro social worlds*

Introductory Analysis

The first interactional unit addresses some key elements in the wider discussion of politics of knowledge and curriculum in postmodern teaching and learning practices. One element pertains to the socially constructed idea or notion of identity. Such a postmodern, socially discursive notion is visible in relation to the identity (ies) of the teacher, the students in the classroom, and the charterers discussed in the Arabic text. The teacher's identity in relation to the students' is quite complex. He acts as a leader of discussion, a

www.manaraa.com

humorous intervener in several critical moments, and racially to some extent, a representative of an Arab. The students also shift and change in who they are through the interactional unit, as if fighting against the rigid historical and institutional perspectives of how students act in modern classroom, or how they ought to be in order to receive knowledge.

This change of footing (Goffman, 1981) and, therefore, awareness of identity markers, supports a critical perspective of identity as previously discussed in chapter 2. For instance, Pennycook (2001) says, "critical theory says that who you are (and are taken to be) depends on how you act" (p. 53). Similarly, the character of the Bedouins, discussed in the Arabic text below, takes a postmodern look that goes beyond a racial identity of who the Bedouins are, and against a fixed portrait, as illustrated in the Arabic textbook. Both the teacher and the students create multiple new identities of the Bedouins and of themselves that are socially and culturally constructed in reaction to the "Other."

A second element of postmodernity in this interactional unit is that of counter narratives. The teacher, Mr. Edward, and the students approach the Arabic written text and the texts they create themselves in a critical way; deconstructing and interweaving newer texts with new meanings. They all delve into the written and orally constructed texts building upon each other's texts and illustrating many layered levels of interpretations that are beyond control (Cherryholmes, 1988; Harvey, 1989). This deconstruction of the text makes void the authoritative power of the author of the Arabic text, and allows room for continuous new voices and narratives to enrich the texts; a process that Harvey (1989) calls "double reading" (p. 51).

Naturally, the above two elements make a good ground for a new understanding

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

of language and language use. In several instances, Mr. Edward tries to introduce new vocabulary through some kind of "language games," (Harvey, 1989, p. 46) where he constructs language threads by selecting a word and using its root to create numerous other words that may relate in meaning. Those newly introduced words become context for students to further analyze, question, or lay ground for newer discussions.

The discussions are not merely of a linguistic characteristic; other historical and sociocultural points of focus are introduced. For instance, in the dialogic notes below, Mr. Edward creates an interesting thread of new words starting with the verb "move from," which is used in their Arabic reading passage to connect to other verbs and nouns like "depart," "trip," "literary travel accounts," and "traveler." Those threads become a resource for students to bring their insight and knowledge about Arabic language and culture into focus. It is interesting to note shifts and turns in regard to who is considered authoritative as sources and means of knowledge. In this unit, both the teacher and students all become valid sources of information in this language event. Also of interest is the inseparable relationship between discussions of language and culture in the classroom (Kramsch, 1993).

The last two elements mentioned in the above diagram--references to 9/11 and the link between macro/micro social worlds--are interconnected. The teacher and the students of Arabic in this interactional unit, look beyond, and even outside, their traditional Arabic textbook for a more immediate sociopolitical and cultural contexts as sources of language teaching and interactional moments in the classroom. Naturally, the politics of teaching Arabic in the United States (Allen, 2004; Byrnes, 2004; Kubota and Austin, 2007) and the students' investments in learning Arabic, makes discussions around 9/11, terrorism,

www.manaraa.com

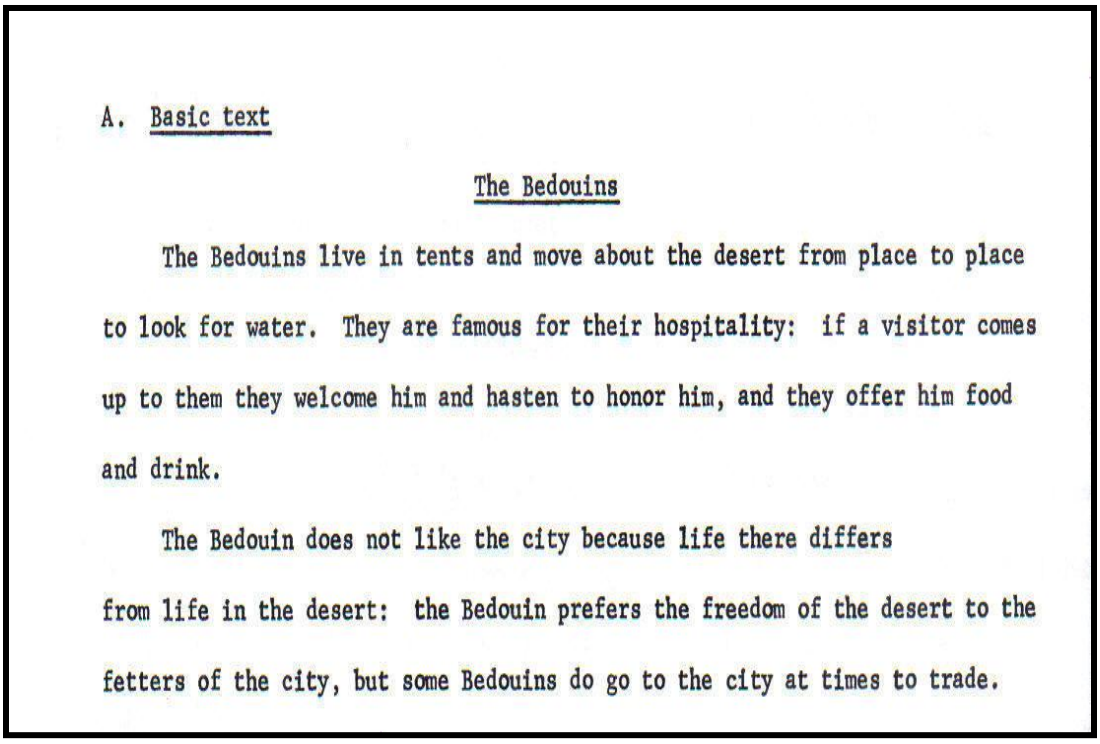
and the ideological representation of Arabs and Muslims a relevant content.

An example in this interactional unit is the news release that connects Bedouins to terrorist acts in Egypt. This is one of a series of news on terrorism that became more pronounced in the American news post 9/11. The students' concerns with current events make their Arabic classroom a personal environment that connects them to the outside world socially, culturally, and politically. Therefore, boundaries between the classroom world and that of the whole nation, and even the globe, collapse or become more fluid. The dialogic interaction between the personal and the global brings about playful and more critical ideological readings of texts, as the fieldnotes will illustrate below (Fairclough, 2001; Gebhard, 2000).

In the following, the interactional unit is provided with a change of font, Courier New. While attempting to keep the unit as intricately untouched as possible, I may provide subheadings to help aid the reader in creating the connection to the elements of postmodernity discussed above. It is by no means possible to provide one subheading for every few paragraphs, as voices overlap and meanings constructed across the interactional unit are multilayered. Therefore, intersections are the norm and my headings are but a simplification for the reader.

www.manaraa.com

Table 6.1: "The Bedouins"[14]



A. Basic text

The Bedouins

The Bedouins live in tents and move about the desert from place to place to look for water. They are famous for their hospitality: if a visitor comes up to them they welcome him and hasten to honor him, and they offer him food and drink.

The Bedouin does not like the city because life there differs from life in the desert: the Bedouin prefers the freedom of the desert to the fetters of the city, but some Bedouins do go to the city at times to trade.

(Dialogic notes): November 15 -Basic text "The Bedouins"

Background

I arrived to the class 10 minutes earlier and since the classroom space was occupied by another teacher, I sat on a bench on the hallway. Clara approached me and we talked about Art history as a field of study and possibilities for Clara to continue her graduate education. Clara is only 2 or 3 years younger than I am. She decided to go back to school later. When it was time for the class, we walked together. I sat down on the right side of the

[14] See APPENDIX C, p. 151, for full scanned lesson in Arabic-English

www.manaraa.com

class and Clara sat immediately behind my seat.

Mr. Edward, the classroom teacher, came in and greeted me as he usually does with a broad grin and a hello in Arabic. He asked students about the weather in Arabic and they responded that it was cold. Students were squirming in their seats. Rula, Jane, and Dan took the furthest seats to the back and the teacher was trying to explain that they have the option to move to the front. They decided against that.

Mr. Edward pointed out that they were behind according to the course syllabus and they needed to catch up. He didn't elaborate on how they were behind. He immediately turned the book to page 357 and instructed Chris, the first student in terms of order of seats, to start reading aloud the first sentence. The Basic text was titled "the Bedouins".

Language threads: Interweaving and constructing of new vocabulary

Students continued reading with Mr. Edward correcting their pronunciation, vowels, or other needed grammatical issues. He would sometimes re-read after the students and would throw out a few questions to check the students' comprehension of the Arabic text.

The interesting part started when Mr. Edward began his usual brief and selective textual analysis of the text.

www.manaraa.com

The first sentence of the passage introduces a new verb in Arabic; the verb رحل من which means to move from one place to another. The teacher alerts students to the change of the meaning if the verb is used with the proposition عن to become رحل عن which means to depart or leave a place. Joy asked Mr. Edward for a reiteration and he did re-explain the difference in meaning and use between the two mentioned verbs. Mr. Edward takes this verb as a departure and, using the root of the verb, he introduces students to derivations by root association including the noun رحلة which literally means a trip. Mr. Edward pushes the associated usages to include ادب الرحلة in reference to the literary connotation in regard to travel accounts in the Middle Ages in Arabic literature. Mr. Edward's line of thinking was becoming more visible to the students. As he introduced and wrote the term رحالة (traveler), he asked if any of the students heard of famous Arab travelers in the old times. Eden refers to 'Ibn Battouta', a famous Arab traveler of the 14th century.

In a minute or two, another new vocabulary in the text is introduced. The noun ضيافة (hospitality) is linked to the noun ضيف (a visitor) and its plural (visitors) ضيوف. Mr. Edward asks students in Arabic if they receive guests and they responded with assent.

www.manaraa.com

Mr. Edward continued that in Arab countries in general, hospitality and welcoming guest is part of the wider social practice. Usually one does not need to call in advance and get an appointment to visit. Andrew was intrigued and asked how one can visit an Arab friend there without creating a situation of formalities. Rafia joined in and spoke of her visit to Syria and how open and welcoming people were. Clara, whose husband is Palestinian, spoke of her negative impression of visitors as annoying in Palestine where one could not get time alone with his/her family. The teacher nods and says smiling "it is like a full time job."

Counter narratives, culture, and cultural identity

As Alice reads, another new word is discussed. The verb 'to welcome' is introduced. Mr. Edward promptly says that the students do not have to believe everything the passage says, as the texts and the meanings represented are all constructed. He refers to the image of the Bedouins on the third line of the passage that describes the hospitality of the Bedouins as "hurry to welcome" visitors and offer them food and drink. Mr. Edward commented that the text could have simply said the Bedouins are generous. He humorously continued:

www.manaraa.com

The situation is like emergency service...ready with a siren...when the guest comes, they hurry and bring them to the tent and they offer them food and coffee. [Changes voice to imitate action]

Mr. Edward: So they offered them طعام و شراب (food and drink). What do they offer for drink?
Students: [no response/ looking at the passage]
Mr. Edward: It is not here…it is from your general knowledge. [Looks at me smiling]
Students: [mumbling]
Mr. Edward: البدو مشهورون بالقهوة العربية (the Bedouins are famous for the Arabic Coffee)
Andrew: و الشاي (and tea)
Mr. Edward: [disagreeing with a smile]: لا , لا يقدمون الشاي (no, they don't offer tea)
[The teacher asked if anyone actually visited the Bedouins and a few raise hands]
Andrew: [laughs] I'm a coffee drinker that suits me well.
Isaq: They gave me tea…they made a lot of food.
Mr. Edward: [asks Thomas] Did they offer you tea?
Thomas: I don't think they gave us anything.

Mr. Edward describes the kind of coffee the Bedouins make as very strong and has cardamom in. He refers to the reading text as the student's "first lesson in dessert life." They all laugh…

Lara reads the last part of the passage. The teacher asks whether students prefer the life of the city. He writes the Arabic word for 'agree on' on the board. Lara

www.manaraa.com

comments that she needs help in Arabic expressing her opinion, "it depends on the city." The conversation is carried later towards comparing the university town during summer with a desert life.

War on terrorism and current sociopolitical context

Students asked a few grammatical questions in relation to conjugating some verbs and recognizing prepositions. After a few minutes, Mr. Edward commented, "Let's go back to the Bedouins, a significant lesson for the Orange Book." In connection to current news of war on terrorism, Mr. Edward eluded to the bad reputation the Bedouins of Egypt, for instance, received in the media due to the news of explosives and involvement in terrorist acts. This picture contradicted the image of the Bedouin in the text.

Mr. Edward: [some Bedouins] don't need to carry passports or identity cards. They can cross the borders. Sometimes they are not part of any state. Some don't recognize borders. They are free people.

Questioning representations and sources of knowledge

Although the class ends here, Mr. Edward pursues the topic in the following class meeting. In a translation from English to Arabic drill that the teacher himself prepared, one of the sentences talked about Bedouins preferring to travel by car. Mr. Edward spoke about the running themes of

www.manaraa.com

Bedouins, but not as the book represents them. They do not necessarily lead a simple life as they did in the past. He offers an alternative image of Bedouins nowadays--some of whom enjoy a luxurious life; very rich, own houses, drive cars, and install satellite dishes.

Mr. Edward suggested writing a novel that challenges the western ideas of Bedouins and the common stereotypes of their life. He added humorously that it will be a good novel in the market.

Commentaries on Interaction 1

Interaction 1 is illustrative of several cues of postmodernity as brought about by the teacher, Mr. Edward, and his students. In alignment with the literature on postmodern curriculum and postmodern understanding of language and language teaching in Chapter 2, this interactional unit is loaded with several productive moments that collide with modern notion of schooling. As Hargreaves (1994) reiterates, postmodernity gives importance to critical ways of engagement in the process of inquiry, analysis, and gathering of knowledge, which is visible in this classroom interaction.

The perspectives of Mr. Edward and his students in understanding cultural identity echo the literature on postmodern conceptualizing of identity as a social and cultural construct, rather than a fixed inherited racial trait (De Alba, et al., 2000). In attempting to understand who the Bedouins are, Mr. Edward asks the students not to take for granted the manner in which the book describes them--whether in terms of behavior, living style, relation to city dwellers, and even their economic and political conditions.

www.manaraa.com

An example occurs when the teacher refers to the textbook representing the Bedouins as hospitable. Mr. Edwards refers to the coffee drinks offered to welcome guests, but students who got the opportunity to visit Bedouins in the Arab World offered contradictory new insights. The students' voices collided with the images represented in the book. Based on the students' first hand interaction with Arab Bedouins, some were offered tea--as Isaq pointed out--instead of special coffee drinks, and others were not offered anything at all, as Thomas revealed. As such, no cultural behavior could be captured in a static format as the modernist textbook exemplified. Can cultural identities be reduced to asset of observed behavioral practices? Surely postmodernity would disagree.

Another example occurs when Mr. Edward redefines the identity of the Bedouins as "free people" who do not abide by laws and regulations of modern nations. According to his statements, Bedouins construct their own political and social views and move across countries freely without valid documents. They do not abide by border regulations. The new picture of Bedouins represents them as hybrid in nationality, since they do not acknowledge any state as their fixed nation. They look more multi-cultural and hybrid in identity, rather than simplistic and confined in a set of cultural practices described in the Arabic textbook. Such instances offer counter interpretations of the knowledge assumed in the textbook, and lays ground for an approach of teaching that underscores complexity as Kramsch argues (1993).

Teaching culture, and therefore cultural identity, then echoes what Kramsch (1993) calls "teaching culture as difference" (p. 206). Going beyond national identities or normative fixed representations of people, Mr. Edward and his students do not seem to

www.manaraa.com

view cultural and social identities in the modernist sense; in relation to national identities or national traits. They are aware of the "multiculturality" (Kramsch, 1993, p. 206) that even a slice of the society like the Bedouins has.

Celebrating contradictions, fragmentations, and favor of differences are main achievements of a postmodern classrooms. Language games or threads commonly introduced by Mr. Edward also bring in more instances of students' rejections to traditional knowledge, and what is assumed to be credible knowledge, by redefining those instances in new contexts. Not only has the notion of hospitality been a linguistic teaching moment for the students in learning new related vocabulary, but it has also been a critical moment to further reflect on the social and cultural constructing of the very notion of hospitality and welcoming from the point of view of the students. Some expressed their feeling of joy for social visits and their possible welcoming etiquettes, as Rafia commented on her visit to Syria. On the other hand, Clara rejected the notion as violating to one's sense of private quiet life, commenting on the family visit to Palestine. Disagreement on representations, rather than universalism, is commonly noticed throughout interaction 1. Such an ideological management of the classroom that makes a haven for students' voices, which Mr. Edwards allows, is a manifestation of the influence of postmodernity in modern institutions of schooling.

The Arabic textbook in its reflections of the Bedouins, arrangements of themes around their life, and marketization of the text as a legitimate official photo of the Bedouins, seems less and less credible in the eye of the Arabic students. Interestingly, it has been the students' own interest in current world media post 9/11 and the focus on acts of terrorism carried out by some Bedouins in Egypt, Syria, and Iraq, that made students

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

more vocal and their resistance more productive. Students' interest in multimedia presentations of the "Other" with reference to Arabs and Muslims, causes them to question what they hear in the news, what they may have seen during their visits to the Arab world, what they read about in relation to the Arab and Islamic world, and what the Arabic textbook bring in.

In Chapter 4, I presented the students' own investment in learning Arabic and their resources in learning about the Arab world. Those classroom interactions have been great instances in allowing a space for students to speak of what they know, what they like to question, and what they disagree on. Students' talk about the news on terrorism has been a major vehicle to instantiate several cases of collision between modern notions of the Arab world that assumes one state, one nation, one language formula, and postmodern notions of fragmentation and complexity (Kramsch, 2003; Kubota and Austin, 2007).

It is pivotal, then, to emphasize that although learning of Arabic post 9/11 has triggered lots of students' interests for political reasons (Byrnes, 2004; Kumashiro, 2008), other reasons are clear that are contradictory. Echoing the findings of Kubota and Austin (2007), students investments in world languages post 9/11 and contexts of late modernity are not all for national security needs, but also for humanistic reasons as well.

Allowing a space in the classroom for students to express their voices as valued even when colliding with the authoritative voices of the Arabic textbook, or that of the teacher, requires a safe environment. A main quality of Mr. Edward that is sensed all through the interactional unit, which helps in making the classroom a safe though chaotic haven, is that of humor. Students of Arabic do emphasize the importance of this quality

www.manaraa.com

of Mr. Edward as making their experience in learning Arabic more safe and fun.

In Chapter 4 of this paper, Debbie, for instance, has made the humor of the Arabic teacher a visible concern, even collecting those funny incidents in a separate notebook. Shawn and Chris have also referred to the humor of the teacher and the way this helped them bring in their own voices in a humorous tone as well. This quality is by no means the only one a teacher could adopt to allow space for students to be critical of the textbook or leaning and teaching practices in general, but it seems to have worked naturally in this classroom.

Interaction 2: "Tunisia"

- *Hybrid roles and identities*
- *Media: 9/11 and global conflicts*
- *Chomsky: Macro/Micro worlds*
- *Assumptions*
- *Institutions and hegemony*

Introductory Analysis

This interaction is interesting in its display of more traces of postmodernity as a major influence on the very concept of teaching and learning in the Arabic classroom. It is rich in some similar cues observed in the previous interaction. It is also brings in other traces amidst newer voices and contexts.

One important marker of postmodernity to re-emphasize in this interactional unit, is the blurry boundaries and dialogicality of voices and texts as they are constructed

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

within new contexts (Fairclough, 2003). Mr. Edward and his students do not follow a neat question- answer –evaluation formula as may be expected in modernist concepts of classroom. Their voices interact and counter-interact in what may look like a cacophony. However, everybody seems to follow the conversation without a necessity to approach an end. Such interactions echo Doll's (1993) vision of teaching as an "open system" where doubt and exploration is the lead (p. ix). A sense of incongruity and constant shifts among voices and texts allow for a multiplicity of truths, meanings, and interpretations.

The postmodern understanding of the fluidity of culture and the hybridity of roles and identities is another significant apparent marker in this interaction. As the teacher and the students of Arabic construct their own texts in reaction to and in agreement with each other, they all adopt a discursive view of identity that unfolds into hybrid roles based on one's "footing" (Goffman, 1981, p. 128). Mr. Edward, for instance, changes his footing or stance towards himself and the audience addressed constantly. Hence, his framing or constructing of who he is shifts several times during this interaction. By approaching the class in a casual manner, with a broad smile, he stands up in front of the desk at a close distance to his students and at their physical level. His conversational tone is a welcoming sign for his students to express their voices with confidence.

Mr. Edward's footing can sometimes be paradoxical, as any teacher's roles are (Kramsch, 1993). As such, he is sometimes the language teacher focusing on some language rules. At others, he is the historical expert on the Middle East and its politics of the 19th century. And in other times, he is the racial and linguistic native Arab. In addition, he is the buddy interested in events happening at the university campus, for example Chomsky's visit. He is also the humorous entertainer of the students questing

www.manaraa.com

and refining of the Arabic textbook's assumptions of knowledge. The choices are many. Such hybrid identities are multidimensional.

The diversity and complexity of who we are also pertains to the relation of the researcher--me--to the students in the Arabic classroom. Being part and parcel of the classroom interaction, even in my silence, my presence has been approached by the students in several ways. Clara, who is the oldest in terms of age among the students, is a reminder that I am conducting data analysis. Her interest in my seating and audio taping is one opportunity to position me as the observer. It also has been an opportunity for her to speak more personally about her feelings as the wife of a Palestinian man. Rula, of Syrian origin, also opened up towards the end of my research to speak of her racial and cultural diverse background.

Technology and multimedia is a postmodern trace that cannot be ignored. The culture of the media--visual or audio--is viewed as a new resource for the construction of knowledge, and a means to create awareness to the global. Multimedia then offers them "multiple potential paths" through the material (Kramsch, 1993, p. 197). The recursive talk on 9/11 and the other global conflicts of the Middle East, for example the war in Iraq or Palestine, is enriching the multilayered texts related to the learning of Arabic language and culture. Media brings in--through sound and imagery--interactive learning experience and narrative. For students, this real-life experience is a resource to be tapped on in Arabic classroom discussions.

The talk on 9/11, for me as an inside observer, has been a constant reminder of the students' investments in learning Arabic. As mentioned in Chapter 4, Shawn and James both are looking forward for a job in the military or a related political field. They believe

www.manaraa.com

they can be constructivists who would correct some misunderstandings of the Arab world through their positions. Their interest then, in the global and the local contexts, is of great value to their personal life. From a postmodern perspective, the boundaries between their local, national and global or between their intimate classroom context and the wider institutional and societal contexts break down. Noticeable so far is that the limited modernist material provided in the Arabic textbook becomes less credible and less satisfying for those students.

Naturally, the interest in Chomsky's visit to the university campus has been widely welcomed by the students and the teacher himself, who made the visit part of the language classroom. Mr. Edward is facilitating ways for the students to respond to their social and political worlds in the Arabic classroom. Through his questioning of mainstream or status-quo expectations, students are developing their own sense of critical thinking and active sense of citizenry.

An interesting instance in the interaction below occurs when the students show their outrage in response to the institutional ideologies that define what kind of lecture Chomsky is presenting and why. Shawn, who is typically interested in politics, expresses his frustration over the fact that this campus of study is receiving Chomsky as a linguist, while the neighboring campus in the same area is welcoming Chomsky as political speaker on global conflicts. The students are aware of the neutrality and the naturalization of Chomsky's visit to their campus at a time when interest in the global political and social representations of the world is underscored.

A last trace of postmodernity to be addressed in this introductory analysis is Mr. Edwards' questioning of the some assumptions in the modernist Arabic textbook. As in

www.manaraa.com

the first interactional unit, Mr. Edward explicitly and implicitly makes room for students to critically think upon the modernist Arabic textbook in terms of claims of knowledge, arrangements of ideas and themes, representations of people and things, and even the very word choice to transmit meanings.

In this interaction, Mr. Edward objects to the use of the verb "to live" in reference to one's stay in a hotel. His reaction is not merely at the level of a possible inappropriate linguistic choice of a word. Rather, it exceeds to include that of the ideological meaning behind this selection of the verb and its assumptions at the level of hegemony and power relations. The dialogue in the classroom erupts around a recent reference to 'Hotels' as symbolic institutions of success, power, and hegemonic dominance of one nation over another (Fairclough, 2003; Pennycook, 2001). The students and teacher point to a subtle power struggle in the capitalist societies represented in a naturalized institutional representation in the example of 'Hotels'. Hence, students joyfully wonder if Chomsky stays over at the Hilton and whether this agrees with his radical ideologies.

Such interactions in literacy events for me as a researcher make me wonder how our language classrooms become characteristic of our contemporary late or postmodern societies, where every text becomes a critical resource to reflect on our ideological stance and power relations as represented in words and deeds.

Students enjoy their language learning experience when using topics of interest in their own immediate daily life. Application of grammar, new vocabulary, and structures are more intimate to them when they themselves find their voice and a real investment in topics of selection. This ensures the nexus among their classroom culture and the wider social and political cultures of their institution and outside worlds.

www.manaraa.com

A visible marker throughout the interactional unit is the character of the teacher, Mr. Edward, who is not the authoritative, all-knower transmitter if knowledge, as the modern concept of a teacher would be defined. Mr. Edward does not fall into the normative, idealized native speaker and traditional role of a teacher "whose role is to impart a certain body of knowledge to non-native speaking non-knowers" (Kramsch, 1993, p. 45). Could this change of character and thus, culture of the classroom, be one way to facilitate and make room for postmodernity to have its imprints in our language classrooms? Possibilities are open.

Table 6.2: "Comprehension Passage" *EMSA 1*, p. 278

Comprehension Passage: Samir is a student at the University of Tunisia. His father is a professor at Cairo University. His name is Dr. Fareed Sarhan. Dr. Fareed went for a visit to his son in Tunisia. Samir welcomed his father at the airport and accompanied him to the Hilton hotel. During his visit in Tunisia, Mr. Fareed saw the old Roman ruins in Carthage. In the city of Tunis, he visited the University of Tunisia. In addition, he visited Al-Zaitona Mosque which is a center for the study of Islamic history and Arabic language. By the end of the visit, Mr. Fareed went back to Cairo and write

(Dialogic notes): October 06 - Comprehension passage- my translation

Background: Hybrid Roles and Identities

It is just the beginning of the foliage. Walking my way to the class, the trees on campus have started to wear beautiful red, yellow, and orange shades.

I arrived early. I sat down. Clara noticed my

www.manaraa.com

hesitancy in selecting a seat trying to get a better location closer to the students. She approached me and asked if I am looking for a better chance to audiotape the class. She did not know yet that the teacher asked me not to bring the audiotape to class as he thinks it affects students' classroom interactions.

Rula approached me also asking about using Arabic software for her computer and how to respond to emails in Arabic.

Media News: 9/11 and Other Conflicts

Shawn, Andrew, and James were engaged, as usual, in heated conversation about wars and conflicts. This time I could hear bits and pieces about the Wall in the West Bank and a documentary program about 9/11. Mr. Edward came in, students squirmed in their seats, some opened up books and notebooks.

Chomsky and World Politics:

Micro/Macro Worlds:

[Square brackets provide my translation for the Arabic interaction among the teacher and students]

Mr. Edward: so لنتكلم قليلا بالعربية

[let's talk a little bit in Arabic]

هل هناك اخبار في الجامعة؟ في المنطقة؟

www.manaraa.com

[Is there any news in the university? in the area]

Students: Noam Chomsky (more than one student spoke together)

Mr. Edward: نعم هناك محاضرة *[yes there is a lecture]*

Students: نعم*[yes]*

(more noises, nods, students asking each other)

Students haphazardly mention that Chomsky is speaking both at [redacted] College and this university.

Mr. Edward: سيتكلم هنا و هناك؟

[Is he going to talk here and there?]

Shawn: A political topic at [redacted] college and a linguistic one here.

Mr. Edward: هنا سيتكلم عن اختصاصه

[here he will talk about his specialty]

Mr. Edward writes the word specialty in Arabic on the board

في [redacted] سيتكلم عن السياسة

[at [redacted] College he will talk about politics]

Mr. Edward writes the word politics in Arabic on the board

Mr. Edward: Is it always like this? [redacted] College gets the revolution. (smiling)

Students: Yes. Ha ha ha (nodding, laughing)

www.manaraa.com

The teacher comments on the small size of the rooms at this university for a talk by Chomsky

Mr. Edward: You see how much we are using the future verb tense?

Students: The linguistic ones don't attract many people but the political ones do.

Mr. Edward: نعم يجب ان تذهبوا الى هذه المحاضرة *[yes, you should go to this lecture].*

This*[should, must]* is a construction you will learn later

Mr. Edward: Noam Chomsky استاذ مشهور *[a famous professor]* يدرّس في اي جامعة؟

[in which university does he teach?]

Students: MIT

Mr. Edward: I wonder how much money is he paid for this? (laughing aloud)

Students: lots of money (laugh)

Shawn: how do we say crazy leftist radical in Arabic? (loud laughs in the background)

Mr. Edward: left you can say. Yes يسار *[left]* and right يمين

for radical, you just arabize it راديكالي *[radical].*

Things like برجوازي *[bourgeois]* are all arabized too.

www.manaraa.com

Mr. Edward writes the new words in Arabic on the board.

Mr. Edward: فهو استاذ يدرس في جامعة م اي ت . و يتكلم احيانا عن الشرق الاوسط

[so he is a professor teaching at MIT and talks sometimes about the Middle East]

يتكلم عن الوضع السياسي

[he talks about the Political situation]

The teacher writes 'political situation' in Arabic at the board

كيف الوضع السياسي اليوم؟

[how is the political situation today?]

Students: (gestures and sounds of negative expressions)

Mr. Edward: لا ليس جيد. هو سئ *[No it isn't good. It's bad]*

The teacher writes 'good/bad' in Arabic on the board

Student: what is سئ? (bad)

Mr. Edward: good and bad (pointing to the writing on the board)

The dialogue goes on about other visiting lecturers then moves on to doing some exercises about conjugating plurals in Arabic. The students were assigned to prepare for the Comprehension passage (translated above) at home and do the related drill in the textbook. Today the class

www.manaraa.com

didn't read the passage in a group as they usually do. They started immediately working on the drill which was filling in the blank with some vocabulary from the passage.

Assumptions:

Drill 9 Sentence 3 sounded problematic as the teacher commented. It could be translated in English as follows:

> 3. Mr. Fareed lived at --------- ---------- during his visit to his son.

The teacher objected to the use of the verb 'to live' in reference to staying in hotel as the passage indicates. Students agreed.

Institutions and Hegemony:

Mr. Edward: the sentence speaks of a stay in a hotel like in medieval times or like 19th century cold war.

S: (laughs)

Mr. Edward: A recent book mentions how the Hilton was encouraged as a symbol for American success and xxx a bit of a hangout for spies…the one in Germany and Egypt xxx Almost like a second embassy.

Some students seemed to agree through their laughter, others looked surprised, and others not sure if they need to believe the humor

www.manaraa.com

Mr. Edward: Well I don't know if the authors thought of hotel politics here in the book

Shawn: what about the Sheraton?

Mr. Edward: not the Sheraton but Hilton

Students: (laughs)

Mr. Edward: Noam Chomsky stays in the Sheraton

Students: (mixed laugh and whisper)

Mr. Edward: Kissinger stays in the Hilton.

Commentaries on Interaction 2

Following the review of literature discussed in Chapter 2, what I find distinctive in this interactional unit and others discussed in this chapter is the unique culture of the classroom as it unfolds, reflecting the internal context of the classroom itself and greatly interconnects to the external societal context in the campus of study, the country, and the globe. The fact that these students have known each other for a minimum of three to four consecutive semesters; sharing the experience of learning Arabic as taught by Mr. Edward has created a certain bond among the classroom participants. It is a small cultural unit of its own. What is also unique is the fact that I, as their Teaching Assistant and later researcher, have noticed and witnessed those students' progress and their constructing of such a classroom community.

Reading the dialogic notes, the students and Mr. Edward put on several "hats" as they take turns and switch footings as they address each other (Kramsch, 1993, p. 39). Mr. Edward is sometimes the authoritative representative of the campus, or educational

www.manaraa.com

institution, making plans of how to do his language lesson. At other times, he is the representative of the target language and culture--Arabic--and students take his word on what he validates. He does initiates conversations and uses several paths as springboard for opening up and facilitating discussions. But he is also a good listener and accepts students' remarks with the least judgment. Students do not seem annoyed by the sense of fragmentation or shifts of roles, voices, and topics. I have not heard words of objection, but rather enthusiasm in sharing opinions.

Integrated within the complex classroom culture, as seen in this interactional unit, is a sense of change and continuity; another cue of postmodernity. The reflections on media news and the current sociopolitical and economic news of the world is becoming a routine topic of interest to all classroom participants. However, every news item, even if repetitive like 9/11, assumes a new meaning. Students sometimes refer to earlier discussions in previous classrooms. Or they will bring to the classroom discussion what they have been discussing in small groups before the class starts. The intertextual links they construct are various. For instance, speaking of the West Bank conflict and 9/11 before the class starts, Shawn and his friends later relate those discussions and interpretations to Chomsky's visit and his political talk at a neighboring college. Therefore, prior texts are integrated into the newer texts and contexts of discussion.

Following the modernist methodology of the textbook, comprehension passages function as readings for the purpose of drilling grammar and vocabulary presented in the various chapters of the textbook. Mr. Edward transforms these passages into turning points. Besides reading them in class, following with the language drills provided in the textbook, and using them as a language review session, he abandons the expedited norms

www.manaraa.com

of teaching the language as suggested by the textbook in favor of a more unpredictable path. The classroom momentum shifts and turns and the participants' texts change from "a formal display act to a negotiation of divergent meanings" (Kramsch, 1993, p. 75).

Mr. Edward changes the context of the situation several times in a very short period. For instance, the chatty atmosphere in reference to Chomsky is part of the lesson, even if not planned as neat scripted learning blocks. Similarly, negotiating the assumptions of the textbook in reference to politics of institutions like "hotels" and comparing between where Chomsky and Kissinger would stay is triggered by the "inappropriate" use of the verb "to live" as the teacher explains. As such, students do not only learn to question the authority of the textbook, but also see how ideologies and subtle hegemonic references to power are triggered through the linguistic features of a text (Fairclough, 2003) in a textbook (Apple, 2000).

The seemingly simplistic reference to a visitor's stay in the Hilton recontextualizes the discussion; moving away from the textbook into a more critical and immediate context that touches the lives of the participants more personally. Students do not identify much with the visitor to Tunisia and his stay in the Hilton. Chomsky's stay in the Sheraton or Kissinger's stay in the Hilton, however, is seemingly more interesting. In a few moments then, the world of the classroom is connected to the other social and political worlds; both the current, as in reference to Chomsky, and old, in reference to Kissinger.

Such a political and historical reference creates a connection between the teaching of the Arabic language and culture, and other fields like political science and history; two majors that many students are interested in as mentioned in Chapter 4. Kramsch (1993)

www.manaraa.com

argues for crossing disciplines and specialty boundaries to offer students a broader scope in terms of readings available about the target culture of study. Mr. Edward not only makes good advantage of cross-disciplinary themes triggered through the Arabic textbook references. He also helps students connect such interdisciplinary themes to their own personal lives.

As I mentioned earlier in my study, my purpose in analyzing such interactional units is not to evaluate the teacher's pedagogical practices or comment on other possible ways to make use of the classroom discursive practices. My intent is to present some scenarios of how one teacher tries to facilitate dialogic moments in which students approach the context of Arabic language learning with newer possibilities shaping their own medium of study. Naturally, his postmodern discourses collide with the modernist discourses in the textbook used. His choice of methods of presentations, changes of expected social interactions with students, adaptation of roles and identities, and selection of thematization connect language and culture in a critical way.

In the end, students have used their own personal reactions to topics relevant to their own personal lives and have somehow "re-written" their own version of those reading passages in the Arabic textbook (Kramsch, 1993, p. 134). In comparison, Interactional Unit 1 was exemplary in the scope of the re-writing process that the teacher and students adopted. Their final text of the Bedouins they created is very different from the one represented in the textbook. In this unit, the re-writing processes targets a smaller portion of the reading passage, the one connected to the "Hilton." The meanings discovered through such soliciting of reactions from the classroom participants are abundant.

www.manaraa.com

Such fluidity and unpredictability is a cue of postmodernity, which addresses a concern about the difficulty a language teacher faces when running into modern educational practices adopted by educational institutions, textbooks, and methods of defining and teaching language and culture in foreign language classrooms.

Interaction 3: "A Foreign Reporter in Tunis"

- *Counter narratives, multiple truths*
- *Word choice & language ideologies*
- *Dialects & language politics*
- *Language, identity, war & religion*
- *Media culture*

Introductory Analysis

Similar to the previous interactional units, this unit involves simultaneous frames or discourses operating at the same time. On the one hand, there is the institutional discourse of classroom learning practices at a particular educational institution. On the other hand, the former discourse is in dialogue with and against the social and cultural discourses constructed by the classroom participants. In the dialogic notes below, as students approach the situation with their own narratives of the job application process as they know in their own American culture. Mr. Edward teases their mind by presenting counter narratives from the Arab world. Narratives collide and multiple truths are now laid on the table for contemplation.

Contrary to the Arabic textbook's claim that basic texts provided are non-

www.manaraa.com

controversial, Mr. Edward seems to enjoy constructing, with the students, rich moments of direct pedagogical moments of language awareness. He uses a monologic text and transforms it into a dialogic one (Bakhtin, 1981). By doing so, he is appropriating the texts to suit other discourses, rather than the authoritative non-controversial and superficially linguistic one suggested by the textbook. What looks like an ordinary piece of text turns into heated discussions of social, cultural, and language junctures.

Below, the basic text provided speaks of a foreign reporter applying for a job opportunity in Tunisia. Looking back at chapter 5, the text echoes the modern representation of the Arab world as it seeks global relationships with the West for mutual benefits. Reference to government help in employment is underscored, as well as importance of foreign languages. Such topics reflect the investment in languages for the interest of politics and the economy during the 60s.

Students are given counter points of access to the text by evoking their own experience in job application in the United States, which is the native cultural reference for the students. Mr. Edward constructs his own version, humorously based on his native Arab cultural practices. I do not, by any means, suggest that any version is a mirror of a cultural or social reality. These versions, however, are interesting in providing multiple narratives and paths into the discussion. Neither the students' nor the teacher's versions are presented as facts about culture to be wholly accepted. Rather, the narratives sound conflicting in simulation of reality where multiple truths co-exist (Kramsch, 1993). In the process, several subjects contribute to the classroom discussions: the voice of the textbook, the voice of the teacher, and the voices of the students. Even though not all voices or subjects are heard in the same manner, none are passive. They are all active in

www.manaraa.com

shaping the discourses in the classroom.

Another major cue of postmodernity in this unit relates to the direct and explicit means in which the topic of language ideologies is discussed in this classroom. As observed in the earlier two units, Mr. Edward continues to interrogate the students' understanding and/or interpretations of texts based on word choice. That is, word choices construct certain representations of the world as they are associated with particular discourses (Pennycook, 2001).

Mr. Edward attempts to make it explicit to students how, for instance, two Arabic words that could be translated as "country" belong to two different academic and sociopolitical discourses. As such, each Arabic word would situate both interlocutors in certain frames of interpretation. Such attempts echo the work of Delpit (1992), Janks (1997), and Wallace (1992) as advocates of direct critical focus of teaching language under the umbrella of critical language awareness. Although such approaches have been criticized as an overt pedagogy (see for example, Pennycook, 2001.p. 98-100), I believe that teachers like Mr. Edward are teasing students' awareness of the ideologies of linguistic choice and how this choice brings about power; power of knowledge of different discourses and how such power operates using language.

In more than one occasion, we see Mr. Edward stepping out of his authoritative role as the teacher. He shifts from being the one who may have power over the students to someone who shares power with his students, to try to interpret and interrogate each others' frames of knowledge. Such visible teaching of language ideologies and their connection to power is clear in Mr. Edward's talk on politics of dialects. Mr. Edward is of Lebanese nationality and refers to the role of media culture in introducing dialects as

www.manaraa.com

"legitimate" in media discourse that have been, until recently, dominated by the Arabic standard only. He, for example, refers to the "selling" of Lebanese dialect in the gulf region as a acceptable register and its recent common usage in public media.

Clara is one of the students who saw the ideological and political aspect of choosing a certain dialect over another. Her question, whether an Egyptian dialect will be chosen by the teacher, is triggered by the fact that the Arabic textbook is edited by mostly Egyptian authors. Later in the same unit, the topic of dialects is triggered again. Only this time the matter is more complicated. The dialects are not only discussed in relation to a standard national language, but also in relation to religion.

Such discussions remind us of the review of literature in Chapter 2 describing classrooms as sites for negotiation and/or resistance to conversations on social, political, and cultural relations happening outside the world of the classroom. In this incident of dialects becoming legitimate, official, or at least prestigious enough to be part of the media, is a visible and direct means in which the teacher brings about discussions of Linguistic nationism (Kramsch, 2003). Such notion refers to the association of one language register or variety--known as the standard national language--as a membership card to a community that shares one national identity. This representation of language as "a self- contained, autonomous, and homogeneous linguistic system" (p. 73) mirrors the imagined view of one nation, one language that characterizes contexts of modernity.

In addition, as I have explained earlier in Chapter 5, the role of religion in relation to standard Arabic is highly pronounced. Therefore, questioning assumptions on the connection between a language, or a variety of language, and religion is a product of postmodern way of thinking.

www.manaraa.com

Other turning points and traces of postmodernity are cued in the complex discussion of what constitutes identity. Similar to the previous units, Mr. Edwards moves beyond a cultural understanding of identity which assumes shared cultural practices (Pennycook, 2001). The teacher and the students problematize the concept of identity when providing the case of the Lebanese as an example. Do the Lebanese consider themselves Arabs? Why and why not? Eden brings in the history of Phoenician lineage. No answers or truths finalize the argument. It is this skepticism and questioning of assumptions about what constitutes one's identity, however, that reminds us traces of postmodernity.

Table 6.3: "A Foreign Reporter in Tunis"

A. Basic text

A Foreign Reporter in Tunis

An American reporter submitted an application to work on the Tunisian newspaper Al-'Amal, and he had an interview with the director. This is a summary of the interview:

Director: Thank you for submitting this application. How did you learn that our newspaper was in need of a foreign reporter?

Reporter: I found out from a friend.

Director: What languages do you speak?

Reporter: I speak Arabic and French, in addition to English.

Director: Where do you work now?

Reporter: I work on the Times. In my articles I deal with the Arab world.

Director: Will you be able to stay in Tunis?

Reporter: I won't be able to until I get a job on your newspaper.

Director: Fine. The government usually cooperates with us in matters such as these. We will consider your application.

Reporter: Thank you. I will be waiting.

www.manaraa.com

(Dialogic notes): December 6 -Basic text "A Foreign Reporter in Tunis"

Counter Narratives, Multiple Truths:

Mr. Edward: هل تتقدمون انتم الى شركات بطلب عمل؟ (Do you (pl) send job applications to companies?)

هل تقدمتم بطلبات عمل في الماضي؟

(Have you sent job applications in the past?)

A student attempts to speak of applying to the universities and asks the teacher for editing.

Mr. Edward: تقدمت بطلب الى الجامعة؟

(Did you send an application to the university?)

Mr. Edward: ماذا تقدمون مع الطلب عادة؟

(What do you usually send along with the application?)

Clara: resume

Mr. Edward: سيرة ذاتية (resume) let me write it

[He writes the Arabic term for resume on the board then sarcastically smiles back]…

In the Arab World, you get work through connections; you don't get it through a resume…

[all laugh]

Mr. Edwards asks me about my opinion of resumes in the

www.manaraa.com

Middle East. I said they have started using them, but I'm not sure how serious they are considered through the process.

Mr. Edward: What other اوراق ثبوتية (official documents) are needed?

Some students thought of a passport.

Mr. Edward: [The teacher writes the Arabic term for passport on the board]

if you go to the Middle East to get passports…there is already a security system…

[he talks about the complicated process of applying for passports]

these are some of the joys of the third world countries…you don't know the fetters here…you should make a trip to an Arabic consulate and say

اريد ان ابحث موضوع جوازات السفر (I want to discuss with you the topic of passports)

Mr. Edward: So when you apply for a job you need to get documentary papers…

صورة- صور (a photo-photos)

يتصلون بكم و يطلبون منكم مقابلة (they call you and ask for an interview)

www.manaraa.com

[The teacher writes on the board]

يطلبون منكم مقابلة لكي يبحثوا معكم طلبكم و يعرفوا اكثر عنكم

(So they ask you for an interview to discuss your application and know more about you)

Mr. Edward: ثم يختارون بعض المرشحين لذلك العمل

(then they select some candidates for that job)

[writes the sentence on the board]

المرشح (the candidate) is more a political candidate

[he looks at me for agreement]

و ماذا يبحثون خلال المقابلة معكم؟

(and what do they discuss through the interview?)

[writes on the board] يبحثون معكم موضوع المعاش-الراتب

(they discuss the subject of wages/ salary)

Shawn: what are Arabic terms for wages and salary and is there a difference?

Mr. Edward looked at me to seek other possible terms used in Jordan.

Students asked after if they needed to speak in the standard Arabic in these interviews.

Mr. Edward explained that it depends on the kind of company which will require a certain identity of the applicant:

www.manaraa.com

being European and bilingual or of strong Arabic identity, etc.

Linguistic Choice and Ideologies:

Students wonder what if an American makes mistakes in the Standard Arabic during the job interview:

Mr. Edward: [smiles] if you make a mistake, they won't take it against you…they will take it like a joke. Like if you say بلد(country) and you mean دولة (country in a political sense)

[reminds them of earlier discussion about the political association to the above terms].

Students:[laugh]

Language Politics: Dialects Prestige

Mr. Edward:…This is an interesting topic. Recent books discuss the negotiation of language in the age of globalization. Think of the Arabic language as used in the satellite channels. Sometimes in Arabic today, you hear colloquial in Lebanese new. This wasn't the case 15 years ago. Now this is a license for reporters to market things a bit. Better to people who are more relaxed in Arabic…

Clara: this is sociopolitical…would you pick Egyptian for us…a political choice

Mr. Edward: Egyptian if you are an Egyptian…a lot of

www.manaraa.com

Lebanese work on the gulf…the Lebanese sold their dialect as part of the westernization…

What Constitutes Identity?

Mr. Edward: if you ask somebody in Lebanon "are you an Arab?"...they will answer "Lebanese"…They claim not to be part of the Arab world because they are not all Muslims but as francophone…

Eden: [talks about genetic studies in the National Geographic that attempted to study bones of dead Lebanese to see whether they could be linked to the Phoenicians… Eden continued that the results proved them to be mixed]

Language, Identity, War and Religion:

Mr. Edward: [explains the difference even in accent between the Muslims and Christians in Lebanon and their geographical location...he refers to the civil war in Lebanon as part of the struggle with accepting and /or rejecting the Arabic identity]

Beyond one nation-one language:

Lara: What are the linguistic changes in the gulf as Hindi is expanding there too?

Mr. Edward: Another area of sociology of language. Hindi in the gulf region is becoming like second or third language in the country due to work force…As you have

www.manaraa.com

French in Lebanon and Hebrew in Palestine.

Language Politics and Media Culture:

Lara: Is 'Aljazeera' Channel because of all this a pan Arab country or trans country…as identifying factor

Mr. Edward: 'Aljazeera' is a result of the economic development in the gulf region...the synthesis of globalization.

Lara: I'm studying Mass media and that is why I'm interested.

Mr. Edward: There is a book about satellite realms.

Language and Religion:

Isaq: Are there accents or dialects according to religion?

Mr. Edward: In Egypt no…in Lebanon yes…Christians live in the mountains, country side and this includes the Druze …Sunni Muslims live in the cities …so when they speak each group has a distinct regional dialect… in some countries it is the geographical location… but …Christians wrote about Arab nationalism more than Muslims because it is a non-Islamic identity…a kind of digression…why don't you give this hard time to your history teacher [all laugh]

Shawn: so you didn't give us your region and religion …is that a vocabulary choice…[laugh]

Mr. Edward: [Talks about educated people and the مكانة

www.manaraa.com

(social status/prestige) based on choice of dialect]

Students: [eyes and jaws wide open..and smiles]

Commentaries on Interaction 3

As mentioned in Chapter 3, critical ethnography attempts to construct meaning as it unfolds in the participants' or participants' lives, both from within and outside world as well. In this line of argument, the presence of the researcher and the reflexivity by which his/her subjectivity plays a role in the process are accountable (Rampton, 2006). In the first subheading of this interactional unit, my presence, as the researcher, in the classroom is publicly referred to three times. In these instances, Mr. Edward attempts to ask me for an opinion or seeks my opinion in agreement with his statements. As I constitute several roles, my part in here has been a participant with my own cultural and social interpretations of, and contributions to, the situated activity.

An interesting point to be mentioned here is that almost in every interactional unit Mr. Edward does, although humorously, asks the students to move into action in hope of a change. For instance, in Interaction Unit 1, Mr. Edward suggest writing a novel that defies the western notion of the Bedouins, their style of life, and the common stereotypical representations of them in general. In this interaction unit, Mr. Edward suggests that students make a visit to an Arab consulate and discuss the complexities of processing passports applications. These instances may sound mere humorous intervals. Social actions, however, start by instantiating moments of awareness upon which people act in hope of a change. Building crossings between discussions in the classrooms and possibilities of carrying these to real action outside the classroom are potential instances of "marrying awareness and practice" (Fairclough, 2001, p. 198).

www.manaraa.com

In these vignettes of dialogic notes, illustrative instances of language ideologies are being constructed. An interesting instance in this unit touches on the topic of dialects. In Chapter 5, I elaborated on the role of an Arabic standard variety at a time of Arab nationalism and its tight connection to religion as the language of the holy book of Muslims, the Quran. In one example, Mr. Edward and Clara refer to the political choices involved in selecting a particular dialect for a particular discourse. Media discourse has been considered an academic discourse, and therefore, mostly reserved to the standard variety of Arabic. Thus, introducing dialects like the Lebanese is a controversial matter.

Students' interest in Arabic dialects has been repetitive in conversations with me. They have shown interest in learning some varieties. Recognizing sociocultural and linguistic differences among those varieties, students have even been wondering about the institutional choices in educational settings that do not allow for inclusion of dialects besides the standard Arabic.

Another interesting example occurs when associating discussions of dialects to religion and geographic location. Mr. Edward refers to the situation in Lebanon where Muslims and Christians may have different dialects based on where they live. Language in this sense becomes a critical vehicle into one's membership into a religious group. In alignment with Kramsch (2003), "language is *the* most sensitive indicator of the relationship between an individual and a given social group" (p. 77-italics in origin). In sum, the participants negotiate multiple paths in which language plays a role in constructing a cultural and social identity; a religious one, a regional one, and an educated one. In each instance, it is how we choose to talk and what language variety we choose to use that situates us in diverse roles.

www.manaraa.com

Lara also brings in another illustrative example that makes space for discussions of postmodernity in this Arabic classroom. Lara, who identifies herself as a mass media major, wonders about the association between a pan-Arab national sense and the dominance of the "Al jazeera" satellite channel. Mr. Edward, though he does not elaborate much, points to the relationship to economy and globalization.

Again, we are reminded of a move beyond modern concepts of nationalism or a one nation's mentality. Mr. Edward does humorously ask students to open up such topics in a history class rather than in a language class. His opening of this space for students brings in the relevance of an interdisciplinary approach to language teaching that connects language to the social, cultural, and political. In other words, its connection to power as it operates through and within our lives. Echoing Fairclough (2001), the world has changed from the national and local, to the global and international, in a dialectic "two –way process": thus, both ways are shaping the other (p. 203). Mr. Edward, moves between a language ideology in the small regional locality in Lebanon, to the gulf, to the whole Arab world, and reaching to the global frame and vice versa.

www.manaraa.com

Interaction 4: "Edward Lane"

- *Media and politics: Egypt mirrored*
- *Questionable touch points*
- *Culture, Nativity*
- *Beyond classics*
- *An interdisciplinary approach*

Introductory Analysis

Entering the Arabic classroom, I constantly participate and observe the students constructing diverse narratives that document their personal lives. With media culture as a main resource in the students' lives, such narratives represent real occurrences in real culture. Amazingly, being immersed in their space, I find myself listening to their voices as they speak of moments linked to historical, societal, and wide cultural moments outside the classroom in the real world. In this interaction, students have a heated discussion over the 2006 elections in Egypt attempting to analyze its purposes and timing. The voices of these ordinary students contribute to other voices authoritated by the media.

As I write down my analysis today in 2011, I cyclically look back at the narratives of elections in Egypt as documented in the media. President Mubarak of Egypt is forced out of position due to the Egyptian's revolution. What students would say now and how

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

their narratives would change is part of what goes on in my own thinking as I continue writing. Different voices speak and different narratives are socially situated and constructed.

Mr. Edward habitually tries, through his sarcasm, to open up a space for the students to negotiate and reinterpret the texts provided in the Arabic textbook. The comprehension passage scanned below speaks of the life of the 19th century orientalist Edward Lane, who attempted to understand the life in Egypt through living there, adopting people's styles of life, and speaking Arabic. As Ethan stumbles on reading the foreign name 'Edward Lane' in Arabic script, the teacher smiles back and asks students for a translation. Students laugh back. The teacher could have moved forward into reading the passage line by line. He chooses, however, to disrupt the classroom environment by throwing the remark: "Edward Lane…the oreintalist...your friend." For most of the students, orientalism is connected to a history of classic stereotypical representation of the east. Calling Lane "a friend" triggers a turning point, a disruption, and a point of departure.

As such within the very first five minutes of the classroom, the teacher has shifted the purpose and ends of the lesson. The teacher selects provocative language that surprisingly redefines the classroom context. The situational context (Kramsch, 1993) changes and unexpected debates open up. I remind the reader that my intention is not to evaluate the manner in which the teacher operates in his classroom, nor the pedagogical methods applied. My intention is only to make visible the negotiations of multiple meanings constructed at the site.

A major illustrative cue of postmodernity in this interaction is the reference to

www.manaraa.com

"culture" and what makes one "native" to a particular culture. Mr. Edward speaks of different constituents that may contribute to one's culture: dress code/ appearance, membership into a certain religion, language, language use, traditions, and membership into a social group. Tow venues are made clear for the classroom. On the one hand, culture is "the product of socially and historically situated discourse communities" (Kramsch, 2003, p. 10). On the other hand, can one become part of or native to another culture by adopting particular cultural codes? Is becoming native to a culture a learned practice? How can one become an insider of a culture? What do we mean by being immersed in a culture? Finally, how can one claim to write about a different culture? Such questions are being directly and indirectly addressed by Mr. Edward in the dialogic notes below.

A critical point triggered by the teacher is the reference to the exceptional work of the orienatlist, Edward Lane, compared to others interested in studying the Middle East in the 19th century. The teacher constructs two versions of approaching a culture. The first belongs to the classical traditional approach, which understands culture as mere set of fixed traits and facts. As such, the teachers says that followers of this classical approach world assume that reading the Quran, the holy book of Muslims, or getting oriented with Al-Azhar, a major Islamic educational center in Egypt, is enough to understand people and their culture. Lane, according to the teacher, adopted a different style. It is more critical. He believed in having to understand locals and see them as they see themselves. As such, he tried to appropriate their life styles, getting acculturated, and paid particular importance to language as a main connection to one's culture.

How is this important for the students? Students themselves may have their own

www.manaraa.com

interpretation of approaching Arab and Islamic cultures. They are studying a foreign language and culture that they don't encounter in their own personal life outside the classroom. The teacher is creating opportunities for the students to see that culture is beyond transmission of set of behaviors or traits (Kramsch, 1993). The very notion of studying culture is intrinsically "ideological" as he mentions in the interaction below. More importantly, the teacher is creating an inseparable, binding connection between language and culture. At the same time, he is avoiding any lumping of the region, the Arab World, as 'one culture/one language' (Scollon, 2004).

Table 6.4: Comprehension passage, *EMSA 1*, p. 369

Edward Lane was a famous English orientalist. Lane visited Egypt in the 19th century where he studied the life and language of the Egyptians. He wrote a famous book about them. In his book, Lane mentioned that life in Egypt differs from life in Europe. He also said that the Egyptian welcomes the visitors, honors them, and offers them food. He lived in Cairo in which he had a large number of friends. He talked in his book about his life in Egypt and his Egyptian friends. He said: a friend told me that marriage is my duty because it is a duty for each Egyptian.

(Dialogic notes): November 17- Comprehension passage-my translation

Media and Politics: Egypt Mirrored

The five minutes warm up in the beginning of the class were heated discussion about elections in Egypt, its timing, and purposes. Students mixed Arabic and English to express the up-to-date news they heard from the media on

www.manaraa.com

the topic.

Intended Questionable Touch Points:

Mr. Edward: Edward Lane

هل سمعتم بـه؟ (have you heard of him?)

Students:[Silence]

Ethan is directed by the teacher to read the first sentence. He stuttered a few times trying to read the first two words. The teacher asked him about the meaning of what he read.

Ethan: I already don't know the first two words…

Mr. Edward: ادوارد لـين (Edward Lane)

Alice: what is it?

Mr. Edward: it is a name ادوارد لـين (Edward Lane)… your friend the orientalist

Shawn: [with a face of unbelief, threw a sharp sarcastic smile at the teacher].

Andrew: ooh.. now I got it.

[Three students raised hands and admitted not recognizing a foreign name in Arabic letters].

Culture, Nativity:

Mr. Edward: Have you heard of him?

Isaq: I think he learned Arabic among its people and then wrote a dictionary

Mr. Edward: yes… in Egypt. He immersed himself in the

www.manaraa.com

culture. He went native in dress…picked up not only the language but also the language usages, traditions, and more about religion…

Shawn: when was that?

Mr. Edward: early 19th century…his books are outdated now…but the idea in the west is that a place like Egypt particularly didn't change since when Mohammad Ali came to power…if you read a text like Al-Quran [the Muslim religious book] and go to a place like Al-Azhar [a famous old Egyptian university and mosque] then you will understand how Muslims think and behave...now such a thought is a stereotype…

So what is he is famous for?

[Students were staring back in silence].

Mr. Edward: He wrote a dictionary, 'definitive English Language Lexicon'7 or 8 volumes…you can look it up...It has its ideology if you want to study Egypt..

[Debbie reads after. Students ask about meanings, conjugations, and seek help in reading new vocabulary.

[The last line in the passage refers to marriage being a duty for Lane as it is a duty for each Egyptian. Mr. Edward resumes his laughter and so do the students].

www.manaraa.com

Mr. Edward: what an exclusive information and odd revelation!

Rafia: واجب Does the term (duty) also means (mandatory/obligatory)?

Mr. Edward: yes

[I thought Rafia, as a Muslim, meant mandatory in the religious jargon and not a social concept. The teacher did not follow up and her comment passed by].

Against Classics:

Mr. Edward: Does the name Edward Lane looks familiar. Are there other orientalists you know?

[Students mentioned something about older orientalists called the 'ancient Egyptian group']

Mr. Edward: Lane belongs to the classical period in some sort though breaking from the approach in another. The classics were connected to understanding a lost civilization. The concern was to dwell on Arabic and Islamic studies, deciphering the text, and encyclopedic data about people. There was no interest in speaking the language. Lane was different in the sense that he immersed himself and learned to speak the language and understand its usages too. One may compare the fundamentalists and the classical

www.manaraa.com

orientalists in the sense that both think in the same line: deciphering a textual book is the way to understand how a classical religious society thinks. [students wows and woos were loud]

An Interdisciplinary Approach:

Mr. Edward: How many of you take a religion course?

عن تاريخ الاسلام؟ (about the history of Islam?)

عن الدين او التاريخ؟ (about religion or history?)

Lara, Joy, and Andrew mention several courses related to:

الدين و الادب و الافكار السياسية (religion, literature, and political thoughts)

Mr. Edward: [redacted] College has religion courses, Jane?

Jane: yeah. Women in Islam

Mr. Edward: المراة في الاسلام (the woman in Islam)

Jane: و هناك صف عن (and there is a class about) Sufism

Mr. Edward: Anybody studying about Sufism?

[Shawn, James and Eden refer to a class or some classes they are taking about Islam. Students explained that the class is like a historical course that starts the beginning of prophethood and move to the recent times. They said they learn about Prophet Mohammad and Hajj (pilgrimage)]

Mr. Edward: So Sufism is in [redacted] College only.

www.manaraa.com

Lara: There is a religion class in [redacted] College. هناك استاذ جديد, استاذ دين (there is a new professor, a professor of religion)

Mr. Edward: [asking a bit about the course and teacher]…Islam courses usually comes by Surprise. [all smile]

[Mr. Edward shuffles through his papers and starts passing out copies of the homework]

Mr. Edward: I will give you handouts to keep you busy…you are brave…you can handle it [smiles]...good news...We are on schedule! [all laugh]

Commentary on interaction 4

To summarize this interaction, three major cues of postmodernity will be addressed as influencing this Arabic language classroom. The first one is associated with the notion of culture. The Arabic teacher focuses on a particular view of culture that is related, according to the comprehension passage, to orientalism[15]. Kramsch (2003) quotes the orientalist notion of culture and its relationship to power as explained by Edward Said. Said explains that orientalists constructed a view of culture that creates division between the powerful and superior West and the powerless voiceless Orient (the Middle East). Not only did orientalists impose a hegemonic representation of the life and culture of the Middle East, they also influenced the manner in which the Middle East sees itself

[15] "Orientalism: Term coined by Edward Said to denote the colonialist perspective taken by European writers on the Orient, and by extension, a colonialist view of any foreign culture" (Kramsch, 2003, p. 130).

www.manaraa.com

through this hegemonic lens. Such a lens has its effect on how other foreign cultures are represented by the powerful West.

In other words, the orientalists exercised an ideological work that legitimized their methods of representing other cultures. This kind of exercise is linked to power and language and is used as a means to speak of and document this ideological working. Naturally, macrostructures, like educational institutions, have helped recycle such ideological and stereotypical representations of other cultures. Hence, Kramsch (2003) underscores the importance of language in representing culture and the ways of talking about it in foreign language classrooms.

Another interesting point in the dialogic notes is the reference to classical approaches of understanding a community through "deciphering" written texts. The teacher critiques the superficial approach in which a community is claimed to be understood by deciphering texts. In this sense, he compares such followers to fundamentalists who try to understand religion by indulging on a word by word deciphering of religious texts, without any association to the social, cultural, linguistic, and political factors that shape and condition a community.

How could a religious book written centuries ago construct a current image of a community and its codes of membership? And how could avoiding the study of the community's language be advantageous? Echoing Kramsch (2003), cultures are heterogeneous and constantly changing making space for continuous "struggle for recognition and legitimation" (p. 10).

The Arabic textbook itself as an archetype of modernity does not revolutionize the students' understanding of culture. General traits and sets of behaviors are presented as

www.manaraa.com

markers of the target culture of study. What the teacher of Arabic attempts to do--through disruptions of classroom practices--is to create a collision between the modern text and the postmodern context, triggered by the speech of the teacher and his students.

The third interesting point of analysis in this interaction is the significance of an interdisciplinary approach to learn about foreign languages and cultures. Surprisingly, when Mr. Edward asks students about other courses they are taking on campus on Islamic studies as a means to learn about Arab and Islamic cultures, a number of them raised hands and shared course names. Andrew, a White American majoring in political science, Joy, a Bangladeshi Muslim majoring in economics, and Lara, a White American majoring in Religion, all share enthusiastically their courses on religion, literature, and political thought. Jane, who has a double major in Political Science and Asian Languages and Cultures with a concentration in the Middle East, also mentions a course on Women and Islam. Shawn and James, both White Americans majoring in Political Studies, and Eden, a White American majoring in Middle Eastern Studies, also share information on the course of Islam offered at a neighboring college.

The rich interdisciplinary resources these students bring to the Arabic classroom are a great asset to be used in learning Arabic language and culture. Their resources provide a ground for multiple intertextual interactions in reproduction of knowledge.

www.manaraa.com

Conclusion

We know each other in Arabic and
We are in the same boat…
Having…a sort of thing in common
I mean
We don't have a college in common
We don't have a cultural background…
But we are all studying Arabic

Shawn used these words to describe the context of the Arabic classroom with all of its components: the teacher, the students, and their conversations. Throughout their semester of study, the students constructed multiple identity roles, initiated multiple points of access into the language materials, negotiated multiplicity of truths, and questioned multiple sources of knowledge. With all of this multiplicity, they share a common factor of being students of Arabic at this particular context.

This chapter enriches the study with the third dimension of data collected throughout my research. In chapter 4, my data constructed vivid images of the students of Arabic, their identities and roles, and their investments in learning Arabic. In Chapter 5, my data focused on the Arabic textbook as an archetype of modernity. In this chapter, my data has brought to life dialogic moments of interactions among the teacher, the students, and texts in the Arabic classroom.

Echoing findings from other research on studying classroom language and literacy events (e.g. see, Bloome et al., 2005), the Arabic teacher and students used the written passages from the textbook to accomplish several purposes: First, as a reading practice, Mr. Edward reads the written text with the authoritative role of the teacher, as the native

www.manaraa.com

speaker, and more knowledgeable language teacher. He constantly corrects the responsive learners throughout the decoding process. Second, the teacher as a critical educator initiates moments to deconstruct, "challenge and interrogate" (Bloome, et al., 2005) knowledge expressed in those reading passages in the textbook, encouraging students to negotiate, reconstruct, and resist the texts as well. And finally, the teacher and students start by reading the written text as a "starting point or a platform for exploring issues in their worlds beyond the written text" (Bloome, et al., 2005). The centering role of the teacher gets decentered at certain times as students contested claims of the textbook or each others' talk. In doing so, the teacher and his students have presented classroom agendas that collide with the ones adopted by the textbook and to some extent the educational institutions.

Several cues of postmodernity have been illustrated in the above interactional units. Some focused on notions of identity as no longer fixed or static, but socially and culturally constructed. Other cues looked at languages and cultures as heterogonous and being reproduced through people's interactions (Rampton 2006). The role of media and visual cultures was pointed to as well, at a time that is described as "postlinguistic" (Fairclough, 2001, p. 2).

In conclusion, the main question that is partially addressed in this chapter is as follows: In a post 9/11 context, how can teachers of Arabic instantiate critical dialogues and allow a space for negotiated interpretations of textbooks in late modern classrooms?

In the above discussion, four instances of playful performances or interactions are analyzed. These performances are interesting in foregrounding how these students and teacher departed from the expected official conventions of the language classroom. The

www.manaraa.com

classroom participants, through their loud pluralized interactions, have disrupted the canonical teaching traditions of educational institutions as represented by the modern textbook in this course.

These performances are unique portraits of a different character to be seen in the classroom proceedings. They collide with modern assumptions and conceptions of schooling and, therefore, show willingness to publicly perform an alternative perspective on classroom reality. The new perspective echoes the literature on post or late modernity where grand narratives are rejected, counter-narratives are constructed, authorities of knowledge are questioned, identities are socially constructed, and the chaotic unpredictable nature of the world is the norm.

www.manaraa.com

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

This final chapter explores the findings and implications of this study. In the preceding chapters, I have drawn on my data and on poststructural theories to argue that language classrooms are complex sites of interactions that are influenced by globalization and late or postmodern contexts. My data illustrates the collision between contexts of modernity represented in the textbooks and educational institutions, and contexts of postmodernity that permeates into the teachers' and students' approach towards teaching and learning Arabic as a foreign language in a post 9/11, college setting. Such concerns provide important implications for teaching and research in foreign language classrooms, which may contribute to debates on identity of language learners, classroom talk, roles of teachers and textbooks in modern and postmodern educational institutions. In this concluding chapter, I will start by revisiting my research questions before elaborating on implications that extend the dialogue on the theoretical and practical concerns in foreign language classrooms.

Revisiting the Research Questions

This research developed out of my dissatisfaction with the scarcity of ethnographic classroom research on the teaching and learning of Arabic at college settings in the United States in a post 9/11 context. I am paying particular attention to the students' investments in learning Arabic, classroom talks and interactions, how teachers and students actually use textbooks, and the connections of learning Arabic to the outside

www.manaraa.com

sociocultural and political contexts. As such, I had an intense interest in investigating relationships between the macro-sociocultural and political contexts manifested in the aftermath of 9/11 and the micro-language events that occur within Arabic language classrooms. The research questions that guide the study focus on three interconnected concerns:

1. Who are the students of Arabic and what are their investments in learning Arabic in a post 9/11 context?
2. How do uses of the language textbook shape curriculum instruction in the Arabic foreign language classroom in contexts of late modernity?
3. In a post 9/11 context, how can teachers of Arabic instantiate critical dialogues and allow a space for negotiated interpretations of modern textbooks in late modern classrooms?

In the following discussion, I elaborate on the findings that respond to each of the above research questions which are: 1) postmodern identities and investments, 2) textbooks and historical contexts 3) plural voices, critical teachers.

Summary of Findings

Finding 1: Postmodern Identities and Investments

The Arabic language learners relate to the social world through a mosaic of identities and investments influenced by contexts of postmodernity.

www.manaraa.com

This finding responds to the first research question, which attempts to explore the Arabic language learners, their identities, and investments in the Arabic language classroom at the university context of study. The analysis shows that Arabic students constructed a certain relationship to the social world--across time and space--which recognizes their multiple sense of identity (Norton, 2000).

Through an educated awareness of situated negotiation of identity, students constructed visible power relations inside the classrooms. Some marginalized students who tend to be very quiet in the classroom have assumed powerful voices in response to, contest of, and negotiation with the other participants in the language learning events. For example, Eden was a silent and shy student throughout the semester. He reframed his relationship, however, with the other learners and the teacher as an interested reader on the history of the Middle East. In the first interaction unit, he spoke of his knowledge of "Ibn Battouta", a well-known 14th century Moroccan traveler. In addition, in the third interaction unit, Eden also shared interesting data from the national geographic on genetic studies in Lebanon that attempts to link bones of the dead to the Phoenicians.

The analysis also shows that the learners of Arabic are aware of the sociocultural and political dimensions that affect their language learning experience and how they acknowledge their identities as a "site of struggle" (Norton, 1995, p. 10). For example, Isaq was one of the language learners that acknowledge the changing forces that construct his sense of identity in terms of race--as a North African--color--as a Black--and religion--as a Jew. He constructed an image of himself with different subject positions. He situated himself across continents as a North African American. Historically, he associated himself with a history of the Jews, with ancestors who lived in

www.manaraa.com

the Middle East. He remembered his father's love of Arabic romantic songs and music. Isaq related his current setting in Chicago in the middle of a large Arab and Muslim community--a fact that made Arabic part of the languages used in the 'synagogue' he attended, as he mentioned in Chapter 4. Isaq's awareness of the multiple identity markers that co-exist in constructing his image equipped him with a sense of power in classroom interactions, where he posed critical questions and answers in response to the other participants in the classroom.

The analysis in chapter 4 also shows that students' investments in Arabic language learning constructs a "meaningful learner environment" and maximizes the learners' involvement and opportunities in classroom interactions (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p. 48). As defined in Chapter 1, investments rather than motivations (see more on instrumental and integrative motivation as defined by Gardner 1985) are used in the study to refer to the postmodern influence on the study of identity and language learning and teaching. Following Norton (2000), rather than adopting a psychological term, I employ her use of the term "investments" as it encompass the learners' sense of identity in relation to the social, cultural, and political contexts of the world (p. 10).

In this understanding of investment, language learners and their interest in the target language and culture is intricately connected to their identities. Through investing in learning Arabic in a post 9/11 context, students understand that "they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will in turn increase the value of their cultural capital" (Norton, 1995, p. 17). Some students reported in Chapter 4 that learning Arabic is in need in response to 9/11 and the political and economic national needs for speakers of the language. Learning Arabic plays a role in increasing the cultural

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

capital (Bourdieu & Passerson, 1997) of the students as speakers in a critically needed language at a time when the return will "give them access to hitherto unattainable resources" (Norton, 2000, p. 10).

Chapter 4 has sketched illustrative images of the students' complex identities and the relationship to their investments. The learners' investment in learning Arabic, and in interacting with target language speakers, has been part of their changing social identities. That is, they constantly rebuild a certain relationship to themselves and how they relate to the outside social world as learners of Arabic post 9/11.

For example, Christopher, one of the Arabic learner participants, identified multiple constituents, or symbolic resources he draws from in construction of his identity including: race, color, religion, friends, family, language, and culture. He is Indo-American. His father is a Hindi Brahmin and his mother is Irish Catholic. His identity drove his investment to learn Arabic and befriend members of the target language. He referred to his love for the linguistic characteristics of Hindi and Arabic. Through his Indian roots, he has been in contact with Indian Muslims. He has also spent time with Moroccan Muslims in Spain. His multicultural identity made his investment in cultural and linguistic awareness grow to a global context, whereby learning of Arabic becomes "intimately personal" as he describes it. His color, due to his Indian decent, has added another dimension to his identity and thus investment in learning Arabic. He refers to the fact that post 9/11, he and his father have been profiled, since they may be perceived as Arabs due to color or features that are similar. He is looked at differently on buses, planes, and along the streets. Finally, his interest to become a linguist in the future is another part of his investment that is influenced by his identity as a future professional.

www.manaraa.com

In sum, Christopher's investment in learning Arabic has been driven by the multiplicity of his identity. Such recognition opens up opportunities for him to learn Arabic and communicate with Arabs and Muslims. Hence, his investment is socially structured and I hope it will help continue to improve his learning to speak and use Arabic outside the classroom with other target speakers. His symbolic resources described above are means of power to help him continue investing as a language learner.

Other Arabic language learners display similar complexities of social identities and aspire, through their symbolic resources, to learn Arabic and get closer to the Arab and Muslim communities. Learners who identify themselves through religion, like Joy and Rafia, speak of their learning Arabic as an investment in learning about their religion. Both spoke of a postmodern understanding of their identity as Muslims and their rejection of social or cultural beliefs on how a Muslim should behave or act. As such, their investment in learning to speak and read Arabic is their means to become "a better Muslim" as Joy says. Both learners rejected the traditional interpretations of texts and wish to find their own voice into reading scriptures.

Students' awareness of their multiple postmodern identities is also noticeable in the manner in which they expressed themselves in Chapter 4--using post linguistic means like drawings, diagrams, and graphs. Lara, for instance, used a graphic illustration—an equation formula--to speak of those who contributed to her becoming a learner of Arabic. Thomas also drew a map of the world to visually record his trip from the United States to Egypt. He also described the American lack of knowledge in foreign languages by drawing a pie chart, whereby he records eleven global languages that he understands to be known in America and interestingly points to the lack of knowledge in some,

www.manaraa.com

including Arabic. Those graphic illustrations, multimodal literacy practices, are another cue of the influence of postmodernity and globalization on the identity and investments of the Arabic language learners.

The above finding confirms conclusions reached by other studies in second and foreign language research, which investigates the notion of identity as a social construct in language classrooms, and its connection to power and the diverse subject positions of language learners. Janks (1993, 2001), Norton (1995, 2000), Rampton (1995, 2006), Toohey (2000), and Wallace (2004), have argued in support for the poststructuralist and postmodern understanding of identity in the language classrooms as dynamic, situated, contextualized, and heterogeneous.

For example, Wallace (2004) utilizes an autobiographical approach in examining 14 high school and college students who belong to bi-racial and bi-ethnic heritage in California. Wallace has conducted semistructured ethnographic interviews using the Expressive Autobiographical Interview (EAI) technique,. The research uses an interesting autobiographical approach, which allows the participants to speak for themselves. The participants clearly expressed their understandings of who they are and how wider society positions them. Using Gee's Discourse theory as a "lens" (p. 195) to explore the "individual" and "mutual" collective processes that affect identity development across contexts (p. 196), the author argues in support for the post-structuralist and postmodern understanding of identity as contextualized and heterogeneous. Wallace concludes that it is urgent to for researchers to address the complexity of attitudes students "positionality, learning, and social processes in school settings" (p.209).

This investigation hopes to contribute a new dimension of classroom research by

www.manaraa.com

providing insights on the situated hybrid identities and investments of language learners in the Arabic language classrooms, sites that are still under investigated.

Finding 2: Textbooks and historical contexts

Textbooks, as products of historical, political, ideological, and institutional contexts, play a major role in shaping language learning and teaching.

This finding answers the second question posed by this study, which situates the Arabic textbook within its institutional contexts as an archetype of the social conditions of modernity. The analysis of Chapter 5 has emphasized some aspects of the textbook's context in relation to the concept of language, understanding of culture, and the teaching methods adopted. Hence, Chapter 5 points to the fact that the Arabic textbook represents certain ideologies, which reflect particular sociocultural, political, and institutional discourses. In other words, at the macro level of analysis, the textbook is influenced by the politics of foreign language education and the theories of language learning/teaching as influenced by behavioral and structural approaches. At the institutional level, the textbook is situated in contexts of modernity, with a particular notion of schools as factories.

The analysis points to the influence of structuralism and its view of language on the language pedagogy adopted by the Arabic textbook, which is the audiolingual approach. Influenced by behaviorism, and as such, scientific experimentation, language learning has been defined as a verbal behavior based on conditioning and reinforcement through empirical observations and scientific methods (Brown, 2000). The audiolingual

www.manaraa.com

method of teaching adopts a style that focuses on repetitive drilling practices, positive and negative enforcement, and memorization of vocabulary and phrases as linear building blocks to learn a language (Lessow-Hurley, 2000).

Such a method of teaching is teacher centered, whereby the teacher is the main authoritative figure in the classroom. This investigation problematizes this particular agenda of the textbook. Data collected on classroom interactions exposes the collision between the modern textbook's assumption of teachers' and students' roles and the reality of learning, where agency in the Arabic classroom of study is not solely dominated by the teacher.

Underpinnings of such pedagogy in the Arabic textbook, therefore, stem from an institutional context defined by modernist adherence to science and behavioral approaches of learning. In addition, it also is influenced by the macro politics of teaching foreign languages in the United States, like Arabic, after WWII when a need for fluent speakers was part of the national security and global economic competitiveness (Kramsch, 1993). Army language laboratories in the United States, as discussed in Chapter 5, have adopted this method of teaching. Choices of pedagogical applications in the language classroom are deeply ideological.

The analysis also points to the apparent modern concepts of "linguistic nationism" (Kramsch, 2003, p. 72) or Pan-Arab beliefs and discourses. The textbook adopts Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) as the national standardized language of Arabs. Chapter 5 analyses the historical, political, and religious values associated with the modern standard version of Arabic with a focus on Arab nationalism movements of the 19th century. In addition, arguments around the use of dialects in educational institutions, and as such in

www.manaraa.com

textbooks, are one of the hot topics of current postmodern contexts of teaching Arabic.

As a descendent of national understanding of language, comes a national, Pan-Arab, understanding of culture. The analysis points to a narrow and limited understanding of cultural identity as associated with a "national identity "and "linguistic identity" (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p. 268). The textbook assumes that all Arabs, spanning over 22 countries, are members of a particular culture that share a language , Modern Standard Arabic, and a nation, an imaginary unified Arab world. For instance, the lesson on Bedouins presents to the language learner fixed generalized behavioral traits of what an Arab Bedouin is based on how he/she acts, lives, or speaks. The classroom discussion of the life of the Bedouins, however, disrupts the textbooks' image and constructs other versions that go beyond national or cultural identities. Culture, in the Arabic classroom talk, is understood in a more complex sense, a bakhtinian view, by the Arabic learners and the teacher as "an activity with political and moral ends and objectives," (Hirschkop, 1989, p. 5).

Stern (1992) explains that the concept of culture identified in educational settings focuses on cognitive and behavioral aspects of culture. The former relates to the geography, values, attitudes, and achievements of the target culture. The latter relates to the learner's ability to understand and interpret such values of the target culture and act culturally in an appropriate manner as befits the target culture. The Arabic textbook carries remnants of this narrow view of culture and the narrow vision of the relationship between language and culture in education.

Through my analysis of the thematization of the textbook, the Arabic textbook has also been situated within contexts of modernity in relation to kinds of topics or

www.manaraa.com

content included. The discussion illustrates the ideological management of the textbook, its reflection of the world views at the time, and the kinds of language learners intended as audience of Arabic in the US in the 60s and 70s--mostly academics and professionals.

The theoretical and practical dilemma of adopting modernity situated language textbooks in our current late-modern global classrooms is alarming. This finding, however, echoes a large literature on language education (Fairclough, 2001; Kramsch, 1993, 2003; Kumaravadivelu, 2003; Pennycook, 1999, 2001), which discusses challenges of modern notions of language theories and methods on learning/teaching language and calls attention to a more critical reading and interpretation of texts.

In addition, other literature focused on the critical evaluation of textbooks' content and the need for a critical reading of texts in contexts of late modernity. For example, the works of Janks (1991, 1993, 1999, 2001, 2010) highly contributes to critical language teaching in foreign language classrooms. With South Africa as her domain of study, Janks focuses on the role of critical language awareness, a "term coined by the Language-Ideology-Power research group at Lancaster University," in language education in schools, (Janks, 2001, p.139). Influenced by post-structuralism and the notion of meaning as dialogic and plural, this pedagogy speaks explicitly of some concepts like ideology in language use, subject position, and the human agency in interpreting meanings.

In her study of students' identity conflicts in reaction to the content of textbooks in South Africa (2001), Janks makes use of students' and teachers' feedback in the process of developing materials in South Africa between 1989 and 1991. With the focus on one workbook, Language and Position, Janks participants--ten students in the tenth

www.manaraa.com

grade level and two teachers--provide helpful data through questionnaires and video-taped interviews. Findings of the research point to the complexity of students' identity and the unresolved conflicts that occur when interpreting texts. As the participants' subject positioning changes, their meanings and reactions to the texts in the textbook become unpredictable. The research concludes the importance of heterogeneous classrooms in articulating plural interpretations of texts, which in this research--against expectation--did not happen. This may be due to the students' perception of schooling, materials, and readings relationship to "sacred" issues of students' lives. It is clear then that "it is not easy to predict what text will ignite in different contexts" (p. 148).

Wallace (1995) presents a critical empirical study, which describes a one-semester course taught to a group of multilingual and multicultural undergraduates at a university setting in West London. The study investigates the understanding and application of critical language awareness on classroom interaction and its influence on constructing a new "focused pedagogy" (p. 335) through readings of written texts. The initial phase of the study focuses on "consciousness raising" (p. 342), where reading is perceived as a social practice and a longer phase that involves a deep analysis of texts and their association with their macro contexts. Wallace highlights the significance of selecting texts, identifying genres, and learning explicit tools to understand the ways in which readers and writers are positioned through language use. Through excerpts from the readings used in the classroom and the students' responses, the author concludes that many learners have felt liberated and empowered by understanding that authoritative texts could be challenged.

www.manaraa.com

Finding 3: Plural voices, critical teachers

The diminished monologic voice of the teacher opens a space for construction of plural voices of language learners and the emergence of new forms of dialogic meanings.

This finding directly answers the third question in this study, which focuses on the role of the teacher and the space he/she constructs for students to share in the authority of the classroom, therefore, helping monitor their own learning. Analysis of Chapter 6 makes visible the interactions among the students, the teacher, and the textbook. The way in which the students interact with each other and mainly with the teacher, informs us of the way late modernity is influencing the classroom learning events. The vivid dialogic notes reflect the changes to the traditional authority of the classroom represented by the teacher, and the traditional sources of knowledge represented by the learning textbook.

The analysis of the dialogic notes has introduced new ways of seeing inside the classroom. As such, we have witnessed new perceptions that collide with modern concepts like classroom learning experience, identity, and classroom culture. The discourse of classroom learning has been constantly shaped and re-shaped over time as informed by cues of postmodernity discussed in earlier chapters.

Against the orderly world of the modern classroom, the Arabic classroom in this study has, through the vivid snap shots of dialogic notes, illustrated events full of difference, fragmentation, and contradictions. The teacher and the learners changed their footings constantly in a playful manner, shifting their roles and expressing plural authorities. The classroom was "a complex social place, one in which a number of worlds coexisted and intersected" (Dyson, 1993, p. 2). This study does not make any claims on

www.manaraa.com

what the student have learned. I have not, however, witnessed any complaints or drop of attendance due to the negotiated learning environment. The investment in keeping the dialogue with the teacher, in agreement or contest, has been high as we have seen in the interactions. In fact, the students' responses to their learning experience has been positive as they reported in Chapter 4, which describes the unique culture of the classroom with its hybrid participants, the safe and fun environment, and the ability to express their voices.

The character of the teacher and his willingness to undermine his role as the dominant authoritative figure and transmitter of knowledge, has contributed to a transformative learning experience. In addition, he has opened a space for countering the universal truths or grand narratives of the textbook, and to construct moments of direct critical language awareness. Through his playful humor, Mr. Edward, the Arabic teacher has attempted to construct social and cultural spaces for learners to voice their personal responses to texts, in effect "re-writing" their own stories (Kramsch, 1993, p. 134).

The narratives students shared with the teachers were "a way of taking or sharing control, of shaping a symbolic world in which [they] themselves were on control" (Dyson, 1993, p. 74). In reminder of the permeable curriculum referenced earlier in the dissertation, the teacher allowed space for rich diversity of the Arabic learners' cultural and symbolic resources to "define their own agendas, their own goals" (Dyson, 1993, p. 81). In Bakhtinian terms, through incidents of "collegial discussions" and playful encounters, the teacher and students transform a monologic curriculum into a dialogic one (Dyson, 1993, p. 136).

This finding is consistent with the literature. For example, Rampton (2006)

www.manaraa.com

provides a study of teenagers' classroom talk in an inner-city high school including detailed transcripts and extensive case studies documenting classroom conversations. He poses the question of the challenges of modernist ideas and assumptions on the concepts of language, culture, and knowledge in late modern context. In comparison with classroom data of the 1970s and 80s, Rampton argues:

> Differences and similarities might ultimately have more to do with a global shift in the perspectives and sensitivities of academics than with any historical changes in classroom interactional practices themselves. The last thirty years have been a shift in the academy from structuralism to post-structuralism and this has generated a new concern for the carnivalesque, the agency of subordinates, and the co-construction of social systems (p. 86).

In his study of language in late modernity, Rampton refers to the various frames and discourses that co-work in classroom talk, situating and appropriating the interaction within the wider sociocultural world. Labeling his research as "linguistic ethnography," Rampton provides a close look and analysis of "situated language use" and therefore clear "insights into everyday social and cultural production" (p. 385). As students adopt plural voices and share authority with teachers--contesting, negotiating, and agreeing--Rampton invites researchers to imagine how the "value and social meaning of a school foreign language might be reshaped within the micropolitics of classroom interaction" (p. 144).

As Chapter 6 highlights, the playfulness of the students and the humorous character of the teacher makes a safe environment available for critical learning in the classroom. The work of Sullivan (2000), as an observer researcher in an EFL classroom in Vietnam, calls attention not only to the "classroom setting and the ways students interact within it, but also to the historical and cultural context of the world outside the

www.manaraa.com

classroom" (p. 115). She refers to "good teaching" as a socially constructed practice (p. 115) underscoring the critical perspective on schooling and education as far from neutral.

Sullivan speaks of the playfulness in classroom language learning, which may include, "teasing and joking, puns and word play, and oral narratives, as part of the broad sociohistorical values…embedded in the ways people interact with each other" (p. 122). Rather than adopting universal ideological systems, which may attempt to understand how humans interact and communicate, Sullivan points out that is pivotal to understand the social relations in which individuals live and socialize. Similar to this investigation, understanding the learner's ways of interacting with others and/or with the teacher needs to be socially interpreted.

Speaking of voices and their authoritative representations from a Bakhtinian perspective on language as dialogic, Morson (2004) argues that authoritative voice is heard, spoken, and interpreted in "a milieu of difference" (p. 318). In this sense, the authoritative voice becomes one way, one perspective, or one view among others that may be contested through dialogue. Hence, dialogue becomes the "process of real testing" (p. 323) of voices without a guarantee of a final resolution. By contesting and being dialogically engaged with other views and voices, one should not intend to destroy "the opponent" and eliminate the "dialogic sphere in which the word lives" (p. 323- 4). Rather, one should learn to "enrich one's own perspective by the exchange" (p. 324). Hence, learning becomes a "perpetual process" (p. 331).

Morson accentuates the notion of a "dialogic approach to the curriculum" (p. 329), which would respect what students think they need to learn. Teachers, then, can provide their own knowledge depending on available resources and having in mind

www.manaraa.com

students' diverse cultures and values.

Implications for Teaching and Research

For scholars and educators in the field of language studies, this study suggests several points of discussion in teaching and research in the foreign language classroom with a focus on Arabic. First, the ethnographic data and analysis of classroom talk and classroom interaction in the Arabic classroom, illustrates the learners' and teacher's actual response to the Arabic textbook. Textbooks have been examined and analyzed as representatives of "ideological message systems for the transmission and reproduction of values" (Luke, 1999, p. 186). A number of studies have directed attention to the pedagogical and ideological purposes behind the selection of textbooks and how they relate to schools as social organizations, politics of school curriculum, and the complexities of legitimate knowledge in association with textbooks, teachers, and learners (Apple, 1986, 2004, 2006; Luke, 2006). Few studies, however, have referred to the actual use of the textbook in the classroom as Heilenman (1991) points out that "we really know very little about how teachers and learners use them [textbooks]" (p. 105).

In relation to Arabic language studies, I have not yet come across similar perspectives that examine how and what teachers and students actually do with Arabic language textbooks. This study, thus, attempts to provide insight into an Arabic classroom in which talk and interaction around the actual use of the textbook clearly shows literacy events. Not only is this shaping and re-shaping influenced by local classroom context, but it is also affected by the outside global context at the sociocultural, political, and institutional levels that surround the learning of Arabic as a foreign

www.manaraa.com

language in a post 9/11, late modern contexts. For researchers and educators in the field of foreign language studies--in general and Arabic in particular--more research on how learners and researchers actually use, interpret, negotiate, and react to textbooks is needed. With particular focus on new technologies in contexts of globalization and digital media, new kinds of textbooks are needed that employs multimodality and digital applications for new kinds of learning (see e.g., Kalantzis & Cope (2010) on "New Media: New Learning").

Second, the tight connection between teaching Arabic as a foreign language in the US and the current rapid changes in the global sociopolitical and cultural relations--both in the US post 9/11 and the current Arab world politics--provides a new "critical juncture" (Duncan, 1991, p. vi) for educators and researchers in the general field of foreign language studies. This study has illustrated the clear connection between teaching a language in the micro contexts of the classroom and its connection to the macro contexts of the worlds. At the institutional level, the politics of teaching foreign languages--and Arabic as a critical need language--has always influenced curriculum and investments in language education. Analysis of the students' identities and investments in learning Arabic highlights the diversity of language learners and their discursive reading of the word and the world.

In this line of argument, classrooms as social contexts of learning language are problematized to take in consideration micro and macro sociocultural and political variables, forcing teachers and learners to "[operate] within and across multiple discourse worlds" (Kramsch, 1993, p. 240). Learning a foreign language may still cherish values of American schools as "a call for action" (Kramsch, 1993, p. 256), however, the

www.manaraa.com

postmodern contexts--which are clear in the classroom of investigation in this study--have introduced multiple purposes that may go beyond canon values triggered by contexts of modernity. The analysis in Chapters 4 and 6 shows that foreign language classrooms are rich in paradoxes in relation to investments in language studies and relationships with the local and global world contexts (Fairclough, 2001; Norton, 2000, Pennycook, 2001)., More research is needed on students' investments in relation to the political, social, and cultural contexts in their native and target cultures, with particular focus on critical need languages like Arabic.

Third, in analyzing the Arabic textbook in Chapter 5, I concluded that the textbook draws from contexts of modernity in relation to an understanding of concept of language, language learning, and methods of language teaching. This study underscores the incongruities in language classes where modern policies of education collide with postmodern contexts of learning. In a world that is rapidly influenced by multiculturalism, multilingualism, and effects of globalization, the teaching of foreign languages including Arabic recognizes the need for a change in curriculum that goes along with the varied learners' investments, world needs, and advanced language capacities. As Byrnes (2010) points out, the field of language teaching acknowledges the high interest in developing advanced "FL capacities in a citizenry being educated for the global multilingual environment" (p. 3).

New pedagogies and materials, hence, are required to satisfy the demands of "globalized environment, in multicultural societies" for competent users of languages (Byrnes & Maxim, 2003, p. x). The work of Byrnes (2010) and Kern (2003) are good examples of adopting literacy-based approach to language teaching. Such an approach

www.manaraa.com

attempts to reconcile two core outcomes: learning the kind of language used for diverse personal and social contexts, and the cultural knowledge of language use. This can be accomplished through "explicitly targeting the development of both language and content" in foreign language curriculum (Byrnes, 2010, p. 6). In Arabic, for instance, authentic literary texts could be used throughout the curriculum to contextualize language learning and use in varieties of contexts.

Fourth, the study gives particular focus to the character of the teacher in foreign language classrooms. The different footings and paradoxical roles the teacher assumed show the complex tasks teachers handle in dealing with diverse group of language learners. The restraints imposed on teachers by the institutional contexts--like schedules, curriculum, and funding--contribute to their challenges. The study presents vignettes of classroom interactions in which the teacher constructs a space for the Arabic learners to develop a sense of critical awareness in negotiating meanings during literacy events. His humorous character and his willingness to diminish his role as the authoritative figure in the classroom, construct a safe place for students to speak up and negotiate their learning of a new language and culture. Allwright (1984) says the significance of interaction is that it only simply creating "learning opportunities, it is that it constitutes learning itself" (p. 9).

The role of the teacher in late modern foreign language classrooms have been examined critically by a number of researchers (Bull & Anstey, 2010; Kramsch, 1993; Kumaravadivelu, 2003; Rampton, 2006; Stolle & Fischman, 2010). This study contributes by adding insights from the Arabic classroom. More work is needed to address the critical aspects of teaching Arabic in current critical political and social

www.manaraa.com

junctures. Having in mind the limitations on data recording in this study, data remain of great significance encouraging teachers and researchers for reflective thinking in evaluation of classroom teaching and learning practices.

In the end, a new pedagogy is being introduced and examined in the general field of foreign language studies. Such pedagogy revolutionizes language learning with the aid of new technologies that enables learners to construct new learning contexts, investments, and identities joining critical literacy with visual literacy (Cole & Pullen, 2010, p. 2). Digital applications in classroom learning are also governed by ideologies of power since not all learning contexts are equipped to meet up with those new technologies (see e.g., Cope & Kalantzis, 2010).

The framework or vision for rethinking foreign language teaching and learning would benefit from new pedagogies, like multiliteracies, that reconcile teaching of language, content, and culture for educated learners in contexts of postmodernity. Such a vision would move beyond "existing language-based theories of communication" as they are no longer in harmony with the critical understanding of language and modes of communication in our contemporary world (Kress, 2000, p. 182). In addition, in such pedagogy, teachers' hybrid roles in the classroom are redefined to tend to the subjective needs of the learners and their engagement in and desire to learn a foreign language (Kramsch, 2009).

www.manaraa.com

APPENDIX A

(ELEMENTARY ARABIC II) STUDENTS SURVEY

Why Learn Arabic?

February 2005

Please read this paragraph carefully before proceeding:

The purpose of this interview is to shed some light into the purposes of learning Arabic, especially in the context of post 9/11 events.

This written interview will be ONLY used for academic purposes and the information provided will be ONLY disclosed to the researcher, myself, Sawsan Abbadi and my academic advisor in the School of Education Dr. Meg Gebhard.

Although some personal information of the interviewees is needed, no such personal information will be accessed or used without the prior consent of the interviewees themselves.

Any names that might be used in the academic research will be pseudonyms.

Personal Information:

NAME:

SCHOOL:

YEAR:

MAJOR: MINOR:

ETHNICITY:

NATIONALITY:

NATIVE LANGUAGE(S):

OTHER LANGUAGES:

AGE:

Academic information:

www.manaraa.com

1. For how long have you been learning Arabic?

2. List names of courses you have taken? When and where did you enroll in these courses (Please indicate if inside or outside the US)? What was the title of the course (e.g. Arabic I: Speaking and Listening)?

3. List any informal efforts you have made (other than formal structured schools) to learn Arabic (e.g., web search, chat rooms, reading Arabic news papers, from a friend, etc.)? When did you engage in these activities? In what context did this happen/or is happening?

4. What has motivated you to learn Arabic?

5. Has 9/11 affected your decisions to learn Arabic? How?

6. In what way do you think Arabic is beneficial to you now and/or in the future?

7. Have you ever had a job where Arabic is recommended? (Journalism, translation, army, any other formal or informal kind of work or duty)

8. Have you been exposed to or learned about Arabic culture(s) (Sociocultural, historical and religious practices)? Form where (class, family, friend, media, etc)? How are you developing a better understanding of the culture(s) or users of Arabic?

9. Have you visited or lived in any Arabic country? Which one(s)? Please describe the purpose and length of your stay (e.g., student, tourist, work related)?

Thanks a lot for your participation…Sawsan

www.manaraa.com

APPENDIX B

(INTERMEDIATE ARABIC I) STUDENTS SURVEY

Survey/ November 05

1. *Personal Information:*

Name:

School:

Year:

Major: Minor:

Ethnicity:

Nationality:

Native language(s):

Other languages:

2. *How did you come to be an Arabic learner?* (Be as detailed as possible, if you need extra space, please use the attached sheet)
    - 2a: Describe the earliest acquaintance with this language (formal and informal) and how did this interest develop later? Try to be specific about times and dates as much as possible.

    - 2b: Imagine that I'm your friend, what stories, chit chats, or incidents (personal or otherwise) can you share with me that motivated you or influenced you to learn Arabic?

    - 2c: How was that story or incident a turning point in your life? In what way did it make you realize that learning Arabic is something important to you at that time?

www.manaraa.com

- 2d: How did you hear about or know that UMass offers Arabic as a foreign language? Was that prior to your application process or after? Did you make contacts with anybody in this regard? Did you have other Arabic programs in other schools in mind too?

- 2e: Now Relax your mind and try to describe to me (in writing, diagrams, map, etc) the details in your life history that you believe contributed to your ending up as an Arabic learner.

3. Can I have an interview with you about your contemporary experience as an Arabic learner? YES NO

4. Can I audiotape the interview to guarantee a better quality transcript and have more time talking to/with you than writing notes?

YES NO

5. If you have participated in the survey I have conducted last year (Spring 2005), please read the following paragraph carefully and sign in where indicated if you voluntarily agree:

"The data (survey data) will be used in the context of a university course to support my development as a graduate researcher. As I develop my research agenda, I may wish to use this data for a conference presentation or publication in the future."

Student's signature:

Student's Name in print:

Researcher's signature:

www.manaraa.com

APPENDIX C

THE BEDOUINS

الدرس التاسع عشر — Lesson Nineteen

أ ـ النصّ الاساسيّ

البـــدو

tents

يسكن البدو في الخِيامِ ويرحلون في الصحراء من مكان الـــى مكان للبحث عن الماء، وهم مشهورون بِحُسْنِ الضِّيافَةِ : يقبل عليهـــــم الزائر فيظهرون له الترحيب ويسرعون الى اكرامه فيقدّمون لـــــــه الطعام والشَّرابَ .

hospitality

drink

والمدينة لا تعجب البدويّ لأنّ الحياة فيها تختلف عن الحياة في الصحراء: فالبدويّ يُفَضِّلُ حرّيّة الصحراءعلى قُيودِ المدينة ، لكـــنّ بعض البدو يذهبون الى المدينة أحيانا للتجارة .

prefers...to; fetters

أسئلـــــة

١ ـ أين يسكن البدو عادة ؟

٢ ـ لِمَ يرحلون من مكان الى مكان ؟

٣ ـ هل في الصحراءكثير من الماء؟

٤ ـ كيف تختلف الحياة في الصحراءعن الحياة في المدينة ؟

٥ ـ هل تعجب البدو حياة المدينة ؟

٦ ـ هل تعجبك حياة المدينة ؟

357

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

A. Basic text

The Bedouins

The Bedouins live in tents and move about the desert from place to place to look for water. They are famous for their hospitality: if a visitor comes up to them they welcome him and hasten to honor him, and they offer him food and drink.

The Bedouin does not like the city because life there differs from life in the desert: the Bedouin prefers the freedom of the desert to the fetters of the city, but some Bedouins do go to the city at times to trade.

B. Vocabulary

بَدَوِيٌّ ـ بَدْوٌ	Bedouin
رَحَلَ ـَـ ، رَحيلٌ	to move about, travel
صَحراءُ ـ صَحارَى	(f.) desert
صَحراوِيٌّ	(nisba of صَحْراءُ) desert, desolate
مَكانٌ ـ أَماكِنُ ، أَمْكِنَةٌ	place
يُقْبِلُ عَلى	he approaches
فَـ	and, and then, and so
يُظهِرونَ (لِ)	they demonstrate, show (to)
رَحَّبَ ، تَرحيبٌ بِـ	II to welcome
يُسرِعونَ (إِلى)	they hasten (to)
إِكْرامٌ	(verbal noun) to honor
طَعامٌ	food
تُعْجِبُ	she, it pleases
لِأَنَّ	because (See Note C.2, pages 263-5.)
حَياةٌ ـ حَيَواتٌ	life; life-blood
حَيَوِيٌّ ـ ون	(nisba of حَياةٌ) lively, vital
تَخْتَلِفُ (عن)	she, it differs (from), varies
حُرِّيَةٌ	freedom

www.manaraa.com

لٰكِنَّ but, however (conjunction; see note C.2)

أَحْيانًا sometimes, at times

تِجارَةٌ commerce, business, trade

Additional vocabulary

أَنَّ that (conjunction; see C.2)

إِنَّ that (conjunction; see C.2)

يَخْتَلِفُ (عن) he differs (from), varies

C. Grammar and drills

ج – القواعد والتمارين

1. Form IV verbs and verbal nouns
2. Particles لِأَنَّ 'because', لٰكِنَّ 'but', إِنَّ 'that' and أَنَّ 'that'
3. Human collective nouns
4. Particle فَ 'and, and then'

1. Form IV verbs and verbal nouns

a. Form

Form IV verbs are characterized by having a perfect stem beginning with the prefix - أَ ?a-. This prefix, however, is not present in the imperfect stem. Example:

Perfect	Imperfect	
أَكْمَلَ	يُكْمِلُ	'to complete'

The perfect stem has the pattern ?aFMaL- (prefix - أَ ?a-, stem vowel a), as in أَكْمَلَ above: stem ?akmal-. The imperfect stem has the pattern -FMiL- (stem vowel i in all verbs), as in يُكْمِلُ above: stem: -kmil-. (Thus the imperfect stem of Form IV verbs is like the imperfect stem of those Form I verbs which have i as the vowel, as in يَرْجِعُ 'he returns': stem -rjiʕ-. The

المنارة للاستشارات
www.manaraa.com

REFERENCES

Abboud, P. & McCarus, E. (Eds.). (1983). *Elementary modern standard Arabic*. Vol. I. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Abdalla, M. (2006). Arabic immersion and summer programs in the United States. In Kassem Wahba, Zeinab Taha & Liz England (Eds.), *Handbook for Arabic language teaching professionals in the 21st century* (317-330). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Abu-Absi, S. (1991). The "simplified Arabic" of IFTAH YA SIMSIM: Pedagogical and sociolinguistic implications. *Al- 'Arabiyya, 24*, 111-121.

Abuhakema, G. (2004). *The cultural component of the Arabic summer program at Middlebury College: Fulfillment of students' needs and expectations*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, the University of Texas, Austin.

Al-Batal, M. (1988). Towards cultural proficiency in Arabic. *Foreign Language Annals, 21*(5), 443-453.

Al-Batal, M. (1995). Issues in the teaching of the productive skills in Arabic. In M. Al-Batal (Ed.), *The teaching of Arabic as a foreign language: Issues and directions* (pp. 115-133). Al-'Arabiyya Monograph Series 2. Provo, UT: American Association of Teachers of Arabic.

Al-Batal, M. (2006). Playing with words: Teaching vocabulary in the Arabic curriculum. In K. M. Wahba, Z. A. Taha, & L. England (Eds.), *Handbook for Arabic language teaching professionals in the 21st century* (pp. 331-340). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

Al-Batal, M. (2007). Arabic and national language educational policy. *The Modern Language Journal 91*(2), 268-271.

Al-Haq, F. A. (1998). Language attitude and the promotion of standard Arabic and arabicization. *Al-'Arabiyya, 31*, 21-37.

Al-Kahtany, A. H. (1997). The 'problem' of diglossia in the Arab world: An attitudinal study of modern standard Arabic and the Arabic dialects. *Al-'Arabiyya, 30*, 1-30.

Allwright, R.L. (1984a). The importance of interaction in classroom language learning. *Applied Linguistics,* 5/2, 156-171

Al-Wer, E. (1997). Arabic between reality and ideology. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 7*(2), 251-265

www.manaraa.com

Allen, R. (1985). Arabic proficiency guidelines. *Al- 'Arabiyya, 18*(1/2), 45-70.

Allen, R. (1990). Proficiency and the teacher of Arabic: Curriculum, course, and classroom. *Al-'Arabiyya, 23*, 1-30.

Allen, R. (1992). Teaching Arabic in the United States: Past, present, and future. In A. Rouchdy (Ed.), *The Arabic language in America* (pp. 222-250). Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press.

Allen, R. (2004). Perspectives on Arabic teaching and learning. *The Modern Language Journal, 88*(2), 275-278.

Allen, R. (2007). Arabic-Flavor of the moment: Whence, why and how? *The Modern Language Journal 91*(2), 258-261.

Allen, W. (2004). Teaching languages and cultures in a post-9/11 world: A personal reflection. *The Modern Language Journal, 88*(2), 285.

Alosh, M. (1991). Arabic diglossia and its impact on teaching Arabic as a foreign language. In Gerald L. Ervin (Ed.), *International perspectives on foreign language teaching* (pp.121-137). Lincolnwood, IL: National Textbook Company.

Alosh, M. (1995). Computer-assisted language learning for Arabic: Rational and research potential. In M. Al-Batal (Ed.), *The teaching of Arabic as a foreign language: issues and directions (257-290).* Al-'Arabiyya Monograph Series 2. Provo, UT: American Association of Teachers of Arabic.

Alosh, M. (1997). *Learner, text, and context in foreign language acquisition: An Arabic perspective*. Columbus, Ohio: The Ohio state university national foreign language resource center.

Alosh, M. (2001). Learning language at a distance: An Arabic initiative. *Foreign Language Annals, 34*(4), 347-354.

Apple, M. (1986). Teachers and texts. A political economy of class and gender relations in education. New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Al-Wer, E. (1997). Arabic between reality and ideology. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 7*(2), 251-265.

Apple, M. (2000). *Official knowledge: Democratic education in a conservative age*. New York, NY: Routledge

Apple. M. (2004). *Ideology and curriculum*. New York, NY: Routlege Falmer

www.manaraa.com

Apple, M. (2006). *Critical education, politics, and the real world*. In L. Weis, C. McCarthuy, & G. Dimitriadis (Eds.), *Ideology, curriculum, and the new sociology of education.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Apple, M. & Christian-Smith, L.K. (1991). The politics of the textbook. In M. Apple and L. K. Christian-Smith (Eds.), *The politics of the textbook*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Arab Musical Instruments. Retrieved June 2008, from http://www.al-bab.com/arab/music/instruments.htm

Areef, M. (1986). The *current linguistic and curricular approaches in teaching Arabic as a foreign language: Problems and suggested solutions*. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Southern California.

Attar, S. (1995). Learning from Gulliver: the teaching of "culture" in an advanced Arabic language course. In M. Al-Batal (Ed.), *The teaching of Arabic as a foreign language: issues and directions (pp.185-222).* Al-'Arabiyya Monograph Series 2. Provo, UT: American Association of Teachers of Arabic.

Bakhtin, M. (1981). Discourse in the Novel. In M. Holquist(Ed.), *The dialogic imagination: Four essays by M. M. Bakhtin*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Bakhtin, M. (1984). *Problems in Dostoevsky's poetics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Beetson, A. (2006). *The Arabic language today*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.

Belnap, K. (1995). The institutional setting of Arabic language teaching: A survey of program coordinators and teachers of Arabic in U.S. institutions of higher learning. In M. Al-Batal (Ed.), *The teaching of Arabic as a foreign language: Issues and directions* (pp. 35-77). Al-'Arabiyya Monograph Series 2. American Association of Teachers of Arabic.

Belnap, K. (2006). A profile of students of Arabic in U.S. universities. In Kassem Wahba, Zeinab Taha & Liz England (Eds.), *Handbook for Arabic language teaching professionals in the 21st century* (pp. 169-178). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Bloome, D. & Egan-Robertson, A. (1993). The social construction of intertextuality in classroom reading and writing lessons. *International Reading Association, 28*(4), 305-333.

www.manaraa.com

Bode, P. (2005). *Multicultural art education: Voices of art teachers and students in the postmodern era*. Doctoral dissertation. University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

Bogdan, R. & Biklen, S. K. (1992). *Qualitative Research of Education: An introduction to Theory and Methods*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Bourdieu, Pierre. (1999). Language and Symbolic Power. In Adam Jaworski and Nikolas Coupland (Eds.). *The Riscourse Reader* (pp. 502-513). London: Routledge.

Bourdieu, P. & Passerson, J. (1977). Reproduction in education, society and culture. London: Sage.

Brand, L.A. (2005). 2004 Presidential address: scholarship in the shadow of Empire. *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin, 39(1)*, 3-18.

Brown, H. D. (2000). 4th Edition. *Principles of language learning and teaching*. New York, NY: Longman.

Brown, H. D. (2007). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy*. New York, NY: Pearson Education

Brown, P., Halsey, A.H., Lauder, H., & Wells, A. S. (1997). The transformation of education and society: An introduction. In A. H. Halsey, H. Lauder, P. Brown, & A. S. Wells (Eds.), *Education: Culture, economy, and society (*pp. 1-44). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Brustad, K. (2006). Reading fluently in Arabic. In K. M. Wahba, Z. A. Taha, & L. England (Eds.), *Handbook for Arabic language teaching professionals in the 21st century* (pp. 341-352). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

Bull, G. & Anstey, M. (2010). Using the principles of Multiliteracies to Inform Pedagogical Change. In D. Cole & D. Pullen (Eds.), *Multiliteracies in Motion: Current Theory and Practice*. New York: Routledge

Burn, B. B. (1980). The president's commission on foreign language and international studies: Its origin and work. *Modern Language Journal, 64*(1), 7-9.

Byrnes, H. Maxim, H., Norris, J. (2010. Realizing advanced L2 writing development in a collegiate curriculum: Curricular design, pedagogy, assessment. *Modern Language Journal,* supplement to vol. 94, monograph.

Byrnes, H. (2004). Teaching languages and cultures in a post-9/11 world: North American perspectives. *The Modern Language Journal, 88*(2), 268.

www.manaraa.com

Byrnes, H & Maxim, H. (2003). Introduction: Creating Sites for Collegiate Advanced Foreign Language Learning. In H. Byrnes & H. H. Maxim (Eds.), *Advanced Foreign Language Learning: A challenge to College Programs.* Boston, MA: Heinle

Byrnes, H., Edwards, J.D., Scollon, R., Allen, R., Wesche, M., Allen, W., & Pratt, M.L. (2004). Perspectives. *The Modern Language Journal* 88(2), pp. 266-291.

Cameron, D., Frazer, E., Harvey, P., Rampton, B, & Richardson, K. (2006). Power/knowledge: the politics of social science. In A. Jaworski & N. Coupland (Eds.), *The discourse reader* (pp. 132-145). London, UK: Routledge

Canagarajah, S. (2004). Subversive identities, pedagogical safe houses, and critical learning. In B. Norton & K. Toohey (Eds.), *Critical pedagogies and language learning.* Cambridge University Press.

Carspecken, P. F. (1996). *Critical Ethnography in Educational Research*. New York: Routledge.

Carspecken, P. F. (2002). The hidden history of praxis theory within critical ethnography and the criticalims/postmodernism problematic. In Y. Zou, & E. Trueba (Eds.), *Ethnography and schools: ethnographic approaches to the study of education* (pp. 55-86). Oxford, UK: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers

Charmaz, K. & Mitchell, R. (2007). Grounded theory in ethnography. In P. Atkinson, A. Coffey, S. Delamont, J. Lofland, & L. Lofland (Eds.), *Handbook of ethnography*. London, UK: Sage

Chejne, A. (1969). *The Arabic language: Its role in history*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Cherryholmes, C. H. (1988). *Power and criticism: Poststructural investigations in education*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Chomsky (2005*). An interview with Noam Chomsky* . The NEA Higher Education thought and action Journal 21, 93-102.

Clark, R. & Ivanic, R. (1997). Critical discourse analysis and educational change. In L. van Lier and D. Corson Encyclopedia of Language and Education (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of language and education* (pp. 217-227). The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Clark, R. & Ivanic, R. (Eds.) (1999). 'Raising awareness of language: a curriculum aim for the new millennium', *Language awareness* (special issue) (8), 63-70

www.manaraa.com

Cleveland, W. (2004). *A history of the Modern Middle East*. 3rd Edition. Oxford, UK: Westview Press

Coffey, A. & Atkinson, P. (1996). *Making sense of qualitative data*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Cole, D. & Pullen, D. (2010). Introduction to Multiliteracies in Motion: Current Theory and Practice. In D. Cole & D. Pullen (Eds.), *Multiliteracies in Motion: Current Theory and Practice*. New York: Routledge

Cope, B. & Kalantzis, M. (2010). New Media, New Learning. In D. Cole & D. Pullen (Eds.), *Multiliteracies in Motion: Current Theory and Practice*. New York: Routledge

Crossley, N. (2005). *Key concepts in critical social theory*. London, UK: Sage

Culler, J. (2004 [1975]). The linguistic foundation. In J. Rivkin, & M. Ryan (Eds.), *Literary Theory: An introduction* (pp. 56-58). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing

Dahbi, M. (2004). Perspectives: English and Arabic after 9/11. In *The Modern Language Journal* 88(4), pp. 628-631.

De Alba, A., Gonzláes-Gaudiano, E., Lankshear, C., & Peters, M. (2000). *Curriculum in the postmodern condition*. New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishing.

Delanty, G. (2000). *Modernity and postmodernity.* London, UK: Sage publications.

Delpit, Lisa (1992). Acquisition of Literate Discourse: Bowing before the Master? *Theory into Practice*, 31(4) p 296-302

Demographic Official Repot (2000). Retrieved June, 2008, from http://www.amherstma.gov/about_amherst/PDFs/Amherst_Demographics.pdf

Dickins, J. & Watson, J. (2006). Arabic teaching in Britain and Ireland. In Kassem Wahba, Zeinab Taha & Liz England (Eds.), *Handbook for Arabic language teaching professionals in the 21st century* (107-113). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Dimitriadis, G., Weis, L. & Mccarthy, C. (2006). Introduction. In L. Weis, C. McCarthuy, & G. Dimitriadis (Eds.), *Ideology, curriculum, and the new sociology of education.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Doll, W. E. (1993). *A postmodern perspective on curriculum*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

www.manaraa.com

Duncan, G. (1991). Forward. In E. S. Silber (Ed.), *Critical issues in foreign language instruction*. New York, NY Garland Publishing, INC.

Dyson, A. H. (1993). *The social worlds of children learning to write in an urban primary school*. New York: Teacher College Press

Edwards, J. D. (2000). Working beyond the academy: The federal government. *ADFL 32*(1), 48-9

Elkhafaifi, H. (2001). Teaching listening in the Arabic classroom: A survey of current practice. *Al-ʿArabiyya 34,* 55-79

Elkhafaifi, H. (2005). Listening comprehension and anxiety in the Arabic language classroom. *The Modern Language Journal 89*(2), 206-220

Emerson, R., Fretz, R., & Shaw, L. (1995). Writing ethnographic fieldnotes. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Emerson, R., Fretz, R., & Shaw, L. (2007). Participant observation and fieldnotes. In P. Atkisnon, A. Coffey, S. Delamont, J. Lofland, and L. Lofland (Eds.), *Handbook of ethnography* (pp. 352-368). London, UK: Sage Publications

Fairclough, N. (1992). *Discourse and social change*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical discourse analysis: Papers in the critical study of language*. Harlow, England: Pearson Education Limited.

Fairclough, N. (2001). 2nd Edition. *Language and power*. London, UK: Longman.

Fairclough, N. (2003). *Analysing discourse: Textual analysis for social research*. London, UK: Routledge.

Ferguson, C. (1996). Epilogue: Diglossia revisited. In A. Elgibali (Ed.), *Understanding Arabic: Essays in contemporary Arabic linguistics in honor of El-Said Badawi* (pp. 49-67). Cairo, Egypt: The American University in Cairo Press.

Fielding, N. & Fielding, G. (1986). *Linking data.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage

Foley, D. (2002). Critical ethnography in the postcritical moment. In Y. Zou, & E. Trueba (Eds.), *Ethnography and schools: ethnographic approaches to the study of education* (pp. 139-170). Oxford, UK: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers

Freedman, S. (2004, June 16). After Sputnik, It was Russian; after 9/11, should it be Arabic? *The New York Times*, p. 7. Retrieved from the Web on March, 26, 2005.

www.manaraa.com

Freedman, S.W. & Ball, A. F. (2004). Ideological Becoming: Bakhtinian concepts to guide the study of Language, Literacy, and Learning. In S.W. Freedman &A. F. Ball (Eds.) Bakhtinian Perspectives on Language, Literacy, and Learning.(pp. 3-33). Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press.

Gebhard, M. (1999). Debates in SLA studies: Redefining classroom SLA as an institutional phenomenon. *TESOL Quarterly, 36* (3), 544-557.

Gebhard, M. (2000). *SLA and school restructuring: Reconceiving classroom SLA as an institutional phenomenon*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of California at Berkeley.

Gebhard, M. (2004). Fast capitalism and second language acquisition. Reprint in *Modern Language Journal 88 (2),* 245-265. (Selected from the Canadian Modern Language Review as most provocative article of the year.)

Gebhard, M. (2005). School reform, hybrid discourses, and second language literacies. *TESOL Quarterly 39* (2), 187-210.

Gee, J. P. (1992). *The social mind: Language, ideology, and social practice*. New York: Bergin & Garvey.

Geertz, C. (1973). Thick description: Toward an interpretive theory of culture. In *The interpretation of culture* (pp. 3-30). New York, NY: Basic Books.

Gerwin, D. & Osborn, T. (2005). What September 11 also teaches us. In T. A. Osborn (Ed.), Language and cultural diversity in U.S. schools (pp. 103-116). Westport, CT: Praeger

Goffman, E. (1981). *Forms of talk*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University press.

Goodall, H. (2000). *Writing the new ethnography*. CA: Altamira.

Gordon, T., Holland, J., & Lahelma, E. (2007). Ethnographic research in educational settings. In P. Atkisnon, A. Coffey, S. Delamont, J. Lofland, and L. Lofland (Eds.), *Handbook of ethnography* (pp. 188-203). London, UK: Sage Publications

Halliday, M & Hasan, R. (1989). *Language, context and text: a social semiotic perspective*. Oxford

Hammond, P. (2007). *Media, war & postmodernity.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Hargreaves, A. (1994). *Changing teachers, changing times: Teacher's work and culture in the postmodern age*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press

www.manaraa.com

Harklau, L. (2005). Ethnography and ethnographic research on second language teaching and learning. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning* (pp. 179-194). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

Harvey, D. (1989). *The condition of postmodernity: An enquiry into the origins of cultural change.* Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell.

Hary, B. (1996). The importance of the language continuum in Arabic multiglossia. In A. Elgibali (Ed.), *Understanding Arabic: Essays in contemporary Arabic linguistics in honor of El-Said Badawi* (pp. 69-90). Cairo, Egypt: The American University in Cairo Press.

Heath, S. B. & Street, B. (2008). *Ethnography: Approaches to language and literacy research*. New York: Teacher's College Press

Heath, P. (1990). Proficiency in Arabic language learning: Some reflections on basic goals. *Al-'Arabiyya, 23*, 31-48.

Heilenman, L. K. (1991). Material concerns: Textbooks and teachers. In Ellen Silber (Ed.), *Critical issues in foreign language instruction* (104-130). New York: Garland Publishing

Herman, D. (2007). It's a small world after all: From stereotypes to invented words in secondary school Spanish textbooks. *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies,4*(2-3), 117-150.

Hirschkop, K. (1989). Intrdocution. In Hirschkop, K & Shepherd, D. (Eds.), Bakhtin and cultural theory. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press.

Hourani, A. (2002). A history of the Arab Peoples. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Hourani, A; Khoury, P; & Wilson, M. (1993). The Modern Middle East. Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press.

Howard (2007, November, 23). Enrollments in foreign- language courses continue to rise, MLA survey finds. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, A 13.

Ibrahim, M. (1986). Standard and prestige language: A problem in Arabic sociolinguistics. *Anthropological Linguistics, 28*(1), 115-126.

Janks, H. (1991). A critical approach to the teaching of language. *Educational Review, 43*(2), 191.

Janks, H. (1993). *Language, identity & power*. Johannesburg, South Africa: Hodder & Stoughton Educational.

www.manaraa.com

Janks, H. (1997). Critical discourse analysis as a research tool. In *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 18, 329-342.

Janks, H. (1999). Critical language awareness journals and student identities. In *Language Awareness*, 8, pp. 111-122.

Janks, H. (2000). Domination, access, diversity and design: A synthesis for critical literacy education. *Educational Review, 52*(2), 175-186.

Janks, H. (2010). Literacy and power. New York, NY: Routlege

Jones, P. (2003). *Introducing social theory*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press

Kamberelis, G. & Dimitriadis, G. (2005). Qualitative inquiry: Approaches to language and literacy research. New York: Teachers College Press.

Kern, R. (2003). Literacy and Advanced Foreign Language Learning: Rethinking the Curriculum. In H. Byrnes & H. H. Maxim (Eds.), *Advanced Foreign Language Learning: A challenge to College Programs.* Boston, MA: Heinle

Khater, A. (2004). Sources in the history of the modern Middle East. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Kincheloe, J., & McLaren, P. (2002). Rethinking critical theory and qualitative research. In Y. Zou, & E. Trueba (Eds.), *Ethnography and schools: ethnographic approaches to the study of education* (pp. 87-138). Oxford, UK: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers

Kirch, M. S. (1980). A message from the president of NFMLTA. *The Modern Language Journal, 64*(1), 5.

Kramsch, C. 91987). Foreign language textbooks' construction of foreign reality. *The Canadian Modern Language Review 44*(1), 95-119

Kramsch, C. (1993). *Context and culture in language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Kramsch, C. (2003). *Language and culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Fourth Edition.

Kramsch, C. (2005). Post 9/11: Foreign languages between knowledge and power. *Applied Linguistics, 26*(4), 545-567.

Kramsch, C. (2007). Framing foreign language education in the United States: The case of German. *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies, 4*(2-3), 151-178.

www.manaraa.com

Kramsch, C. (2009). *The multilingual subject*. New York, NY: Oxforn University Press.

Kress, G. (2000). Multimodality. In B. Cope & M. Kalantzis (Eds.), *Multiliteracies: Literacy learning and the design of social futures* (pp. 182-202). London, UK: Routledge

Kubota, R. & Austin, T. (2007). Critical approaches to world language education in the United States: An introduction. *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies, 4*(2-3), 73-83.

Kumagai, Y. (2007). Tension in a Japanese language classroom: An opportunity for critical literacy? *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies, 4*(2-3), 85-116.

Kumar, K. (1997). The postmodern condition. In A. H. Halsey, H. Lauder, P. Brown, & A. S. Wells (Eds.), *Education: Culture, economy, and society (*pp. 96-112). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kumaravadivelu, B. (2003). *Beyond methods: Macrostrategies for language teaching*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Kumashiro, K. (2008). *The seduction of common sense: How the right has framed the debate on America's schools.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Lahlali, M. (2007). *Critical Discourse Analysis and Classroom Discursive Practices*. Lincom Europa

Lather, P. (2007). postmodernism, post-structuralism and post (critical) ethnography: Of ruins, aporias and angles. In P. Atkisnon, A. Coffey, S. Delamont, J. Lofland, and L. Lofland (Eds.), *Handbook of ethnography* (pp. 477-492). London, UK: Sage Publications

Leeman, J. (2005). Engaging critical pedagogy: Spanish for native speakers. *Foreign Language Annals 38*(1), 35-45

Leeman, J., & Martinez, G. (2007). From identity to commodity: ideologies of Spanish in heritage language textbooks. *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies, 4*(1), 35-65.

Lessow-Hurley, J. (2000). The Foundations of Dual Language Instruction. NY: Longman.

Lightbown, P. M. & Spada, N. (2003). *How languages are learned*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

www.manaraa.com

Luke, A. (1991). Basal reading textbooks and the teaching of literacy. In P. G. Altbach, G.P. Kelly, H.G. Petrie, & L. Weis (Eds.), *Textbooks in American society: Politics, policy, and pedagogy* (pp. 201-216). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Luke, Allan. (1996). Text and discourse in education. An introduction to critical discourse analysis. *Review of Research in Education*, 21, pp.3-48.

Luke, A. (1999). Social perspectives on primers and textbooks. In D. Wagner, R. Venezky, & B. Street (Eds.), *Literacy: An international handbook*. Colorado: Westview Press.

Luke, A. (2004). Two takes on the critical. In B. Norton & K. Toohey (Eds.), *Critical pedagogies and language learning* (pp. 21-29). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Luke, A. (2006). Teaching after the market: From commodity to cosmopolitan. In L. Weis, C. McCarthuy, & G. Dimitriadis (Eds.), *Ideology, curriculum, and the new sociology of education.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Loon, J.V. (2007). Ethnography: A critical turn in cultural studies. . In P. Atkinson, A. Coffey, S. Delamont, J. Lofland, & L. Lofland (Eds.), *Handbook of ethnography*. London, UK: Sage

Lyon, D. (1994). Preface. In D. Lyon. Postmodernity. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Lyon, D. (1999). Postmodernity. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Lyotard (2004 [1979]). The postmodern condition. In J. Rivkin, & M. Ryan (Eds.), *Literary Theory: An introduction* (pp. 355-364). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing

Madison, D. S. (2005). *Critical ethnography: methods, ethics and performance.* Thousands Oak, CA: Sage Publication

Maxwell, J. (2005). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

McCarus, E. (1987). The study of Arabic in the United States: A history of its development. *Al-'Arabiyya, 20*, 13-27.

McKinney, C. (2005). *Textbooks for diverse learners*. Cape town, South Africa: HSRC Press.

www.manaraa.com

Morson, G.S. (2004). The Process of ideological Becoming. In A.F. ball & S.W. Freedman (Eds.) *Bakhtinian perspectives on language, literacy, and learning.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

New London Group (1996). *A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies: Designing Social Futures*. Harvard Educational Review, 66(1), 60-92.

Norton, B. (1995). Social identity, investment, and language learning. In *TESOL Quarterly*, 29, 9-31.

Norton, B. (2000). Identity and Language Learning: Gender, Ethnicity and Educational Change. Harlow, England: Pearson Education Limited.

Norton, B. & K. Toohey. (2004). Critical pedagogies and language learning: An introduction. In B. Norton & K. Toohey (Eds.), *Critical pedagogies and language learning.* Cambridge University Press.

Omaggio Hadley, A. (1993). *Teaching language in context*. Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle

Parkinson, D. (1985). Proficiency to do what? Developing oral proficiency in students of modern standard Arabic. *Al-'Arabiyya 18*(1&2), 11-44.

Parkinson, D. (1991). Searching for modern fusha: Real-life formal Arabic. *Al-'Arabiyya, 24*, 31-64.

Parkinson, D. (1995). Computers and proficiency goals: Facing facts. In M. Al-Batal (Ed.), *The teaching of Arabic as a foreign language: Issues and directions* (pp. 291-317). Al-'Arabiyya Monograph Series 2. Provo, UT: American Association of Teachers of Arabic.

Pennycook, A. (1999). Introduction: Critical Approaches to TESOL. In *TESOL Quarter*, 33(3), pp. 329-346.

Pennycook, A. (2001). *Critical applied linguistics: A critical introduction*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Phillips, J.K. (2007). Foreign language education: Whose definition? *The Modern Language Journal 91*(2), 266-268.

President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies (1979). *Strength through wisdom: A critique of U.S. capability.* Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office

www.manaraa.com

Rammuny, R. (1990). Modifying EMSA using the proficiency orientation. *Al-'Arabiyya, 23*, 49-74.

Rammuny, R. (1996). An introductory course on Arab culture and language and its practical implications. *Al-'Arabiyya, 29*, 177-199.

Rampton, B. (1997). Second language research in late modernity: A response to Firth and Wagner. *The Modern Language Journal 81*(3), 329-333

Rampton, B. (2006). *Language in late modernity: Interaction in an urban school*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Reagan, T. & Osborn, T. (2002). *The foreign language educator in society: Toward a critical pedagogy.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Rivkin, J. & Ryan, M. (2004). Introduction: The implied order: Structuralism. In J. Rivkin, & M. Ryan (Eds.), *Literary Theory: An introduction* (pp. 53-55). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing

Ryding, K. (1995). Discourse competence in TAFL: Skill levels and choice of language variety in the Arabic classroom. In M. Al-Batal (Ed.), *The teaching of Arabic as a foreign language: Issues and directions* (pp. 223-231). Al-'Arabiyya Monograph Series 2. Provo, UT: American Association of Teachers of Arabic.

Ryding, K. (2006). Teaching Arabic in the United States. In Kassem Wahba, Zeinab Taha & Liz England (Eds.), *Handbook for Arabic language teaching professionals in the 21st century* (13-20). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Said, E. (1978). *Orientalism*. New York, NY: Pantheon Books

Said, E. (1997). *Covering Islam: how the media and the experts determine how we see the rest of the world.* New York, NY: Vintage Books

Said, E. (2003). *Culture and Resistance*: *conversations with Edward W. Said*. Cambridge, MA: South End Press.

Samy, W. (2006). Instructional media and learning Arabic. In K. M. Wahba, Z. A. Taha, & L. England (Eds.), *Handbook for Arabic language teaching professionals in the 21st century* (pp. 331-340). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

Saussure, F. (2004 [1916]). Course in general linguistics. In J. Rivkin, & M. Ryan (Eds.), *Literary Theory: An introduction* (pp. 59-71). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing

Schrag, F. (1992). Conceptions of knowledge. In P. Jacson (Ed.), *Handbook of research on curriculum* (pp. 268-301). New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing company

www.manaraa.com

Scollon, R. (2004). Teaching language and culture as hegemonic practice. *The Modern Language Journal* 88(2), 271.

Sleeter, C. E. & Grant, C. (1991). Race, Class, Gender, and disability in current textbooks. In M. Apple and L. K. Christian-Smith (Eds.), *The politics of the textbook (pp. 78-110)*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Socioeconomic Official Report (2000). Retrieved June, 2008, from http://www.amherstma.gov/about_amherst/socioeconomic_data.asp

Soltis, J. F. (1993). Foreword. In W. E. Doll. *A postmodern perspective on curriculum*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Spencer, J. (2007). Ethnography after postmodernism. In P. Atkisnon, A. Coffey, S. Delamont, J. Lofland, and L. Lofland (Eds.), *Handbook of ethnography* (pp. 443-452). London, UK: Sage Publications

Spindler, G., & Spindler, L. (1982). Roger Harkes and shoenhausen: From the familiar to the strange and back. In G. Spindler (Ed.), *Doing the ethnography of schooling: Educational ethnography in action* (pp. 20-47). New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Spring, J. (1991). Textbook writing and ideological management: A postmodern approach. In P. G. Altbach, G.P. Kelly, H.G. Petrie, & L. Weis (Eds.), *Textbooks in American society: Politics, policy, and pedagogy* (pp. 185-198). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Stern, H. (1992). *Issues and options in language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Stolle, E. & Fischman, G. (2010). Disrupting Traditions: Teachers Negotiating Multiliteracies and Digital Technologies. In D. Cole & D. Pullen (Eds.), *Multiliteracies in Motion: Current Theory and Practice*. New York: Routledge

Suleiman, Y. (1994). Nationalism and the Arabic language: An historical overview. In Yasir Suleiman (Ed.), *Arabic sociolinguistics: Issues and Perspectives*. England: Antony Rowe.

Suleiman, Y. (2003). *The Arabic language and national identity*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.

Sullivan, P. (2000). Playfulness as mediation in communicative language teaching in a Vietnamese classroom. In J. Lantolf (Ed.), *Sociocultural theory and second language learning.* New York, NY: Oxford

www.manaraa.com

Taha, T. A. (2007). Arabic as "a critical-need" foreign language in post-9/11 era: A study of students' attitudes and motivation. *Journal of Instructional Psychology, 34*(3), 150-160.

Taha, Z. (1995). The grammar controversy: What to teach and why? In M. Al-Batal (Ed.), *The teaching of Arabic as a foreign language: Issues and directions* (pp. 175-183). Al-'Arabiyya Monograph Series 2. Provo, UT: American Association of Teachers of Arabic.

Thomas, J. (1993). *Doing Critical ethnography*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications

Thompson, L., Christian, D., Stansfield, C., & Rhodes, N. (1990). Foreign language instruction in the United States. In A. M. Padilla, H. H. Fairchild, & C. M. Valadez (Eds.), *Foreign language education: Issues and strategies* (pp. 22-35). Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications

Toohey, K. (2000). *Learning English at school: Identity, social relations, and classroom practice.* Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.

U.S. Census Bureau (2000). Retrieved June, 2008, from http://www.census.gov/prod/2003pubs/c2kbr-23.pdf

Venezky, R. (1992). Textbooks in schools and society. In P. Jacson (Ed.), *Handbook of research on curriculum* (pp. 436-461). New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing company

Versteegh, k. (2006). History of Arabic language teaching. In Kassem Wahba, Zeinab Taha & Liz England (Eds.), *Handbook for Arabic language teaching professionals in the 21st century* (3-12). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Wallace, C. (1992). Critical literacy awareness in the EFL classroom. In N. Fairclough (Ed.), *Critical language awareness* (pp. 59-92). London: Longman.

Wallace, C. (1995). 'Reading with a suspicious eye': Critical Reading in the Foreign Language Classroom. In Cook, G. & Seidlhofer, B. (Eds.) *Principle & Practice in Applied Linguistics* (pp. 335-347). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wallace, C. (1997). The Role of Language Awareness in Critical Pedagogy. In L. van Lier and D. Corson (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Language and Education, Volume 6: Knowledge about Language* (pp. 241-249). The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers

Wallace, C. (2003). *Critical reading in language education*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

www.manaraa.com

Wallace, K.R. (2004). Situating multiethnic identity; contributions of Discourse theory to the study of mixed Heritage students. In *Journal of Language, identity, and education*, 3(3), 195-213, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Watzke, J. L. (2003). *Lasting change in foreign language education: A historical case for change in national policy*. Westport: CT: Praeger

Welles, E. (2002). Foreign language enrollment numbers: some (mis)interpretations explained. *The Modern Language Journal, 86*(2), 253-255.

Welles, E. (2004). Foreign language enrollments in United States institutions of higher education, Fall 2002. In *ADFL Bulletin 35*(2 & 3), 7-24.

Wesche, M. (2004). Teaching languages and cultures in a post-9/11 world. *The Modern Language Journal* 88(2), 278.

White Paper (2004). *A call to action for national foreign language capabilities*. National language conference briefing document. National Language Center. University of Maryland.

Wignell, P. (1995). *Critical literacy: A linguistic perspective*. Australia: National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia Limited.

Wolcott, H. (2002). Ethnography? Or educational travel writing? In Y. Zou, & E. Trueba (Eds.), *Ethnography and schools: ethnographic approaches to the study of education* (pp. 27-48). Oxford, UK: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.

Younes, M. (1990). An integrated approach to teaching Arabic as a foreign language. *Al-'Arabiyya, 23*, 105-122.

Younes, M. (1995). An integrated curriculum for elementary Arabic. In M. Al-Batal (Ed.), *The teaching of Arabic as a foreign language: Issues and directions* (pp. 233-255). Al-'Arabiyya Monograph Series 2. Provo, UT: American Association of Teachers of Arabic

Zappen, J.P. (2000). Michael Bakhtin. In M. Moran & M. Ballif, (Eds.), *Twentieth-century rhetorics and rhetoricians: Critical studies and resources.* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

www.manaraa.com