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EXPLORING LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND IDENTITY: PERSPECTIVES FROM NON-NATIVE ARABIC UNIVERSITY TEACHERS IN THE US

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Exploring Language, Culture and Identity:
Perspectives from Non-native Arabic University Teachers
in the US

A Dissertation Presented

by

BRAHIM OULBEID

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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College of Education
Teacher Education and Curriculum Studies

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DEDICATION

To my dear parents, my brothers and sisters, my wife Khadija, and my children (Oumaima, Zakaria, and Younes) for their support, their patience, and their prayers.

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First and foremost, all praise of gratitude and thankfulness are due to the Almighty Allah for enabling me to complete this work, and peace and blessings of Allah be upon His Messenger Mohamed. I would like to extend my utmost gratitude to the teachers who shared with me their personal and professional worlds. I sincerely thank all for their trust, time, and support.

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ABSTRACT

EXPLORING LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND IDENTITY: PERSPECTIVES FROM NON-NATIVE ARABIC UNIVERSITY TEACHERS IN THE US

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This dissertation explores how six non-native (NN) university Arabic teachers make sense of language, culture, and identity. Specifically, it aims to understand how their experiences as Arabic language learners, preservice teachers, and classroom practitioners shape their classroom work, especially as they relate to their conceptions of teaching culture and the negotiation of their personal and professional identities.

Four questions guide this study: how NN Arabic teachers perceive culture, what their culture teaching practices are, what identities they enact, and what their contributions to the teaching of Arabic as foreign language (TAFL) field are. To address these issues, the study draws on sociocultural theory to understand language, culture, and identity, along with Wenger's (1998) concept of communities of practice to examine NN Arabic teachers' practices in relation to teaching language and culture and the development of their identities as teachers.

This study employs qualitative case study research methods. The data were collected via an online survey questionnaire, in-depth semi-structured interviews, and teacher documents. The procedure for data analysis draws on thematic analysis.

Analysis of the data shows that most of the participants desire to provide better learning experiences to their students than they have had, and that cultural competence is peripheral to linguistic competence in the Arabic language classroom. Additionally, they enjoy collegial connections with their students, other faculty, and administrators. However, while some of the teachers show self-confidence, others struggle with anxiety, intimidation, and inadequacy. Furthermore, most teachers acknowledge their contributions to Arabic pedagogy despite their recognition of their limited linguistic and cultural knowledge. However, some of the teachers struggle with the native speaker ideology. Their struggle results in feeling outside the inner circle and, therefore, as inadequate teachers. Nevertheless, some participants argue that their limited linguistic and cultural knowledge can be transformed into opportunities for their professional training.

Implications point to the need for efforts to promote teacher preparation programs that meet the specific needs of NN Arabic teachers. Failure to learn a dialect alongside Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and insufficient teacher training are found to account for the anxieties and insecurities of NN Arabic teachers. Therefore, programs focusing on second language pedagogy and a deeper understanding of teacher identity development are needed. The end goal is to build Arabic education programs that foster empowering learners and teachers to enable them to overcome their challenges and become successful Arabic learners and teachers.

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CHAPTER I

STUDY OVERVIEW

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Since I arrived in the United States over a decade ago, I was puzzled to learn about the lack of interest in learning foreign languages among some US students and in some educational institutions. Having worked as a language teacher in Morocco for 11 years and for 14 years in the US at the college level, I have witnessed an increasing disinterest in language learning, especially with the economic meltdown of the mid-2000s and English-only initiatives (Reagan, 2002). According to Pufahl, Rhodes and Christian (2010), the decrease in foreign language programs in schools can be primarily attributed to budget cuts. Language programs are usually first to be canceled, and language teaching positions are eliminated whenever there is a financial crisis. The economic meltdown and budget cuts may have had some impact on foreign language program offerings generally. However, with reference to Arabic language course offerings, there has been an increasing interest, particularly after the 9/11 events. Al-Batal (2007, p. 271) notes, “[F]oreign language educators often refer to the surge of American national interest in language study in the 1950s as the Sputnik Moment,” or a confluence of socio-political circumstances that has brought about funding for all levels of education in the sciences and foreign languages (Savignon, 2018). This interest in competing with the Soviet Union brought Russian language to the forefront and caused the expansion of teaching and learning this language in the US. There is a clear parallel with the post-9/11 era, which represents the ‘Sputnik Moment’ for Arabic (Abbadi, 2011), although the early

beginnings of Arabic teaching and learning in the US did not seem to be driven by political agendas as the brief historical overview of Arabic study will show.

1.2 Arabic Language Study in the US

The history of Arabic study dates back to the 18th century when it was introduced at Yale and in the 19th century in Dartmouth and Princeton (McCarus, 1992). In his seminal article on the history of Arabic study in the US, McCarus (1992) notes that the purpose of introducing Arabic at this stage was mainly theological (to study and understand Islam) or philological (to learn about the structure and historical developments of Arabic language).

Undoubtedly, in the 20th and 21st centuries, the history of foreign language learning in the US has been connected with political challenges and global economic competition (Kramsch, 2005; Perkins Report, 1979). Concerning Arabic, the US government has ranked Arabic, among other languages, as critical for intelligence and political interests. After World War II, there was a need to train government officials and intelligence personnel, and conduct research in the Arab World (McCarus, 1992). This need has brought about the establishment of Arabic language training agencies, namely the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) in the 1950s and the Defense Language Institute (DLI) in the 1970s. According to McCarus (1992), the Ford Foundation awarded two generous grants in 1957 (\$176,500 to five universities) and in 1962 (\$250,000 to eight universities) to offer summer programs in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish to create and develop new teaching materials in the US. The “inter-university [Arabic] program” led to the formation of the American Association of Teachers of Arabic (AATA), which was sponsored by the Modern Language Association in 1963. The mission of AATA was to

“facilitate communication and cooperation between teachers of Arabic and to promote study, criticism, research and instruction in the field of Arabic language pedagogy” (AATA website, n.d.). In 1976, the Center for Arabic Study Abroad (CASA) program was established with funding from the National Defense Education Act (NDEA), which promotes secondary education. This program has uplifted the study of Arabic as it was created for advanced level learners and attracted highly motivated students. The fellows who get selected to participate in the program spend a year in an Arab country where they study intensive Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and a local dialect as well as content courses. The CASA program started in Cairo, Egypt (Allen, 1992), but has been moved around recently to include other countries, namely, Morocco, Syria, and Jordan. In 2017, the CASA program celebrated its 50-years anniversary, and in 2019, it is still operational in Egypt and Jordan.

As Americans gained interest in the Russian language during the cold war years, the Arabic language has witnessed similar growth in student enrollments post 9/11. According to Reagan (2002, p. 126), “it is in the best interest of society to produce sufficient numbers of linguistically competent individuals to function in the various national and regional languages that are used in areas of national political, economic, and strategic concern.” The need for linguistic competence in Arabic among the American public emerged as a result of the 9/11 events and made Arabic language a “critical-need” foreign language; consequently, interest increased rapidly in comparison to the 1990s (Allen, 2007). Underscoring this need, Al-Batal (2007) indicates that Arabic is of vital interest to US national agendas and security. Accordingly, this need has prompted the Department of Defense (DoD) to partner with some higher education institutions and

launch the federally-funded Language Flagship program in 2002. This program shifted learner and teacher attention from reasons (philological or theological) for learning Arabic to a more focus on the time it takes a learner to become proficient (Ryding, 2018). The purpose of this program was to help undergraduate students to reach advanced proficiency in any language other than English (i.e., Arabic, Mandarin Chinese, Korean, and Russian) in higher education institutions affiliated with the federal government (Kramsch, 2005; Murphy & Evans-Romaine, 2016). This Language Flagship program started at first as Post-Baccalaureate programs that last for two years: the first year in the host institution in the US and the second year abroad (Nugent and Slater, 2016). This program was not able to keep up with the high demand from federal employees for individuals with advanced language competence. Therefore, the program was expanded to the undergraduate level and targeted students from all majors (Nugent & Slater, 2016). The abundance of funding and scholarships attracted many young Americans to enroll in undergraduate language classes and many higher education institutions to create new programs in these languages. Nugent and Slater (2016) indicated that the undergraduate Flagship enrollments increased exponentially from 41 in 2006 to 967 in 2014.

This recent growth in enrollments has brought with it challenges, in the case of Arabic, to the Arabic teaching profession. The number of Arabic language programs in the US has started to increase, especially in smaller higher education institutions (Al-Batal, 2007, Allen, 2007). Based on the Modern Language Journal (MLA) data, the increase in Arabic enrollments reached 40.2% since 1998 (Welles, 2004). To describe this surge in interest, Allen (2007) referred to Arabic as the “flavor of the moment.” According to Ryding (2006) and Allen (2007), the biggest challenges have been finding

qualified instructors who could teach Arabic language courses (Alhawary, 2013; Belnap, 2007; England, 2006) and developing teaching materials for different levels in the Arabic language classroom. The increase in enrollments in Arabic in US higher education institutions has prompted colleges and universities to recruit Fulbright scholars from the Arab World to fill this gap. For the students, the generous incentives that were offered by the government in terms of scholarships and study abroad grants have prompted them to take Arabic language courses and major in Arabic Studies (AS), the Teaching of Arabic as a Foreign Language (TAFL), or Middle Eastern Studies (MES). Arabic language study is offered in all these and other departments across the country. Many graduates from these programs chose to enter the Arabic teaching profession. The result is a new generation of teachers of Arabic who are leading Arabic language classrooms in many colleges and universities across the country. These teachers are slowly replacing teachers who have learned Arabic at a younger age, which we can refer to as heritage speaker teachers of Arabic. It is in this context that this study is situated. This study centers on the experiences of this new category of teachers as novice learners of Arabic, student teachers, and classroom practitioners. Working with a few Arabic teachers in this category, non-native (NN) Arabic teachers, in the past few years either during summer programs or at the institutions where I have worked, has piqued my interest in their experiences, their challenges, and their potential contributions to the Arabic language classroom especially as most of the students they teach come from backgrounds where English is their first language.

Historically, NN language teachers have been marginalized and their contributions were “invisible” in front of the native (N) teacher domination and bias

(Llurda, 2015). The N language teacher has been recognized as the default teacher in the literature and some NN teachers considered themselves as “impostors” (Bernat, 2008; Oulbeid, 2018). With the domination of the ideology of “native speaker fallacy” (Phillipson, 1992) and “native- speakerism” (Holliday, 2006), even teacher training programs seem to disregard the needs and characteristics of NN language teachers. The teaching of Arabic as a foreign language (TAFL) field is no exception. Experiences of NN Arabic teachers have not been brought to the fore in previous research. This is the gap that this study wants to fill, especially as more and more NN Arabic teachers are entering the teaching profession a few years after 9/11.

Within this context of the post 9/11 era and the emergence of this new generation of teachers of Arabic, this study attempts to shed light on the experiences of NN Arabic language teachers at the college level as learners, teacher trainees, and classroom instructors. This study explores their practices in relation to teaching language and culture, and their discourses as they negotiate and construct their personal, social, and professional identities in different periods of their experiences with Arabic language learning and teaching post 9/11.

Part of my interest includes these teachers’ negotiations and constructions of identities throughout their time spent learning and teaching Arabic. Furthermore, it is of paramount importance to understand how they view themselves as part of their departments in their institutions. The rationale of this research was that my pilot study (Oulbeid, 2018), which included two NN Arabic teachers, concluded that these teachers face personal as well as institutional (classroom, department) challenges that need to be explored in-depth. One of these challenges is the lack of recognition by other faculty and

academe, which could make these teachers “unhappy Arabic teachers” (Belnap, 2007).

Using a larger sample in this current study and understanding these challenges could help uncover other factors that impact teacher identities and enable teacher education programs to develop content courses that are sensitive to the needs of their teacher trainees after graduation. Such programs could help prepare incoming teacher trainees adequately for the profession. Additionally, it is important to understand how they view themselves as part of their departments so that other faculty can become aware of the situations of NN Arabic teachers, and develop collegial relationships built on collaboration, support, and a common sense of belonging.

In terms of pedagogy, the teaching approaches of Arabic have traditionally relied on the classical audio-lingual and grammar translation methods until the 1980s (Allen, 1992; McCarus, 1992; Ryding, 2018), when the focus shifted to teaching the formal modern standard Arabic (MSA) at the expense of the everyday informal (dialectal) varieties. This was evident in the Arabic teaching materials (i.e., *Elementary Standard Arabic* and *Intermediate Modern Standard Arabic*) that have been published by the University of Michigan in 1968 and 1971 respectively (Ryding, 2018). This approach to teaching Arabic was prompted by the focus on understanding classical texts and literature. However, as mentioned earlier, with the surge of the communicative approach to foreign language teaching, the questions that scholars of Arabic ask have recently shifted from “why study Arabic?” to “how long does it take to become proficient?” (Ryding, 2018, p. 12). With this shift appeared new objectives for the Arabic language learner; specifically, to be able to use the language to interact with other users of the

language and to develop an awareness of and reflection on other cultures and one's own. Because of this shift, there were calls for the integration of dialects in teaching MSA.

The publication of the 3rd editions of *Al-Kitaab* series (Brustad, Al-Batal, and Al-Tunsi, 2014) and *3arabiyat Al-Naas* (Younes, 2014) which integrate Egyptian and Levantine dialects are attempts to bridge the gap between the standard and colloquial Arabic in the classroom, and enable students to use the colloquial varieties when they study abroad. Usually the authors include in their textbooks the dialects that are used in the frequent travel abroad destinations of the students. What is called the “integrated approach” (Younes, 2014) is what learners of Arabic need to function with less confusion in situations of interaction with native speakers of Arabic. The participants in my recent study (Oulbeid, 2018) felt this gap and for this reason, one of them was working with a tutor in Egypt and travelled there for two months to immerse himself in the Egyptian colloquial language and culture. This focus on MSA and dialect learning undermines the teaching of culture. My study demonstrated that culture teaching may not be an essential part of preservice Arabic teacher education. This study seeks to delve into this issue with a larger sample of participants for the purpose of identifying the factors that lie behind the likelihood of integrating culture in the Arabic language classroom. It also aims to examine how these Arabists (i.e., non-Arab specialists in the study of Arabic language and cultures) make meaning of language, culture, and identity.

The following pages introduce the theoretical framework that guides this study, the purpose and significance, methodology, and data collection and analysis procedures.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

This study draws on the Vygotskian sociocultural theory to understand language, culture, and identity. Additionally, I draw on Wenger's (1998) concept of communities of practice and his three modes of belonging (engagement, imagination, and alignment), and how these modes shape the negotiation and construction of teacher identities.

A first lens for exploring identity, language and culture is the Vygotskian sociocultural theory (Johnson, 2006; Reis, 2011; Varghese, Morgan, Johnston, & Johnson, 2005). For Johnson (2006), learning, from a sociocultural perspective, is described as a “dynamic social activity that is situated in physical and social contexts and distributed across persons, tools, and activities” (p. 237). In this sense, knowledge is co-constructed through participation in social activities and acquired via mediation of culturally-developed tools (Lantolf, 2000). This study examines NN Arabic teachers' beliefs about the relationships between language and culture in the classroom, and their responses to questions about teacher identity formation. Language is one of the major tools that are employed in the development of NN teacher identities. In her study on identity transformation of NN English teachers, Reis (2011) remarked that sociocultural theory promotes the construction of NN English teachers' professional identities. Such construction “involves promoting their awareness of how they position themselves professionally and are positioned by others... in regards to their legitimacy and in relation to the contexts where they work and live” (p. 144). In other words, identity develops through participation in social activities and is shaped by internal and external factors existing in the individual's immediate physical and social contexts. Therefore, as Olsen (2008b) posits, identities are both a “product” and a “process” as they change

based on contexts. Bamberg, De Fina and Schiffrin (2007) consider identities as “contextually shaped.” Therefore, they are viewed in the plural in this study.

A second lens for looking at teacher identities is Wenger’s (1998) concept of communities of practice and modes of belonging. Wenger (1998) proposed a social theory of learning in which he characterizes knowing and learning as social participation and active engagement with the world. Through active participation, individuals negotiate and construct their identities in relation to their communities of practice. For Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002, p. 4), communities of practice are “groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis.” In the case of NN Arabic teachers in the US, these teachers constitute a community who may have a passion for teaching or concerns about their practices. For this reason, a Facebook page was curated by a few members of their community. On this page, they exchange ideas about best practices, share teaching materials, and post Arabic teaching positions. It is through doing and participation in similar activities that individuals make sense of their experiences, themselves, and the communities to which they belong. Accordingly, using communities of practice as a theoretical framework helps examine the social complexity of the teachers as a community of practice. One of the strengths of this framework is foregrounding issues of context and “the relationships between the individual and community” (Benzie, Somekh & Cisneros-Cohenour 2005, p. 185).

Additionally, analysis of individual participation in various contexts can account for the behaviors and experiences of individuals in these contexts as well as the institutional contexts that shape such behaviors. It is in these multiple contexts where

individuals construct their identities, which implies that identities are not fixed (Eckert, 2006). In fact, Wenger (1998) explains the process of identity construction in terms of three modes of belonging: engagement, imagination, and alignment. In the case of language educators, engagement relates to the individual's involvement in shared practices, interactions and relationships with others (instructors, students, administrators). Imagination transcends the present, "involves a different kind of work of the self" (Wenger 1998, p.177), and enables the creation of new images of the self and the world in different times and spaces. In this respect, it is through imagination that individuals negotiate new identities that span across the past, present, and future (Block, 2007). Alignment refers to the coordination of individual activities within a broader community or institution. This coordination is what ensures one's sense of belonging as they do their part inside their community of practice.

However, identity does not manifest in practice only; rather, discourse and agency play a crucial role in identity negotiation and formation (Trent, 2015). Trent (2015) discusses a framework that highlights the role of practice, language, and discourse in shaping teacher identity. He argues that through language structures and the use of what he called "modality" and "evaluation" (Fairclough, 2003), teachers negotiate and construct their identities. In talk, teachers make use of modal verbs (would, should, must) to describe their obligations and responsibilities. Preliminary findings in the candidate's pilot research suggest that teachers can also express their aspirations and desires using such words as "fascinating, amazing, funny, and interesting" (Oulbeid, 2018). In discourse, using naming categories such as "novice teacher, NNS teacher, role model," teachers display their commitment to such positionings (Trent, 2015). Therefore, using

Trent's integrated framework, which highlights the impact of teacher practice, self-perceptions, and agency on shaping identity construction, would assist in unpacking NN Arabic language teacher identities. This framework is significant in uncovering what happens in the classroom, how teachers categorize themselves, what positionings are important for them, and which ones are ascribed to them, all of which can deepen our understandings of the factors that impact teacher professional identity formation, their sense of belonging, and the manners in which teacher identities are enacted.

1.4 Purpose and Significance of the Study

A few years after 9/11, the teaching of Arabic as a foreign language (TAFL) in the US witnessed an increasing number of Americans teaching college level Arabic courses. While there are a few studies examining the status and profiles of Arabic language teachers in general (e.g. Abdalla & Al-Batal 2011, Belnap 2007), except for the candidate's pilot study (Oulbeid, 2018), there is no other research addressing the status and characteristics of NN Arabic teachers in the US. Therefore, this multiple case study fills this gap and examines what NN Arabic university teachers believe about the integration of language and culture in teaching, how their beliefs impact/not their classroom practices, and how they make sense of their identities as NN Arabic teachers.

Four questions guide this research:

- 1- How do NN university Arabic teachers in the US define culture in the classroom?
- 2- What are these teachers' perspectives regarding teaching culture?
- 3- What identities do they construct in relation to their students, their Arabic language colleagues, and the faculty in their departments?

4- What does it mean for them to be teachers of Arabic in the US?

This study seeks to understand how their experiences as Arabic language learners, preservice teachers, and classroom practitioners shape their classroom work, especially as it relates to their conceptions of teaching culture and the negotiation of their identities. This study will contribute to a better understanding of the experiences of NN Arabic language instructors, their self-perceptions, their contributions, and the challenges these teachers face in their classrooms and within their institutions. Drawing on this understanding, studies like this may help teacher educators and program directors in Arabic Studies and TAFL to build new programs that are sensitive to the needs of the growing population of preservice Arabic teachers and supportive of their pedagogical and emotional development in the process of becoming professional classroom practitioners.

1.5 Methodology and Methods

This study draws on qualitative case study research methods to explore the processes and activities NN Arabic teachers engaged in as learners, preservice teachers, and Arabic instructors. Specifically, the case study approach, with its reliance on multiple sources of information, seeks to find compelling and reliable evidence to explain and support the claims made from the analysis and interpretation of the study findings. The case study approach can use multiple sources of data (Tellis, 1997; Yin, 2014) to tease out the details of the participants' experiences. The triangulation of the data generated by the study (online survey, interviews, teaching philosophy statements, teaching artifacts, and email correspondence) ensures the reliability and validity of the process (Yin, 1994). In this multiple case study, teachers are presented the opportunity to respond to discussions about their perspectives of reality, which gives meaning to their actions and

enhances the understanding of their teaching and their identities. This study design can facilitate the exploration of differences within and between cases (Yin, 2014). The use of comparisons between the multiple cases, through a variety of data sources, can offer a deeper understanding of the phenomenon studied, provide ‘compelling’ evidence, and make the study ‘robust’ and rigorous (Yin, 2014). As such, the study can help foster a bigger and comprehensive picture of the various cases and the factors that influence teachers’ teaching practices and identities.

1.6 Data Analysis

Data collection is the first step in analysis. Analysis usually takes place as the data is being collected in the form of reflections and memos (Creswell, 2009). The purpose of this case study is to describe each individual case in detail via connecting the data with the purpose of the study and the research questions. This connection helped in maximizing the understanding of individual cases and some aspects of teaching Arabic as a foreign language in the US context. The organization of the data entailed transcribing interviews, writing up field notes, and sorting all the data using NVivo software. The next step was doing a preliminary reading of all the data (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982) to develop a general map of the study. The use of NVivo software facilitated the organization of the data and generation of detailed descriptions of the setting, participants, and by implication themes for analysis. Making sense of the data was possible through making connections between the various themes identified in the interview transcripts and teacher artifacts. Such connections eventually led to the interpretations and discussion of the study findings and implications.

In sum, this study explored how NN Arabic teachers make meaning about language, culture, and identity. Through accounts of their experiences as Arabic language learners, preservice teachers, and Arabic instructors, this study sheds light on how the teachers perceive language and culture, and how they form their identities in their institutional contexts. Two theoretical constructs guided this study, namely sociocultural theory and communities of practice. These constructs have enhanced the alignment between my research questions and methods of inquiry.

1.7 Overview of Chapters

Chapter 2 reviews the literature on language and culture in the foreign language classroom, specifically as it relates to how foreign language teachers understand and integrate culture in language teaching. The chapter discusses the modernist and postmodernist understandings of culture and how the postmodernist perspective helps second language users construct multiple identities as they move between languages and cultures (Liddicoat, 2004; Schulz, 2007). Additionally, the chapter reviews the literature on the debate over the concept of the native speaker fallacy (Phillipson, 1992) and N versus NN language teachers. First, it defines this concept and describes the characteristics of these teachers. Second, the chapter discusses the controversy surrounding the issues of N and NN language teacher dichotomy. Finally, it delves into how NN language teachers perceive themselves as language teaching professionals and how other faculty view and treat them in their institutions.

Chapter 3 discusses the methodology, methods, and data analysis procedures employed to investigate NN Arabic teachers' experiences. The chapter describes in detail the collective case study approach, procedures and criteria for selecting participants,

gathering data, and interpretation. The purpose of the multiple case study was to draw an individual profile of each teacher's unique experiences using multiple data sources: survey questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, teaching artefacts, and email correspondence. The methods generated teachers' demographics and accounts that may be unique or shared and relevant across all cases (Ayres et al., 2003). The chapter concludes with a description of the choices for data analysis, the role of the researcher, and the limitations of the study. This methodology is sufficient to ensure the development of an interpretation of the data that elucidates the dynamics at play in the participants' teaching approaches, the construction of teacher identities, and the understanding of the effects of these identities on their practices and the field of teaching Arabic as a foreign language (TAFL) in US higher education.

Chapter 4 describes the context of the study and presents the research participants, including the researcher and the six participants' demographics and portraits. The larger context is the teaching of Arabic as a foreign language in the US. The specific contexts are the Arabic departments in higher education where the learning and teaching of Arabic takes place. The narratives in the portraits trace the trajectories, motivations, and experiences of each participant as a learner of Arabic, teacher trainee, and in-service teacher. While all the participants self-identified as white Americans and their native language is English, their trajectories as learners of Arabic were different as their portraits will show.

Chapter 5 and 6 present the findings of the study. Chapter 5 addresses the research problem and provides a response to research questions 1 and 2. The chapter sheds light on the participants' understandings of culture and the connections they make

between language and culture. Additionally, it describes the participants' daily teaching routines and how each teacher approaches culture in practice. Chapter 6 reports on the findings from research questions 3 and 4. It elucidates the participants' sense of belonging through a presentation of how they position themselves and how they think they are perceived by their students, Arabic language faculty, and other non-language faculty. Furthermore, the chapter discusses the participants' conceptions of their own contributions as NN Arabic teachers and the contributions of N Arabic teachers.

Chapter 7 offers the analysis, interpretation, and synthesis of the key findings of the study. The purpose of this chapter is to figure out the deeper meanings and significance of the study. The process of analyzing data started with identifying salient analytical categories in the findings, providing a thick description and interpretation of the analytic categories, and synthesizing the findings to show how they relate to literature, research, and practice.

Chapter 8 provides conclusions drawn from this study. These conclusions follow the research questions, the findings, and interpretations. The discussion includes recommendations for teaching Arabic as a foreign language, suggestions for further research, and a final researcher reflection.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Foreign language education has seen a rapid shift in the last few decades in terms of the conceptions of language and culture, which affected the language teaching profession. Historically, language and culture were considered two separate entities and therefore taught separately (Kramsch, 2011). In the last twenty years, there was a call for an intercultural approach to language teaching and learning that views language and culture as inseparable. My preliminary pilot research seems to suggest that language teachers may become entrenched in the narrow understanding of culture as facts, specifically teachers who are labeled as NN teachers (Oulbeid, 2018). Therefore, this chapter comprises four interconnected sections regarding teachers' perceptions of language and culture, the debate surrounding the N vs NN language teacher characteristics, culture-teaching constraints, and identities. The first section explores the concepts and models of intercultural competence models. These models focus on how culture is defined, and what learners need to know and be able to do to function appropriately in the target language. The second section delves into how language teachers view culture. Teachers both nationally and internationally acknowledge the importance of culture. Nevertheless, their classroom practices focus on the teaching of communication skills rather than developing intercultural competence and understanding, which offers language learners insights into learning to value other cultures and their own. The third section examines the constraints to teaching culture. These constraints pertain to curricular demands, lack of time, and limited culture teaching pedagogy. The

fourth section discusses the debate surrounding the NN teacher characteristics and professional identities.

2.1 Overview

Historically, learning a language has been treated as separate from learning the cultures of the native speakers. Although culture has been deemed essential for language learning (e.g., Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013) and language and culture have been considered inseparable in the curriculum (e.g., Byrnes, 2002; Kramsch, 1993), both language and culture have been conceptualized and approached differently. This situation puts world language educators in a dilemma in relation to whether or not to implement culture learning and how to undertake it in the teachers' daily practices. In the last few decades, the concept of intercultural competence has gained prominence (Witte & Harden, 2011), especially in the language education field. With the focus on the intercultural dimension, culture is defined as a social practice and a symbolic system, which stresses the development of resources for participation in shared and meaning making practices (Kramsch, 1993, 1998). From this perspective, language learning becomes a process whereby the learners interpret each other while engaging in communication in language to acquire experiences of language and culture.

Therefore, building students' ability to use language and acquire the potential for cultural understanding as a means of functioning effectively in the target language and culture becomes the purpose of world language education. Similarly, Byram (2009) posits that becoming an intercultural speaker, that is developing intercultural awareness, should be the aim of world language education. To achieve this goal, teachers are

required to teach culture along with language in order to inspire students to develop both an understanding of language and culture and an ability to discover, analyze, compare, and reflect on the cultures of the speakers of the languages taught (Byram & Feng, 2004). The main issue with culture learning is how teachers and students conceive of language and culture and how teachers envision culture in the classroom. Many language teachers and student teacher candidates note the significance of integrating culture in the language classroom (Byram & Risager, 1999; Fox & Diaz-Greenberg, 2006; Galeano, 2014; Klein, 2004; Byram, Nichols & Stevens, 2001; Sercu, 2006). Yet, teachers struggle with teaching language and culture. Questions of how they define the complex concept of culture, and how they approach language and culture in the world language classroom need exploring in the literature. Therefore, the purpose of the literature review in this chapter is twofold: (a) to examine world language teachers' conceptions of culture and their perspectives regarding teaching culture in the language classroom; and (b) to explore NN teacher identity negotiation and formation as teachers of language and culture.

This review of the literature offers insights into teachers' views of culture, the reality of their classroom practices, and the construction of their personal and professional identities. Before embarking on the discussion of these issues, this discussion provides an overview of intercultural competence, the term that is commonly used in the research literature (Perry & Southwell, 2011).

2.1.1 Intercultural Competence: Concepts and Models

The early days of competence go back to the 1950s and 1960s with Chomsky's theory of language that distinguished between competence and performance. Chomsky (1965) understood language as fixed and that the human mind is equipped with an innate ability to produce an infinite number of utterances. An important critique to this view of language is that it is too limited as it does not explain the social knowledge needed for the production and interpretation of utterances in specific contexts. As a reaction to Chomsky's narrow notion of "competence" in the 1960s, Dell Hymes introduced "communicative competence." This concept entails that individuals need more than just language to communicate. Hymes (1964) maintains that for any communicative activity, humans need social knowledge that would give meaning to linguistic forms and enable appropriate communication. In the 1980s, M. Canale and Swain (1980) and M. Canale (1984) developed the components of communicative competence: grammatical competence, strategic competence, sociolinguistic competence, and discourse competence. These four parts enable acceptable use of language by knowing how, when to say what to whom. The goal of communicative competence is to use language like a native speaker (Byram, Gribkova, & Starkey, 2002) and the focus is on the foreign culture. This model, which is based on the use of language for social interaction, has and is still influencing language teaching with its emphasis on the functional and pragmatic aspects of language. However, defining communicative competence based on a native speaker model is rather narrow as it focuses on the learner, and ignores the interaction and the learner's identity in intercultural encounters (Byram, 1997). Additionally, communicative language teaching emphasizes the acceptable and appropriate use of language in interaction and disregards "the intercultural aspect of communication"

(Piatkowska, 2015, p.406). Establishing new intercultural relationships and communicating in the target language have become the new goals of foreign language education as indicated by the World Readiness Standards for Learning Languages (NSFLEP, 2014). According to these standards, culturally appropriate communication involves “knowing how, when, and why to say what to whom” (p.11). This conceptualization of acceptable and appropriate communication aligns with Byram’s (1997) influential model of intercultural communicative competence (ICC).

For Byram (1997), because foreign language learners can be exposed to and interact with speakers from different cultural backgrounds, they need to develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable them to participate appropriately and effectively in communicative events, in a foreign language, involving speakers with different cultural backgrounds (Byram, 2012). By describing the five components of intercultural communicative competence, this model addresses not only the what of communicative competence, but also the how of intercultural competence. These components are the five skills which Byram (1997) calls *savoirs*, meaning knowledge, skills, and attitudes: (a) Attitudes of curiosity and openness to other cultures and one’s own; (b) Knowledge of social groups and awareness of similarities and differences between cultures; (c) Skills of interpreting and relating which enable interpretation of other cultural events and communicating across cultures; (d) Skills of discovery and interaction: acquisition of new cultural knowledge which can be used for communication in real situations; and (e) Critical cultural awareness: the ability to critically evaluate cultural products, practices, and perspectives of other cultures and one’s own. According to Byram (1997), for learners to develop ICC, they need to develop the five *savoirs*

mentioned above. Although ICC has been used extensively in the literature, there are other terms that are used interchangeably to refer to ICC. In this regard, Fantini and Tirmizi (2006) cited 19 terms (e.g., multiculturalism, cultural communication, cultural sensitivity, transcultural communication, cross-cultural communication, and global competence). Fantini and Tirmizi (2006) noted that most of these “terms allude only to limited aspects of a complex phenomenon” (p. 11). For Fantini and Tirmizi (2006), these terms do not cover all that happens in intercultural encounters. For example, some constructs focus on global competence or cultural awareness, while others on multiculturalism or empathy. Concerning foreign language learning, most ICC models make a distinction between learning a language for communication with native speakers and for the development of intercultural competence, where learners acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes for understanding differences between cultures and viewing these cultures and their own from a variety of perspectives. The process for such development takes time according to the developmental models of ICC (e.g., Deardorf, 2011) as will be discussed in the following section.

One of the developmental models of intercultural competence is Bennett’s (1993) intercultural sensitivity which describes two stages where the individual moves from an ethno-centric to an ethno-relative mindset and responds to cultural differences. The first stage is ethnocentric and focuses on denying, defending against, and minimizing the differences between cultures. The second stage is ethno-relative and addresses the movement from denying to accepting, adapting, and integrating differences in interactions. By moving from stage 1 to stage 2, the learner develops an understanding of their own culture and becomes aware of other cultures.

Another developmental model is the one proposed by Kordes (1991) and Meyer (1991). This model outlines three levels of cultural development: monocultural, intercultural, and transcultural. At the monocultural level, the learner shows behaviors, attitudes, and worldviews that are pertinent to their own cultural perspectives. These perspectives are ethnocentric and stereotyped. The intercultural stage is characterized by the learner's ability to explain their culture and the foreign culture when they move and operate between two languages and cultures. However, at this stage, they are not able to negotiate meanings and address what Agar (1994) calls "rich points," which means problems that can arise from miscommunication or cross-cultural understanding. These points come up in interaction because "[L]anguage is never culturally neutral: it carries linguaculture" (Risager, 2010, p. 7). What this term means is that through meanings, language contains cultural dimensions. The third level, the transcultural, involves the ability to evaluate intercultural differences and address miscommunication or intercultural problems. What makes this stage different from the first two is that it positions the learner to construct multiple identities in other cultures, which is part of the purpose of transcultural competence. Seidl (1998, p. 108) indicates that "[the] aim of transcultural competence is not only to give learners an outsider's perspective on their own personal situation but also to give them confidence as a 'foreign' insider in another culture." At this stage, it is the interlocutor and his or her status which affect communication and understanding. In other words, ICC helps the learner to be well-prepared for interaction through the use of language as a vehicle for understanding other cultures and building relationships (Deardorf, 2011). Given this understanding of ICC and the distinction made between communicative competence and ICC in terms of how

culture is viewed as a fixed product on the one hand, and as dynamic and context-bound on the other hand, this review explores the foreign language classroom reality. Specifically, it discusses what connections most teachers make between language and culture and what tasks they emphasize when teaching.

The literature discusses four main themes in relation to language, culture, and teachers in the world language classroom: definitions of culture, teachers' conceptions of culture teaching and learning, how textbooks' content addresses culture learning, and the constraints that hinder the integration of culture in the world language classroom. This discussion introduces each of these themes. First, the review focuses on how the literature defined the concept of culture in language study and how it has developed to become a complex construct over the years, especially recently as a result of the constantly shifting dynamics in the world. Second, teachers' conceptualizations of the term 'culture' and their classroom practices in teaching culture are presented. Third, the discussion offers insights into language textbooks' content and the place that culture occupies in this content. Finally, based on the review of the literature, this discussion points to some strategies for integrating intercultural communicative competence to combat the constraints that hinder the promotion of culture in the classroom. To that end, teachers would respond to the learners' current needs for moving across and between languages and cultures, and negotiating their identities as users of world languages in today's global environment. Language teacher education programs and professional development for teachers are suggested as one such means of preparing world language teachers to blend theory and practice. Teacher professional development would enable teachers to engage students in intercultural experiences and encounters whereby they can view their own

cultures with a critical eye, and come to an understanding of the target cultures through the use of language to create meanings and develop new identities.

2.1.2 Definitions of Culture

The main theme that the literature addresses is the definition of culture as a broad concept. The change of the meaning of culture over the years has been hastened by the impact of globalization and the mobility of people. In the past, culture was viewed as separate from language and conceived as being associated with aspects of civilization and education, which are reflected in arts, literature, and drama. Later on, culture was divided into two segments: the big “C” culture as a concept describing literary and artistic materials, and the small “c” culture which refers to a group of people’s behaviors (Kramsch, 2006). Recently, culture has been defined as broad, complex, dynamic, and multi-layered (Furstenberg, 2010). The following section offers an overview of how the literature defines culture in language education.

Foreign language education presupposes teaching language learners to be able to communicate in and understand the culture of the target language. The integration of language and culture in language teaching and learning would help learners to develop both linguistic and intercultural communication skills. Intercultural language teaching and learning emerged as a result of theorizing about the nature of language and culture and the ways they are related. Definitions of culture and the history of its development have been widely documented in the literature (e.g., Kramsch, 2006; Risager, 2006; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). Owing to the complexity and the multi-layered aspect of the concept of culture, the meaning of culture in language learning has shifted over the years.

For example, Kramsch (2006) provides an understanding of culture from two perspectives. She states that “there are two different ways of looking at culture in language study: the modernist and the post-modernist perspective. They both co-exist in the same language department at the same universities” (p. 12).

The modernist approach to language prioritizes language skills and describes culture as knowledge of literature, music, and arts; that is big “C” culture or as a way of life and behaviors of a social group; that is small “C” culture (Holliday, 1999). This view perceives culture as knowledge and information about a social group through observation of its practices. Hence, culture is considered as invariable and any social group’s cultural practices as homogeneous. The language learner acts here as a distant observer who focuses on factual knowledge of cultures, which paves the way to the construction of essentialist and stereotypical views of cultures and social groups in the language classroom. In this cultural orientation to language learning, the learner studies culture as a separate unit from language and this unit serves the purpose of knowledge accumulation. Modernist teaching practices, therefore, favor teaching language and culture as separate entities with a focus on language accuracy and homogeneity of culture. The bulk of culture then is knowledge of cultural practices. Citing Blommaert, Leppänen, Pahta, and Räisänen (2012), Kramsch (2014) summarizes this view when she states that, “[M]odernist approaches to language are based on an ‘ethnolinguistic assumption...that aligns language use and ethnic or cultural group identity in a linear and one-on-one relationship’” (p.298). In summary, culture from the modernist perspective refers to knowledge and facts with respect to its representation of canonical literary and artistic knowledge (big C), and its reference to daily life activities and practices of a social group

(little c). In this sense, culture is seen as invariable and static, and the learner as distant. The role of language in this case was a mere tool for accessing selections of information, works of art, and literature.

The post-modernist view describes culture as being not only facts, but also thoughts, behaviors, and language use (Kramsch, 2006). This approach is known as the intercultural orientation to language learning which targets rejecting stereotypes and essentializing national cultures through a focus on cultural differences. Culture is defined as “Discourse, identity, and power” (Kramsch, 2006, p.16). This view initiated the fluid aspect of culture as it becomes related to a reflection on self and the “other”, and membership in a discourse community. In her comment on the impact of globalization on foreign language teaching, Kramsch (2014) indicates that “late modernist approaches add a reflective element or self-awareness that enable language users to better interpret the communicative situations in which they are to make situated choices” (p. 308). Adding the reflective element in language and culture learning highlights the necessity of responding to the different needs of foreign language learners especially with the movement toward an intercultural dimension to language learning, which conceives culture as subjective and related to the individual’s history. For this reason, language instructors’ task is to teach meaning, interpretation, and discourse that would allow students to reflect on their own experiences and develop multiple perspectives from which they view the world.

In line with this view, Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) argue that “[S]econd language learning within an intercultural orientation... is best seen as a process that necessarily entails a *movement between languages and cultures* in communicating with

others in the target language being learned and in the process of learning itself” (p. 43, emphasis in original). Rather than focusing on the static and homogeneous aspect of culture where the language learner acts as an observer, Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) consider culture as a dynamic context where language learners engage in interaction, meaning-making, and reflection practices that lead to the enhancement of mutual understanding and the development of linguistic and intercultural competence. In this respect, the learners draw on their own cultures, which they reflect on in order to develop self-awareness and understanding of the other. Referring to this approach to culture, Kramsch (2013) reports that “seeing the two cultures echoing each other across time and space might foster in students a post-modern subjectivity” (p.68). The learner in this case plays multiple roles (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013) which shape his/her identity: learner (in the classroom), language user (interpreter and intercultural speaker), and individual (a person with his/her unique characteristics). In other words, the learner brings multiple identities to the learning environment, where he/she engages in interaction and meaning-making actions that result in the transformation of the self in the process of learning. This transformation occurs because of the learner’s multiple experiences and his/her participation in meaning making and interpretation, which play a significant role “in the way that both language learning and intercultural understanding are understood” (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013, p. 62).

Along the same line, Kramsch (2013) claims that culture in language learning needs to be seen as a way of meaning-making “that is relational, historical, and that is always mediated by language and other symbolic systems” (p.71). For the language learner, and as indicated earlier, his/her subjectivities and identities are constructed

through talk between their instant self and their future self in a “third place” of discourse; that is culture (Kramsch, 2006, p.328). This place is “a way of belonging” not a place of belonging (Kramsch, 2006, p.328). Following a postmodern perspective, Kramsch (2013) defines culture as “the meaning that members of a social group give to the discursive practices they share in a given space and time and over the historical life of the group” (p.69). In the world language classroom, the learners need to develop not only communicative competence, but also symbolic competence (Kramsch & Whiteside, 2008), which Kramsch (2012, p. 24) describes as “[T]he ability to read and interpret spoken and written discourse, identify the symbolic value of words and metaphors, grasp their social and historical significance, contrast them with metaphors in one’s own language, and reframe one’s interpretation of events.” This conception of culture aligns with the sociocultural view of language learning (Lantolf, 2000; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006), which situates meaning in social interaction where language is used in a specific context. In this sense, symbolic competence allows learners to become members who constantly interpret themselves and the other to increase intercultural understanding. Valdiviezo and Nieto (2015) offer a comprehensive definition of culture which takes into account all of its aspects discussed thus far. For Valdiviezo and Nieto (2015, p. 93), culture is “dynamic, multifaceted, embedded in context, influenced by social, economic, and political factors, created and socially constructed, learned, and dialectal.”

In summary, on the basis of the two aforementioned perspectives to culture in language teaching, the learner is either placed outside of culture and is satisfied with acquiring knowledge about the target culture through the use of language (modernist approach) or takes center stage in the learning process by maintaining relationships

through a dialogue of cultures (Savignon & Sysoyev, 2002), becoming active in negotiating meaning, and developing new worldviews such as symbolic competence (Kramsch & Whiteside, 2008) and/or intercultural citizenship (Byram, 2008). Fenner (2008) describes these perspectives as the development from cultural competence to intercultural competence. The post-modernist perspective highlights the delicate position that world language teachers find themselves in and the challenges they face in the classroom, namely how they would integrate culture in their teaching.

The need to teach intercultural competence, defined as the ability to interact effectively and successfully with individuals from the target culture, makes the task of teachers fraught with uneasiness and discomfort, especially because of the different needs of the world language learner in a constantly unsettled and interconnected world. What is tricky for teachers in this regard is how to teach culture without (re)producing essentialist, reductive, and ethnocentric views of cultures, which have characterized the modernist approach to culture (Witte, 2011). This situation requires what Shulman (1987) refers to as subject matter knowledge (SMK) from exposure and experience, and pedagogical matter knowledge (PMK). The literature reported that some world language teachers may not possess SMK and PMK (Galeano, 2014; Byrd, 2014). SMK here means knowledge of language structure and functions, and PMK refers to knowledge of language teaching methodologies. These two concepts are relevant to all NN language teachers in general, but specifically to NN Arabic teachers, the participants in this study. Before looking at teachers' classroom practices regarding the implementation of language and culture, a survey of how the literature discussed world language teachers' views of culture will be offered.

2.2 Teachers' Views of Culture

How world language teachers understand culture as individuals and how they undertake teaching culture in their classrooms is another recurrent theme in the literature (Byram & Risager, 1999; Canale, 2016; Kearney, 2008; Klein, 2004; Peiser & Jones, 2014). In their qualitative study on English and Danish foreign language teachers in England and Denmark, Byram and Risager (1999) indicated that foreign language teachers still lack a deep understanding of the term culture. The researchers reported that teachers choose to surmise the meaning of the term “culture” or turn to looking it up in the dictionary. Therefore, it is often difficult for them to figure out how to teach culture. For this reason, culture has always been linked to knowledge of literature or lifestyles (Peiser & Jones, 2014). In this manner, it is essentialized and taught as a separate entity as if it is static and/or invariable. Consequently, teachers prioritize the teaching of linguistic and communication skills and minimize the time allotted to intercultural understanding (Byrd, 2014; Fox & Diaz-Greenberg, 2006).

The research suggests that teachers find it challenging to provide a definition of the word “culture” and frequently resort to the cultural content in their textbook units. However, some authors note that the teachers have personal understandings that are related to the themes that they teach in the classroom. Klein (2004) conducted a study on how 14 high school foreign language teachers of French, German, and Spanish in the US understand their work as teachers of language and culture. This study was based on observations, a questionnaire, semi-structured interviews and reflection journals. The findings demonstrate that the participants share similar perceptions about culture, stress the importance of teaching culture, and aim to develop awareness of and empathy toward

other cultures (Ryan & Sercu, 2003). This study confirms Byram and Risager's (1999) other finding since it indicates that teachers find it challenging to capture the meaning of the term "culture": some teachers tend to view culture as 'all encompassing', while others draw their perceptions of culture from the cultural themes displayed in the textbooks. These themes often follow the four F's approach to culture which define it as "Food, Fashion, Festivals, and Folklore" (Banks, 2002; Sleeter & Grant, 2002, cited in Phipps & Guilherme, 2004, p.50). This cultural approach to language teaching and learning results in the (re)production of stereotypes and essentialization of the target cultures. For example, Sercu's (2006) survey of 242 foreign language teachers from Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece, Mexico, Poland, Spain, and Sweden suggests that "teachers perceive culture teaching foremost in terms of teacher-centered transmission of cultural knowledge" (p.69). This transmission of cultural facts deprives the learner of negotiation of meanings and development of intercultural understanding. After all, cultural knowledge can be easily accessed through the native language, according to the traditional and narrow view of culture. However, not all teachers share the narrow view of culture, as I will explain below.

The narrow understanding of culture among teachers lies in their convictions about the importance of the implementation of culture, but their teaching practices do not reflect their convictions. For example, Kearney (2008) conducted an ethnographic study including 14 intermediate French students and seven teachers at the college level and how they integrate learning and teaching culture. All the teachers indicated that language and culture are inseparable. The focus group interviews of teachers pointed to different approaches and objectives for culture learning. These objectives include enabling learners

to: (a) decode the cultural context; (b) interpret meanings in French to develop knowledge about self and other; and (c) move from an ethnocentric view of the world to an ethno-relative one. Nevertheless, what these teachers practice in the classroom is not determined by the teachers' views of culture and their lesson objectives, but by their lack of common knowledge about culture, limited time, and individual teacher characteristics. This discussion brings up the research on teacher cognition and the inconsistencies that exist between "what teachers think, know, and believe and the relationships between these mental constructs to what teachers do in the classroom" (Borg, 2003, p.81). The divide between what Shulman (1987) calls SMK and PMK - teacher knowledge and beliefs on the one hand, and their classroom practices on the other- is evident in world language and culture teaching. This review indicates that world language teachers do not have a clear understanding of the term "culture" and that they feel culture is important in language learning; still, their classroom practices and cultures do not reflect an emphasis on intercultural learning.

Without an in-depth understanding of the significance of culture in the world language classroom, opportunities for developing intercultural understanding and intercultural communicative competence (Byram, 1997) become scarce. The scarcity of such opportunities is due to the emphasis on the acquisition of language skills and the accumulation of cultural knowledge, which does not meet the needs of today's learners who aspire to construct new identities through the process of moving between languages and cultures, and negotiating meanings in that process (Liddicoat, 2004; Schulz, 2007).

2.2.1 The Focus on Teaching Language

Despite the emphasis on cultural understanding and the fact that teachers acknowledge its importance for learners, they still give priority to teaching communication skills and surface-level culture. The following section explores the call for implementing the intercultural dimension of language learning in the US and Europe by examining two documents: The Modern Language Association report (2007) and the Common European Framework of Reference (2001). Next, I identify the factors that influence teachers to prioritize teaching language over intercultural understanding.

Emphasizing teaching linguistic skills in the foreign language classroom is not a new trend due to the monopoly of the communicative approach to language teaching in the past few decades. However, with the increasingly shrinking world because of globalization and economic and political competition worldwide, it is necessary to prepare global and interculturally aware citizens for the challenges of the twenty first century (MLA Report, 2007). For this reason, institutions in the US and Europe call for the integration of language and culture in the curriculum to enhance students' cultural awareness and intercultural understanding.

In the US, the National Standards for Foreign Language Teaching (1996/ 2006) describe five overarching goals that teachers need to meet and implement in their classrooms. Culture is one of these goals that aim to “have students understand how a given group’s worldview is related to the tools they use and the things they do” (Galeano, 2014, p. 134). The standards present culture in terms of practices, products and perspectives. While cultural products refer to the tools and artifacts that a social group uses, the practices are the ways of behavior of this social group. The cultural perspectives reflect the attitudes and values of such a group, which represents the culture’s views of

the world (i.e. perspectives). Additionally, the report by the Modern Language Association (MLA) Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Language Learning (2007) entitled "Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World," brought a new vision that called for a consideration of the role of culture in foreign language in higher education. This report criticized the notion of culture as facts and information which are distributed for tourism purposes. A new goal was put forth: developing translingual and transcultural competence. Transcultural competence foregrounds the social construction of learning in the language classroom and the importance of learner interaction in building "intercultural awareness and understanding" (Mijalski, 2014, p. 37).

In Europe, the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR; Council of Europe, 2001) linked language learning with developing intercultural competence and a European citizenship. Byram, Gribkova, and Starkey (2002) define intercultural competence as "the ability to ensure a shared understanding of people of different social identities, and their abilities to interact with people as complex human beings with multiple identities and their own individuality" (p.10). This definition highlights the focus on competence as an ability to interact and share understandings and not as a process of compiling information and cultural facts. However, despite all the interest in intercultural understanding and the shift in the conceptualization of world language learning with the emphasis on the role of culture, teachers still focus on language and marginalize culture. Even when culture is covered in the classroom, priority is given to the national aspects of culture (Byram & Risager, 1999; Dytynshyn & Collins, 2012).

The factors that drive the focus on the functional aspects of language are discussed below.

2.2.2 Constraints to Teaching Culture

This section focuses on what restrains teachers from implementing culture in their classrooms. Rather than prioritizing the intercultural dimension of foreign language teaching, the research reviewed revealed that teachers favor teaching language in the first place. This review identified three major constraints to teaching culture in the foreign language classroom: curriculum expectations, teacher characteristics, and absence of a clear language and culture pedagogy. These constraints seem to be the primary reasons for teachers' failure to implement a post-modernist approach to language teaching and learning.

2.2.2.1 Curriculum Expectations

School mission statements and curriculum objectives place the four linguistic skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) as the most important objective in language learning. Byram and Risager (1999) note that the goal of integrating culture in the curriculum was to provide information and “break down prejudice” (p.100). Additionally, the authors claim that teachers are overwhelmed by teaching loads and the need for frequent assessments and evaluations of student learning (e.g., Carel, 2001; Sercu, 2007). In the same vein, Ryan and Sercu's (2003) study on 47 Mexican English and Spanish teachers as mediators of language and culture echoes the previous study when the authors report that 73.33% of the teachers surveyed pointed out that they maximize more language than culture because of time constraints. Language teaching,

then, was rated as the most significant aim in the classroom. Still, in Sercu's (2006) quantitative study on foreign language teachers and intercultural competence, 79.48% of 424 teachers indicated that intercultural competence would be part of their classrooms focus if they had more time and were not pressured by curricula overload.

The emergent themes from the research suggest a need for professional development opportunities for language teachers and research on alternative means of teaching culture, namely ethnography and online intercultural exchanges (telecollaboration). When learners conduct ethnographic studies and engage in research in the field either through study abroad or in structured language classrooms (Carel, 2001; Byram & Feng, 2004), they will likely be able to understand not only what it is like to be a member of a particular culture, but also how and why they act and behave in their own ways. Learner research can be an opportunity for learners to look in-depth into who they are and how they compare to members of the cultures they study. For example, Carel (2001) used the ethnography of communication and what she calls "the virtual ethnographer" to help 23 public high school students of French experience *authentic* behaviors of French speakers through observations, interviews, and video recording analyses. The purpose of the virtual ethnographer was to develop cultural awareness and appreciation of French communication behaviors and values. The same pattern applies to exploring culture by connecting students from different cultures through online exchanges that adopt Network-based language teaching (Warschauer & Kern, 2000; O'Dowd, 2004).

One of the applications of this approach is telecollaboration (e.g., O'Dowd, 2004; Schenker, 2012). According to Mijalski (2014, p. 73), telecollaboration aims to "promote

intercultural understanding and language learning through dialogue and cooperation among students.” At first, research on technology and language learning focused on how the use of the computer and online exchanges promote linguistic competence (Lantolf, 2000). Recent research from the 2000’s embarked on linking language learning to developing intercultural competence through online language programs (Kern, Ware & Warschauer, 2004; O’Dowd, 2004; Warschauer & Kern, 2000). These online programs rely on using computer-mediated communication tools such as email, virtual chats, debates, and discussion forums to explore foreign cultures without traveling abroad. One type of telecollaboration is Cultura, an online program developed by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Cultura aimed to engage American students of French and French students of English in online discussions of a variety of topics and exchange their views on these topics (Furstenburg, 2010). Based on these exchanges, learners become capable of examining the deep structure of both their own cultures and the target cultures. Another example of student online exchanges was reported in Mijalski’s study involving French and US students. In her dissertation thesis on online intercultural exchanges between 25 US French students and 15 French learners of ESL, Mijalski (2014) found that when learners explore cultural similarities and differences, attempt to step outside their cultures, and manage “rich points” or difficulties in communication, they can develop intercultural skills. The data for this study were collected from students’ and instructors’ communication logs, observations, students’ blogs and reflections, and an open-ended survey. In this study, the US students had misconceptions about French students and they were able to appreciate French culture through critical engagement with stereotypes, which is a sign of the acquisition of intercultural competence (Byram, 1997).

This study shows that one way to ensure the development of intercultural competence in learners in online learning is through reflection and discussions of the exchanges recorded in students logs.

However, as Peiser and Jones (2014, p. 377) remarked, in the absence of “a commonly understood intercultural teaching methodology,” language teachers are challenged as they attempt to integrate language and culture in their teaching. This challenge increases with curriculum expectations, textbook content, lack of time, as well as teacher beliefs and characteristics.

2.2.2.2 Teacher Characteristics

Borg (2006) defines teacher characteristics “in terms of personal qualities, pedagogical skills, classroom practice, subject matter and psychological constructs such as knowledge and attitudes” (p. 8). These characteristics influence the teaching and learning experiences of both the teachers and their students, especially because language teachers are expected to teach not only linguistic skills, but also aspects of the target cultures, which can be related to literature, history, politics, and education (Borg, 2006). In this process of integrating language and culture in teaching, language is dynamic and requires language teachers to be “creative, [have] a sense of humor, flexible, ‘actor type,’ ..., and radiate positive feelings” (Borg, 2006, p. 23) in order to attend to the need of implementing approaches that link language and culture teaching. However, the research reviewed reflects a different reality.

Despite the prevalent understanding that language and culture are bound, the research reviewed indicates that teacher characteristics and teacher beliefs determine their

likeliness to teach language, culture or both. Peiser and Jones (2014) claim that the decision to engage in and teach intercultural understanding or not is influenced by the teachers' individual traits, namely, personalities, interests, and life-experiences (Ryan & Sercu, 2003; Llurda & Lasagabaster, 2010). Similarly, in her study with world language teachers from different countries, Sercu (2006) argues that communicative language competence constitutes the core of teachers' beliefs. Galeano (2014) links this trend to teacher characteristics: some teachers tend to teach in the same way that they learned in the classroom using the textbook as the main source of content. In this regard, she holds that "teachers' culture pedagogy predominantly results from their own experience as language and culture learners" (Galeano, 2014, p. 135). This is the case for Kohler's (2015) NN teachers of Indonesian: "the case studies reveal how teachers' understandings of the concepts of language and culture and their relationships are influenced by their personal experiences, knowledge, and identities" (p.127). In some instances, teachers often have very limited experiences with the target cultures and are unable to develop cultural awareness and intercultural understanding among their learners (Galeano, 2014; Kohler, 2015). In contrast, Sercu (2006) reveals that her participants viewed themselves to be familiar with the target cultures they teach. However, in the absence of a common approach to teaching cultural understanding and the lack of suitable teaching materials (Bacha & Haley, 2014), teachers tend to give priority to teaching language. Ryan and Sercu (2003) found that the teachers they interviewed perceived themselves as volunteers in imparting to their students' cultural facts that they are aware of and that they have experienced. Teachers draw on their personal experiences as a tool for integrating culture in their practices. In this respect, Borg (2003, p. 81) contends, "there is ample evidence

that teachers' experiences as learners can inform cognitions about teaching and learning which continue to exert an influence on teachers throughout their career." The research reviewed supports Borg's argument (e.g., Klein, 2004; Galeano, 2014).

Surprisingly, some teachers consider teaching culture as not important at all in the language classroom (Sercu, 2006). Such teachers, according to Sercu's (2006) study, argue that integrating culture in the world language classroom does nothing except increase the construction of stereotypes. Additionally, these teachers believe that culture learning should occur in uniquely diverse classrooms because they believe language and culture cannot be taught in an integrative way. What these teachers lack is opportunities to view alternative ways and strategies for integrating language and culture in instruction. Such strategies can be offered and learned through teacher professional development. Unfortunately, such opportunities are lacking in most schools due to the lack of a unique pedagogy for teaching language for understanding cultures.

2.2.2.3 Absence of Culture Teaching Pedagogy

Some of the challenges that most teachers face when attempting to provide opportunities for their students to develop self-awareness and intercultural understanding is the absence of a clear and unified pedagogy for teaching culture (Schulz, Lalande, Dykstra-Pruim, Zimmer-Loew, & James, 2005; Peiser & Jones, 2014) and the lack of training on approaches to teaching language and culture (Lange, 2003; Byrd 2014). To begin with, culture is such a broad concept and as was mentioned earlier, there is no common definition of culture among language teachers. Additionally, the focus on the textbook as the default source of knowledge about cultures can lead to teachers' adoption

of the cultural and ethnocentric perspective to language teaching (Dytynyshyn & Collins, 2012). All of this engenders the homogenization of cultures and the strengthening of stereotypes (Galeano, 2014). In their qualitative study on international foreign language teachers as mediators of language and culture, Ryan and Sercu (2003) reported that their participants use “materials from different textbooks” (p.117) to teach culture, but they do not invite visitors from the target cultures to their classes. Sercu (2006) identified a mix of factors that prevent teachers from embracing teaching practices conducive of developing intercultural competence among students. These factors are: (a) failure of education programs to train teachers to adopt intercultural competence approaches to culture teaching; (b) most teachers play by the textbook which presents culture as static and based on national rather than international perspectives; and (c) teachers’ lack of theoretical work on the pedagogy of intercultural competence.

2.3 Teachers’ Approaches to Teaching Culture

As a result of the aforementioned factors, teachers approach culture teaching and learning differently: using the textbook or drawing on their interests and experiences (Peiser & Jones, 2014). Some teachers rely on the textbooks as the primary source of culture teaching. This teaching consists of transmitting cultural content and does not discuss aspects of culture outside of the textbook (Ryan & Sercu, 2003; Sercu, 2006). G. Canale (2016) synthesized nine research studies on how language textbooks represent culture. His synthesis suggests that in addition to “homogenizing” cultures, textbooks reflect diversity solely in terms of similarities and differences between cultures, which (re)produce stereotypes and promote a reductive and ethnocentric view of culture

(Savignon & Sysoyev, 2002; Forman, 2014). G. Canale (2016) reminds us that there is a dearth of research on how culture is appropriated in classroom practice.

Peiser and Jones (2014) indicate that while most teachers rely on the language textbook, some teachers resort to their individual interests and experiences as determining factors in their culture teaching practices. The authors laid out four themes related to teacher characteristics and interests, namely “emotional mission, imparting facts, pastoral emphasis, and playing by the book” (Peiser & Jones, 2014, p. 381). Each of the teachers in the study engages in culture teaching in different and personal ways because of the lack of a clear and common teaching methodology. Additionally, Byram and Risager (1999) conducted an international study comparing English and Danish foreign language teachers and found that teachers have independent perceptions of culture and that they are not aware of their individual understanding of culture. Another international quantitative study by Sercu (2006) revealed that despite teachers’ awareness of the importance of intercultural competence development in students, culture is still seen as “peripheral” to communication skills. Even when teachers attempt to include culture in teaching, they focus on similarities between students’ native cultures and the target cultures (Galeano, 2014). The reason is that teachers face challenges in the classroom and rely on individual initiatives and trial and error to implement the cultural component in language teaching and learning. This is the case in Kearney’s (2008) study of culture learning in college French classrooms in the United States. The participants designed objectives to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Byram, 1997) that foster intercultural competence and awareness, but the implementation of these objectives took the form of indirect (Byrd, 2014), implicit, and improvised attempts since the teachers did not receive

any training on how to teach culture. Lortie (1975) referred to this phenomenon when he stated that “[T]eachers say that their principal teacher has been experience; they learned to teach through trial and error in the classroom” (p.79), which makes their practice individualistic and not shared. However, some teachers have opportunities to share their experiences and ideas about classroom activities during their regular teacher meeting sessions. As such, these meetings help them to share best practices, reflect on their teaching, and improve their approaches to teaching culture.

In summary, this review exposes the place of culture in the world language classroom, which can be characterized as peripheral due to teachers’ varied conceptualizations of culture, curriculum expectations, and the absence of training on culture teaching pedagogy. All these factors explain the focus on the teaching of functional aspects of language and the superficial teaching of culture amidst the recent calls to make it the core of the world language classroom. This focus on language is caused by lack of teacher socialization into the subject taught, the teaching profession, and the school context (Johnston & Wetheril, 2002). Lortie (1975) refers to teacher socialization as primitive since it relies on abrupt “practice teaching” which lacks uniformity and a quick transition to full teaching responsibility. Byrd (2014) conducted a study on L2 methods courses for pre-service teachers. His findings indicate that: (a) teacher educators follow an “indirect approach” to teaching culture; (b) most of the readings do not pertain to how to teach culture; and (c) “Half of the courses devote less than 10% of class time to the study of how to teach culture” (p. 80). The foreign language teacher training has been following the same pattern with less focus on cultural awareness and understanding (Byram, 2009). However, the world language teachers’ task

has been redefined recently. Language teaching has become more difficult with the mandates of globalization, the conceptualization of culture as dynamic and fluid (Byram & Feng, 2004; Kramsch, 2014), and the emphasis on the role of culture in enhancing intercultural understanding and shaping learners' identities in the process of learning. These factors have a great impact upon language teaching in terms of the learners' needs for a closer understanding of the self and the other as they settle in a "third place" where they move between languages and cultures, and engage in a "dialogue of cultures."

2.4 Summary and Discussion

This review explored teachers' definitions of culture, their perspectives regarding teaching culture, and the barriers that prevent them from applying what they believe in in their practice.

Based on the findings of this review, there is a lack of consensus among world language educators both nationally and internationally on what constitutes "culture." The absence of a common understanding of this term can be attributed mainly to the lack of professional development possibilities for language teachers. While teacher training was mentioned as lacking uniformity, research on this topic seems scarce in the literature.

Another element missing in current research is longitudinal studies with a large sample. Except for the two international studies by Byram and Risager (1999) and Ryan and Sercu (2003), most of the studies reviewed in this paper were conducted with a few participants, not exceeding 18. Additionally, except for one study (Peiser & Jones, 2014) which expanded over one year, most of the studies were short term: between one semester and two semesters. Therefore, there is a need for more longitudinal studies at

the national level, which would yield interesting findings about the challenges faced by language teachers in adopting intercultural approaches to foreign language teaching and learning. Such studies may also offer recommendations on how to overcome such challenges and provide strategies for teaching for intercultural understanding.

Taken together, this review suggests a disagreement between the theoretical pieces and the empirical studies with respect to how teachers understand culture and how they apply their ideas in practice. This difference can be called a gap between theory and practice. On the one hand, theoretical articles stress the need for a movement toward an intercultural view of foreign language teaching and learning. This view considers learning language and culture as a process of reflection and analysis of both one's knowledge and culture, and the cultures taught and learned. This perspective highlights the development of intercultural competence and new identities as learners move between languages and cultures. On the other hand, the research articles reflect disarray in terms of how teachers conceptualize culture and how their conceptualizations are not manifested in their teaching practices. Such practices foreground linguistic skills over developing intercultural competence (i.e., knowledge, skills, and attitudes). Without question then, this situation calls for interventions to bridge theory and practice and offer strategies for alternative methodologies to teaching culture.

The literature surveyed provides recommendations on how to enhance intercultural learning, which takes into consideration learner exploration and comparison of cultures, and critical reflection on the representations of cultures in and outside of the foreign language classroom. These recommendations pertain to preservice teachers and culture teaching pedagogy. First, Byrd's (2014) study on L2 methods courses highlights

the importance of interaction and the co-construction of knowledge about culture teaching methodology, which includes reflection on the ways to apply this knowledge in daily practice. In the same vein, Fox and Diaz-Greenburg (2006) emphasize linking the teaching of culture to the ACTFL “Five Cs” instead of the “Four Fs” that are frequently presented in the language textbooks. Preservice teachers can apply this strategy only if the licensure programs provide cultural experiential learning opportunities that they can discuss, reflect on, and implement in practice before applying them in their own classrooms (Garrett- Rucks, 2010). These opportunities can take the form of project-based learning (Plough, 2016) through which teacher candidates explore and experiment with explicit cultural knowledge in a “third place” where they develop strategies for discovery, analysis, interpretation, and comparison (Witte, 2011), and develop new identities as they move between languages and cultures. Additionally, Forman (2014) notes that language learners need to use their background knowledge as a foundation to explore “global understandings” and for this to happen, language textbooks should contain materials that target both local and global contexts. After all, in today’s world, world language learners do not need to travel abroad to be immersed in the language and culture. Technology can offer easy and fast access to ways to interact with individuals from a variety of authentic cultural contexts both in and outside of the classroom, which can provide experiential learning to supplement cognitive learning. In this regard, language learners can maintain relationships, explore other cultures and their own, and can become ready to function effectively and appropriately in different geographical and cultural contexts (Mijalski, 2014).

Johnson and Golombek (2003) take a sociocultural approach to teacher learning and offer insights into how teacher learning develops. This approach examines how the use of “cultural tools” such as teacher reflections and discussions with other teachers helps them understand themselves and develop new ways of engaging with classroom activities. Johnson and Golombek (2003) call this learning a “transformative process” (p. 735) which affects not only the teachers, but also their students and the school environment. This transformation is highly needed in world language education. Therefore, more research addressing the disconnect between teacher knowledge and classroom practice in language education can help teachers gain an understanding of themselves, their students, and their school environment before engaging in transformative activities in which they can serve as language and culture mediators capable of contributing to the development of not only linguistic, but also intercultural awareness. Serving as language and culture mediators is the work of all language teachers. This study, however, focuses on the experiences of NN Arabic teachers in particular. For this reason, I present, in what follows, a selective review of the debate about the characteristics, merits, and identities of NN language teachers in general.

2.5 NN Language Teachers and Teacher Identities

In this last section, I present a selective review of the literature on NN language teachers. The focus is on the debate on the definition of a NN teacher, NN teacher characteristics, their self-perceptions, and their identities.

2.5.1 Native and Non-native Language Teacher Debate

Riordan (2018, p.113) likens NN language teachers to “an elephant in the room of foreign language education.” As such, NN language teachers are visible to everyone

usually in a lower standard as they are constantly compared to “ideal,” “default,” or “expert” teachers (i.e., N language teachers). The debate about N and NN teachers began since the 1990s especially in the English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as second language (ESL) fields, because of the focus of the communicative approach to language teaching on achieving native speaker-like competence (Byram, Gribkova, & Starkey, 2002; Kramsch, 2002; Selvi & Rudolph, 2017). Making the native speaker competence the end goal of foreign language learning has undermined the ability of NN teachers and sets N language teachers as the model. Llurda (2015) describes this goal as ‘unnecessary’ especially in the ESL field where the N-NN language teacher debate started almost three decades ago. Kramsch and Zhang (2018) refer to the distinction between N and NN language teachers as “one of the most contentious issues” (p.1). This distinction resulted in some reactions that denounce both bias toward the N teacher and the marginalization of the NN teacher (Braine, 1999; Cook, 1999; Leung, Harris & Rampton, 1997; Llurda, 2015; Megyes, 1994).

The main issues addressed in the N-NN language teacher discussions relate to the definition, assets, and weaknesses of both N and NN language teachers. In her recent review of the literature on the NN language teacher, Riordan (2018) notes the communicative approach to language teaching has put the language learner at the center of the teaching and learning process, therefore leaving the language teacher at the margin. The author’s survey identifies three main themes in the literature: defining NN language teachers, their characteristics, and their self-perceptions.

Riordan defines the NN teacher as: (a) a language user who learned the language later in his/her life; (b) a language user with some imperfections in language proficiency;

and (c) a language user who self-identifies as a NN. This working definition based on the literature review covers only teachers who work in non-immersion contexts where access to language and culture is very limited. An example of such contexts would be the teaching and learning of less commonly taught languages (i.e., Arabic, Japanese, Russian, Swahili, and Persian) in the US, Europe, and Australia.

In terms of NN language teacher characteristics, Medgyes (1994) claims that the differences between NN and N language teachers can be traced to their personal traits, teaching practices, and language ability. In terms of teaching practices and behaviors, Medgyes attributes the differences to limited language proficiency and lack of self-confidence among NN teachers. However, in a foreign language classroom, NN teachers can be seen as a model of a successful learner, which could motivate their students to invest in language learning. Additionally, a NN teacher can also anticipate where students' language difficulties lie and can empathize with them, especially when both teacher and students share their L1 and are familiar with the local educational contexts and systems (Mc Neil, 2005; Oulbeid, 2018). However, one of the weaknesses of some NN language teachers is their emphasis on language functions and error correction in instruction. The candidate's (Oulbeid, 2018) ethnographic study with two native English teachers of Arabic in the US revealed that this trend, the focus on teaching the mechanics of language, could be directly traced to teacher training which stresses accuracy and assessment over fluency, a gap that language teacher education programs need to address.

NN language teachers often view themselves as lacking self-esteem as a result of their inability to reach N teacher level in terms of intuitive knowledge of language and native speaker accent (Llurda, 2015; Levis, Sonsaat, Link & Barriuso, 2016; Martel &

Wang, 2015). NN teachers find themselves in an awkward situation trying to imitate N language teachers to the extent that they end up describing themselves as “impostors” (Bernat, 2008; Oulbeid, 2018). NN language teachers also suffer from anxiety because of their perceived lack of language proficiency and self-assigned inferior status (Megyes, 1994). Despite these weaknesses, Medgyes acknowledges that both N and NN teachers could equally be effective practitioners in their own ways as demonstrated by their positive self-perceptions discussed above.

As a result of the debate discussed above, calls to advocate for and support NN teachers, specifically NN English language teachers, appeared in the literature (Braine, 1999; Kramsch, 2002; Llurda, 2015). Dewaele (2017b) describes the native speaker label as ‘racist,’ ‘strange’ and stemming from a “strong monolingual bias” (p. 236). The reason is that NN language teachers are viewed through comparison to N language teachers and are expected to achieve adequate N language teacher proficiency (Llurda, 2015). Unfortunately, these problematic and discriminatory views still exist in the foreign language profession around the world despite the efforts to support and empower NN teachers. Part of these efforts can be witnessed in the development of new terms that are less offensive to these teachers.

Cook (2002) talked about the benefit of developing positive self-image of the teacher by calling them L2 users as opposed to NNSs. L2 user is different from L2 learner. Drawing on Cook’s (1999) notion of multicompetence, Pavlenko (2003) discussed how teachers viewing themselves not as lacking native speaker English competency, but as multicompetent speakers who are able to use another language in addition to their L1. In this sense, the multicompetent teacher becomes empowered to

develop positive self-perceptions, although they may believe that they would never attain native speaker proficiency (Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999; Oulbeid, 2018). The issue with L2 user as a term is the case of individuals who can use a 3rd, a 4th, and a 5th language. Dewaele (2017b) compensates this issue with the terms L1 user versus LX user, which he describes as a compensation for the ideological assumptions of N versus NN dichotomy. Another term in the wave of terminology regarding NN teachers is Guerra's (2017) "language expert". Guerra is more concerned about language and culture competency and teaching skills rather than who can be a better teacher. Kramsch and Zhang (2018) used the term "multilingual instructor" to move from the biased terms of N and NN.

Braine (1999) reviewed research on how English language teachers' self-position themselves as NN English teachers, and how they are viewed by their learners. The majority of this research took place in the English language teaching (ELT) field and underscores the recognition of NN English teachers as successful practitioners (Braine 1999). Research on NN language teacher self-perceptions and identities outside the EFL and ESL fields is scarce. Only a handful of studies addressed issues of language, culture and identity in other languages, namely German, Indonesian, Arabic, and Chinese (Ghanem, 2015; Koehler, 2015; Oulbeid, 2018; Zhang & Jensen, 2013). This study contributes to research on NN teachers by providing a N Arabic teacher's understanding of NN Arabic teachers' perspectives of language, culture, and identity.

2.5.2 Non-native Language Teacher Identities

Language teacher identification and development in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) was a prominent topic in recent literature (Block, 2007). This study

draws on Norton's (1997) definition of identity which she describes as "how people understand their relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how people understand their possibilities for the future" (p. 410). Norton highlights that identity is developed through the individuals' relationships with each other and with the world over time. As such, they construct social identities that enable the individual to join a group as a member and through this group membership, they build their identities (Hogg & Abrams, 1998). The social identities are created through connections with the "larger social world, as mediated through institutions" (Norton 1997, p. 420). In these connections, individuals establish an ingroup versus outgroup membership environment, in which they engage in social comparisons and individual self-awareness, two key concepts in understanding teacher identity.

Research on language teacher identities examined the debate on N and NN teachers in the ELT field (Braine, 1999; Medgyes, 1992; Moussou & Llurda, 2005; Reis 2011; Zhang & Jensen, 2013). The debates on identity explored how NN teachers in ELT develop their professional identities, how they position themselves, and how they are positioned by learners and colleagues (Llurda, 2005). The debate culminated in NN English teachers rejecting the widespread ideologies of "native speaker fallacy" (Phillipson, 1992) and "native-speakerism" (Holliday, 2006). These ideologies consider N teachers of English as the default and "ideal" teachers, thereby labeling NN teachers as deficient and inadequate.

In terms of navigating identities, NN teachers' educational backgrounds, their experiences as learners, their students, their personal interests, and their future aspirations shape their classroom practices and the identities they enact. Block (2007) remarked:

“[I]dentities are about negotiating new subject positions at the crossroads of the past, present, and future. Individuals are shaped by their sociohistories but they also shape their sociohistories as life goes on” (p.27).

As mentioned above, the literature that looked into the experiences of NNS teachers of languages other than European languages is limited (Ghanem 2015, Koehler 2015, Oulbeid, 2018; Zhang & Jensen 2013). With regards to Arabic, what has not been addressed in the literature is how post 9/11 generation of Arabic teachers experienced Arabic as learners, teacher trainees, and Arabic teachers. Another gap in the literature is inquiry that expands knowledge of how teachers develop their social and professional identities in the process. This study aimed to fill these two gaps: NN Arabic teachers’ trajectories and the construction of their identities.

2.6 Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, I have laid out the state of the field regarding world language teachers’ perceptions of language and culture, NN teacher characteristics, and the negotiation of their identities. This review suggests that even though foreign language teachers believe in the significance of teaching culture for learners, classroom practices and cultures reflect teachers’ inclination to focus on communication and functional aspects of language. The literature reviewed suggests that language teachers need an in-depth understanding of culture and professional development sessions that would offer them insights into how to promote intercultural competence in the classroom as stressed by the 2007 MLA Report. To this end, teachers need to develop alternative methodologies for teaching that consider the notion of teaching not as a transmission of knowledge but as acquisition of intercultural abilities and skills for understanding the self and the other, appreciation of diversity, and tolerance of other cultures. In this respect,

teachers' belief system needs to be challenged and transformed by having them engage in reflection and research about themselves and their own practices. This strategy is sufficient to affect and change classroom practices (Sercu, 2006). Through reflection on their experiences, teachers deal with the cultural differences they encounter and find their own place between cultures (Liddicoat, 2004).

With regards to NN language teachers, Riordan (2018) refers to them as “the elephant in the room.” This observation is true about the new generation of NN Arabic teachers in the US as there are no qualitative studies, to my knowledge, that address their situations, (un)pleasant classroom and institutional experiences, and the formation of their identities. This study fills this gap.

This multiple case study used data from a sample of six teachers and sought to contribute to the scholarship by investigating how NN teachers of Arabic perceive themselves as NN teachers and how they make connections between language and culture in their daily teaching practices. It draws on the sociocultural approach to language and culture teaching along with Wenger's (1998) concepts of communities of practice and modes of belonging. This study is important for prospective teachers and teacher mentors in Arabic language programs as it provides a description of how NN teachers connect language and culture, where some teachers develop their identities, and how these identities position the teachers. The following chapter lays out the study design and methods for data collection and analysis.

CHAPTER 3

STUDY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This study draws on a multiple qualitative case study that sought to understand the experiences of NN Arabic teachers as learners, preservice teachers, and Arabic university instructors. The research study explored the perspectives of these teachers concerning language, culture, and identity. Specifically, the case study approach, with its reliance on multiple sources of information, seeks to find compelling and reliable evidence to explain and support the claims made from the analysis and interpretation of the study findings. This chapter describes the research design including participant recruitment procedures, researcher positionality, data sources, and data collection, along with the data analysis plan.

3.1 Case Study Approach

The purpose of this multiple case study was to investigate the experiences of NN Arabic language teachers in higher education. This study was designed to collect evidence to understand the deeper experiences of NN Arabic language teachers as learners and preservice teachers. Additionally, it explores how their experiences affect their classroom practices especially as it relates to their conceptions of teaching culture and the negotiation of their identities. To this end, this study examined how NN Arabic teachers in the US make meaning of language, culture, and identity. Yin (2014, p. 16) defines case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the “case”) in depth and within its real-life context; when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident.” Case study research is reliable and

holistic by providing an in-depth understanding through the use of multiple sources of data (Creswell, 2009; Durdella, 2019).

A first step in the study methodology is connecting the research questions to the methods for data collection and analysis. In sum, this study sought to deepen the understanding of how the experiences of NN Arabic language teachers in Higher Education as Arabic language learners and preservice teachers affect their classroom practices. Specifically, to analyze the impact their experiences had on conceptions of teaching culture and negotiation of their identities, this multiple case study was developed to answer the following research questions:

- 1- How do NN Arabic teachers in the US define culture in the classroom?
- 2- What are these teachers' perspectives regarding teaching culture?
- 3- What identities do they construct in relation to their students, their Arabic language colleagues, and the faculty in their departments?
- 4- What does it mean for them to be teachers of Arabic in the US?

Maxwell (2013) designed a matrix that enables the researcher and reader to understand connections between research questions and methods. The researcher can use the matrix to identify how each part of the methods contributes to answering the research questions. Displayed in Table 3.1 are the connections between the research questions and the methods, based on Maxwell's Matrix.

Table 3.1: Matrix Linking Research Questions to Methods (Maxwell, 2013)

Research questions: what do I need to know?	Why do I need to know this?	Sampling decision: where will I find this data?	What kind of data will answer this question?	Whom do I contact for access?	Data analysis
How do NN Arabic teachers in the US define culture in the classroom?	Culture is part and parcel of language teaching. It is important to understand how it is defined.	Arab second language teachers	Interviews and survey, syllabi	Dept. chairs, teachers	Listening to interview recordings, Transcription, coding, (re)reading
What are these teachers' perspectives regarding teaching culture?	Their descriptions of culture will help explain how they teach it.	Teachers	Interviews and teaching documents	Teachers	Field notes, reading interview transcripts, coding, thematic analysis
What identities do they construct in relation to their students, their Arabic language colleagues, and the faculty in their departments?	How they are perceived across several contexts helps to better understand how they feel about teaching and themselves as professionals	Teachers	Interviews and teaching documents	Teachers	Reading interview transcripts, memos, field notes, coding
What does it mean for them to be teachers of Arabic in the US?	This question targets how the teachers perceive themselves and what identities they developed as Arabic instructors.	Teachers	Interviews and Teaching documents	Teachers	Ongoing analysis, Categories and themes

The following description of the matrix addresses the research questions and the rationale for sampling and methods.

The evolution of these research questions was based on my own experiences as an Arabic teacher and my observations of other teachers, specifically those who are native speakers of English. In particular, the first question addresses how the teachers perceive “culture.” My goal is to be able to place and align their views of culture within current theoretical perspectives (culture as a noun (product), culture as a verb (action), culture as plural (cultures)). I am interested in understanding whether teachers’ perspectives of culture differ from how and why they enact culture in the classroom or not. The second question aims to identify the reason for the focus on the teaching of the four skills of language (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). The final question addresses their perceptions of themselves as teachers of Arabic and the identities they negotiated /negotiate as Arabic language learners, as Arabic student teachers, and as practitioners in the Arabic language classroom. The participants’ accounts of their shared/varied experiences can enable the TAFL community understand their processes of becoming Arabic language and culture teachers and the challenges that they encounter.

I conducted interviews with NN Arabic language teachers in the US, specifically university-level teachers. Many Arabic language classrooms in colleges and universities in the US have seen a growing number of teachers who have learned Arabic in high school or college and ended up earning a Master’s or a PhD in Arabic Studies or in Teaching Arabic as Foreign Language (TAFL). Through my research, I explore the experiences of these teachers to gain a deeper understanding of their trajectories. The data in this dissertation can help understand the processes of becoming an Arabic language teacher: first, how they perceive culture and teach culture-related content of Arabic

language; second, how their learning and teaching Arabic affects who they are; and third, what identities are ascribed to them by their students and colleagues.

I selected NN Arabic teachers (aka Arabic second language teachers) because of my familiarity with the field given my experience as an Arabic language teacher of Arab descent. I interviewed Arabic second language teachers to find better ways to help them thrive in the classroom and support student learning by implementing both linguistic and intercultural knowledge. This implementation will foster the formation of well-rounded Arabic language and culture users. The findings from this research will be useful for practitioners, educators, teacher education programs, and Arabic language programs in general. The recommendations may suggest the development of new methods that are responsive to the needs and characteristics of student teachers who are not of Arab descent (of Arabic heritage). I sought nominations from individuals who have experienced both learning and teaching Arabic as a second language and whose native language is not Arabic. Additionally, I welcomed nominations from individuals, recommended by colleagues, who fit the criteria and requirements for participation in this study.

I collected my data mainly through an online survey, in-depth interviews, and teacher documents. The nature of my questions points naturally to qualitative interview data. The information I am seeking cannot be gleaned solely from surveys or tests. Survey data may help in gathering quantifiable data, but cannot foster eliciting rich data about issues of culture and identity perceptions. Additionally, I am interested in investigating the procedures of becoming an Arabic teacher, which cannot be measured

through closed-ended questions that are typical of quantitative methods. I also used teacher document reviews to triangulate the data.

3.2 Data Collection Procedures

I chose the case study approach because case studies can use multiple sources of data (Tellis, 1997; Yin, 2014) to tease out the details of the experiences of the participants. The triangulation of the data generated by the study (online survey, interviews, teaching artifacts, teaching philosophy statements, and email exchanges) ensures the reliability and validity of the process (Yin, 1994). In this regard, this multiple case study aims to give these teachers an opportunity to talk about their perspectives of reality, which gives meaning to their actions and enhances the understanding of their teaching and their identities. Multiple case study design can facilitate the exploration of differences within and across cases (Yin, 2014). Drawing on comparisons between the multiple cases (i.e. teachers with varied experiences) through multiple data sources can offer a deeper understanding of the phenomenon studied, provide ‘compelling’ evidence, and make the study ‘robust’ and rigorous (Yin, 2014). As such, the study can foster a bigger and complete picture of the different cases and the factors that influence their practices.

However, the case study methodology is challenging because it requires the researcher to follow specific and detailed procedures, all of which foster high quality research. The principles of case study research include creating a case study protocol, drawing data from multiple sources, creating a case study database, being sensitive in maintaining a chain of evidence, and being careful in using social media communication evidence. Based on these principles, case studies take longer periods of time and more

effort to conduct, which makes them both expensive and exhausting (Yin, 2014). In what follows, I provide a discussion of procedures for recruiting the participants, data sources, data analysis, and the researcher's positionality.

3.2.1 Participant Recruitment Procedures

The unit of analysis in this study are six teachers of Arabic who learned Arabic as a second/third language and are teaching Arabic at the college level in the US. The recruitment procedure was twofold.

First, I posted a participation request (Appendix B) and survey questionnaire (Appendix C) on an Arabic language teachers' listserv and the New Generation of Arabic language teachers Facebook closed group page, after obtaining permission from respective administrators. This Facebook page was curated by a group of graduate students at a prominent Arabic language Flagship program in the US a few years ago. I sent the call for participation in the survey to both forums. After two weeks, I posted another call for participation after I noticed that not many people completed the survey. I recruited some participants via snowball or chain method (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Miles & Huberman, 1994). I identified cases of interest from acquaintances of people who knew the cases that may fit the requirements for participation and could provide rich information about the issues the study was trying to investigate. Recruitment from acquaintances builds credibility and trustworthiness of the study in potential participants. I contacted, via email, the participants who completed the survey and expressed their interest in participating in follow-up interviews and sharing teaching documents. The survey asked general questions around education, college degrees, languages spoken and

taught, years of teaching, and their beliefs about language and culture teaching. The participant requirements included the following:

a-Current teachers/ professors of Arabic at the college level in the US.

b-Native speakers of English/ other non-Semitic languages.

c-Teachers who learned Arabic in college or high school.

After examining the survey questionnaire responses, I found out that the number of individuals who completed the survey was very small. I started another recruiting attempt by emailing chairs of Arabic departments in many universities around the country. A couple of them responded. However, this attempt was not fruitful in recruiting more participants. Some respondents completed the survey and read the consent form, but did not agree to participate in follow-up interviews. I contacted the respondents who expressed their consent via email, thanked them for their willingness to participate in interviews about their experiences learning and teaching Arabic language. Then, I invited them to choose a convenient date and time to conduct two interviews. The time between the first and second interviews was one to two weeks. However, for three participants, the time between the first and the third interview was longer because the time of the interviews coincided with the end of the spring semester, which was a busy time for all instructors.

The second part of the procedure was carried out once the participants willingly accepted participation and signed the Institutional Review Board consent forms (Appendix A). Each participant was asked to sit for two 45-60-minute interviews: The first one dealt with their experiences as a learner of Arabic and preservice teacher. The second delved into their college-level Arabic teaching practices, the discussion of the

meanings of their experiences, and their identities. In the interviews, I asked the participants to share the pedagogical, emotional, and social challenges they face as teachers and how they deal with them. In addition, I reminded them that they could skip any questions they feel uncomfortable answering.

3.2.2 Participation and Protection of Confidentiality

Participation was voluntary and participants could withdraw from the study at any phase of the study. This information was clarified in the informed consent form (Appendix A).

As indicated in the consent form, data breach is possible. Nevertheless, the following procedures were used to protect the confidentiality of the participants' study records. Concrete measures were taken to protect their confidentiality: their names and the names of their institutions will not appear in any publication or disclosed to anyone. All identifiable information and their respective codes were kept in a personal computer with password protection. While the data was still being collected and analyzed, audio and video materials, questionnaire responses, artifacts, and interview transcripts were stored in a safely locked file cabinet in the researcher's private office on campus. All the data sources were duplicated against possible loss and were stored in locked file cabinet in the advisor's campus office. After completing the dissertation, all the materials will be given to the dissertation committee chair. Research records will be labeled with a code. A master key that links names and codes will be maintained in a separate and secure location. The master key and audio files will be destroyed three years after the close of the study. All electronic files (interview transcripts, audio and video recordings, artifacts) containing identifiable information will be password protected. Any computer hosting

such files will also have password protection to prevent access by unauthorized users. Only the researcher will have access to the passwords. At the conclusion of this study, the researcher may publish the findings. The participants and their institutions will not be identified in any publications or presentations because information will be presented in summary format.

3.3 Data Collection Sources

The data for this study were collected over the course of nine months (March - December 2019); this period includes data analysis time. Sometimes during the data analysis phase, questions can come up and I may need to contact the participants for clarification on some issues that may arise as I analyze and interpret the data.

Yin (2014) notes that case study research draws on multiple sources of evidence. Such sources enable studying the contexts and activities of the cases and drawing a complete picture of the cases to reach a “[Q]ualitative understanding of cases” (Stake 2006, p. 2). This study draws on four data sources: an online survey questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, teaching artifacts, and email exchanges.

3.3.1 Online Survey Questionnaire (Appendix C)

Case study research can include quantifiable data collected from surveys (Yin, 2014; Miles & Huberman, 1994). As such, quantitative data can be supplemented by qualitative data from the same sample as is the case in this study.

The participants in this study were invited to voluntarily take part in the research via a Qualtrics online survey questionnaire. The questionnaire was posted as a link in an Arabic language teachers’ listserv and a closed Arabic teachers’ Facebook page. The

participants completed the survey online. On this Facebook page, instructors of Arabic share information about Arabic teaching materials, best practices, new publications, and employment opportunities. Although the page was created by new American graduate students and teachers of Arabic, it is open to any Arabic language instructors around the world.

The initial survey questionnaire aims to recruit potential participants, create their profiles and describe their backgrounds. The survey questions were not all close-ended.

An example of an open-ended question was completing the following sentence:

“Teaching Arabic for me is like” The close-ended questions included information about the participants’ educational and teaching backgrounds (teaching status, major, degree, years studying Arabic before graduation, years of teaching, proficiency in other languages), and their views on teaching language, culture, and identity. There were 48 responses in all. However, not all of them were complete. Only 17 respondents completed the whole survey and only seven consented to take part in the interviews. I chose six to have an equal representation of gender. The respondent that I excluded has taken part in my pilot study to test the feasibility of the research questions and the current study.

3.3.2 Semi-structured Interviews (Appendix D)

Case study research supports the use of interviews for data collection purposes. The purpose of these interviews was to elicit information in the form of views and opinions from the participants. One way to design the interview questions is to align them with the research questions and make explicit the connections between them (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). This link will help generate the information and data needed. The interviews were semi-structured: The questions were fewer in number. Nevertheless, they

helped me probe to uncover the experiences of the participants as learners of Arabic, preservice teachers, and practitioners, and how their experiences affect their self-perceptions. Drawing on phenomenology (Seidman, 2006), I conducted two interviews ranging from 45 to 60 minutes each. The first interview addressed the participants' experiences as learners, their teacher training, and their teaching practices. The second pertained to teaching, the meanings of their experiences, and their identities. The interviews enabled me to pose questions about the daily experiences of the participants and what they have to say about the meanings of their experiences. All interviews were conducted and recorded using Zoom video. The reason for using Zoom video-conferencing was that most of the participants do not reside in the Northeast. The Zoom technology allows for e-interviewing of the participants, a technology that "closely resembles the natural back-and-forth of face-to-face communication, including verbal and nonverbal signals" (Salmons, 2012; p. 3). Of course, I requested consent for recording the interviews and discussing the contents of the interview protocol with the participants. To make up for unanticipated technology glitches or unavailability of network, the participants and I tested out the internet connection and the conversation before starting the interview.

Drawing on Creswell (2009), I used an interview protocol that follows the same standard procedures in all the interviews: a heading with the date, place, interviewer and interviewee; instructions for interviewee; ice-breaker question; 4-5 questions and probes for clarifications or explanations of some issues; a final thank-you statement as acknowledgement for the time and effort of the interviewee.

What was interesting about conducting Zoom interviews for the first time was that I was learning new tricks in Zoom with every new interview. One of the things I learned was enabling all the functions before starting the interview. When I logged into Zoom using the attendee link, I could not view the attendee. That kept my attendees waiting for some time until I figured out that I had to log in as a host. Recording was one of the functions that I had to figure out because I thought that Zoom records automatically. Another interesting moment in the interviews was that one of the participants did not consent to Zoom. The institution where he works does not allow him to use any technology except the telephone in his office. Hence, two interviews were conducted via the telephone. I recorded these interviews on my computer using Audacity application, and I had a back-up plan recording on my cellphone. After conducting all the interviews, I listened to them many times and used various ways for transcription: (a) I transcribed one interview myself; (b) I used Rev.com which was expensive, but worth the price; and (c) I used NVivo automatic transcription, which was cheaper but not very accurate.

3.3.3 Classroom Observations (Not a requirement for participation).

Classroom observations were not a requirement for participation. However, I initially wanted to conduct classroom observations to really get into the reality of the classroom experiences of the teachers. Observations as a visual reality captures the interactions of the participants with their learners and allows for the description of the participants in action. However, given that all the participants do not live locally, the tough administrative procedures to obtain consent from institutions and students, and the high travel expenses and time, I decided to opt out of this procedure.

3.3.4 Artifacts and Teaching Documents

According to Coffey (2014), documents have a function and a form. In other words, they are written according to social and linguistic norms for a specific audience. For example, self-assessments and teaching statements are narratives that teachers use to share their accomplishments: present and construct themselves and their realities. Such documents are required and aim to ‘persuade’ a department chair or a hiring committee that the candidate would be the perfect choice to be granted tenure or to hire.

Collecting documents (Syllabi, lesson plans, worksheets, and teaching philosophy statements) is important for finding out the content that is being taught and the different strategies/ methods that the participants use in implementing their materials in the classroom and achieving their teaching goals. These documents represent the writing of the participants that they have dedicated so much time to finalizing, especially since such documents are usually shared with department chairs, other faculty and academic affairs divisions. Once obtained from participants, they can be accessed easily for analysis.

Teaching manuals (textbooks): most language instructors use a textbook as the primary source for teaching. The manuals provide content materials as well as pedagogy for course implementation. This artifact was at the center of discussion with instructors and enabled me to pose questions about their attitudes and beliefs about the importance of the textbook for them. The instructors use different manuals, which provided an opportunity to explore each manual, and compare and contrast it with others.

Syllabi: if an instructor relies on the textbook, this would be clear when the researcher examines their syllabi. The syllabus would provide information about what the participants focus on when delivering their lessons, assess learners’ progress, and to what extent they depend on the textbook or outside resources.

Lesson plans: lesson planning is an important part of teaching. Lesson plans provide a clear roadmap of the day's learning targets. This artifact can be used to find out how lesson planning is reflected in practice.

Worksheets: the content of the worksheets and handouts and how the participants use them can shed light on what the instructor prioritizes in class.

Quizzes: quizzes reflect the assessment plans of the instructors and can provide insights into the instructor and their teaching goals.

Final project assignments (if any): some language instructors require their students to submit a final project usually at the end of the semester. I am interested in discussing the utility and usefulness of these projects to the learners from the instructors' point of view.

Teaching philosophy statements: These statements are usually well-crafted and are usually target potential employers and/or tenure committees. Review and analysis of these documents would yield information about the participants' values and beliefs about education and language learning. These statements usually present reflections on what drew them to the field and what they can contribute to the profession.

Email exchanges: Emails exchanged between the researcher and participants during the various phases of the study (Creswell, 2009).

I collected various documents from all participants, specifically sample syllabi, lesson plans, assignments, quizzes, and teaching statements. In my analysis, I focused more on analyzing teaching statements and syllabi as these offered an opportunity to compare the content to how the participants articulate their teaching practices during interviews.

Building on these data sources, I used what Yin (2014) calls ‘replication logic’ by treating each case in the same way; each case completed the survey questionnaire, participated in two interviews, and shared teaching documents. This replication logic enabled detailed descriptions of each case and helped explore the similarities and differences across cases (Ayres et al., 2003).

3.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis in qualitative studies starts with data collection. As the researcher collects the data, they continually reflect on them and write analytic memos (Creswell, 2009). Part of data analysis is coding which Miles and Huberman (1994) define as the method of connecting the data with the research questions, interpretations, data sources, and writing the research report. Charmaz (2001) refers to coding as the “critical link” between data collection and interpretation of meanings. Drawing on Durdella (2019), I followed the three-phase analytical process: preliminary data analysis, thematic data analysis, and interpretation. The lines between the three stages can be blurry and may not be clear, but following this process enabled organizing and bringing direction to the study.

In this multi-case study or collective case study, as Stake (2006) refers to it, the central focus is on ‘contextualized’ deeper understanding of the individual cases, which requires detailed descriptions of each case to reach an understanding of some aspects of Arabic language teaching in the US. To organize the data, I listened to the data recordings many times before transcribing all the interviews, wrote-up field notes, and sorted all other data according to the data sources used for data collection. I have taken the following steps in analyzing data.

First, I established a database folder to facilitate locating data on my computer and on the university storage (Box) as a back-up. I organized the data into three main sets: online survey questionnaire responses, semi-structured interviews, and teaching documents. I prepared the data for analysis by creating a folder for each case, arranging audio and video recordings, transcribing interviews, organizing documents, and typing up field notes.

Second, I read all the data twice in a “long, undistributed periods” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, p.165) to get a comprehensive idea of the data. After this reading of electronic copies of the data, I printed out the survey questionnaire responses and the interviews to start a manual coding to become acquainted with the data. When reading, I jotted down ideas or sketched relationships that helped me to understand and develop categories that emerged from the data. After the initial readings of all the data (Creswell, 2009), I used the NVivo computer software to store and arrange data in folders as it is an “efficient means of storing and locating qualitative data” (Creswell, 2009, p. 188). This software allowed me to code the data and store all the codes in one place. Additionally, I was able to run preliminary queries to search for codes, categories and themes from the data. NVivo enabled the creation of a codebook that detailed descriptions of the cases and the themes or categories for analysis (Figure 3.1). In case study research, these descriptions allow for thematic data analysis both within and across the cases (Durdella, 2019).

Name	Files	References	Created By	Created On
Attitude -Identity and self-perceptions	10	23	BO	1/8/2020 11:26 AM
Background - Academic experiences learning and teaching	7	51	BO	1/9/2020 9:52 AM
Current Department and teaching position	5	6	BO	1/9/2020 10:36 AM
Doing a PhD program - Sarah	1	1	BO	2/25/2020 6:33 PM
Early experiences with languages	5	16	BO	1/7/2020 9:58 PM
Family language practices	2	3	BO	1/7/2020 10:02 PM
Graduate school Arabic	4	21	BO	1/8/2020 11:24 AM
Pedagogy and teacher training	11	37	BO	1/8/2020 11:44 AM
Teaching culture pedagogy	1	1	BO	1/8/2020 11:44 AM
Interest and motivation to learn Arabic	6	22	BO	1/7/2020 10:03 PM
Study abroad experiences	6	29	BO	1/8/2020 10:58 AM
Undergraduate Experience_Arabic Language teaching	11	42	BO	1/7/2020 10:14 PM
Culture teaching as a student	5	12	BO	1/7/2020 10:11 PM
First year Arabic classroom	6	14	BO	1/8/2020 10:47 AM
Challenges - downsides of teaching Arabic	5	9	BO	2/20/2020 3:21 PM
Dialect- 3ammiya issues	5	22	BO	1/8/2020 11:18 AM
Employment bias NNS Teachers	1	2	BO	2/20/2020 3:05 PM
Future research topics	3	4	BO	2/22/2020 9:51 AM
Language ideologies- stereotypes	2	10	BO	1/11/2020 8:27 AM
Native speaker ideology	2	4	BO	1/13/2020 11:00 AM
Professional development language literature dichotomy	1	1	BO	2/22/2020 9:15 AM
Teacher presentations and workshops	1	2	BO	2/24/2020 10:13 PM
Recommendations- advice for students of Arabic	6	8	BO	2/20/2020 3:22 PM

Figure 3.1 List of codes generated using Nvivo software

Finally, I copied and pasted each code on a word document, read it, and completed another round of coding of each document in two steps: first I coded the documents on my laptop, then I printed the coded documents to recode them manually. This strategy helped digging into the data and examining each case closely.

The next step was interpretation, which entailed examining patterns, irregularities, and connections between the themes identified and the descriptions. Miles and Huberman (1994) call this stage “data display”. Data display includes presenting themes using graphs, tables, word clouds, and text. A case in point is the illustration of the participants’ demographic and departmental information in a table format. The analysis and interpretation of the data is a repetitive process which aims to “see what the data are saying (analysis), and seeks to understand what it means (interpretation)” (Bloomberg &

Volpe, 2019, p. 105). As this study involves multiple cases, I examined and presented the themes within each case in a codebook before analyzing the themes across cases. The various presentations of the data assisted in telling the story of the data and exploring the meanings that the participants make about teaching and identity issues, all of which are presented in the discussion and implications chapter of the study. The following chapter addresses the research context, presents detailed portraits of the participants, and traces the trajectories they have taken to become teachers of Arabic.

3.5 Role of Researcher

Past research documented that NN teachers in ESL and TESOL conducted most of the research by and with NN teachers (Medgyes, 1994; Braine, 1999). This study brings an outsider's perspective to the issues of language, culture and identity in Arabic language classrooms guided by NN teachers of Arabic. While the participants in this study learned Arabic as adults, I learned it growing up. Therefore, we have very different experiences. In my role as researcher, I bring my own varied experiences, biases, and judgements as I engage in this study. For this reason, as an outsider, I needed to be aware of my own biases that come with my own experiences and knowledge of the field of TAFL. Being aware of my biases means trying to understand and present my research participants and their world through their perspectives. To this end, I strived to dig into how they make sense of their experiences while trying to be impartial. One of the ways in which I demonstrated my research reflexivity was being forthcoming about my interests in the study, the context of research, and the significance of the study when I first contacted the participants. Additionally, in the consent forms and during the interviews, I explained how the data would be interpreted and the findings disseminated. Still, as

Rossmann & Rallis (2012, p.34) note, “the data do not speak for themselves.” For this reason, I acknowledge that research subjectivity impacts research and being impartial can be challenging despite having best intentions. Still, I believe that triangulating the data, drawing on comparisons of the participants’ views, showing data rather than telling about them, and detailing the research process would enable the reader to come to their own conclusions and grasp of the research process. After all, case study research necessitates patience, reflection, and examining opposing views (Stake, 1995).

3.6 Limitations of the Study

This research is a multiple case study with six NN Arabic teachers in higher education in the US. It seeks to provide an understanding of their trajectories, their experiences as classroom teachers, and their professional identities. With the lack of previous research studies in this topic, this study is exploratory rather than explanatory. While this research approach aimed at an in-depth examination of the life worlds of the participants, the study contains a few limitations, some of which are related to the small sample size, lack of classroom observations, and potential researcher subjectivity. Careful measures, however, have been taken to explain these limiting conditions and offer ways to reduce their impact.

One of the limitations is the absence of direct classroom observations. I did not conduct observations because of lack of funding, travel expenses, and the ample time that fieldwork takes. Observations of some classes would have contributed to the deeper understanding of each case. For example, as I was reading the participants’ teaching philosophy statements, teacher portfolios, and self-assessment documents, I kept

wondering how much of what was written in these documents was applied in reality; that is in the classroom. In this regard, as Adam mentioned in the first interview, the teaching statement functions to impress a hiring committee or reviewers in a tenure committee. For this reason, he notes that these documents are meant to “demonstrate a certain level of minimal knowledge of the buzzwords,” and may not necessarily reflect the reality of his teaching. Additionally, as I was reading Juliette’s teaching statement and end of year self-assessment, I had similar questions about her classroom practices. The documents have a function and social norms given that they target a specific audience: the department chair or a tenure committee. Therefore, they may not reflect the realities of the participants’ beliefs and practices as much as observations would, and may impact the findings.

Another limitation relates to data analysis and interpretation. As is the case with qualitative research in general, a major limitation is my own researcher subjectivity as a N Arabic teacher with college teaching experience and my potential bias examined in the researcher role section above. A related limitation was that the participants’ awareness of my status may have influenced their collaboration by offering responses that they thought I was seeking or by being partial in their responses.

Acknowledging the limitations of the study, I took the following measures. First, I openly stated my research agenda and my assumptions in chapter 1. To make up for the absence of observations, I focused my analysis on what the participants said and compared it to what their various artifacts revealed. Second, to minimize the impact of researcher status on the participants, I strived to build rapport and created a collegial and safe environment that fostered open dialogue. Third, to address the potential bias in

analysis and interpretation, I conducted various rounds of coding of the data and created a coding book based on the study themes. Finally, I used the member-checking technique by sharing the study findings and interpretations with the participants to seek their consent about the accuracy of the findings. The member-checking phase was immediately followed by a 15 minutes virtual interview with each participant to discuss their feedback on the study results. In summary, the study does not seek or claim any generalizations about the experiences of NN Arabic teachers in the US. As I mentioned above, with the lack of previous research in this topic, this study lays the foundations for further research in the field of TAFL.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH CONTEXT

This chapter presents the general context of the study and describes the various Arabic departments where the participants work. Additionally, it offers details of the participants' profiles and highlights their journeys in learning and teaching Arabic.

The larger context of this study is the teaching of Arabic as a foreign language in US higher education. As has been mentioned in the introductory chapter of this study, there was a sudden and huge interest in linguistic competence in Arabic immediately after 9/11 for strategic reasons (Al-Batal, 2007; Allen, 2007). With this interest came funding by the Department of Defense (DOD) for higher education institutions that launched the Language Flagship programs in 2002. These programs aimed to help undergraduate students attain advanced-level proficiency in critical languages (i.e., Arabic, Mandarin Chinese, Korean, and Russian). This surge in interest and the abundance of funding for study abroad attracted many young Americans looking for new opportunities for employment in government, business, and teaching. Of the young Americans who learned Arabic, a group of graduates chose teaching Arabic as a profession.

The specific contexts are the departments where these teachers were working at the time of the study. These contexts are significant as they serve as spaces where Arabic language teaching and learning takes place. During the teaching and learning processes, teachers build connections with their students, Arabic faculty, and other departmental faculty. Through these relationships, teachers develop attitudes, self-perceptions, and

identities, all of which contribute in one way or another to the construction of their social and professional identities.

The participants in this study work in Arabic language teaching programs at public or private universities in the US, which was the larger context of this study. The specific context is undergraduate and graduate programs offering courses in elementary to advanced levels of Arabic. Five participants in this study are either assistant or associate professors of Arabic language teachers in five different universities in the US. The sixth participant is currently a doctoral student, but has worked for a few years in summer Arabic programs teaching and directing, and had experience as a lecturer at a private Ivy League research university for two years. These Arabic programs offer undergraduate Arabic study only. Three of these universities offer a major in Arabic and two offer a minor. One university does not offer a minor or a major. Three of the participants are assistant professors of Arabic coordinating the Arabic programs at their respective institutions. Table 4.1 below offers a detailed description of the context in which each participant was working at the time of the study (department name, how many instructors in all, how many non-native Arabic instructors, courses offered, majors/minors, certificates if any, and description of classrooms on campuses).

Table 4.1 Participants' Arabic departments' details

Institution Name	Arabic Program	Major	Courses	Faculty	Arabic Program Mission Statement
U-Adam	Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures	Major in Arabic and Area Studies	Beginning, Intermediate Advanced Topics in Arab culture and society	2 full time faculty. Both not native of Arabic	U-Adam offers a BA in Arabic. It maximizes learning culture and an Arabic dialect.
U-Harry	World Languages and Cultures	N/A	Introductory Arabic I & II Arabic Study Abroad	1 full time faculty.	This program offers unique opportunities to learn modern standard Arabic and an Arabic dialect.
U-Ann	Foreign Languages and Literatures	Minor	Elementary Intermediate Advanced Arabic Study Abroad Topics in Literature and Culture	2 full time faculty 1 part time faculty Both non-natives of Arabic	This program foregrounds the rich and diverse intellectual and literary heritage Arabic has. It targets analysis of various cultural texts and develop linguistic and intercultural competences.
U-Jim	Arabic Department	Major	Intermediate, Advanced. All classes integrate the 4 skills: Listening, reading, speaking, and writing.	7 full time. Jim is the only non-native instructor	This program offers courses on Modern Standard Arabic and Egyptian, Iraqi, and Levantine dialect. The vision is to offer language education that is culturally based.
U-Juliette	Arabic Department	Major	Beginning Intermediate Advanced Arabic Literature Arab Cinema	5 full time. 3 are NN speakers Assistant professors	This program offers Arabic as the living language but focuses on MSA in the classroom. Dialect learning occurs in study abroad programs.

U-Sarah	Near Eastern Studies	Minor	Elementary Arabic	4 All native speaker lecturers	This program targets students to work for government agencies. The focus is on linguistic competence and cultural knowledge in Arabic
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4.1 Research Participants

I start with a portrait of myself as author/ researcher because my background and experiences shape how I see the participants as they make sense of themselves and their world. Next, I present the profiles of each participant in detail and explore their trajectories based on their narratives and the survey responses. These portraits provide the background for analysis in the findings and discussion chapters.

4.1.1 The Researcher

I, the researcher, am a native speaker of Arabic who was born and raised in Morocco. Prior to moving to the US in 2003, I earned a bachelor's degree in English language and literature and taught Arabic, French and Math in elementary schools for 11 years. When I arrived in the US, I enrolled in a master's degree program in education and then in teaching French. After a few years teaching Arabic and French at a state university, I entered graduate school to continue towards a doctoral degree.

As a graduate student, I worked as a Teaching Assistant of Arabic in the Five College Arabic program. From 2012 to 2017, I had the opportunity to participate in the STARTALK Arabic teaching summer programs sponsored by the National Security Agency (NSA) in three different states. During these summer programs that target high

school students, I had the chance of working with teachers who are not native speakers of Arabic. It was in this context that I developed the curiosity to look into the experiences of these teachers to identify their interests in Arabic and their learning and teaching experiences in the Arabic language classroom.

In addition to my extensive experience teaching foreign languages in Morocco and in the US, specifically French and Arabic both in K-12 and in college contexts, I am familiar with Arabic language teaching and programs given that I have been teaching at the university level in the US for the last fourteen years. The purpose of choosing teachers of Arabic who are not native speakers and work at the university level lies in my interest in exploring the experiences of this category of teachers who are growing in number, specifically in the last 15 years. These teachers' experiences are certainly different in comparison to my own experiences because of the differences in educational background, linguistic and cultural knowledge, and teaching and learning experiences. For this reason, I wanted to bring in an "outsider's" perspective on their experiences and the factors that account for the successes and challenges they face in and outside of their classrooms.

This is where this study comes in. As an experienced Arabic language instructor in the US, I came to this study with the curiosity I developed after working with a few NN teachers in summer Arabic teaching programs. Based on my personal and professional background, I put forward two assumptions that drive this study. First, NN Arabic teachers in the US may be an excellent fit for their native English students given that they share similar experiences. Therefore, they may appear as successful learners for their students. In other words, can NN teachers be a good fit for their English-speaking

students? Second, both N and NN teachers, what Dewaele (2017b) calls L1 and L2 (LX) users, can be better teachers if they can prove their linguistic, intercultural, and pedagogical expertise to lead a foreign language classroom: that is if N and NN teachers are equipped with knowledge of language and culture and pedagogy, can they be better teachers? In light of the analysis of this study's findings, I examine the two basic assumptions next.

The first assumption posited was that NN Arabic teachers in the US may be able to meet the needs of their native English students given their shared characteristics. Therefore, the teachers may inspire their students to become successful Arabic learners. This assumption held true to some extent according to the first findings. The teachers' personal experiences played a central role in how they teach. The trend is that some of the teachers work to provide better learning experiences than they had as learners of Arabic. Additionally, all the participants without exception maintained that they are a source of inspiration for their learners and that their experiences as students of Arabic inform their teaching. However, this assumption may not be valid for some teachers whose inspiration does not exceed elementary and novice levels of Arabic. At the intermediate high and advanced levels, some of the teachers felt that their students may expect the use of highly sophisticated language, which the teachers may lack. This situation occurs specifically when heritage Arabic speakers happen to be in the classes, which causes anxiety and discomfort for most teachers.

The second assumption in this study is that both N and NN teachers can be effective classroom practitioners if they possess linguistic and intercultural knowledge and prove their pedagogical skills to teach a foreign language. This assumption turned out

to be true. All the participants acknowledged the contributions of both N and NN Arabic teachers to the Arabic language classroom. They all felt that a mix of both N and NN teachers with adequate pedagogy and training in a language teaching would be beneficial to students of Arabic as the mix would facilitate the learners' exposure to both the depth and breadth of Arabic language and culture the teachers would bring with them.

The two aforementioned assumptions were the guiding beliefs that informed this study. Overall, although the N and NN teacher debate or native-speakerism is present and alive in Arabic classrooms, this study highlights the ways all teachers can face their shortcomings and enhance their effectiveness as teaching professionals.

4.1.2 Portraits of Teachers

The following sketches of the six teachers' profiles introduce the unique experiences of the participants and their trajectories learning and teaching Arabic in the US. The participants' profiles were drawn from the online survey questionnaire that I administered in early March 2019 and the teachers' narratives from the semi-structured interviews conducted in the spring and summer of the same year. Forty-eight teachers attempted to complete the online survey and fifteen completed the whole survey.

However, only seven participants consented to take part in the semi-structured interviews and share teaching documents. I excluded one participant from the interviews because he was a participant in my pilot study that led to this research. Three male and three female teachers were the final participants who completed the entire study. In the following section, I introduce each teacher according to the timeline of participation in the interviews. I invited each participant to choose a pseudonym for himself or herself and

they did. The portraits are not identical in terms of length and depth because some participants offered to expand on their experiences and backgrounds while others preferred to be brief and to the point. As the portraits show, the participants' narratives describe unique and different views on their paths learning and teaching Arabic.

4.1.2.1 Harry: Peace Corps Volunteer in Morocco

Harry is a white male American assistant professor of Arabic at a university in the southeastern region of the US. He is a native speaker of English but learned Hebrew and Arabic as an undergraduate student. He earned a PhD in Arabic Studies and has been teaching Arabic at the college level for over eight years.

Like any other undergraduate student, Harry had to fulfill a language requirement in his first year of college. However, all the romance language classes (French, Spanish, and Italian) were full. Therefore, he decided to take Hebrew, not Arabic. For Harry, a monolingual English speaker, learning Hebrew has changed his “perspective on what is a language, especially how the brain works when one learns a different language and the complexity of the learning process” (Interview 1, April 2019). In his sophomore year in college, Harry chose International Studies as a major and enrolled in Arabic because of the opportunities that Arabic offered in 2004 in terms of funding for study abroad following 9/11. Additionally, he wanted to compare learning Hebrew to learning Arabic and he felt the same enjoyment.

After two years of learning Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) with no exposure to a dialect, he went to study in Jordan. In Jordan, Harry found using the language he learned in class impractical since he did not know any Jordanian dialect and felt the students' levels in Arabic were higher than his own. At this point, he was convinced that “the only

way to learn Arabic is to speak a dialect” (Interview 1, April 2019). He was shocked to discover that people do not speak the language he has learned in the US, which was based essentially on Fusha (MSA), the language often taught in American classrooms. For this reason, he felt the need to spend some “real” time to learn a dialect abroad. In other words, he wanted to engage with people abroad to be able to learn a dialect, the authentic means of communication which was absent in the classroom.

After graduation, Harry applied for the Peace Corps Program hoping to go back to Jordan since he had some experience living and studying there. Unfortunately, to his disappointment, Harry was assigned go to Morocco. The Peace Corps recruiter advised him to start learning French immediately, a stereotype related to how all Moroccans are perceived to speak French in their daily interactions. Furthermore, he was concerned that the experience in Morocco was going to affect his Arabic skills. His concern arises from the stereotypes he has been hearing, as a student, about Moroccan Arabic not being “real Arabic.” Nonetheless, he still went to Morocco. During the training phase, he learned intensive Moroccan Arabic for three hours every morning with a group of five other Peace Corps volunteers during the training phase. Afterwards, the group joined the sites where they would spend two years working with youth programs and live with Moroccan host families.

So far, Harry had two events that he called an “*interesting turn of faith*” in his experience: the first one was not finding any romance language classes open for enrollment in his college, and the second his appointment as a Peace Corps volunteer in Morocco when he was really hoping to serve in Jordan. The third event that shocked Harry was the nature of the site where he would serve. He called it “the core of Amazigh

part of Morocco” (Interview 1, April 2019). On this site, most people do not speak either standard Arabic or Moroccan Arabic dialect in most daily interactions. His host mother was one of the people who only spoke Amazigh. Amazigh is an Afro-Asiatic language, which the natives of Morocco spoke before the spread of Islam and the arrival of Arab Muslims. This language is completely different from Arabic and is essentially a spoken language. Therefore, his host mother was a monolingual Amazigh speaker and he had yet to learn Tashelhit, the variety of Amazigh language she spoke at his site, to be able to communicate with her. Harry did not travel a lot when he was in Morocco because where he lived was far away from urban life. He stayed at his Peace Corps site learning Moroccan Arabic, Amazigh language, and reading. These experiences stimulated his thinking about “having a better sense of this life, place, and the language I have been speaking” (Interview 1, April 2019).

Toward the end of the Peace Corps experience, Harry decided to join graduate school and contacted various graduate studies department chairs at a few universities. In his graduate applications, he noted that he lived in Morocco and was interested in exploring the history of the Arabic language. The responses from the Arabic Studies chairs did not appeal to him since he felt that for some chairs a student who wants to conduct research on the history of Arabic language has to have a command of other languages and has to be a “native speaker” of Arabic. Clearly, this incident indicates how the ideology of native-speakerism is inherent in language departments. However, he received an acceptance letter from the Arabic Studies program at a major university in the US, without negotiations. After the Peace Corps and entering graduate school, Harry studied standard Arabic in Fez, Morocco for a summer. Despite not having studied

Standard Arabic for two years, his language level was high and that was because he has been speaking the Moroccan dialect throughout his service as a Peace Corps volunteer.

A fourth perspective-changing event occurred when Harry went to visit an American friend in Syria from the border with Jordan in 2010. This experience took place while Harry was still in the Peace Corps. He did not have a visa and he had not spoken Syrian Arabic before. He went to the Syrian border guard and spoke to him in simple novice/ elementary level Arabic: “عندي صديق هو ساكن بدمشق. بدي أروح أشوفو. بدي أروح أشوف” [I have a friend who lives in Damascus. I want to go see him. I want to see Syria]” (Interview 1, April 2019). The border guard responded, “!مرحبا” [Welcome!]. This event shows the impact of speaking to people in their language and is a reminder of Nelson Mandela’s famous quote: “If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his mind. If you talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart.” The main point here is that differences in Arabic dialects can be easily overcome when a speaker knows one of them. After Harry read the study findings report I shared with him as part of member-checking, he commented on this event and clarified:

When in Syria, I spoke a modified Darija (i.e. Moroccan Arabic) the whole time and was able to communicate fine, which made me realize that variation in Arabic is not a big obstacle as it’s made out to be. (Harry, December 2020)

After coming back from Syria, Harry entered graduate school in the south-central region of the US with the idea of exploring the linguistic history of Arabic and, not necessarily, to become an Arabic teacher. However, in the interview he mentioned that whoever enters the Arabic program in his university ends up graduating as a teacher of Arabic. He took classes on Arabic dialects, issues in Arab societies, and the language of the Quraan. Another course related to pedagogy was “Teaching Middle Eastern

Languages.” For Harry, this course aimed to recruit particular students to study and teach Arabic. In this class, students engage in discussions surrounding using the communicative approach to teaching. The teaching approach in his university integrates both Standard Arabic and Colloquial Arabic (Egyptian, Levantine, and Moroccan). This approach focused on communication and offering learners opportunities to work in groups and talk to each other.

When asked about his teaching philosophy, Harry replied that all learning should be task-based and that his first goal when teaching elementary students is to help them grasp core grammatical structures including the Arabic sound system (the pronunciation of the Arabic alphabets), which is challenging given the alphabets being distant in pronunciation and script from Alphabets in European languages. One of the first courses Harry taught as a teaching assistant was a course in Moroccan Arabic to students who were planning to study abroad in Morocco. In the online survey, Harry indicated that he was very satisfied with his graduate Arabic teacher training experience and that he learned many of his teaching strategies from his graduate teaching mentor who was a NN Arabic professor.

In 2019, Harry was teaching Arabic in the Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures and he has been teaching for over six years. His program does not offer a minor in Arabic. At the time of the study, he was the only Arabic instructor in his university and he hopes to build a stronger Arabic program.

4.1.2.2 Adam: Arab and Muslim Immigrants and Arabic Script

Adam is a white American native speaker of English in his thirties. He started taking college Arabic courses as a junior in high school in the upper midwestern region

of the US. He earned his PhD in Arabic Studies and he has been teaching Arabic for over 6 years. In his childhood, he had some exposure to Spanish, Hebrew, and Latin, but did not enjoy the experience. He notes that “to this day, I regret that I didn’t study an actual language” (Interview 1). For Adam, studying an actual language would mean learning a language that he can use to interact with real people in real time. Here, Adam refers to using language as practiced in authentic situations of communication with native speakers.

Growing up in a highly diverse city, Adam could see a lot of Arabic script everywhere in his neighborhood. Because of the flow of immigrants from Somalia and Iraq after the Iran-Iraq war, advertisements, signs in Arabic, and Arabic marketplaces drew Adam’s attention to the Arabic script. At this time, Adam started taking Arabic classes at a university when he was a high school student, and he found learning Arabic to be enjoyable in the first two years learning it. Adam had a relatively untrained NN teacher who relied totally on the textbook: the teacher had no training in Arabic teaching and his teaching followed the “drill and kill” approach where explanation was nonexistent. Reflecting on this period of his trajectory, he noted that he now understands the effects of the absence of meaningful cultural content to which students could relate. As an undergraduate student, Adam’s teacher was a NN Arabic speaker: his teaching style lacked organization and he communicated in standard Arabic only even in the basic everyday speaking interactions. This context explains the reason why Adam noted that he was not inspired to continue learning Arabic by his first teachers (Online survey, March 2019). Additionally, Adam was very critical of the textbook used (*Al-Kitaab fii Ta'allum al-'Arabiyya*). This popular Arabic classroom textbook focused on the text and the

mechanics of the language, “the focus was so much more on the text than anything else, than ANYTHING ELSE” (Interview 1, April 2019). Cultural content in the textbook was “minimal” and outside resources were scarce partly due to lack of technology tools. After four years of learning standard Arabic, Adam was awarded a scholarship to go to Jordan. Adam was surprised to find out that Jordanians do not speak the language he had learned in the classroom. They speak colloquial (dialectal) Arabic in everyday communication. Together with a group of other students, they petitioned for a colloquial Arabic class, which the college finally offered. In this class, Adam learned “all of the high frequency vocabulary you need to understand any 3ammiya (i.e. colloquial Arabic)” (Interview 1, April 2019).

Learning the colloquial was a turning point in Adam’s experience. He was able to communicate in everyday language with people and function in that small world. Despite the fact that he learned the dialect to speak with real people and to build confidence in the classroom, he was once again frustrated to find that the post travel abroad test called Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) was conducted entirely in standard Arabic including the role-plays. For Adam, speaking the dialect enables the learner to build confidence in speaking in the classroom, which by implication helps them to make progress in language. It seems like Adam has quite a few issues with learning and using Arabic. Here, Adam refers to a major issue in the field of TAFL in general: a hot topic surrounding the integration or non-integration of Arabic dialects in teaching Arabic. After the study abroad, Adam finished his final year of undergraduate education.

In terms of teacher inspiration, despite the lack of an organized curriculum, Adam felt inspired to continue his Arabic learning journey by his undergraduate teacher through

the energy the latter had. Accordingly, he applied for graduate school to study Arabic at three major US universities. Adam received two harsh/ unfriendly rejections, but was accepted “with open arms” into the third university which is located in the south-central region of the US (Interview 1, April 2019).

After a year of graduate school and a year studying in Jordan through the Center for Arabic Study Abroad (CASA) program, Adam taught his first class as a TA. The teaching philosophy in his department was separating the standard and dialect, an approach that was the rule across the teaching of Arabic as a foreign language (TAFL) field for many decades (Al-Batal (2017). For Adam, this separation between the standard and the everyday spoken language was confusing especially at the elementary and intermediate levels of Arabic. However, this was the time where the integrated approach was in the making at his program, and culminated in the third edition of the Arabic textbook (Al-Kitaab fii Ta callum al-cArabiyya).

In terms of graduate courses, Adam took a pedagogy course on an overview of language teaching methods, specifically methods pertaining to teaching in the Arabic language classroom. In this course, Adam conducted class visits and learned about the communicative approach to language teaching and learning. The teaching assistant experience was the period when Adam was able to design lesson plans, discuss them with other teaching assistants, and implement them in the classroom. For Adam, the teaching assistant experience “was very much a training and so I would say that that was the majority of really my hard-core training” (Interview 1, April 2019). One of the other main courses Adam took as a graduate student was about curriculum design, which introduces graduate students to practical strategies for planning and implementing Arabic

language lessons. Adam noted in the first interview that this class could have been helpful if he and the other TAs were instructors of their own courses and in charge of their curriculum design.

After graduation, Adam held Arabic teaching positions and he is currently an Associate Professor of Arabic and head of the Arabic section in the foreign languages program. Additionally, he created the Arabic program at a public research university in the northeastern region of the US.

4.1.2.3 Ann: Making Arabic Teaching Better

Ann is a white American citizen in her thirties. She earned a PhD in Second Language Studies and is currently working as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Foreign Languages, Literatures and Cultures at a university in the southwestern region of the US. Ann grew up in a rural area in the mid-Atlantic region of the east coast of the US. She started learning Arabic in her first year at a major university Arabic program twenty years ago. After taking French language courses throughout high school, Ann wanted to continue learning French in college, but she did not pass the entry exam that the department required and was placed into an upper French speaking class in college. However, on the first day of the class, the professor told her she had to drop the class to make space in it for students who had returned from study abroad but were still unable to pass the French speaking exam their program required. After this experience, she did not pursue further French classes in college. This was one of the reasons for choosing Arabic. Another reason was that she read a series of books by Sally Watson, an American author whose books take place mostly in England, Scotland, and the US, but there are three

focused on the Middle East and which contained some phrases in Arabic. These readings sparked her interest in Arabic language and the Arab World.

Ann had a very positive learning experience in her first years. The focus of the classes was on interaction in standard Arabic, which she qualified as “communicating in a weird way” (Interview 1, April 2019). By the word “weird,” she meant speaking a language that the native speakers are not using in every day interactions. In her college classrooms, she learned to read and write in Arabic, but was not able to understand and speak every day Arabic, especially since there are not many cognates that could enable understanding. For this reason, she reflected on her experience in this way: “the whole reason I ended up going into Arabic and Applied Linguistics was because I felt like it could have been much better in retrospect” (Interview 1, April 2019). As a student, Ann liked the grammar-focused method for teaching Arabic and had proven to excel at it when she went abroad. However, she feels that teaching that is based on grammar “is not the best way to teach.” (Interview 1, April 2019). In terms of cultural learning, Ann’s first exposure to Arab cultures came from the materials presented in the main Arabic textbook “Al-Kitaab” and watching movies.

One of the turning points in Ann’s trajectory was living abroad during the September 11 events. She saw that the views towards Arabs in general were different and negative after 9/11. After her time abroad, Ann hoped to “resist these negative views of Arabic and Arabic speakers” (Interview 1, April 2019). To that end, she committed to becoming an Arabic teacher to offer better learning experiences for her students than she had as a student in two key ways. First, she wanted to enable her students to have access to different points of view by reading materials in the target language, which would open

doors to understanding Arab cultures as more than one homogenous entity. Second, with so much interest in Arabic and the abundant resources available for learning Arabic, the language could be taught better. This was one of the reasons for joining a PhD program at a university in midwestern US.

During her doctoral studies, Ann did not receive formal language teacher training because it was not required, at the time, in higher education, which she found problematic. Her first introduction to teaching was through a one-week practical workshop on teaching Arabic at the college level. In terms of theory, Ann took courses on theories of language teaching that focused primarily on teaching English as a foreign language. Additionally, she had practical experiences as a TA grading homework and observing classes. After that, she became the instructor of the courses as a PhD student. she was a lone teacher because of lack of coordination, except for a coordinated final exam at times. Furthermore, she did not have a teaching mentor except for her time teaching at other institutions like Middlebury College summer programs.

Ann is currently the director of the Arabic program that she joined eight years ago. For her, the program is growing as it offers courses in elementary, intermediate, and advanced Arabic. Additionally, the program offers classes on Arab cultures in English. These classes aim to recruit new students to take Arabic language classes after exploring Arab cultures.

4.1.2.4 Jim: Camp David and Emotional Motivation to Promote Peace

Jim is a white American in his sixties. He started learning Arabic as a graduate student after he saw the tragedy of the 1973 war in the Middle East. He earned a doctorate in Arabic studies in the 1990s, and has been teaching for over 20 years.

Jim grew up in New York City and New Jersey. After high school, he went to college for one year but quit because, as he said, “I had had enough of school. I could not sit in the classroom anymore.” (Interview 1, April 2019). When he left college, Jim spent a year in Israel and witnessed the tragedy of the October 1973 Arab-Israeli war.

Reflecting on his ‘emotional motivation’ to learn Arabic, Jim said:

I saw with my own eyes the tragedy of war for both sides, and the futility, the uselessness of war, and in my heart, I resolved ... that I must do something in my life time for peace between Arabs and Jews... I should learn Arabic language, and that way I can personally serve as a bridge of friendship between Arabs and Jews. (Interview 1, April 2019)

A few years later, he went back to complete his BA in political science and became interested in the Middle Eastern conflict and diplomacy during the Jimmy Carter era. He wrote his senior thesis on the Camp David Accord: the peace treaty signed by Egypt and Israel in 1979. Jim became interested in learning Arabic but very few universities offered Arabic at the time. In New York City, he explored a private university that offered Arabic and discovered that employees could take any courses and receive a tuition waiver. He obtained a position as a clerk and took Arabic classes for two and a half years. At the same time, he completed a Master’s degree in the Teaching of English for Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). Then, he spent one year in Egypt teaching English. In Egypt, Jim took advantage of every opportunity he had to practice Arabic. Upon his return from Egypt, he enrolled in Graduate School and earned a PhD in Arabic Studies. Since then, he has worked in teaching, translation, and linguistics research.

Jim described Arabic learning and teaching in the 1980s as not in demand. He was an undergraduate student in the 1980s. The classes were small. There were seven or

eight students in Jim's first college Arabic class at a private university. The teaching approach was the grammar translation method. The instructors focused on reading and writing: textual and grammatical analysis. Most of classroom communication was entirely in English and students did not have opportunities to use and practice speaking Arabic language in the classroom. In terms of culture learning, the use of authentic readings about geography, history and people of the Arab societies were the sole sources used. This was Jim's experience as an undergraduate student.

As a doctoral student, Jim had the chance to work as a teaching assistant in Arabic. He graded students' homework, led conversation sessions, and conducted classroom observations and practice teaching classes. After the practice periods, he was the primary teacher in the classroom. Jim noted that he had no formal training as an Arabic teacher and this explains his dissatisfaction with his graduate Arabic teacher training experience (Online survey, March 2019). However, he had some formal training when he earned his MA degree in TESOL. This training helped him to transfer some of his TESOL teaching skills into the Arabic language classroom.

After graduate school, Jim worked as a researcher and analyst for a technology company for five years and taught Arabic part time. This company had contracts that include designing an Arabic-English machine translation system. After 9/11 and with the growing interest in Arabic teaching and learning in the US, Jim took a temporary teaching position at a private university and abandoned his previous job. However, he had to take a 50% cut of his salary working with computers for the company. His salary as a language analyst was high, but he did not really enjoy working for the company. For Jim, it was monotonous and dull because he wanted to teach and to engage in human

interaction. Teaching was his passion. He took this step for the love of teaching: “I really wanted to teach.” (Interview 1, April 2019). After teaching part time for one year, he accepted a full time position with the US Army. In 2019, Jim was a tenured professor in an Arabic Language Department and has been teaching there for over 20 years.

4.1.2.5 Sarah: The Social Functions of Arabic Learning

Sarah is a white American in her thirties. She started learning Arabic in her first year in college. She holds a dual Master's Degree in Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language (TAFL) and in Middle Eastern and North African Studies. Sarah has been teaching Arabic for five years and is currently a doctoral student in Languages, Literatures and Cultures at a public research university.

Sarah grew up in the midwestern US in a well-educated family. Her father is a college professor of English and her mother works in instructional technology at the same university. As a young girl, she used to travel a lot. Sarah traveled to Denmark with her family, which enabled her to develop a “sense of curiosity about the world beyond the US” (Interview 1, May 2019) and about non-American cultures. Additionally, she learned French and Francophone culture in high school, which made her feel that she “was good at languages.” (Interview 1, May 2019). When she went to college a few years after 9/11, she felt an urge to take a challenging language to pair it with her knowledge of French. Hence, she chose Arabic and discovered that it “filled a very important social function for [her] in college” (Interview 1, May 2019). She explained that in language classes in general, especially at the elementary and intermediate levels, most of the content focuses on the self, family, school, weather, daily routines, and hobbies. Therefore, learners end up building small classroom communities as they learn about each other and develop

relationships that can last beyond college. This ‘social function’ of the Arabic classroom includes teachers as well. Many language instructors learn about their students more than their advisers or other instructors, for example. For this reason, students usually tend to request letters of recommendation from their language instructors. For Sarah, language classes fulfill a sense of sympathy within a learning community trying to master a hard language. Therefore, by taking language classes together, students grow together “socially, intellectually, and obviously linguistically” (Interview 1, May 2019).

As for Sarah’s Arabic learning beginnings, she started learning Arabic at a small liberal arts college in the northeast of the US as a freshman. In her first semester in college, she was on the waitlist in the Arabic course. She was nervous during the first week when she attended the Arabic class as an observer. She finally joined the class after the add-drop period and she, with her colleagues, immediately established a family-like connection with their instructor and his family. The instructor was a native speaker of Arabic. He would invite his students to his home. They would cook and spend time together. The course content was from the second edition of Al-Kitaab textbook collection focusing on standard Arabic only. Sarah did not find it weird that the dialect was absent from the curriculum back then. Her first exposure to a dialect was during a summer language course, but it was “light” ʿAmmiya (dialect).

In her junior year, Sarah went to Syria to study in Damascus at the Language Institute. In Syria, Sarah realized the importance of learning the Arabic dialect. She was shocked to discover that Syrians did not speak her language and she did not speak theirs. Sarah had a “horrible time in Syria mainly for linguistic reasons.” (Interview 1, May 2019), which caused her to feel alienated. She was interacting with people in dialect,

which she found hard as a single foreign female. Therefore, she mostly mingled with people who were willing to speak to her in modern standard Arabic. After Syria, Sarah spent a year in Egypt with the Center for Arabic Study Abroad (CASA) program and extended her stay to work with a language program in Egypt. The program offered her and her colleagues intensive dialect training to help them function in the culture. In Egypt, Sarah enhanced her speaking skills in the Egyptian dialect, which was a “huge boost to [her] confidence,” (Interview 1, May 2019) before she was evacuated from Egypt because of the Arab Spring. Afterwards, she worked for a few summer Arabic programs in the US and then enrolled in a Masters in TAFL at a major US university in the Midwest.

For her graduate school experience, Sarah spoke about the lack of training in teaching methodology, language pedagogy, and understanding research. Additionally, she described the strengths of the program; specifically, the abundance of culture courses related to history and literature, which were taught mainly in English. What was lacking in her program as a master's degree student was teaching methods courses that introduce students to research in second language acquisition and how to teach language.

Reflecting on her Master's program, Sarah said:

We hardly did anything like reading or understanding research or knowing, like about the field of second language acquisition. The program was weak on that in my opinion. (Interview 1, May 2019)

In the survey questionnaire, Sarah was ultimately neutral concerning her satisfaction with her Master's program.

After graduation, Sarah was excited to apply for Arabic language teaching positions but she found the application process “frustrating.” First, the requirements

emphasize that a Master's Degree is required, but a PhD is preferred. For Sarah, a candidate with a PhD is "over qualified to just teach a language" (Interview 1, April 2019). It is true that an applicant with a PhD has more credentials, but it does not necessarily mean they can be more effective if they are not trained in how to best teach a language. Second, the job interviews are conducted mainly in English, but the Arabic portion is conducted by a native speaker who may not have formally studied Arabic language pedagogy. They could be from the Economics or Chemistry department, for example, and they usually ask trivial questions such as: "ماذا تظنين عن تدريس اللغة العربية؟" [What do you think about the teaching of Arabic?]. The job search and interview processes were tedious. Of the numerous positions she applied for, she only received one offer from a private university in the Northeast. She accepted the offer and she taught Arabic in the Near Eastern Studies Department for two years before joining a PhD program in second language acquisition in the Midwest.

Juliette: Not Scared of a Non-Latin Script

Juliette is a white American woman who was born in New York City. She earned a PhD in Arabic literature and she is currently an Assistant Professor at the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures at a state university in the southeastern region of the US. She is in her thirties and she comes from a family with a music and art background, specifically opera. She lived most of her life in the US, but she spent her early years as a child in different parts of Europe, which enabled her to master French and Italian languages. She attended a public high school where she took all the languages that were offered: French, Spanish, Italian, and Japanese. As a high school student, she spent a summer in Japan that she did not enjoy given the aspect of the Japanese culture

that she qualified as a “cold culture.” (Interview 1, May 2019). She was an art student in high school and the beautiful aspect of the Arabic script drew her attention to the language:

My art interest urged my interest in studying Arabic because I just thought it was so beautiful and wanted to decode it. I wanted to know, what is the letter? what is the word? (Interview 1, May 2019)

However, she was unable to study Arabic until she joined a private university. The transition from an urban public school to a private university had not been easy in terms of the level of preparedness and the skills needed for analysis and critical thinking. She was advised not to take Arabic in her first year because she was studying French, German, and Italian. Therefore, she started learning Arabic in her sophomore year. In her first semester as a learner of Arabic, she had a native speaker teacher who was a graduate student and was unprepared to teach the language.

In the second semester, she had what she called “an amazing teacher,” (Interview 1, May 2019) which sparked her interest in Arabic. She described him as a “mentor figure.” When I asked her about her earlier experiences learning Arabic, Juliette shared the grammatical challenges she had with the Al-Kitaab textbook, namely how the textbook presents six pronouns in Arabic instead of 24. Additionally, she had a hard time understanding the “Idaafa” [الإضافة] construction in Arabic (the grammatical concept of possession). Nevertheless, she did not give up and kept going even though she was not “an A student”.

In terms of culture learning in her Arabic classes, the content was limited to music and presentations on Arab musicians. Her cultural learning as a student about Arabs and Arab societies was limited until she traveled abroad to Egypt as a junior. Juliette spent a

summer abroad in Egypt where she explored the Egyptian dialect for the first time. She found the Egyptian culture warmer than the Japanese. In her last year of undergraduate school, she took two final classes: media Arabic and introduction to Arabic literature.

Two years after graduating from college, she applied to five graduate programs to study Arabic and ended up in the pacific region of the US. There, she earned her MA in classical literature and continued learning Arabic language. As a graduate student, Juliette thought about leaving graduate school on many occasions as she found learning Arabic hard and saw high fluency in Arabic as beyond her reach. She wondered:

Why didn't I choose something easier? I'll never be a native! I'll never measure up! I'll never feel fluent ever, will I? (Interview 1, May 2019)

Additionally, she felt frustrated that her graduate program did not prepare her to read and write in Arabic. All the Arabic literature materials were translated into English. She read and wrote her papers in English and her Arabic was “getting rustier every year.” (Interview 1, May 2019). Nevertheless, her interest in teaching and being in the classroom kept her going. She did not give up because she wanted to have a teaching career after graduate school. Therefore, for the duration of her PhD program, she had taught elementary and intensive intermediate Arabic language courses. Juliette did not have any formal training: she learned to teach through experience teaching as a graduate student and with assistance from her graduate program coordinator. She learned to design and discuss lessons with the coordinator before implementing them in the classroom. Furthermore, her investment in various study abroad programs through the Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) prepared her to teach Arabic. In one of the CLS summer programs in North Africa, Juliette assisted the program director and mentored NN Arabic learners. After graduation, she held various positions in teaching Arabic language and

culture. At the time of the study, Juliette was a visiting Assistant Professor of Arabic in the Department of Arabic at a private liberal arts college in the Northeast.

As the portraits above show, each teacher had unique experiences that led them to enter the Arabic language classroom for the first time. Additionally, their trajectories in terms of classroom experiences as learners and teacher trainees have some commonalities and differences. One major common denominator is that all the teachers are white Americans and their native language is English. The differences reside in growing up in different parts of the US and learning Arabic either in high school or in college. For example, while Adam started learning Arabic in high school, Sarah, Ann, Harry, and Juliette enrolled in Arabic as freshmen. However, Jim did not start Arabic until graduate school. In terms of interest in Arabic, various circumstances led these teachers to take Arabic, specifically curiosity about reading the Arabic script, learning about “non-American” cultures, and contributing to bringing peace to the Middle East conflict on a personal level.

Table 4.2: Self-Reported Arabic Teachers’ Demographics

Name	Age	Ethnicity	Gender	Native Language	Highest Degree	Teaching Status	College Teaching Experience	Study Abroad
Harry	22 - 31	White	M	English	Ph.D. in Arabic Studies	Assistant professor	6-10 years	Yes
Adam	32 - 41	White	M	English	Ph.D. in Arabic Studies	Assistant professor	6-10 years	Yes
Jim	60 +	White	M	English	Ph.D. in Arabic Studies	Tenured professor	20+ years	Yes
Anne	32 - 41	White	F	English	Ph.D. in Second Language Studies	Assistant professor	6-10 years	Yes

Sarah	32 - 41	White	F	English	M.A. in TAFL	Doctoral student	1 – 5 years	Yes
Juliette	32 - 41	White	F	English	Ph.D. in Arabic Literature	Assistant professor	1 – 5 years	Yes

CHAPTER 5

PEDAGOGY: LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND TEACHING

“Language is the roadmap of a culture. It tells you where its people come from and where they are going.”

Rita Mae Brown

The purpose of this case study was to explore with a sample of six NN Arabic college teachers their perceptions of language and culture and the construction of their identities. A better understanding of the life experiences of these teachers would allow prospective teachers, teacher educators and graduate program directors to reach an informed perspective and proceed accordingly when designing programs that consider these teachers’ experiences, successes, and challenges.

This chapter presents key findings gleaned from a survey questionnaire, 12 in-depth interviews, as well as teacher documents (syllabi, lesson plans, quizzes, and teaching philosophy statements). By describing the participants’ teaching goals, their perceptions of language and culture, and the types of identities they construe, the researcher investigated the ways the participants talk about language, culture, and teaching both in theory (their artefacts) and in practice (their teaching). Each participant was asked to define culture and express their understanding of the connections between language and culture. As their profiles in chapter 4 illustrated, the teachers were diverse in their teaching experiences and general backgrounds, which affected how each of them defines culture according to their unique understanding. In analyzing the transcripts from teacher interviews, online survey questionnaire, and artefacts, I discerned the following broad findings: (a) Language learning experiences impact teaching objectives; (b)

Teachers' daily routines are characterized by heavy teaching, lesson preparations, service, and some research; and (c) Some participants found it difficult to define culture. The participants approach teaching culture in different ways.

5.1 Language Learning Experiences Impact Teaching Objectives

What follows is an account of the teachers' teaching philosophies and objectives. These are connected to both teaching practices and culture teaching approaches. The teachers come from various geographical backgrounds in the US and draw from different educational experiences. Therefore, it is not surprising that their teaching objectives and practices look different.

5.1.1 Adam: Making Arabic Teaching Better

Adam had not been inspired to continue learning Arabic when he was a student despite his teachers' different teaching approaches. As he noted in the survey questionnaire and the interviews, his first teacher in high school was a NN Arabic teacher who taught Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) in even basic and informal every day communication. Additionally, this teacher's curriculum and teaching was not organized. In college, his second teacher was a NS of Arabic. Adam described this teacher as having no training in language pedagogy and following the "drill and kill" approach, the textbook, with no explanation. Another major factor that impacted Adam's approach to teaching Arabic was his own lack of ability to speak and understand native speakers when he went to Jordan. His knowledge of MSA was not efficient in interacting with Jordanians. He needed to learn a local dialect. All these experiences have informed Adam's teaching goals: he wanted to make Arabic teaching better. Therefore, one of his

main concerns was to build a stronger and successful Arabic program that is based on a ‘well-designed curriculum’. In his teaching philosophy statement, Adam wrote:

Teaching excellence must be embedded within a well-designed, pedagogically effective curriculum in order to produce the best results. For this reason, and in keeping with the broader goal of my work in developing the Arabic program at [my university], my pedagogical focus has been to build and refine an Arabic program curriculum that is effective, efficient and realistically grounded in the realities of the Arabic language. (Adam -Teaching statement 2018)

Adam prepared this statement for tenure promotion and, of course, he crafted it specifically to impress the tenure committee members. The realities of Arabic language mentioned in the statement refer to the need for learners of Arabic to study both standard and colloquial Arabic simultaneously to be able to face the realities of interacting with native speakers and understanding popular cultures. For this reason, when he started teaching, Adam adopted the communicative and integrative method where students learn both varieties of Arabic language. This approach follows the latest edition of the popular Arabic textbook “Al-Kitaab.” However, one of the critiques of this textbook that Adam brought up was that it focuses on text and minimizes cultural content. Hence, he started to gradually introduce culture into his courses and altered his teaching approach by adopting genre theory to language teaching. This theory relies on culturally based text types, thematic outcomes, and language functions. His approach is guided by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) standards and Can-Do-Statements. These Can-Do-Statements prioritize the use of language to fulfill specific functions such as using language to be able to greet a person, introducing oneself, and placing an order at a coffee shop or restaurant, for example.

5.1.2 Ann: Genre-based Pedagogy, Translanguaging, and Teacher Reflections

Ann described her Arabic learning experience as being positive. However, she thought teaching Arabic could be better, which convinced her to choose a PhD program in Applied Linguistics. Her goal in choosing Arabic teaching as a profession was to offer her students a better learning experience that would allow them to use Arabic in real life communications with Arabic speakers, understand Arab cultures, reflect on their own, and resist common, static, and essentialist views about Arabs and Arabic speakers. Her teaching philosophy statement and her classroom practices reflect the implementation of innovative research-based teaching methodologies. There are three main components in Ann's teaching philosophy: genre-based teaching, translinguaging pedagogy, and teacher reflections. First, Ann draws on ACTFL Can-Do-Statements, thematic units, and student self-assessments to design her Arabic lesson objectives that focus on language and intercultural learning. In her intermediate course syllabus, Ann describes the class goals as the ability to develop intermediate high Arabic skills in the three ACTFL modes of communication: interpersonal (i.e., exchange of talk in spoken, signed, or writing language to share information), presentational (i.e., present information or ideas to inform others), and interpretive (i.e., understand, interpret, and analyze various types of information). Second, genre pedagogy informs her teaching approach. Ann defines genre in her teaching portfolio as "collections of text that share the same purpose, such as describing a city or making a purchase. Students are then guided to analyze the texts to understand not only *what they mean*, but *how they mean* through the use of particular linguistic structures and culturally expected stages." This approach focuses on text types and language functions. The design and lesson implementation follow text comprehension, analysis, and reconstruction. Ann bases her approach on the language

functions and the cultural contexts of interaction. Another aspect of Ann's teaching is encouraging translanguaging. She noticed that her classrooms are diverse and therefore she invites her students to think about how their linguistic repertoires can enhance their learning experiences. Finally, Ann uses daily and weekly reflections on her teaching experiences and discusses them at the end of the semester with her colleagues to improve her teaching.

5.1.3 Harry: Task based Learning

Harry entered the Arabic language classroom as a sophomore after he tried to learn Modern Hebrew a year before. His experience of learning Hebrew sparked his interest in taking a course in Arabic. After a few years of Arabic and travel abroad, Harry found himself interested in the linguistic history of Arabic language. As a student, Harry was misled because he was under the impression that the only Arabic language was Fusha (MSA), a myth that he discovered once he traveled abroad for the first time. For this reason, Harry stated that his Arabic program as a student could have been better. The focus on MSA only has not been of help to Harry and many other students. It does not really reflect the "real" Arabic that people speak in the Arab world. Hence, Harry's teaching philosophy and style did not follow what he learned from his former Arabic teachers. On the contrary, his teaching perspectives rely on task-based learning to enable students to create with language. Harry postulated that he would never use the "drill and kill" method. Rather, he designs contextualized and culturally relevant tasks that focus on language tasks. At the novice and intermediate levels of Arabic, Harry strives to enable his students to learn the alphabets, master pronunciation, and understand the Arabic sound system. Adam uses what he calls "applied context" when teaching grammar,

vocabulary, and conjugation. One way to teach verb conjugations is through skits or role-plays. For example, to teach the conjugation of the verb “to drink,” Harry would bring up tea culture and the cultural rituals of drinking tea by showing a video on how tea is made and served in some parts of the Arab world. This way, he contextualizes the cultural concepts and practices while teaching the mechanics of language meaningfully.

5.1.4 Jim: Whatever Works

Jim asserts that he has no “ideological commitment to any school of thought,” (Interview 1, 4-18-2019) and has no orientation when it comes to his teaching approaches. He is open to following any method that would benefit his students. Jim learned Arabic in the 1970s when Arabic learning was neither in demand nor of interest to students in the US. As a learner of Arabic, Jim learned MSA only because every day spoken language (dialect) was not prioritized and, therefore, did not have a place in the classroom. Even in his current position with the US Army, his work consists of teaching MSA only. This is evident in his responses in the interviews and the lesson plans he provided for his intermediate classes. These lessons build on audio/ video clips that include debates surrounding Arabic political, economic, religious, or social issues. The tasks for his students include text transcription, comprehension, vocabulary, and writing, which is typical of traditional teaching approaches.

5.1.5 Sarah: Flipped Classrooms and Learning Arabic for Real-life Encounters

Sarah seems to have been satisfied with her Arabic learning experiences as an undergraduate student. In her survey responses, she pointed out that her first teacher was inspirational. Her undergraduate teacher used to invite the whole class to his house to

practice the language and cook Middle Eastern foods. This sense of inclusion can be felt in Sarah's teaching mission which she summarizes as:

creat[ing] an inclusive and mutually-supportive environment in which students develop not only language and cultural knowledge beyond the textbook, but furthermore hone their awareness of learning strategies and their own strength. (Teaching statement - June 2019)

This statement highlights that Sarah is committed to enabling her students to be ready to engage in authentic situations of communication beyond the classroom and the local environments. Such opportunities were not available to her as a student. When she was relating her experience as a learner, she described how she felt out of place when she visited Syria for the first time because she could not speak the language of the Syrians.

At the beginning of each semester, Sarah conducts what she calls a "needs analysis" to inform her curriculum. As a result, she encourages her students to experiment with the language and take risks. She likens her classroom to a "laboratory" where experiments are conducted and mistakes are likely to occur. To this end, she tries to create for them a safe environment that is conducive to learning.

In her teaching statement, Sarah remarked that she draws on ACTFL standards and modes of communication to instill, in her students, strategies for interaction in the target language and cultures. In other words, her classroom teaching offers her students opportunities where they can create with language through interaction that requires them to understand and produce language by communicating in everyday situations with one another. Her assessment measures include real-life tasks that display what students can do with the language outside of the classroom. Therefore, the end goal was to prepare her students to face any challenges that come their way. However, in the interview she notes

that she was bound to the Arabic textbook in both of the institutions where she worked. For this reason, it was not clear to me as the researcher how she would use the modes of communication drawing on the textbook materials.

Speaking of her work in the classroom during the first interview, Sarah signaled that she is very enthusiastic and shows how much she cares about her students. At the beginning of each class, she capitalizes on the time before each class starts to connect with her students, which boosts their confidence during class time. Concerning her teaching methodology, Sarah uses flipped classroom techniques where students complete most of the work as homework that they would prepare for the classroom. Classroom time is devoted not to teaching new concepts, but to practicing and interacting in the target language using the grammar structures and vocabulary items they have learned. In other words, flipped classrooms ensure that students discuss and/or apply what they have learned at home from the homework assignments.

5.1.6 Juliette: Supportive Classroom Environment and Community Building

Juliette's major language goals were to teach the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and introduce students to Arab cultures for a better understanding of the Arab speaking world. In her teaching statement, Juliette describes the infectious energy and excitement that she brings to the classroom, which enables the creation of positive connections with her students and bringing a community of learners together starting from the first day of classes.

Juliette is unique among the six participants because she spoke more than four languages (French, Italian, Japanese, and German) when she started learning Arabic in

college. Despite her multilingual upbringing and language learning experiences, she did not appreciate her first Arabic teacher. In the survey questionnaire, she indicated that he did not really inspire her to continue her journey because he was a teaching assistant majoring in the sciences and did not have any language teacher training or background. However, after her first year she had a well-trained and inspiring teacher, which helped her continue her journey. In her teaching statement, Juliette defines language as:

a powerful tool to open doors, bring diverse peoples together, build stronger human connections, and demystify the unknown.

Through language, Juliette bonds with her students and strives to introduce students to Arab cultures for a better understanding of the Arab speaking world. Based on her teaching philosophy statement, one of her core beliefs is integrating Arabic dialects into teaching Arabic to permit students to appreciate the diversity of Arabic dialects. However, her students are apparently exposed to Arabic dialect only in special sessions that her teaching assistant leads, which is typical of the mission statement that focuses on MSA in her institution. Additionally, Juliette strives to provide a risk-free environment where students are not penalized for making mistakes. As such, her students gain self-confidence, learn to participate in in-class activities, and become active learners.

In terms of teaching materials, Juliette bases her teaching on authentic materials that include songs, movies, advertisements, videos, news clips, and poetry. In her annual report, she brings up her teaching practice and describes it as based not necessarily on teaching grammar, for example, in a traditional sense. She integrates poetry and music that provide rich texts for the lexical and grammatical concepts she has to introduce.

However, in the interviews, Juliette reflects on how she is fond of preparing worksheets for teaching grammar:

What I do in advance is I prepare all the handouts. So, I have all these... I'll come in for the week, and I'll have five or six or seven or eight different handouts.
(Juliette, Interview 1, May 2019)

Nevertheless, she does understand that handouts can make students tired and lack energy. For this reason, she makes her classes entertaining and brings back energy to her students by offering opportunities for students to move about the room to sing and dance.

In sum, some of the teachers discussed how they did not enjoy their experiences as learners of Arabic and, therefore, committed themselves as teachers to providing better learning experiences for their students. Through the examination of their teaching statements and goals, it was apparent that their teaching strategies are varied: flipped classrooms, translanguaging methodologies, genre-based learning, task-based learning, and building classroom communities. While these strategies are simply the goals that each teacher targets, it is important to look at how the teachers describe their daily classroom practices.

5.2 Typical Daily Arabic Teaching Routines and Practices

This section describes the participants' daily routines and typical classroom teaching practices. The description shows that typical work day routines differ from one participant to another depending on their individual circumstances. Additionally, their teaching routines vary according to each participant's teaching beliefs and their institutional conditions.

5.2.1 Adam: Lesson Planning, Teaching, and Service

In his survey responses to what he focuses on in class as an Arabic teacher, Adam indicated that he highly focuses on vocabulary, reading, listening and speaking, and aspects of culture. He somewhat attends to writing but does not really cater to teaching grammar.

Adam teaches four days a week. Most of the time, his typical workday starts and ends with developing new materials and creating new lessons. In fact, he pinpointed that he spends 60% of his time on lesson planning or modifications of previous lessons. Lesson preparation takes most of his time because he was not using a textbook. A typical Monday for Adam would include lesson planning, material development, writing a proposal for a department major, and/or grading. His classes were scheduled in two opposite parts of his campus. Therefore, he had to "sprint" to get to one of his classes on time, which rarely happens. After his classes, Adam either attends search committee or departmental meetings, or designs lessons for the rest of the week. In late afternoons, he would sometimes send reminders for his students to complete the homework for the following day.

Describing his teaching routines, Adam indicated that he used to have routines to start every teaching session. Some of these routines were "question of the day" and "word Bingo game." Reflecting on his class routines during the spring 2019 semester, Adam felt that he did not have any routines as he did not have enough time to develop and prepare for his classes. Service requirements took much of his time that year. While Adam talked about how 60% of his time during the day is devoted to lesson planning, in his description of a typical teaching session, he disclosed that lesson preparation took only 10% of his time, which is a noticeable contradiction in his talk. This contradiction can be

explained by the overwhelming requirements for service in the 2019 spring semester. In general, his classroom teaching emphasizes student participation and effective collective tasks. Class activities vary from tasks to total physical response activities.

5.2.2 Ann: Teaching, Research, and Service

For Ann, her classroom teaching practices capitalize on the four skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking). Next, she introduces aspects of Arab cultures. She sometimes includes vocabulary, but occasionally focuses on grammar.

After she wakes up at 4:30 or 5 am, Ann exercises, meditates, and gets ready to leave for work at 6:30 am on typical teaching days.

The classes are six credits and they are co-taught. Her weekly schedule consisted of two days teaching sessions (75 minutes each), with the remainder of those days and the other three days for teaching preparations, grading, research, and service projects. On the days she worked, Ann goes early to work and stays in her office planning her lessons and designing teaching materials for most of the morning. After her classes, Ann would grade any homework she may have, check and respond to emails, and send homework reminders to her students.

In terms of typical class routines, Ann follows structured routines based on research-based methodologies (Genre-based approach): text reading, small group discussions, text analysis (what the text means and how it means), and text production. This is for first and second-year students. She starts with providing a text (audio, video, or script) sometimes from the textbook, discussing content, then analyzing text functions, and finally producing similar texts following the genre of the text studied in class using

Can-do-statements (i.e., language functions). Every text presented in class is based on an event and the language functions that she wanted her students to be able to use in the first and second-year classes. She emphasizes creating with language following text comprehension, analysis, and production. First, the class discusses the meanings in the text in groups and then Ann invites the students to deconstruct the text by analyzing how the language is used to convey specific meanings. Learners are then guided through analysis to discover that language use differs depending on whether it is used on the internet, textbooks, newspapers, blogs, or podcasts. Additionally, Ann introduces them to notions of general language and specific language. For example, when discussing a topic on holidays, some general language can be related to gifts, parties, and celebrations. Specific language would be the jargon specific to a particular holiday (i.e., specific recipes, clothing, and greetings). With advanced classes, Ann moves her classroom teaching to focus more on content.

5.2.3 Harry: Teaching, Research, and Email Correspondence

Harry focuses more on vocabulary, listening, speaking, and teaching some aspects of Arab cultures. To some degree, reading, writing, and grammar come second in terms of importance to classroom instruction. Harry claimed to have both teaching and research expectations. He plans his lessons three weeks ahead. On a typical day, after he wakes up, he prepares for his classes, grades any homework that was left ungraded, and heads to the classroom. In the spring of 2019, he taught three 50-minute class sessions three days a week; one of the classes was online. After teaching three sections back to back, he would take his lunch and grade homework. Part of his daily duties was research and responding to emails, which he referred to as time-consuming.

In a typical class session for his second semester Arabic students, Harry always starts with a culture snapshot before students come in. The snapshots take the form of a picture or a video representing an aspect of Arab cultures: a man making tea, a girl walking silently, a scene from a city center, or a song. These cultural videos target early bird students and aids them to start thinking about Arabic and speaking in Arabic after the daily morning routine. Harry plans to show different cultural concepts and practices of the Arab World: clothing, daily practices, foods and drinks, living, Arabic buildings or homes, and education. However, he acknowledged that he is "Morocco biased" given that he served for two years in Morocco as a Peace Corps volunteer and his friendships with Moroccans. This experience is evident in his teaching of the Moroccan dialect alongside Arabic.

After the daily cultural activity where students identify objects in the videos, Harry makes it a routine that students interact with at least two of their colleagues simply chatting using every day greetings and asking one another simple questions using the vocabulary and structures they have learned. The interactions can be in either MSA, Moroccan Arabic or a mix of the two. The end goal for these interactions is to have students get used to situations where they have to speak regularly as if they are living abroad. These are the kinds of encounters that they can expect there. After this quick activity, Harry asks the students if they have any questions about the homework before embarking on the main activity and tasks of the class: a listening or a reading activity. These activities are usually assigned as homework and the class time is reserved for discussing the video content through group tasks and, then, as a whole class. This activity follows the think, pair, share strategy. Harry starts with the general picture of the video

and moves together with the students to the specifics and details of the video. According to Harry, the strategy aids students to build confidence. He remarked:

I tried to get them from the big picture to the zoomed in picture and they come out of the class and they are more confident. (Interview 2, April 2019)

This is similar to the way Ann leads her classes. After the main activity of the day, Harry makes final announcements about the homework. It is interesting to note here that Harry did not talk about the four skills in his session. Rather he mentioned that he focuses on the meanings of a text and the tasks students engage in to understand the text.

5.2.4 Jim: Teaching Standard Arabic and Grading Homework.

Jim's instructional practices emphasize vocabulary, reading, listening, speaking, grammar and aspects of culture. Writing is of less importance although a fair amount of writing is a part of his lesson plans. In general, Jim does not follow or apply a specific teaching approach or methodology. For him, any activity or task that "*works*" and would benefit his students can be used in his classes.

A typical day for Jim starts with an hour of meditation before checking his emails to view the homework that his students have turned in. After evaluating some of the homework, he "runs" to his class to teach. He usually sends the graded homework with the corrections back in the afternoons. Jim splits his typical day between teaching and preparing new authentic listening materials for his classes. These listening materials are usually from Arabic news channels or YouTube. Listening materials and activities are of paramount importance for Jim. He purposefully collects listening materials in standard Arabic as mandated by the guidelines of his institution. Jim acknowledges that standard Arabic is not superior to the dialects: he stated, "my job is to teach Modern Standard

Arabic, but I fully accept and recognize the supreme importance of teaching the dialects as well." After choosing an audio/ video clip, Jim transcribes it to understand the "deep" meanings before he embarks on creating a lesson plan, which takes the rest of the day and sometimes up to two days. Jim reported that if he were a native speaker of Arabic, he would not need to carefully transcribe the audio/ video files. What this means is that Jim believes that NS teachers have an advantage over NNS teachers given that the former grew up learning the language. In other words, Jim believes in the ideology which maintains that NS teachers are "ideal" teachers.

Jim co-teaches a class that comprises seven students in intermediate high Arabic. The students attend six hours of Arabic every day. Jim teaches a three-hour session and one of Jim's colleagues teaches the other three hours. Other than classroom teaching and lesson design, Jim attends faculty meetings or meets with his students during office hours.

As for a typical teaching session, Jim would start with the homework that they have prepared the day before. The task for homework is usually listening to an audio clip a few times, summarizing the main points, and writing their reaction to the piece. In class, the students engage in an in-depth discussion of the text. The following day, the students would have to prepare an assigned portion of the long clip to facilitate the discussion and analysis of their portion with their colleagues in class.

5.2.5 Juliette: Teaching, Office Hours, Lesson Design, Grading, and Service

In the survey questionnaire responses, Juliette emphasizes teaching vocabulary, grammar, the three skills (writing, listening, speaking), and aspects of culture. Reading

comes in second place. This approach was also visible in her teaching philosophy statement. In her statement, she describes that her goal as a teacher of Arabic is:

to provide students with sound and engaging instruction in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation across the four language skills; and to ensure that they gain a broad and impartial introduction to Arab culture and society. (Teaching statement - 2018)

Therefore, through her teaching, Juliette targets developing basic skills in Arabic and offering an unbiased understanding of Arab cultures.

A typical day for Juliette starts with coffee after waking up, listening to the news, and preparing for class or grading. Her daily workload consists of teaching two classes. The elementary level class meets every day and the intermediate/ advanced level one meets three times a week. Therefore, on some days, she teaches two classes which she describes as “frenetic and rushed.” When she has to teach one class only, she would feel “a little more relaxed.” Once in her office, she would “quickly” print handouts or worksheets for her class and head to class. Her daily work routines revolve around teaching, holding office hours, lesson designs for the following day, and grading. In the evenings, she exercises and completes grading assignments in bed. As this routine showed, grading takes much of Juliette’s time during the day and at night:

Before bed, sometimes I grade myself to sleep. I have my papers and I am in bed and I just grade until I fall asleep. (Interview 2 - May 2019)

Juliette ensures that she corrects all of her students’ mistakes, even though they can self-grade their homework using the answer key that Juliette makes available to them. What this tendency implies is that Juliette emphasizes accuracy rather than fluency.

Other than teaching, lesson preparations, and grading, Juliette's service and research-related tasks are also part of her daily life. Some of the weekly extra-curricular activities include guest lectures, film screenings, social events at the Arabic House, and the weekly language table meetings over lunch with students. As for research, Juliette is working on a book project exploring the work of Arab immigrant literature in the US in the early 20th century and linking it to debates on Arab and Arab American identity in the 21st century. She brings her knowledge of this literature to her intermediate and advanced classes in the form of poetry translations and field trips to Arab American community neighborhoods in the US.

In a typical class session, Juliette uses a warm up activity to transition to the main topic of the session. This activity provides opportunities for her students to “start using language first thing.” In the warm-ups, students discuss what they did the night before and in the morning. The morning routines, just like for Harry and Adam, aim to facilitate the transition to the content of the class and enable students to talk and use language before moving to the main activity of the day. This strategy makes the learning more memorable to students. After the warm-up phase, Juliette starts the main content, which may be introducing a grammar concept or application of such a concept through guided drills completed in pairs or groups. Juliette ensures that group members are mixed every time so that each student is able to work with different colleagues each time. At times, when students lack concentration because of a dull grammar activity, Juliette would ask her students to work on a skit or introduce a song to bring energy back to the students and the classroom.

5.2.6 Sarah: Walking to Campus, Teaching, and Lesson Planning

In the survey questionnaire, Sarah reported that in her classroom, vocabulary, listening, and speaking are of utmost importance. Reading, writing, grammar, and aspects of culture come in the second place. Here, it is evident in her teaching that she focuses on the mechanics of language as she and her colleagues “[We] did not have a lot of opportunities to digress from the textbook” (Interview 1 - May 2019). Sarah focuses mostly on showing videos of music or popular spaces in an Arab city to teach culture. Cultural assignments, graded or ungraded, are inexistent.

Sarah’s workdays are not always the same. On some days, she would teach three classes while on other days, she would teach only one course. Sarah’s typical day starts at 6:30 am. After taking breakfast at home, she walks to work every day. Sarah lives 30 minutes away from campus. She finds walking to work fascinating especially because her town is small and she enjoys contemplating nature. On other days, she would use her time in a productive manner as she listens to news and Arabic language podcasts. Once she arrives to her office, Sarah prepares what she calls “last minute print outs” or her own activities for class if she has not printed out the learning materials the night before. She makes sure to be in class early enough to be able to greet her students and quickly chat with them in Arabic as they enter the classroom. After her classes, she holds office hours and eats her lunch in her office. Once a week, the Arabic faculty eat lunch together and discuss teaching-related issues. Sometimes, she just eats lunch with just one other Arabic faculty. When the entire faculty leave their offices at the end of the day, Sarah would stay in the shared office by herself to create new materials, prepare new lesson plans, and eat dinner. During this time, Sarah takes advantage of the quiet environment to listen to music and turn the volume loud as she works on her lessons and eats dinner. While

discussing her workday activities, Sarah commented that dinner time was a productive moment for her as she could quietly print out all the worksheets she would use the following day. When she finishes all the work she has, Sarah walks back home. On some occasions, Sarah would stop to exercise at a gym. At home, she watches a TV show, practices the guitar, or reads a book before going to bed.

Typically, Sarah structures each of her class sessions based on the homework assignments. Sarah starts a typical session softly with a warm up in the form of regular greetings followed by basic questions surrounding the theme of the unit. This routine serves "to lubricate [the students] and move slowly to get them going" (Interview 2 - June 2019). The main part of the class starts by discussing the homework the students have prepared for class participation. Sarah considers most of her classes as flipped. In other words, most of the written/ listening work is assigned as homework. This facilitates the task of the teacher as they can dedicate class time for student engagement with language through interactions. One of the classroom strategies that Sarah uses is the think, pair, share activity. This strategy provides possibilities for students who are shy or nervous to participate and practice the language. Sarah maximizes speaking and communication for the whole class and, as she notes, her approach:

is a more communicative framework rather than an input floods framework. But I like to think about maximizing their ability to speak and practice, negotiate meaning as much as possible in a less stressful environment such as with their partner before they then get to share it out in front of the whole group. (Interview 2 - June 2019)

In her teaching philosophy statement, Sarah emphasizes this approach and describes her classroom as a "laboratory" where students can experiment with language and develop an awareness of their learning abilities and strategies. Each class session

ends differently depending on how instruction unfolds and how students participate and respond to the activities and tasks conducted in class.

In sum, the discussion above shows that each participant has their own strategies for leading their classes. A typical workday routine for each participant ranges from teaching, lesson planning, grading, and service. Additionally, classroom practices differ according to each participant's teaching philosophy, pedagogical approaches, and experiences as learners of Arabic.

5.3 Language and Culture in the Arabic Language Classroom

5.3.1 Defining Culture

How teachers define culture has always been a challenge. Despite the fact that the participants in this study view culture as useful and important, some of them struggled with defining the term “culture.” Some of the reactions to this question ranged from “that’s hard,” “a deep question,” and “a heavy question.” What these reactions may imply is the lack of attention or negligence of culture and its inevitable connection to language teaching. Additionally, as table 5.1 shows, other teacher reactions show the value of culture in the classroom and the teachers were able to show ways in which language connects to culture: culture as a product, as difference, as negotiation, as interaction, and as everything.

Table 5.1: Participants' views of culture

Adam	Ann	Harry	Jim	Juliette	Sarah
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Culture as everything	Culture as negotiation and interaction	Culture as a puzzle: a discussion of peoples' worldviews	Culture as everything embedded in authentic resources	Cultural arts, literature, food, religion, calligraphy	Culture as difference and everything
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5.3.1.1 Adam: Culture as Everything

Adam believes that culture is valuable in the Arabic language classroom. In the online survey questionnaire, Adam considered culture as consisting of food, festivals, folklore, movies, songs, music, values, clothing, worldviews, and beliefs. In his Arabic culture classes, to simplify the understanding of Arab cultures for the students, he bluntly states that, “Arabs are people!” Many students in today’s classroom come with ideas that are embedded in the stereotypical pictures of other cultures generated from the media in general. Therefore, when Adam refers in a straightforward and simple way to Arabs as people, he thought his students might be incited to want to learn more about them. For Adam, engaging his students in cultural activities, most of which are chosen by the students, can make a difference in developing a holistic understanding of the Arab cultures. Concerning the connections between language and culture, Adam notes that both language and culture are equally important and bound. His claim can be found to be true as he focuses on culture in his syllabi and teaching statement. However, his lesson plans tend to separate language and culture activities. Additionally, he still teaches a course on modern Arab cultures in English to enable him to recruit and attract more students to enroll in his Arabic program.

5.3.1.2 Harry: Culture as a Puzzle

Harry acknowledged that defining culture is hard. When he was asked about what

culture means to him, he sighed and added, “Oh, man! What is culture? That’s hard!” (Interview 1, April 2019). In addition to food, festivals, folklore, movies, songs, music, values, clothing, worldviews, and beliefs, Harry includes commerce and industry, ecology, and political systems. What was interesting about Harry was that he defines culture as a “discussion” that can go in many different directions. For him culture is about peoples’ perspectives:

It's how they entertain themselves. It's how they interact with their family. It's how they envision the kind of the role of the people's relationship with the government. It's how they dress. It's how they practice their religion. Sometimes it's actually what their religion is. (Harry: Interview 1 - April 2019)

In sum, for Harry culture is a discussion of what people do. At one point, he likens culture to a “puzzle” in which all the pieces fit together and complement each other. For this reason, Harry talks about Arab “cultures” and not Arab “culture.” Despite the commonly shared practices in the Arab world, Harry highlights the diversity of the culture and affirms that it goes beyond ethnic, linguistic, and religious identity. For Harry, learning Arab cultures means acquiring knowledge of not only the shared practices, but also insights that transcend monolingual Arab identity. As an example, not all Arabs are Muslims and not all Muslims are Arabs. This type of cultural knowledge is highly needed in students. Language classes are sometimes the sole avenue where they can develop knowledge to become culturally aware. In terms of the connection between language and culture, Harry considers that:

Language is the filter, maybe I don't know, either language is the filter culture goes through or culture is the filter that language goes through. You can't separate them. I mean you can separate maybe the grammar, right. But even the grammar goes through a cultural lens. (Harry: Interview 1 -April 2019)

Here, Harry expresses the complex and fluid relationship between culture and language

and the inseparable nature of this relationship. He adds that culture is about how people perceive the world and use language to articulate their perceptions.

5.3.1.3 Ann: Culture as Negotiated Performances in Interaction

Like Harry, Ann shares a similar understanding of culture: a view that highlights the variable and dynamic nature of culture. For Ann, traditional practices such as holidays and repeated daily rituals cannot be understood as a set of static products. Such practices vary from one culture to another and even within individual cultures. Hence, culture and language are bound, equally important, but cannot be separated. In the classroom, Ann aims to introduce not only differences across cultures but shared cultural patterns as well. By doing this, Ann takes a step forward highlighting common practices across cultures instead of just focusing on variations, which is a typical understanding of the idea of cultures in the US. She notes that she designs:

cultural assignments as an orientation and asking leading questions that aren't so bound to this nation's idea of cultures. (Interview 1 - April 2019)

Therefore, in addition to cultural products (food, clothing, festivals, and folklore), Ann considers values, worldviews, beliefs, and negotiated performances in interaction as part of culture. What this means is that Ann has a broader understanding of culture, which transcends the cultural products. After all, culture for her starts with how people engage in negotiations of meanings in their daily interactions. She draws on web-based resources that include cultural content from various countries and different social backgrounds to highlight shared cultural patterns between various cultures.

5.3.1.4 Jim: “Culture? An Intensely Heavy Question!”

Concerning Jim, his reaction to the question “what does the term culture mean to you?” was one of astonishment. Astonishment arises from the abstract nature of the

concept “culture.” The abstractness of such a concept causes him to be unable to answer the question. Therefore, he described it as a “heavy question!” This was probably the reason for responding this way: “Wow! that's such an intensely heavy question! I don't even know where to begin, but I'm ... The thing is...” (Interview 1, April 2019). This reaction was similar to Harry’s reaction referenced above. In the online survey questionnaire, Jim checked off the following items as being part of culture: food, festivals, folklore, movies, music, songs, values, clothing, worldviews, and beliefs. Even though Jim was not able to answer the question, he reported that he teaches Arab cultures drawing on authentic materials (video and text) that are written by Arabs for Arabs. This authentic cultural content includes various traditions, ways of life, politics, geopolitics, and religion. As for the language culture connections, Jim responded that language is more important than culture and that language and culture are bound but can be separate. This response is reminiscent of the teaching mission adopted in Jim’s institution, which focuses on teaching the mechanics of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) to military service personnel. For Jim, culture is embedded in the authentic content from the internet, most of which relates to media, and geopolitics. In Jim’s institution, students are sometimes exposed to culture through events hosted and led by language faculty. In these events, students engage in simulated activities where faculty wear traditional dress, cook traditional foreign cuisines, and interact with students in the target language. Additionally, a small percentage of students are offered grants to study abroad for one month as a potential of learning about culture.

5.3.1.5 Juliette: The “big C” Culture: Music and Literature

Juliette described the question, “what does the term culture mean to you?” as a

“deep question!” In the survey questionnaire, she expressed her understanding of culture as including food, festivals, folklore, movies, music, songs, values, clothing, worldviews, and beliefs. To this list, she added religion. This understanding indicates that Juliette views culture as a product, which is reminiscent of the view of culture as the “big C”, which is limited to arts, music, literature, and food (Holliday, 1999). Concerning teaching culture, Juliette acknowledges that she does not consider herself an expert in describing other peoples’ cultures, which is understandable given her statement that she has limited knowledge of other cultures, including Arab cultures. In her classroom, Juliette focuses on cultural arts, music, film, media, literature, and food. She talks about cultures in the plural form and describes how the Arabic speaking world shares some general cultural patterns such as hospitality. However, the diversity of Arab cultures, traditions, and lifestyles reminds her to “shy away from making blanket statements about culture.” (Interview 1, May 2019). In terms of the connections between language and culture, Juliette reported that it is a difficult topic, but claimed that both are bound and equally important. This same attitude was reported by Harry and Jim.

5.3.1.6 Sarah: Culture as “Something Weird in Communication”

As for Sarah, she was able to provide a unique definition of culture. She describes culture as:

Anytime that you are in a new situation, say you’re traveling somewhere and something seems weird to you. That’s when you hit culture in the face. (Sarah, Interview 1 - May 2019)

Sarah seems to see culture through becoming aware of differences with other cultures after being exposed to an event where “rich points” occur (Kramsch, 1993; Michael Agar, 2006). Sarah provides a concrete example of some differences in cultural

practices: in some cultures, it is acceptable to give someone ten missed calls in a row, which is not acceptable in western cultures. Although this practice might be seen as weird, Sarah values this difference and sees it as important and normal in some Arab communities. Some aspects of culture that Sarah focuses on in her classes are peoples' daily movements, street scenes, and the physical spaces people occupy and do not occupy. Additionally, she instills in her students the etiquette of greeting each other every time they enter the classroom, a practice they may not be used to doing in other classes. The purpose behind implementing this routine was to enable them to experience the importance of greetings and the expectations to respond to them in Arab cultures. At the same time, learning these expectations can enable students to compare such cultural practices to their own. As for her understanding of what constitutes culture, Sarah reported that both the visible and invisible aspects of culture are important. She used the metaphor of the cultural iceberg model that displays the surface and deep or hidden aspects of culture (E.T. Hall, 1976). In this model, while the tip of the iceberg displays items such as food, festivals, folktales, and clothing, the invisible part includes values, assumptions, expectations, worldviews, and beliefs. In terms of the connection between language and culture, Sarah reported that whether they can be bound or separate depends on the language level of the students.

In sum, examining Sarah's understanding of cultural patterns and practices shows that she is aware that what might be normal in her culture may or may not be acceptable in other cultures and vice-versa. Such understanding may open the door for her to be accepting of other cultural practices and implementing them in her Arabic classroom.

5.3.2 Teaching Culture

This section explores how the six participants approach teaching culture based on the analysis of interview transcripts and their teaching documents (teaching statements, lesson plans, syllabi, annual reports, and quizzes). All the participants integrate culture in their teaching in one way or another, but the implementation differs in terms of how each participant perceives culture and how much freedom they have to stray away from the Arabic textbook used in their programs.

5.3.2.1 Adam: Cultural Knowledge and Appropriate Behavior

In the interviews, Adam reports that he uses “culturally relevant texts” based on a genre and a theme. Adam directly introduces culture in all his courses in various ways: weekly culture portfolios, final projects, and a course on popular culture in the Arab World in English. First, Adam assigns cultural activities to his students in “weekly culture portfolios.” In his Fall 2015 syllabus, Adam describes the cultural portfolio as:

a weekly assignment where you will reflect on cultural practices or notions in Arab and Middle Eastern culture in English. You will write a short weekly reflection on a cultural topic; culture being broadly defined. (Adam: First semester Arabic syllabus - 2015)

Adam acknowledges that these activities are an “abuse” of the word “portfolio” because it is a random weekly journal rather than a real portfolio. This portfolio is a series of weekly reflections on a topic that students choose to research, a story they read, or a movie they view. The reflection is meant to guide students to explore cultural practices and discuss their ideas after engaging with the activity in 300 words essay in English. In the past, Adam used to require his students to watch three films and read an Arabic novel in translation. However, he remarked that he prefers reflecting on movies as an assignment because they can serve as a tool where culture is more visible. In addition to the weekly cultural journals, Adam assigns final projects in the form of roleplays, creation of a social

media profile or a forum in Arabic. These are real-life tasks that students may find meaningful as they are based on the exploration of texts from the same genre and theme.

Following is a sample final project prompt:

Social Media Profile: You will create a one-page mockup of a social media profile, similar to Facebook. The final product must include the following. Everything must be written in Arabic in Arabic characters:

- 1) An “About Me” section featuring at least 6 full sentences.
 - 2) Basic Summary Information: can overlap with some of the ‘about me’ section.
 - 3) ‘wall posts’ from friends. You must have a ‘reply’ to at least 1 of them.”
- (Adam: final project- elementary Arabic)

Other ways Adam teaches culture in the classroom is through a course in English that he developed in 2016. He labeled this course an “Arabic culture course in translation,” which focused on Arab popular culture. The main purpose of this course is to stimulate students’ interest in the culture and by implication incite them to enroll in Arabic classes. As he calls it, “it is a feeder course” to boost the Arabic program enrollments. Speaking about the design of this course, Adam explained:

I’ve redesigned it so one day a week is watching a movie. I mean it should be fairly easy kind of a course in theory, but the idea is just to get people interested in Arabic so they hopefully take Arabic classes and stuff like that. (Adam, interview 1 - May 2019)

The topics discussed in this course include orientalism, essentialism, demographics of the Arab World, issues of gender, Arab Americans, and music and musicians. Specific examples of how he introduces culture include exploring such behaviors as greetings and leave-taking, appropriate uses of Allah phrases according to contexts and situations of communication. As for cultural knowledge, Adam draws on various topics: geography, major Arab figures, religion, and Arabic music. In his second-

year courses, Adam encourages his students to communicate the cultural differences between aspects of Arab and American cultures.

Overall, an examination of Adam's syllabi and cultural outcomes shows that Adam focuses on both cultural knowledge and students' performances on "culturally appropriate behaviors."

5.3.2.2 Jim: The Internet as a Source for Language and Culture Teaching

For Jim, teaching culture means relying on the internet to retrieve authentic resources that are written by Arabs for Arabs to use in his classroom. He does not resort to translated materials. With a simple Google search on a cultural topic such as Ramadan traditions, for example, Jim would have a "million" hits to choose from. With reference to how he teaches culture, Jim reported that:

We concentrate on materials that are written by Arabs about Arab subjects, about Arab culture, about the Arab people, about traditions and cultural... various cultural dimensions, and of course politics and geopolitics. That's the way we teach culture. (Jim, Interview 1 - April 2019)

A quick glance at Jim's lesson plans discloses that he designs and shares them with other faculty, which explains his use of the pronoun "we" in the quote above. There is a sense of collaboration between the Arabic instructors. This explanation of the way they undertake teaching culture in his institution reflects the mission of the institution and the Arabic program's understanding of culture. Given that Jim works at a military school, the mission of the school aims at providing language education for service members to enhance US security. Therefore, the emphasis is, as Jim's lesson plans show, on topics ranging from business, geography, history, politics, economy, and religion. The primary skills target listening and the secondary skills include reading, speaking, writing,

transcribing, and translating. It is worth mentioning that all the instruction in Jim's classes is conducted in Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). Concerning cultural practices, they are addressed contextually when students and teachers engage in discussions about various topics. Jim pointed out:

Of course, in the context of things, you have to continually remind students about the Arab traditions: the proper way of greeting, the proper answer to various kinds of greetings, the holidays, the emphasis on family... the value of teachers in the Arab World, respecting elders, respecting the tribes, and of course all the important aspects of religion. (Jim, Interview 1 - April 2019)

This statement reminds us that Jim and his program view culture as the “big C” culture which aims to explore cultural products and facts such as geography, economy, and history, and broad topics such as religion and gender. However, there is room for side discussions of cultural and social practices related to the value of family and respect for elders and teachers.

5.3.2.3 Ann: Demystifying Traditional and Daily Cultural Practices

In her teaching portfolio document, Ann made it clear that “intercultural learning” is important. In this regard, her main goal was to:

help students use their developing knowledge of Arab-speaking cultures to gain a view of culture as a series of negotiated performances rather than static facts.
(Ann - Teaching portfolio)

However, with her students' interests being limited to cultural products or broad topics such as religion or gender in the Arab World, she starts her semester with sessions defining culture and introducing some notions of intercultural communication. The end goal was to enable students to develop an understanding that cultural practices such as dress codes, eating times, and holiday traditions, for example, in any culture are relative

and not static. These practices differ from one country to another and even from community to community within countries. Ann aims to bring her students to an understanding which would enable them to resist essentialism, engage in cultural comparisons, and explore both shared and unshared patterns and perspectives between cultures. To this end, Ann assigns some cultural topics in English at the beginning of each unit as an orientation to the cultural themes (i.e., school systems, presenting condolences, etc.) in the chapter. The topics do not always align with the textbook chapters. This orientation allows students to research various perspectives on an array of cultural topics on their own and write a reflection in English. After the students post their reflections, the students share and discuss their thoughts first in small groups and then as a whole class. In these discussions, Ann would ask leading questions that counter the ethnocentric and unidimensional view of culture. In this regard, Ann noted:

I think my overall goal is to have [students] see how cultural practices are created because there are cultural practices that we want to change in our own society. And if you see them as repeated, then you can do that. For example, maybe you would want to change cultural practices that are racist or associate Arabs with terrorism and things like this. (Ann, Interview 1- April 2019)

To achieve her goal of instilling the variable and context-based understanding of culture in her students, Ann draws on a variety of internet resources that represent cultural knowledge and practices from different countries and backgrounds within the countries. While it is important to learn about specific cultural knowledge about holiday practices whether it is for Muslims, Christians or Jews, Ann stresses the importance of understanding that these practices, even if they are repeated, shared, and differ from nation to nation. When she joined her current institution, “many of the cultural assignments were focused on describing cultural products, such as songs and historical

sites.” (Ann, Teaching portfolio). Part of her efforts to implement a cultural component that is based on enhancing multiple perspectives, in her Arabic language teaching, was inviting Arab students from her university to expose her students to different cultural perspectives than their own.

Ann’s approach to intercultural teaching builds on genre-based pedagogy which encompasses both language and culture objectives through modeling a text (i.e., discussing and analyzing text structure, context, and language). Modeling helps students understand the types of relationships between speakers and the context in a conversation, for example, affect the nature of interactions. By examining various texts ranging from YouTube videos to hashtags on social media posts in class, students build new understandings of how cultures differ from one Arab country to another, but even within individual communities in each country. For Ann, these understandings can develop as students become aware that cultural categories, whether they are racial or religious, are not fixed; rather, they are generated through performances and interactions.

5.3.2.4 Harry: Raising Awareness About Arab Cultural Diversity

For Harry, teaching culture entails assigning students tasks in the form of skits, role plays, or discussions of cultural practices after viewing videos or researching a cultural topic. Harry addresses culture in his classes in two keyways: informally and formally. The informal way consists of presenting short videos every morning as the students enter the classroom. These videos target early bird students and aim to explore various aspects of Arab cultures informally. Each video viewing is usually accompanied by a brief informal group discussion. The formal way of integrating culture in the classroom is through weekly reflections that students write as a response to a prompt

requiring them to research an array of different topics on Arab cultures. These reflections serve as the ten cultural journals which students share in an online forum throughout the semester. The journal makes 15% of the whole course grade. The prompts ask leading questions about the authenticity of the resources and the perspectives and stances of the author(s). The topics of the culture portfolio discussions include music, food, geography, ecology, dress codes, politics, religion, ethnicity, and linguistic minorities in the Arab World.

For Harry, the cultural learning goals aim:

to get students to think about different topics, bring their ideas to class to share with their colleagues. The end goal is for students to be aware of the large amount of diversity in geography, history, languages, ethnicity, and political systems in the Arab World. (Harry, Interview 2 - April, 2019)

In addition to requiring and grading the weekly reflections, Harry includes cultural assessments in his tests and final exams. The test prompts do not ask about facts or cultural products. Instead, they ask students to discuss diversity and provide evidence against the essentialist views and the monolithic perspective of Arab cultures. Below is an example of a prompt, from a final exam, which demonstrates the integration of culture in students' assessment:

7. Culture (10 points) This semester you are taking a geography course and one of your classmates, Max, insists that “all Arabs are the same” and that “even though there are a lot of countries in the Middle East, there is not really any difference between them.” A couple people have challenged him, saying this is an oversimplification, but Max says he’ll only be convinced if someone can cite specific evidence. Help inform the discussion by providing two different cultural topics that for which the facts differ from place to place in the Arab world, giving a brief description of each topic in two different places. (Harry, Arabic 101. Final Exam 2019)

5.3.2.5 Juliette: Listening Portfolios: Music, Poetry, and Film

Juliette understands culture as products, which was evident in the topics that she focuses on in class. In her teaching statement, Juliette writes:

I offer a far-reaching but accessible introduction to Arab culture and society... to enable students to connect with the subject matter deeply and authentically.
(Juliette - teaching statement)

This broad statement does not clarify how students can engage with the “subject matter” in a deeper and authentic manner. However, in her teaching sessions, Juliette brings in music, film, calligraphy, arts, literature, and food. Here, we can notice a focus on the cultural products that equate culture with history, literature, film, and music, which are all part of the view of culture as the “big C” culture. Juliette assigns cultural tasks to her students through a “listening portfolio.” The purpose of the listening portfolio for her second-year Arabic students is:

to improve [your] listening comprehension skills and [your] understanding of socio-cultural and historical aspects of the Arabic-speaking world. It is the aim of this portfolio to encourage [your] engagement with the Arabic language outside of the classroom in ways that are exciting and meaningful to [you]. (Juliette, Listening portfolio - 2018)

Possible listening sources include news segments, Arabic music concerts, films, TV shows, audiobooks/ stories in Arabic, or a conversation in Arabic with a native speaker. The audio or video files should be 30-60 minutes long. The students are expected to write three journal entries as a response. Each response can be written in English (250 words) or in Arabic (100 words). In the entries, students should describe the event that they watched or listened to, address their takeaways from the activity that they conducted, and

share their thoughts about aspects of Arab culture that are specific to the type of the activity they have participated in.

However, she engages advanced-level students in reading and translating poetry. Juliette grades the listening portfolios, which count as 9% of the total course grade. In addition to the culture portfolios, Juliette introduces poetry and music in her classes. She taught a whole course on Arabic poetry given her specialization in Arabic literature. Her introduction to Arab American poets and poetry was not limited to discussing the text. She also invites students to translate poems into English and engage with the poets' descendants through visits and interviews.

In sum, Juliette introduces Arab culture through activities that focus primarily on listening or viewing a set of files that represent culture as knowledge of products that she shares with her students.

5.3.2.6 Sarah: Culture in the Textbook

Although the textbook Sarah uses does not offer the types of cultural knowledge that she wanted to expose her students to, she still sticks to it. In addition to the textbook, she offers other cultural activities from online resources, but does not necessarily assess her students' cultural knowledge. One of the ways she introduces culture activities was through music and songs. For Sarah, songs can serve as a tool for activating basic vocabulary and narrating a story through the description of the events in a song. For Sarah, songs are authentic sources which she finds on YouTube and uses as an alternative to what she called "contrived" videos from the textbook, that were filmed in some parts of the Arab World. Therefore, using the staged stories in the textbook and various videos from YouTube are two of the ways she introduces culture in her classes.

It seems that that showing staged videos from the textbook and YouTube videos to her classes was an individual initiative that Sarah takes to integrate culture in her classrooms. In the interview, she noted that the faculty do not have opportunities to “digress” from the textbook. Furthermore, she does not evaluate cultural understanding:

We do not give them cultural assignments or grade them on culture. I don’t really have like a reference for how that would even work, but would love to learn about, like to have a model for what that would look like. (Sarah, Interview 1 - May 2019)

Sarah states that she does not have a model for how to teach culture. It is her belief that language and culture go side by side as evidenced by her teaching statement where she claims that “in [her] classroom, language and culture reinforce each other.” What this means is that Sarah admits that integrating language and culture in teaching is of importance to students. However, she had not been trained to teach and assess both language and culture.

In sum, Sarah teaches culture as a product through songs and videos of physical spaces in the Arab World from YouTube (which she considers authentic sources) and staged videos from the textbook. All of these activities, supplemented with discussions of what is a normal/not normal practices in the Arab cultural contexts would enable her students to have a taste of what Arab culture is like or looks like. An example of what is normal in Arab culture would be extending the greeting to asking how all family members are doing or receiving five or more missed calls in a row. However, student engagement with Arab culture was articulated in her teaching philosophy statement more than in the interviews with her.

5.4 Chapter summary

This chapter presented the two findings uncovered in this study. Findings were organized according to the research questions 1 and 2. Data from the online survey questionnaires, individual interviews and teaching documents revealed research participants' perceptions vis-a-vis their experiences as learners of Arabic, teacher trainees, and classroom practitioners. As typical of qualitative research, the participants' voices were included in the report through extensive samples of quotations from the data gathered. The purpose of using statements from the participants was to provide an accurate representation of their realities as described in their own words.

The findings addressed the teachers' goals for teaching and their teaching approaches. The participants differed in their teaching approaches. The approaches included flipped classrooms, genre pedagogy, task-based learning, flipped classrooms, and "whatever works." The teaching goals target "teaching Arabic better" and building communities of learners. It is noteworthy that the teachers aim to provide better learning experiences for their students. In term of daily routines, teaching, lesson design, and service take a larger portion of the teachers' time. Research was mentioned only lightly by three participants.

The first finding of this study (which is related to the first and second research questions) is that some teachers found it difficult to define culture, which affects how they teach it. Some of the participants, however, managed to define culture in different ways: as difference, as everything, and as a filter. What was interesting about this finding was that most of the participants surmised about the definition of culture. One participant was able to describe culture as a filter through which language passes, as a puzzle, and as

peoples' ways of life. This definition may be reminiscent of the likely rich personal and educational background of the participant in comparison to the other participants.

The second finding addressed approaches to teaching culture. For most of the participants, their teaching of culture takes mainly the form of what is called “culture Fridays”, that is a weekly assignment that potentially aims at exposing the students to cultural content and diversity through culture portfolios. In the survey questionnaire responses, the teachers consider language and culture as bounded, but in their classroom work, culture tends to be peripheral to language functions and may not be integrated all the time when teaching language skills. All in all, the goals beyond language instruction for the incorporation of culture include combating stereotypes and exposing students to the diversity of the Arab world. Another important point is using culture classes as a “hook” of sorts to spark students' interest in Arabic and draw them in.

Chapter 6 will introduce the findings related to questions 3 and 4. These questions sought an understanding of NN Arabic identity development, positionings, and contributions.

CHAPTER 6

TEACHER IDENTITIES

SELF-POSITIONINGS AND ASSIGNED IDENTITIES

This chapter explores the participants' self-positioning and how they are perceived by their students and faculty in their respective institutions. In other words, it describes the identities that the teachers assign to themselves and those ascribed to them by others. The discussion concludes with an account of the teachers' contributions to the Arabic language classroom in comparison to the contribution of N Arabic teachers.

6.1- Self-positionings

As table 6.1 shows, to some extent, there is a sense of consensus about the identities that the six participants enact.

Table 6.1: Participants' self-positioning (data from the survey questionnaires)

Adam	Ann	Harry	Jim	Juliette	Sarah
Teacher	Teacher	Teacher	Role	Teacher	Teacher
Role model	Role model	Interpreter	model	Role model	Role
Interpreter	Interpreter	of culture	Interpreter	Interpreter	model
of culture	of culture	Continuing	of culture	of culture	Interpreter
Continuing	Continuing	learner of	Continuing	Continuing	of culture
learner of	learner of	Arabic	learner of	learner of	Continuing
Arabic	Arabic	NN Arabic	Arabic	Arabic	learner of
NN Arabic	Researcher-	teacher	NN Arabic	NN Arabic	Arabic
teacher	practitioner		teacher	teacher	
				Imposter	
				Ambassador	

However, the interviews disclosed other identities and differences between the teachers.

The following discussion illustrates identification differences in terms of levels of

confidence, anxieties in the classroom, and interactions with faculty in their departments.

6.1.1 Adam: Highly Confident with Low-levels of Anxiety

Adam entered the Arabic teaching profession to make Arabic language teaching better. He was not satisfied with his experience as a learner of Arabic and strives to make his classroom engaging and lively. This does not mean that, as a teacher, he is a perfectionist. However, he thinks “things should be perfect [or] should work at a minimum level of functionality” (Interview 2 - May 2019).

In the online survey, Adam indicated that he perceives himself as a teacher, a role model, an interpreter of culture, a continuing learner of Arabic, and a NN Arabic teacher. Nevertheless, he does not view himself as an imposter, which is an issue that some NN language teachers struggle with. This view can be explained by his high degree of confidence as a white male. He remarked, “I am an overly confident person. I feel like I have a white man +10 to confidence” (Interview 2, May 2019). This excess of confidence enables him to take the initiative to bring changes to his Arabic program to make teaching Arabic better. His understanding of teaching is beyond the traditional view of filling students’ brains with knowledge. Adam understands teaching as “a guidance process of, [I] am leading you to the sources and texts and things that will get you further along” (Interview 2, May 2019). With this view of teaching, Adam indexes two identities: a guide and a leader. As a guide, Adam shows his students where and how to find resources to learn Arabic. As a leader, his students can view him as a role model because he himself was a learner of Arabic. Additionally, they can see him as a commander whose path they can follow to achieve their goals of reaching a higher level of fluency and proficiency in Arabic.

However, despite his overly confident attitude, Adam still feels he needs to be more fluent to become an expert: “I wish I had more fluency in general to make myself more expert” (Interview 2, May 2019). Here, fluency refers to ease of speaking and accurate pronunciation. Adam does not seem to have issues with lower Arabic classes more than he has with higher-level classes, specifically when it comes to learning and teaching an Arabic dialect. His sense of discomfort and anxiety seems to stem from three key causes: having heritage students in his classes and whether or not he was teaching well or not. First, anxiety caused by the presence of a heritage student in class arises when his students ask a question that Adam cannot answer. In this case, Adam views heritage students as experts in the language and/or culture, which may be a threat to his authority and question his knowledge as a teacher. Second, Adam places himself as a teacher who was always monitoring his teaching and questioning his ability to teach well, given his limited fluency in Arabic dialects. Viewed from a different angle, this positioning may refer to Adam’s awareness of the differences between himself and native teachers who he frames as having “a much greater knowledge about culture and language” (Interview 2, May 2019). For this reason, he feels that he always has to prove his ability to teach well (Oulbeid, 2018). As Adam expands on the causes of his anxiety, he reflected on the importance of growing up in a culture to easily understand cultural patterns, practices, and frames of reference. He illustrates the importance of this cultural knowledge by providing the example of the show “Family Guy,” which he describes as hinting at “random references to popular items” (Interview 2 - May 2019) in American society that no non-American individual would find entertaining.

In sum, although Adam experiences some anxiety in the Arabic language classroom as a teacher and when communicating with native speakers, he enjoys excessive confidence from being a role model, an interpreter of culture, and a continuing learner of Arabic. All of these attributes highlight his awareness of what he needs to do to be a successful teacher.

6.1.2 Ann: “I am a Researcher-practitioner”

In the survey questionnaire, Ann identified herself as a teacher, a role model, an interpreter of culture, and a researcher-practitioner. She does not view herself as a NN teacher or as an imposter. Although she used to be concerned and anxious in the past, Ann is not worried about her NN teacher status even though her students may question it. Over the years, she has developed a different perspective about native-speakerism from reading research from TESOL (Teaching English for Speakers of Other Languages) literature. According to Ann, TESOL is “more accepting of non-native speaker teachers than teaching Arabic is.” (Interview 1, April 2019). Her new perspective of native-speakerism lies in her awareness of her limited knowledge of Arabic language and culture, and how she reacts to her status. She uses this lack of knowledge as an opportunity to prove her ability to puzzle out her students’ questions using practical strategies with help from online resources. As a NN teacher, she stated:

some students will question me more... But I think my perspective on it has changed. And I have better ways of responding to the questioning. (Interview 1 - April 2019)

This attitude spotlights her confidence in addressing challenging inquiries from her students.

Another aspect of her perspective resides in her ability to predict her students' knowledge because, unlike native Arabic teachers, she had experienced being a student of Arabic in the US. Additionally, another reason for her different perspective on NN teachers was her engagement in research on language ideologies and how these ideologies prescribe how a language teacher should look and how they carry out their work. For example, in programs for "critical" language teachers, she has sometimes been mistaken for a teacher of Russian because of how she looks. Furthermore, outside of the classroom, when she introduces herself in a gathering saying, "I teach Arabic," she often gets a surprised look and the response: "YOU teach ARABIC!" Ann understands that such perceptions were due to language ideologies and she does not seem to worry about them anymore:

I think, through my research, having a better perspective on what are the racio-linguistics ideologies that led to this in the first place? And a lot of it can be traced back to colonialism and other harmful policies. So, I think having that perspective on it, I just don't mind anymore. (Ann, interview 1 - April 2019)

Thanks to this knowledge, Ann does not seem to be concerned about her status, although she was when she first started teaching Arabic. An indication of her confidence was that she was against labeling herself as a NN teacher.

In sum, Ann's awareness that she will never be able to know all the words and expressions in Arabic as well as all of the research she has read on native-speakerism and language ideologies enables her to lead her classes confidently and mostly overcome her anxieties as a NN teacher.

6.1.3 Harry: "I am not an Imposter: Arabic is MY language"

In the survey questionnaire, Harry perceives himself as a teacher, an interpreter of culture, a continuing learner of Arabic, and a NN teacher. He is strongly opposed to being an imposter. He rejects imposter syndrome claiming that he does not need justification for speaking Arabic:

I feel like Arabic is My language, right. I have a claim to it. And I think what made it possible is living in Morocco learning most of My Arabic from people who were not native speakers themselves. (Harry, Interview 1 – April 2019)

Harry learned Arabic in a region populated by “Imazighen,” aka pejoratively as Berbers, the indigenous nations of the Maghreb region in northwestern Africa before the expansion of Islam westward. The Amazigh populations learned Arabic from Arabs and converted to Islam. Having learned Arabic from Imazighen, Harry purports that he has a claim to the Arabic language because this experience helped him develop his view of the Arabic-speaking community as something independent of Arab ethnicity. Therefore, his claim to the language is because he participates in that community as do many millions of people in the Arab World who are not Arab.

In terms of being a NN Arabic teacher, Harry thought it could be an issue at the beginning of his career as a teacher. However, over the course of eight years, he realized that there is no knowledge gap between him and other native teachers, especially at the novice and intermediate levels he is teaching. Still, he reported in the interviews that he may be worried if he were to teach an advanced level culture course on a single topic in Arabic. Such a course would be challenging for him. Nevertheless, Harry does look at it as a challenge. He sees it as an opportunity for “academic training.” Therefore, Harry does not view NN teacher status as a barrier to teach Arabic. He acknowledges that he may not be bringing the same depth that NS teachers do, but he was confident enough to

claim that he can “give a different sort of depth in other ways” (Harry, Interview 1 – 04-11-2019). For this reason, he feels ready to teach any topic that is of interest to his students. With respect to his NN teacher status, Harry claims that there is no indication from his students that they consider his NNS status as a weakness.

At the same time, Harry positions himself as a guide and a linguist for learning a new sound system and a new alphabet. As a linguist, he is capable of explaining how to pronounce a particular sound and provide details about the organs of speech that students can use to pronounce that sound well. Additionally, as a guide, Harry can walk his students through the variety of ways he dealt with pronunciation and the tricks he used as a student. In both roles, Harry acts implicitly as a role model and an expert whose path students can emulate to learn better and to attain a certain level of proficiency in Arabic.

6.1.4 Jim: A Veteran, But Still a Permanent Full time Student

The answers to the online questionnaire indicated that Jim considers himself a role model, an interpreter of culture, a NN teacher, and a continuing learner of Arabic. In the interviews, Jim positions himself as “a fortunate, lucky, and rich man” who has the privilege of teaching Arabic. However, within this privilege lies the identity of a “permanent full time student.” As a teacher preparing his classes, Jim views himself as a learner completing homework:

Well, I see myself as a student and all the work that I do in my office of collecting materials, and transcribing or translating, or preparing lessons, all of this is my homework as a student. And so, this way, I am a permanent student of Arabic.
(Jim, Interview 1- April 2019)

He continues to identify with this status because he is surrounded by his NS teacher colleagues who are always ready to answer any of his questions. In fact, he considers

them his teachers. Additionally, compared to his NS teachers, he labels himself a “khawaga” (a foreigner) and he does not shy away from reaching out to his colleagues for assistance when needed.

In terms of his relationships with students, Jim portrays himself as a source of “good materials” for Arabic language learning. In this capacity, Jim serves as a “working person” and a representative (or an ambassador) of Arabic language and culture that he shares through materials from the internet which he refers to as “our textbook.” Overall, Jim feels “gratified” to be teaching Arabic and enjoys his self-positioning as a permanent full time student.

Contrary to his identity and status as a full time student, Jim positions himself as a veteran of studying Arabic. While commenting on his contribution to the Arabic language classroom, he described himself as a veteran who encountered many challenges during his journey as a learner of Arabic. In this respect, he pointed out:

I’ve been through so many difficulties in trying to understand Arabic, and I’ve fought many battles. I’m like a soldier who’s been wounded in my arms and legs and chest and head; everywhere, I have scars from trying to learn Arabic. Now I can anticipate the difficulties that my students will encounter. (Interview 1 - April 2019)

Jim reminds us that his ability to know when his students face challenges can be traced back to his experiences as an Arabic language learner and the difficulties he faced in the process. For this reason, he likens himself to a veteran. What is contradictory about Jim’s self-concept is that despite his many years of learning and teaching Arabic, he still does not think of himself as an expert. Instead, he views himself as a permanent full time student.

6.1.5 Juliette: “There are Times When I Feel I Will Never Measure up”

In the survey questionnaire, Juliette describes herself as an interpreter of culture, a continuing learner of Arabic, a non-native teacher, and an ambassador. One of Juliette’s salient self-attributes is positioning herself as a NN teacher, which causes her feelings of self-doubt. In her comment on her NN teacher status, Juliette noted:

I started my sophomore year of college. So, I don’t have any links at all to Arabic growing up. Zero. I didn’t grow up hearing it. When I started studying it I just knew what it looked like. I had no idea what it sounded like at all. So very much a non-native speaker of Arabic. (Interview 1 – May 2019)

As she expands on her experience, Juliette depicts how her status affects her confidence and self-perception. First, she showed signs of “humbleness” when she mentioned that she would never reach the level of proficiency in Arabic as she would have liked. Second, because of her NN speaker status, Juliette feels that despite her high level of comfort in teaching lower-level Arabic classes, she was still concerned about her fluency and lack of ease of communication, particularly when interacting in various dialects of Arabic. Juliette considers her struggle with her identity as a NN Arabic teacher to be “depressing, very, very demoralizing at times.” In the first interview, she narrated, “[T]here are many times when I feel like I will never measure up. I’ll just never be in the same league.” Perhaps, Juliette was imagining herself here in comparison to “ideal” N Arabic teachers. However, despite her struggle with the NNS status and her limited knowledge of language and culture, Juliette persists because she enjoys teaching and describes herself as “a way better teacher than most teachers, perhaps than even native speaker teachers.” Juliette acknowledged that she acquired many other languages (French, Italian, Japanese, and German) and she never felt the degree of complexity that

she faced when learning Arabic. She referred to her experience learning Arabic as the *ultimate challenge*:

When I think about why Arabic, I was kind of moving through. I was like, okay German, Italian next, next, next. Nothing was hard. You know what I'm saying? It was all kind of ... When I got to Arabic I was like, OKAYYY, I guess I'm going to be here for a while. It's the ultimate challenge. So, it's the ultimate challenge, especially when you get to the dialects. (Juliette, Interview 1 – May 2019)

In summary, Juliette believes that one of the advantages of being a NN teacher is inspiring students to learn Arabic by walking them through the difficulties of learning Arabic as a student and addressing the strategies she used to deal with them. However, the main obstacle is her limited linguistic and cultural knowledge, which make her task "hard" as a teacher. Nevertheless, she does not lose hope because she finds it beautiful that she can commit to improving her skills and she has her "whole lifetime to get better at it."

6.1.6 Sarah: NN Status Not an Issue, But A strength

In the online questionnaire, Sarah positions herself as a teacher, a role model, an interpreter of culture, and a continuing learner of Arabic. It looks interesting that she does not view herself as a NN teacher.

The strength of Sarah's confidence was discernable in her narration. She does not feel distant or different from native speakers as a teacher of Arabic even though she is aware that her Arabic skills are not "amazing." She was humble. When she was a graduate teaching assistant, there was an incident when a N Arabic faculty member looked down on Sarah and other teaching assistants and alluded to them not having an advanced level of Arabic. Sarah considered this faculty member to be biased, wanting to

draw lines between N and NN teachers. However, in her recent position as a part time lecturer, she has had a totally different experience with her department chair. The chair is a N Arabic professor who brought her into the group and invited her to collaborate with him on various writing projects.

In general, Sarah does not consider her NNS status as an issue. On the contrary, she frames it as a strength, even though she does not think highly of herself:

I honestly believe, I don't think I am like amazing in Arabic and I don't think I sound like a native speaker. (Sarah, Interview 1 – May 20219)

Sarah tends to derive her confidence from the unique insights and perspectives she would bring to an Arabic program that comprises a mix of N and NN Arabic teachers.

Additionally, one of the principles that boosts her confidence can be inferred from her statement: “I am not a NS of Arabic, but I am teaching it.”

In terms of her self-concept, Sarah used to feel very nervous when she tried to speak in Arabic, but she has grown comfortable in her role as NN Arabic teacher. As a student of Arabic, she had a “positive experience” abroad living in Egypt for a year. She came back with a strong confidence that made her less concerned about her fluency and knowledge of Arabic language and cultures. This experience enabled her to feel more comfortable about her Arabic. However, as a doctoral student at the time of this study, she noticed that because she was not teaching Arabic, she felt that her Arabic skills were deteriorating. In her classroom, she turns students' inquiries that she cannot answer into teaching moments for her class. She tells her students that there is no harm in not knowing how to address a question as long as one knows how to look for the answer either online or asking other colleagues. As she mentioned when she was describing her

classroom routines, Sarah tells her students that the classroom is like a “laboratory” where the teacher and the students experiment with the language. This attitude teaches students that the classroom is a space where both the teacher and students can learn together as a community.

Overall, Sarah positions herself as a teacher who is both humble and confident about her teaching abilities. She sees her NN teacher status, not as a problem, but rather as a strength. Although she still considers herself a continuing learner of Arabic, she claims to have a contribution to the Arabic language classroom as a role model for her students.

In summary, this discussion demonstrated that the participants in this study enact various self-identities depending on their personal experiences, the amount of confidence they have, and their attitudes towards teaching. Figure 6.1 below summarizes the participants’ self-positionings in this study:



Figure 6.1 - NN Arabic teachers’ self-positioning

The following section addresses the participants' perceptions of their relationships with their students.

6.2 Teacher-student Relationships and Student Feedback on Teaching

In Arabic language classes, just like in most less-commonly taught languages, students tend to know their language instructors well. Classes are usually smaller in size and teachers and students have multiple classes over the years. Most of the participants in this study addressed their relationships with their students but were hesitant to discuss how their students perceive them as teachers.

6.2.1 Adam: Friendly Relationships and “Stockholm syndrome”

Adam stressed the importance of building rapport with his students and described his relationships with them as “good.” To build this rapport, Adam uses more English in class and shows a flexible attitude with course work. As the Arabic program chair, this flexibility attracts more students to his program. In terms of class work and attendance, Adam is flexible because he treats his students as responsible adults. He trusts his students to take most quizzes at home. In general, the relationships between Adam and his students can be described as friendly with a sense of humor in class as a motivating factor.

Adam is unsure about how his students perceive him as an Arabic instructor. When I asked Adam about how he feels his students view him, he replied on three occasions: “I don’t know.” According to students’ feedback that he received at the end of each semester, the students ranked him as “best teacher” and his class as their “favorite class.” In his first-year classes, he displays an overwhelming sense of excitement and

energy to motivate his students to learn. He usually encourages his students to reach out to him outside of class hours, but he does not enforce this policy and, therefore, students rarely go to his office hours. When they do appear in his office, it is usually to seek advice about scholarships. As a result, his energy fades away after the first semester.

Even though Adam could not unravel how his students view him as a teacher, he draws from his experiences as a student who had a NN Arabic teacher. As a student, Adam saw in his Arabic teacher a source of inspiration and motivation to follow. Currently, as a teacher, he does not know whether his students see him as inspiring or not. Additionally, he is not even aware if they can see the difference between N and NN teachers. At times, he feels as if his students end up appreciating him even though they may not feel the same when they first entered his classroom. Adam likens this experience to the metaphor “Stockholm syndrome,” which he explains as “when people take someone as hostage and then the person ends up liking their captor” (Adam, Interview 2 – May 2019). Typically, languages like Arabic tend to be seen as hard to learn and, thus, Adam thinks that his students feel anxious going into the classroom. However, after one semester, some students end up feeling it is worthwhile putting in the effort to learn the language, and therefore appreciate the role Adam plays in their success. All in all, Adam builds good relationships with his students even though he may, at times, feel unsure how they view him.

6.2.2 Ann: Good Relationships and Appreciation of Teaching

Ann enjoys close relationships with her students. During her time in class, Ann spends time talking about herself and her background. Additionally, she engages with her

students outside of the classroom by participation in extracurricular activities. Therefore, she generally establishes “good relationships” with them.

Concerning how her students view her as a teacher, Ann reported that she often receives positive feedback, her students enjoy her teaching, and they show interest in continuing their Arabic learning experiences. However, some students may, at times, express their wishes of having a NS as a teacher at the beginning of a new semester, but eventually they change their minds or shift their attitudes over the course of the semester and stop making the request. Ann understands the common trends of favoring NS teachers and she explains that such attitudes are “an ideological standpoint that is rooted in how we view language and the language ideologies we have in the US” (Ann, Interview 2 – May 2019). In addition to their appreciation of Ann’s teaching, some students reach out to Ann to discuss sensitive topics that they may not feel comfortable bringing up with a NS teacher. For example, one of the questions that students ask Ann is about studying and living abroad in the Arab World as a gay or lesbian student.

In summary, Ann’s reflections on her students’ perceptions of her as a teacher show two main points. On the one hand, while some students buy into the ideology of the NS teacher as the “best” teacher, their attitudes may shift by the end of the first semester. On the other hand, some would feel more comfortable discussing personal concerns and sensitive issues with Ann rather than with a N Arabic teacher.

6.2.3 Harry: Friendly Relationships and Positive Evaluations

In the interviews, Harry describes his relationships with his students as “friendly, a good relationship, ..., we joke.” He commented that he assigns a lot of homework to his

students, which some students complain about. Harry is not offended by their objections. He considers their reaction to the amount of homework as a sign of respect, honesty, and directness. Harry commented that he has a positive attitude and follows a strict policy, but is strict only to a certain degree. His flexibility can be seen in his responses to his students' individual concerns. He tends to work with struggling students and sometimes makes exceptions to his course policies.

Concerning how his students view him as a teacher, Harry mentioned that his students' evaluations do not comment on his NN Arabic teacher status:

I never got any comments about like this guy is not a native speaker. Why is he teaching an Arabic class? Never in my life. And then, it's not they didn't get a chance. I mean I've done a pile of like 100 different student evaluations and no one's ever mentioned a single time: to say well, I wish I'd had a teacher who actually grew up in the Arab World. (Harry: Interview 2 - April 2019)

It seems that Harry is not concerned about native-speakerism. Therefore, he understands that his students might judge him initially, when they meet him for the first time in class. Regardless, he does not seem to worry about such attitudes because he is confident as a teacher. His confidence was noticeable in his extensive discussion of native-speakerism which he does not subscribe to.

When I asked him how his students perceive him as a NN teacher, Harry replied that he did not really know. However, he added that when he joined his current institution, his students had a NS teacher who "was not playing the teacher." As a chemist of Arab descent, this teacher did not have any language teacher training. Therefore, some of Harry's students experienced what it was like to have a NS teacher with no training. In their anonymous evaluations of his teaching, Harry explains, the

students did not comment on his NNS status or his inability to teach like a NS teacher. According to Harry, the students do not seem to feel they are missing anything. On the contrary, their feedback states: “I learned a lot more in this class than in previous classes.” Harry explains that the positive feedback from his students can be attributed to his training in language teaching.

On the cultural level, Harry recounts that his students recognize him as a source of varied and multicultural perspectives, through his experiences. For Harry, the NS teacher may focus more on cultural practices and perspectives that pertain to their country or region of origin. In this regard, Harry narrates that he has high school students enrolled in his college classes. These students have a former teacher of Arabic who was from Syria. When he assigned his students a test on culture about comparing various cultural patterns and practices in the Arab World, Harry found that they provided specific examples from Syria and from Morocco which Harry focuses on in his classes. What this account means to Harry was that a mix of N and NN teachers could be beneficial for students.

Finally, to prove that students do not choose their courses based on who teaches them, Harry provided the example of classroom enrollment selections. When he was a graduate student, his program had a blend of N and NN teachers of Arabic. However, students were not inclined to choose their courses based on the name of the instructor. Rather, courses were selected depending on the days and times that fit students’ schedules and specifically, which classes were not held early in the mornings. Harry sums up his students’ impressions by asking me to search sites for rating professors online and check whether students’ statements describe teachers like Harry as “not

knowing anything” (Interview 2 – April 2019). His argument is that such statements would not be found in such sites. Although he does not expect these statements, he responds to the ideology of native-speakerism in this way: “They [NN teachers] really did not know anything initially, but it is a lot harder to get there if you don’t know everything” (Interview 2 – April 2019). This statement shows Harry’s self-assurance and confidence that he can lead Arabic classes without worrying about his NN status.

Overall, Harry was outspoken about his relationships with his students. He does not seem to be concerned that his students may question his NN teacher status. The evidence is his own experience as a student. According to him, most students do not choose their courses based on whether the teacher’s name is Fatima or John. Additionally, similar to Adam’s assessment, Harry believes that some language students, especially at the beginner’s levels, may not even have a sense of the difference between a N and NN teacher.

6.2.4 Jim: Collaboration and Learning with Students

Jim was indecisive and unable to describe his relationships with his students. However, he recognized that his students are conscious of his status. He stated, “I am not an Arab and I don’t know everything, and I have problems with the language frequently.” Jim is honest with his students and does not shy away from seeking their assistance with audio transcriptions in Arabic for example. His request for help is a sign of his treatment of his students as responsible adults and as equal colleagues that he can count on. For this reason, his relationships with them can be interpreted as one of collaboration in understanding teaching materials. After all, Jim’s own self-perception as a permanent full time student of Arabic confirms this relationship of collaboration.

As for how the students depict Jim and his teaching, Jim brought up course evaluations and feedback. Jim qualifies these evaluations as either favorable or unfavorable. On the positive side, Jim is described as a role model who is conscious of what it means to be a student in class. Additionally, he is aware of student learning difficulties and knows how to address them in a clear and understandable way. However, on the negative side, Jim contends that some students may say:

What's wrong with this guy? He does not know the language well-enough! Why don't you give us a teacher who is an expert, a native teacher? (Interview 2 – May 2019)

In sum, Jim enjoys collegial relationships with his students. These relationships are based on mutual understanding and collaboration. Nevertheless, his students' perceptions of his teaching can be either positive as a role model or negative as a non-expert teacher.

6.2.5 Juliette: "Close Relationships in the Classroom"

Juliette described her relationship with her students as centered on friendship, mentorship, and therapy. When Juliette was a graduate student at a large institution with over 40,000 students, she noticed that Arabic classes were the smallest. Therefore, she believes that the relationships between the students and instructors were "the most intimate." When students start learning Arabic, they usually bond with their first teacher. Teachers and students learn more about each other over the course of their time studying Arabic and, in some cases, over the course of the students' undergraduate education. One of the aspects of these relationships is that students seem to feel that their language instructors know more about their characteristics, their insecurities, and their needs. Consequently, students of Arabic tend to seek out their Arabic teachers for letters of

references for study abroad scholarships and job applications. Juliette confided that even though she could not address the applicant's qualification if they are a science major, for example, she could at least describe in detail their personality and behavior.

However, Juliette warns against treating students as friends because that relationship may become complicated with respect to the student's expectations about the instructor's availability. Additionally, the friend relationship can be problematic for the teacher when grading her students' work. Yet, Juliette arranges a grading plan that is impartial through anonymous grading.

With reference to how her students perceive her as a teacher of Arabic, Juliette responded that her students' views can be described in two key ways. First, in elementary Arabic classes, the students perceive her as an inspiring teacher who had gone through the process of learning Arabic as an adult and is now able to teach it. This perception is encouraging for both Juliette and her students. For her, she feels as if she is "put on a pedestal of: Wow! look at what she was able to do!" As for her students, they see her as a role model. Second, with advanced classes, Juliette acknowledged that her students view her as unable to provide satisfying answers all the time. She feels that her "imperfect" explanations arise from her limited language abilities. However, reflecting on this last point, Juliette noted that her feelings may be just "in [her] head... or... a projection of [her] own insecurity on the students' evaluations of [her]. (Interview 2, 05-28-2019)

Overall, Juliette reported that her close relationship with her students leads to "a deeper mentor sort of relationship." Students are inquisitive about the details of her trajectory and seek her advice about their future paths.

6.2.6 Sarah: Connecting with Students on an Individual Level

Sarah has an easygoing personality that enables her to attract and connect with students both inside and outside of the classroom. Sometimes, she even attempts to find ways to connect with them on individual levels when she discovers that she and her students share the same interests or have the same hobby, favorite color, or even birth date. She remarked:

I like the challenge of finding one way to connect with at least every ... at least one way to connect with every student at the individual level during class. Finding something that makes them tick or makes them laugh or a point of common interest. (Interview 2 – June 2019)

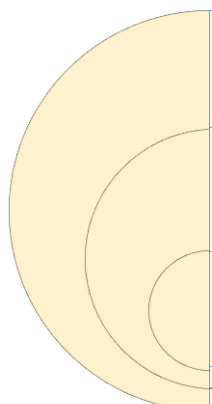
The purpose of these connections is to care for the students in the classroom, make them feel at home, and encourage them to continue learning Arabic.

As a part of her personality, Sarah connects with her students in various ways. At the beginning of each semester, she requires each student to meet with her individually to discuss their personal goals and how to make “the semester successful.” She also exposes her students to culture by playing music in the classroom and bringing Middle Eastern treats. Some students discover and taste these treats for the first time. Additionally, she attends cultural activities hosted by the Arabic language house, in which she served as the faculty member, to eat with and engage her students in conversations. These conversations also enable students to use Arabic with other campus members beyond the classroom.

With respect to how her students describe her as a teacher of Arabic, Sarah stated that her students do not judge her. Conversely, she believes that seeing a person with “a reasonable level of proficiency” in Arabic can be a motivating factor and could inspire

her students to continue their Arabic learning journey. On the flip side, Sarah makes it explicit that she is learning alongside her students. Therefore, she does not pretend ownership of knowledge. When her students ask her a question that she cannot answer, she turns the situation into a teaching moment. She acknowledges that she does not know the answer, but that she will find it and bring it to the next class. In this way, she imparts in her students' humbleness and honesty. She mentioned her classroom is like a laboratory where both teacher and students experiment with the language and learn together. It is experiences of this kind that stimulate student interest and contribute to desires to continue learning Arabic beyond the elementary level and empower teachers to continue their teaching endeavors. In addition to their relationships with students, teachers connect with other faculty in their work environments. The types of relationships with students, Arabic and non-Arabic faculty are displayed in figure 6.2.

RQ 3: Teacher Relationships



Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Stockholm Syndrome” • Positive Evaluations
Arabic Faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support & Collaboration • Intimidation
Non-Arabic Faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support • Admiration & Astonishment • Isolation

Figure 6.2: Participants' relationships with students, Arabic, and non-Arabic faculty.

6.3 Relationships with Arabic and Non-Arabic Faculty

The following is a description of the types of relationships Arabic and non-Arabic language faculty have with the six participants in their institutions. Except for Jim, Sarah and Juliette, the other three participants work in very small Arabic departments with three teachers or less. Adam is an Associate Professor of Arabic who works with one Continuing Lecturer. Ann is an Associate Professor of Arabic with one Lecturer and one part-time Instructor. Harry is the only Arabic teacher in his institution. Therefore, for some of the participants in this study, there is insufficient contact with Arabic teaching faculty. The attitudes of Arabic and non-Arabic faculty toward these teachers differ from one context to another, with most attitudes being favorable and positive.

6.3.1 Adam: Close and Collegial Relationships

Adam's relationship with his Arabic speaking colleagues was that of a mentor, a trainer, and a community member. In 2015, Adam started in his current institution as the only Arabic faculty member. He used to have Fulbright Language Teaching Assistants (FLTAs) brought from abroad to fill the needs of the program. These assistants were usually native speakers of Arabic with no training. Because of the lack of training, Adam declined to host new assistants and started hiring part time and emergency faculty, which he had to train as well. When he was on parental leave, he was able to hire a part time faculty member for one year. After that, he received a grant to have a Continuing Lecturer. The lecturer left the position after a year. To keep this position filled, he hired a NN Arabic colleague who ended up serving as the permanent continuing lecturer. Adam hired this lecturer for his skills in instructional design and lesson planning. Adam remarked:

I try to treat him as an equal... he knows a lot about instructional design, that's one of the reasons I hired him. Because I want someone who can really think through instructional design. That's where his strength, lesson planning is really, his lesson plans are amazing... So, we know each other well and we're buddies. (Interview 2 – May 2019)

This remark shows that Adam and his colleague are close friends and their friendship extends beyond their programs. They socialize and spend time together as families.

Concerning non-Arabic faculty, he enjoys collegial relationships with most faculty in Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures Department, which he described as having an “awful name.” Adam is very active in departmental meetings and committees. Therefore, he is very well-known to other language faculty. When I asked him about the kinds of reactions from this faculty when they find out that he teaches Arabic, he responded:

Oh, you get a mixture of fascination and interest. I actually, I was just thinking about this the other day. I don't like telling people what I do because then I always get weird reactions. Oh, what do you do? I am a professor at the university. If they ask me what, I tell them, but if not I'm just like, I'm a professor, and leave it there. (Interview 2 - May 2019)

Some other faculty would comment that Arabic is refreshing and really important.

6.3.2 Ann: Between Acceptance and Astonishment

Ann enjoys the company of her colleagues on both a personal and professional level. As the Director of the Arabic program, Ann teaches classes with two Lecturers, one full time and one part time. She described their relationships this way:

We have very close relationships. The three of us who teach Arabic... And I mean, we hang out socially like our kids are about the same age. So, we hang out

a lot outside of work. And like I said, we co-teach classes. So, we have to work together to develop these [lesson plans]. (Interview 2 – May 2019)

Ann has intentionally built close relationships with the other faculty members because she wants to set up a program where collaboration is key to building a stronger Arabic program. Ann and her team plan lessons and tests together, share materials on Dropbox, and hold regular meetings to reflect on their teaching and student progress. Ann commented that she and the two faculty members teaching Arabic share similar views on teaching and collaboration. Therefore, they work together through coordinating and co-teaching classes.

Ann expressed her dissatisfaction with the name of her language department, which, in her view, has a negative connotation because this label may entail that all languages other than English are “alien.” Her program is housed in a department named “Foreign Languages.” Ann preferred that the department be named “World Languages.” The program offers eight different languages in addition to Arabic. But she does not witness a great deal of coordination with other language faculty because they focus more on literature and not language teaching. Additionally, their teaching styles are different from her own:

There is not really much coordination between different language groups, which I haven’t really pressed for either. I mean part of it is I think some of these other languages are still taught in like very traditional ways. And so, they might not. I don’t know. I mean it just may not be a fruitful endeavor to try to coordinate across languages. (Interview 2 - May 2019)

It seems here that Ann does not have similar teaching outlooks as other language faculty. For this reason, Ann and her Arabic teaching colleagues sought opportunities to

be active outside of their language department. For example, they participate with another group of teachers to develop General Education classes to make them more focused on racial and social justice.

In general, the faculty in her language department know that Ann teaches Arabic and, therefore, accept her since there are quite a few NNS teachers of other languages in the department. However, when she introduces herself as a teacher of Arabic outside of her department, some faculty react with astonishment. Ann explains such a reaction as rising from “racialized perceptions and language ideologies” of how an Arabic speaker should look like:

I think it’s like a racialized perception of who looks like an Arabic speaker ... It’s like a larger structure but it’s definitely like, like...Again this goes back to these language ideologies. You know who speaks languages and things like this. But I think it has to do specifically with what they perceive an Arabic speaking person looking like and what I look like more than being a non-native speaker language teacher. I don’t think I would get the same reaction if I said I taught Spanish or French or German. (Interview 2 – May 2019)

The quote above sums up the attitudes of other colleagues outside of the language department, which can be described as racialized attitudes. It seems that the fact that a white American like Ann was teaching a less commonly taught language like Arabic may have brought about these attitudes.

6.3.3 Harry: A Supportive Group of Faculty

As the only Arabic teaching faculty in his institution, Harry remarked that he has “a supportive group of faculty” from other language departments, such as French and

German. Other language departments such as French and German. Harry describes their relationship as:

very collegial; there is a sense that everybody brings something to the table. And that's a good perspective for students to see both native speakers and interact with them and get their cultural perspective and also to like interact with people whose background is more similar to theirs who have made the same journey they might make great. (Interview 2 – April 2019)

Here, Harry highlights the importance of having a mixture of NS and NNS teachers in a program. For him, such a mixture enables language students to enjoy the best of both worlds. While NS teachers provide deeper cultural knowledge, NNS teachers can inspire students by sharing their experiences and perspectives as learners of Arabic. Harry had the privilege of working with both NS and NNS teachers as a graduate student, which he found to be stimulating. Therefore, as a NN Arabic teacher, Harry admits that he needs to constantly keep up-to-date with popular culture trends and stay abreast of Arab cultures.

All in all, Harry thinks that both NS and NNS teachers bring unique qualities to the classroom. However, both need training in cultural knowledge and student learning strategies respectively.

6.3.4 Jim: Very Friendly and Collegial Relationships

Jim asserted that his relationship with Arabic faculty in his department is:

a very friendly and collegial relationship. Any time I need any help, I can go to any one of my colleagues, and they are happy to help me. So, I feel blessed to be in this department, to have so many friends and people who support me. So, of course because you team-teach, there is a lot of collaboration between you and your team teachers. (Interview 2 - May 2019)

Jim is happy to be working with colleagues who support and collaborate with him. While Jim mentioned that they are happy to assist him, he was not able to talk about how he thinks they perceive him as a teacher of Arabic at least initially. Jim communicated that although the Arabic faculty were kind and encouraging to him, some may “privately think, oh! This guy doesn’t know anything.” This may not be true of all teachers. Some teachers respect the fact that Jim is knowledgeable about Arabic grammar, which makes him feel confident. He noted:

they say that I’m better at that (Arabic grammar) than they are. I don’t know if they are saying that to make me feel good. But it works because it makes me feel good. (Interview 2 – May 2019)

Jim’s language program offers many other languages than Arabic. The language faculty come from all parts of the world and, therefore, have to resort to communicating in English during lunch times:

I have colleagues who teach other languages: Spanish, French, German, Italian, Chinese, Russian, and I love them. I feel I’m at the United Nations. Yeah, because they’re people from all over the world speaking different languages... we have to use the language that everyone knows, and that’s English. But we have fun. We enjoy each other’s company. (Interview 2 – May 2019)

Non-Arabic language faculty seem to be surprised to learn that Jim teaches Arabic. Through daily interactions with this faculty in the same building, Jim learned that they respect him as an expert. Nonetheless, for him, this consideration is simply an illusion because just teaching Arabic would not necessarily mean being an expert. He indicated:

the fact that I have my employment here as an Arabic instructor, they say, oh my goodness, he is teaching Arabic. He must be so great. (Interview 2 – May 2019)

In short, Jim enjoys having a supportive crew of teachers from various countries, who respect him and consider him an expert in Arabic, although he has some doubts about his status and lacks confidence.

6.3.5 Juliette: Fear-based Intimidation at Times

Juliette's relationship with her Arabic faculty can best be described as supportive. The faculty work together, share teaching materials, and collaborate on assessments. She pinpointed that:

at least at my [name of college], it's been a really beautiful balance of independence and also communal work, and so...this is the plan, we're both getting to this place but how you do it and the exact timeline that you take can be yours, right? (Interview 2 – May 2019)

The relationship is comforting both at the personal and professional levels. There is a blend of N and NN teachers in Juliette's Arabic program. In general, the Arabic faculty appreciate the innovative ways in which she teaches (poetry, music, and radio station broadcasts). While she was proud of the work she was doing, Juliette struggles with her negative self-perceptions and worries about being judged. Juliette said:

Again, I would say that the way I would describe the way that my colleagues perceive me might also be tinged by my own projection of not being good enough. So sometimes, I make up in my head things that they're thinking about me that are negative, which I think is kind of human instinct. (Interview 2 – May 2019)

Because of her negative attitudes about herself, Juliette avoids speaking in Arabic with her colleagues for fear of making mistakes. The situation becomes serious and overwhelming in front of her department chair. She reported:

With my chair and with people who are making decisions about my future, I might be more paranoid than with a colleague who is also an assistant professor who has no control over my fate and yet, ... But that fear doesn't go away. (Interview 2 – May 2019)

Juliette's frustration with her sense of worth constantly reminds her about the need to continue learning Arabic to improve her proficiency. For this reason, she travels abroad every summer and practices Arabic online with a tutor.

When she is with non-Arabic faculty, Juliette feels less intimidated. She describes their reactions as respectful. They are impressed and consider her "super smart," given Arabic has the reputation of being a "hard language" to learn. When asked about her relationships with non-Arab language faculty, Juliette noted:

The intimidation is slightly less, because sometimes I have these moments where I'm like, they did the same thing. I heard them make that same mistake or ... But I still feel the same judgement. I mean that could just be my own internal... I mean I know that I have a tendency to be sort of ashamed of myself or overly critical of myself or expect perfection of myself. So, I still experience that sort of fear-based intimidation at times. (Interview 2 – May 2019)

In sum, Juliette appreciates the sense of collaboration, guidance, and community of practice in her Arabic department. With non-Arabic faculty, she feels admired to be able to learn and teach Arabic. Nevertheless, her negative self-esteem causes her to feel frustrated and intimidated.

6.3.6 Sarah: Department Instability Hinders Building Strong Relationships

Sarah shared the information that her Arabic program had been unstable in terms of keeping lecturers of Arabic due to short term contracts. Only the department chair and one lecturer continued teaching at Sarah's university for many years. Sarah described the faculty situation as:

a revolving door of people. We've talked about how there's so much instability in the lecturer departments, which I think is hard for students. (Interview 2 – June 2019)

Instability in the teaching faculty affects not only students, but also relationships and types of collaboration between the faculty themselves.

Sarah mentioned that her relationships with Arabic faculty was friendly. She stated:

I would say that they were friendly: one of them was a heritage speaker of Egyptian Arabic; one was a NNS of Arabic; one left early on and he was quite religious. So, I didn't interact with him very much because he was private, I think. (Interview 2 – June 2019)

This new teaching environment was different for Sarah. Having moved from a unified and well-organized program where syllabi and lesson plans were shared, she found herself in a new environment where each faculty was free to create their own syllabi and class preparations. This type of environment was not to Sarah's liking. For this reason, she took the initiative and leadership responsibility of organizing and coordinating the first-year program. The end goal was exposing all classes to the same materials and giving them the same assignments. At the same time, sharing materials and teaching resources would enhance teacher cooperation and enable the creation of a homogeneous teaching community.

As for Sarah's interactions with non-Arabic faculty, she remarked that she has a good relationship with the Turkish and Hebrew Lecturers because they shared office spaces in the same building. Sarah's relationships with them take the form of daily interactions through which they teach each other simple phrases from Arabic, Hebrew, and Turkish.

The Arabic, Hebrew and Turkish programs are housed in the Near Eastern Studies department. Other programs within this department include History, Religious Studies, and Literature. The Professors in these programs tend to distance themselves from Lecturers of Arabic even if these Professors speak Arabic. Sarah narrated that she:

did not know non-Arabic faculty very well because there's just not really a lot of space to interact with them. They wouldn't necessarily come to an Arabic film night or our Arabic picnic where we make food or things like that. (Interview 2 – June 2019)

However, because of her outgoing personality, Sarah had the opportunity to collaborate with a Film Studies Professor on organizing an Arabic film festival on campus.

Additionally, a History Lecturer invited her to participate in a session of his course on the history of coffee and tea. In this session, Sarah discussed different tea-types and displayed Arabic and Turkish coffee-makers for the students. For Sarah, this experience is a sign of interdisciplinary collaboration "across departments, across fields, and across faculty ranks."

Despite the positive experience with the film studies and history faculty, Sarah felt treated differently by one of the Professors, which she labeled as just "one bad apple." She reported that:

there was just one person who I think was just a bad apple. It wasn't just me. The other lecturers, including the Turkish ones, he just had a way of ignoring you, or not saying hi, but saying hi to the person behind you who happened to be faculty [i.e., professor]. (Interview 2 – June 2019)

For Sarah, this Professor tends to distance himself from Lecturers and described him as “a jerk who lacks self-confidence.”

In sum, Sarah had a great experience in her institution because the department chair was welcoming and she quickly bonded with Arabic, Turkish, and Hebrew faculty thanks to her outgoing character. Additionally, her positive attitude enabled her to experience collaboration with non-Arabic faculty, namely Film Studies and History Professors. In general, most NN Arabic teachers in this study enjoy collegial relationships with their students, Arabic, and non-Arabic faculty. However, some teachers may experience isolation and “fear-based intimidation” because of the lack of collaboration with other language faculty and feelings of low self-esteem. As a result, experiences like these negatively affect how the teachers make sense of their work as teachers.

6.4 Meaning of the Experience: Teacher Metaphors

Question four seeks to explore what meanings the six participants make out of their experiences as teachers of Arabic. In the survey questionnaire, I asked the teachers to complete the following statement as a metaphor for teaching Arabic: “For me, teaching Arabic is like ...” In the interviews, I asked, “how do you feel about teaching Arabic?” Table 6.2 describes how the participants describe teaching Arabic.

Table 6.2: Participants' metaphors on teaching Arabic

Adam	Ann	Harry	Jim	Juliette	Sarah
Coaching	Going on a new journey through the same woods every day	Imagining the program I would have wanted as a student.	Being a permanent full time student of Arabic	Windsurfing: (Joyful and exhilarating, but very hard work and sometimes you fall	Helping students overcome their fears (related to cultural beliefs, their beliefs of what is intellectually possible for them)- it's about empowerment and showing them that they can do the impossible

For Adam, teaching Arabic is “like coaching.” One of the things that excites him about teaching Arabic is “to do things well.” What Adam means by this statement was providing learning opportunities that make a difference in his students’ lives. To this end, Adam strives to enable his students to develop an awareness of the diversity of the Arab World. Most students enter the Arabic language classroom with the need to understand that the Arab World is not only Saudi Arabia, for example. Adam remarked:

For me, Arabic has increasingly come to be an important thing for help; it’s one of the things I feel does make a difference in the world. (Interview 2 – May 2019)

Making a difference in today’s students starts with acquiring a certain level of proficiency and bringing them closer to an understanding and appreciation of the Arab World as a heterogeneous entity. Therefore, it comes as no surprise when Adam likened

teaching Arabic to “coaching.” To make teaching Arabic better has been Adam’s goal from the beginning. According to Adam, achieving this goal necessitates coaching which entails patience, perseverance, planning, and dedication.

Unlike Adam, Ann focuses on the experience of teaching Arabic as an opportunity to learn how to navigate ways to respond to questions from her students and develop accurate strategies to make up for her limited knowledge of Arabic language and cultures. This attitude does not reflect any worry about her NN teacher status. On the contrary, she is aware that she will never know all the words in Arabic and is concerned about how to respond to questioning from her students. However, over the years, her perspective has changed. She learned from her experience as a student of Arabic that she can predict what her students will know, which facilitates her task as a teacher. She indicated:

Of course, I don't know all of these words and I don't know, especially, some of the Sudanese dialect words. But I have ways of figuring out what they were. And ways of looking them up. And so, then I incorporated that into the class.
(Interview 1 – April 2019)

In terms of her metaphor for teaching Arabic, Ann wrote:

For me, teaching Arabic is (like) going on a new journey through the same woods every day. (Survey Questionnaire – March 2019)

It is interesting that Ann thinks of teaching Arabic as a daily journey through the same woods, a journey that may be tough at first. However, with repetitive trips, she has made new discoveries and drawn sign posts and landmarks to facilitate going in and out of the woods easily. In other words, teaching a language like Arabic may be challenging for any novice teacher, but with more time in the classroom, the teacher develops ways to overcome challenges whether they are personal, academic, or professional.

As for Harry, the eight years he spent teaching Arabic empowered him to gain confidence as a teacher. He does not seem to have any self-doubts. After all, he does not worry about his NN teacher status and does not feel like an imposter even though he did not learn Arabic growing up. He stated:

I don't have imposter syndrome. I go into Arabic class and I'm, you know, I'm ready to teach whatever they want to know. So, I don't really ever feel like there is a knowledge gap especially the levels I'm teaching. (Interview 2 – April 2019)

What contributes to Harry's confidence is his students' evaluations of his teaching, which have been positive. Additionally, his colleagues including other teachers of Arabic have not doubted his abilities as a teacher. It is interesting that Harry constructs a unique subject position from that of the other participants because of his investment in learning Moroccan Arabic and Moroccan culture both inside and outside of the classroom. This investment, subjectivity, and self-confidence may be explained as the result of being married to a native speaker (Kramsch, 2018).

As a NN teacher, Harry may face challenges related to knowledge of language and/or culture. However, he views the challenges as opportunities for academic training to make his teaching better.

Harry puts himself in the place of his students so as to provide them with experiences that he would have liked to have when he was a learner of Arabic. Harry wrote: "For me, teaching Arabic is like imagining the program I would have wanted as a student." What is interesting about this statement is that Harry assumes his students' needs and aspirations, which may not have been the case when he started learning Arabic as an undergraduate student.

Jim perceives teaching Arabic as doing homework every day. He still considers himself a full time student of Arabic. As a NN Arabic teacher, a major part of his work is to complete all the homework before assigning it to his students, which helps him to learn continuously in the process. What adds to his stance as a full time student is that he is surrounded by a number of supportive faculty that enjoy answering any of his questions “with a smile.” In this respect, he described himself this way:

I feel fortunate. I feel lucky. I feel like a rich man because I’m surrounded by my teachers. All the members of the Arabic department, they are my teachers.
(Interview 1 – April 2019)

What can be inferred from this statement is the privilege that comes with the ability to teach Arabic. On the one hand, it may be a tough task. On the other hand, it opens opportunities for life-long learning. Jim said:

I feel extraordinarily lucky to be a non-native speaker of Arabic who has the privilege of teaching, because this allows me to learn more every day. That’s why I call myself a permanent full time student. (Interview 1 – April 2019)

Jim adds that seeking help from other faculty is one of “the best things about being a NN teacher.” If he were a N teacher, he would feel uncomfortable asking for assistance.

Sarah has a mission as a teacher of Arabic that transcends just teaching the functions of language. As a PhD student with some experience in teaching Arabic, Sarah would like to engage in activities and work that involve communicating with people after her graduation. She remarked:

I really enjoy talking to people... and teaching language is just ... it’s such an awesome way to get to do that. I think that teaching Arabic in the US at this time in our country’s history with the vis-a-vis like the Muslim World and Arabs, I feel like it’s so important to let people know it’s not what you think it is on the media or out of Donald Trump’s mouth. That the Arab World and the Arab cultures and the Arab people, those are pretty much... can be just as boring or silly or quirky, or funny as you and your friends here in the US. (Interview 2 – June 2019)

For Sarah, teaching Arabic means inspiring people to develop alternative views of Arabs and their cultures than the ones that are stereotypical. Sarah considers that:

being able to teach the Arabic language ... is one way to make the world a better place (laughing). (Interview 2 – June 2019)

As for the metaphor, Sarah chose to describe teaching Arabic this way:

For me, teaching Arabic is like helping students overcome their fears (related to their cultural beliefs, their beliefs of what is intellectually possible for them, etc.). It's about empowerment and showing them that they can do the impossible. (Survey questionnaire - April 2019)

As a teacher with experience being a student of Arabic, Sarah seems to be committed to building confidence in her students and empowering them to believe in their abilities to excel in acquiring Arabic. What motivates Sarah is that she can be a role model and her students are likely to learn from and appreciate her experiences as a learner.

Juliette highlights that she is able to guide her students to succeed in learning Arabic by stimulating students' interest and encouraging them through the learning process. She brings her experiences and the tricks she has developed over the years to encourage her students to overcome their learning challenges. She explained that, with her help:

It's so empowering for the students to know how to navigate that system early on, and [to] just make their learning much, much more efficient. (Interview 1 - May 2019)

While Juliette stressed the importance of driving students to succeed in learning Arabic, she also explained that being a NN Arabic teacher affects her confidence and self-esteem. She tends to feel that her Arabic teaching skills are not satisfactory. It is noteworthy that Juliette has mentioned her lack of confidence in the interviews. She pointed out:

It [NN teacher status] does affect my experience and also my confidence and my self-concept. I'm very much, very humble and feel like I'll never feel the degree of ease and comfort with Arabic as I would like to... there are times when I feel like I'll never measure up. I'll just never be in the same league. (Interview 1 - May 2019)

Juliette's concern here led her to self-identify as an "imposter." She tends to worry about failing after her students have praised her achievements and put her "on a pedestal." The same attitude can be inferred from her Arabic teaching metaphor:

For me, teaching Arabic is like windsurfing: joyful and exhilarating, but very hard work and sometimes, you fall. (Survey questionnaire – April 2019)

Juliette enjoys teaching Arabic, but, for her, the experience can be difficult and depressing at times.

In summary, the six participants find the teaching of Arabic as a challenging endeavor: an opportunity for academic training and life-long learning. Some find it important to help students navigate the system and empower them to believe in themselves. Other teachers focus on enabling their students to become aware of the diversity of Arab cultures and encounter alternative perceptions and perspectives of Arabs and Arab cultures. Finally, teaching Arabic is likened to coaching, going through the same woods every day, and windsurfing, all of which require patience, dedication, persistence, and self-confidence. All these personal traits arose as the teachers discuss their contributions to the Arabic language classroom and navigate the N and NN teacher dichotomy.

6.5 N and NN Arabic Teacher Contributions

In my discussions with the study participants, the topic of the differences between N and NN teachers and their contributions to the Arabic language classroom emerged.

This section explores the participants' understandings of the advantages and disadvantages of being either a N or a NN teacher. The six participants' perceptions differ due to their unique experiences and their levels of self-confidence.

6.5.1 Adam: Depth and Breadth of Linguistic and Cultural Knowledge

Adam pointed out that one of his major contributions to the field of teaching Arabic is that he does not know all the answers. This self-perception may model humbleness for his students. It may encourage them to feel empowered to persevere in learning Arabic. Despite his anxiety, he does not see his limited knowledge of the language and the culture as a problem because while N teachers may have depth of cultural knowledge, they may lack breadth. As an example, Adam stated that some N teachers may be biased in favor of cultural concepts and frames of reference from their own subcultures. In this respect, the learners would leave the classroom with a single frame of reference because of the limited perspective they had in the classroom. On the opposite side, according to Adam, NN teachers may have had exposure to a much larger variety of cultural perspectives from their various Arabic classroom teachers, study abroad experiences, and their academic and personal interests. To illustrate the importance of bringing breadth in cultural knowledge, Adam cites how a cultural practice, Ashura for example, is celebrated differently in many Arab countries. Ashura is a Muslim holiday which occurs on the tenth day of the first month in the Islamic calendar. In some countries, it is celebrated with sadness by the Shia Muslims, while in others, it is a time for family gathering, toys for children, and water fights between youth. This example shows that a N teacher may have only one perspective or may choose to

highlight their own viewpoints in the classroom. However, a NN teacher with multiple experiences would prefer the classroom to explore culture from various angles.

6.5.2 Ann: N or NN: Experience Makes the Difference

For Ann, NN teachers' contributions to the Arabic language classroom lie in predicting what students already know and what they need to make progress. As a NN Arabic teacher who learned the language as an undergraduate student herself, Ann is better equipped to predict students' needs and attitudes in the classroom. In addition, a NN teacher may be capable of drawing on local US popular culture to explain or clarify content. However, Ann reported that sometimes even a N teacher would be able to rely on popular culture to clarify concepts if they are familiar with the local culture. For example, if a student asks: "what does "ممثل" (actor) mean in English?" Ann would simply name any American actor and the students would immediately understand the term in question.

As for N teachers, Ann communicated that they have the advantage of not resorting to the web to look up word meanings and cultural information as much as NN teachers would do. The difference lies in that N teachers grew up using the Arabic language and were socialized into the culture. Additionally, they may be familiar with efficient ways of finding information online. In sum, experience and training are the key factors in teacher effectiveness and success in the classroom. For Ann, an experienced teacher, whether they are N or NN, would make a large difference in their students' learning.

6.5.3 Harry: Teacher Training is Essential

According to Harry, having experienced the process of learning Arabic as a student can be one of the positive sides of teaching the language in the US. NN Arabic teachers seem to understand what it means to be a student of Arabic. As a result, they can walk their students through a systematic path to learn Arabic while sharing some strategies that worked for them when dealing with pitfalls in the learning process.

As for N Arabic teachers, they may underestimate the high potentials and abilities of US students. Unlike some N Arabic teachers, Harry raises the bar and the expectations for his students. For example, he rejects his students' complaints about the difficulty of pronouncing Arabic alphabets. The reason was that since Harry himself was able to perfect his pronunciation of Arabic sounds, his students are expected to reach adequate pronunciation as well. In this instance, Harry tends to be a constant reminder for his students and a model to follow.

In summary, Harry believes that there may not be a great difference between N and NN Arabic teachers except in terms of training. For Harry, there is a tendency to consider training not necessary for N Arabic teachers, just as is the case with N English teachers for some "biased" hiring committees. However, NN teachers are usually asked to show their transcripts, language proficiency level, and abilities to teach before they can be hired. Harry draws on his own experience when he said:

So, for me, certainly I have to, like you know, show transcripts for years. I had to do language tests when I got my job. You know, we just do a language check. Of course, which makes perfect sense. (Interview 2 – April 2019)

Harry rejects such practices as these because a teacher without training, whether they are a N or NN, would probably end up being unsuccessful.

6.5.4 Jim: N Teachers as Experts in Communication and Target Language Use

For Jim, a NN Arabic teacher is better at providing scaffolding for his/ her students. In this respect, Jim likens himself to a “veteran soldier.” What this would mean is that Jim can anticipate the difficulties his students may encounter drawing on his experiences. As a learner and teacher of Arabic, he feels well-equipped to alert his students to the common learning challenges and provide concrete ways for coping with such challenges.

On the flip side, Jim believes that a N Arabic teacher may not need extensive time for preparation and lesson planning. He gives the example of the amount of time it takes him to transcribe audio and video recordings for his classes. In his account of his typical work day, Jim stated that he spends most of his day preparing materials and designing his lessons. He considers the time spent preparing classes as time spent doing homework, which explains why he considers himself a permanent learner of Arabic. Therefore, according to Jim, a N Arabic teacher may spend less time transcribing audio and video files and designing class materials. Additionally, Jim describes N teachers as “ideal models” because they can teach the target language and can “force” their students to communicate in Arabic. For Jim, the language “comes to them [N teachers] automatically.” He summarizes the contribution of N Arabic teachers as follows:

One of the great contributions is that they can conduct the classroom in the target language and assist the students, model the students, and they are a tremendous scaffolding for the students to improve their production...Additionally, my native speaking colleagues are experts in teaching the students the productive skills: speaking and writing. (Interview 1 – April 2019)

In sum, Jim views N Arabic teachers as experts who may easily lead their classroom totally in the target language and teach speaking and writing. As for NN Arabic teachers, Jim posits that they can anticipate the difficulties their students may face and provide meaningful ways of dealing with the learning challenges.

6.5.5 Juliette: N Teachers May Lack Satisfying Explanations

Juliette admits that beginning learners of Arabic face the difficulty of the distant nature of this language from English and Romance languages (Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian, for example). The Arabic script and pronunciation are completely different from some of the languages US students may be familiar with. Therefore, Juliette considers NN Arabic teachers may benefit their students and inspire them by sharing their positive experiences when they were learners of the language. Furthermore, by exposing the students to what it means to be a learner of Arabic in the US and walking them through that process, NN Arabic teachers would likely be empowering. In this process, the NN teachers build on their experiences to display what was lacking in their training as learners. Additionally, NN teachers may inform the students about what to expect in subsequent weeks or even semesters if the students choose to continue learning the language. Finally, Juliette argues that one of the contributions of NN Arabic teachers is the ability to provide clearer and logical explanations of some concepts and language phenomena.

As for NN Arabic teachers, Juliette had the opportunity of knowing and observing both excellent and unskilled teachers. She stated that one of the aspects of their teaching was that some teachers fail to provide satisfying and meaningful answers to students regarding how language works. She noted:

What I have noticed sometimes, the negatives that I have seen with some native speakers of Arabic is that there is no explanation. It's just like, because why? Because that's what it is. That's not helpful to a learner. (Interview 1 – May 2019)

According to Juliette a learner of Arabic has the right to a logical and rule-based explanation of some linguistic phenomena.

All in all, Juliette considers that some NN teachers can be a resource of inspiration and empowerment for their students, which may be one of their main contributions to the Arabic language classroom. Some N teachers would be capable of inspiring their students. However, Juliette noted that some of these N teachers tend to lack skills or knowledge for providing explanations that are logical and reasonable for the learners.

6.5.6 Sarah: NN Teacher as a Role Model

Sarah contends that for students to have a NN Arabic teacher as a model can be powerful. First, for the students, NN Arabic teachers epitomize the experience of being a learner of Arabic in the US; particularly navigating the learning of a language that is different, in all of its phonological and syntactic features, from English and other romance languages. Then, NN teachers can anticipate situations of learning that could be difficult for students to manage and, therefore, offer meaningful strategies and “tricks” to overcome any challenges that students may encounter.

As for her views of N Arabic teachers, Sarah reported that some tend to over-explain concepts because of the lack of experience and exposure to NN students and/or the US educational system. Additionally, these teachers may underestimate the potential of their students to retain certain concepts and, as a result, lower the course expectations. Sarah provided the example of a teacher from Jordan she observed when he was teaching. This teacher was trying to explain the concept “نائب الفاعل” (the substitute of the doer/ agent in a passive sentence). According to Sarah, the teacher’s explanation transcended the grammatical concepts to political concepts of “نائب الرئيس” (vice president), which Sarah found would confuse students. She stated:

I think when you [addressing the teacher] explain it like you are, you're going to confuse them more because they don't need to know this in order to know how to use the language. (Interview 1 – May 2019)

Sarah brought up a situation where another N Arabic teacher failed to recognize the potential of his students to retain and understand the language content. She recounted how this teacher did not believe in his students' ability to understand the materials. As she said:

He would like play the video in class and stop at every sentence and translate it and then play the video, play the next sentence and translate it, and it's like you're really gonna, you, if you don't believe they can do it, you probably shouldn't be doing this, you know? (Interview 1 – May 2019)

What this teacher does was playing the video sentence by sentence, because he may have assumed that his students might find understanding the whole text difficult.

Sarah explained that this attitude to teaching was coming from lack of teacher training. Nevertheless, Sarah acknowledged that these are only two examples of N teaching situations that she witnessed, and, naturally, the two examples would not speak for all N teachers.

6.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented two findings that were organized according to the research questions 3 and 4. Data from the online survey questionnaires, individual interviews, and teaching documents revealed research participants' self-perceptions, their relationships with their students and other faculty, and their contributions to the Arabic language classroom. As is typical of qualitative research, the participants' voices were included in the report through extensive samples of quotations from the data gathered. The purpose

of using statements from the participants was to provide an accurate representation of their realities as described in their own words.

The first finding which addresses question 3 concerns the construction of teacher identities through interactions with others in their work environments. It is through relationships with others that the teachers develop identities of belonging and/or non-belonging. Overall, most of the participants in this study enjoy collegial connections with their students, other faculty, and administrators. However, while some of the teachers show confidence in themselves and their abilities, others struggle with anxiety, intimidation, and inadequacy as teachers.

The second finding which answers research question 4 is that most teachers acknowledge that they make great contributions to the Arabic language classroom despite their recognition of their limited linguistic and cultural knowledge. However, some of the teachers struggle with the native speaker ideology which maintains that N teachers are the models and authority. Their struggle results in feeling as part of the outer circle and, therefore, inadequate teachers. Nevertheless, some of the participants who seemed self-confident argue that their limited knowledge should be viewed as a strength and an opportunity rather than as a barrier to their professional success.

CHAPTER 7

ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION, AND SYNTHESIS

The purpose of this case study was to explore with a sample of six NN Arabic university teachers their trajectories learning and teaching Arabic to discern an understanding of their perceptions of language, culture, and teaching identities. It was hoped that a better understanding of the experiences of NN Arabic teachers would provide insights into the construction of their identities, their contributions, and ways to overcome the challenges learners of Arabic, teacher trainees, and classroom practitioners encounter as a whole.

This research used a qualitative case study to collect data through an online survey questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, and teacher artefacts. The data were coded, analyzed, and organized by research questions, and then by categories and subcategories, guided by the theoretical framework as described in chapter 2. The following four questions guided this study:

- 1- How do NN Arabic teachers in the US define culture in the classroom?
- 2- What are these teachers' perspectives regarding teaching culture?
- 3- What identities do they construct in relation to their students, their Arabic language colleagues, and the faculty in their departments?
- 4- What does it mean for them to be teachers of Arabic in the US?

Analytic categories are directly in line with each of the study's research questions. I used the same categories to code the data and present the findings in chapters 5 and 6. In the first level of analysis, I searched primarily for patterns within the analytic categories.

The second level of analysis ties in relevant theory and previous research by comparing and contrasting the study themes to issues discussed in the literature.

This chapter builds on the findings of chapters 5 and 6 by organizing data gathered from multiple resources into categories that produce a narrative of the participants' experiences. The purpose of this chapter is to offer insights gleaned from the interpretation of these findings. While the chapter findings tell the story of the participants in this study through split chunks of data, this chapter attempts to foreground a holistic understanding and a complete picture of the cases and their stories.

The discussion considers earlier research and issues raised in the literature on language, culture, and identity. The implications of the findings seek to raise awareness of the trajectories of NN Arabic teachers and to recognize their contributions to the Arabic language classroom. The chapter concludes with researcher reflexivity and an examination of potential researcher bias and its possible impact on interpreting the findings.

7.1. Analytic Category Development

The process of developing analytic categories began with revisiting the study findings. After attentive reexamination and analysis of the participants' responses and the data reported in the findings, themes and patterns emerged: analytic categories. The central finding of this study disclosed that while NN Arabic teachers acknowledge their challenges regarding limited knowledge of Arabic language and cultures, they seek recognition for their unique contributions to the Arabic language classroom and claim their abilities to provide better learning experiences to their students. Analytic category 1, "Juggling the understandings of language and culture in teaching," describes the

participants' conceptualizations of culture and their understandings of the connections between language and culture in teaching. This analytic category speaks to findings 1 and 2.

Teachers construct their identities in practice (Wenger, 1998). In daily interactions with their students, administrators, and colleagues; and through lesson planning, teaching and service, the participants in this study construct their identities via three modes of belonging: engagement, imagination, and alignment. An examination of the participants' experiences through the three modes culminated in displaying a mix of confidence, anxiety, and tension. I refer to this analytic category as "Belonging and developing identities in practice." Analytic category 2 speaks to findings 3 and 4.

The challenges NN Arabic teachers encounter shape their experiences as teachers. Native-speakerism as an ideology that considers native speaker teachers as a model and authority affects the participants' lives in varying and complex ways. This was evident in their accounts on the meanings of their experiences. In their metaphors on the meanings of their experiences as teachers, they likened teaching Arabic to "coaching," "surfing," "going through the same woods every day," "helping students believe in their abilities," "imagining having a better Arabic program as a learner of Arabic," and "being a full time student of Arabic." I called analytic category 3 "Navigating native-speakerism effects in TAFL." Analytic category 3 speaks to findings 5.

7.1.1 Juggling Understandings of Language and Culture in Teaching

The first research question sought to determine how the participants define culture and what connections they draw between language and culture in teaching. Three participants found it hard to provide a definition of culture initially. Harry labelled the

question as “hard.” Jim referred to the same question as “intensely heavy,” and Juliette described it as “a deep question.” This stance is frequent among language teachers in general and echoes previous research (Byram & Risager, 1999; Ghanem, 2015; Sercu, Méndez García, & Prieto, 2005). However, the three participants were still able to define culture. For example, Harry considered culture as a puzzle of many pieces that come together. Jim explained that culture is represented in authentic material from the internet. Juliette stated that culture included cultural arts, literature, calligraphy, and religion. The other three participants defined culture as everything (Adam), as difference (Sarah), and as “negotiated performance in interaction” (Ann). The responses from the online survey questionnaire indicated that all the participants considered culture as consisting of both cultural products and practices.

What can be inferred here is that the teachers tend to generalize that culture is “everything” and “all embracing” (Klein, 2004). However, there are some differences between the participants regarding their approaches to culture, which is noticeable in their teaching. Therefore, if we look at how each teacher conceives of culture, we would notice that they can be divided into three categories: culture as a product, culture as a process, culture as everything. The first category understands culture as cultural products and practices (food, folktales, literature, and festivals). Kramsch (2006) refers to this view as the modernist approach to culture. This approach defines culture as static, homogeneous, and invariable (Holliday, 1999). Therefore, culture takes the form of knowledge transfer to learners who play the role of observers. One consequence of adopting this view of culture in the classroom is the reinforcement of stereotypes and essentializing the target cultures.

The second category refers to culture as a process. Two participants conceptualized culture differently. Harry described culture as a discussion of peoples' worldviews and as a puzzle. This view extended the prior view of culture as products as it invites students to reflect on what people do and how they view the world. As for Ann, her perception of culture resides in interaction and performance. In other words, through negotiation of meanings in interaction, people participate in performing culture in a given context. These two views of culture emphasize the significance of language use and context in defining culture. Kramsch (2006) calls this perspective postmodernist: culture is seen, not as a product, but as thoughts, feelings, and language use. The language user becomes an active participant who can describe, analyze, discuss, and reflect on their cultures, the target cultures, and themselves. Additionally, they recognize the fluid, heterogeneous, and dynamic aspect of culture as they become members of a discourse community (Kramsch 2014).

The third category simply prefers to perceive culture as everything without having a specific understanding of how it would work in the classroom. This is evident in how it would be implemented in the classroom, particularly how they talk about teaching culture. For example, Sarah does not assign cultural activities to her students. She stated that she had no idea about how to evaluate and assess learners' cultural understanding. However, Adam offers weekly culture portfolio reflections, which he labelled as "an abuse of the term portfolio." The portfolios require students to write a brief essay on a cultural topic of their choice or one that Adam assigns.

Concerning teaching culture, how each participant defines culture impacts upon its implementation in the classroom. The six teachers use a variety of topics when

teaching culture. These include music, film, geography, education, family, and news. In terms of how they teach culture, one common denominator was using culture capsules and weekly culture portfolios to enable students to reflect on a cultural topic assigned or chosen by the students. The culture capsules are usually role plays or skits that are prepared in advance, rehearsed, and performed in class. The topics for these skits address general greetings, food etiquette, music, and daily routines. As for the language of the culture portfolio reflections, students write them in English mostly, with an option to write them in Arabic at the intermediate levels. The purpose of these portfolios was to raise students' cultural awareness of cultural products and practices. The reflections are discussed in class after being posted on the course website. For some teachers these reflections are graded and count as 10% of the course grade. It was not determined if all the teachers assess culture learning in the exam. One of the teachers, however, shared his final exam that showed a prompt regarding culture perspective-taking. An example of a quiz prompt is from Harry:

Choose a minority ethnic, linguistic, or religious group in the Arab World: Name of group: _____ Countries they reside in: _____ What factors make this group unique?

It is interesting that Harry assesses cultural knowledge through quizzes. Harry's approach to teaching culture aims to impart facts and combat prejudice (Byram & Risager, 1999). To that end, his assessments maintain a sense of raising consciousness about the diversity in Arab cultures and enabling his students to develop various perspectives of the target cultures.

Adam is one of the teachers who uses culture portfolios, but he is not strict about using them. He referred to them as an "abuse of the word portfolio." For Adam, the

portfolios are simply weekly reflections that address topics aligned with the textbook themes. However, two of the teachers do not seem to assign culture portfolios to their classes at all. The reason is that they teach culture through the content provided in the internet resources and the topics under discussion. For example, Jim teaches 2nd year Arabic in Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) only and all the resources he uses are in MSA, which was not his choice. The main topics that he addresses in his teaching are broad: religion, politics, history, and geopolitics. One way Jim teaches culture is through reminders for his students about Arab traditions and appropriate behaviors:

So, I select something that I think would be interesting and educational, and also I go to YouTube. In the context of things, you have to continually remind students about the Arab traditions: the proper way of greeting, the proper answer to various kinds of greetings, the holidays, the emphasis on family... the value of teachers in the Arab World, respecting elders, respecting the tribes. (Jim, Interview 1 - April 2019)

What Jim does is that he focuses on big C culture (religion, politics, literature, and history). The products and perspectives of culture take second position as they are addressed as “reminders.” Likewise, Juliette adopts a similar approach just like Jim. The difference is that Juliette focuses on cultural arts, literature, and music as she explained:

I tried to sort of balance my courses by bringing in music, and film, and media, and calligraphy, and poetry, and literature, Quran. Food of course. That's what I focused on most when I taught culture. (Juliette, Interview 1, May 2019)

As for Sarah, she acknowledges that she does not stray away from the textbook and while she enjoys showing scenes from an Arab country or a song, she does not assign culture portfolios and does not know how they work. This is again an example of a touristic approach to teaching culture.

Ann's approach combines culture portfolio reflections and introductions to the cultural concepts in each lesson at the start of each unit. This strategy helps in orienting the students to aspects of Arab culture addressed in each unit.

This discussion raised various issues reported in previous research. One aspect of dealing with culture in the classroom is that it does not seem to be an essential part in foreign language education because (a) some participants could not define the term “culture;” (b) they tend to focus more on the mechanics of language; and (c) the time dedicated to teaching culture is very limited (*Culture Fridays*). The participants indicated that language and culture are both important in the language classroom. However, some of them have not been able to provide what Schulz (2007, p.12) calls “an operational definition of culture.” Additionally, while the participants describe language and culture as interrelated, their teaching practices show a completely different picture. They focus more on language forms and functions, which is the typical approach for communicative language teaching. This is evident in the survey questionnaire responses which disclosed that the participants prioritize language over culture. These findings are consistent with Ryan and Sercu’s (2003) study with 47 Mexican English and Spanish teachers. Furthermore, culture is taught once a week and focuses on literature, arts, movies, and music (Byrd, 2014; Fox & Diaz-Greenberg, 2006) for the most part. The themes of the cultural portfolios are strictly linked to the textbook, which reflects the narrow understanding of culture that consists of accumulation of cultural knowledge, and by implication, contributing to the (re)production of stereotypes and essentialization of the target cultures. In other words, focusing on the textbook as the default source of cultural knowledge leads to ethnocentrism (Dytynshyn & Collins, 2012) and stereotyping

(Galeano, 2014). The causes of ethnocentrism would stem from reflecting diversity, in terms of similarities and differences between cultures, and homogenizing culture (G. Canale, 2016). As Abbadi (2011, p. 164) noted, the textbook stands in the way of using language in “authentic communicative events” to develop cultural awareness that is based on the reflection on the self and others. Therefore, instead of teaching language and culture in tandem, the teachers still follow the traditional approach and teach them separately (Byram & Risager, 1999). Still, within this approach, some teachers take initiative to dispel the old approach by having their students take varying perspectives on various aspects of culture such as ethnicity, dress code, family life, and geography for example. Harry and Ann are the two teachers in this study who really focus on showing the diversity of Arab cultures not only between Arab countries, but also within communities in each country. This attitude may indicate a hopeful step toward moving the teaching of culture from a cultural to an intercultural perspective.

A second aspect that affects teaching culture in the Arabic language classroom is teacher characteristics, particularly personality, interests, and life experiences (Llurda & Lagabaster, 2010; Peiser & Jones, 2014; Ryan & Sercu, 2003). Many teachers focus on aspects of culture that interest them or that they have experienced. A case in point is Juliette who earned a PhD in Arabic literature and grew up in a family of musicians. Juliette’s classes integrate a mix of music, film, literature, and poetry. Adam is very familiar with Jordanian and Syrian cultures given that he lived there during his one-year study abroad program. Therefore, most of his resources draw on these two cultures. Harry acknowledged that he is Morocco-biased and that he is very invested in exposing his students to Moroccan cultures. The reason for his focus on this culture was that he spent

three years in Morocco as a Peace Corps volunteer and that he is married to a Moroccan.

As for their teaching approaches, some of the participants in this study draw on their individual experiences as learners and personal experiences to teach in the same way they were taught Arabic.

A third playing factor in limiting teaching culture is the absence of a clear language and culture teaching pedagogy among the teachers. This study confirms prior research in this direction. One common feature of NN teachers is their acknowledgement of their limited knowledge of language and culture (Galeano, 2014; Kohler, 2015). This situation impacts upon the depth and quality of cultural teaching they could bring to the classroom. However, even if they may not offer the depth of culture that some N teachers may have, Adam explained that NN teachers can offer breadth of knowledge because of their exposure to many aspects of the cultures through their learning experiences and travels abroad, which N teachers may not have. N teachers usually tend to rely on one cultural perspective, which is derived from their own culture.

Teachers' experiences as learners inform their knowledge about teaching and learning, which influences their professional lives (Borg, 2003). In their responses to the question, "to what extent do you agree that the teaching mentors focus on teaching culture as graduate students?" three participants in this study (Adam, Ann, and Jim) mentioned that they "somewhat agree"; Harry indicated that he "agrees", and Juliette and Sarah noted they "strongly agree." It is interesting to note that Sarah and Juliette strongly agree that culture is important for their graduate mentors. The reason being that their classroom practices do not reflect a focus on cultural learning. This may suggest that there is some focus on culture in their exposure to culture through classes taught in

English as graduate students, culture being defined as static information about literature, history, religion, and music. Such courses are popular in Arabic studies and Middle East studies programs under the title: Introduction to Arab Culture and Society or Topics in Middle Eastern Cultures. These courses would not be efficient in using language to teach culture because it is learning about culture in English and not learning and performing culture.

Finally, the absence of teaching culture as a dynamic and context-based concept in the classroom can be connected with the lack of training on how to teach culture for pre-service teachers. In terms of the teachers' satisfaction with their teacher training programs, two teachers were dissatisfied, one was neutral, one was satisfied, and two were very satisfied. It is very interesting to see that one of the teachers did not have any "formal" teacher training and indicated that she was very satisfied with her training. Be that as it may, whether the teachers were satisfied or dissatisfied with their teacher education program would not hide that their culture teaching is lacking. This suggests the absence of concrete culture teaching pedagogy in language teacher education programs, as reported in the literature (Schulz et al., 2005, Peiser & Jones, 2014). Lack of training on approaches to teaching culture in methods courses has been confirmed by Byrd (2014) and Lange (2003). In his survey of research methods courses, Byrd (2014) indicated that, (a) teacher educators follow an "indirect approach" to teaching culture; (b) most of the readings do not pertain to how to teach culture; and (c) "Half of the courses devote less than 10% of class time to the study of how to teach culture" (p. 80). Most foreign language teacher education has been following the same pattern with less focus on

cultural awareness and understanding (Byram, 2009). The pattern lies in following the textbook, relying on individual initiatives (Kearney, 2008), and improvising.

In summary, this discussion suggests that NN Arabic teachers still consider teaching culture as peripheral to teaching the functions of language, which can be explained as an indication of the influence of the communicative approach to teaching languages which targets achieving native-speaker fluency. Additionally, while the end point of teaching culture should be building cultural awareness and combating stereotypes by moving from focus on people to focus on their practices and perspectives, some Arabic classrooms are the grounds where essentialism still prevails. This prevalence may originate from the absence of effective teacher education programs. Evidence from this study point to the fact that some teachers were dissatisfied with their training. What is unfortunate was that one of the teachers did not have any formal training. As a result, some of the teachers like her may feel unprepared to teach culture simply because they have not been taught how to deal with it in the classroom. However, this lack of teaching culture is common among many language teacher education programs, specifically in methods courses as reported in the literature (Byrd, 2014). The field of TAFL does not seem to be the exception.

7.1.2 Belonging and Developing Identities in Practice

Representing the experiences of language teachers requires an exploration of all aspects of their identities. Varghese et al. (2005, p. 22) postulate:

In order to understand language teaching and learning we need to understand teachers; and in order to understand teachers, we need to have a clearer sense of who they are: the professional, cultural, political, and individual identities which they claim or which are assigned to them.

This statement clearly demonstrates that the starting point for studying teacher identity would be examining their day to day practices because identity is shaped by their teaching practices and interactions with others in their respective institutions. According to Wenger (1998), identity construction is a process that is shaped by three modes of belonging: engagement, imagination, and alignment. It is in practice that teachers construct their identities through (a) engaging in work within a community of practice; (b) aligning their practices with the structural goals and order of their institutions; and (c) imagining their images of themselves and the world around them.

Engagement is a kind of investment in the work that teachers do and their interactions with others. Investment means participation in both teaching and non-teaching practices that include teaching routines, service, and interactions with students and other faculty. Through engagement in similar work, teachers negotiate meanings and identities which may lead to ensuring a sense of belonging and affiliation with a community of practice. One of the major activities that teachers engage in are lesson planning, materials development, teaching and assessment. Through such engagement, the teachers reflect their (un)friendly relationships with their students and an understanding of teaching as an open door to understanding their students' needs, interests, and challenges. Another aspect of engagement is discussions with colleagues and supervisors through sharing materials and/or co-teaching classes, and reporting students' progress and evaluations. In the classroom, the participants in this study view themselves as role models for their students, specifically since they share a similar background, namely being native speakers of English. Furthermore, in their department

meetings, they enact identities of equal and legitimate members of the Arabic language teaching community.

Imagination is another source of identity. Through imagination, teachers create their self-images that associate or dissociate them from other group memberships. In the case of NN Arabic teachers, such self-images would include being learners, student teachers, and classroom practitioners. However, they may also imagine themselves in comparison to other teachers, specifically N Arabic teachers. In this regard, they may enact identifications that distance them from colleagues with different learning and teaching backgrounds. In this study, Jim and Juliette draw a line between N Arabic and NN Arabic teachers. Jim refers to his N Arabic colleagues as “ideal models:”

Oh, well yeah, because they are ideal models, and they can walk into the classroom and do all of the teaching in the target language, and force the students to do all of the communication in the target language. It comes automatically to them. For me, I'm supposed to do that too, supposed to use the target language all the time in the classroom, but it can be difficult. At the end of an hour I have a headache. It's really tough. So, the great contribution is that they ... One of the great contributions is that they can conduct the classroom in the target language and assist the students, model the students, and they are a tremendous scaffolding for the students to improve their production. I think I'm a little bit ... My advantage is the passive learning. Not the passive learning, but the passive skills of listening and reading, and my colleagues are tremendous experts in getting the students to produce. (Jim, Interview 1 - April 2019)

Juliette explains the difference between N and NN Arabic teachers in terms of the analogy of “a male and a female wrestler:”

One analogy would be, say you had... I hate to say this but a male wrestler and a female wrestler, they're not going to be in the same category. The male wrestler has different muscles and a different body type and sometimes it seems like it would be unfair to put them in the ring together. So that kind of thing. I'm also intimidated because I have learned all these different dialects, but I don't have one particular dialect that I'm extremely good at. (Juliette, Interview 2 - May 2019)

These two excerpts clearly show the impact of the native speaker fallacy (Phillipson, 1992) in ELT, which contends that NN teachers of English might not be as effective and successful as N English teachers. Jim and Juliette tend to overgeneralize and resort to stereotyping when comparing themselves to N Arabic teachers. For example, describing N Arabic teachers as “ideal models” in language and culture and comparing them to “a male wrestler” suggest that Jim and Juliette view themselves as deficient teachers and N teachers as having privilege and power. In this sense, they frame themselves as being of a lower status because for Jim, he cannot teach Arabic exclusively in the target language. As for Juliette, she tends to see herself outside of the “ring” or “league” by imagining herself in a different “league” because she feels that she may not be as efficient as N Arabic teachers.

Unlike Jim and Juliette, Ann, Adam, Harry, and Sarah do not imagine themselves as incompetent Arabic teachers. While they acknowledged their limited knowledge of Arabic language and cultures, they highlighted their contributions to the Arabic language classroom and the opportunities class challenges offer in terms of learning to respond to students’ inquiries in satisfactory and understandable manners.

Overall, constructing identity through imagination was clear from the participants’ metaphors about teaching Arabic and their future aspirations. In terms of metaphors, Adam described teaching Arabic as “coaching.” Juliette referred to it as “surfing.” Ann indicated that teaching Arabic is like “going through the same woods every day.” While Sarah wrote that teaching Arabic is like “helping students overcome their fears,” Jim likened teaching Arabic to “being a full time student of Arabic.” Finally, Harry noted that teaching Arabic is like “imagining the program [he] would have wanted

as a student.” The teachers' metaphors clearly draw pictures that locate them in the social world, which entails continuity over time (with the use of the gerund form of the verbs in their metaphors). Additionally, the metaphors underlie the contributions of these teachers: to coach, to help students, to surf, to explore new places, and to learn with students. Another aspect underlying these metaphors is related to the challenges of teaching. For example, for Harry, imagining the program that he desired as a student takes agency and thinking about introducing innovative teaching methods conducive to student learning. Finally, one metaphor suggested that teaching Arabic seems to be fraught with danger. Juliette claimed that it is just like surfing: while it is delightful and exhilarating, it can sometimes be challenging, scary, and depressing, as Juliette described it. Figure 7.1 summarizes the participants' metaphors related to imagining their identities in relation to teaching Arabic.

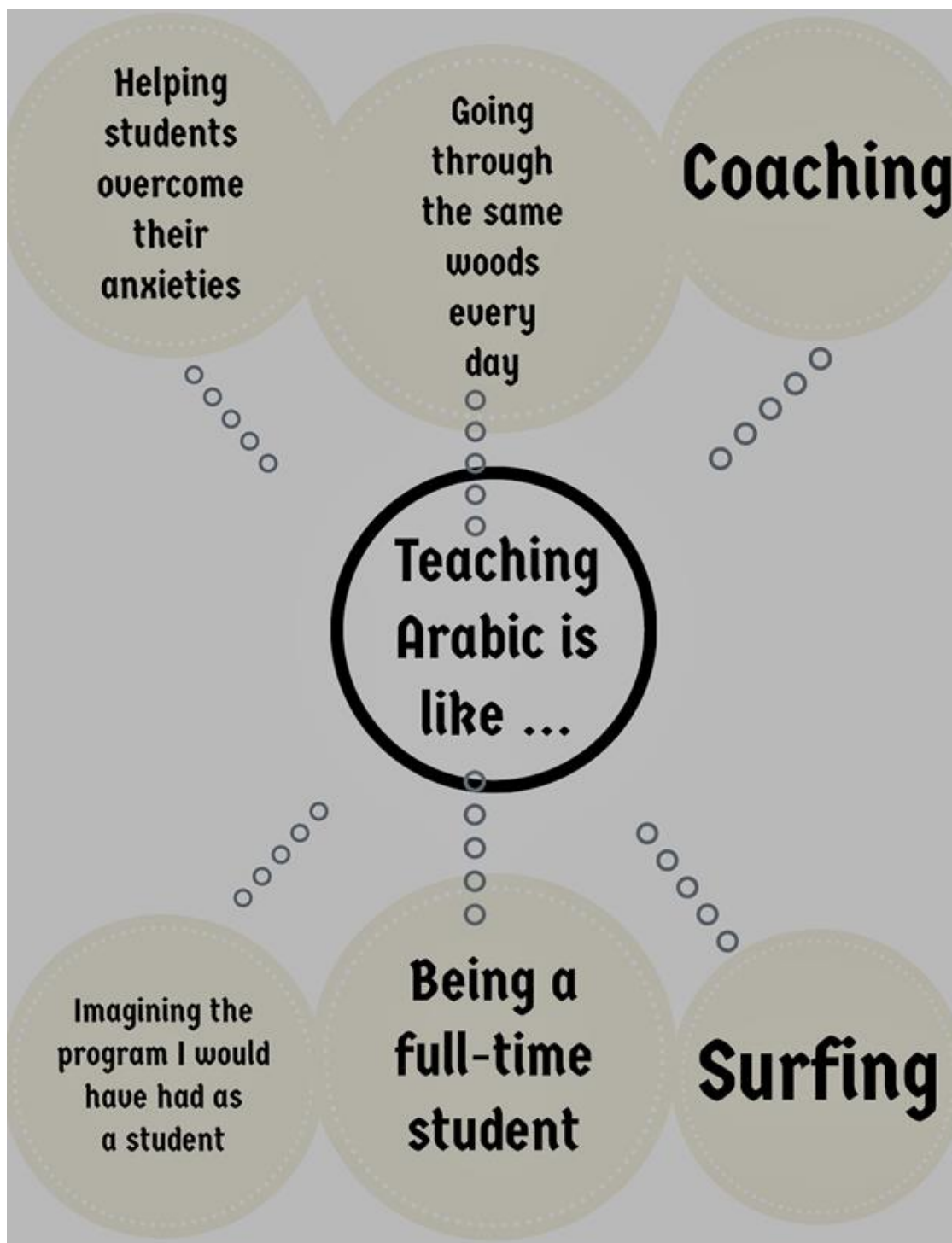


Figure 7.1: Teaching Arabic: teachers' metaphors

All these metaphors indicate that the teachers have to work hard to overcome their anxieties and fulfill their aspirations.

In terms of career goals and aspirations, the six participants looked optimistic about continuing their teaching journeys. Adam, for example, mentioned that he worked hard to promote the Arabic program and, therefore, would like to remain in academia for five years. Ann sees herself as a member of the TAFL community and is developing curriculum with resources to disseminate through an open access website for the Arabic teaching faculty. Additionally, given that she noticed that teacher training is lacking in the field, she would like to promote teacher training, instruct teachers about the use of teaching materials, and engage them in discussions of language ideologies. As for Harry, he enjoys his job and would like to take advantage of his large university learning community (15000 students) to build a successful Arabic program. Juliette imagines herself publishing an Arabic language textbook based on music and songs. She also mentioned that she would like to publish articles in language pedagogy and build confidence in her spoken Arabic. Jim is nearing retirement. He noted that he enjoys his job well and that he would like to continue teaching. Finally, Sarah, a doctoral student in second language acquisition seems to be open to teaching foreign language learning courses and Arabic language in college, high school, or in an online environment.

The third aspect of belonging is alignment. Alignment means investing one's energy to show accountability to the college system using pedagogical skills and teaching selves. The participants in this study self-positioned themselves as teachers who invest in applying the teaching and learning goals of their departments and ensure the continuity and success of the programs. Based on this self-positioning, the participants construct identities as members of the teaching community, building on their trajectories and their potential future aspirations. As Wenger (1998, p. 149) notes, "we define who we are by

where we have been and where we are going.” Examples of alignment include developing teaching practices that would benefit students and, in the case of this study’s participants, “making teaching Arabic better” (Ann, Adam, and Harry). Other examples of alignment lie in following the textbook themes and organizing cultural activities around the theme in each unit. Therefore, by investing their energy while participating in teaching and non-teaching practices that align with their program goals, the participants create alignment through coordination of efforts and reflect their commitment to teaching and to their communities of practice.

In sum, the three modes of belonging, engagement, imagination, and alignment, described in this section show that through these modes, NN Arabic teachers navigate the identities that they purport and those that are ascribed to them. One of the crucial elements that affect identity development in language teaching is the influence of native-speakerism, an ideology that influences both the experiences of teachers and their personal and professional identities.

7.1.3 Navigating Native-speakerism Effects in TAFL (Teacher Agency and Autonomy)

My discussions with the participants in this study revealed the impact of native-speakerism upon their lived experiences and professional lives. Native-speakerism was particularly connected with the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) (Holliday, 2006). This ideology maintains that N English teachers are the model and authority and, therefore, considered to be superior to NN English teachers. The topic of native-speakerism has been taken up and researched in languages other than English, but was

limited to a few languages: Chinese (Zhang & Jensen, 2013), Indonesian (Kohler, 2015), German (Ghanem, 2015; Riordan, 2018), and Arabic (Oulbeid, 2018).

As I pointed out in chapter one, I am using the labels native (N) and non-native (NN) because they are widely referenced in the literature despite their subjective, strange, and value-laden aspects (Benke & Medgyes, 2005; Braine, 1999; Cook, 1999; Dewaele, 2017b, Ghanem, 2015; Holliday, 2006; Mahboob, 2010; Riordan, 2018; Zhang & Jensen, 2013). In the field of Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language (TAFL), this study demonstrated that native-speakerism influences the participants' experiences in complex ways and in four key areas: teaching grammar vs teaching communication, empathizing with students, employment bias, and self-confidence.

First, while most of the participants agree on the seemingly “superiority” of N Arabic teachers in terms of their knowledge of language and culture, they also believe that N and NN Arabic teachers have distinct strengths and weaknesses, which is consistent with previous research in ELT (Benke & Medgyes, 2005; Medgyes, 1992). An example that highlights this tendency can be viewed in Jim's and Juliette's accounts. Jim remarked that as a NN Arabic teacher, he is good at grammar as witnessed by his N Arabic colleagues. In contrast, Jim noted that N Arabic teachers are good at teaching conversational and communicative activities:

My native-speaking colleagues are experts in teaching the productive skills, the production: speaking and writing. (Interview 1 - April 2019)

Juliette's experience supports Jim's claim. She indicated that some N Arabic teachers usually fail to provide logical explanations to grammatical phenomena:

One of the negatives that I have seen with some native speakers of Arabic is that there is no explanation. It's just like, because. Why? Because that's what it is. That's not helpful to a learner. (Interview 1 - May 2019)

A second example of “stereotypes” that are linked to NN language teachers in general is that NN language teachers tend to know their students’ needs better and may empathize with them (Mc Neil, 2005, Oulbeid, 2018). While this may be partially true, it cannot be generalized. For example, Harry does not empathize with his students. On the contrary, he challenges them and ensures that they do not get away with inadequate pronunciation. Moreover, Harry assigns his students more homework than necessary as part of the challenge.

Third, NN teachers struggle with status and power because they are subjected to excessive linguistic scrutiny and hiring bias. Hiring preferences for N teachers are well-documented in the ELT research (Amin, 1999; Braine, 1999; J. Liu, 1999; Mahboob & Golden, 2013; Medgyes, 1992; Selvi, 2010). Adam, a participant in this study, experienced employment discrimination when he was the third candidate in line for a position of assistant professor of Arabic at a private college. Adam explained that even after the first and second candidates declined the job offer, he was not contacted or offered the position. Adam felt that his experience may be an example of employment bias, but could not prove it. In terms of scrutiny, Harry narrated his experience as a Fulbright scholar in Morocco and recounted that he was offered a position to teach English simply because English was his mother tongue. Reflecting on this teaching experience, Harry described himself as a “horrible teacher” because he did not have any teacher training back then. When he spoke about NN Arabic teachers, Harry commented on how his linguistic competence and his transcripts would be carefully scrutinized, which would not be the case if he were a N Arabic teacher. Additionally, Adam and Juliette talked about having had unpleasant experiences with their first teachers who were

N Arabic teachers that lacked training. These teachers were hired simply for their native speaker status.

Finally, native-speakerism as an ideology is considered a factor that affects some NN language teachers' self-worth and professional standing. One of the reasons that the participants in this study raised as a cause for their anxiety and low self-esteem is their inadequate knowledge of language and culture, which is consistent with the literature (Bernat, 2008; Lowe & Kiczkowick, 2016; Medgyes, 1994). Two of the participants who openly expressed their self-doubts about their teaching skills in this study are Juliette and Jim. With upper levels of Arabic, the two participants felt that they have to prove their abilities to both their students and colleagues, and "need to develop linguistic authority" (Lowe & Kiczkowick, 2016, p. 10; Oulbeid, 2018). What Jim and Juliette's attitude may suggest is the lack of effective teacher training. For Jim, he noted in the survey questionnaire that he was not satisfied with his training as a teacher. Additionally, he believes in the effects of native-speakerism because he was trained as a teacher of TESOL initially, where native-speakerism as an ideology was prevalent. His training as an Arabic teacher took the form of a few class observations of a native speaker teacher and homework grading before "jumping" into teaching. This was how Jim was socialized into teaching Arabic and, unfortunately most Arabic teachers in the US are introduced to teaching in a similar manner as evidenced by Ann's experience and the research from my pilot study (Oulbeid, 2018). Even though Ann had limited training just like Jim, she was able to overcome the native-speaker ideology by reading research in applied linguistics, her major as a graduate student.

As for Juliette, her attitude can be explained first by the fact that her major as a graduate student was Arabic literature and not foreign language teaching. Therefore, all the works of Arabic literature in her courses were discussed in English, which affected her Arabic language fluency. She remarked:

And that was something that was very pronounced for me during my PhD and writing of my dissertation where I was so frustrated and wanted to give up so many times because I said, what... I decided to pursue this because I love speaking Arabic and yet here I am reading in Arabic but speaking English and writing in English and my Arabic is just getting weak. So that's a frustration for me, and I feel like I constantly have to go back to school. I feel like I constantly have to go. I mean and that's part of the reason for being abroad in the summers, and I'm taking off for القدس (Jerusalem) in a few days, and I'm going to be in an Arabic speaking environment for almost three months, which is great. (Interview 2 - May 2019)

As the excerpt above clarifies, Juliette was not satisfied with her language proficiency as a graduate student, which had a negative impact on her self-confidence and self-concept.

However, other participants, Adam, Ann, Sarah, and Harry displayed high self-confidence. Although these participants acknowledge their limited linguistic and cultural knowledge, they consider such a perceived “weakness” or “deficiency” as an opportunity for professional development and what Harry calls “academic training.” This attitude has been viewed as the “positive effect” of native-speakerism (Lowe & Kiczakowick, 2016, p. 8). The evidence is that Adam, Ann, and Harry for example, who serve as the Arabic program directors in their institutions have completely renovated the course schedules and are adopting innovative methodologies that are not based on the language textbook. They are using task-based learning and genre pedagogy. The reason behind their initiatives was their dissatisfaction with the way Arabic was taught when they were

students. Therefore, they wanted “to make teaching Arabic better.” (Ann and Adam). This attitude signals their autonomy and agency as teachers.

In summary, native-speakerism in TAFL impacts NN Arabic teachers differently. While native-speakerism influences some teachers in a negative manner through their feelings of anxiety and low self-confidence, it prompts others to persist and reject imposter syndrome. As a result, those who persist manage to turn their classroom teaching challenges into opportunities for self-development and empowerment.

7.2 Summary of Interpretation of Findings and Reflection

This chapter described the teaching experiences and professional identities of a sample NN Arabic university teachers. The prior discussion pictured the complex and multifaceted nature of the teachers’ experiences regarding their understanding of culture teaching and the development of their various identities in practice. The discussion showed numerous ways of integrating culture in the Arabic language classroom and the strategies the teachers used to navigate their senses of belonging as they interact with students, other faculty, and administrators in their institutions. At this point, it is noteworthy to mention the impact of the participants’ trajectories as learners of Arabic and teachers on their understandings of culture, their identifications, self-worth, and future aspirations. The discussion indicated that native-speakerism impacts NN Arabic teachers in two key ways. First, some teachers developed self-confidence which allowed them to view themselves in the inner circle and to confirm their affiliation and belonging to the Arabic language teaching community. This affiliation was evident in their agency and initiatives to build and use innovative curricula that would provide better learning experiences to their classes than they had as students. Second, some other teachers see

themselves as part of the outer circle and not part of “the same league” (Juliette) because they feel that they are not “experts” in teaching Arabic and their language skills needed maintenance. All in all, despite the negative effects of native-speakerism and the employment bias, one of the participants noted during the member-checking discussion with me that NN Arabic teachers with doctoral credentials are progressively offered tenure track positions while N Arabic teachers with similar credentials hold lecturer positions. The struggle with language maintenance and the native-speakerism ideology are two of the key messages revealed by the analysis of the findings of this study.

The purpose of analyzing the findings was to produce a comprehensive and nuanced synthesis of the data. The data collection and analysis procedures were not undertaken separately, rather data analysis began during the data collection phase. The two phases were interlocking. The challenge was sifting through a large amount of data (questionnaires, interviews, and documents), reducing them, making sense of them, identifying patterns, and synthesizing the key messages that the data uncovered regarding the study purpose and significance. Within case analysis revealed that each case has unique features in terms of its experiences, teaching styles, and positionings as explained in chapters 5 and 6.

The cross-case analysis performed found significant relationships between teacher training, discipline/major, teaching experience and self-confidence, which helped explain the findings. In the case of training, those participants who had little or no training displayed more anxiety than those who were satisfied with their teacher preparation programs. For example, Harry and Adam indicated that they had adequate training as graduate student instructors, which boosted their confidence. Both Adam and Harry

graduated from the same university. They indicated that the teaching assistant experience and “pedagogy” courses were all they could remember from that period of their education. However, as teaching assistants, the course designs and materials were prepared and discussed before implementation in the classroom. For Ann and Jim, despite the differences in age and teaching experience (Jim is over 60 years and Ann is in her thirties), and their dissatisfaction with their Arabic teacher preparation experiences, their level of anxiety was lower given that their experiences in and knowledge of the field of TESOL (the Teaching of English for Speakers of Other Languages). Both Jim and Ann earned a master’s degree in TESOL. As Jim indicated in the interviews, he derives most of his knowledge of pedagogy from his experiences in TESOL.

Sarah and Juliette are about the same age and both have 5 years teaching experience at the time of the study. However, they do not share the same level of confidence. While Sarah was neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with her training and experience as a master’s degree student, Juliette was very satisfied even though she hardly had any formal training and her discipline was comparative literature and not Arabic language studies. Sarah felt very positive about her skills and confidence in teaching. For her, her NN teacher status is a strength, not a handicap. Examining Sarah’s experiences indicates that her self-confidence arose from her experiences in summer Arabic programs teaching and direction. She taught and directed Arabic summer programs for high school students for a few years. These programs are sponsored by the US government and follow the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) standards for teaching. As for Juliette, she did not have any formal training in Arabic pedagogy. She only had a teaching mentor as a graduate student in comparative

literature. During this period, Juliette commented that her Arabic language speaking and writing skills were fading because she read all the literature books in Arabic and wrote in English. Therefore, she was concerned about Arabic language maintenance, which explains her positioning as a “deficient” speaker of Arabic, placing herself outside of “the same league,” and questioning her affiliation with the Arabic teaching community. Therefore, the teacher’s major, whether it is Arabic language or Arabic literature, and the type of teacher training they had influenced the teacher’s self-concept and level of confidence.

The presentation of the analysis of the findings revealed in this study should be examined with a degree of caution. The findings are open to question and cannot be generalized. First, the research sample was small in terms of the study participants and interview data (6 participants and 12 interviews). Second, the focus of the study was on those teachers whose first language was English. Thus, the perceptions of teachers whose first languages were Spanish, Italian, or Chinese, among others are not represented. Therefore, it must be stressed that the implications that can be drawn are essentially specific to the experiences of the teachers who participated in this study.

Besides my potential biases as a researcher, I acknowledge possible other biases when analyzing the findings because of my experiences as a N Arabic teacher and having worked with NN Arabic teachers in the past. To that end, and for the purpose of minimizing this limitation and maximizing validity and reliability, I shared individual findings reports with each participant to verify the accuracy of my accounts and interpretations via email (i.e., member checking). After the participants read and commented on the reports, they sent them back to me and we met virtually over Zoom for

30 minutes to discuss their reactions to the findings and interpretations. All the participants felt they saw themselves in the reports and commented on how meticulous the descriptions of their experiences were. Sarah for example said in the interview after reading the report, “I felt seen. This is like therapy!” In her email response to reading the findings, she wrote:

Attached is a commented-upon version of what you'd sent me. I just made a few comments as I was reading - some reactions, some clarifications, some corrections. In general, I was struck by the care with which you listened to me and faithfully recorded my responses. That is the mark of good qualitative research - it feels like therapy! I look forward to talking to you more whenever is convenient for you - perhaps sometime early next week? (Sarah, email exchange - November 2020)

In his email response after reading the report, Jim commented:

I reviewed the document you sent me. I made just a few tiny corrections. You mentioned that I worked for a federal agency. Actually, I worked for a private company which had many contracts, including a contract with a federal agency. As it turns out, that was the contract that involved designing an Arabic-English machine translation system, and I participated in that contract. Attached, you will find the document with a few minor corrections. By the way, thank you for changing my name. And please do not hesitate to contact me with any further questions. You have my respect and admiration as a researcher. (Jim, email exchange - November 2020)

Ann returned the report with minor comments saying:

I hope you are doing well in these crazy times! I've attached it with my comments. In general, I thought it was pretty accurate so they are minor. If it's possible to schedule the follow-up chat after December 7, that would be best, but if not, I can fit it in. Let me know if you have any further questions. (Ann, email exchange - November 2020)

Juliette was the only participants who did not send back the report with her comments even after I reached out to her three times.

Finally, I shared this research at an Arabic second language conference virtually and received two comments from the audience both confirming the picture of NN Arabic teachers that I have displayed and the feelings of inadequacy that some teachers sometimes grapple with. All in all, the data in this study remain open to alternative interpretations and the possibility of telling a different story by others. However, this chapter aims to present how I made sense of and understood the data and the interrelationships I saw in them.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this multiple case study was to examine with a sample of NN Arabic university teachers their trajectories, their perceptions of language and culture teaching, and the development of their social and professional identities. The conclusions from this study follow the research questions, the findings, and interpretations (See Appendix E for consistency of the findings, interpretations, and conclusions). Therefore, I discuss four key points: (a) Personal and classroom learning experiences as a foundation for teacher beliefs and practices; (b) Understandings of the inter/cultural approach to language teaching in the Arabic language classroom; (c) Perceptions that teacher education programs would prepare teachers for the profession; and (d) Challenging Arabic native-speakerism in Arabic teaching: Limited linguistic and cultural knowledge in Arabic is not a handicap, but an opportunity for academic growth. This chapter provides a discussion of the major findings and conclusions drawn from this research. The discussion concludes with recommendations for practice and research, and a final researcher reflection on the study.

8.1 Conclusions

8.1.1 Personal and Classroom Learning Experiences as a Foundation for Teacher Beliefs and Practices

The first major finding of this study is that teacher experiences as learners impact their beliefs and teaching. Although most of the teachers expressed their dissatisfaction with their experiences as learners of Arabic, some still use similar strategies their teachers employed when they were learning Arabic. The examination of the participants'

trajectories as learners and student teachers indicated that Arabic teaching programs were not able to attend to the needs of learners of Arabic. One of the major issues in the TAFL field is the focus on communication using modern standard Arabic (MSA). This is at the expense of Arabic varieties which are the everyday and familiar means of interaction of Arabs locally and overseas, which Ryding (2018, p. 15) calls “the tools of primary discourse.” As a result, some learners of Arabic are left to themselves to discover that the variety of Arabic they are learning in the classroom is not the language of communication of educated native speakers. Many Arabic teaching programs tend to aim for enhancing communicative competence in learners. However, this objective would unlikely be reached when Arabic language varieties are marginalized. Learners find out about this discrepancy only after a few semesters of learning the language or when they study abroad. This study revealed that some of the participants’ discovery, exposure, and learning of colloquial Arabic was a turning point in their trajectories and a key factor that helped them develop confidence and interest in continuing to learn Arabic and eventually teach it.

A counter example is Jim who did not learn a dialect before. He noted that one of his regrets was not having had the opportunity to learn an Arabic dialect when he was a learner. For the learners, the ability to speak Arabic in natural and authentic encounters should be developed in the classroom. Otherwise, failing to communicate in such environments may result in feelings of inadequacy and sometimes failure, which may lead to discontinuing the Arabic language learning experience. Therefore, having discovered this gap in Arabic teaching practices as learners, NN Arabic teachers would engage in inculcating the values of spoken Arabic in their students. Accordingly, the

students may eventually be able to reach advanced proficiency in *secondary discourse* (MSA) while keeping connections with the *primary discourse* of everyday informal interactions.

8.1.2 Understandings of the Inter/cultural Approach to Teaching in the Arabic Language Classroom

In line with the teaching approaches and the language of instruction, a key finding in this research is the participants' total emphasis on the four skills (vocabulary, grammar, speaking, and listening), the language functions, and less on integrating culture in language teaching. This study showed that although some of the participants take modest initiatives in teaching culture through weekly culture assignments, culture is still marginalized and occupies a second place in the Arabic language classroom. A conclusion to be drawn from this finding is that despite the multilingual turn in second language acquisition and the MLA report (2007) on the importance of multilingual and multicultural competencies for foreign language learners, the teaching of Arabic as a foreign language (TAFL) field and some Arabic teaching programs may not be aware of or are not implementing the principles of the MLA report. Instead, traditional approaches to teaching continue to be used. Such approaches are guided by the communicative teaching methods that aim to enable Arabic language learners to emulate or sound like native speakers. This approach was discernible in the teaching practices of the participants in this study. The majority of the participants did not indicate the how of integrating the linguistic with the cultural in meaningful ways, except for two participants who align their lesson plans with the ACTFL standards, Can-Do-Statements, and the five Cs (Communications, Communities, Comparisons, Connections, and Cultures).

Therefore, it can be concluded that this tendency may be attributed to teacher education experiences. While some Arabic teacher preparation programs provide courses in culture teaching, some of the content courses may be inadequate in offering satisfying ways of integrating culture into language teaching, such as sharing meaningful materials and using basic methods that cater to the intercultural language classroom. In other words, teacher training may not sufficiently prepare Arabic language teachers for culture teaching, negotiating meanings in authentic intercultural encounters, and enabling their students to easily move between languages and culture.

8.1.3 Perceptions that Teacher Education Programs Would Prepare Teachers for the Profession

In general, when teachers enter the language classroom for the first time, they find out that teaching entails building connections and relationships with individuals and entities, other than their students, in their institutions. They end up wearing multiple hats and enact various identifications. Therefore, students who enroll in a master's or doctoral program in TAFL should not expect that coursework and graduate teaching instruction alone can fully prepare them to teach. Because they are likely to interact with students, language faculty, and administrators, teachers go through a process of being, becoming, and belonging. In this process, teachers juggle many responsibilities and tasks required to engage with the entities in their teaching environments. Such a process requires various experiences and skills that teacher preparation programs may not offer. A conclusion that can be drawn from this finding is that having the privilege of speaking and teaching Arabic as a native speaker of English is fraught with challenges that may include anxiety, concern, insecurity, and inadequacy. These challenges may impact the teachers' self-

esteem and confidence. Thus, one way to overcome feelings of inadequacy and develop confidence was for prospective and inexperienced teachers to be open to learning informally and to seek opportunities for professional development even with the absence of incentives and formal training. For example, in one of the member checking session discussions, Harry suggested that many Arabic language summer programs seek fellows to teach high school students for a stipend. Many of these programs follow ACTFL standards and offer a variety of workshops in lesson design, implementation, and assessment. Being a part of these programs and benefitting from the supervision and feedback from expert supervisors would enable teachers to develop their instructional skills, accept ambiguity and inadequacy as normal for novice teachers, and boost their confidence and autonomy in their college classrooms.

8.1.4 Challenging Native-speakerism in Arabic teaching: Limited Linguistic and Cultural Knowledge as Opportunities for Academic Growth

Another major finding of this study was that most teachers acknowledge that they make great contributions to the Arabic language classroom despite the recognition of their limited language proficiency and cultural knowledge. 4 out of 6 participants did not consider N Arabic teachers as better or superior except when the former are well-trained in language pedagogy. A conclusion that can be drawn from this finding is that NN Arabic teachers seek legitimacy for and validation of their contributions as teachers to the field of TAFL. The participants in this study demonstrated that despite their differences from N Arabic teachers in terms of language proficiency and teaching behaviors (teacher intuition, for example), they are aware of the Arabic language learning processes and can provide insights into what can be easy and what can be problematic for their students.

Therefore, they can be effective teachers in their own terms if they are equipped with adequate language proficiency and training.

In this study, some of the participants were not concerned about their limited linguistic knowledge because they view it not as a barrier, but as a *strength* and an opportunity for improvement and *academic training*. As a result, some of these teachers may exercise a sense of autonomy and agency when it comes to meeting the needs of their students and their departments, especially if they are in charge of their department as is the case with Adam, Ann, and Harry in this study. Agency and autonomy can be manifested in their freedom to choose the teaching approaches (genre pedagogy, flipped classrooms, and task-based learning for example), and to recommend and implement required courses and weekly schedules. Ann tends to enrich her teaching methodology by co-teaching classes and recording reflections on her classroom practices. This may be the reason for positioning herself as a researcher-practitioner. In this capacity, she was able to apply research-based language learning methodologies in her classrooms. Unlike Ann, the other participants were not in charge of their teaching. Jim, Juliette, and Sarah had to follow the schedules, teaching approaches, and textbook materials mandated by their department chairs, which may account for their sense of intimidation, anxiety, and isolation. It can be concluded that the difference between the two groups is that the first group view themselves as having teacher legitimacy and power to make a difference in teaching Arabic in innovative ways. The second group still implements traditional teaching practices based on their experiences as learners and following the directions of their program coordinators. This attitude and these teachers' (i.e., Jim and Juliette) practices can be explained as arising from their self-doubts, anxieties, and low

professional self-worth. Another conclusion to be drawn is that self-confidence or lack thereof can influence teacher practices. Therefore, teacher confidence enhances autonomy and agency, which may promote pedagogical innovations, self-confidence, empowerment, and a sense of belonging.

8.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings, analysis, and conclusions of this study, this section offers recommendations in the form of several points of discussion about learning and teaching Arabic in the US and NN Arabic teachers' personal and professional identities. A second set of recommendations addresses further research.

8.2.1 Recommendations for Practice

The interviews in this study aimed to describe the trajectories of NN Arabic teachers to discuss the factors that enabled them to become Arabists, the challenges they face as teachers, and their needs to succeed in their teaching endeavors. The findings discussed above point to several practical implications for learning and teaching Arabic in the US.

First, this study illustrated that continuing the Arabic learning experience for the participants was made possible by learning colloquial Arabic alongside the formal variety (MSA) abroad. Learning formal Arabic alongside the Arabic dialects was referred to in the literature as the integrated approach, which is communicative in nature and seeks to enable the learners to become educated speakers capable of negotiating meanings in authentic situations (Younes, 2014; Al-Batal, 2017). One issue with the integrated approach was which variety to learn, given that each Arab country has its own dialect(s). However, this study demonstrated that knowledge of any variety of colloquial Arabic

would enable easier communication with speakers of other varieties. For example, Harry learned Darija (Moroccan Arabic) before travelling to Syria. In Syria, he was able to easily interact with people using what he called “a modified Darija.” His success in communicating smoothly using his knowledge of Moroccan Arabic made him “realize that variation in Arabic [dialects] is not as big an obstacle as it’s made out to be.” (Harry, Member checking feedback). Thus, learning an Arabic dialect can motivate learners of Arabic and have a positive effect on enhancing their self-confidence (Donitsa-Schmidt, Inbar & Shohamy, 2004; Soliman, 2014). Therefore, Arabic teaching programs should consider the merits of integrating spoken Arabic with MSA in elementary Arabic courses to enable their students to improve their communicative skills and invest in learning Arabic beyond the first semester or first year. This integration would undoubtedly help learners build a solid foundation for developing adequate proficiency at the advanced and superior levels of Arabic.

Second, as is the case with many NN teachers in English Language Teaching (ELT), this study explained that NN Arabic teachers are concerned about their language proficiency, particularly when teaching advanced level classes in Arabic. The main issue resides in how to maintain their language skills, which affects their self-esteem. One key reason for the lack of language maintenance and ease of spoken language at the advanced levels was the emphasis on “secondary discourse” (Ryding, 2018), which is formal Arabic (MSA) at the elementary level classes, at the expense of “primary discourse” (Ryding, 2018), which refers to everyday informal Arabic (dialects). The second reason is the language-literature divide as reported in the foreign language teaching literature (Byrnes & Kord, 2002; MLA, 2007). The divide shifts attention from spoken to mainly

written discourse at the intermediate and advanced levels in content courses (i.e., linguistics and literature), which influences the foreign language learner's knowledge base and interactional abilities. Therefore, implementing a curriculum that combines language, culture, and literature as "a continuous whole" (MLA, 2007) would enhance language proficiency, enable language maintenance, and promote positive self-concepts.

Third, this study illustrated how some teachers received little to no training in general and in integrating culture with language in particular, which is noticeable in their practices. Therefore, quality teacher education is needed, specifically professional development in teacher training (Al-Batal & Abdalla, 2011). The training should include teacher socialization into the discipline (i.e., Arabic teaching), the teaching profession, and the school organization (Johnston & Wetheril, 2002). With reference to Arabic, formal teacher training should include the knowledge base, second language pedagogy, research in second language acquisition (SLA), and Arabic language proficiency (Alhawary, 2013). Additionally, adequate training should include clear, relevant, and research-based strategies for integrating and assessing culture in language teaching (Byrd, 2014). Such strategies may be based on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) standards for Arabic. Furthermore, to help preservice teachers be informed about various teaching practices, they should be invited to observe Arabic classes taught by both N and NN Arabic teachers, conduct interviews with these teachers about their professional lives, and engage in reflections and discussions with their educators and fellow pre-service teachers. Finally, raising consciousness on the needs of NN Arabic teachers among N Arabic teachers and vice-versa would open doors for sharing teaching goals and practices, working in teams, and supporting each other. In

brief, Arabic teacher education programs success may lie in “creating teacher community” and “facilitating reflective practice as an important process in teacher development” (Bigelow & Walker, 2004, p. 11).

Fourth, concerning teacher practices and professional lives, Arabic language education programs should offer content classes that seek to uncover how NN Arabic teachers construct their identities. In L2 education in general, Kanno and Stuart (2011) called for the centrality of “a deeper understanding” of teacher identity development for student teachers. One aspect of teacher identity construction that is common among preservice foreign language teachers is the anxieties and emotions linked to L2 learning and teaching. This study portrayed how several teachers experience multiple levels of insecurity. Hence, the need for language teacher preparation programs to design content courses that prepare teacher candidates to navigate ambiguity, powerlessness, and inferiority complex. For prospective NN Arabic teachers, understanding how to challenge concerns related to native-speakerism and low confidence entails learning about what to expect after graduation and how to turn negative self-perceptions into positive ones. One of the key findings of this research is that developing teacher agency can help counteract negative emotions and promote teacher self-efficacy.

Finally, because of inadequate training and the emotions caused by the native speaker fallacy (Phillipson, 1992) or native-speakerism (Holliday, 2006), NN Arabic teachers need continuous support and mentoring. This study highlighted the benefits of collaboration and team-teaching on teacher emotional stability (in the case of Jim and Ann). Additionally, the participants in this study remarked that having a mix of N and NN teachers in foreign language departments would be an ideal environment for

successful student learning experiences as the mix can facilitate productive collaboration and support between the teachers. Practicing collaboration with language colleagues would likely alleviate the burden of isolation, self-doubt, and the impact of questioning the NN Arabic teacher il/legitimacy.

8.2.2 Recommendations for Further Research

To the best of my knowledge, this is the first large study in the field of teaching Arabic as a foreign language (TAFL) addressing the trajectories, teaching, and identities of NN Arabic teachers in the US. One small scale study on this topic was conducted by the researcher (Oulbeid, 2018). Therefore, I recommend future research to be undertaken to come to a deeper understanding of the personal and professional lives of NN Arabic teachers in the US and around the world.

First, based on the findings of this study, specifically regarding the use of the integrated approach (i.e., teaching colloquial and formal Arabic in tandem) to teaching Arabic, further research examining the effects or lack thereof of this approach on student success and confidence is needed. The purpose of such research would be to give voice to both teachers who learned a dialect from the beginning and those who did not. A comparative study would uncover interesting findings about the effective approaches to learning Arabic as a second language.

Second, since NN teachers' emotions are linked to their practices, further research in TAFL should examine the influence of emotions and identity conflict on teacher practices and lives. This kind of research would offer insights into the type of support NN Arabic teachers would need to overcome their sense of im/balance and the strategies to

help reconcile their conflicting identities and “regulate their emotions.” (Reis, 2011, p. 61).

Third, this research demonstrated that identity shifts and develops overtime and across social contexts, and that anxiety decreases with years of experience. More studies are needed to uncover the process of NN Arabic teacher identity development overtime to understand the factors at play. This type of research should be undertaken with a larger sample to examine the various personal, structural, and contextual factors that impact upon learning experiences, teacher identity development, self-confidence, and agency.

Fourth, based on the dissatisfaction of most of the participants with their socialization into language teaching and the profession, future studies should be conducted to look into the details of preservice teacher experiences including teaching methods courses, which have been deemed inefficient in inculcating relevant and research-based methods for the integration of culture in L2 teaching (Byrd, 2014).

Finally, there is a growing number of NN Arabic teachers in the K12 education system in the US. Therefore, further similar studies exploring the identities of NN Arabic teachers in this context would be valuable to promote an understanding of their trajectories, their identities, and their classroom and institutional challenges. A fair number of native English speakers are working as NN Arabic teachers in the K12 context. It would be constructive to compare and contrast their experiences with college level NN Arabic teachers.

8.3 Researcher Reflections

This research was sparked by my experience of working with a few NN Arabic teachers as a teacher and mentor during a few Arabic summer programs. NN Arabic

teachers' experiences and identities is a fairly new field of study in TAFL. After I have piloted a small-scale study with two teachers, I realized there is more to learn about this category of teachers in terms of their trajectories, their aspirations, their successes, and their challenges.

Writing this dissertation has been a long, but rewarding journey in terms of honing my skills as a researcher and expanding my knowledge as a foreign language educator. It was also worthwhile exploring this new field of study in learning and teaching Arabic as a second language in the US using qualitative research methodology. Finally, I have attempted to successfully draw a comprehensive picture of the teachers' personal and professional experiences that would enable them to reflect on their successes and challenges both as learners and as teachers.

This work was a collaborative effort between me and the research participants. The insights gleaned from their demographic information, narratives, and teaching documents have been enhanced by their feedback on the study results and conclusions that I shared with them. I am grateful to them for taking the time to share both their successful and challenging experiences with me. My greatest hope is that, through this research, I have sowed a seed that would give rise to future research on this topic, demystify the process of becoming and being a NN Arabic teacher, and enable both prospective learners and teachers of Arabic to feel empowered in the face of language ideologies and the myth of native-speakerism. Finally, I hope this study prompts teacher educators and program directors in TAFL in the US to rethink the value of content courses in Arabic language teacher education. In their reconsideration, the new coursework should be sensitive to the needs of the growing population of preservice NN

Arabic teachers and supportive of their pedagogical and emotional development in the process of becoming professional classroom practitioners. At the same time, the new programs should come with an understanding of the importance of acknowledging that having a mix of N and NN teachers in an Arabic language program will offers Arabic language learners the best of both worlds.

APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Consent Form for Participation in a Research Study

University of Massachusetts Amherst

Researcher: Brahim Oulbeid, *Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Laura Valdiviezo* [413-545-7043]

Study Title: Arabic second language users' perceptions of language, culture, and identity: When teacher beliefs meet classroom and institutional realities.

1. What is this form?

This form is called a Consent Form. It will give you information about the study so you can make an informed decision about participation in this research.

This consent form will give you the information you will need to understand why this study is being done and why you are being invited to participate. We encourage you to take some time to think this over and ask questions now and at any other time. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this form and you will be given a copy for your records.

2. WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE?

You have been invited to participate in this study because you are:

- a- Current teachers/ professors of Arabic at the college level in the US.
- b- Native speakers of English/ other non-Semitic languages and learned Arabic in college.
- c- Teachers who learned Arabic in college or high school.

3. WHAT IS THE CONTEXT and PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?

This case study takes place in the context of the recent interest of many young Americans in learning languages that are considered “critical” to U.S. economic and political interests, especially after the events of 9/11. Arabic and 12 other languages have been deemed “critical-need” languages. Some of the participants in this study are part of the wave of teachers who have benefited from the funds that served to stimulate U.S. students’ interests to learn these languages (Welles 2004) and teach college level Arabic courses. Competence in these languages promotes the development of intercultural communication and understanding, and global competition.

Research on NNS teachers did not begin until the 1990’s (Braine 1999, Llurda 2005, Medgyes 1994). Most of this research was on NNS teachers of English and explored the differences between native speaker (NS) teachers and NNS teachers as well as differences in teaching language and culture. While there are a few studies about the status and profiles of Arabic language teachers (Abdalla and Al-Batal 2011, Belnap 2007), there is no research addressing the status and characteristics of NNS teachers of Arabic in the United States.

The purpose of this study is to examine a maximum of 12 college level non-native speaker (NNS) Arabic teachers’ beliefs about the integration of language and culture in teaching, how their beliefs impact/not their classroom practice, and how they make sense of their identities as NNS teachers of Arabic. This study will help better understand the challenges that Arabic language teachers encounter and raise awareness among language program directors and teacher educators about such challenges, which will result in building new programs that address these challenges and are sensitive to the needs of these teachers.

4. WHERE WILL THE STUDY TAKE PLACE AND HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?

The study will take place during the spring semester and will last from January 2019 to December 2019. It will take place at the participants' respective institutions (colleges/universities).

5. WHAT WILL I BE ASKED TO DO?

There are two parts to the research study. A participation request on an Arabic teachers list-serve and the New Generation of Arabic language teachers Facebook page after obtaining permission from respective administrators. A link will be posted on the two webpages for volunteer participants to complete a 10-15 minutes survey online. You will read the consent form online and sign it online in Qualtrics before you start completing the survey. The link to the consent form is provided in the survey itself. First, you will be asked to complete a 4-question pre-screening questionnaire. Once you are eligible to participate, you will be directed to agree to participate before completing the rest of the survey. Those who are deemed ineligible will be directed to the end of the survey message (See end of survey message document). The short questionnaire includes general information about education, languages taught, spoken, years of teaching, college degrees, and information pertaining to the participants' Arabic language learning and teaching experiences. At the close of the questionnaire, if you are willing to participate in follow-up interviews, you will be invited to read the informed consent form online, sign it and contact me via email to discuss the interview schedule and procedures. After examining the questionnaire responses and obtaining the names of potential interview

participants, a maximum of 12 participants will be selected (selection will be based on having an equal mix of gender participants).

The second part is that once you willingly accept participation in the study, you will be asked to sit for three interviews: a- the first one will deal with your experiences as a learner of Arabic and preservice teacher; b- the second will delve into your experiences as a college teacher of Arabic; and c- the third will engage in the discussion of the meanings of your experiences and how you see yourself as a teacher of Arabic. You may skip any question you feel uncomfortable answering. Another part of the study is audiotaping three class observations that focus only on you as a teacher. Furthermore, you will be asked to provide some teaching materials (lesson plans, syllabi, quizzes, teaching philosophy statement, and worksheets). These materials will be quizzes and worksheets that have been handed in to students and do not necessarily need to be completed by students. Finally, a focus group interview (if possible) will provide a space for all the participants to share what they have to say about their different experiences as learners of Arabic, preservice teachers, and classroom practitioners. Some of the topics for this discussion include, how you understand culture in the classroom, the factors that facilitate or hinder its implementation, and what challenges you encounter in your workplace (See sample focus group questions document). This is an opportunity for participants to agree or disagree with each other about the issues in question. They will also be encouraged to share the pedagogical and social challenges they face as teachers and how they deal with them.

In short, you will be asked to:

- 1- Complete a 8-12 minutes online survey (you have already completed the survey at this stage).
- 2- Attend three 45 -60 mins interviews via Skype.
- 3- Allow the researcher to observe them teaching three classes (Not a requirement for participation in the study)
- 4- Allow the researcher to audio record and transcribe three classes. (Optional)
- 5- Provide a sample of teaching materials and teaching philosophy statement.
- 6- Participate in one 45- 60 mins semi-structured focus group interview.
- 7- Allow the researcher to contact during study data analysis and write up to chat for 15- 20 mins to clarify any issues or ask any questions that may come up.

6. What are my benefits of being in this study?

There are no specific benefits associated with participation in this study. However, some teachers and administrators have reported that discussing and reflecting on their professional practices has contributed to them having a better understanding of their work and their learners, particularly as it relates to difficult issues regarding language, culture, and identity. You may not directly benefit from this research; however, we hope that your participation in the study will benefit Arabic language education programs, as it will offer recommendations about what challenges these teachers encounter and help them design programs that are sensitive to the needs of NNS teachers.

7. WHAT ARE my RISKS OF being in THIS STUDY?

We believe there are no known risks associated with this research study; however, a possible inconvenience may be the time it takes to complete the study. There is always the possibility of a data breach. However, the researcher has made every reasonable effort to maintain the confidentiality of the data.

8. How will my personal information be protected?

The following procedures will be used to protect the confidentiality of your study records. Concrete measures will be taken to protect their confidentiality and their names and the names of their institutions will not appear in any publication or disclosed to anyone. All identifiable information and their respective codes will be kept in a personal computer with password protection. While the data is still being collected and analyzed, audio materials, questionnaire responses, artifacts, and interview transcripts will be stored in a safely locked file cabinet in the researcher's private office on campus. Research records will be labeled with a code. A master key that links names and codes will be maintained in a separate and secure location. The master key and audiotapes will be destroyed three years after the close of the study. All electronic files (interview transcripts, audio recordings, artifacts) containing identifiable information will be password protected. Any computer hosting such files will also have password protection to prevent access by unauthorized users. Only the researcher will have access to the passwords. All the data sources will be duplicated against possible loss and will be stored in locked file cabinet in the advisor's campus office. After completing the dissertation, all the materials will be given to the dissertation committee chair. Research records will be labeled with a code. A master key that links names and codes will be maintained in a separate and secure location on campus (researcher/ advisor's office). The master key and

audiotapes will be destroyed three years after the close of the study. At the conclusion of this study, the researcher may publish their findings. Information will be presented in summary format and you will not be identified in any publications or presentations.

9. WILL I RECEIVE ANY PAYMENT FOR TAKING PART IN THE STUDY?

No.

10. WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?

Take as long as you like before you make a decision. We will be happy to answer any question you have about this study. If you have further questions about this project or if you have a research-related problem, you may contact the researcher(s), Brahim Oulbeid at (413) 923-1952. [If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research subject, you may contact the University of Massachusetts Amherst Human Research Protection Office (HRPO) at (413) 545-3428 or humansubjects@ora.umass.edu.”].

11. CAN I STOP BEING IN THE STUDY?

You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to. If you agree to be in the study, but later change your mind, you may drop out at any time. There are no penalties or consequences of any kind if you decide that you do not want to participate.

12. WHAT IF I AM INJURED?

The University of Massachusetts does not have a program to compensate subjects for injury or complications related to human subjects research, but the study personnel will assist you in getting treatment.

13. SUBJECT STATEMENT OF VOLUNTARY CONSENT

When signing this form, I am agreeing to voluntarily enter this study. I have had a chance to read this consent form, and it was explained to me in a language which I use and understand. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have received satisfactory answers. I understand that I can withdraw at any time.

I agree for the researcher to:

___ Observe three class sessions of teaching activities (Not a requirement to participate).

___ Audiotape my classroom teaching activities (This is not a requirement for participation).

___ Audio record and transcribe my interviews.

___ Include samples of my teaching materials for the research study (e.g. lesson plans, syllabi, quizzes, teaching philosophy statement, and worksheets).

___ Contact me (during the study) to answer questions about the data I provide.

___ Contact me (after the study closes) to participate in a 15-20 minutes chat if I have questions to ask.

A copy of this signed Informed Consent Form has been given to me.

Participant Signature:

Print Name:

Date:

By signing below, I indicate that the participant has read and, to the best of my knowledge, understands the details contained in this document and has been given a copy.

Signature of Person

Print Name:

Date:

Obtaining Consent

APPENDIX B

STUDY PARTICIPANTS RECRUITMENT REQUEST

Subject line: Survey Questionnaire for College Level Teachers of Arabic

My name is Brahim Oulbeid and I am a doctoral candidate in the Department of Teacher Education and Curriculum Studies at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst.

I am writing to request your participation in a brief survey. You have been invited because you are an Arabic as a second language teacher (i.e. Non-native teachers of Arabic) and helping students to learn Arabic at the college level in the United States. All teachers, regardless of their years of experience, are eligible to participate. I would like to obtain more information about your experiences learning and teaching this language.

Your responses to this survey will help me identify some of the challenges that teachers of Arabic as a second language encounter in and out of their classrooms, find ways to face these challenges, and provide better teaching and learning opportunities for teachers and students of Arabic language.

Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary and your responses will be kept confidential. No names will be associated with responses. Please feel free to contact me by telephone at 413-923-1952 or by e-mail at boulbeid@umass.edu should you have any comments or questions.

The survey is brief and will only take 10 to 15 minutes to complete (on average). Please click the link below to go to the survey Website (or copy and paste the link into your web browser).

https://umassamherst.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8APz20xuaCOVvRX

At the end of the survey questionnaire, you will be invited to participate in *follow-up interviews* with me to discuss some of your responses in the survey as well as your experiences as learners of Arabic, student teachers and classroom teachers. If you are willing to participate, please contact me by telephone at 413-923-1952 or by e-mail at boulbeid@umass.edu. The interviews will last 45-60 minutes, and will be conducted via Skype or face-to-face.

Thank you for your time and cooperation. Arabic second language teachers' experiences and classroom contributions are important to the Arabic language teaching community in the US.

Sincerely,

Brahim Oulbeid
Ph.D. Candidate
College of Education
University of Massachusetts-Amherst

APPENDIX C

ONLINE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Study Title: Arabic second language users' perceptions of language, culture, and identity:

Introduction

I am conducting this survey to better understand the experiences of college teachers of Arabic language as language learners, pre-service teachers, and classroom instructors. I am interested in the challenges that teachers are facing both in and outside of the classroom. Because this information is so important for teachers of Arabic, administrators, and teacher educators, I am asking that all teachers who initially learned Arabic in college to complete this survey.

Before completing the survey, you will be asked to answer four pre-screening questions that will determine your eligibility to participate in this survey. If you are determined to be eligible to complete the survey, you will start the survey after consenting to participate. If you are determined to be ineligible to participate, you will be directed to the end of survey message.

Your responses will be kept completely confidential and will not be identifiable in any research reports, presentations, or publications on the results.

Participation in this survey is voluntary and takes 8 to 12 minutes to complete (on average). You may skip any questions that you prefer not to answer. At the end of the survey you will be asked to participate in a follow-up interview. If you are interested in participating, please send me your contact information (your name and email address) at: boulbeid@umass.edu or provide your name and email address where indicated.

Thank you for participating. If you agree to participate in this survey, click "Next," below.

Q1 Do you self-identify as a native speaker of Arabic?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (3)

Skip To: Q2 If Do you self-identify as a native speaker of Arabic? = No

Skip To: End of Survey If Do you self-identify as a native speaker of Arabic? = Yes

Q2 Are you currently teaching Arabic at the college level in the US?

☐ YES (1)

☐ No (4)

Skip To: End of Survey If Are you currently teaching Arabic at the college level in the US? = No

Skip To: Q3 If Are you currently teaching Arabic at the college level in the US? = YES

Q3 Did you start learning Arabic in college?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (3)

Skip To: End of Survey If Did you start learning Arabic in college? = No

Skip To: Q4 If Did you start learning Arabic in college? = Yes

Q4 Have you been teaching Arabic at the college level for five years or more?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (3)

Skip To: End of Survey If Have you been teaching Arabic at the college level for five years or more? = No

Skip To: End of Block If Have you been teaching Arabic at the college level for five years or more? = Yes

Page Break

End of Block: Default Question Block
of Block: Block 1

Q5 When did you first start learning Arabic?

- ☐ High School (1)
 - ☐ First year in college (2)
 - ☐ Sophomore year in college (3)
 - ☐ Junior year in college (4)
 - ☐ Senior year in college (5)
 - ☐ Graduate student (6)
 - ☐ Other (please specify) (7)
-

Q6 Where did you start learning Arabic?

- ☐ University (1)
- ☐ State college (2)
- ☐ Community college (3)
- ☐ Private college (4)

- ☐ Private university (5)
 - ☐ High School (7)
 - ☐ Other (please specify) (6)
-

Q7 Please indicate the highest degree you earned.

- ☐ Ph.D. (1)
 - ☐ Ed.D. (6)
 - ☐ Master's (3)
 - ☐ Bachelor's (4)
 - ☐ Other (please specify) (5)
-

Q8 What was your major?

- ☐ Arabic Studies (1)
- ☐ Middle Eastern Studies (2)
- ☐ Teaching of Arabic as a second language (TAFL) (3)
- ☐ Asian Studies (4)
- ☐ Education (5)

☐ Other (please specify) (6)

Q9 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

My first Arabic teacher inspired me to continue my journey of learning the Arabic language.

☐ Strongly agree (1)

☐ Agree (2)

☐ Disagree (5)

☐ Strongly disagree (6)

Q10 Have you traveled abroad to learn Arabic?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

Skip To: End of Block If Have you traveled abroad to learn Arabic? = No

Q11 If you answered "Yes" to the previous question, please indicate how likely or unlikely your experiences abroad impacted your interest in learning Arabic language and culture.

☐ Very likely (1)

☐ Likely (2)

- ☐ Somewhat likely (3)
- ☐ Somewhat unlikely (4)
- ☐ Unlikely (5)
- ☐ Very unlikely (6)

End of Block: Block 1

Start of Block: Block 2

Q12 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

As an undergraduate student of Arabic, my classroom teachers focused on

	Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Somewhat agree (3)	Somewhat disagree (4)	Disagree (5)	Strongly disagree (6)
vocabulary (Q9_1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
reading (Q9_2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
writing (Q9_3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

listening (Q9_4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
speaking (Q9_5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
grammar (Q9_6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
teaching some aspects of culture (Q9_7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q13 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements: As a graduate teaching assistant of Arabic, my teaching mentors focused on

	Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Somewhat agree (3)	Somewhat disagree (4)	Disagree (5)	Strongly disagree (6)
vocabulary (Q10_1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
reading (Q10_2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

writing (Q10_3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
listening (Q10_4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
speaking (Q10_5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
grammar (Q10_7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
teaching some aspects of culture (Q10_8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q14 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements: As a teacher of Arabic, I focus on

	strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Somewhat agree (3)	Somewhat disagree (4)	Disagree (5)	Strongly disagree (6)
vocabulary (Q11_1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
reading (Q11_2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

writing (Q11_3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
listening (Q11_4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
speaking (Q11_5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
grammar (Q11_6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q15 To what extent are you satisfied with your graduate Arabic teacher training experience?

- ☐ Very satisfied (1)
- ☐ Satisfied (3)
- ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (4)
- ☐ Dissatisfied (5)
- ☐ Very dissatisfied (6)

End of Block: Block 2

Start of Block: Block 3

Q16 What does culture in language teaching mean to you? (select all that apply).

- ☐ Food (1)
 - ☐ Festivals (2)
 - ☐ Folklore (3)
 - ☐ Movies, songs, and Music (5)
 - ☐ Values (6)
 - ☐ Clothing (7)
 - ☐ World views, beliefs (8)
 - ☐ Other (please specify) (9)
-

Q17 How do you rate the importance of language and culture in teaching?

- ☐ Culture is more important than language (1)
 - ☐ Language is more important than culture (2)
 - ☐ Language and culture are equally important (3)
 - ☐ Other (please specify) (4)
-

Q18 How do you view the relationship between language and culture in the classroom? (select all that apply).

- ☐ Language and culture are bound (1)
 - ☐ Language and culture are separate (2)
 - ☐ Language and culture are bound but can be separate (3)
 - ☐ Other (please specify) (6)
-

Q19 When you were studying Arabic, did the curriculum include content on Arab cultures?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)

Q20 When you were studying Arabic, what materials did your teachers use to present Arab cultures in the classroom? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ YouTube Videos (1)
- ☐ Movies (2)
- ☐ Songs and dance (3)

- ☐ Authentic materials: koufya, hand of Fatima, flags, etc. (4)
 - ☐ Guest speakers (5)
 - ☐ Field trips (6)
 - ☐ Talk about different ways of greetings (7)
 - ☐ Other: please specify (8)
-

Q21 As a teacher of Arabic, what teaching materials do you use to teach Arab cultures? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ Songs and dances (1)
 - ☐ Movies (2)
 - ☐ YouTube Videos (3)
 - ☐ Authentic materials (4)
 - ☐ Guest speakers (5)
 - ☐ Field trips (6)
 - ☐ Short stories (7)
 - ☐ Other: please specify. (8)
-

End of Block: Block 3

Start of Block: Block 4

Q22 What is the status of your position?

- ☐ Tenured professor (1)
 - ☐ Assistant professor (6)
 - ☐ Lecturer (2)
 - ☐ Teaching assistant (3)
 - ☐ Instructor (5)
 - ☐ Other. Please specify. (4)
-

Q23 What department is your Arabic program that you teach in a part of?

- ☐ Middle Eastern Studies (1)
- ☐ Near Eastern Studies (2)
- ☐ Asian Languages and Civilizations (3)
- ☐ Languages, Literatures, and Cultures (4)
- ☐ Arabic and Islamic Studies (5)

☐ Other (please specify) (6)

Q24 How many years have you worked as a teacher of Arabic in College (Not including the years you worked as Teaching Assistant)?

☐ 1-5years (1)

☐ 6-10 years (2)

☐ 11-15 years (3)

☐ 16-20 years (4)

☐ More than 20 years (6)

Q25 To what extent do you agree or disagree with each statement about your department/ program:

	Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Disagree (3)	Strongly disagree (4)
I feel appreciated. (Q22_1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel isolated (Q22_2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel welcomed (Q22_3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

There is a spirit
of cooperation
with non-
Arabic faculty
(Q22_4)

☐☐☐☐

There is a spirit
of cooperation
with Arabic
language
faculty (Q22_5)

☐☐☐☐

I am included in
decision-
making about
Arabic course
offers (Q22_6)

☐☐☐☐

I have the
resources I need
to do my job
well (Q22_7)

☐☐☐☐

I feel
intimidated
(Q22_8)

☐☐☐☐

Faculty and
staff seem to
care about me
(Q22_9)

☐☐☐☐

Q26 In your department, to what extent do you feel like you

	To a great extent (1)	To some extent (2)	To no extent (3)
belong? (Q23_1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
have a good support system? (Q23_2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
have a mentor? (Q23_3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
have a role model? (Q23_4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
are a valued member? (Q23_5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q27 As a teacher of Arabic, how do you view yourself? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ Teacher (1)
- ☐ Role model (2)
- ☐ Interpreter of culture (3)

- ☐ Continuing learner of Arabic (4)
 - ☐ Imposter (5)
 - ☐ Non-native teacher (6)
 - ☐ Other (please specify) (7)
-

Q28 What is your age in years?

- ☐ 22 - 31 years (1)
 - ☐ 32 - 41 years (2)
 - ☐ 42 - 51 years (3)
 - ☐ 52 - 61 years (4)
 - ☐ Other. Please specify. (5)
-

Q29 What is your gender?

- ☐ Male (1)
- ☐ Female (2)

☐ Other. Please specify (3)

Q30 What is your race/ ethnicity? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ Native American (1)
- ☐ Asian/ Pacific Islander/ Asian American (2)
- ☐ Black/ African American (3)
- ☐ Latino/a, Hispanic (4)
- ☐ White (5)
- ☐ North African/ Middle Eastern (6)
- ☐ Other (Please specify) (7)
-

Q31 What other languages do you speak in addition to Arabic? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ English (1)
- ☐ French (2)
- ☐ Spanish (3)

- ☐ Farsi (4)
- ☐ German (5)
- ☐ Chinese (6)
- ☐ Japanese (7)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (8)
-

Q32 Would you be interested in participating in a follow-up interview? If YES, please e-mail me your name and contact information at this address: boulbeid@umass.edu or provide your name and email address below.

- ☐ Yes: Please write your name and email address (1)
-

- ☐ No (2)

Display This Question:

If If Would you be interested in participating in a follow-up interview? If YES, please e-mail me your name and contact information at this address: boulbeid@umass.edu or provide your name and email... Yes: Please write your name and email address Is Displayed

Q33 Thank you for participating in our study! Please look over our procedures and terms of consent before proceeding.

[Oulbeid consent form jan 2019](#)

- ☐ I have read the informed consent form. I agree to the terms of consent and would like to participate in a follow up interview (1)

- ☐ I have read the informed consent form and I do not agree to the terms of consent (2)

☐ Click to write Choice 3 (3)

APPENDIX D

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Title: Arabic second language users' perceptions of language, culture, and identity: When teacher beliefs meet classroom and institutional realities.

Main research question: examines the perspective and beliefs of non-native Arabic teachers about the integration of culture in teaching Arabic language, and their identity formation.

First interview questions: Focus on life history (Seidman, 1998).

- 1-Tell me about yourself in relation to learning and teaching Arabic language and culture.
- 2-What were your very early experiences with this language and culture like? Can you describe these experiences?
 - How did you learn the Arab cultures as a student?
- 3-How did you become an Arabic language and culture teacher?
- 4-Could you talk a little bit about your teacher training experience?
- 5-Now as a non-native teacher of Arabic, how would you describe your classroom teaching? Can you tell me about your teaching philosophy?
- 6- What are your thoughts about culture in the classroom? How do you understand culture in the Arabic classroom?
- 7-What does it mean to teach a language and a culture that are not your first language and culture?
- 8- How has the teaching of the Arabic language and culture been going for you?
- 9- What impacts/ changes has the learning of Arabic made in your understanding of the language and culture?
- 10- How did learning Arabic change your views of the Arabs and their cultures? Are your views different than when you first started learning the language?
- 11-What can prospective Arabic language students learn from your experience? What advice can you give these students?
- 12-What does it mean to be a non-native speaker of Arabic? That is how do they identify themselves as non-native teachers of Arabic?
- 13-What do you see yourself doing 5-10 years from now?

APPENDIX E

CONSISTENCY OF FINDINGS, INTERPRETATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

<i>Findings</i>	<i>Interpretations</i>	<i>Conclusions</i>
<p>Finding Statement 1 & 2: Learning experiences and teaching practices</p> <p>1) The majority of the participants draw on their experiences as learners to make Arabic teaching better. But they were unable to provide an understanding of integrating culture in the classroom.</p> <p>2) Experiences and trajectories influence teaching styles in many ways:</p> <p>A) focus on form: 4 skills</p> <p>B) Culture Fridays</p> <p>C) Learning the dialect plays a role in improving fluency and building confidence in learning MSA</p>	<p>Possible interpretations in summary form</p> <p>1) Culture is not deemed an important aspect of language learning (peripheral to the 4 skills and taught weekly through culture portfolios)</p> <p>2) Teacher socialization does not emphasize culture and its place in learning a language.</p> <p>3) Impact of the communicative approach explains the absence of culture teaching. Cutshall (2013): learners may have a functional knowledge of language, but not culture. (Hamami, 2014, p.73)</p> <p>4) No lesson plans show the integration of the linguistic with the cultural and individual perspectives</p> <p>5) Satisfying ways of integrating culture in teaching were not taught to pre-service teachers.</p>	<p>Conclusions from the first and second finding</p> <p>Students who enroll in a master's or doctoral program in TAFL should not expect that coursework and teaching assistant experiences alone can fully prepare them to teach. After graduation and holding a teaching position, new responsibilities come that entail interacting with one's own students, language faculty, and administrators. In this context, teachers go through a process of discovering, becoming, and belonging. This study demonstrated that Arabic teacher socialization is limited and inadequate. 4 out of 6 participants in this study received little or no training in Arabic teaching pedagogy, which explains their struggle with defining and discussing culture teaching.</p>
<p>Finding Statement 3: Identity and self-positioning</p>	<p>Possible interpretations in summary form</p>	<p>Conclusions from the third finding</p>

<p>The participants in this study enact multiple and conflicting identifications. Their self-positioning differs depending on the context where they imagine themselves in:</p> <p>1) Students: teacher, fellow learner, role model, NN teacher, ambassador, resource for cultural content.</p> <p>2) Other faculty: teacher, NN teacher, ambassador, researcher practitioner, coach</p>	<p>1) Identities are not stable. They shift according to context. Teachers wear more than one single hat.</p> <p>2) Teachers take on more responsibilities than just teaching.</p> <p>3) They may be accountable for their students, colleagues, and supervisors: a big burden that they may not be prepared to handle.</p> <p>4) Personal ideosyncrasies come into play: impostor, ambassador, researcher practitioner.</p> <p>5) While taking various responsibilities, NN Arabic teachers grapple with issues of inferiority complex, powerlessness, anxiety, self-doubt, intimidation</p>	<p>NN Arabic teachers should be expected to wear hats other the teacher hat. Teaching is a journey that individuals undertake in the company of students, other faculty, and administrators.</p> <p>Therefore, they should be ready to juggle the responsibilities and tasks required to engage with multiple constituents in their teaching environments.</p> <p>Having the privilege of speaking and teaching Arabic as a native speaker of English is fraught with uncertainty, insecurities, inadequacy, concern, and anxieties. Therefore, to overcome such dilemmas, prospective teachers need to be open to learning informally and seek opportunities for professional growth even with the lack of incentives and formal training.</p>
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Finding Statement 4: Meaning of the experience	List all possible interpretations in summary form	Conclusions the fourth finding
<p>The participants feel very fortunate to be teaching Arabic. They all seem to enjoy what they do and being part of their community of practice. There is a sense of collaboration in some institutions (co-teaching Ann and Jim), partial collaboration in others (Juliette and Sarah).</p> <p>However, some teachers grapple with anxiety, intimidation, and isolation. This was due to the lack of mentorship, consistent advisement, and professional development that meets the teachers' needs.</p> <p>The experience was described as tough because for one, as learners of Arabic, they were left to themselves to discover what Ryding (2018) called "primary and secondary discourse" in Arabic. MSA is the secondary discourse and the Arabic dialects are the primary discourse. Teaching practices in Arabic tend to favor standard Arabic over the fundamental skills needed to use the language of everyday communication.</p>	<p>1) Enjoying the workload may signal satisfaction and success as teachers. It may promote stability.</p> <p>2) Collaboration and co-teaching indicate harmony among faculty members who are NN teachers. It would be interesting to examine if collaboration would work if there is a mix of N and NN teachers.</p> <p>3) Anxiety and insecurity arose because of a complex of inferiority, lack of adequate teacher training and socialization into the profession.</p> <p>4) Failure to understand that teaching requires wearing multiple hats</p>	<p>Teaching is a social venture/ responsibility toward students, colleagues, and administrators.</p> <p>Prospective teachers who are about to enter the profession should be ready for such an undertaking both in theory and practice.</p> <p>Teacher preparation programs should adopt the ACTFL Standards.</p> <p>Teacher socialization into the profession should consider helping preservice teachers understand teacher identity development and the multiple challenges they may face in the profession.</p> <p>NN Arabic teachers seem to need support both within their department and within the larger community at the national level. Teachers tend to suffer when they are left to themselves to solve ambiguities and deal with insecurities in their work place.</p> <p>Therefore, teacher preparation programs should impart in preservice teachers attitudes of being open to ambiguity and anxiety.</p> <p>At the same time, teacher</p>

<p>Learners of Arabic do not usually find out until later.</p>		<p>educator should strive to discuss how such challenges can be addressed.</p>
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Adapted from Bloomberg and Volpe (2019).

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