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Learning to be “Good”: The Ethics of Socialization and the Socialization of Ethics in Amman, Jordan

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in

Anthropology

by

Haleema Nazir Welji

Committee in charge:

Professor John Haviland, Chair
Professor Matthew T. Herbst
Professor Hasan Kayali
Professor Saiba Varma
Professor Kathryn Woolard

2017
The Dissertation of Haleema Nazir Welji is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

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Chair

University of California, San Diego

2017
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Signature Page ........................................................................................................... iii  
Table of Contents ........................................................................................................ iv  
List of Figures ............................................................................................................... vii  
List of Tables ................................................................................................................ viii  
List of Transcripts ......................................................................................................... ix  
Acknowledgements ....................................................................................................... xi  
Vita ................................................................................................................................. xv  
Abstract of the Dissertation ......................................................................................... xvi  

## Chapter 1: Introduction ......................................................................................... 1  
1.1 Overview of the Dissertation .............................................................................. 1  
1.2 Methodology ......................................................................................................... 8  
1.3 Al-Dawran School ............................................................................................... 13  
1.4 Jordan and the Sociopolitical Context ............................................................... 18  
  1.4.1 Youth, the Economy, and Education ......................................................... 26  
1.5 Education ............................................................................................................. 28  
  1.5.1 Educational Reforms ................................................................................. 31  
  1.5.2 Moral Education ......................................................................................... 35  
  1.5.3 The Role of English in Jordan ..................................................................... 37  
1.6 Theoretical Framework ....................................................................................... 42  
  1.6.1 Language Socialization .............................................................................. 43  
  1.6.2 Islamic Socialization ................................................................................... 50  
  1.6.3 Islamic Socialization at School .................................................................. 53  
  1.6.4 Ordinary Ethics ........................................................................................... 55  

## Chapter 2: “Good” Responses: Socialization in the English Language Learning Classroom. ........................................................................................................ 59  
2.1 Introduction ......................................................................................................... 59  
2.2 Theoretical Background ..................................................................................... 63  
2.3 Data ..................................................................................................................... 69  
2.4 Interactional Moves ........................................................................................... 74  
  2.4.1 Interactional Move One: IRE (Initiation-Response-Evaluation) ............... 74  
  2.4.2 Interactional Move Two: The Chorus ......................................................... 79  
  2.4.3 Interactional Move Three: Guided Repetition ........................................... 83  
  2.4.4 Interactional Move Four: Follow the Leader ............................................. 89  
2.5 Learning about Personhood ............................................................................... 94  
  2.5.1 Being an Individual .................................................................................... 98  
  2.5.2 But not too Individual! ............................................................................... 104  
  2.5.3 Being in the Collective .............................................................................. 107  
  2.5.4 But not too Collective! ............................................................................... 113  
2.6 Ethical Messages ................................................................................................. 116
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 3.1: Honorable vs Shameful Behavior in Children and Child Development ........ 132
Figure 3.2: Theory of ‘aql (reason) and the impact on shameful and honorable behaviors... 136
Figure 4.1: Front page of Al-Dawran’s hajj passport ........................................ 252
Figure 4.2: Center page of Al-Dawran’s hajj passport ....................................... 253
Figure 4.3: Top Portion of Center page of hajj passport ................................. 254
LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1: List of classroom lessons and topics used for data in Chapter 2 .................... 72
Table 2.2: Summary of Interactional Moves from detailed analysis of three lessons......... 73
LIST OF TRANSCRIPTS

Transcript 2.1: Textbook company’s master teacher explaining “turn and talk” pedagogy to Jordanian teachers .......................................................... 76

Transcript 2.2: Example 1: IRE “What is an ant?” ........................................ 78

Transcript 2.3 Example 2: The Chorus “We sit in the box.” ............................. 81

Transcript 2.4: Example 3: Guided Repetition 1 “Reading ‘house.’” ................. 84

Transcript 2.5: Example 4: Guided Repetition 2 “Repeating the alphabet.” .......... 88

Transcript 2.6 Excerpts of Example 3 .................................................................. 90

Transcript 2.7: Example 5: Follow the Leader “We sit in the boat.” .................... 92

Transcript 2.8: Example 6: Standing out as an individual 1 “The short and long ‘I’ sound.” 99

Transcript 2.9: Example 7: Standing out as an individual 2 “See how Haifa colors?” .... 102

Transcript 2.10: Example 8: Balancing Individual needs for the Collective 1 “He has got a rock.” .............................................................. 105

Transcript 2.11: Example 9: Balancing Individual needs for the Collective 2 “Haneen read beautifully.” ................................................................. 106

Transcript 2.12 Textbook company’s master teacher explaining pedagogical philosophy of student-centric classrooms to Jordanian teachers ........................................................................ 107

Transcript 2.13: Example 10: Necessity of joining the Collective Chorus “Repeat with me properly.” ......................................................... 111

Transcript 2.14: Example 11: “Color better”: Regulating Behaviors to the “collective path.” 112

Transcript 2.15: Example 12: “Read the whole word”: Calling on Individuals .......... 114

Transcript 2.16: Example 13: “1 + 3 = 4.” Ignoring Responses until Initiation is complete. 119


Transcript 2.18: Example 15: Teaching home routines. “Where do you put dirty socks?” .. 122


Transcript 3.1: Example 1: “No Sweets for you.” .................................................. 160

Transcript 3.2: Example 2: Sticker Wars ............................................................... 163
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VITA

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Learning to be “Good”: The Ethics of Socialization and the Socialization of Ethics in Amman, Jordan

by

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Doctor of Philosophy in Anthropology

University of California, San Diego, 2017

Professor John B. Haviland, Chair

While much of the rest of the world looked upon Jordan and surrounding regions in 2013 with fear of continual revolt and religiously motivated violence, Jordanians continued to live their everyday lives, attending to ordinary concerns, such as the raising and socialization of children. The central question that this dissertation explores is: how are children in Amman, Jordan, socialized into matters of morality? Though moral education is rooted in Islam, the source of moral education is found not only in formal religious education, but also in the way Islam is lived in the everyday. Moral education is integrated into interactions between children and their caretakers. Through activities such as answering questions in the classroom, to misbehaving and then being scolded, children are absorbing values about how to be members of the community and, specifically, how to be good, moral community members. But this preparation for adulthood
is done within a context of change. Amidst political, social, and economic instability, what it means to be good is in flux. Jordan is also in the midst of large-scale educational reforms, which have led to new curriculums and methods of teaching. Economic reforms have fallen short in creating jobs for the increasingly educated population. In my dissertation, I look closely at language—starting at the interactional level and moving to broader discourses about bilingualism—and argue that children are caught between what it means to be good in a moral, Islamic, and cultural sense, and what it means to be good in a globalized sense where English and the pressure toward individual achievement take on tremendous power in Jordan’s move into the future. While the particulars of the balancing act differ across Jordan and even within the population I worked with, moral education is about finding a balance between local values and concerns (like who are you and how you relate to others) and progress (tied to leaving Jordan, learning English, and achieving individual success in education). The dissertation analyzes classrooms at Al-Dawran, a mid-sized private school in Amman, and interactions between children and their caregivers at home, including parents and extended family.
1.1 Overview of the Dissertation

Meen enti? Min wain enti?
Who are you? Where are you from?

When I started my fieldwork in the Fall of 2013, I was asked the two questions above repeatedly, everywhere I went, from most of the people I met. As part of most social routines, Jordanians greet everyone, individually, as they enter a room; the two questions above emerged from the routines of connecting with each person in one’s context as part of everyday practice. Time and time again, I responded, building my answer over time, as I tried to decipher what was meant by the questions and what kind of answer was expected. My answer eventually became rote: “My name is Haleema and I am from America, but my great-grandparents were from India.” Before I added the part about India to my answer, I received a follow up question: “But where are you rooted (aSl)?” The root of the Arabic word aSl (صل) means “to be firmly rooted” and leads to derivations such as root of a tree, descent, original (Wehr 1994:22-23). Knowing my name and my only place of residence were not enough; I had to respond by going back to my roots. I came to discover that knowing who someone was and where they were from, was, for the Jordanians I met, an exercise in placing a new person into a familiar or relatable context; the knowledge connected the newcomer with a family or a place which may be known to the person asking. In my case, my family and my place of origin were out of the norm. My rote answer served as a way to connect to other forms of common ground. Indians, I was told, were similar to Jordanians in the centrality of values of home, family, and religion. Being from India also explained my brown skin. My name was also key; while I did not have a family name that tied me to Jordan, Haleema is a highly marked name within Islam. Haleema took care of the infant who was to grow into the
Prophet Muhammad. Between the cultural ties to India, and the name marking me as a Muslim, I found shared values and perspectives to begin interactions with Jordanians I met.

But the connection to America was also significant. As soon as the new people I met learned I was from America, they wanted to know, “Can you help my child learn English?” From translating university textbooks from English into Arabic, to doing a child’s homework, to helping someone prepare for an English exam, to many other situations (many of which I was unable, not to mention uninterested in doing), I received numerous requests for help. The struggles over English education and schoolwork were part of the everyday concerns for many Jordanians.

While much of the rest of the world looked upon Jordan and surrounding regions in 2013 with fear of continual revolt, protest, and religiously motivated violence, Jordanians continued to live their everyday lives, attending to everyday concerns. Seeing a new person invoked thoughts about who the strange girl was who moved in nearby. Watching their children struggle with schoolwork lead to concerns about how to prepare their children for a highly competitive job market. Their focus on the ordinary is not to deny the fact that the socio-political turmoil that began with the Arab Spring in 2010 did and continues to influence the thoughts and concerns of the Jordanian people. Many of the people I met spoke openly about government corruption or fear of the rise of Islamic extremism. But these political concerns did not erase ordinary, everyday concerns.

The questions I was repeatedly asked about my family ties and English influenced my dissertation, shaping it into an examination of the role that language (not just particular languages, but also interactions between caregivers and children and what is said, how, and in what context) plays in the ethical and moral socialization of young children in a particular social class and community in Amman. The questions of identity and national origin are not just asked of foreigners, but also to Jordanians of all ages. Through continual exposure to these questions
and learning how to answer them (just as I had), Jordanian children learn to articulate who they are and the families they are tied to. For the Jordanians I met, the answers to these questions are linked to one’s connection to family and place. “Who are you” is both about the individual and the family, presupposing a sense of self in relation to others. Understanding the balance between the individual and collective identities that one belongs to is a key goal of socialization, as a child learns not only about the individual (the ability distinguish oneself from others, “who are you”), but also the collective (who and what place claims you as one of their own or that one claims to come from).

The question about teaching English led me to Al-Dawran, a mid-sized private school in Amman. The school claims to offer a strong education for the middle and upper-middle classes of Jordanians who can afford to pay for private education. Jordan is in the midst of large-scale educational reforms leading to new curriculums and teacher trainings. At the same time, attempts to boost jobs have expanded the private sector leading to a rapid growth of private schools as alternatives to government sponsored education. The educational reforms are rooted in pedagogical approaches from the West as an effort to build a “knowledge economy,” a concept used by the Jordanian Monarchy and coming from institutions such as the World Bank; the knowledge economy is rooted in the idea that economic growth is most dependent on knowledge and that nations that want to survive in the global economy must have a work force that can create and synthesize knowledge (see Shirazi 2010b). As a native speaker of English, my skills were in demand not only by parents, but by teachers at the school who needed assistance navigating through English materials or resources; Arabic language teachers sought help from the large presence of English language in their own lives, from using technology or understanding a doctor’s report. At Al-Dawran, I assisted in the direction and development of the English program and I observed the influence of Western pedagogical ideas. While I have a background in

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1 The school name is a pseudonym given to protect the privacy of the school, its students, and the staff.
teaching and education which helped me with this role, such experience never seemed required to the parents, teachers, or school; it was native English skills that allowed me to integrate into the school.

The central question that my dissertation explores is: how are children in this society socialized into matters of morality? Though moral education in Jordan is rooted in Islam, the source of moral education is found not only in formal religious education, but also in the way Islam is lived in the everyday. Moral education is integrated into everyday interactions between children and their caretakers. Through activities such as answering questions in the classroom, to misbehaving and then being scolded, children are absorbing values about how to be members of the community and, specifically, how to be good, moral members of the community. But this preparation for raising children to become good adults is done within a context of change. Amidst political, social, and economic instability in Jordan and the region, what it means to be good is in flux. In my dissertation, I look closely at language—starting at the interactional level and moving to broader discourses about bilingualism—and argue that children are caught between what it means to be good in a moral, Islamic, and cultural sense, and what it means to be good in a globalized sense where English and the pressure toward individual achievement take on tremendous power in Jordan’s move into the future. While the particulars of the balancing act differ across Jordan and even within the population I worked with, moral education is about finding a balance between local values and concerns (like who are you and how do you relate to others) and progress (tied to leaving Jordan, learning English, and achieving individual and personal success in education).

This dissertation contributes to a growing body of scholarship on the intersection between the anthropology of Islam and ordinary ethics as a subdomain of anthropology. Over the past two decades, anthropologists have begun addressing the growing global influence of religion on daily life, as seen in the way religion punctuates the everyday and the everywhere (Hirschkind 2006;
Robbins 2001). Previous work in the anthropology of Islam has concentrated on Islam’s effect on the everyday lives of particularly pious Muslims, focusing on Islamic scholars, formal religious education, or the growing piety movement (see Adely and Starrett 2011; Deeb 2006; Hirschkind 2006; Mahmood 2005, Moore 2006). These arenas focus more on formal religious inculcation and religious discussion, through religious study. This religious self-cultivation includes deliberate attempts to integrate piety in life through greetings (Caton 1986; Mahmood 2005), modes of listening (Hirschkind 2006), dress (Gokariksel 2009), acts of service (Deeb 2006), and even approaches to death (Hamdy 2014). Using the foundation established by Hirschkind (2006) and Mahmood (2005), my project steps further back from religion. Recent directions in the study of Islam “attended to the way individuals constantly make and remake themselves into what they consider good Muslims through ordinary actions” (Fadil & Fernando 2015:64).

The work on ordinary ethics allows for examination of the ethical in everyday interactions between children and their caregivers not just as a means of learning language, but in learning what it takes to be a good, ethical, and positive member of the community. Das reflects on the attention to the ordinary by writing, “the notion of the ordinary takes us to an important characteristic of everyday life…that its very ordinariness makes it difficult for us to see what is before our eyes” (2015:71). The study of the ordinary resonates with historical trends throughout anthropology including ordinary language (Austin 1956). Ordinary talk such as excuses (Austin 1956) or gossip (Haviland 1977) or here, as I propose interactions between caregivers and children “reveal how people ordinarily think and talk about certain kinds of moral dilemmas (which is in part to show what these dilemmas are)” (Haviland 1977:5). Das also echoes Haviland’s call to examine moral dilemmas when she writes, “threats to the everyday will also be seen in relation to this picture of the ordinary” (Das 2015:71). The daily task of raising children is full of challenges and dilemmas, which have ethical implications: how to scold a child, how to reward and encourage good behavior, how to raise a child to be good, and what does good even
mean. The ordinary process of socialization is full of moments when children act in accordance with the values of the community, but also full of moments of children specifically disrupting the expectations of parents. Thus in this dissertation I look at interactions between children and their caretakers to examine ethics—what do they look (and sound) like and what do they mean for children in the practices and events of everyday life.

Pandian draws on Foucault to define “ethics” as a project of self-cultivation of a moral being who is concerned with wanting to live a moral life. Pandian uses this idea in his own project, to examine the lives of Southern Indians to understand how people cope with “the moral challenges of modern life by working ethically upon themselves and others” in order to give meaning to the Tamil concept of “virtuous conduct” (Pandian 2009:13). He writes, “virtue emerges as a practice of navigating ‘the good and the bad’ of worldly life by turning one’s own desires, bodily acts, habits and customs, sensual indulgences, and social engagements toward the good” (Pandian 2009:13). In this dissertation, I use interactions as a way to find how individuals determine what is good and bad and demonstrate their own ethical stances through their actions. However, with such a young age group, expectations of ethical behavior meet ideologies about childhood. Children are still learning the rightness and wrongness of actions; parents are still molding and preparing their children for a process of self-cultivation, while perhaps not yet expecting it to have occurred. In the society where I worked, as well as many other Muslims societies, children are seen as lacking ‘aql or ‘reason,’ which is necessary for making good decisions and necessary for self-cultivation (Das 1989; Fernea 1995; Khan 2006). In this dissertation, I define the ethical as ways in which children are being socialized to be in the world, to negotiate behaviors that align with contextually-determined community ideas of the good. Attention to interactions between adults and children and how children learn to talk models a “process by which attention to conversation leads to knowledge” (Haviland 1977:2). In this case, the knowledge is about how to live a moral life. While ethics apply to practice and behaviors, I
use moral as a broader category for ideas about “the good.” As Fassin writes, “the object of a moral anthropology is the moral making of the world” (2012:4).

This dissertation is based on approximately 18 months of ethnographic fieldwork in Jordan (August 2013-May 2014 and August 2014-March 2015). These time periods encompassed most of the 2013-14 and 2014-15 academic school years. I conducted the majority of the fieldwork in the Western regions of Amman. I focused on what goes on inside classrooms at Al-Dawran school, a rapidly growing and expanding private school in Amman. Additionally, I examined everyday life outside school with the families of students and teachers from the school. During my time at Al-Dawran, I concentrated on the early elementary years, pre-Kindergarten to grade 2. In the afternoons, on weekends, and holidays, I visited families that I got to know through the school, the neighborhood where I lived, and by introductions from people I knew.

In order to examine how children are socialized into their sociocultural and familial ideas around morality, I adopt three different angles on the various interpretations of what it means to be good. In Chapter 2, I look at the moral messaging layered onto classroom interactions between a teacher and her students. I argue that a teacher’s interactions and responses help students balance their individual desires while also learning to be contributing members of the collective community. Children learn an appropriate balance between individual and collective desires by absorbing specific messages about how to fit their behavior to their culture’s expectations and beliefs about what it means to be good. In Chapter 3, I turn to the question of shame as a technique for embedding moral messages about respect and concern for others. I argue that even as caretakers excuse misbehavior of children and their own inability to control children, they instill in children values that are important to the community. As children develop the cognitive ability and reasoning skills to make better decisions, I argue that caretakers demonstrate techniques for cultivating ethics and morality in and through the child’s future behavioral decisions. In Chapter 4, I look at the relationship between language ideologies and the kinds of
adults parents hope their children will grow into. I argue that both school and parents lean on ideas about English and Arabic and the values that speakers of each hold to justify and legitimate school choice. Each language has associated moral implications about religion, economics, culture, and identity. By examining moral education from these three angles, I clarify some of the complexities of socialization. I look not just as the various sources, but in the values and ethics that are being conveyed to children.

In this rest of the introduction, I begin by introducing my field methodology and details about my field site (1.2 and 1.3). After that, I set out the socio-political context of Jordan (1.4). I focus specifically on factors that influence education (1.5). In section 1.6, I situate this dissertation in a theoretical framework at the intersection between the fields of language socialization and the concept of ordinary ethics. It is through everyday interactions that Jordanian children not only learn the language, but also ethics, religion, good behavior, and the values attached to the two main languages they are exposed to, English and Arabic.

1.2 Methodology

When I started fieldwork in August of 2013, I was residing with a family in the outskirts of Irbid. Irbid is located about an hour and a half north of Amman. It is very close to the border with Syria and not surprisingly, has taken in the bulk of Syrian refugees (Department of Statistics 2015). Irbid is the second largest city in Jordan. As I had been training to be an English teacher the last time I was in Irbid, in an effort to help with my work, my host family quickly introduced me to the principal at a nearby school. Despite my insistence that I was not interested in starting my fieldwork at a school, I ended up having a good conversation with an enthusiastic administrator about helping at the school in any capacity I was willing to provide, from a full-time teacher, to being a consultant a few days a week. I agreed to volunteer as a consultant two days a week, working with the English department (with a specific focus on the elementary
classrooms, grades 1 through 5). I began helping at the school when the school year started (September 1st) for about two and a half months.

My role at the school was to advise the English program’s lead teacher about how to improve the teaching quality and effectiveness of the rest of the teachers. I spent two to three class periods each day observing the six English teachers on a rotating basis. After each observation, I wrote short reports for the individual teacher and the English supervisor on what I observed: what strategies seemed successful in teaching and learning and a few strategies for improvement. I also checked and advised on exams and handouts for English classes of all grades. Finally, I spent time getting to know the teachers and hear about their lives and experiences at the school and in Jordan.

In November of 2013, I moved from Irbid to the outskirts of Amman, Jordan. At the time, I was not sure how long I would stay in Amman. However, due to some of the challenges of my living situation in Irbid, I completed the rest of my fieldwork in the outskirts of Amman, until March of 2015.

All the participants in the study came from two neighborhoods in Greater Amman, both located southwest of the downtown area. Na’our, the neighborhood where I lived, along with many of my participants, is a predominantly residential neighborhood with only a small shopping area (although many residents went elsewhere for the bulk of their shopping). The neighborhood also had three large mosques, a church, and multiple government schools, including a public girl’s school down the street from where I was staying. Although Na’our was founded by Circassian-Jordanians, the current community displays much of the same diversity that is found throughout Jordan, including Jordanian-Jordanians, Palestinian-Jordanians, and Syrians. Both Christians and Muslims live in Na’our.

Marj al-Hamam, the second neighborhood where my participants came from, borders Na’our, just north and a little closer to downtown Amman. Marj al-Hamam is also ethnically and
religiously diverse; however, it is much more commercial than Na’our, with a much larger shopping area and city center, including stores that sell clothing and home goods, as well as multiple large grocery stores. Also unlike Na’our, Marj al-Hamam has restaurants and public places to gather and congregate in the evening. As the commercial area is a more recently developed area and still expanding, some parts of Marj al-Hamam are bustling and lively, and other parts are still under construction as the neighborhood spreads northwest.

Looking closely at how people live in the neighborhoods of Na’our and Marj al-Hamam, this project focuses on the socialization of young children into competent and productive members of their community. The work on socialization advocates for a holistic perspective which takes into account that learning to be a member of the community can come in different forms, across many diverse kinds of interacts; this means also that the sources, forces, and drives of socialization are intricately intertwined and complicated. Because of the diversity of experiences that help shape and mold children, this ethnographic project looks at young children in a variety of contexts to help develop a more holistic picture of the ways in which children in this community interact with various caregivers and various messages to learn how to be positive and contributing members of their community.

To better understand the many forces at work in socializing children, I focused on three sites: homes, schools, and extended family gatherings. As Thorne (1993) discusses, contemporary childhood is most significantly impacted by three key sites: families, neighborhoods, and schools. Given the centrality of families and schools, both in terms of forces of socialization but also due to the percentage of time dedicated to those two arenas, immediate families and schools were the central foci for this project. Additionally, in Jordan, the close proximity (for many families) of extended family, specifically grandparents and aunts and uncles, means that one’s “family” is often larger than merely the immediate family. Many families lived in the same building as one set of grandparents, which facilitated childcare during work hours, and family gatherings in the
evenings and weekends. Seeing children in and around extended family was important for watching the process of socialization. Neighborhoods are a little more difficult to examine in contemporary suburban Amman. Watching kids interact in their neighborhoods was definitely part of my fieldwork experience, even if neighborhoods were not studied as systematically as other settings for socialization. Many children in the age group I studied were not permitted to spend time in public spaces around their neighborhood and only interacted with neighbors during visits to each other’s houses.

During my time in Amman, I got to know many families in the neighborhood, through the school, and through the contacts I had already made. True to the Bedouin and Islamic values of hospitality, I was welcomed into homes, with food, drink, and conversation. Most of the time, when I visited, the middle-aged adult males in the house were not present, either still at work or having gone out. I spent my visits chatting with the mother, helping her cook, or hearing about her concerns. I also spent a lot of time with her children, watching TV, practicing some English, and playing games which the family had or I had brought with me. During the course of my fieldwork, I made regular visits to six families (approximately once a month), which I discuss in Chapter 3. For each of these six families, I recorded parts of the whole of each visit, and interviewed the mother at the beginning, middle, and end of my fieldwork. Sometimes other guests would arrive while I was visiting, allowing me to watch interactions with neighbors and extended family as well. For some of the families, I got to know the grandparents quite well. I also visited many other families and neighbors on a less regular basis; some visits I recorded and many others I simply took fieldnotes on.

Similar to my time in Irbid, in Amman, I quickly came to focus my fieldwork time and energy on schools, which were some of the most powerful sites of socialization. The Jordanian family I was staying with, whom I had met during my previous time in Jordan (2007-2008), also encouraged me to consider working at a school. As with my experience in Irbid, I was quickly
introduced by my family to their friend, an English teacher at a nearby school, who was excited about the prospect of having a native speaker’s help. It was through this teacher, Ms. Layla, that I was first introduced to the school where I conducted my fieldwork, Al-Dawran. During my time working at the school, I got to know the English teachers, the elementary aged students, and many of the parents. I began visiting families of children at the school during the afternoons and weekends. In the next section I will introduce Al-Dawran and give some background about the students, teachers, and my role at the school.

During my fieldwork, I used a mix of colloquial Arabic and English, as did most of the adults I met during my fieldwork. Codeswitching into English for particular terms, concepts, and vocabulary is an ordinary part of many Jordanians conversation. In the classroom while teaching, the goal was to use English was the primary language and supplement with colloquial Arabic to help students understand. However during breaks and around the school, with many teachers and all students, colloquial Arabic was the primary language of communication. A few of the English teachers spoke to me primarily in English with some Arabic and I did the same in return. The rest of the English teachers and most of the rest of the staff (administration, secretaries, work staff) and I conversed in colloquial Arabic. Except for the few teachers who conversed with me almost entirely in English, interviews with teachers and administrators were in colloquial Arabic, although some chose to give their answers in a mix of English and Arabic.

With families and outside of school, colloquial Arabic was my primary medium of communication. Interviews with mothers were all conducted in colloquial Arabic, although about half mixed in some English as well. While the mothers ordinarily codeswitch into English (at different rates), the amount of mixing in English into their Arabic was largely for my benefit and characteristic of most of our interactions.

2 The names of all individuals at the school (staff, teachers, and students) are pseudonyms given to protect each individual’s privacy.
For most of the transcripts in the dissertation that included Arabic, I include all or parts of the colloquial Arabic above or before the English translation. In general, quotes in italics mark translations from the Arabic.

1.3 Al-Dawran School

The school where I conducted the bulk of my fieldwork was located in Marj al-Hamam. During the second academic year of my fieldwork (2014-2015), the school opened a second location as the new home of the early education program: pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and grade 1. The main (and first) location was relatively close to the main city center of Marj al-Hamam; the second location was about a 15-minute drive away in the less developed parts of the neighborhood. Away from the center of development, this area was made up of rolling hills and wide expanses of undeveloped land. Since the new location was relatively far, the school ran shuttles that took the young children and teachers from the old site to the new building each morning and the reverse direction after school. The new site provided the school’s owner the ability and space to expand. In fact, during the 2014-2015 academic year, the building was only one story with the empty shell of a second story above it. By the 2015-2016 year (after I left the field), the teachers I worked with messaged me about the excitement surrounding the completion of the second story. The second story allowed the school to shift the second and third grades to the new building as well.

“Al-Dawran: your way towards creativity.” The logo of Al-Dawran (see Appendix I) with this motto was visible as you entered this moderately sized private school with two sections of 25-30 students in each grade from grade 2 up to grade 5. The high school grades were much smaller classes although I did not work with them. And with the positive reputation of the school growing and with the new school building opening, grade 1, kindergarten, and pre-kindergarten were growing, with three sections of 30 students each. The school’s logo was an image of the
world and an ovular ring behind it, suggesting the Earth on (or near) an orbit or at least the Earth in the greater context of space. The logo situated the school in a global context and between the image and motto, the school presented itself as a place for students “going places.” The Arabic triliteral-root of the actual name of the school refers to “clods of earth or mud, loam, clay” and refers to the nomadic, sedentary population of Jordan (Wehr 1994:1054). This root brings in traditional and metaphorical attachment to origin and roots. Through the logo, the school mixes progress into tradition, the international in with the local. And the motto “your way towards creativity” associates the school with a progressive educational model of innovation, change, and success.

Al-Dawran was established in 2005, although most of the staff I worked with had only been at the school a few years or were new to the school. The school’s full name Al-Dawran International Schools, in its name, referred to itself in the plural (madaris meaning schools).

The plural “schools” referred to the two-track system of education available inside the same school building. The two “schools” were the international track and the national track, most commonly referred to in English as “international” and “national” or “international section” and “national section.” For the Jordanian population that could afford to seek education outside the government school system, Al-Dawran offered both an international section and a national section for each grade level (except for pre-kindergarten, which was undifferentiated). Beginning at the kindergarten level, parents could choose to enter the international section for an additional cost. For parents joining the school after kindergarten, their children were assessed for English competency before being allowed to join the international track, although the test was easily swayed by parent demand and willingness to pay.

The international track of the school was an attempt to market the school in the vein of the international school model. Al-Dawran, however, did not qualify for or make any attempt to meet such guidelines. Instead the “international” in the title merely suggested high quality
education and a stronger focus on English language education, but without any recognized certification. The Council of International Schools (CIS 2015) determines the criteria and has the authority to provide accreditation to schools that follow their criteria of what it takes to become a certified international school. According to their website, accreditation includes curriculum standards, codes of ethics around diversity and global citizenship, and college preparedness (CIS 2015).

Aside from the cost difference, the concentration on English was the key difference between the international and national sections. Given that I primarily worked with the international section students and teachers, I had fewer observations of the national section. However, a few of the parents I interviewed had experience with both sections; one had moved a child up to the international section and another had one child (of different age levels) in each track. Thus, there was at least some overlap in the audience for international and national sections. Both carried the prestige of a private education; however, the centrality of English was clear in the international section. International had two additional periods of English classes a week compared to the national section. Since each section had a different curriculum and textbook, it was not easily clear how the abilities of the students compared. Based on my experience working with the students in both sections, the difference in ability of the average student seemed in favor of the International section being stronger. Having looked over and often helped to create exams and workbooks for both sections, I believe that the content being taught and tested was more challenging in the International section.

The school was founded and directed by the owner, Dr. Hussein. He worked as a professor at a local university and developed the school as an additional project and source of income. When I first visited the school, he asked me to take on a role as a consultant. I provide more details about Dr. Hussein’s background in Chapter 4.

The school’s success can be seen in how fast they are growing, expanding to a new site in
2014-15 and a second story in the 2015-16 year. While Al-Dawran did lose students over the time I was in the field, they were few, and in fact, my second year at the school saw a significant increase in the number of enrolled students. This was largely because of the new building, providing cleaner, newer, and larger classrooms for the kindergarteners. But as I show in Chapter 4, parents were also drawn in by the school’s growing reputation.

The families that could afford to select Al-Dawran over their neighborhood government school alternative were mostly solidly middle class. The school did not attract elite and upper class families, as they tended to select schools with legitimate Interactional curriculums and preparation for entering universities abroad (preparing students for the SAT). Many of the parents of students at the school were of a rising class, where the parents were of the first generation to go to college and had entered well-paying jobs. These parents were now working as doctors, engineers, civil servants, professors, and pharmacists. I frequently heard from parents that part of their motivation for sending their children to Al-Dawran was to protect their children from the challenges that the parents had faced. The parents did not want their children to struggle to get a good education in the way that the parents had, especially in terms of not knowing enough English. Some of the other parents were less educated but had reached the middle class through success in their businesses – including shops and stores. About half of the mothers of students worked outside of the home - teachers, medical professionals (nurses, pharmacists), or in companies or businesses, including government offices. Of the mothers who stayed at home, many were highly educated, having gone to university and sometimes even worked before marriage, but who either could not find work or chose to be home with their young children.

When I first started at the school, Dr. Hussein and the current English supervisor asked me to evaluate the English program as a consultant for the school. They asked me to use my experience to look at how the English program was functioning and make recommendations. While I protested, saying that I was not qualified, they asked that I do what I could. I spent a few
weeks in November of 2013 observing various classes and various teachers before writing my thoughts into a report. From there, the owner invited me to conduct my research at the school while assisting the English teachers in the International section of the school. From December 2013 until early June 2014, I assisted the teachers in grades kindergarten to 5, two to three days during the week. From August 2014 to March 2015, I moved to the new building, working five days a week with the pre-kindergarten to grade 1 teachers. I rotated between assisting the five English teachers at the school or working on my own in the teacher’s lounge or in the back of a classroom. From November 2014 until the end of my fieldwork, I was able to transfer one day a week to work with a few teachers at the old school building, working with grades 2-5.

My role at the school varied, depending on the occasional needs of the teachers. For the most part I helped them find resources and materials to assist in teaching. Mostly this meant finding or creating worksheets to teach specific lessons the teachers already had in mind. Sometimes it meant brainstorming and designing lessons with the teacher, especially for math and science in kindergarten, as that class was without a textbook. I also helped with spontaneous issues during class, like stapling weekly planners into agendas, printing homework for the next day, stepping in to take over a lesson when a teacher was called away, or chaperoning a fieldtrip.

In discussion with the school administration and some of the teachers, we decided that audio recording would be the least disruptive and least controversial method of data collection. It was easier than, for example, video recording for students to get used to in their classroom and provided more assurance to parents who may have been worried about their child’s identity and image being recorded. I used the same audio recording method with the families I visited as well. As I was entering the domestic space, using video recordings would have required many of the women to cover themselves within their own homes (which they usually did not do and were not required to do in front of me as I was a woman). Audio recording allowed the families to be more comfortable in their own space.
During the school day, I recorded between two and three lessons most of the days at the school. Some of those were strictly my observations of the teacher’s lesson. On other occasions, the teacher had asked for my assistance in the lesson with showing videos, playing songs, or running an activity. Only a portion of the data collected was included in the analysis for this dissertation. Each chapter contains a methods section to further explain what data was used and how the data was examined.

1.4 Jordan and the Sociopolitical Context

From my first trip to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in the summer of 2009, until the end of my fieldwork in the spring of 2015, I watched as upheavals in the region led to a shift in the way the Jordanian monarchy treated its citizens, and a concurrent shift in the demands Jordanians made of their monarchy. I watched the people go from never speaking a negative word about their king (often for fear of someone overhearing), to speaking openly about the challenges of the current regime. The most pressing concerns driving protests were poor economic conditions, seen especially in high unemployment, and the political corruption exemplified in the prime minister and cabinet members (Adely 2012c). The Jordanian people joined the Arab Spring within months of protests that began in Tunisia in 2010 and which ultimately swept across much of the Arab world. Protests in Jordan similarly called for strong and swift political upheaval. Early chants included, “the people want to reform the system” (beginning in March 2011) (Sadiki 2012) and progressed into “the people want the downfall of the regime” (starting November of 2012) (Al-Khalidi 2012). However King Abdullah II of Jordan quickly quelled the most extreme protests by dismissing corrupt political figures (including the prime minister and many cabinet members), and by granting greater political participation to the people (Adely 2012c). As opposed to other Middle Eastern leaders such as Bashar al-Assad whose staunch refusal to implement reforms led to war (Noueihed & Warren 2012), Jordan was able to maintain its
monarchy in the face of revolts in the region. But the voices of the people had become and remain much stronger forces in the future directions of the country than had been the case before the Arab Spring.

Jordan has always been under the influence of international voices. Founded by King Abdullah I in 1921, Transjordan was backed and supported by the British. King Abdullah I’s family, the Hashemites, originally came from Saudi Arabia. However, the British rewarded his family with this particular territory, the area around what we now know as Jordan, for his family’s leadership in the Arab Revolt. The British had allied with the family of Abdullah I against the Ottoman Turks (Massad 2001).

After declaring independence in 1946, Jordan coped with periodic waves of immigrants that in many ways benefitted as well as stressed the young nation. Jordan absorbed the first wave of Palestinians after the creation of the state of Israel in 1948. Palestinians were offered Jordanian citizenship and many Palestinians came as educated, political elites helping to build and advance the Jordanian nation. However, the benefits of citizenship were not extended to all later waves of Palestinians, especially those coming from Gaza (Shirazi 2012). As a result of later additional influxes of Palestinians, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency estimates that there are over two million Palestinian refugees in Jordan (Shirazi 2012; UNRWA 2015) out of an estimated population of between eight and nine million\(^3\).

In addition to Palestinians, Jordan has taken in smaller groups of immigrants including waves of Circassians (while the area was still under Ottoman rule (Alon 2007)), Iraqi refugees (beginning in the 1990s), and the current influx of Syrians (beginning around 2011). Each time, some of the refugees integrate well, others move on to other countries, and many struggle to make ends meet in the new country. Consider the current situation with Syrian refugees: political

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\(^3\) Estimates of the total population vary even with attempts to include the Syrian refugee population (CIA Fact book; Jordanian Department of Statistics).
upheaval in Syria sent waves of immigrants, estimated at nearly 1 million (Shirazi 2016), flooding into Jordan.

The lives of Syrian refugees in Jordan are exceedingly difficult, and Jordanians have had varied responses to the added economic strain on a country with limited resources. Some Jordanians responded by sharing housing, clothing, food, money, and time. Based on conversations while in the field and my fieldnotes, these Jordanians drew on diverse logics to explain why they supported Syrian refugees. Some Jordanians helped refugees based on the recognition of a shared history of expulsion or instability, such as Palestinian-Jordanians drawing parallels to also having to flee from their homes. Other Jordanians distinguished the plight of Syrians as significantly worse than their own paths to Jordan, explaining that Syrians had been forced out by a supposed Muslim and a Syrian, not a treaty from outside international parties. And still others were motivated to support refugees after watching those refugees give almost their entire income to landlords, leaving little for food, clothing, and gas to provide heat and cooking fuel. On the other hand, there were negative feelings towards many refugees (recently or not so recently arrived), expressed as fears that refugees were taking jobs which were already so limited for those already in the country.

One positive outcome of the waves of immigrants is the possibility for diversity through people of different ethnic groups living, working, and studying together. Jordan has also attracted workers from European countries and North America, many coming for social and political work in the region. Some of these immigrants have settled, intermarried, and now live in and amongst the people of Jordan. Populations of South Asians and Southeast Asians have also come, primarily (or assumed by many Jordanians) to work as domestic labor (often for temporary periods). While visiting some families, I watched the children run off to join diverse playgroups. For example Palestinian-Jordanian children (who were raised partially in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) played with Syrian refugees now living in Jordan. Or children with one British and one
Jordanian parent played with their Syrian neighbors who were originally Circassian and are now refugees in Jordan.

However, most of the neighborhoods are clustered in and around pockets of ethnic in-groups, limiting exposure to diversity even in a diverse country. A group of Circassian Christians living in the town I stayed in, all clustered in close proximity around a church and school. Syrian refugees from the same extended family settled in large inter-generational houses, close by other refugees from their town in Syria. Populations held strong material and ideological ties to ethnic origin, as seen by the opening questions to the chapter. Once while I was observing the fourth grade, a student asked me if I was Circassian or Palestinian. When I replied I was neither, he said that I must be one of the two. Attending a school where students were predominantly either one or the other (the owner was born in Jordan with parents holding different ethnic origins--one Palestinian and one Circassian, and the school tended to attract almost exclusively students with parents from one or the other group), the student assumed I must be from one of these two groups.

One consequence of the influx of outsiders was that the monarchy deemed it essential to develop a nationalist discourse around being Jordanian. Jordanian citizenship is only offered through the male line, so children born in Jordan are not guaranteed citizenship. This means that some children are denied official documents attaching them to the country of their birth and childhood (Massad 2001). Even with Jordanian citizenship, many Jordanians cling to historical ethnic origins outside of Jordan, leading to rising tensions between groups, as well as favoritism for members of the same ethnic group. This policy reflects the tension between meritocracy and values of asl or origin. In order to create a discourse of unity in spite of the tension, the government has made attempts to highlight commonality over difference. In 2002, Jordan began an educational and marketing campaign to highlight the Jordanian ties of identity. The campaign was called *al Urdan Awalan* ("Jordan First") (Shirazi 2012). The images of the campaign were
and can still be seen in posters throughout schools and public places (see Appendix II for the most popular image still visible in public spaces today). In the image, five hands and arms are holding onto the Jordanian flag. Some of the clothing pictured is socially and ethnically marked. This includes an arm in a business suit, indicating an educated or professional class. The black top with colored embroidery indicates traditional clothing common in Jordanian or Palestinian women’s clothing. One of the other hands has the sleeves rolled up, showing off a heavily muscled, strong arm, indicated a working class individual. However all the hands are fairly light skinned, even though not all Jordanians are, suggesting colorism (Jablonski 2012) or preference for light skin. Overall, the image demonstrates some gender and occupational diversity in Jordan coming together as one. As Adely argues, the campaign promoted a “right” way of engaging in civic life, focused on “building a modern Jordan” rather than holding to other nations and identities (Adely 2012a). A National Committee consisting of parliamentarians as well as the Prime Minister created the “Jordan First” campaign. According to King Abdullah II’s decree on the “Jordan First” campaign, schools play an important role in socializing the messages of “pluralism as a source of strength” (Adely 2012a:63). In his speech, King Abdullah said, “Jordan’s future is a right for its young men and women, who constitute more than two thirds of the population. There is no alternative to firmly establishing the Jordan First concept in the minds and consciences of our youth through implanting the values of belongingness, participation, work, production and accomplishment” (2002).

However, Jordanians continue to cling to various ethnic origins to which they feel loyal. In a conversation (in English) with two of the teachers at Al-Dawran School, the teachers began talking about the new secretary at the school who was Christian (one teacher imitated the sign of the cross on herself to indicate the person she was talking about was Christian). As one of the administrators at the school was Christian, the sign of the cross reinforced the shared identity that was the reason the teachers assumed the secretary got the job. In my field notes I wrote how both
teachers described Jordanians as “racists” saying that everyone was only looking out for their own race. The teachers were pointing to the in-group preference, sometimes tied to religion, sometimes to ethnic origin.

Historically, the Jordanian state has relied on and used education to promote nationalistic discourse. In 1955, a public education law regulated textbooks as a means of controlling the influence of Christian educational institutions (Katz 2005:97). Katz explains that aspects of this law required the use of the Ministry of Education textbooks and teaching methods, and it also required Arabic to be the language of instruction (2005). The textbooks also integrated nationalistic ideas about “what it meant to be Jordanian” (Katz 2005:97). As Anderson’s work on history textbooks demonstrates, the content of history textbooks socialize students into a pro-Hashemite nationalist discourse. This includes the narrative that “The Hashemites are Jordan; Jordan is the Hashemite family” even though the Hashemites were initially foreigners to the country (Anderson 2005:1-2).

But it is not just nationalist discourse that the government promulgates. In an effort to contrast with the “clash of civilizations” discourse that Islam and Western ideas of modernity and democracy are incompatible (Huntington 1993), the monarchy works to create a discourse around the integration of Islam into modern ways of being. Both the King and Queen talk about the ability to be Muslim and educated, political, and progressive. In an interview with Fareed Zakaria, Queen Rania said, “What we're trying to do in Jordan is to demonstrate that you can be an Arab, you can be a Muslim and sometimes you can be a world player. You can be progressive. You can have political, economic and social reform but these things are not mutually exclusive so setting that model of moderation is extremely important” (2008).

Islam is not only important to the legitimacy of the Jordanian Monarchy, but it is important to the future direction of Jordan. Drawing on religious legitimacy through lineage, King Abdullah II claims and is accepted to be a descendent of Prophet Muhammad (Layne 1994).
In addition to the various Islamic revivals of the Middle Eastern region (see Deeb 2006, 2009 re Lebanon, Mahmood 2005 and Hirschkind 2006 re Egypt, Hasan 2009 re Indonesia), Jordan also has experienced an Islamic revival amongst its people (Adely 2012b). The piety movement does not always align with the monarchy’s version of a moderate Islam. King Abdullah’s “Amman Message” of 2004 expresses Islam’s ability to be modern. One way he brings this out is by highlighting the peace at the heart of the religion and distancing the religion from acts of violence. In the Amman message he says, “Today the magnanimous message of Islam faces a vicious attack from those who through distortion and fabrication try to portray Islam as an enemy to them. It is also under attack from some who claim affiliation with Islam and commit irresponsible acts in its name” (2004). The King repeatedly returns to the role of Muslims to present a positive and modern face of Islam and counters the narrative of Islam as a religion of terror.

The monarchy also uses Islam to regulate specific kinds of behavior. One way is to encourage learning and specifically moral education. Looking at the Ministry of Education’s goals, one of the intellectual bases for education states that “Islam is a system of intellectual behavioral ideology that respects man, exalts his mind and urges for knowledge, work and morality” (Ministry of Education). Under this umbrella, Islam serves as justification for not only morality, but also hard work, progress, and pursuit of education. Anderson argues that the conflation of Islam and modernity serves as a means of regulating the population (2007). Through the use of textbooks, Anderson writes that “Islam has become the catchall subject for discussing not only religion but also history, society, and morality. At times, the Quran or Hadith lay out specific rules for relationships; at other times, very contemporary concerns are addressed with contemporary solutions, but in either instance, Islam appears to be the source. No attempt is made to differentiate between injunctions specifically mentioned in the Quran and those the state wishes to place under the Islamic rubric” (2007:77). For Anderson, religion is used to validate the
authority of the Monarchy to not only confront modern challenges, but also to regulate behavior. Anderson includes obedience and discipline in the classroom as a value attributed to Islam but working to further the overall message that “individual transgression will lead to disintegration of the society” (2007:82). While Anderson’s argument does resonate to some degree with my experience teaching at a government school with government textbooks, the issues are less relevant in the private school system; private schools do not use texts produced by the Jordanian Ministry of Education and while nationalism is an important value conveyed at Al-Dawran, it is not as central as at government schools. However, the use of Islam, even by private schools, to regulate behaviors is something I examine in this dissertation. I discuss some aspects of this concern in Chapter 3.

Jordan, under the guidance of a monarchy, is aiming to be the progressive, educated face of the Muslim Middle East. The Jordanian king promotes the Jordanian workforce as competent, modern, and productive, through its command of and competence in English (Al-Hassan & Lansford 2009). Additionally, King Abdullah has described Jordan as a “safe home in a rough neighborhood” (see Tobin 2016:4).

In the face of humanitarian crises, demographic conflicts, and political challenges, the Jordanian monarchy has responded with national campaigns for the role of education. However, the advantages are not always trickling down to the people. Campante and Chor argue that frustrated educated people “with poor labor market prospects” were one of the main causes of the Arab Spring uprisings (2012:169). Beginning in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the percentage of graduates obtaining public sector jobs as their first jobs began to fall, going from 60% to 30% by the 2000s (Assaad 2014:9-10). Youth are facing struggles in finding secure jobs and their parents are constantly concerned about getting ahead in order to increase the chances of a secure future. When I first started my research, I was explaining to my host father some of the questions I was interested in exploring, including about the hopes of Jordanians about their future. My host father
responded, “people don’t have much hope for the future of Jordan…the youth just want to leave Jordan because it is the only way for them to be successful.”

1.4.1 Youth, the Economy, and Education

Young people make up a predominant proportion of the population of Jordan. Based on a 2015 census conducted by the Jordanian Department of Statistics, the population is approximately 9.54 million people (including non-Jordanians living in Jordan and Jordanians). Of this total population, 34% are under 15 years old; an additional 29% of the population is between 15 and 29 years old (Department of Statistics 2015).

But while the population of Jordan entering the workforce is growing quickly and the workforce is achieving increasingly higher average levels of education, the opportunities for employment have not kept pace with the demand for jobs. High unemployment is a key force not only in protests (Campante & Chor 2012), but also in concerns about the future and stability. Based on the World Bank’s online unemployment data from 2016, the average unemployment for the Middle East and North Africa is 11.2%, slightly down from 12.3% in 1991. Jordan’s official average for 2016 was 13.2% unemployment, down from 15.4% in 1991. Many Jordanians unable to find employment, especially the more highly educated individuals, find success by working abroad and sending remittances home to support family who remain in Jordan. The most common countries I heard about as migrant labor destinations do show lower unemployment rates than Jordan - Saudi Arabia (5.5%), Algeria (11.2%), Qatar (.2%) (The World Bank 2016).

Looking specifically at unemployment among youth—classified by the World Bank as 15-24 year olds—the numbers for Jordan are high. The World Bank cites the world average at 14% in 2014, up slightly from 13% in 1991. However the Middle East and North Africa more

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4 The CIA World Factbook estimates a much lower number at just over 8 million including Syrian Refugees as of July 2016.
5 In his article, Shirazi cites that unofficial estimates of the unemployment rate (in 2010) were at 25% (2010b).
than doubles the world average at 30.4% youth unemployment in 2014. Jordan is not far off the regional numbers, with the unemployment rate for youth at 28.8% (World Bank 2014). By contrast with the common perception in Jordan and the idea strongly promoted by the government, higher levels of education do not seem to decrease unemployment (Assaad 2014:13).

Peak unemployment rates in Jordan are found in those with university level education (Assaad 2014:15). This encourages educated individuals to seek jobs outside of the Arab world after they graduate. It also suggests that while the monarchy is promoting a highly educated population, the economic sector has not expanded in parallel to provide employment opportunities for a more educated workforce. As Spring notes, “one criticism of focusing schools on preparing students for the needs of the knowledge economy is that there are not enough jobs in the knowledge economy to absorb school graduates into skilled jobs and that the anticipated demand for knowledge workers has not occurred” (2009:50). The high unemployment is also affected by the growing predominance of women in higher education (women now enroll in university at higher rates than men), but women significantly lag behind in employment rates (Assaad 2014; Hausmann, Tyson, & Zahidi 2011; Shirazi 2016).

High youth unemployment has impacts that are much broader than an unfavorable economic outlook as youth near the end of their education and enter the workforce. According to the World Bank, youth employment impacts the social and political climate of a country. “Young men and women today face increasing uncertainty in their hopes of undergoing a satisfactory transition in the labour market, and this uncertainty and disillusionment can, in turn, have damaging effects on individuals, communities, economies and society at large. Unemployed or underemployed youth are less able to contribute effectively to national development and have fewer opportunities to exercise their rights as citizens (World Bank 2016). Economics and politics are closely linked in Jordan as demonstrated strongly through the Arab Spring. Unemployment and underemployment have also delayed marriage in Jordan as men need to work longer to save
up for the necessary bride price\textsuperscript{6} and to demonstrate economic stability to the family of a potential bride (Bowen, Early & Schulthies. 2014). Economic uncertainty has social, cultural, and political effects on how people live and the choices they make in life.

1.5 Education

Based on the constitution of Jordan, everyone has a right to free public education (Ministry of Education). While families are not expected to pay tuition, there are marginal costs associated with government schools. During my experience working at a government run school in southern Jordan (prior to dissertation fieldwork), I observed that families pay for uniforms, occasionally chip in for fuel to heat the classroom, and help support school performances and celebrations, all of which require at least some small cost for families. In Jordan, education is compulsory beginning at the age of 6 and continuing until grade 10. Many parents choose to enroll their students in kindergarten and pre-kindergarten; however, not all students attend, nor are either required. After the required 10 years of education, students have the option to enroll in a two-year program (\textit{Tawjihi}). The test is necessary for entrance to university as well as many jobs. \textit{Tawjihi} prepares students for a comprehensive exam in the second year, which tests students on the various subjects studied during their prior education. This test parallels the courses (and material) covered during the two-years of \textit{tawjihi} and includes subjects such as English, Arabic, math, science, and Islam. Results on the exam hold weight socially, but also practically, as scores determine viable career tracks\textsuperscript{7} and acceptance to university (Ministry of Education).

The desire for economic success is intimately tied to the demand for higher quality education. A growing percentage of Jordanian families are seeking and willing to pay for private

\textsuperscript{6} This is the sum of money agreed by the families of the bride and groom to be paid to the bride and her family upon the marriage and the money guaranteed to the bride upon divorce (Bowen, Early, & Schulthies 2014:17).

\textsuperscript{7} The university departments or disciplines that a student is allowed to major in are restricted by score on this final exam. Only students who get top scores are allowed to enter medicine and engineering. Disciplines are ranked by score and students are accepted into a department based on their score.
education. The most recent results published by the Ministry of Education and reported in UNESCO’s “World Data on Education” come from 2007-2008. According to those numbers, about 71% of primary school students are enrolled in government run schools. The private sector educates 28% of primary school students. The private system runs 900 elementary schools, most of which are concentrated in cities such as Amman. The government system runs 2153 elementary schools (UNESCO 2011).

Helping to counter the economic uncertainty facing the country, the monarchy has actively promoted education as the means to ensure a better future, both for the country and for individual people. In a country which can derive so little economic security from natural resources, King Hussein, the former monarch, and his son, King Abdullah II declared the people of Jordan the country’s “greatest asset.” King Abdullah said in an interview, “Our priority has been to provide Jordanians with the best life they can possibly get. Our human talent has always been our greatest asset, so my focus has been to improve the quality of life for all Jordanians, equipping youth with the education and skills they need to compete and achieve and open new horizons, reduce poverty and unemployment and keep the country on a steady course towards progress and development” (Pesec 2009). So far, the Jordanian government has been successful, at least in some measures, in boosting the population’s education. Al-Hassan and Takash report that literacy rates have increased from 33% in 1960, to 85.4% in 1996 (2011). According to UNESCO, in 2015 the literacy rate for Jordan was reported at 97% for age 15 and above and 99% for 15-24 year olds (UNESCO Institute of Statistics 2017).

But as discussed in the previous section, the availability of jobs (especially for an increasingly educated population), has not grown at the same pace as the number of young people entering the workforce. The government’s discourse around education not only situates education as the solution to economic challenges, but at the same time places tremendous responsibility for future success on schools. As Shirazi writes, “youth are being told that ‘being educated’ is the
best way to navigate the uncertainties of the future” (2016:91). Shirazi continues that government discourses focus on the idea of creating “human capital for the ‘knowledge economy’” (2016:91). Shirazi demonstrates the role of schools to be the path towards success, resulting the placement of responsibility for success on students. However students are facing this burden of personal responsibility in a system with such high unemployment rates, that success is difficult.

But it is not just the government that perpetuates the rhetoric that education is the means to success (Shirazi 2012). Many Jordanian parents find resonance with the monarchy’s emphasis on education. The parents believe that “the school is the arena par excellence in which the unformed potentials of [their] children are given shape as they are molded into members of our nation, bearers of [the] culture and tradition, the laborers who will build [the] future” (Starrett & Doumato 2007:2). Fearing that their children will not be able to find jobs, parents place responsibility on the school to provide the tools necessary for later success.

The vision and mission of the Jordanian Ministry of Education are tied ultimately to the economic future of the country. In the Ministry’s mission (listed in Appendix III), the purpose of building an education system is to “contribute to the nation’s wealth in a global ‘Knowledge Economy’” (The Ministry of Education). The vision of the school system is to provide “life-long learning” in order to “stimulate sustained economic development through an educated population and a skilled workforce” (The Ministry of Education). The mission and vision place education as an important means for economic prosperity and reinforce the role of schools in fulfilling that goal. Queen Rania talked about the importance of education for girls, drawing on the link between education and economic success. Queen Rania stated in an interview with Oprah, “One of the most important things that you can do for a girl is to empower her with her education …Because once she has the education, she can then have control over her income, she can change her life, she can have choices…when a woman is educated and her life is improved, then she can improve the life of her children” (2006). According to the discourses around education, education
serves as a means to economic and individual freedoms of choice that benefit not just the individual but also the next generation.

1.5.1 Educational Reforms

One of the monarchy’s educational initiatives was a program that began in 2002 and continues currently; the program concentrated on enhancing oversight of the education system and bringing in educational pedagogy that relies on “creating economic opportunities …encouraging creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration among students as well as the increased use of information communication technologies” (Shirazi 2010a). The program was known as the Education Reform for the Knowledge Economy (ERFKE), and it was implemented with the help of the World Bank, The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHRC), United States Aid for International Development (USAID), and the Jordanian Ministry of Education. According to Shirazi, The World Bank alone has given more than $120 million for this initiative (2010a). ERFKE’s vision statement has been adopted by the Ministry of Education and now listed on the Ministry website: “The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has the quality competitive human resource systems to provide all people with life-long learning experiences relevant to their current and future needs in order to respond to and stimulate sustained economic development through an educated population and a skilled workforce” (Ministry of Education). The ERFKE initiative was rolled out in three parts, with part two wrapping up while I was in the field. So far, the initiative has included a focus on early childhood education, computer skills, a new curriculum designed around research and critical thinking, and reforms to teacher education (Hodges 2015; ERFKE 2011). So far, the implementation of the ERFKE program has led to the training of teachers on trendy topics in Western models of education such as “group work” and “critical thinking”; however, as Hodges argues, these trainings provide only a rudimentary understanding of how to implement these ideas in the classroom. Hodges continues that more crucially, these buzz words
enter without discussions of how pedagogical approaches should and could be adapted and altered to fit into the Jordanian context (Hodges 2015).

The Philosophy and Objectives of Education listed on the Jordanian Ministry of Education’s website fall in line with the Monarchy’s approach to building a modern Jordan: Islam and Arab values are not incompatible with the current trends and ideas in the field of education. As laid out in the objectives, the system of education is rooted in a variety of values including loyalties to state, God, Islam as a driver of behavior, and scientific inquiry. A complete list of “The Philosophy and Objectives of Education” is listed in Appendix I. The government’s direction over education places Islam as the central force behind education and way of living, as seen in the objective “Islam is a system of intellectual behavioral ideology that respects man, exalts the mind and urges for knowledge, work and morality” (see Appendix III under (a)3) (Ministry of Education). In the government’s promotion of the ability to adopt new methods of educational practice seamlessly without losing core religious and cultural values, Islam serves as the main source for the intellectual basis of education.

The general objectives of education place side-by-side religion, Arabic, and a focus on technology, critical thinking, and scientific inquiry. As important as learning the Arabic language, and Islam, students are expected to “vigilantly comprehend technology,” “think objectively and critically and adopt scientific methods in observation, research and problem-solving,” and “invest personal potentials and free time in developing knowledge, innovation, invention, and the spirit of initiative, towards work and its completion and in innocent entertainment” (listed under (d) General Objectives). The Ministry’s approach ranks loyalty to the Arab nation as important as learning and using a “scientific methodology” (Ministry of Education).

While the Philosophy and Objectives of the Ministry of Education are important foundations for presenting the ideal compatibility between traditional classroom practices and the integration of new approaches to learning, the balance looks different in practice. Despite the
policy that the educational system should “have better suitability to both individual and society needs, and establishing a balance between them” this is difficult to accomplish in the classrooms of teachers who are unprepared for the new curriculum or not sure what that balance can and should look like in Jordan. As I discuss further in Chapter 2, traditional methods of education are difficult to change without clear guidance and support as well as discussion of how reforms can occur within the cultural framework of Jordan and each particular school and community.

The overall goal of the 2002 ERFKE reforms is to “modernize” education (Shirazi 2012). The reforms included pedagogical approaches as well as teacher preparation. Some of the changes included new textbooks, integrating research and critical thinking into the curriculum, adding group work and computer skills to the content, and a stronger focus on teacher education and teacher training (Hodges 2015:8).

One specific initiative through the reforms was the expansion of early education. Beginning in 2003, the Ministry expanded access to public kindergarten, as many Jordanians only had access to private kindergartens which charged tuition (Al-Hassan & Lansford 2009). The lack of access to pre-primary education more negatively affected girls, although all children were disadvantaged. However, beginning in 2003, the Ministry of Education began opening public kindergartens, adding an additional 532 across the country (Al-Hassan & Lansford 2009). This move was part of King Abdullah’s push for education as a strategy for preparing a workforce of “human capital” in a knowledge based economy (Al-Hassan & Lansford 2009).

According to the Jordanian government and reports produced by international funding agencies, education reforms have been very successful and further reforms continue to build on past accomplishments. One report states that “from 2002 to 2007, new curricula emphasizing research, critical thinking and group work were introduced in all Jordan’s schools…more than 60,000 teachers have been trained in using the new curricula” (Royal Hashemite Court cited in Hodges 2015:49). However, Innabi and El Sheikh’s study on Jordanian teacher’s perceptions
about critical thinking (including a study done in 2004) find that teacher trainings may not have translated into a “clear and adequate understanding of critical thinking” or the ability to talk about how to teach critical thinking (2006). Yet the educational reforms continue. The second phase of the reform, which started in 2009, “continues to build on the achievements of the first phase…and focuses on schools as the locus of changes as well as on the need to enhance capacity building at the central and field levels” (ERFKE 2011).

While the education reforms suggest that it would be easy to adapt new ways of teaching, what Hodges found on the ground is that educational reforms exacerbated the tension between traditional values and those associated with modernity. As Hodges writes, the monarchy assumes that it is easy to “balance the needs of centralized state creation with the cultivation of future democratic citizens… and balance the attempted modeling of a modern, moderate Islamic state with strong political opposition from Islamic-oriented organizations” (2015:38). However, as Hodges points out, “the state is silent on the impacts [the Educational reform] goals and the very objectives of the education system have on the stability of the family/tribe, religion, and silent on the stresses of cultural and economic change” (Hodges 2015:59). In addition, Shirazi describes these top-down educational reforms as “education as a socioeconomic panacea” which do not consider the social context of Jordan (2010b).

Assuming that the educational reforms will be easily integrated into current methods of teaching leaves educators to “figure things out in situ” (Hodges 2015:59) without discussion about how that can occur. Based on both Hodges’s ethnography and the time I spent in government schools in 2007-2008, there is evidence that the training the government claims to have provided has not been enough to integrate research methodologies, critical thinking, or group work into the classroom. Hodges describes one such training called “Teach Like A Champion,” designed by an American teacher, Doug Lemov, and translated into Arabic to be used in Jordan. Principals from government schools as well as some from private schools select a
few representatives from the school to attend and those teachers bring the materials and learning back to teach to the rest of the school. Trainings are free for government school employees, while private schools may incur some cost to send representatives. Hodges quotes one of the trainers as saying “[Jordanians] are moving backwards because the teachers are left behind” (2015:161). In Chapter 2, I explore the patterns of classroom interaction that reinforce traditional ways of teaching and make it difficult to integrate new pedagogy such as critical thinking.

1.5.2 Moral Education

The monarchy’s emphasis on schools as a “crucial site of…social transformation” (Shirazi 2016:91) means that schools are an important site for the molding and creation of an ideal student, and that the definition of being the right kind of student has moral implications. Teachers instill what it means to be not only a good student, but also a good citizen, and a good person. Additionally, many teachers and parents in Jordan see schools playing an important role in shaping “good” qualities in their children.

Predominant “disciplinary institutions” (Foucault 1995) in Jordan, much like in other parts of the world, are homes, schools, and religious institutions. As Adely wrote in her ethnography of high school girls in Jordan, the community, including teachers, administrators, and parents, saw one of the main roles of the school to be “an extension of the family--as an allied social institution that, in addition to teaching academic subjects, was entrusted with the upbringing or tarbiyya of young women, according to a set of generally shared moral values” (2012a:112). In parallel with parental expectations, Adely found that socializing students into “shared moral values” was a role that most of the teachers took seriously as part of their teaching responsibilities (Adely 2012a). One of the reasons for the attention to overseeing the behavior of the students was that “the reputation of the [students] in turn built the reputation of the school” (Adely 2012a:122), a fact which is especially important in private schools like Al-Dawran.
Amongst the mothers I interviewed, the reputation of Al-Dawran was an important reason why parents select the school over the many other private school options. While the definition of these “shared moral values” may be vague, for the Jordanians that I worked with, values are often mapped onto the intertwined concept of akhlaq (ethics) and adab (manners) and are explained as knowing how to behave, appropriately, across a variety of settings. Thus the “shared moral values” vary by context and contextual cues. Additionally, it is not just the context and environment that impact which values are salient, but the ways that these values are enforced in ethical behaviors differ across teachers and across situations. In Chapter 3, I explore akhlaq and adab in more detail and the methods by which “correct” behaviors are enforced. As Adely and Starrett write, “Embedded in the educative process are day-to-day efforts to monitor and control the behavior of young people and to shape them in particular ways to be obedient, productive, moral, and successful. These efforts go beyond explicitly religious efforts…” (Adely and Starrett 2011:360).

Discourses around the importance of education are not merely about economic necessity. According to Adely, success in school (measured by completing and doing well on the exit exam) has become a marker of a person’s character. In the case of women, the completion of a bachelor’s degree is desirable, especially in a wife, as seen in Queen Rania’s comments about being able to educate her children. The family of the groom was often looking for an educated bride who could support her future children in accurately completing schoolwork, often while she is also working her own job (thus making teaching a desirable field for a bride who was expected to work and take care of the children). With the necessity of education, not doing well in school becomes not just a marker of lack of intelligence, but of a moral failing (Adely 2012:130). She writes, “not being educated or not doing well in school can now be considered a deficit and is often tied to implicit assumptions about a girl's behavior and respectability…if a girl was a poor student, it was frequently assumed that this was a result of her laziness and her preoccupation
with matters that were frivolous and possibly even immoral" (Adely 2012:130-131). In Chapter 4, I examine the ideologies about language, education, morality, and progress that parents are reacting to when making choices about their children’s education.

1.5.3 The Role of English in Jordan

The king and queen of Jordan, their images omnipresent in public spaces, are emblems of wealth, power, status, and success. Both speak English fluently, serving as role models for the power of English to lead to achievement and success. The Jordanian Ministry of Education is attempting to fulfill King Abdullah’s mission of creating an English-speaking workforce. While the number of jobs may be lacking, the demand for English at those jobs is strong. The Ministry of Education has increased students’ exposure to English education. In the early 2000s, the Ministry changed the practice to begin English instruction at grade 1. Previously, English instruction began at grade 5 with grades 1-4 having Arabic as the only medium for instruction (Al-Salman 2007).

However, the additional length of study did not always translate into command over the English language. Based on the results of the end of secondary education exam, the tawjihi, 2016 marked the third year in a row when most secondary students failed the exam, with a pass rate around 40% for the past few years (Azzeh 2016). The article further elaborates that the English section was especially difficult; one student described his reaction to the English section thus: “the vocabulary and type of questions made me feel that it was the first time I was reading English” (Azzeh 2015). Various articles discuss both the likelihood that the expectations of the exam were too high and the quality of the students and the education offered by their schools were too low. Thus, the King’s push towards English seems to be incongruent with the abilities of students and teachers, and the results fail to meet the goals of the Ministry itself.
The inconsistency between the message of the King and the practical realities of English makes it no surprise that English is not listed explicitly on the Objectives and Philosophy of Education published by the Ministry of Education (Appendix III), or on the stated objectives of the Basic Education Cycle (grades 1-10) (see Appendix IV). Some of the objectives around technology may implicitly necessitate some English, but English is never mentioned. The Basic Education Cycle includes objectives around Islamic history and Islamic values, basic skills in Arabic, geography of the Arab World, tradition and values, love of homeland, basic skills in a foreign language (unnamed), and knowledge of technology. While English is not listed as the foreign language, government schools all teach English, as do most private schools. Note that both Arabic and the foreign language objective are to “acquire basic skills.” In the case of Arabic, the objective is thus clarified: “so that [the student] becomes able to use it easily.” It is unclear how “basic” is defined in the case of English. While it takes 10 years to get up to the objective of “basic,” in the final two years of tawjihi, listed as “secondary education,” the objectives list that a student should “use his Arabic language to enhance his scientific and literary knowledge, to consider the constituents of correct linguistic structure, and to relish the arts of the language.” Within the two years of tawjihi, the student is expected to progress in the foreign language from “basic skills” to “mastery” (Ministry of Education).

For most students who pass the Tawjihi and enroll in university, English is largely a necessity. The majority of university classes are in English, meaning that students need to be able to read and comprehend English in order to understand class materials and take exams.

For post-university students who are looking for jobs, the economic value of English becomes even greater. The best and most highly paid occupations require not just the ability to read English, but to speak it fluently with Jordanians and non-Jordanians (either in medical or business situations or dealing with tourists). Many students who did well in university find that they can read English well, but still do not speak English well enough to get a decent-paying job.
In the city of Amman, the majority of positions now require fluent spoken English. Many job advertisements require an application to show “a good command of spoken and written English” (Al-Salman 2007:146). In order to fill the gap between reading and speaking skills, some students end up in courses such as those taught by the British Council to develop the speaking skills necessary to get a job. These courses, however, are expensive, so much of the population cannot afford them. Thus, the ability to speak English takes on an incredibly great importance even for youth who see themselves as staying within Jordan or the Middle East and not just those who aspire to travel or live outside of the country or region.

Historically, Jordan has had a strong connection to the English language through the influence of a colonial past with Britain. The connection was most direct during the Mandate years under British protection (1921-1946) (Tell 2013:132). Even after independence in 1946, the influence of Britain continued, especially through military and financial connections (Tell 2013:115). The relationship between Britain and Jordan has been described as “later colonialism,” which Alon categorizes as more partnership than domination (2007:4). In the early years of the British Mandate, with Britain’s hesitance over how to rule in Jordan, Jordan was able to establish and maintain Arab rule and local political participation (Alon 2007). However, the British did have the privilege of power and intervention in Jordan, which, given their lack of understanding of the people and the country, led to numerous challenges and conflicts such as local revolts as the tribes tried to gain power (Alon 2007). However, compared to other former British colonies, the perception of the British in Jordan after independence was more agreeable. Alon describes that while Jordanians condemn colonialism and imperialism, “the British mandate is not necessarily perceived as the ultimate sin and is not blamed for the shortcomings of the state, as in many other former colonies” (2007:6).

In more modern times, the United States has replaced Britain’s influence in Jordan (Alon 2007) and allowed Jordan to maintain favorable and beneficial relationships with the English-
speaking Western world, especially through tourism and aid dollars. This positive relationship allows English not to be weighed down with heavy colonial baggage, but instead to be seen as a force for development and a sign of modernity. As far back as the 1950s, Jordan sought help from the United States to capitalize on tourism. At that time, Jordan targeted a predominantly Judeo-Christian audience, commodifying the holy places within Jordan and hoping to draw in tourist dollars. Ad campaigns described Jordan as “an ageless country by constructing an image of Jordan’s ancient religious civilizations in a new modern package” (Katz 2005:120; Massad 2001). This line of marketing continues, as the official tourism website of Jordan begins “The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, which once captivated ancient travelers, continues to enthrall a whole new generation as a modern, vibrant nation” (Jordan Tourism Board 2013). As Katz notes, “Jordan’s tourism authorities regarded holy places as ‘natural resources’ to exploit for the purpose of tourism” (2005:122).

For a country like Jordan poor in financially promising natural resources like oil, tourism was and continues to be an important economic driver. Preparing for a strong tourism sector requires speakers fluent not just in English but a number of world languages. As Mufwene points out, in order to coordinate an exchange with a country, the manufacturing company generally operates using the terms of the country it is selling to (2010). In the case of tourism, Jordan acts as the company using the language of the people to whom they hope to entice for tourism money. The approach Jordan has taken is to learn the languages of the tourists in order to sell Jordan’s historical sites as the commodity for purchase. The Official Website of the Jordan Tourism Board has options to view the site in thirteen languages including English, Arabic, German, Spanish, Italian, Korean, Japanese, and Chinese.

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8 Some of these sites include early churches, Mount Nebo, Bethany Beyond the Jordan where Jesus was baptized, and the tomb of Aaron (http://in.visitjordan.com/Whattodo/ReligionFaith.aspx)
9 While English is the most common language while visiting Jordan’s many popular tourist sites, it is common to see local Jordanian tour guides speaking other languages. A variety of European languages are popular (Italian, Spanish are common) as are East Asian languages such as Chinese and Japanese.
In order to take advantage of the benefits offered through English, the people of Jordan have made facility in English a prized commodity. As De Sawaan describes, English is an economic good; but rather than be consumed, it has potential to be accessed by many and gains value the more people use it (2010). English provides access to science, technology, research, and computers, all things mentioned by various Jordanians I spoke to during my fieldwork.

International textbook publishers have taken advantage of this commodification of English through the teaching of English as a foreign language. Teaching materials originally used in England and America are now being sent across the world (Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson 2010). Graddol cites the Chair of the British Council, Lord Neil Kinnock, who estimates the monetary gains attributable to English: “the English language teaching sector directly earns nearly £1.3 billion for the UK in invisible exports and our other education related exports earn up to £10 billion more” (cited in Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson 2010:83).

Along with English-language education come Western methods of teaching. As Phillipson writes, “In professional English teaching circles, English tends to be regarded as an incontrovertible boon, as does language policy and pedagogy emanating from Britain and the USA” (1992:8). In my fieldnotes, I wrote about one of the teachers in my field site asking me to help her sign up for an online teaching course. When we looked through the listing, I read out the titles of possible options. I read out a course with “common core” in the title and the teacher said, “Oh, common core. I’ve heard of that. Sign me up for that one.” The power of a trendy educational term was incentive enough to choose the class. In the end, the logistics of an online course for a teacher raising three children in a home without consistent internet proved too much of an obstacle for her to attend the course.

However, the integration of education reforms and discourses around education from the West often comes with a tension between traditional cultural values. Hodges writes that the explicit goal of Jordanian reform efforts in teacher education is “to ‘professionalize’ teachers out
of their personal and cultural understandings of the meaning of being a teacher and into the state’s understanding of the meaning of teaching for a knowledge economy” (2015:9). She continues that teachers face situations of “overlapping, ambiguous, and sometimes contradictory social expectations” which “often put teachers in the position of justifying behavior according to state goals in contradiction to traditional role expectations of religion, gender, family, and culture” (Hodges 2015:9-10).

While English is a growing part of the Jordanian education and economic sectors, English language education is understudied. There is very little written about what that English looks like across segments of the population and how Jordanians think about the role of English (see Pedersen 2010 for a look at elite English speakers). Most of the contemporary work focuses on the challenges of teaching the English language in Jordan (Fareh 2010; Rababah 2002; Zughol & Hussein, 1985; Zughol & Taminian 1984) or the status of English in Jordan (Al-Salman 2007). In Chapter 4 of this dissertation, I look at the attitudes and ideologies about languages amongst a certain class of Jordanians that influence the learning of English, as well as the desire for learning English.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

I begin my theoretical stance with the approach of the volume *Everyday Life in the Muslim Middle East*, which starts with concerns of everyday life—child rearing, issues around fertility, health concerns, and navigating within a city—and then allows for Islam to be interpreted and practiced in diverse ways and in conjunction with other cultural values (Bowen, Early, & Schulthies 2014:4). In that volume, the focus is on how Muslims live and interact, rather than the religious study and religious practice that may drive those ways of life. The point is not to ignore piety in an Islamic sense, but rather to look at the impact of religion through a different lens. My project focuses on language socialization, which encompasses “socialization through the
use of language and socialization to use language” (Schieffelin & Ochs 1986:163). By looking at the lens of the everyday, we see that religion intersects and may compete with other prominent factors in the process of socialization.

This dissertation takes as a model Ayala Fader’s ethnography *Mitzvah Girls* about the kinds of work that caretakers invest into socializing girls within a Hasidic community. Fader’s ethnographic work models research on religious education *without* the necessity of focusing on formalized religious education (Baquedano-Lopez 2008; Hunt & Carper 1997; Eickleman 1978; Hefner, 2007; Messick 1993; Moore 2006; Zaman 2002). In Fader’s ethnography, much of the religious precepts are conveyed in everyday behaviors and practices, through guidance about how to behave, and importantly, censure about *how not* to behave. Discipline and regulation of speech, dress, and other ways of behaving create and maintain a distinction between Jews and other communities and between “alternative religious modernity” and the rejected ideas of other kinds of modernities (Fader 2009, 2012). While the tensions and challenges of ethnographic contexts differ, Fader’s work models the linguistic analysis and attention to interactions that I used in my dissertation.

### 1.6.1 Language Socialization

The process of socializing a child into being a member of a particular community is partly a moral concern. From who is responsible for the socialization to what happens if a child makes errors, one of the goals is instilling children with “correct” social values. The definition of “correct” varies by cultures, and the means of teaching and disciplining children into correct ways are brought to life through diverse child-rearing practices (Fechter 2014:149). Language and linguistic interaction serve as a lens for viewing and understanding the ethical messages of a culture, but also a medium through which to convey ethical values. The field of language socialization has developed a strong and durable methodology for answering questions about how
members of a community come to be culturally specific beings, enacting behaviors in line with a local worldview, that is, learning what the boundaries of “right” and “wrong” are within that community (Kulick & Schieffelin 2004; Ochs & Schieffelin 1984; Schieffelin 1990). Language socialization focuses on the interactions between children coming to enact “appropriate” cultural behaviors and community members who model these behaviors and socialize the children.

The field of language socialization emerged as a direct response to what the earliest authors (especially Ochs and Schieffelin) saw in language acquisition research as a very narrow definition of language learning. Prior perspectives of language learning focused primarily on a specific age range and language learning in institutional settings. One of the trends that Ochs and Schieffelin pushed back against is the idea, largely from language acquisition, of language learning having an end-state and the concern for “linguistic competence” (as described in Kramsch 2002; Schieffelin & Ochs 1986). From this perspective, language learning has a clear end, where the child is considered “competent.” A direct result of this perspective is for language learning research to focus on the role of formal “instructional contexts” where children are explicitly coached in correct uses, or to focus on the input provided to children in learning routines and formulaic expressions (Gleason & Weintraub cited in Schieffelin & Ochs 1986).

That language learning was defined in a very narrow and specific way, directly motivated the questions, methods, and conclusions of the field of language socialization. Rather than focus on socialization as an outcome, language socialization highlights the process of learning, achieved through a close inspection of ordinary interactions (Ochs & Schieffelin 1984). Knowing how to behave is not constructed through “a preexisting process” (Schieffelin 1990); through interaction, a child does not just absorb how to behave, but engages with interactants. Given that any interaction has the possibility of teaching, language socialization encourages looking beyond explicit instructional settings. The interactional approach reveals cultural variability, such as differences in how joint attention is reached (Brown 2012). Further, an interactional approach
makes clear that children learn not just by being addressees. Using Goffman’s (1981) participant framework, de León demonstrates that a variety of roles are involved in learning; for example, overhearing is central to socialization because it also teaches skills of observation, attention, inference and participation (2012: 84). An interactional approach reveals strategies of language socialization aligned with local ideologies about how children think or interact with the world (de León 2012).

An interactional approach brings also critical attention to language and how interactions themselves can be part of the learning process. As Goodwin (1990) warns, it is easy to view conversation and talk as “a transparent medium for gathering information” instead of “part of the phenomena under investigation” (1990:4). What Goodwin criticizes is the focus on what kids say about their social world rather than the social world created through those interactions (1990:17). For example, she demonstrates that by analyzing the interactions between the boys in her study, she reveals how they create and reinforce social hierarchies (Goodwin 1990). In Chapter 2, I focus on classroom interactions as an object of study to examine how children learn the “right” way to behave in their community.

With attention to Goodwin’s critique, the interactional approach of language socialization research can benefit the anthropology of Islam. Consider a commonly recited Islamic ideology that religion is a way of life. In her ethnography of Muslim women in Egypt, Mahmood presents a lesson in an Islamic study group about the fear that “religious sensibilities” were being forgotten. Hajja Samira, one of Mahmood’s informants says, “Look around in our society and ask yourselves: who do we emulate? We emulate the Westerners, the secularists, and the Christians…When you enter the homes of Muslims, you are surprised: you can’t tell whether it is the house of a Christian or a Muslim. We are Muslims in name, but our acts are not those of Muslims. Our sight, dress, drink, and food should also be for God and out of love for Him” (Mahmood 2005:44). For many Muslims, being Muslim is about imbuing all actions with
submission to God, which the speaker advocates. Mahmood provides two readings: at the surface, one might conclude that Hajja Samira is trying to “assert…religious distinctiveness” in Muslims. Mahmood offers a deeper reading that Hajja Samira is “critiquing a prevalent form of religiosity that treats Islam as a system of abstract values that is to be cherished but that, nonetheless, remains inessential to the practical organization of day-to-day life” (2005:45). By adding an interactional approach, we add the interaction between participants and the influence interactants have on each other. From word choice to making behavioral decisions (dress, drink, food), interactants subtly and not so subtly comment on each other’s behaviors and shift behavior and talk to align more or less with each other, depending on the situation. Studying interactions allows us to observe how language is shaped and influenced by not only Muslim identity, but the desire to convey that identity to others and in turn, to accept that religious identity oneself. The interactional approach focuses on “the social world created” through an interaction (Goodwin 1990:17). An interactional approach would add a third reading, that Hajja Samira is creating a way to be Muslim. Mahmood alludes to this social world being created through the self-cultivation of religion through attention to bodily practices; practice becomes the way to make Islam part of everyday life. Hajja Samira is trying to create an answer to a question underlying Mahmood’s ethnography: how do Muslims “make [their] daily lives congruent with [their] religion while at the same time moving with the world, especially given that the present period is one of great change and transformation?” (2005: 45-6). With such a difficult challenge, Hajja Samira’s answer demonstrates that bringing together dress, postures, conversation with others, and actions suggest something about religion and religiosity. By looking at the interaction, we can better understand how language and interactions are helping to create what it means to be Muslim and how.

The approach of language socialization emphasizes the importance of looking across contexts and a variety of different interactions. Examining language in relation to the context
highlights the creation of meaning through language use. Understanding what is considered “correct” or what is considered appropriate religiously, as well as what is incorrect and inappropriate, is often contextually and interactionally bound (Gumperz 1992). In Chapter 3, I look at some of the various ways that children are socialized when their behavior is deemed incorrect for the particular context. Islam has a tremendous power over definitions of “good” and “bad”; however, an interaction approach reveals how difficult it can be to apply these definitions in practical life. The fact that religious studies are generally limited to the kinds of contexts that are linked formally to religion (religious settings like the mosque or religion classes) limits the kinds of discussions at play and misses reflections on religion outside of those contexts.

The medium of investigation for language socialization, the interaction, also shifts the meaning of “correct” into an understanding of language within its context (Ochs & Schieffelin 1984). The interactional approach shows that learning is an active process and requires negotiation (Ochs & Schieffelin 1984). The Samoan kids at the center of Och’s ethnography provide an example of the role of the language learner. Samoans generally do not see “actions, including speech actions… as right or wrong, good or bad, in isolation (i.e., as inherently right or wrong, good or bad). Actions are, rather, evaluated in terms of the ‘fit’ between the actions and the situation. Disapproval is often voiced as E lee fetau: ‘It doesn’t fit.’” For example, insults may be “bad speech” in many situations, but “good speech” when they are uttered to protect family honor (Ochs 1988:54). Viewing speech and actions in terms of “fit” places emphasis on social relationships and context which determine appropriateness and allows the child to learn the boundaries of “fit.” And as “fit” is determined contextually, “good” and “bad” are not fixed categories; learning by doing is the best way of learning boundaries, as the lines are not very easily elaborated as rules. Defiant behavior is expected in young children and even encouraged, for it builds skills in adulthood for defending honor (Ochs 1988).
In addition to learning language, children are learning culturally specific ideas about what it means to be an individual in their community and about relationships between community members. As Schieffelin and Ochs write, “children’s understandings of social identities are a function of their subjective involvements in interactions with others” (1986:176). In some communities, dyadic interactions are the predominant turn-taking pattern that teach about relationships with others; in other communities, multiparty interactions help teach about relations with siblings, community hierarchies, and ritual patterns of respect and power (Brown 2012; de León 2012; Schieffelin & Ochs 1986; Schieffelin 1990).

Through the process of language socialization, children also are socialized into ethical expectations—how to behave in acceptable, highly valued ways of being. Through everyday activities such as eating, interacting in the classroom, and learning religious rituals, children are scaffolded into community expectations. After being guided by caregivers, children are expected to implement these behaviors and culturally acceptable values on their own. Across activities from eating to praying, children not only are learning how to behave, but picking up on community hierarchies and social orders as well as moral expectations of good and bad, right and wrong. In Aminy’s work with an Islamic school in California, teachers associated being a “good child” with being a Muslim (2014:131), suggesting that one’s behaviors have moral expectations and can be integrated into cultural expectations around religion. Given the underlying influence of Islam in Jordan, the connection between “good Muslim” and “good child” will also be prevalent in this dissertation.

Mealtimes are an important site for the socialization of children into cultural expectations. As Ochs and Shohet write, “mealtimes constitute universal occasions for members not only to engage in the activities of feeding and eating but also to forge relationships that reinforce or modify the social order. In addition, mealtimes facilitate the social construction of knowledge and moral perspectives through communicative practices that characterize these
occasions” (2006:36). Ochs and Taylor analyzed how dinnertime narratives reinforce a “family political order” (1992:302). Aronsson and Gottzén further this work to look at how older siblings take up different stances in the family order and in the moral order—at times supporting a younger sibling and at times taking a stance as an adult in order to provide the younger sibling with moral guidance about behavior (2011).

Schools play an important role in the socialization of children. As García-Sánchez highlights, “educational institutions do not work in isolation from larger societal forces, and therefore, are not immune to” ideologies, beliefs, and the politics of the society; “In that sense, [schools] do not only reflect the tensions and makeup of the wider society, but also have a very decisive role in the construction of new social relations and dynamics” (García-Sánchez 2014:128). Al-Dawran school played an important role in re-producing cultural beliefs about social identities and the personhood of children, and had the potential to be a space for change in an evolving Jordan. As Levinson argues, schools are spaces in which the global and the local meet, both in positive ways and in ways that conflict (1999). In spite of the rapid spread of Western ideas about education across the world, how those ideas are integrated and incorporated with the local are distinct (Levinson 1999). Thus we can understand how local and global ideas merge and reinforce culturally specific ideas in the Jordanian context by examining classroom behaviors and interactions.

The similarities in interaction between socialization at home and school also helps some children adjust to the educational system better than others. Heath demonstrated that students raised in some homes were better prepared for the kinds of literacy, classroom interactional styles, and thinking skills expected at school (1982, 1986). Relationships between reading, and specifically Biblical reading, influence how parents interact with texts, ask question, and the kinds of formulaic questions and answers children are taught to respond to (1986:63). Rote learning and known information questions are central to the Jordanian classrooms that I studied. Looking at
classroom interactions can provide insights into the patterns of thinking being socialized into students.

1.6.2 Islamic Socialization

Imitating their parents praying is a common way for children to begin their religious socialization. I observed during fieldwork little girls using extra scarfs or even kitchen towels to cover their heads as they copy the postures of ritual Islamic prayers. Basking in the delight of their audience, some children recite religious utterances like “allahu akbar” (God is great) and “bismillah ir-rahman ir-raheem” (in the name of Allah the most beneficent the most merciful). These are both phrases which are repeated multiple times in the process of ritual prayers.

As children grow, their responsibilities toward Islam grow as well. Usually before starting school, many children have memorized at least a few passages of the Qur’an. From there, the children learn how to pray. As they grow, children add religious practices such as fasting during Ramadan. Elementary-school aged children may fast for a few hours, working up over the years until the full day fast for the entire month. While children may begin praying five times a day, it is when they reach puberty that they are expected to follow religious obligations without fail. The expectations around children and religion will be discussed further in Chapter 3 of the dissertation.

The goal of this dissertation is not to look at the socialization of religious orthodoxy – guidelines about what is or is not correct according to Islam. Instead the focus is on how religious values, concepts, and ideas guide everyday behavior and interactions as well as expectations for “correct” behavior. While Islam is a key source for how people think they ought to live, the implementation in everyday life is far from clear. What is “good” and what is “bad” can be difficult to determine. Between culture (thaqafa), religion (deen), and ethics (akhlaq and adab), the forces that affect behavioral decisions are complicated.
Leila Ahmed’s memoir about growing up in Egypt after Egyptian independence from Colonial Britain conveys that much of religious socialization takes place outside the formal sphere of religious education. Ahmed writes:

Being Muslim was about believing in a world in which life was meaningful and in which all events and happenings were permeated (although not always transparent to us) with meaning…What it was to be Muslim was passed on not, of course, wordlessly, but without elaborate sets of injunctions or threats or decrees or dictates as to what we should do and be and believe. What was passed on, besides the very general basic beliefs and moral ethos of Islam…was a way of holding oneself in the world. (1999:121)

What Ahmed describes is the influence of Islam not in formal commandments, but in how to behave and how to act.

Religious study is an important part of socialization. Many Jordanians of all ages are involved in further religious education outside of schools (Adely 2012b). Some children attend Qur’an classes in summers or after school. Young women I met in the field attended Islamic study groups with other women to discuss the Qur’an. Those with young children (too young for school) brought children along; the children memorized verses of the Qur’an while their mothers discussed the meanings of some of those same verses. Religion was also an important part of social gatherings where friends drank tea and talked about religion, politics and the news. Teachers in the breakroom shared prayers and told stories about the power of religion in their lives. The messaging service WhatsApp was a popular source for religious reminders, videos of Islamic preachers and scholars, and prayers to be passed around a group.

According to Moore, learning and memorizing religious texts is not seen as demonstrating “proper religious feeling but rather a means for developing it” (2012:219). In the work of Fader and Moore, in the religious traditions of Judaism and Islam respectively, teaching recitation of religious texts through memorization is just as much about imbibing “religious feelings” or embodying a moral character and respect for the words, as it is learning the text (Fader 2008; Moore 2012). This practice is a way of teaching that religious ideologies are part of
being a member of the community, of having faith integrated into a way of life (Moore 2012). As Messick points out, learning parts of the Qur’an is not just for being able to pray, but serve as an indication of common membership to the Muslim community (1993). Given the importance of reciting and learning religious texts and speaking in a way that reflects the authority and power of God, language is key to learning how to become Muslim.

The “religious feeling” that is being developed is common to some interpretations of the three Abrahamic faiths. Religious feeling may develop into some kind of “inner state” or sincerity about the practice of faith. In these communities, importantly, children are not expected to naturally reflect this state, but instead start to develop it (Moore 2012:219). Rituals are imbued with ideas of respect, self-control, and modesty. Rituals are seen as a way of cultivating and internalizing those virtues, and must therefore be socialized at young ages. As Fader writes, “women and girls’ ways of speaking (regardless of which language), clothing, reading, and comportment are shaped by a belief that public embodied signs produce and provide evidence of Jewish women’s interior souls” (2009:32). Without clear ways of measuring “inner virtue,” the external becomes not only a means of developing it, but a sign of its creation. Thus, how one speaks becomes a sign of virtues like piety.

Recent work in the anthropology of Islam reflects a heightened attention to the self-cultivation of a pious and virtuous Islamic self (Deeb 2006, 2009; Haeri 2013; Hirschkind 2006; Mahmood 2005). The “Islamic self” is based on ideologies of “the good” and enacting virtues exemplified in religious texts and in the life of Prophet Muhammad (Sajoo 2010). Some of these actions include study of the Qur’an, listening to sermons, attention to modest dress/veiling, and service to the community (Abu-Lughod 1986; Brenner 1996; Deeb 2006; Hirschkind 2006; Mahmood 2005). These practices cultivate the Islamic self; they can be understood as “ethical practices” because they guide actions in line with choices about what is “good” from the perspective of Islam (Lambek 2010; Sajoo 2004). These actions become a marker to others--and
to the self—of attention to creating a moral self, as training the body becomes a sign as well as a method of following the path to a virtuous self (Fader 2009, 2012; Hirschkind 2006; Moore 2012).

1.6.3 Islamic Socialization at School

Contrary to the images that interpretations of Islam are largely steered by men, women play an important role in teaching Islam, particularly to young children. Most women take the lead in overseeing all education, including teaching passages of the Qur’an to children before they even enter school. One mother I spoke to talked about the important role of the family in teaching religion: “First [children] learn religion and then go to school. There they can learn science, math, and things like that. But first they have to understand religion, know how to pray, and fear God (khaifu Allah).” For this mother, learning begins at home, making the foundation of learning the domain of mothers. Further, she saw religion as the basis for other educational topics, necessary before learning other subjects.

In the years that follow when kids start formal schooling, religious socialization continues at home and with the family, and children are also exposed to religious socialization in schools and for some, in Islamic centers. At most schools in Jordan, religion is taught formally as an independent course. In the case of the elementary students at Al-Dawran, they had a separate class for religion (focused on Islamic history) and Qur’anic recitation. Religion classes in schools are called deen coming from the root (دَينَ), which means “to profess.” From this, comes the word دين (deen) meaning “religion, creed, faith” (Wehr 1994:353). In the case of the schools I visited, deen class was limited to the study of Islam.

Teachers are also an important source of religion and an Islamically derived version of moral education. Adely in her work on religion in Jordanian public schools writes, “The role of the teacher, then, is a most significant one in a context in which teachers are still expected to be
moral guides. Just as school administrators were concerned with discipline and control, they were also concerned with producing good girls and citizens” (2012b:307). As an indication of the deep integration of religious socialization in Jordanian schools, Islam, the Qur’an, and the Prophet may weave into any subject. Teachers invoke the name of God when frustrated or disciplining their students, which I examine in more detail in Chapter 3. One of the interactions I observed in the kindergarten class was a student asking the teacher in Arabic, “Is it right that if one puts their food in the trash, Allah will put them in the fire?” The teacher affirmed with an agreeing “ahh.”

Adely notes that religion is both overtly and subtly driving ordinary interactions at school (2012b). Religion influences peer interactions, student-teacher interactions, teacher-teacher interactions, and even principal-community interactions (Adely 2012b:297). With the distribution of the knowledge and authority of Islam beyond a narrow, orthodox body of Islamic scholars other spaces for religious socialization have emerged (Asad 1986). And as Adely demonstrates, “public schools--state pedagogical institutions--throughout the Middle East are officially charged with the task of defining correct practice and asserting dominance” (2012b:298). Adely argues that schools take on the historical role of religious orthodoxy to control behavior and regulate what is “correct” (2012b:297).

At Al-Dawran, religion and the implications Islam had on how to behave were important concerns for the elementary school. The elementary school principal, Ms. Asma, began an interview about her thoughts on the task of educating the next generation of Jordanians with the comment “all of us here are Muslims.” From Islam she derived key principles such as respect and manners towards guests or those in need. She said, “wherever you are, if you see something not good, make it good.”

Also from her ideas about Islam, Ms. Asma derived her stance on moral education. Her philosophy of education centered on the idea that if students love their teacher, they are better behaved, listen and pay attention, and learn. According to her, if a teacher is loved and respected,
“for sure, 100% the kid will be excellent.” The principal promoted the responsibility of the school towards ethical and moral education. Moral education in how to live and behave was a necessary foundation for academic learning.

1.6.4 Ordinary Ethics

Recent authors in the anthropology of ethics note that it is in studying ethics that we come to understand culture-- that ethics are inherent in what make us human (Lambek 2010). Rather than look for abstract ideals, it is ethics, and especially a look at “ordinary ethics,” that demonstrates culture as practice (Lambek 2010). “Ordinary language,” with its unmarked and implicit nature, makes for an opportune window into underlying beliefs (Austin 1956; Wittgenstein 1973). Ordinary ethics look at ethics as “relatively tacit, grounded in agreement rather than rule, in practice rather than knowledge or belief, and happening without calling undue attention to itself” (Lambek 2010:2). As Das elaborates, the ethical becomes not the “judgments we arrive at when we stand away from our ordinary practices” but instead “a dimension of everyday life” (2012:34).

In line with Lambek, I focus not on defining or listing specific ethics, but to “the ethical” “an emergent quality or property of action” (2015:6). Examining the ethical requires a focus on action and interaction rather than an objective list of how to behave in a particular context. Das argues that the blurred edges of concepts such as ethics allow for ethics to be “embedded in what Wittgenstein called the whirl of organism,” that is, how are ethics used in various ways in interactions and in different contexts (2015:59-60). The underlying messages of the interactions between caretakes and children, create the meaning of the ethical, and also what “the good” means in a particular culture. As I demonstrate in Chapter 3, continual references to thinking about how one’s behavior affects others and what God may think of one’s behaviors help socialize children into meanings of the good and the ethical.

As Lambek discusses, rather than conceptualize ethics as objectified and articulated as a series or rules, codes, or precepts about how to live, ordinary ethics captures the ethical as
“immanent,” a guiding force in how to live, interact and speak (2015: 16). He writes, “our talk and actions matter to us--and so do the judgments we make about the world and about our conduct in it. Hence the ethical is an intrinsic dimension of human activity and human life worlds, as grammar is an intrinsic dimension of language” (2015: 18). This dissertation is not concerned with discovering the principles and values that characterize Jordanian cultures and people. As Lambek suggests, this is a problematic approach that can lead to generalizations and flat perspectives of a people (2015: 39). Instead, this paper tackles ethics from the direction of what it looks like in practice: What do ordinary ethics look like in the context of an interaction? What are the methods by which children learn ethics? What do these everyday processes of teaching and shaping children tell us about what matters to a community of people? What are the implications of this process on their understandings of self and other? If the ethical is a process of the “ongoing practice” of judgments (Lambek 2015:44), how are children learning to continue this process on their own?

However, as Lempert reflects, the challenge with seeing the ethical as “intrinsic to speech and action” (Lambek 2010:1) is that it appears “effortless” and “immanent” (Lempert 2013:371). Seeing the ethical and the moral everywhere means that “morality is left undifferentiated and co-extensive with rights and responsibility of knowledge expression” (Lempert 2013: 377). And as he continues, “apart from moral breakdowns and self-conscious deliberation and the histrionics of public ritual, it is not always clear how ethics even matters for interactants” (Lempert 2013:387).

Lempert advises that research into ordinary ethics “study the communicative methods and labor—discreet to dramatic, implicit to explicit, improvised to institutionalized—through which actors make ethics recognizable and effective in discursive interaction” (2013:387). I look at the socialization into ethics as deliberate exercises by caretakers. At the same time, I look at how these moments of ethical education or moralizing are interactionally built in the moment and within a particular context. In an effort to make ethics less “immanent,” I also look at how ethics being taught link to specific values of the community that children are being socialized into.

Much of the most recent and popular work on Islamic ethics has focused on the direction of self-cultivation. This includes women establishing their own agency in the Islamic search for
knowledge in the case of Mahmood (2005) and the role of service for the women in Deeb’s ethnography (2006). Other works include the development of new veiling practices (Gokariksel 2009) and ethical development through listening to sermons (Hirschkind 2006), or even the forbearance demonstrated by terminally ill patients awaiting transplants (Hamdy 2014). As Louw writes that the ethnographic studies of Islam that began largely with the work of Mahmood and Hirschkind to “explore the complex meanings of Islam and being Muslim in everyday religious life and demonstrate that in spite of the predicaments of everyday life, for most people, engagement in Islam mainly seems to be driven by the effort to lead pious lives and cultivate moral selves” (2013:515). What Louw highlights is the way ordinary ethics lends itself to a look at how Muslims use religion as a key guide to their everyday behaviors.

While self-cultivation is an important part of everyday life for Muslims, it concentrates on the level of the individual, rather than the interaction between individuals learning and negotiating the cultural guidelines of what it means to be a good Muslim, student, child, and citizen. Religious self-cultivation is an important angle, and certainly worth investigating. My dissertation takes a different approach, looking at the invocation of ethics in everyday interaction and the ethical implications of interactions. The interactional approach, generally between caregivers and children or between school administrator and parents, provides the context for ethics to be shaped by the interaction and the situation, rather than portraying ethics as fixed, black-and-white, or generalizable to different situations. The children, teachers, parents, and administrators at the school were each influenced by their own history, experiences, understandings and relationships with Islam. Their diverse experiences led to very different possibilities which ethics get called on, why, and how much to push expectations for good behavior especially for a child who is still in the process of learning ethics and ethical boundaries for the various contexts of their lives, including familial, educational, and cultural contexts. Additionally, the reactions of the child as well as the child’s temperament may play a role in how a caretaker navigates ideas about teaching good from bad.
In the next chapter, I begin with a close look at interactions between a teacher and her students to examine what ethics are being taught and how those messages are conveyed to students.
Chapter 2: “Good” Responses: Socialization in the English Language Learning Classroom

2.1 Introduction

In Chapter 1, I discussed how educational reforms in Jordan not only encourage the adoption of Western teaching pedagogy, but increase the tension between educational goals and traditional values. In this chapter, I look at what education looks like in practice through the example of Ms. Layla. I argue that the interactional patterns (or moves) between Ms. Layla and her students reinforce uniformity and conformity to the group, rather than creativity and innovation (as encouraged in critical thinking pedagogy). The interactional moves require students to repeat and participate in choral utterances and keep more control of the classroom in the hands of the teacher. Through these interactional moves, students not only learn to balance their desires for individual recognition, but instead support the group. Finally, I argue that these same patterns prioritize cultural homogeneity rather than innovation.

I know that we have scientists in Jordan, but we don’t see them...I don’t hear about any research that Jordanian scientists do inside Jordan, I hear that they do it outside Jordan...I wish [for Jordan] that people start to think in a different way, using English language. I’m not teaching English because I want them just to speak... I don’t want to teach them English because I want them to turn themselves from Arabs to Americans. It’s not that...They say, ‘oh yeah, when you speak English, so you are gonna dress up like Americans, you are gonna do like Americans.’ Okay we can’t. We have a different society. See?

- Ms. Layla, Kindergarten and Grade 1 English teacher at Al-Dawran, Interview January 2015

Hodges argued that Jordanian public school teachers felt caught in the middle, unsure of how to implement a curriculum full of research and critical thinking in the midst of socializing cultural and Islamic values (2015). Ms. Layla, an English teacher at Al-Dawran, expressed a passion for the way English could help her students learn about research, and went on to talk about conducting research. But she struggled with the possibility that taking ideas from the West meant leaving behind the values of the Jordanian society they came from.
Critical thinking was a term used frequently in the educational reform documents in Jordan in 2002 as preparation for the “knowledge economy.” It was a concept taken up by the movement for educational reform without discussion about what it would mean or look like in the Jordanian context. Additionally, critical thinking was never clearly defined and typically poorly implemented. Innabi and El Sheikh define critical thinking as problem solving and reasoning by using what is already known to draw conclusions (2007:46-47 from Ennis 1985). In their work from 2007, Innabi and El Sheikh investigated Jordanian teachers’ understanding of critical thinking by looking at some implementation of the Education Reform for the Knowledge Economy (ERFKE) initiatives on critical thinking as well as earlier reforms. The authors concluded that many of the teachers lacked a comprehensive understanding of what critical thinking was and half of the teachers could not provide any examples of methods of encouraging critical thinking in their students (Innabi & El Sheikh 2007:65).

Ms. Layla was Al-Dawran’s biggest proponent of scientific inquiry and critical thinking. In our discussions, Ms. Layla was interested in cultivating in her students what she referred to as “critical thinking,” but generally lacked clarity on what that meant. In one instance when she attempted to define it, Ms. Layla said, “being open to different ways of thinking” or as quoted above to “start to think in a different way.” Generally she avoided explaining critical thinking by referring to it as a concept that students needed to learn, but that her students did not currently have. In the classroom, her occasional forays into critical thinking asked students to apply what they already knew to draw conclusions (such as applying what they knew about bears to better understand the story of “Goldilocks”), to evaluate a situation (such as Goldilocks’s behavior), or to evaluate the effect of their behaviors on others (as I discuss in Chapter 3). In order to better understand “critical thinking,” Ms. Layla invited an educator to conduct a model lesson. The educator had pedagogical training in critical thinking and happened to be the mother of one of the kindergarteners in the class. The educator’s method of teaching critical thinking was to have the
children use their imaginations. During the modeled lessons, the first grade students were given a page of circles. Using their imagination, the students used the circles as the basis for drawing something else (like a sun, a pizza, or an insect). See Appendix V for examples of the products when the Arabic language teacher for kindergarten did the same exercise for homework.

The discourses that Ms. Layla and other Jordanian teachers (Adely 2012a, 2014) espoused about critical thinking often fell short in practice as the training, resources, and infrastructure for a new pedagogical approach was still lacking (Hodges 2015). As Buckner and Hodges point out, the evaluation system in Jordan is still based on standardized tests that focus on memorization and recall (2016:607), prioritizing a particular way of teaching. Naguib writes about a similar educational model and challenges in Egypt, explaining, “teaching methods prevent students from developing essential tools to improve their intelligence, levels of understanding, and ability to acquire the scientific principles to carry out research and critical inquiry” (2006:68).

Ms. Layla’s theories about education versus practice of education exemplify the tension between wanting to introduce new educational methods into her teaching and not knowing how to fit them onto her current methods of classroom interaction. The topics and presentation of Ms. Layla’s lessons were not always predictable, unlike most of the other teachers I observed. However, as I argue and demonstrate in this chapter, she continued to rely on the same underlying interactional patterns across the variety of activities. These patterns in the classroom socialized students into a very specific way of how to be a “good” student. Even with creative teaching ideas, her interactions focused on responding in the right way at the right time, and rarely in generating creative and critical responses to the topic. Her interactional patterns helped her maintain order in the classroom; not just hierarchical order (between a teacher and her students) but also social order (between classmates) (García-Sánchez 2014, Haviland 1988). Ms. Layla’s classes were often chaotic messes of yelling, distraction, and lack of focus. In response, Ms.
Layla turned to interactional strategies that controlled behaviors. Ms. Layla’s interactional moves followed traditional teaching methods in Jordan—rote memorization, choral chanting, and testing that focuses on recall—are rooted in cultural values of respect for authorities, precision and correctness, and knowing when it is appropriate to say what.

In this chapter, I look at the interactional patterns that students were learning as well as the moral lessons that these patterns conveyed. These interactional moves reinforced a teacher-centric classroom. Instead of demonstrating that one was creative and thinking outside the box, students were successful if they were willing and able to follow strict classroom interactional rules around when to answer and what specific answers to give. Using the interactions between Ms. Layla and her kindergarten and first grade students, I examine four common interactional moves used by the teacher and the responses students provided. I then delve deeper into the implications of those patterns on what it means to be a good student and a good community member.

As Lambek explains, ethics are not about “how we can do what is absolutely right, but how we should live and what kind of person we want to be” (2008:134). By engaging in the interactional moves of the teachers, students were actively learning how to behave: what to say, how to balance their collective and individual identities in the way they respond, and how to demonstrate they are “good” students and citizens. I focus on the level of classroom interactions between the teacher and her students to examine the following questions:

1. What were the most common interactional moves that emerged in Ms. Layla’s classroom?
2. What were the implications of these patterns on the development of personhood for students in the class?
3. What ethical messages emerged from these interactional patterns and what do these messages say about what it meant to be “good” in the Jordanian cultural context?

I argue that Ms. Layla’s interactional moves teach students that being good requires them to join in the crowd and discourage innovation. The patterns of interactions socialized the
students to balance individual desires with the needs and benefit of the collective class. Students are encouraged to work hard and achieve, but largely for the benefit of their peers. These same interactional patterns also encourage students to behave in predictable, rote ways even outside of the classroom.

In this chapter, I begin by laying out theories from classroom interaction, ethical socialization, and ideas around personhood that ground the chapter. In section 2.4, I answer question 1 by describing the four most prevalent interactional moves in classroom interaction. I build on this information in section 2.5 to look at how these patterns socialize young children into ideas about personhood, learning when to stand out as an individual respondent and when to follow along with the collective crowd. Finally, in section 2.6, I explore question 3 to look at how these patterns teach what it means to be good members of the community.

2.2 Theoretical Background

At the beginning of their education, students are being introduced to shared ideas about classroom behavior and the task of learning. In their introduction to their book *Roots of Human Sociality*, Enfield and Levinson describe human interaction as unique because it “rests on participation in a common mental world, a world in which we have detailed expectations about each other's behavior, beliefs about what we share and do not share in the way of knowledge, intentions, and motivations” (2006:1). According to the authors, this form of cooperative communication is “inherited” by individuals who adopt the social organization of their culture and community by accumulating cultural and historical capital (2006:1). While Enfield and Levinson use the term “inherited,” the literature on socialization shows that this learning is a gradual process of exposure, scaffolded learning and correcting of mistakes, and eventual enough ability that newcomers to a culture, like children, pass as competent members of their community (Ochs & Scheiffelin 1984). The process of socialization is done largely through and with
language as children learn culturally constituted beliefs about the world, what to expect of other’s behaviors, and what knowledge is shared amongst those inside the culture.

Interactions with adults, siblings, peers and others help the child learn rules, patterns, and methods of appropriate interaction, with the teacher in the position of power. But the rules of the classrooms often differ from the rules of conversations outside the classroom (Gardner 2013). Most classroom interactional styles in Jordan and common in other parts of the world, are described as teacher-centric, where “the teacher is the one who mainly imparts knowledge to students, generally corrects students and controls turn-taking and sequence organization, and who has greater rights to initiate and close sequences” (Gardner 2013:593). The added burden of children in the English classrooms I investigated was learning these interactional styles with limited access to the language. Thus, it is essential that the teacher develops patterned interactional moves that the students learn to recognize and respond to.

In classroom interactions, the students are confronted with situations where they must predict the responses that the teacher is prompting. As Levinson points out, participants engaged in an interaction are deciding what to say during their next turn, after only having heard part of the current speaker’s turn; the gap between turns is less than the length of time it takes to execute a planned response (2013:103). “[The respondent] must have parsed what they have heard and understood its grammar well enough to predict both the content and its structure, so that they can predict when it will come to an end (otherwise their response may come too early or too late)” (Levinson 2013:103). While classrooms are not structured with the same turn-taking patterns of conversation, it is still the case that students are predicting the kind of response the teacher is looking for, what that response is, and when exactly to give it, all before hearing the question completed, or in the case of the classrooms I observed, possibly without fully understanding the question.
The teacher provides cues about how to interpret her initiations and students learn to read those cues. Action formation is the process by which a speaker provides clues as to how to interpret an interaction which Schegloff describes as, “the resources of the language, the body, the environment of the interaction, and position in the interaction fashioned into conformations designed to be, and to be recognized by recipients as, particular actions — actions like requesting, inviting, granting, complaining, agreeing, telling, noticing, rejecting, and so on” (2007:xiv emphasis in original). Changes in intonation, gaze, fronting command and question words, hints and scaffolding are all potential indicators for how to interpret the teacher’s utterances (Levinson 2013). “Action ascription” is the term Levinson uses to refer to the work on the part of the listener to determine and enact a response to what the speaker is doing (2013:104). Both action formation and action ascription are used in the classroom, as students are reading the teacher’s cues to predict what kind of answer the teacher wants (repeating something, yes/no answer, recalling a word or concept, etc.).

Based on Mehan’s work on classroom interaction and the many works that follow in this avenue, students in a classroom are not merely learning content that they can repeat back or apply to answer specific questions; they are learning patterns of behavior. At a basic level, they learn how to respond and when. At a deeper level, they learn how to demonstrate content understanding (or lack thereof) to their teacher, how to read the intentions and expectations of others in the classroom (especially the teacher), and how to respond to those expectations to convey (or conceal) their own intentions (Anderson 1995; Anderson-Levitt 2004; Cook 1999; Mehan 1979a, 1979b; Mehan and Cazden 2015). Students are learning ways of being in the world.

Classroom interactions are sequences or “a course of action implemented through talk” (Schegloff 2007). Similar to adjacency pairs, or culturally patterned sequences with an expected or preferred response to the initiation, classroom interactions are also patterned, regulated, and are
often accompanied by preferred responses. However, classroom sequences are not commonly constructed in pairs. The most widely described sequence of classroom interaction is a sequence of three conversational units.

Mehan’s Initiation-Reply-Evaluation (IRE) is the most commonly described sequence in classroom interaction (1979a). Mehan breaks down the interaction between teachers and students into three parts, a sequence of initiation, reply, and evaluation/feedback. In initiation, a teacher initiates an inquiry with her students (asking a question, pointing to a word to read, gesturing for a reaction from them) and this can vary from a “simple, preferred answer” in the case of “known information questions” or new information, opinions, or interpretations which are more common in “information-seeking questions” (Heath 1983; Mehan & Cazden 2015:15). The second part of the sequence is reply, in which students respond to the initiation of the teacher. In this paper, I use response because students, especially in the classrooms I observed, are not always clear on what is expected and response more accurately captures their return of information than “reply.” The third part is feedback, or evaluation (see Mehan & Cazden 2015 for the integration of “feedback” to the evaluation category to fit with new directions in teacher strategies and pedagogy). The teacher comments on the response from students, including accepting or praising correct answers, or correcting or indicating wrong answers. Feedback broadens the concept to recognize that responses from teachers vary in form. Evaluation is not always given with each feedback and sometimes it can come from other sources, like students. This is especially relevant with the increasing use of reasoning skills as part of the inquiry process where evaluation is less about a clear “right and wrong,” and replies from students must be supported by evidence (Mehan & Cazden 2015).

The feedback or evaluation part of the sequence, as Lee argues, is key because it reinforces the main idea and goal of the question, and insures that the response is audible to the class (2007). The third position reinforces the interactional rules that students are learning about
how to interact, indicating that students correctly understand and are following the initiation-
response sequence (Gardner 2013:598). In the case that students provide an incorrect response,
the third position can also lead to an extension in the IRE pattern as the teacher can use hints and
scaffolding to guide students toward the “right” answer, i.e., the answer the teacher is expecting
from the students; these hints can include parts of the answer, the initial sound of the response,
clarifying questions, and prosodic clues (Lerner 1995).

Mehan’s IRE framework provides an organizational tool for understanding how students
learn how to be members of their school community. Learning the patterns of the classroom
prepare students for not just for working with a particular teacher, but the general patterns
necessary for success across many years of schooling. The focus on known information questions
(which are common in Jordanian classrooms), or questions with a limited parameter of responses
and the expectation that the student should already hold the knowledge of the response, allow
teachers to serve as “both educators and evaluators” (Mehan 1979b).

One avenue of expansion from the field of classroom interaction is interactional research
on the patterns used to teach students to memorize and recite the text of the Qur’an. The study of
the Qur’an relies on different patterns of interaction between a teacher and students than the IRE
pattern. Not only are there behavioral expectations necessary in order to engage in Quranic
recitation (cleanliness, postures, how to dress) (Aminy 2004:131-132), but patterns of learning
are based around rote repetition. As Aminy points out, the emphasis for Qur’anic learning is on
precise and exact repetition of Qur’anic phrases—memorization and not emphasis on the meaning
and understanding of the Qur’an (2004). Moore expands the examination into how children in
Cameron are taught to memorize the Qur’an. Moore describes an interactional patterned called
guided repetition, a pattern of rote learning, which focuses on the authority of the teacher to
expect and socialize students into the exact imitation of Qur’anic phrases (2006).
Both Cook (1999) and Anderson (1995) use Japanese classrooms to expand the notion of “participation structures” of IRE. Anderson argues that classroom interactions in Japanese classrooms are more commonly multiparty rather than dyadic, involving multiple students in the process of responding to the teacher (1995). But rather than keep power centrally focused on the teacher, Cook further explores the role of peers in the Japanese classrooms to listen to, respond to, and evaluate the responses of peers (1999). This variations on the IRE pattern not only reflect cultural values found in Japan, but show how young children are being socialized into learning and demonstrating these values in the classroom.

The ability to alter and adapt classroom interaction is an important aspect of learning. Baquedano-López, Solís, and Kattan argue that the ability of teachers to make changes, adapt, and reorganize classroom interactions during breaches or disruptions to classroom routines and activities, is what leads to learning (2005). Thus as this dissertation builds out, the varieties of classroom interactional patterns helps create the space for learning. Ms. Layla moves through the various patterns at different points and times in her lesson to scaffold, reinforce, and eventually test her students on the material she wants them to learn.

Classroom interactional patterns give important insights into how students are socialized as community members. Not only is school a major part of a child’s day and an important part of learning academic material, but most parents place high expectations and responsibility on schools to prepare their children for a lifetime of success. In Jordan, the socialized ways of interacting, which emphasize community membership, play a role in the behavior of children. These interactions serve as a way of interpreting how “good” a student is, academically, socially, and behaviorally. In the first few years of schooling, students are being taught to sit still and pay attention to the teacher as well as when and how it is okay to talk. Students learn that they cannot respond with just any response, but from a set of limited options (yes/no/okay, etc.) or from a particular body of shared content knowledge.
While the classroom interactional moves that I describe in Ms. Layla’s classroom\textsuperscript{10} encourage teacher-centric education, the educational reforms driven by the Ministry of Education and the Jordanian Monarchy push classrooms towards potentially different interactional patterns. Early studies of classroom turn-taking (like IRE) found that interactional moves kept control in the hands of the teacher. However, more recent studies argue that classroom turn-taking is changing to reflect the pedagogical change towards learner-centric pedagogies (Gardner 2013:594). “Teacher-controlled turn-taking is broken down even further during pair or group work, where learners manage turn-taking without the teacher”; instead turn-taking matches the needs of the activity - often somewhere between the teacher controlled patterns and ordinary conversation (Gardner 2013:597). Thus educational reforms that encourage group work and critical thinking will likely result in additional or altered interactional moves in the classroom. However as I argue, even Ms. Layla, the school’s biggest proponent of change and innovation, relied very strongly on moves that kept her classroom teacher-centric.

Learning how to be a part of the classroom is an ethical process. Students are learning which behaviors are acceptable through everyday, ordinary interactions with each other and their teacher. Everything from explicit guidance from the teacher to her subtle expressions or reactions plays a part in their socialization process. From these observations and reactions, students learn to shape their future interactions. As Das highlighted (2015), ethics are learned and discovered through their interactions with caregivers. Through feedback in those interactions, children begin to learn categories of good and bad and what behaviors are considered right and wrong.

2.3 Data

\textsuperscript{10} While I focus on a close examination of the interactional moves in Ms. Layla’s classroom, based on my observations they are generally representative of teaching styles for most teachers in Jordan.
In this chapter, I focus on one of the teachers at Al-Dawran. Ms. Layla was one of the most experienced primary English teachers at the school with over ten years of teaching experience. In 2014-15, with the opening of the new school building, Ms. Layla became the head of the early primary (pre-kindergarten to grade 1) English Program. She taught English in kindergarten and grade 1, as well as grade 1 math and science in English\textsuperscript{11}. One of her roles, as head of the English Program, was to oversee content and direction for the English program, although not all the teachers sought or always followed her guidance. This included developing the math and science program for kindergarten and providing guidance on how to teach English (phonetics, memorizing sight words or lists of key words in English to assist in reading). Ms. Layla also designed lessons on special topics which were taught once a month. She structured the program around, as she described, “concepts from the Jordanian community, from around us, not from the outside community.” The variety of topics include social and cultural topics important to the urban, Jordanian context, including topics such as: my family, my house, safety at home, and healthy foods, all which hold moral implications on what it means to be good and to belong in the community.

When I started fieldwork in Jordan in the fall of 2013, Ms. Layla was in her second year at the school. She cared passionately about teaching English as well as improving the English abilities and competencies of her students. She brought a style of teaching reading rooted in phonics based on years of experience teaching kindergarten at an International School in Saudi Arabia. Although she was Palestinian-Jordanian, she spent much of her childhood and many years after getting married in Saudi Arabia. After moving back to Jordan a few years before I met her, she carried ideas and resources from her old school (in Saudi Arabia) into Al-Dawran and shared them with the English teachers. Ms. Layla’s experience and the respect and influence she

\textsuperscript{11} The students also received instruction on these two subjects in Arabic, generally before learning the same concepts in English.
had over other teachers (such as making phonics a key part of the curriculum) allowed her to move into the role as head of the English program after such a short time at the school.

The data for this chapter came from 10 classroom sessions across three classrooms: one first grade and two kindergarten classes. All classrooms were part of the school’s international section. The lessons were supposed to be taught in English, with Arabic to assist comprehension. Most of the 10 sessions were recorded during an English lesson, as that was the predominant subject Ms. Layla taught. However, she did teach a few lessons a week of Math and Science for grade 1, one of which was included in the sample set. The table below summarizes the topics and themes covered in each lesson. While the length of each period was 45 minutes, most lessons varied from 30 to 45 minutes due to starting late or other issues.
Table 2.1: List of classroom lessons and topics used for data in Chapter 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Simple addition, counting by tens, workbook exercises and counting review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten A</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Reviewed homework, read sight words, “The Ant and the Grasshopper” story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten B</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>“The Ant and the Grasshopper” story, review of English greetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Divided the class into groups to read words off the board, discussed rules of has/have, created sentences using has/have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten A</td>
<td>English Story time</td>
<td>Read story called “How are you,” lesson on feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten B</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Phonics for letter G and letter W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten B</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>“Goldilocks” story, reviewed family terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Reviewed short and long vowels, reading exercise, workbook exercises on vowels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Dictation of short vowel sounds, alphabet practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten A</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Taught the phrase “I like,” phonics for short ‘a’ sound and letter ‘m’ sound</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The audio recordings for the first three listed lessons were entered into ELAN, a program for transcription and annotation. Using ELAN, I transcribed lessons and tagged each teacher-student interaction to identify the role of each utterance. From a list of 166 interaction descriptions, I identified the most common base patterns or the interactional moves that appeared with relative frequency. This resulted in four common patterns, which I describe in the next
section. Once the predominant patterns were discovered, the remaining seven lessons were entered into ELAN and annotated for interactions that followed and elaborated on the four patterns of interest. The whole chapter is built off of various examples from across the ten lessons.

From the three lessons examined in detail, there were 166 total interactions between Ms. Layla and her students. The rest of the class period was spent on the students doing independent work (largely with the help of the teachers or their peers) or the teacher giving instructions or scolding the class for their behavior. Of the 166 interactions, 10 were excluded because they did not fall into any of the 4 categories. Most of the excluded interactions were student-initiated interactions that received a variety of reactions from the teacher (from being ignored to being validated). The rest were variations on the four patterns described below. Not all the interactions were successful; in some cases, the students gave an incorrect response or no response at all and the teacher had to provide the correct response. Additionally, many patterns were variations on the categories below, such as requiring an additional initiation before students responded, or an incorrect response before the correct was provided. However, the interactions included were categorized as follows:

Table 2.2: Summary of Interactional Moves from detailed analysis of three lessons.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interactional Move</th>
<th>Number of Interactions</th>
<th>Percentage of Interactions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. IRE (section 2.4.1)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Chorus (2.4.2)</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Guided Repetition (2.4.3)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Follow the Leader (2.4.4)</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.4 Interactional Moves

In the rest of this chapter, I work through three layers of what students are being socialized into through classroom interactional strategies. In this section, I start at the first level: students in the classroom are being socialized to know what to respond to, when, and with what response. The interactional moves examined here provide the basis for knowing how to respond. A student’s mastery of these patterns provides evidence of being a good student, leading to the possibility of praise and reward from the teacher. In this section, I lay out the four commonly observed moves of classroom interaction.

2.4.1 Interactional Move One: IRE (Initiation-Response-Evaluation)

The influences of Western education are strong and common in many former colonies (Phillipson 1992), and Jordan is no different. One source of Western influence that I observed while in Jordan was direct intervention by Western-based publishing companies. These were the same companies that provided my textbooks in primary and secondary school in the USA, and currently, they provide international versions of their textbooks across the world. The teacher’s materials are designed to help teachers in non-English dominant countries adapt the lessons for students of varying levels of English competency. The publishers send “expert teachers” each year to run workshops at fancy downtown Amman hotels to instruct teachers in good pedagogy as well as how to use the teacher’s materials in English as a Second Language contexts.

In the fall of 2014, just before the beginning of the school year, I attended a workshop with almost all of the early elementary teachers at Al-Dawran (only one was not in attendance). The workshop focused on modeling small group work in the classroom, a strategy of pair work called “turn and talk.” While not a workshop sponsored by the Ministry of Education, the “turn and talk” pedagogical approach aligns with the pedagogical approach of educational reforms of the Jordanian Monarchy. The master teacher used her hour and a half to promote her company’s
books and additional resources, but also to model the pair work strategy. Exposure to a different interactional style and interactional moves illustrated student-centric learning to the teachers and encouraged them to use it in their own classes.

The turn and talk strategy covered at one of the workshops was presented as a way to increase the agency that all students had in their own learning by putting pressure on *all students* to try and respond. All students were learning and practicing conversation with their neighbors rather than relying on a few students to provide the answers for the rest of the class. The presenter described “turn and talk” as follows:
Transcript 2.1: Textbook company’s master teacher explaining “turn and talk” pedagogy to Jordanian teachers.

1   Presenter    Turn and talk that we’re going to do all through today, is about kids having an authentic audience to say something worth saying.

2

3   Presenter    Not me asking a question and then getting an answer. Cause who’s gonna answer when I ask a question?

4

5   Teacher chorus   Anyone from group three\textsuperscript{12}?

6

7   Presenter    When I ask a question it’s going to be “aah miss! Miss! Yeah! Pick me, pick me please!”\textsuperscript{13}

8   Teacher chorus   No (weak chorus)

9

10  Presenter    And the green group\textsuperscript{14} aren’t even thinking, they’re going (models staring off into space)

11  Teachers    (Laughter)

12  Presenter    “who am I gonna play with; what did I have for dinner last night”

13  Teachers    (Laughter)

14  Presenter    Turn and talk changes the pressure we put on green group, because they have to think.

15   And when you get collaboration happening in your classroom, you get a much more equal playing field, where everyone is talking, everyone is thinking, everyone is looking for evidence in the text.

Based on interactions during these workshops, the teachers at Al-Dawran certainly seemed intrigued and inspired by trying this new (to them) method. During one turn and talk practice, a pre-kindergarten teacher said to me “[the instructor] taught me today uh you have to stop {being} dinosaurs and open our minds again and try new things.” This pre-kindergarten

\textsuperscript{12} Group three was also known as the “green group” – a lower level reading group labeled with a euphemistic symbol. It allowed for grouping by skills but with less stigmatized labels. The green group was described by the presenter as “gorgeous kids, love them to bits. They don’t see the connections between anything. They learn it. And then they forget it.”

\textsuperscript{13} The presenter was imitating the highest achieving reading group and their very vocal and very physical strategies to be called on.

\textsuperscript{14} Also known as group three - See footnote 12.
teacher suggested her belief that old-fashion teaching methods (like “dinosaurs”) had to be replaced with new ideas. Yet in practice and back at the school, the teachers I questioned about the potential to try pair or group work remained skeptical about the viability of this method. The teachers told me that students needed more guidance in what they were supposed to do and say or else they said that the room would dissolve into chaos (presumably more chaos than already). Turn and talk encouraged students to take control over the interactions, and explore a variety of responses. The teacher’s unwillingness to try different interactional styles meant that IRE patterns and the other patterns I described, played a central role as an interactional move in the classroom. IRE helped the teacher maintain control and encouraged the emphasis on a particular right answer that students were expected to provide.

Below is an example of the basic pattern of an IRE interactional move. See Appendix VI for a detailed explanation of the transcription system and notations. Each example is made up of a transcribed version of the original interaction (often a mix of Arabic and English) with any necessary English glosses appearing below the Arabic. Text originally in Arabic is also marked with italics. On the left side of the transcript are the interaction moves, which for IRE include initiation, response, and feedback. The teacher’s utterances are indicated by a T and an individual student respondent with an S. Other symbols are explained in Appendix VI.

In Example 1, the kindergarteners had just finished watching an animated video of the Aesop’s fable “The Ant and the Grasshopper.” After watching the video once all the way through, the teacher stopped to check their understanding by first asking who the characters were (what kinds of insects) in the story. This clip began as the teacher unsuccessfully asked about the larger insect (the grasshopper). So Ms. Layla instead asked the students to translate the Arabic word for ant (nimleh) into English, as a student had already successfully identified it in Arabic:
Transcript 2.2: Example 1: IRE “What is an ant?”

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>T initiation to class</td>
<td><em>shu ismo hatha al kabir an al nimal</em></td>
<td>What is the name of that one bigger than the ants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1.3 sec pause)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>T initiation to class</td>
<td><em>al nimleh shu ismo bil</em> English</td>
<td>What’s the name of the ant in English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1.2 sec pause)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>S response</td>
<td>ant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>T feedback</td>
<td>ant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This example of IRE encapsulates the basis of the most common patterns in Ms. Layla’s interaction with students (45% of interactions). **Initiation:** Ms. Layla asked this question (like most of her questions) to the whole class. The response to line 1 was “grasshopper,” a word the students struggled with even when Ms. Layla later provided it to the students. When Ms. Layla gets no response to line 1, rather than give a hint, she changes the question in line 2 to something that her students would be more likely to already know. Initiations often used both English and Arabic, and, often, unsuccessful initiations were repeated with increasing amounts of Arabic to aid comprehension. Line 1 and 2 were both mostly in Arabic, which helped ensure students understood the initiation. As Levinson (2013) and Schegloff (2007) suggest, through action formation, the teacher gave clues to students about how to respond. The first initiation, line 1, already cued students to the kind of response the teacher wanted. Line 1 also asked for the name (*ism*) of a character from the story. Both line 1 and 2 front the question marker (*shu* - what) to help guide action ascription as students determine how to answer. Ms. Layla did not always employ a rising question intonation at the end, so the question marker early in the sentence serves as a clue. **Response:** In IRE, a single student responded to the initiation. Ms. Layla (and many other Jordanians teachers) socialized her students to self-select when they wanted to answer by simply announcing the answer. Student did not wait to be called on by the teacher. Variations on IRE include incorrect attempts and a simplified, re-initiation from the teacher. In some cases, the teacher eventually provided the response. **Evaluation:** As for the evaluation or feedback (line 4), Example 1 had a common type of evaluation, an echoed repetition of the student’s correct
response. The teacher’s repetition of “ant” served as both evaluation of the response, and feedback to the student who responded, as well as to the whole class. It confirmed the student’s response as correct and broadcasted the answer to the whole class, making sure it was loud enough for all students to hear and learn from (Lee 2007). Other common forms of feedback included general praise (“bravo,” “excellent”), and less commonly, specific praise directed at the individual respondent. Examples of both will be examined later in the chapter.

Ms. Layla’s feedback accomplished multiple ends. At an interactional level, it taught and confirmed a pattern of teacher-student interaction. It acknowledged to the students that the response was given at the right time (after an explicit question by the teacher), by the right person (here, the question was posed to the class as a whole and any student had the opportunity to respond without the need for a hand-raising or the teacher selecting a respondent), in the right format (a one word response, in English), and finally that it was the right answer. The exchange served as a way of teaching the word “ant” while also teaching how to interact in Ms. Layla’s classroom. Underlying the content, students were being socialized into classroom behavior. The content of the question itself pertained to information related to classroom material, but drew on knowledge that students may have accumulated either inside or outside of class. Students were connecting knowledge from various sources to equate “nimleh” and “ant.” The “good” response came from a smart student who was listening, thinking and making connections to what she knew, and was not afraid to announce that to the class at the time the teacher requested.

2.4.2 Interactional Move Two: The Chorus

In all ten lessons examined for this chapter, it was not common for Ms. Layla to call on specific students to give responses. Thus it was often the case—just over 20% of responses—that multiple students responded to an initiation or even that a “chorus” answered. Choral answers consisted of multiple students responding, varying from a few to just about the whole class. The
choral answer is the same response (a word or phrase) at the same time or in very close, overlapping utterances. The choral pattern was similar in many ways to the IRE pattern just discussed. However, the initiations for the chorus interactional move seemed to be either calls to read, questions about things that students had learned by rote, or yes/no questions used to check comprehension or student engagement. As such, the focus was more on information shared by most of the students in the class. With only audio data and field notes, it is not clear how many students responded in the chorus. From my classroom observations, at least a few students were distracted or not paying attention. Others appeared to be trying to follow along, but their comprehension of English was far behind and they struggled with even repeating basic responses. I observed choral repetitions where students with poor comprehension either mumbled along or simply opened and shut their mouths without making a sound.

In Example 2 below, the kindergarteners were being socialized into the chorus and specifically the expectation that they all participate. The students were asked to read the sentence “we sit in the box.” Chorus responses are marked on the left, as are utterances from the teacher that could serve as both evaluation and initiation. As we will see, the lines between initiation and evaluation at the conclusion of a response are not always clear.
Transcript 2.3 Example 2: The Chorus “We sit in the box.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>T initiation</th>
<th>Read</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>(.6 sec pause)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>S Chorus</th>
<th>&lt;We&gt; (stretched over 1.2 s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>S Chorus</th>
<th>&lt;Sit&gt; (stretched over 1 sec)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>S Chorus</th>
<th>&lt;In&gt; (stretched over 1.3 s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>T evaluation</th>
<th>ana sama'a al girls bas min honak biqraau</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>I only hear the girls from there reading.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>T evaluation</th>
<th>Adil wa Azam wa Farid wa Arish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Adil and Azam and Farid and Arish</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>T evaluation + initiation</th>
<th>No reading, leish ?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>No reading, why ?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>T evaluation + initiation</th>
<th>bidi kul mabadth one two three</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>I want everyone together one two three</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Initiation:** The initiation in line 1 is an explicit imperative, instructing the students to read the sentence on the board. The imperative acts as a performativ (Austin 1975) to initiate a response in the students. This command was directed to the collective class instead of specific individuals. In the case of reading, Ms. Layla has socialized the students to read as a group. English words like “read,” “repeat,” serve as cues for action formation (Schegloff 2007) notifying students that the response should be choral recitation. **Response:** The responses (lines 2-4) differ from IRE with a collective response by many members of the class instead of a single individual. As the students read, they stretch out the length of each word, making it easier for the class to read as a group. Doing so allows some students to join the chorus in the middle of the response and it also allows some students to hide among the voices of their peers, especially when they cannot read. There are times when the teacher does not receive a choral response when she has to re-initiate or ask for the acceptable response of choral reading. **Evaluation:** Given that the only acceptable response was choral reading, the evaluation in this particular example focused exactly on how well the choral reading was accomplished. In lines 5-8, Ms. Layla evaluated the participation in the response. With the focus on participation, there was greater leniency in the
accuracy of the response. In line 3, some students read “sit” as /set/ instead of /sɪt/ and the teacher allows these inconsistencies in pronunciation to pass without comment. Attempted participation in the chorus took priority over correctness. The choral reading allowed students who were already reading to support and guide those who were still learning by joining in the crowd. The fact that Ms. Layla did not evaluate between lines 2-4 suggested that each word was read correctly or correctly enough.

Ms. Layla had students in her class read off the board frequently, which was most often done as a collective exercise. Especially in the kindergarten class, she went over the same words, combined differently into new sentences, providing scaffolding for the students by having them repeat each word after her until the class was collectively able to “read” on their own. Prior to Example 2, the students had already repeated all the words in the sentence “we sit in the box” after the teacher a few times, and this time the class was being asked to read it without the teacher’s help. Ms. Layla was socializing them to a pattern where, after guidance, the class was expected to read together, but without the teacher. The weak students mumbled along with the group.

As part of her evaluation in Example 2, Ms. Layla scolded the boys and some of the girls for not playing along. She called out the girls seated outside the section she indicated as well as four boys specifically by name. The behavior she labeled as inappropriate was “no reading” (lines 5-7). Even though Ms. Layla asked why they weren’t reading, she got no response. Instead, in line 8, she explicitly stated her instructions of choral reading, “I want everyone together.” Given the evaluation of those not reading, Ms. Layla reminded the students of the correct response to the initial initiation in line 1. Her comments in lines 7 and 8 also served as cues to action formation (Schegloff 2007) about how to behave in the next iteration of reading; in line 7 she critiqued why the boys thought that they did not have to read and in line 8 she explicitly instructed the students to all read. Given that much of the class could not read independently, this method of choral
reading was part of a process of learning to read. Through the choral practice, students were learning how to associate words and sounds with the letters on the board.

Emphasis was placed on socializing students to respond as part of the chorus. While the conflation of “reading,” “memorizing and then repeating,” and “mumbling along with peers” may be worth considering, these concepts were not always easily separated in this context. Not repeating was scolded because it was not what “good” students did. The four boys and some of the girls not participating were shirking their responsibility as students, a responsibility that entailed active attempts in the chorus as a way of learning.

2.4.3 Interactional Move Three: Guided Repetition

The next pattern, guided repetition which I take from Moore (2006), frequently intersected with the previous choral pattern, but was distinguished by the heavy use of automaticity and rote repetition. Guided repetition was the least common pattern, making up only 13% of all interactions. As mentioned earlier, Example 2 was preceded by Ms. Layla coaching her students to eventually read (as a chorus) without her. Guided repetition was often the means of the initial scaffolded learning that allowed for independent reading. In guided repetition, the teacher initiates a choral repetition of the response just given to the students. The response being repeated could be from the teacher or from another student in the class. This pattern of initiation and repetition is central to the process of rote learning and is common across all subjects in Jordanian classrooms as well as in the practice of learning Qur’anic recitation (Moore 2006).

There are two categories of guided repetition. The first (Example 3) is prompting repetition of a response just given through a second initiation. The second (Example 4) is a cycle of “repeat after me” with the teacher. Both share key commonalities to mark them as guided repetition. Guided repetition is labeled on the left of the transcript.
In Example 3 below, we see how the IRE and chorus patterns can launch into guided repetition. In this example, the kindergarten students were being asked to read the sentence “I sit in the house” written on the board. Just before the example started, students struggled to read “house,” many reading it as “table.” The excerpt below began with one student correctly reading “house.” After the teacher praised the individual response (using IRE lines 4-6), the next initiation (line 8) checked the class’ understanding of “house” through translation back to Arabic (lines 8 and 10 as a Chorus), which set up the class for repetition to reinforce learning (guided repetition lines 11 and 12).

Transcript 2.4: Example 3: Guided Repetition 1 “Reading ‘house.’”

1. (T initiation) (T points to “house” written on the board)
2. S response House
3. T evaluation Hou<ou>se
4. T initiation Meen qaraha Who read it
5. S response Ana Me
7. S response (not same S as line 5) [Ana [Me
8. T initiation Esh huwa al house What’s the meaning of house
9. S response [house]
10. S chorus (small ~3 students) [beit [house
11. T evaluation + initiation Esh huwa al house What’s the meaning of house
12. Choral response – guided beit house
13. T evaluation al beit the house

As seen in Example 3, the interactional moves often bled into and built off of each other.

This example built on the previous two patterns, as the teacher moved from IRE to Chorus and
ended with guided repetition. In the first IRE interaction (lines 1-3), a single student correctly read “house” (line 2) and the teacher confirmed the answer by repeating the student’s response for the whole class. Given that some of the students were reciting “table,” the teacher’s evaluation reinforced the correct reading after many incorrect ones. In the second IRE interaction (lines 4-6), the teacher tried to find the correct respondent to praise, which she does with “excellent” in line 6. Interestingly, multiple students claimed credit for the single student reading of “house” (lines 5 and 7). Ms. Layla did not call out the name of the individual who did answer, nor did she comment on the second student attempting to take credit. Instead she gave general positive feedback with “excellent” and by repeating the correct response (line 6).

Line 8 began what I call a guided repetition move, where she asked the students to connect the word “house” to the Arabic word “beit.” A few students knew the answer, giving a chorus response in line 10. But rather than give immediate direct feedback on the choral response, Ms. Layla repeated the initiation in line 11 and this served as an action formation (Schegloff 2007) cue to try again. Without evaluation, it could be that the teacher wanted a completely different response, or for students to repeat the response from line 10, or the much louder response from line 11. In line 12, we see the chorus chose correctly by repeating the earlier response from the small chorus in line 10. Guided repetition triggered a stronger choral response of beit. The re-initiation made the pattern guided repetition because this time the whole class was being prompted to repeat the answer they just heard. The re-initiation in line 11 added a layer of evaluation not just because line 10 was incorrect, but because not all the students had participated in the response and it was overshadowed by an incorrect response.

Guided repetition adds an element of rote repetition onto the previous pattern of chorus. **Initiation:** In this style of guided repetition, the teacher gives two initiations, the second being a repeat or slightly modified repeat of an earlier initiation (line 11 repeated line 8). As an action formation cue, repetition of the same initiation (especially when the prior responses had received
no evaluation) suggested that students should repeat an answer as a group. Using contextual cues (such as the reaction of the teacher, lack of dismissal of the previous response, and the close temporal connection to a response), students learned to interpret the initiation as a cue to repeat the previous response instead of a request for a different answer. **Response:** Similar to the chorus, students answered guided repetition as a group. However, the response was a repetition of an earlier response, not a new response. **Evaluation:** Guided repetition can have an evaluation that looks similar to evaluations seen previously. It was rarely directed at a particular student, but like line 13, Ms. Layla often used repetition of the response to reinforce the correct answer. The evaluation was generally withheld until the cycle of guided repetition was satisfactorily completed, sometimes meaning that enough students responded to satisfy the teacher.

In the final line of feedback from Ms. Layla (line 13), she added the Arabic definite article “the” (*al*) onto the word for house (*beit*). Aside from when she focused on the word written on the board (line 3 and 6), Ms. Layla modified house or its Arabic equivalent with the article *al* (lines 8, 11, and 13). Given that the school was teaching the students standard Arabic as opposed to just informal varieties spoken at home, Ms. Layla would sometimes transform student responses from their colloquial to standard version. However, she never stressed the distinction, as she was not the Arabic teacher.

As we can already see, Ms. Layla used repetition frequently in her class, and line 9 demonstrated a consequence of that. In line 9, a single student jumped to the conclusion that the teacher would be asking for a repetition of the word written on the board (house). As Levinson indicates, respondents are predicting and forming responses *before* hearing the complete initiation (2013), and the immediacy of line 9 at the conclusion of the initiation in line 8 confirms the student was predicting the initiation. As we will see in other examples, it was very common for the teacher to ask all the students to repeat an English keyword after it was first introduced a couple times, as a means of rote learning. Thus, the student in line 9 was making a good guess;
even though Ms. Layla front loaded the question word “what” (esh) in line 8, the student leaned on expected patterns but simply predicted incorrectly in this instance.

However, Ms. Layla’s re-initiation for guided repetition reinforced the correct reading of the initiation, and served as a less direct way of demonstrating how to respond. Re-initiation also served as a way of less explicitly rejecting incorrect responses without calling out the individual respondent or their response.

The second style of guided repetition shares with Example 3 the rote repetition of a provided response. This style was most often used to teach new vocabulary or practice reading words which students would be asked to read on their own later in the lesson. This style of guided repetition more closely aligns with Moore’s descriptions of how Qur’anic recitation is learned (2006) and which I discuss further. Guided repetition was also common for elements that students were supposed to learn by heart - phonics sounds, alphabets, and sight words – lists of high frequency words in early English reading materials that students are taught to read on sight. Because guided repetition was often linked with learning new elements, it predominated at the beginning of a lesson, after which other patterns took over.

Example 4 demonstrates how guided repetition was used for rote learning of fundamental concepts. Here the kindergarteners were drilling the English alphabet and phonics sounds. As per Ms. Layla’s pattern, students were being socialized to recited the name of the letter, the primary phonetic sound, and a keyword to help them remember the sound. Ms. Layla went through this exercise at least a few times a week while standing in front of an alphabet chart that had the 26 letters listed along with a picture of the word that started with each letter.
Transcript 2.5: Example 4: Guided Repetition 2 “Repeating the alphabet.”

1. T initiation
   Repeat after me “A” /a/ [apple]

2. Various S Responses
   [apple]

3. Various S Responses
   [apple]

4. [apple]

5. [apple]

6. T initiation
   ‘Ulu “A” /a/ apple
   Say “A” /a/ apple

7. Choral response – guided
   “A” /a/ apple

8. T initiation
   “B” /b/ banana

9. Choral response – guided
   “B” /b/ banana

10. T initiation
    “C” /k/ carrot

11. Choral response – guided
    “C” carrot

12. T initiation
    “C” /k/ carrot

13. Simultaneous Choral response – guided
    “C” carrot
    “C” /k/ carrot

Initiation: While the previous form of guided repetition consisted of two initiations, this variety instead has the teacher providing the response and asking the students to repeat the phrase (line 1 and line 6). Both initiations were commands of what students were expected to do: “repeat after me” (line 1) or “say” (line 6), either could be in Arabic or English. The initiation was followed immediately by the phrase that was to be repeated (line 1 and 6). Response: In Example 4, we see that students are still being socialized into the process of guided repetition, which may be partially due to a language barrier. The cue for guided repetition “repeat after me,” was given in English. In pointing to pictures of the letter and an image (a picture of an apple for the letter “a”), at least four students audibly responded with the English word “apple” at various times during and at the end of Ms. Layla’s initiation (lines 2-5), while there were no audible attempts to repeat the complete phrase in line 1. These four students either assumed or copied their peers in thinking that the initiation was for the name of the image. Ms. Layla re-phrased her command for guided repetition, to “say,” this time in Arabic in line 6, and students correctly responded with guided repetition (pairs of lines 6-13). Students were being socialized that a good response was an exact repetition after the teacher, minus the call for repetition. Evaluation: Unlike the evaluation
of Example 3 where Ms. Layla repeated the correct utterance as confirmation, Ms. Layla has another means of conveying evaluative information. Repetition of the same phrase (as in line 13) indicates an error in the previous response, commonly pronunciation errors or insufficient participation. The chorus of students in line 12 only repeated the letter name and word (without the letter sound). Ms. Layla, rather than explicitly point out the error, simply re-initiated the entire phrase. While re-initiation of the identical phrases signaled errors, moving on to the next item was a sign of acceptance and positive evaluation.

Ms. Layla’s approach to correction parallels the way Qur’anic recitation is taught. The Qur’an is generally taught through rote repetition, where an expert reads line-by-line and the students repeat, exactly as the expert did. What is being taught is memorization and precise pronunciation. Teaching Qur’anic recitation avoids calling attention to errors because such attention may require reproducing those errors, thus intentionally reciting an error in the word of God; instead, teachers repeat the correct recitation to model for students (Moore 2006). The avoidance of errors, even as a means of instruction, also aligns with rote learning, as we see here with Ms. Layla, where repetition of the right answer is viewed as the primary means of learning. The emphasis is not placed on what is wrong and Ms. Layla avoids making the error explicit. Additionally, evaluation during Qur’anic recitation is rarely explicit praise (Moore 2006). Instead, students are socialized to read, moving on to the next verse of the Qur’an as an indication of an acceptable recitation, and repetition of the same line as an error. The guided repetition interactional move encourages precision and particularity in responses, rather than prompting creativity.

2.4.4 Interactional Move Four: Follow the Leader

The behavior exemplified in the final pattern, follow the leader, is a combination of IRE and guided repetition. Follow the leader makes up just over 20% of the interactions. Unlike in
guided repetition where the teacher prompts a choral response in her students, students without prompting lean on their peers for the response they repeat. The mark of follow the leader is that a single student responds, and the class immediately repeats their peer’s response as a chorus. The teacher’s evaluation, if present, usually comes after the chorus, so students sometimes repeat a peer response which is incorrect, as will be demonstrated in Example 5.

Before getting to the follow the leader pattern, I want to address how the teacher’s interactions scaffold students into such a pattern. Looking back at Example 3, Ms. Layla used guided repetition as a way to encourage her students to repeat after their peers.

Transcript 2.6 Excerpts of Example 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>T initiation</th>
<th>S response</th>
<th>S chorus (small ~3 students)</th>
<th>T evaluation + initiation</th>
<th>Choral response – guided</th>
<th>T evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Esh huwa al house]</td>
<td>[house]</td>
<td>[beit house]</td>
<td>Esh huwa al house</td>
<td>beit</td>
<td>al beit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>What’s the meaning of house</td>
<td>[house]</td>
<td>[beit house]</td>
<td>What’s the meaning of house</td>
<td>house</td>
<td>the house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>[house]</td>
<td>[beit house]</td>
<td>[house]</td>
<td>[house]</td>
<td>[house]</td>
<td>[house]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In line 10, a few students provided the correct response, while in line 9, one student presented the wrong response. Ms. Layla provided no evaluation for either response, but her re-initiation in line 11 scaffolded them into guided repetition. Students were being socialized into repeating after a student (a practice demonstrated strongly in the follow the leader pattern). The teacher’s explicit evaluation accepting the response came only after the choral repetition. So students were being asked to judge responses and decide whether to repeat the answer of their peer, or perhaps provide a new response to the initiation.

The follow the leader pattern was common in the process of learning to read. One student read first and the class quickly repeated the response as a chorus. This was not only because some weaker students relied on their peers to help them sound out and identify the words on the board,
but also because students needed differing amounts of time to sound out words on their own. Regardless, choral reading privileged the fastest students, while the rest followed behind the guidance of the strong. The biggest challenge was for the bulk of students in the middle, who were repeatedly a little behind in producing the word. Some tried to sound out the word, coming up behind, or some waited for a response from a peer they could copy.

Now that we have seen how repeating after peers is encouraged and socialized in the classroom, I will provide an example of the follow the leader pattern, marked to the left of the transcript. In Example 5, students were reading the sentence “we sit in the boat” off of the board.
Transcript 2.7: Example 5: Follow the Leader “We sit in the boat.”

1. S chorus: We
2. S chorus: [we]
3. T evaluation + initiation: [we ?]
   (2.9 sec pause)
4. S response: sit
   (.5 sec)
5. Choral response – follow: <s>[sit]
6. Choral response – follow: [sit]
7. T evaluation: [sit]
   (4.5 sec)
8. S response: in
   (.3 sec)
10. T evaluation + initiation: [in ?]
    (3.5 sec)
11. S response: the
    (.4 sec)
12. Choral response – follow: the]
13. T evaluation + initiation: [the ?]
    (2 sec pause)
14. T hint: awal embarrass
    [From] the day before yesterday
    (1.5 sec pause)
15. S response: box
16. Choral response – follow: box
17. S response: bo[x
18. S response: [b]ox
19. Choral response – follow: [box
20. T evaluation: {chuckles} <b>[boat
21. S response: [box
22. S response: [box
23. S response: box
Example 5 exemplified a common pattern seen when students read something for the first time without guided repetition\(^{15}\) (repeating after the teacher). **Initiation:** The initiation in Example 5 mostly came from Ms. Layla pointing to the next word in the sentence and waiting for the students to sound it out. It also came from the previous evaluation: The repetition of the correct response by the teacher often had a slight rise in intonation at the very end of the word (such as lines 3, 10, and 13), similar to asking a question. However, the students had learned to interpret the change in tone not as an indication that their reading was incorrect, but rather as an initiation layered onto the evaluation. The intonation added a request for moving on to the next word on top of the acceptance of the last word. **Response:** A single student read a word (lines 4, 8, 11, and 15) and a chorus of students echoed the same word after (lines 5/6, 9, 12, 16 and 19). The student chorus comes without the prompting of the teacher, like guided repetition. **Evaluation:** The teacher’s evaluation came in the form of repetition of the correct response, but came only after the chorus echoed the response. Most of the follow the leader patterns (28 out of 33, 85%) are followed by evaluation.

The single student responses in Example 5 came from strong readers. The brief gaps between the single student and the chorus meant that students did not have the teacher’s explicit evaluation to help them determine the veracity of the response from their peer. Some students simply needed more time to decipher the word on the board. Other students were quickly listening, judging, and repeating the responses of their peers.

As we can see with the word “box,” students often repeat incorrect answers. But unlike the stronger chorus for “in” and “the,” at least some of the students seemed to discriminate the response before repeating it. A small chorus repeated “box” directly after the first student (line 16). Some of the students appeared to delay their repetition as they judged and considered

\(^{15}\) In this particular lesson, this example came soon after transitioning between predominantly guided repetition to more student-directed responses. Of the words in this sentence “we,” “in,” and “the” were covered in guided repetition. “Boat” and “sit” were being read for the first time in this particular day’s lesson. (“Box” was also new in this lesson).
whether to repeat “box.” Given the difficulty with the word, Ms. Layla in the end revealed the correct reading. However, with her chuckling and her drawn out /<b>/ (and the relatively short “oat” sound), many students still continued to recite “box” (see lines 21-23).

One consequence of the follow the leader pattern was that these patterns helped Ms. Layla to socialize her students to rely on and share responses with their peers. Ms. Layla not only accepted responses repeated after peers as correct, but she even encouraged students to repeat responses after their peers. Not surprisingly copying on in-class work was also acceptable. These patterns furthered the idea that peers are an important resource in learning. While copying on tests was not actively encouraged, in many observations, it seemed only marginally discouraged. Through socialization into interactional patterns, students were encouraged and expected to help each other. Ms. Layla’s evaluation did not single out anyone for praise, including the student who first read the word. The emphasis was on the whole class reading, where smart individuals are expected to contribute to the success of everyone else.

Thus, we see that follow the leader builds on other socialized patterns of interaction and emphasizes the practice of learning through rote repetition and the importance of peer engagement and support. In combination, the various patterns I have introduced demonstrate that students are easily learning not just how to respond in the classroom, but how to behave amongst their peers, as part of a group, and towards authority figures, a phenomenon I examine in the next section.

2.5 Learning about Personhood

In section 2.4, I examined how students were being socialized about what to say, at the right time. In this section, I look at one of the key effects of these four interactional patterns, specifically on what students are learning about their personhood in relation to others. As Lambek writes, “Persons, as social beings, are constituted through their relations with others” (2015:19).
Students are being asked to balance their needs with the needs of others, balancing their contributions with the responses of others. In this section, I argue that this juxtaposition of autonomy and dictated control was part of the balancing act that students were being socialized to, learning when to be individuals and help drive the rest of the class forward, and when to sit back as part of the crowd.

In Merlan’s chapter in the volume *Ordinary Ethics*, she discusses one of the challenges of the concept of the “individual person.” How do you describe the “social character” of an individual “focusing on individual distinctiveness and images of the concrete individual person against a ground of commonality?” (Merlan 2010:216). This tension between a “social” being and an “individual” is key to the question of ethics. Merlan also writes, “Ethics has to do with the recognition of others and with forms of accommodation and displacement linked to that recognition. This occurs in a space somewhere between established forms of normativity that actors can access and the pragmatics of action. The relationship is only intelligible as a process participating both in a dimension of ‘becoming’ and in what has already been established” (2010:209). This process of negotiating sociocultural reproduction and transformation is at the heart of ethics. It requires continuous negotiation between what has been, what can be, and what is considered “good” and “right” in a changing context.

In the case of children, not only are children being socialized into patterns of cultural reproduction and the space for ‘becoming,’ but they are also negotiating a changing sense of personhood that balances their own interests (such as getting rewards and recognition for their responses) and the collective good (both learning with their peers and helping their peers learn alongside them). Teachers, parents, and students are caught between changing, potentially conflicting, and long-standing ideas about what education is, means, should look like, and how that is related to the individual. Being successful in education requires an individual doing well. So a parent may at the same time feel that it is (one of) the responsibilities of the teacher to
maintain control of the classroom so that learning can occur, but protest and become offended when their child is given a time-out for disrupting the class. Or parents can complete their children’s homework on their behalf, ensuring correct work, but express shock that the child cannot pass the exam at the end of the unit. The challenge lies at the tension between the needs of the individual and the benefit of the class.

Interactions between caregivers and children are not only important in teaching what it takes to belong (how to respond and with what response), but which students belong in the group and to what degree. Wortham’s analysis of classroom interactions across the school year (the “trajectory of socialization”) demonstrate that children learn how to participate as well as the “socialization and identity development of a biographical individual”; how a student responds can, over time, be used to label and describe an individual as “successfully” or “unsuccessfully” participating, and further, as “good” or “disruptive” students (Wortham 2005:95). García-Sánchez’s ethnographic work on socialization of Moroccan immigrants in Spanish classroom also demonstrates how within a school’s discourse of “inclusion, tolerance, and respect,” classroom interactions reinforce exclusion, avoidance, and rejection of Moroccan students, and the othering of Moroccan students from the classroom (2014).

Early anthropological work on classrooms demonstrated that some students are not only labeled as “different” or “disruptive,” but that the way they are treated especially by teachers perpetuates and creates such differences. Susan Philips’ ethnographic work on the Warm Spring Indian Reservation argues that cultural differences between groups do not just suggest why children who are ethnically in the minority struggle in school, but that these children “are constituted, indeed are created, as having difficulties, through and by virtue of classroom organization of interaction” (1983:xvi). From this previous research, we see that classroom interactions help to build, form, and reinforce identities and ways of being in students.
Classroom interactions also teach culturally specific models of respect and social hierarchies. Howard’s ethnographic work on politeness in Northern Thai classrooms argues that classroom interactions are a means of teaching particular forms of politeness and respect and broader concepts of citizenship and personhood. Classroom interactional routines are an important part of explicitly teaching and reinforcing politeness forms that become part of routines used by the children (Howard 2009). The socialization of politeness also becomes a part of the metalinguistic discourses of teachers as they create ideas about the “well-mannered child” and justify their own reactions towards students violating expectations around politeness (Lo 2009).

Mealtimes are another site for demonstrations of belonging and inclusion and for reinforcement of moral expectations. In Karrabaek’s work on classrooms in Denmark, Karrabaek argues that teachers not only reinforce moral expectations around healthy food, but use the absence of rye bread for lunch to “other” immigrant children from belonging in the classroom community (2012). The Danish teacher’s condemnation of the child’s lunch criticized the parent’s ability to follow Danish guidelines around parenting. The teacher also invoked the idea of “pity” over the child’s “unhealthy” lunch; Karaabaek argues that this lack of approval of food choices carries over into the marginalization of immigrant children (2012).

In order for children to be successful in the classroom, as I demonstrate in this section, students must strive at times to stand out from the crowd with excellent work or correct responses, and at other times, blend into the crowd. I argue that the four interactional patterns that I identified are used to help students find balance between those two responsibilities—that of individual and collective personhood. Based on the teacher’s responses to the students, she is subtly encouraging individuality (but not too much so as to assert oneself above the fray) and also collectivity (but not too much so as to get lost in the crowd). Being successful at education requires being part of the team as well as taking control over their learning and finding success through a good career. Being successful in society requires cultural integration into a collective--
being well-behaved in the classroom and helping and supporting their friends and peers. Each of these outcomes have moral implications: any extreme or incorrect balance between the benefits of autonomy and the collective good may lead to negative moral evaluations.

During a single class period, students were likely to receive a mix of messages—some heighten the emphasis on one end of the spectrum (individual to collective) or another. Students are learning to negotiate a balance, striving for success and achievement as an individual, confident and accomplished in learning English, while also using this knowledge to benefit the collective, contributing to the chorus but also assisting their peers who may be struggling to learn.

2.5.1 Being an Individual

Even though Ms. Layla runs her class as a teacher-centric classroom, students were not always simply repeating the responses of the teacher or a few smart peers. Students strive to be the first to answer a question, especially, as we will see later in the chapter, because the reward may be praise from the teacher with the addition of a sticker. As discussed in Chapter 1, the increasing emphasis on English language is an important part of standing out in a tough job market. Parents of the students at Al-Dawran were already concerned about their child’s ability to compete as individuals. They had all self-selected this school because of the emphasis on English so their children could compete on the job market in the future.

Out of the examples I have given so far, even when an individual was providing a response to the teacher, feedback directed specifically at an individual was not common. However, individual recognition became more common when an individual student did very good work: either gave a response that their classmates were not producing, or did something that surprised the teacher. Ms. Layla not only gave this student explicit praise, but held up the individual as a model for others in the class. In this section, I will demonstrate instances of both
cases where the stress was placed on individual achievement, with the expectation that all
students should be aspiring to stand out for presenting exceptionally good work.

Example 6 below demonstrates the potential for top students to be singled out with
extensive praise for their excellent contributions to the class. This example comes after Ms. Layla
had reviewed with the kindergarteners the short and long sounds of the letter “i.” Then the
students practiced it as a group, and ended with Ms. Layla checking comprehension by going
through a list of various words on the board and having the students identify which sound was
being used. The long “i” is marked by the IPA diphthong /ai/ and the short “i” with the IPA
symbol /ɪ/. The excerpt began just after she asked the class, “Can you see a word with a short “i”
/ɪ/ in the middle?” When no one responded, she pointed to the word “like” and the excerpt began
there:

Transcript 2.8: Example 6: Standing out as an individual 1 “The short and long ‘I’ sound.”
1 T initiation Hatha short ?
   Is this short ?
2 T initiation Hona esh sawt-ha bikun ?
   What sound is here ?
3 S chorus (weak) /ɪ/ /ɪ/ /ɪ/ /ɪ/ /ɪ/
4 S response /AI/
5 T feedback /AI/ southa.
   /AI/ is the sound
6 T initiation Leish /AI/ Alim
   Why /AI/ Alim
7 S response Leeno ma “e”
   Because it’s with the letter “e”
8 T feedback ma “e”
   With the letter “e”
9 T feedback Taarifu Alim bido clap kabireh wa zahfooro
   Do you all know Alim wants a big clap so clap for him
(clapping from students)
Example 6 used predominantly an IRE pattern with the student called Alim helping him stand out as an individual. In line 3, a few of Alim’s classmates started to chant using the chorus pattern (incorrectly) that the vowel sound in “like” was the short “i” (/ɪ/) sound, which Ms. Layla did not address or evaluate explicitly. It was possible that Ms. Layla’s initiation in line 1 (“Is that short?”) prompted some students to assume the word took a short vowel. In contrast, Alim boldly and loudly went against the group by announcing the sound was instead a long “i” (/aɪ/), which cut off the chorus chanting the wrong answer. Alim’s answer was confident and clear. Not only did Ms. Layla validate Alim’s answer (line 5), but she made Alim into a figure of authority who explained why the long sound was correct. Alim’s reason drew on a familiar explanation taught many times before: the letter “e” in like makes the letter “i” sound like the name of the letter. However, the explanation may only make sense to those familiar with Ms. Layla’s explanations. In line 8, the teacher accepted his reasoning with a simplified version of his response, without elaboration or further explanation to the class. She assumed the students would connect Alim’s response to her many prior explanations.

In Example 6, not only did Ms. Layla contribute positive feedback to Alim, she rewarded him for being the one to respond correctly, against the crowd. Ms. Layla demonstrated how pleased she was with the response by (immediately after this clip) going to the classroom chart, a poster on the wall with each student’s name and picture, and giving Alim a star by his name. She said as she placed the star by his photo, “Here’s another star,” acknowledging the stars he already had by his name. Not only did the teacher draw attention to Alim’s individual contribution by giving him a star, but she also reinforced who was being praised by repeating his name a total of six times in this short segment of class. His name appeared twice in Example 6 (lines 6 & 9). She said his name twice in looking for his picture on the class chart and twice in the process of attaching the star. The repetition of his name and his receiving a star reinforced Alim’s individual contribution.
But it was not just Ms. Layla who praised Alim; Ms. Layla brought the whole class into the process. In line 9 she requested the whole class praise him with applause. She marked her verb with the second person plural form of the verb - “Do you all know...” - addressing the entire class. Ms. Layla also phrased the request for applause as an imperative, “you all clap for him.” Thus it was not completely his request, but her command to the students to recognize Alim’s answer. This interaction modeled for the class that in order to get a lot of praise, all students should strive to stand out from the rest of the class with correct and insightful answers.

The second example looks more closely at how Ms. Layla utilized individual attention to model for others how to be good students. Example 7 occurred at the beginning of a lesson when Ms. Layla was going over the previous night’s homework with her kindergarten class. In the assignment, students were given a coloring page of an outdoor scene with trees, flowers, and rolling hills. Part of the page was already colored in and the directions told the students to color in the remaining parts with either red or brown. The teacher, with the help of her students, publicly critiqued the coloring homework assignment of each student. Her predominant pattern was to hold up a coloring page and ask the class, “Is it nice?” Sometimes a few students in the class responded, but for each, the teacher provided commentary on what was nice and where to improve (often in English, then repeated in Arabic). For superior coloring work, students were rewarded with a star on the classroom wall chart; poor work was publicly criticized for what it did wrong. However, all work received a star directly on the coloring assignment, regardless of quality. The attention on each assignment was highly individual, yet done for the whole class to see. The example below was when Ms. Layla evaluated the work of a high achieving student, a girl named Haifa.
Transcript 2.9: Example 7: Standing out as an individual 2 “See how Haifa colors?”

1. T initiation Is this nice?

2. S response Yes]

3. S response [Yes

4. S response Yes

5. T evaluation + initiation Nice?

6. S chorus Yes

7. T evaluation + initiation {..} as star honak ?
   {..} the star over there ?

8. S response Yes

9. T evaluation + initiation Hilweh ?
   Is it pretty?

10. S chorus (weak) Ah (mumbled)
    Yes (mumbled)

11. T evaluation + initiation Murattebeh ?
    Tidy?

12. S chorus (weak) Ah
    Yes

13. T feedback She didn’t leave white spots she didn’t went out of the line

14. T aside I’m not surprised she’s Tameeza’s sister (chuckles)

15. T initiation So meen hai ?
    So whose is this?

16. S response Ana
    Me

17. T feedback Y<ea>ah<ss>

18. T initiation What’s your name

19. S response Haifa

20. T feedback Haifa

21. T evaluation + initiation (1.4 sec pause)
    This is Haifa see ?

22. S response [yes

23. T evaluation + initiation [How Haifa did her homework ?

24. T feedback Hek bidi
    I want it like this

( .9 sec pause)

25. T feedback Like this
In Example 7, we see how Ms. Layla drew attention to the individual artwork as a model for the way to be a good student. While Ms. Layla usually started discussing each assignment by calling out the name of the artist, in this example, Ms. Layla withheld this information until after the quality was discussed. After the teacher and class had established that the work was nice, pretty, tidy, and deserving of a star, Ms. Layla had the individual identify herself (line 19). This delay in naming the artist put emphasis on the criteria for assessment. This is important because often students determined the answer to “is it nice?” by what they knew of the student artist, not the work; I discuss this later in the chapter (Example 14).

The chorus played an important role in this interaction. The class was asked a few times to judge the work, such as an overall assessment of appearance (is it nice? Should it take a star? Is it pretty? Is it inside the lines with no spots left white?). These were also the criteria that became expectations for all students. By contributing, the students were asked to agree to and accept Ms. Layla’s criteria for “good” art and “good” student. Ms. Layla, in both English and Arabic, suggested that other students should do their work like Haifa (lines 21 and 24-25), and thus be “like Haifa.” In line 21, Haifa’s artwork stood in for Haifa herself (“this is Haifa”), her work being an exemplar of correct behavior.

But Ms. Layla also drew attention to the individual who did the coloring, as a form of praise. In line 26, Ms. Layla requested that the class applaud Haifa. Even before revealing her identity to the class, Ms. Layla made a side comment about Haifa’s sister (line 14), mostly for my
benefit, indicating she was well aware of the artist and expected great things based on genetics. Rather than call out the student, Ms. Layla had Haifa identify herself. Giving Haifa a star allowed others to see her work deserved recognition (line 29). However, it is for the quality of her work that she received the star on the classroom chart (“because she did color nicely” line 30). This allowed Ms. Layla to do dual work - highlight an individual student, while also making her a model for how others should strive to be. From Examples 6 and 7 we saw that Ms. Layla valued the work of individuals, who achieved more than all or most of the class. In the next section, I examine how she kept egos in check as she highlighted individuals, often in ways that brought attention back to the whole class.

2.5.2 But not too Individual!

In the section above, we saw that individual praise highlighted remarkable work by individuals focusing on what they were doing better and different from others in the class, and at the same time served as a model for the class in how to do and be better. In this section, I look at the ways in which individual attention is often balanced with focus on the group. To achieve this balance, the teacher praised individual contributions, but while doing so also either maintained focus on the collective or reduced her attention to the individual. This balancing act benefited the collective by highlighting values of deference to the group.

Looking back at Example 1, we saw that even an individual’s correct response was not always called out in praise of the individual. Likewise, students who answered incorrectly were rarely singled out (as in the students who read “boat” as “box” in Example 5). This helped to maintain the focus on the collective classroom - correct answers were for the benefit of everyone learning and no individual was stigmatized for being incorrect. This continual focus on the whole class was one way to reign in individualism and remind students that they and their responses were there to help the whole class.
In this next example, we see that one of Ms. Layla’s strategies for individual praise was to keep individual recognition brief before returning focus on the group. Example 8 came from a grade 1 English class, where they had just gone over the construction “has got” and “have got.” The teacher asked the students to look at a picture in their books and create a sentence about one of the boys using “has got.” After getting multiple incorrect answers like “he got a fish” and “has he got a rock,” Ms. Layla reacted with frustration.

Example 8 began with an already frustrated teacher who finally got a correct answer in line 4. She briefly praised it with “bravo” (line 5), which positively evaluated the response and thus indicated that the individual contribution of the student and the individual who contributed in line 4, were correct. However, she never directly called out the student or recognized him by name. Instead, she re-directed her attention to the whole class and with sarcastic intonation asked, “Was that hard?” (line 6), which received no response from the students. She paused only briefly before returning to the response by repeating it for the whole class. Using IRE, she positively validated the individual commenter (line 5), but her focus returned to the whole class, which was

Transcript 2.10: Example 8: Balancing Individual needs for the Collective 1 “He has got a rock.”

1 Teacher

astagfirallahul azeem\(^{16}\)

I seek forgiveness from Allah the almighty

2 T re-initiation

What. has. he. got.

3 T initiation

Jawabeen al hadath suaal

Answer this question

4 S response

He has got a rock

5 T feedback

Bravo

6 T evaluation + initiation

Sa’beh ! ?

Was that hard ! ?

(1.5 sec pause)

7 T feedback

He has got a rock

\(^{16}\) Astagfirallah is a common God-phrase to seek forgiveness, when frustrated, or to note shame (on ones own or others’ behavior). Given that the class had produced many incorrect answers on a task that the teacher had just taught, Ms. Layla was frustrated as seen in the ways she re-phrased the question in line 2. The God-phrase may have multiple audiences (Goffman 1981) including God as well as the students who are made more clearly aware of her frustration.
unable to answer such an easy question. Her tone in line 6 suggested it was a way of shaming the whole class, and ignored the one student who did not find it hard to be able to produce a correct response.

The second way that the teacher minimized individualism was by giving individual attention softly, and without fanfare, unlike we saw earlier in Examples 6 and 7. In Example 9, even though the class had just finished a reading exercise using a mix of chorus and follow the leader interactional moves, both of which are techniques that focus on the group, Ms. Layla still found a way to praise an individual’s contributions.

Transcript 2.11: Example 9: Balancing Individual needs for the Collective 2 “Haneen read beautifully.”
1 T evaluation Entu shatreen
   You all are smart
2 T evaluation Haneen
   (turns back to class)
3 T evaluation takhodh star alil lowha (softly)
   She takes a star on the board
4 T evaluation Hiya tigraa hilu (softly)
   She read beautifully.

Ms. Layla, in finishing up the reading lesson, praised all her students using both the plural second person (you pl) and the plural of “smart,” calling them “shatreen.” However, in line 2, Ms. Layla moved on to specifically rewarding Haneen for her reading. Unlike the earlier Example 7 where the teacher turned Haifa into a model for the class, Haneen’s praise was subtle and tempered. Ms. Layla’s praise for Haneen was soft, as if possibly talking to herself as she searched for Haneen’s picture on the wall chart. Ms. Layla spoke with her back to the class as she added a star for Haneen. The students would have heard the teacher and would have seen the visual manifestation of the praise of Haneen (the star being added), but Haneen herself was not made central. Example 9 demonstrated how strategies such as soft speech or other subtle forms of praise mitigated individual attention, which minimized praise for even the most talented of
students, thereby showing them that their individual attention was balanced with the needs of the whole class. Haneen in this example contributed as a beautiful reader to help her classmates in the choral exercise of reading.

2.5.3 Being in the Collective

Most schoolwork in Jordanian classrooms has a largely collective component. Looking at the pedagogical instruction, such as the workshop introduced earlier in the chapter that modeled turn and talk, it would seem that teachers got little out of the session and instead continued to rely on traditional methods of rote learning. After all, the pre-Kindergarten teacher admitted her ways of a “dinosaur” needed to change for new and more open methods; yet in practice, group work was still avoided and the teaching looked the same. However, I argue that the teachers were impacted through validation of the style of classroom interaction they already were implementing. The master teacher presented what she called “the underpinning philosophy” of the textbook as follows:

Transcript 2.12 Textbook company’s master teacher explaining pedagogical philosophy of student-centric classrooms to Jordanian teachers
1 Presenter Watch me I’m the expert
2 Ta-daaah
3 Teachers (chuckles)
4 Presenter Let’s do it together—shared practice
5 You do it, I give you feedback and guidance—guided practice
6 and you do it
7 sadly, in many schools
8 I’m sure not in your schools
9 It’s watch me, I’m the expert, ta-daaah
10 Now you do it and I test you

During the workshop, the master teacher repeatedly explained her pedagogical philosophy: model for students (as the expert), do it together (shared practice), teacher gives
feedback (guided practice), and finally students do it alone (independent work). According to the master teacher, it seemed that the common alternative to her pedagogy were the “sad” schools that skipped the middle two steps. Even though the teachers at Al-Dawran did not use turn and talk to allow most students to try, fail, and learn, the teachers were very deliberate about working through all four of the master teacher’s pedagogical process.

However, the teachers at Al-Dawran applied these stages with the whole class, not through turn and talk. The difference is that the pressure on all students to try, especially in the middle two stages is largely taken away. First, the teacher does an example on the board. Then, the class works through an example together, with the strong students providing the answer. In the third stage, the students practice with an exercise in their book. For the strong students, practice may mean independent practice and feedback. However, most of the class waits because the students know the teacher will go over each of the questions. Various students (or the teacher) provide answers to the class, and the teacher pauses for all the students to copy down the answer on their own papers. Students often turn to a neighbor for help: repeating a whispered answer when called on, checking the correct spelling, or when unsure what they were supposed to be doing. In the final stage, students are tested. Even tests can be a collective endeavor. Students talk throughout exams, teachers review many of the answers immediately before handing out the test, and many students get guidance on the test (from what the answer was, to a notification of which questions they may have answered incorrectly). However, the teachers reference the necessity of guided and independent practice, aligning (in principle) with the master teacher’s philosophy. The teachers at Al-Dawran did not see themselves as the “sad” schools that go from teacher as the expert to testing students. The workshop validated and reinforced their process of collective learning.

Ms. Layla’s classroom demonstrated a preference for learning through repetition and rote memorization. The students were socialized to replicate the work of the person who knows
(sometimes the teacher, sometimes a knowledgeable student), more so than create or innovate answers or practice and possibly fail through their own attempts. Ms. Layla herself was taught in school via this interactional method. However in an interview, she told me the way that she learned English was not in school, but rather by listening to English songs over and over, trying to write out the lyrics, and then checking what she wrote against the actual lyrics. And she would watch TV shows and repeat the lines after the actors. While the methods she described do involve a lot of repetition, they did not involve a teacher and instead involved a lot of active learning on her part. But now as a teacher, she relied on teacher-directed rote learning as the default path to help students learn. Thus in Example 2, it was lack of participation that prompted her scolding during the collective reading.

In much of the Islamic world, repetition has a long history of success as the means of learning precise and correct recitation, beginning with the learning of the Qur’an. As seen in the second style of guided repetition, students of Qur’anic recitation learn not only the text, but precision and perfection in recitation. According to Eickelman, the two main features associated with Islamic education, which are “rigorous discipline and its lack of explicit explanation of memorized material. Both of these features are congruent with the essentially fixed concept of knowledge which is at the base of Islamic education…and the associated concept of reason (aql)” (1978:493-494). Eickelman points to the centrality of precision, without explanation, without encouraging questioning. Although Eickelman questions the implications that there is an idea of fixity in Islamic knowledge and ways of thinking, it is the interactional patterns of Qur’anic learning and their derivations seen in this chapter that encourage the ideology of discipline, memorization, and lack of questioning of the correct, precise answer.

The emphasis on precision is carried beyond the strictly religious realm. I once visited a family where the uncle was drawing a poster of road signs, a school assignment for his nieces. He explained to me that it was better for him to do their homework because the kids “might make a
mistake.” We saw even Ms. Layla’s diligent attention to the tidiness of coloring in Example 7 with Haifa’s model coloring.

In addition to the focus on precision, we saw through the Follow the Leader Interactional move the importance of helping and supporting peers. Behaving in the classroom in a way that demonstrated concern and support for peers reinforced the cultural value of collectivity, and patterns like Follow the Leader helped it to be socialized into the children. As we will see in Chapter 3, the value of community and acting out of concern for and awareness of others is a pressing behavioral guide. Most of the classroom resources came from donations by parents to share with others (tissues, art supplies, food for a Thursday morning activity, etc.). These requests were made through the kindergarteners and first graders who were told to request these items from home. Contributing to the classroom is part of demonstrating community orientation.

Ms. Layla placed most of her emphasis on the collective over the individual. This can be seen through close analysis of a reading exercise where the kindergarten class was reading through a series of sentences off the board. The exercise started with mostly guided repetition, and then shifted into a mix of choral responses and follow the leader interactional moves. Over the course of about eight minutes, students collectively repeated after the teacher, recited after peers, or read from the board. During this time, only one student was directly called out by name for a good answer (for correctly reading ‘bus’), and Ms. Layla used a vague “excellent” four other times (three times for collective responses, and once to a reader who was never explicitly named). Seven students (out of a class of 30) were called out by name for not listening or not participating in the collective reading (and one was called out twice). Additionally, the class as a whole was scolded to pay attention, look at the board, or read out loud, a total of four times. Most wrong answers were simply ignored and only one student, in a rare occurrence, was directly called out by name for a wrong answer. The rare attention to individual students (except when they were not
doing the reading), was not surprising because the focus was on the class as a whole responding, on having everyone involved in rote learning.

Even with Ms. Layla’s attention on the class as a whole, with about 30 students in a class and lots of distractions (teachers coming in, bells and announcements, students fidgeting or needing to go to the bathroom), focusing on the whole class served at least partly as a method of discipline to keep more of the students engaged. Calling a student’s name was a disciplinary strategy to get that student to stop what they were doing and start paying attention. This reminder to the students kept them focused on the collective goal of the class. The next example returns to guided repetition, where students were learning the phonetic alphabet. Increasingly at the end of the alphabet, Ms. Layla was struggling to keep students on track.

Transcript 2.13: Example 10: Necessity of joining the Collective Chorus “Repeat with me properly.”

1  T initiation  “R” /r/ rose
2  Choral response – guided  “R” [ /r/ ] rose
3  T feedback  [Sadia ]
4  T initiation  “S” /s/ star
5  Choral response – guided  “S” /s/ star
6  T feedback  [Kashif ‘aeid mmneh maai Kashif repeat with me properly

Both Sadia and Kashif were called out for not participating appropriately in the guided repetition. Saying the name of a student served as a performative (Austin 1975), a warning that the student was not behaving appropriately. Usually one instance of saying a student’s name was enough to nudge a student to start participating with the chorus. Unlike Sadia, whose scolding was partly covered by students trying to repeat, Kashif was admonished between repetitions, during a lull in the class. In addition, Kashif was given the imperative to “repeat properly” along with the teacher. Ms. Layla socialized her students into a specific kind of participation with active and careful repetition during the collective chorus. Compared to when Ms. Layla asked questions
and only expected a few students to know the answer, the chorus required everyone to participate. Thus attention and active participation were more important (and thus more highly regulated) during this time. Sadia and Kashif were being called out because their inattention to the chorus was affecting their ability to learn through rote.

A second way that we see the focus placed on being part of the collective was how Ms. Layla discouraged students from veering off the “collective path.” In Example 11, I return to Ms. Layla’s public evaluation of the kindergarteners’ coloring assignment, this time for a girl named Mayyada.

Transcript 2.14: Example 11: “Color better”: Regulating Behaviors to the “collective path.”

1 Possible T initiation Mayyada
2 T initiation (to class) Look !
(1 sec pause)
3 T initiation Is it nice?
4 S chorus (weak) Yes
5 T feedback But Mayyada (.2 sec) you should color red (.5 sec) and brown
(1.5 sec pause)
6 T initiation Did she color red and brown?
7 S chorus (weak) No
8 S chorus (weak) No
9 T feedback Hatha pink ?
This is pink ?
(.8 sec pause)
10 T feedback Somethi<ing>ng* okay looks like brown
11 T feedback Lazim istamili dark brown same as the picture
You must use dark brown same as the picture
12 T feedback Okay ?
13 T feedback So star for Mayyada here ? (puts star on her paper)

While Ms. Layla told Mayyada that her coloring was nice, Ms. Layla also listed out the ways in which Mayyada should improve. She reinforced her critique by turning to the collective, that is, the expectations that everyone should follow. This was done by reinforcing an underlying discouragement of moving away from the “correct” and collective expectation. Mayyada colored
with pink and light brown, instead of red and dark brown. While pink may be considered incorrect, even Ms. Layla, in line 10, hesitated a little, conceding that perhaps Mayyada used something “like brown.” But this “creative license” to interpret brown into another shade did not stop Ms. Layla’s line 11 critiques. The teacher determined the “right” brown, (even though the assignment just called for brown) to be (a) dark brown and (b) the “same” as other parts of the picture. This provided Ms. Layla with some kind of legitimacy for her hesitancy over Mayyada’s choice of brown. Additionally Ms. Layla used the class to support her evaluation of Mayyada’s work. While only a few students participated, the class in lines 7 and 8 agreed the colors were incorrect after being told as much in line 5. In this exercise the chorus was used mostly to echo the teacher’s critique (even though the chorus was not stressed, nor was participation enforced).

Even though Mayyada’s work was judged to be “nice,” her incorrect use of colors prevented her from receiving a star on the wall chart. She only received, like all the students regardless of coloring quality, a star on her paper. Even though her color choices were close to the assignment, she was prohibited from greater praise because her creative interpretation of colors fell out of line with Ms. Layla’s expectations for the whole class.

2.5.4 But not too Collective!

Even though the collective was stressed and essential to join, at the end of the day, the students were still expected to know the material and be able to answer the questions on their own (at least sometimes). Ms. Layla, especially when frustrated with the class or their responses, picked on individual students. This move away from the collective focus reminded the students that they could not rest on the contribution of others, but had to be able to answer for themselves and do the work on their own.

In Example 12, Ms. Layla forced individual students to participate as individuals instead of relying either on the chorus or on self-selection to respond. In Example 12, Ms. Layla was
conducting guided practice for the long “i” sound by trying to get her grade 1 students to read the word “like” from the board. Prior to where this excerpt began, one student kept reading just the long “i” sound. The teacher did not respond to any of the student’s four attempts. The excerpt started with the first response from the teacher.

Transcript 2.15: Example 12: “Read the whole word”: Calling on Individuals.

1  T evaluation + initiation  Qara kalimat kamleh
   Read the whole word
   (over 5 sec pause)

2  T feedback  tsk (tongue click)

3  T evaluation + initiation  Qara kalimat kamleh !
   Read the whole word !
   (1.5 sec pause)

4  T initiation  Dunia
   (2.2 sec pause)

5  T initiation  Dunia !
6  S response (not Dunia)  /i:/
   (1 sec pause)

7  T initiation  Dunia
8  S response (Same S as line 6)  /i:/
9  T feedback  Laaa !
   Nooo !
   (2.5 sec pause during which, scattered responses begin from various students)

10 T initiation  Malik

11 S response (Malik)  “like”
12 T feedback  like !

When the example began, Ms. Layla re-initiated her attempt to have the students read the word “like” with a hint (line 1). Given that a student attempted four times with just the long “i” sound (/ai/), it could be aimed at that particular student; however, it is not clear from the audio. Regardless, after the hint, the student stopped responding. In line 4, Ms. Layla switched her attention to another student, Dunia, who even after the three calls of her name (lines 4, 5, and 7) still does not have an answer. Eventually, Ms. Layla turned her attention to Malik, one of the
smartest students in the class. Malik obliged with a prompt, correct response. Ms. Layla repeated Malik’s response rather forcefully.

As pointed out earlier, directly targeting initiation to particular students was not only rare, but the students seemed unaccustomed to this pattern. Even though the teacher called on Dunia, another student in the class decided to throw in his answer. He seemed convinced that a long “e” sound (/iː/) was correct. After his first attempt to answer in line 6, Ms. Layla ignores the response by calling on Dunia again. After his second unsolicited attempt, the teacher reacted with frustration in her voice. Ms. Layla’s “laaa” “nooo” with rising intensity throughout the word perhaps frustrated both because of the incorrect answer, but also because the wrong person responded to the prompt, which she indicated was for Dunia in line 7. From my observations, primary students into 5th grade repeatedly answered calls directed at individuals not themselves. Whether this was motivated by deliberate ignorance or just lack of attention, students seemed to find almost all initiations open to the crowd. Additionally, the student in lines 6 and 8 did not heed Ms. Layla’s guidance in lines 1 and 3, that the student should read a whole word. For the rest of the excerpt, Ms. Layla did not accept any more unsolicited answers. She ignored the students who tried to answer in line 10.

Malik’s answer did not just help ease Ms. Layla’s frustration that none of the students comprehended the lesson on long and short “i” sounds. Malik supported his peers by giving them the right answer and deflecting the teacher’s irritation. Example 12 showed the way interactions help teach the students that they were not merely members of the chorus, but active contributors to the class, sometimes out of their own initiative, and sometimes because of a demand made by the teacher. The attention on the individual served as a reminder of the underlying need for individual responses and demonstrating good behavior even as an individual. But collectively, the

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17 I did not observe higher than 5th grade at this school.
variety of interactions teaches a necessary balance between their individual and collective responsibilities in the classroom.

2.6 Ethical Messages

In this final section of the chapter, I examine some of the implications behind the interactional moves common in Ms. Layla’s classroom. Ms. Layla was socializing students about what to say, when, and how to negotiate themselves in relation to others, balancing proudly showing off what they know as an individual and joining in the collective effort to help others in the class benefit. In this final level, I add on a layer of some of the implications of these interactional patterns on how a child is supposed to behave. Ms. Layla’s diligent attention to socializing children into a particular kind of personhood comes with messages about what it means to be “good.” For Ms. Layla, the messages about how to be good carry across school and into the home.

2.6.1 Precision and Order

Unlike the interactional moves that would accompany turn and talk or critical thinking by students, Ms. Layla’s interactional moves emphasize the necessity of offering the right answer, at the right time. While students are not often scolded or shamed for having the wrong answer, only the right student receives praise.

The answer is also particular; Ms. Layla asks questions that have one right answer she is looking for, common of known-information questions (Heath 1983, Mehan 1979a, 1979b). In one interaction, Ms. Layla was reading a story called “How are you?” in which characters talked about why they were feeling sad, angry, thirsty, and hungry. According to the book, the character who was hungry “did not eat breakfast.” A few of the students suggested Arabic translations of this line of the story. One says, “he didn’t want to eat a lot” and another “he didn’t want to eat
Ms. Layla ignored the first response and explicitly refuted the second. The only response she accepted was the student who said “he didn’t eat.” This was the most precise meaning to the story, but it also was the only acceptable answer. The earlier responses which were incorrect both provided good reasons why someone might be hungry. However, even though Ms. Layla eventually phrased the question (after the two “incorrect” responses) “why is one hungry?” the only acceptable response was the exact answer from the storybook. Given the pedagogical movement towards critical thinking, Ms. Layla’s interactions with students favored particular answers over creative responses.

The interactional patterns applied more broadly onto Ms. Layla’s encouragement for precise and exact work. Looking back at the lesson where Ms. Layla judged the coloring work of her kindergarteners (like Example 7 and 11), her individual attention to particulars of coloring made it a tool for socializing precision. Underlying her comments on using the right color and staying in the lines were messages of being precise and orderly. Students who did not stay in the lines were reprimanded. Further, Haifa (Example 7) was explicitly praised not merely for staying in the lines, but for being “tidy.” Ms. Layla drew a connection between the act of coloring, and a much larger concept, that of being tidy. The Arabic word that the teacher used (muratteb) is based on the root r-t-b (ر-ت-ب) which means “to arrange…to put into proper order” (Wehr 1994:375). In the coloring context this simply means staying in the lines. But the concept was applied time and again, in the classroom, and more broadly in other contexts – one’s desk, cleaning the classroom after snack time, talking about how to help mom at home, and putting away things when students reached home.

Shifting to talking beyond coloring to being tidy demonstrated how Ms. Layla fit coloring into a much larger skill she was teaching. Of the 30 students in the class, four received a star on the wall chart for their coloring. One was given a star even though she had “white spots,” another common area of critique. However, the teacher noted that she stayed in the lines. Across these
four cases, staying in the lines was the most common reason given as justification for why students received stars on the wall chart, and seemed to be the common trait shared. Staying in the lines worked as a proxy for the tidiness that Ms. Layla found in Haifa’s coloring. But tidiness went well beyond coloring, as Haifa was a model of how everyone’s work should be. Ms. Layla scolded the students for being messy during snack time, for not putting away their bags in the right places, and for not emptying their folders of old assignments. Being neat and tidy was highly valued as good practice of ethical self-cultivation which has broader impacts.

The precision of responding to the teacher’s interactional patterns connected to Ms. Layla’s desire that students follow directions. Even though Ms. Layla was a big proponent of creativity and critical thinking, in practice she stuck close to the directions. She asked students to follow the instructions on the worksheet, rarely changing or even simplifying the directions. Even art projects were strictly regulated - giving groups of students yellow (and only yellow) to color the sun, having all students only allowed to paint their handprint during an art activity with the color red, or rejecting a very creatively colored campfire because it used greens and purples instead of reds, yellows, and oranges. Uniformity was not merely a question of equal access to the same color or task. Ms. Layla’s responses focus on precision--on following exact directions and doing things as prescribed. In Example 7 of Haifa’s work, the students were not just shown good work, they were shown a model for what all students were expected to do and to be, including following exact directions.

The attention to directions reinforced hierarchical relationships where the teacher remained in control of the class. By stressing the importance of interactional patterns and following directions, Ms. Layla maintained her position as the authority figure in the class. Ten of the interactions in the analyzed lessons were excluded because they often had the student initiating a response from the teacher. However, this was rare. The teacher was almost always the one to initiate a response. During the first grade math lesson, Ms. Layla demonstrated this control
by ignoring a student with the correct response until after she had made the initiation. The
students were looking at an addition problem, adding one and three watermelons to get four.

Transcript 2.16: Example 13: “1 + 3 = 4.” Ignoring Responses until Initiation is complete.

1  T  hala endi fruit
    Here I have fruit

2  S response Khalid  four

3  T  so endi here
    So I have here

4  S response  one

5  T  [one watermelon wa hon endi three watermelons]
    One watermelon and here I have three watermelons

6  S response Khalid  [four

7  T initiation  put them together]

8  S response Khalid  [four

9  S Chorus  [forur

10 T evaluation  [four

Khalid attempted his response three times before it was accepted by the teacher (lines 2,
6, and 8). He had to wait for the teacher to get to the initiation in line 7 first. Following the IRE
pattern helped Ms. Layla keep control of the lesson, and socialized the students to keep order by
waiting for the initiation before giving a response.

Ms. Layla’s interactions also required the students to keep concentrating in the class. The
chorus called all the students to pay attention and participate. When Ms. Layla was teaching (and
a lot of time in the lesson was normally taken up with distractions and interruptions), she asked
for intense concentration from the group. She rarely got it. Calling out a student by name was one
method of demanding concentration. In the case of the coloring, staying in the lines, not leaving
white spots, and not scribbling all require careful concentration. Careful attention to one’s work
demonstrated diligence, concern, and dedication. Demonstrating such focus and precision in
homework, even on tasks as simple as coloring, was supposedly indicative of a student’s
character. Most importantly, their character could carry over to other parts of their lives -
behavior at home, with family, and in the community.
This link between character and performance was most clearly seen when the class negatively assessed the work of the most disruptive students in the class. As mentioned earlier, students often seemed to rely on an individual student’s character to determine their assessment of that student’s coloring.


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<td>1</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Osman</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>T initiation</td>
<td>Is it nice?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>S Chorus (weak)</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>T initiation</td>
<td>Is it nice?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>S Chorus</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>T evaluation + initiation</td>
<td>No? Why?</td>
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| 7 | T evaluation | yani better than Azam  
I mean [its] better than Azam |
| 8 | T evaluation | nice ya Osman |
| 9 | T evaluation | hotelak star hon okay?  
I’ll put for you a star here okay? [puts star on paper] |
| 10 | T evaluation | nice ya Osman asli  
Nice Osman original |

When the most disruptive student in the class had his work reviewed, the students responded that his work was not nice (line 3). When the teacher re-initiates, the students interpret it as a cue to repeat the answer given (guided repetition line 5). However, it leads the teacher to question the response (line 6) and ask the students to defend “why” it was not nice. Ms. Layla never clarified why Osman’s work was nice, just that it was original (asli) and better than Azam. Asli comes from the root a-S-l (ا ص ل) which, as we saw in Chapter 1, is a way to talk about one’s origins or roots. Azam was also frequently viewed as disruptive, and during his review, his work was noted to be outside the lines, and he also left white spots. In fact, it was not just Azam and Osman who received negative assessments. Of the boys in the class who had the question “is it nice?” asked of their work, five got a response of “no” and one got both “yes” and “no.”
Wortham’s examination of speech chains argues that over the course of the school year, teachers and students come to label other students in the class depending on their ability to socialize into classroom interactions (2005). Thus some students are labeled as “smart” or “unintelligent” or even “disruptive.” The association of Osman as a poor student helps his classmates to judge his work automatically as not nice. We will see this build into a label of “naughty” in Chapter 3 of this dissertation.

2.6.2 Following Routines Behaviors

Ms. Layla builds on the values of order and precision to guide routine behavior and interactions outside of the classroom. That balancing of individual and collective desires meant that students were to respect not just their mothers but also, as we will see, their siblings. In this section we see that giving the right answer at the right time parallels expectations of doing the right thing at the right time at home. Being a “good” child contributes to the family through specific and guided routines at home.

Example 15 below occurred during Ms. Layla’s tangent from class material after her assistant had shown her a note from an upset mother. Farid’s mom wrote to Ms. Layla that Farid was not listening to her at home. The letter from the mother demonstrated a particularly involved interaction between parents and teachers where teachers were respected and valued for their advice and intervention in home environments. For some mothers, the close overlap between home and school was an important reason for selecting Al-Dawran school, as I will explore in Chapter 4. However, not all parents valued this level of oversight by teachers, both in terms of disciplining their children and in terms of interfering in the home. Unfortunately for Farid, his mother appreciated this interference. For his misbehavior at home, Farid is punished at school by having a star taken off of his name the classroom chart.
Ms. Layla began by scolding Farid, but turned it into a lesson for the whole class. After interrupting a comment from a student (“when I get home from school*”), Ms. Layla started an interactional sequence reciting “correct” return-from-school routines. Prior to the excerpt, the students had collectively recited that they first change, and put away their uniform and shoes. The chorus focused on routine responses that all the students had learned to recite.

Transcript 2.18: Example 15: Teaching home routines. “Where do you put dirty socks?”

1  T initiation  \textit{jurabat al wasakheh wain bihoteha}  
Where do you put dirty socks?  

2  S Chorus  \textit{Bil ghaseel}  
In the wash  

3  T feedback  \textit{Bil ghaseel}  
In the wash  

4  T initiation  \textit{shu baadain bisaw}  
What do you do next?  

5  S Chorus  \textit{bighasil idain}  
Wash your hands  

6  T initiation  \textit{oo ?}  
and  

(1 sec pause)

7  S Response  \textit{bighasil}  \textit{rijlain}  
[Wash \ your legs]  

8  T gives response  \textit{rijlain}  
\[legs\]  

9  T gives response  \textit{bighasil wijih, sah ?}  
[Wash your face, correct?]

10  S Chorus  \textit{ah}  
yes

In this example, Ms. Layla was taking the students through a behavioral routine, in the order that the tasks should be done. Based on my observations, while this recitation may not have aligned exactly with the order in which children behaved at home, it does reflect common “return from school” practices (changing, putting away uniforms and shoes, washing up, eating lunch, and doing school work). When I visited families, my presence was a clear disruption to their routine, but parents often prodded their children on these same behaviors that Ms. Layla had them
Students who had mothers who worked or were teachers often did their homework before eating, while their mothers cooked. Regardless, this interaction with Ms. Layla showed that students had been conditioned to respond in a particular rote pattern, even though it may not be what they did at home. Students mostly answered immediately and in chorus (like lines 2 and 5). Some of the questions were guided (line 1 “where do you put dirty socks”), and the students responded immediately (with “in the wash”). Students seemed to know not only what to respond, but the exact phrase to provide, even though each one may have different spaces and places in their house to place dirty clothes. Even after the more vague “what do you do next,” a chorus quickly responded with “wash your hands” (lines 4-5). Ms. Layla aligned to some degree with the Islamic washing practices of wadu, important before ritual prayer. Ms. Layla listed off three parts of the body important to wash in wadu, but not in the same order as ritual washing. Ms. Layla prompted her students to respond with legs and face (in line 6). While one student started to answer, Ms. Layla ended up responded in line 8 and 9. Ms. Layla’s use of the tag questions, “correct?” (line 9), suggested that she was seeking agreement for something she expected the students should already know, as if merely reminding them of what they already did.

This example of call and response was not by any means a perfectly socialized choreography of home routines. The students revealed that they may still be learning Ms. Layla’s expected patterns, such as not knowing the correct response for what to do after washing their hands. Just before Example 15, she asked the class, “Where do you put your shoes?” and the students mumbled various answers, including one response of “in the bathroom.” Just after Example 15, the teacher asked what came next, again receiving a variety of responses. The most clear and confident response was a girl who said “nudroos,” “we study.” Other responses were

\[\text{In all my visits, it was rare to not take my shoes off at the door. One of the only reasons to keep them on was if we were headed to an outdoor balcony on the other side of the house. The student may have been predicting a different routine of behaviors at home.}\]
difficult to make out. Ms. Layla’s “correct” response, however, was, “bitghada Sahani kullu” meaning “I eat my whole plate.”

Students had already started the process of being socialized into a pattern of responses. For some well-known responses, the students responded collectively—with the same answer and at the same time. The pattern of simultaneous repetition where students responded the same way reinforced the collectivity in the classroom. At a deeper level, however, the collective responses aligned with patterns of similar orderly behavioral routines at home as well.

While the content of Example 15 may not be exactly what one might expect as a topic of discussion during English class, the interactional moves shared some key similarities with the interactional patterns covered in earlier examples. Lines 1-3 and 4-5 followed the chorus pattern. Like the alphabet, phonics, counting, and reading sight words, students were being socialized to learn these behavioral routines to the point of automaticity. Parallel to basic academic concepts, students were being socialized in what to say and when. Sight words, like the alphabet and counting, became the tools for reading - words that students can pronounce and read without sounding them out each time because they became so automatic. The same went for behavioral routines at home. Learning them by rote made such patterns the building blocks of respectful and appropriate behavior that would presumably carry over outside of the classroom. Ms. Layla was in the process of scolding a single student about his lack of obedience to this mother, but she built on what it meant to be a “good” child (one who listened to his mother) to, more broadly, how one should behave at home through daily routines.

Looking further in the interaction, Ms. Layla had finished home routines, and gracefully transitioned into a chorus of what behaviors to avoid at home. Home routines and behavior are both part of expected ways of being good. However, one student, Azam, directly rejected the behaviors the teacher demanded of him.

1. T initiation  
   *badroob akhui saghir iza endi akhu saghir?*  
   Do I hit my little brother if I have a little brother?

2. S Chorus  
   *La*  
   No

3. T initiation  
   *badroob akhui li kabir?*  
   Do I hit my older brother?

4. S Chorus  
   *La*  
   No

(1.2 sec pause)

5. S Response  
   *Badroobhom*  
   I hit them

6. T evaluation  
   *enta tadroobhom?*  
   You hit them?

7. S Response  
   *ah*  
   yes

8. T evaluation  
   *wa hai sheelna star minak*  
   And here we take a star from you

Once the teacher confirmed that in fact it was Azam who had admitted to his behavior, she without question removed one of his stars from the wall chart, just as Farid did for not behaving appropriately towards his mother at home. While Azam did initiate an explanation of his behavior almost one minute after this interaction (as I discuss below), he was not given a chance to justify his behavior before his punishment (taking away the star). His behavior was unquestionably rejected as inappropriate.

Not only does Azam’s response go against the expected answer (“no” I don’t hit my brother) but Azam violated the choral response pattern, responding with a different answer, outside of the choral response window. He indicated he had not learned the right interactional reply; speaking out of the chorus also paralleled the fact that Azam’s behavior was the wrong answer and the wrong thing to do. For the wrong answer at the wrong time and the wrong behavior, Azam was punished by having his star taken away. At a deeper level, we see that Ms. Layla expected a “right” answer to these questions (which was “no”). Not only were the students
being socialized to recite the “right” answer at their teacher’s behest, but their answer also reflected to others that they understood how to interact in society. The chorus was so important because it showed that students were all in line with shared notions of being in the community. In Azam’s response, he ignored the demand for participation.

Whether they actually followed these behavioral dictates were less important here than the moral display of affirmation, that the children understood and “played along” with these right and wrong “rules.” Mehan’s examination of IRE found that emphasis was placed strongly on the teacher guiding her students into forming the full and complete sentence (“The red flower is under the tree”). However that focus on precise response led the teacher and students to overlook the fact that the flower was not actually red; it is children, (those like Azam), that bravely declare, “Hey, that’s not red” (Mehan 1979b). Azam did not simply follow the expected pattern of agreeing that he does not hit his siblings. He instead interjected his own answer. Ms. Layla presented her initiations as non-debatable patterns of behavior, in a way that can be displayed as “things you must show you know.” These patterns are parallel to those used when students learn to count. Giving the right answer was proof of a “good” student and a “good” person.

The interactional patterns forced the students into giving an exact answer. In the case of behavioral discussions (like Example 16), the interactional pattern focus on correct responses led to distinct rules about how to behave. Ms. Layla had no choice but to stand by her moral dictates and immediately discipline even the mere mention of violating such demands--like Azam who admits to hitting his brothers. The expected pattern took precedence over the truth (like the actual color of the flower in Mehan 1979b’s example) and over the realities of everyday life; interacting with siblings is not as simple as memorizing and following a series of black and white rules. Even though Azam answered honestly (and I’ve seen him hit his little brother), he was punished. Most of the students in the class probably hit their siblings; however, their moral display was in line with expectations.
A few minutes after this exchange, Azam tried to defend his actions by explaining that his brothers take his toys. Here again, the teacher repeatedly refuted the acceptability of his behavior, sticking to her moral dictates even though it led her to say things such as “you have your toys and your brother has his toys and so your brother doesn’t take your toys.” In visits to Ms. Layla’s home, I watched her own children fight for a turn with shared objects, and clearly this ideal of “toy separation” was not reflected in the reality of most households with multiple kids. However, Azam was punished for not “playing by the rules”; he was not about to recite behaviors that he had no intention of following.

In this final section, we saw how academic concepts often had close ties to social ones. Tidy drawing suggests tidy behavior, and correct choral routines suggest proper behavior at home. By using the same classroom interactional routines that helped rote learning of alphabets, Ms. Layla was socializing children into social behaviors that would hopefully extend beyond the classroom. These collective behaviors, taught through rote learning, ultimately are judged on the individual level. Students may learn the alphabet chorally, but testing is individual (at least in theory). Students may recite “good” behaviors as a group, but if their mom writes a note that they are not behaving, the punishment is singular. Striking a balance between the individual and collective teaches children how to behave as they begin their journey through the Jordanian education system.

2.7 Conclusion

Despite her strong ideas about English being a gateway to vital critical thinking skills, Ms. Layla had expectations that her students behave in a very particular way during lessons. The rigidity of interactions not only maintained a teacher-led classroom, but helped socialize students into particular patterns of how to respond. The necessary order and precision of answers took precedence over engaging in critical thinking. Ms. Layla thus emphasized in her class how to be
"good" students, which in the end prevented students from practicing the critical thinking that Ms. Layla valued so much.

Teachers in the classroom provide students with guidelines at different levels. At a basic level, interactions teach what it means to be good in a classroom through content and timing--saying the right answer, at the right time. This is where classroom interactional routines play an important role in learning what is expected, and what is possibly in violation of those guidelines. In Chapter 2, I presented four common patterns that students have been taught to respond to in very specific ways. Most of the interactions map onto IRE, Chorus, Guided Repetition, or Follow the Leader, and all of them teach students how to read cues and predict the response the teacher is looking for. Students do not always predict the interactional move correctly, and they don’t always have the right response, but they are learning to expect certain patterns and behave accordingly.

At a second, deeper level, I examined how students learn about themselves in relation to their classmates and their teacher. Through these interactions, the students are learning how to interact with others, which requires a balance of striving to stand out and collective responsibilities, being part of the chorus and helping their peers. Based on their understanding of teacher responses, students were socialized into the appropriate balance (for their community) between thinking about their own needs and deferring to the needs of the community. Students are encouraged to do good work (give good responses, excel on homework), but those responses help the whole group and not just the individual. At the same time, the students cannot hide away and not contribute to the class, because the detriment is their own learning. Finding the balance between personal and community benefit means students strive to be good by having the answer, but know that it may be for the advancement of the class and not for individual recognition. Being good means finding the right balance.
Finally, at a third level, classroom interactional patterns express what it means to be “good” in one’s community. Implicit in these interactions are instructions on the right and wrong ways to behave. Through the four interactional moves, students are learning explicit and subtle messages about what their behavior ought to be as well as what it can and does say about them. Students are socialized to be precise, orderly, respectful of authority, and to play along with demonstrating that they are good children. While the line between prescribed behavior and practice is not always direct, the teacher uses the same methods of internalizing academic concepts as she does behavioral ones, socializing her students into exhibiting the elements of “good” behavior.

Behind these four patterns are larger implications on the disciplining of behavior. In Chapter 3, I explore the reactions of caregivers to moments of misbehavior. However, in this chapter we see that many behaviors and not just classroom behavior, are taught through rote learning and strict dictation of how to be good. In Chapter 3, we see that caregivers are often excusing much of a child’s behavior as normal, making punishments, for many children, not very common. While in the classroom, behaviors were taught as black and white dictates about how one must behave, in practice, the lines of good and bad are not so clear. In disciplinary interactions, parents model how ethics are cultivated in practice, negotiated in the moment. Additionally, ethics are often in competition; Mattingly uses the concept of “moral pluralism” as the basis of ordinary life to indicate the complications of applying which moral should take precedent (2014:8). However, Ms. Layla’s methods of teaching demonstrate one of the subtle ways that schools function as “disciplinary institutions” (Foucault 1995) to regulate behavior.

The emphasis on precision and order counters the key objectives behind critical thinking. Most of the research on the effectiveness of educational reforms in Jordan (Hodges 2015, Innabi & El Sheikh 2007; Shirazi 2010a) have looked at the process of teacher education and training. However, my research points out that the interactional moves between a teacher and students may
be so ingrained that trainings must take them into consideration. In my analysis of the workshop that the teacher of Al-Dawran attended by the textbook company, “turn and talk” reinforced the pedagogical practices that the teachers were already using, rather than highlighting the differences between current practice and the practice from the master teacher. Hodges (2015) is absolutely right that conversations about what “critical thinking” and other trends should look like in Jordan are needed. But they must take into consideration the current methods of classroom interaction. Training new pedagogy must begin with interactions that are routine and either add new ways of interacting with students, or change what is currently common practice. Simply implementing new pedagogy that are tied to different interactional styles without understanding current patterns of interaction will have a difficult time taking hold.
Chapter 3- “Have Shame!”: Shaming as Discipline and Ethics in the Socialization of Children

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I lay out a theory of discipline based on how adults in the community I work with in Jordan apply Islamic ideals to child-rearing. I argue that due to the philosophy that children are still developing ‘aql (reason), caregivers use discipline to model how to make behavioral decision in line with important community values. Using shame, caregivers demonstrate how other parties are affected by the child’s misbehavior in the hopes that as children grow up and develop ‘aql, the children will make better decisions in the future. Through this introduction, I build out the theory which will be reflected in the data later in the chapter.

During the morning snack break at Al-Dawran, one of the English teachers realized some of her kindergarten students were not eating their sandwiches. On this particular mid-December morning, as an incentive to encourage them to eat, the teacher announced to her 30 students, with the classroom assistant, me, and my audio recorder as a witness, that “whoever does not finish (ma bikhalas) his sandwich, will not go play outside (ma raH ya’lab burrah).” This declaration made outdoor play contingent on what the children ate. The teacher talked about finishing sandwiches in the present tense (bikhalas), while going out to play took the future marker (raH). With outdoor play on the line, the students began to eat in silence as their teacher gave the following speech:

There is a thing called being well-mannered (adab) my dears. Like one does not make sounds when they are eating, does not do something disgusting, does not talk with food in their mouths. These are called manners (akhlaq). We must all have manners, my children...I do not hit. I do not deceive. So we can become good kids (wilad kwaiyseen). But in every place there are naughty/bad people

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19 Based on my fieldnotes, I wrote about teachers telling me that concerned mothers complained of hungry children. Their children were filling up on junk food from the school shop or bringing home half eaten sandwiches, neither of which were ideal for learning.

20 Italics are used for what was spoken in Arabic.
(sharireen). Do you turn out to be bad people? Turn out to be bad people? No, you must be good people, right? Good people don’t do these things.

The teacher, in this mini-lecture on behavior, exemplified a behaviorally driven interpretation of what it meant to be a person (“good” or “bad”). Performing honorable behaviors through morals (akhlq) and routines of manners and politeness (adab) can then become goodness in the form of a “good person.” But one must “become” good and “turn out” good meaning that the process takes time, as a child grows into an adult.Honorable behaviors as children are indicative of the development of good people but not deterministic. The process of becoming “good,” can be mapped onto the following figure:

![Figure 3.1: Honorable vs Shameful Behavior in Children and Child Development.](image-url)

The teacher began with two interconnected concepts, akhlq and adab, which were both common in my interviews with caregivers about child rearing and parenting. Akhlq is a key principle of Islamic philosophy about the link between creation and morality. The word akhlq
comes from the Arabic root kh-l-q (خ-ل-ق) “to create” (Wehr 1994:299). It is the same root used for God as the creator (al-khaliq) and creation (khalq). Based on the root, there is a derivational link between creation and morality. This link reinforces the Islamic ideal of the innate goodness in humankind, at least at creation (as opposed to a philosophy based on original sin). Children are thus believed to be born good. The derivational link also highlights the importance of creating and maintaining morality in everyday life as a goal of creation. According to Carl Ernst, the covenant between humankind (formed at the time of creation) “becomes the charter both for ethics [akhlāq], as an acknowledgment of divine authority, and for spirituality, as a testimony to the intimate relationship between God and humanity” (2004:111). Akhlāq is defined as “character (of persons); morals; morality” (Wehr 1994:299). Adab comes from the root a-d-b (ب-د-ا) “to be well-bred” (Wehr 1994:11). The root is also used in derived concepts such as literature, decorum, and morality. Thus to display manners is part of demonstrating one is well-bred and developing into a moral being. Parents are trying to raise children with both akhlāq and adab. While the derivational roots help partly distinguish these concepts, as the theory of language socialization suggests, in practice they are intertwined, interconnected, and may not be clearly distinguished.

Ideas about “good” and “bad” are not always fixed but contextually and culturally defined. Parents in interviews focused on various aspects of the definition of “good” children (those who are mu’adab - “well-behaved”) and commonly described children who are mu’adab as those who listen, are respectful, controlled in their body (not running around), and polite. The definitions focus on the individual child but with clear ramifications on those around them. Parents commonly listed adab (manners) and akhlāq (ethics) as two of the most important things that parents must teach young children in the home. Children who are called mushaghīb (“naughty”) or commit actions that are ‘aib (“shameful”) behave in quite the opposite way; naughty children are loud, run around, do not listen to their parents, take things that are not theirs,
and do not behave in the way expected or desired for a particular context. The interpretation of a child as mushaghib centers around the child’s negative impact on others.

While adults are expected to know good from bad, children are expected to still be learning the distinction. More specifically, they are learning values that show respect to the community, the people in the community, and to religion. As Fernea writes, “the goal of child rearing was to instill and develop the reason (‘aql) which is seen to be necessary for successful adult life in the society” (1995:8). One mother in an interview openly spoke of how her anger drove her to act in ways that she found shameful. After once yelling at her son and calling him “hammar” (donkey), she voiced (in our interview) the son as replying, “ana hammar!? Ana hammar!? Allah yasame’ek!” (I’m a donkey!? I’m a donkey!? God hears you!). This mother was explaining that she was still in the process of being socialized into how to be a good mother and learned from her son’s reaction. She continued, “like my son, I’m teaching myself don’t get angry, don’t insult, don’t do wrong things.” The window to reform and learn behaviors was still open not just for her son who was still developing ‘aql, but apparently for her as well. Socialization is a life-long process and even adults have to learn how to take on new roles (like the role of “parent”).

The idea that children must develop ‘aql (reason) means that there is time for “reform” as their reason develops, so they do not “turn out” to be bad. Discipline plays an important role in teaching cultural values and modeling a process of ‘aql as parents give reasons for why children should cease their misbehavior—something will break, the carpet will get dirty, someone will be upset when there are no more stickers. These explanations model for children how to reason about the impacts of their behavioral decisions.

In addition to the logical explanations, parents rely on shame. While children have innate goodness, that does not mean that they only do good. Caregivers need a way of guiding children towards collective standards of morality and ethics. When children act outside of these norms,
caregivers sometimes signal the misbehavior with the label “shame.” A five-year-old boy disturbing his mom’s conversation while I visited was told “wallah ‘aib wallah ‘aib!” (“by God shame, by God shame!”). A little girl who was kicking around fallen fruit in her grandmother’s garden was told “haram, allah biza’al minik” “that’s forbidden, God will be upset with you.” Both examples link children’s actions with indications of something not socially or religiously acceptable. Even the teacher above listed a number of behaviors that are often labelled as shameful - hitting, deceiving, eating impolitely.

Using shame to describe a behavior is part of a process by which behavior is being judged against a cultural standard of how one brings pride and honor to the family and avoids bringing shame; that is, children are being socialized into conformity with societal expectations. As Levy points out, demonstrating membership to a group involves control over social behavior (1973:348). One of the examples I heard frequently throughout my fieldwork was “‘u’oud zai an nas” “sit like people [do].” Whether it is sitting or eating, children are being scolded into a category of general standards as “people” as a way to regulate behavior. Even adults (by their elders) have their behaviors monitored. Based on my fieldnotes, when visiting an extended family gathering, a new mom was scolded by her aunt for lounging on the couch. Her aunt’s logic was “you’re a mom” and even sitting should reflect that. The aunt tied community expectations to the fact that the niece should have been aware of her status in society. As Lo and Fung write in an overview of language socialization and shame, “through shaming, caregivers bring to bear the weight of other individuals’ disapproving regard, with the hope of stimulating a heightened awareness of the individual’s connectedness to others in the social fabric and the capacity for self-reflection and self-examination” (2011:169). Shaming is a technique to build interpersonal awareness and internalized reflection on how to behave.

Throughout childhood, children develop reason (‘aql) which will allow them to make good choices and regulate their own behavior. Caregivers use discipline and punishment to model
‘aql regardless of how successful the strategy was at stopping or preventing the misbehavior in the future. While many ethnographies of Muslim cultures make the point that the lack of ‘aql impacts parent-child relationships (Abu-Lughod 1986; Ahmed 2010; Das 1989; Fernea 1995; Khan 2006; Messick 1993; Nutter-El-Ouardani 2014), in-depth investigations of caregiver-child interactions are lacking. This chapter sheds light in this area. This leads us to the final figure of a theory on child behavior:

![Figure 3.2: Theory of ‘aql (reason) and the impact on shameful and honorable behaviors.](image)

In this chapter I ask 3 questions:

1. What does discipline look like and how is it influenced by the concepts of ‘aql?
2. How are the labels of shame (haram and ‘aib) used?
3. How are caregivers socializing children into culturally based values in their exercise of ‘aql (reason)?

In the name of raising “good” children, caregivers in this community employ numerous tactics from shaming, bribing, and pleading, to asserting authority, and fear of God. Using observations at home, school, and in intergenerational gatherings, I elaborate on the theory illustrated in figure 3.2 about discipline for children around the ages of four to six. I argue that the strategies used by caregivers focus less on the children's bad acts or the consequences of the bad acts, and instead model the use of ‘aql and occasionally shame with the goal of improved behavior in the future. In order to develop reason (‘aql), the discipline strategies of caregivers socialize the child into community values that place the needs of others above the individual desires of the child.

In the next section, I introduce the methods that I used to collect the data used in the chapter. After that, in section 3.3, I present shame in its theoretical and ethnographic contexts. By looking at shame and the Islamic concept of ‘aql (reason), I begin to answer the first two questions. In sections 3.4 I also introduce Goffman’s participation frameworks to help analyze the disciplinary interactions. In sections 3.5, 3.6, 3.7 and 3.8, I look at how disciplinary interactions socialize children into cultural values while also modeling culturally appropriate ‘aql (reason) about how to behave.

3.2 Methods and Introduction to Data

This chapter focuses on data from three of the most important spaces for socialization of children ages four to six. Those sites are school, home, and with extended family (particularly grandparents but also aunts, uncles, and cousins). For each site, I selected a number of field observations to examine in detail (numerated below). The particular sessions examined were selected because the sample covered a variety of settings, types of activities and all included disciplinary issues between children and caregivers.
For the school, I drew from my time assisting at Al-Dawran. My data set included nine classroom lessons across the English program including lessons teaching alphabets, reviewing mathematical concepts of addition and shapes, reading stories, quizzing students on material, and getting ready for a field trip. In order to collect data including a variety of teaching styles, I examined four teachers across pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade at least a few months into the school year. The teachers were all English-medium teachers however frequently used Arabic in the classroom. Ms. Layla (who we saw in Chapter 2) was the most experienced teacher and was the head of the early elementary English program. She taught English in grades 1 and kindergarten. Ms. Nadia had been teaching English for three years and also taught in the kindergarten. The remaining two teachers were new teachers at the school in the 2014-2015 academic year. Ms. Naseema was the English-medium science, math, and drama teacher for kindergarten. Though in her first year of teaching, Ms. Naseema had worked as Ms. Layla’s assistant the year before. Ms. Tasneem was the English teacher for pre-kindergarten. While new to the school, she came with prior experience teaching pre-kindergarten at other schools.

The second category of data came from visiting families in their homes. All of the visits were after school, in the early evenings, or on holidays. During these times, most fathers were either still at work or had gone out. Some fathers went out because of my visit, either uncomfortable with a guest or worried I would be uncomfortable with them at home. These men also left when their wives had other female friends over. Generally home visits entailed spending a few hours with the mother and her children, talking, playing, cooking, eating, and watching TV. For this data set, I included nine visits across six families. At least one of the children in the family was in the pre-kindergarten to first grade age range during the 2014-15 school year, most attending Al-Dawran.

The children of the six families include Farah, Faheem, Ghazal and Yusra (sisters both in the age range), Azam, Miraj, and Yasira. The final two families (Miraj’s and Yasira’s) I got to
know only during the 2014-15 school year. I visited each family approximately once a month during much of my fieldwork and got to know the mother and children in their homes and outside of the school setting. Farah was the child I spent the most time with and also the youngest child in the data set, turning four towards the end of my fieldwork. Farah was an only child, although her mother was expecting a second child soon after I left the field (March 2015). Farah’s mother, a stay-at-home mom, was the most outwardly religiously conservative\(^{21}\), wearing a *hijab* and *niqab* (head scarf and face veil) in public. Farah tagged along to her mom’s weekly religious study, and daily visited her grandparents on her dad’s side (who lived upstairs) and a few times a week her mom’s side (just a few minutes drive away). As I lived with Farah’s paternal grandparents, I saw her almost every day. Farah’s dad was unemployed for some of my fieldwork until he got a job in Doha, Qatar. During my fieldwork, Farah and her mom moved to Doha for a few months, but visas were difficult and they decided not to stay.

Faheem was the youngest of three children. He attended first grade in the 2014-2015 academic year. He had a sister six years older and a brother nine years older than himself. Faheem spent his first few years of life in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, but had returned to Jordan by the time he reached school age. Faheem did not attend Al-Dawran but his mother, Ms. Layla, worked there. Faheem spent kindergarten at a different private school in Amman (with his siblings). Ms. Layla told me that she picked the school because it had activities for her kids, like a swimming pool, but was less expensive than Al-Dawran, even after the discount applied for the children of

\(^{21}\) While it is difficult to judge level of religiosity, amount of covering is often an index used by Muslims. All the mothers in this study wore a *hijab* (head scarf) in public. Farah’s mom was the only one who also wore a *niqab* (face veil). The *niqab* entailed an additional light material that sat just below her eyes and hung down to cover the rest of her face. Between the *hijab* and *niqab* only the eyes are visible. When in the presence of only women (or her immediately family), she could lower the material to her chin or if at home, would be uncovered. This was especially helpful during meals. In the presence of men (even of her extended family), she could quickly return the material to cover the majority of her face. While many Muslims debate the Islamic requirements for covering, the *niqab* is generally considered optional and not obligatory. Thus choosing to wear the *niqab* is read as a religious stance. As most of my visits took place inside family homes, most of the mothers did not cover around me.
However, a year later, with Faheem’s father temporarily unemployed from his job as the manager at a local grocery store, Faheem and his sister transferred to their local government school. Ms. Layla kept her eldest son in private school because she explained that it was easier for the little ones to catch up later, but crucial for the eldest to be well educated now.

Ghazal and Yusra were sisters about a year apart. Ghazal was in kindergarten and Yusra in pre-K in 2014-15, both attending Al-Dawran. They also had a little brother. Because the family did not have grandparents close by, the youngest spent the day at the day-care center at the mother’s workplace. The mother was an English teacher at a public high school in the neighborhood, but she was not confident in her English skills. However, her experience with English allowed her to provide her daughters a strong foundation in English and strong motivation for them to be more successful than she was. In working with Ghazal’s class, it was clear that she was one of the stronger students in English. Their father was a medical doctor and worked at a hospital in Amman.

Azam, who we were introduced to in Chapter 2, was in kindergarten at Al-Dawran in 2014-15. His older brother, Haadi was in the second grade at the same school. The family had been sending their children to the school since Haadi began pre-K. I worked with Haadi’s teacher about once a week and Haadi did well in school. He was described by his teachers as well-behaved. Azam on the other hand was frequently scolded during school. Haadi and Azam also had a baby brother. The family lived in the same building as the paternal grandparents and an uncle with his family. The extended family played an important role in providing childcare, especially for the baby, since both parents worked. Azam’s mom was employed as a nurse at the neighborhood clinic. She took the position because although she loved her job at the hospital, the

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22 Of the elementary teachers at the school with kids, based on my counts, most mothers brought their kids to Al-Dawran for their education. In spite of the higher cost, this choice was more convenient and safer than finding another school. Teachers came and went (either on the bus or in their own car) with their children. However, Ms. Layla was certainly not the only teacher who could not afford to send her own children to the school.
clinic allowed her more regular hours and more time at home. In spite of that, she still worked 5 and a half days a week, with only Fridays off.

Miraj, like Farah, was an only child during my fieldwork. However, unlike Farah, it is likely that he will remain an only child. His mother in interviews openly talked about her inability to conceive again and how it was sad, but God’s will. This mother was facing a cultural imperative to have children (Maffi 2013), though the pressure on her was decreased by the fact that she did have one child and it was a boy. Miraj was in the kindergarten at Al-Dawran and transferred into the school for the 2014-15 school year. As I will discuss later in the chapter, Miraj was struggling academically. Despite his academic difficulties, Miraj was relatively well-behaved in class. While he was often distracted, he generally did not disrupt others. Miraj’s mother stayed at home but she had previously worked as a school nurse and dietitian and his father owned his own business which provided well for the family.

Finally, Yasira was also new to the school as a kindergartener in 2014-15. Her parents decided to try Al-Dawran after hearing about it from a neighbor. Her brother Bilal was in the second grade at a different school, so the mother was considering whether to switch Bilal over to Al-Dawran the next academic year. Yasira’s mom had married straight out of high school. Living in the apartment below her in-laws, however, Yasira’s mom had been able to receive their help in taking care of her children in order for her to attend and graduate from college. When I started visiting, Yasira’s mom was currently at home with her children.

As some of the families had grandparents, aunts, and uncles living near them (down the block or a short drive away), I also got to know some extended family when they would be visiting at the same time or when the family went over to visit, taking me along. For many of the children, their extended family played an important role in socialization into community culture, values and even child rearing. Many children spent their early years or afternoons after school
with their grandparents. In my data set for this chapter, I included four visits with extended family.

Interviews with mothers and teachers helped set the foundation for the chapter. It was from these interviews that I learned culturally specific understandings of *adab* and what it means to be *mushaghib*. I also used interviews and conversations with the mothers and teachers to build a theory of child development and the role of the Islamic concept of *'aql*.

In my sample, there were a variety of instances of disciplining children. Across the observations included were 70 instances of a child (or children) being disciplined by a parent, relative, or teacher. Of those, just over 25% (19 out of 70) included an explicit referent to a label of shame (*'aib, haram*, etc). The 51 instances without explicit labels still drew on ideas of shame and inappropriateness, but without the labels (such as the example “*sit like people [do]*”). In the majority (70%, 35 cases), kids were given a reason as to why they should cease their misbehaving—including something will break, that the salad was not theirs so they cannot have it all, or someone would be upset by their actions.

The labeling of behaviors as inappropriate also occurred with reasons at about the same percentage (63%). *Haram* was used 4 times for things like not putting in effort at school, kicking fruit, lying, and wasting food. *Haram* was used in the most character damaging situations, like children growing into liars or students who do not care about school. Religious expectations also fell into explicit references to *haram* such as wasting food or mistreating God’s creations. *'Aib* was used 4 times in instances such as referring to one’s grandmother by a nickname, or taking someone’s things. While still “poor” character, unlike *haram* these are all more etiquette behaviors that most often negatively affect other people. The bulk of the labels (11) were the term *ma basir* a colloquial term meaning “not allowed,” which overlaps with the kinds of etiquette seen with *'aib*. In fact, taking someone’s stuff was referred to in one example with back-to-back *ma basir* and *'aib*. It also included playing with matches, going outside without telling one’s
mother, and chewing with your mouth opened. Having given an overview of the data set for this discussion, in the next section I go into the literature on shame before focusing on shame within the Jordanian context.

3.3 The Cultural Role of Shame, Guilt, and Fear

In examining the literature on shame, it is also necessary to consider work that deals with guilt and fear, which are often interrelated. I address briefly the history of psychological and anthropological work on these concepts. While in common usage, guilt and shame are often treated as related and even interchangeable terms (Gilbert, Pehl, & Allan 1994), they are generally distinguished in psychological literature. At the same time, the literature on guilt and shame is also largely based on studies of Western peoples and cultures. Lo and Fung define shame as “a response to the external judgment of others, as opposed to guilt, where the individual’s internalized sense of wrongdoing is more paramount” (2011:170). Barrett’s review on the distinction states that “most theories that distinguish guilt from shame agree that shame generally focuses on the whole being, a sense that the entire self is bad; guilt, on the other hand, focuses on particular misdeeds (1995:27). Lewis presents a distinction where shame revolves around a power-dynamic between self and others, rooted in another’s negative view of oneself; the self here is helpless or “unable” to react and instead leads to particular responses such as blushing and withdrawal (1986, 1987, 1971). Guilt, on the other hand, is linked to self-judgments of actions; here the self is enabled and can take action for repair (Lewis 1986, 1987, 1971).

From the work on distinguishing shame from guilt, previous scholarship had attempted to carve up cultures of the world into those structured around shame versus those focused on guilt. Benedict writes:

True shame cultures rely on external sanctions for good behavior, not, as true guilt cultures do, on an internalized conviction of sin. Shame is a reaction to other people’s criticism. A man is shamed either by being openly ridiculed and
rejected or by fantasying to himself that he has been made ridiculous. In either case it is a potent sanction. But it requires an audience or at least a man’s fantasy of an audience. Guilt does not. In a nation where honor means living up to one’s own picture of oneself, a man may suffer from guilt though no man knows of his misdeed and a man’s feeling of guilt may actually be relieved by confessing his sin. (1946:223)

Drawing a line between shame and guilt led to an attempt to separate cultures that focus more predominantly on shame versus those cultures that are regulated more strongly by guilt. Given the Western bias of some of these researchers, this led to a hierarchical distinction, where guilt was seen as “superior” and evidence of higher moral development (Creighton 1990).

Subsequent work, however, has demonstrated that the theoretical distinction between shame and guilt was fraught. First, the distinction between shame and guilt is not so clear. As Creighton points out, if shame requires an audience, then the idea of an omniscient God (as we will see in this community) can always serve as an audience; in this case, guilty feelings about transgressing against God can be read as part of the larger category of shame (Creighton 1990:285). Second, examinations of diverse cultures suggest that most cultures were not limited to guilt or shame, but contained forms of both (Piers & Singer cited in Creighton 1990). Third, the hierarchical distinction between shame and guilt cultures is rooted in a Western stance of superiority. In their review of the socialization of shame, Lo and Fung use anthropological studies from diverse cultures to challenge the hierarchy, often perpetuated, that guilt is viewed as a “morally and culturally superior emotion,” and argue instead that the perception of guilt and shame are based on cultural norms, cultural understandings of the self, and historical context (Lo & Fung 2011).

In looking at my own use of the term shame in this chapter, a strict distinction is problematic. Many of the above definitions of shame and guilt come from speculations about how the self reacts (either withdrawing, or empowered for reaction). For the children in this project, while some do react to invocations of shame by their caregivers, it is not easy to judge their
reaction or feelings from being disciplined. As Al Jallad points out, if a person shames someone using ‘aib “it means that he/she found fault with something or criticized someone. This does not necessarily cause the one being criticized to feel ‘shame,’ ‘disgrace’ or ‘dishonor”’ (2010:41).

My focus is not on the reactions of the children, but on what and how parents flag particular behaviors as “shameful” or otherwise culturally inappropriate. Additionally, rather than look at whether guilt or shame are good or bad, or which is “morally superior” in this cultural context, I am more concerned with how shame or guilt are being used by caregivers as part of the socialization process. As I demonstrate, various Jordanian caregivers wanted children to follow cultural guidelines about how to behave. In this context, honor and shame are important constructs that structure society meaning that how other people view one’s actions is a driving principle for determining how to behave and judging one’s behavior after the fact.

Fear is also an important tool for socializing children into correct behavior, such as seen in Levy’s ethnographic studies of the Tahitians. Levy writes, “The overt goal of management of children is to produce docility and ‘fear.’ By fear is meant a fear of trouble, a fear of something going wrong. People hope that children will obey because they are ‘afraid’ not to” (1973:447). Closely tied to shame and guilt, parents may try to induce fear to prevent children from repeating inappropriate behavior. Threats such as not going to heaven, or vague warnings that something bad will happen if you mess up the piece of paper, may invoke fear and not just shame over misbehavior.

Shame, guilt, and fear are important regulators of behaviors and socialize children into culturally-specific, appropriate behavior. They are classified as “social” emotions because “another person (or perceived other) is centrally involved in each of these emotions” (Barrett 1995:39). Looking at what is invoked as shameful and how caregivers react to moments of shame is a glimpse into a culture. As Levy’s work on the Tahitians demonstrated, within a particular group the ideas of shame take on cultural forms and become “significant aspects of socially
Caregivers flag situations so that children begin to recognize on their own when they should be feeling shame, so that in the future, as children develop reason, they will learn to self-regulate their behavior towards more honorable actions. In the next section, I look at how cultural and Islamic concepts of maturation and responsibility weave into shame, and thus influence how parents discipline children for misbehavior.

3.3.1 Shame in the Islamicate Context

Before delving into the role of shame in a culture strongly rooted in Islam, or an Islamicate culture (Hodgson 1974), it is important to note that there is tremendous diversity not only across varieties of Islams, but also across how Muslims interpret Islam. We see this same diversity not only in how people parent and discipline their children, but in the role that Islam plays in justifying, driving, or excusing parenting and disciplinary methods. Islam by no means dictates how children should be reared and disciplined. However, my goal is to examine some Islamic concepts which caregivers themselves addressed, and look at the concepts’ role in influencing and driving behavior.

Honor and shame have been important to the study of Mediterranean cultures for many generations; honor and shame drive social order as well as the social sanctioning of community members (Peristiany 1966; Schneider 1971). For Peristiany, the small size of many societies was a central feature as individuals interacted with people they knew rather than anonymous individuals. Thus, within the community, behavior was being judged as a mark of honor or shame on you and your family because they were known entities. Outside of the group, “behaviour of the individual reflects that of his group to such an extent that, in his relations with other groups, the individual is forcibly cast into the role of his group’s protagonist” (Peristiany 1966:11). Thus

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23 Islamicate refers “not directly to the religion, Islam, itself, but to the social and cultural complex historically associated with Islam and the Muslims, both among Muslims themselves and even when found among non-Muslims” (Hodgson 1974:59). The mixing of religion and cultures makes it difficult to distinguish the two.
community members were striving to always act in ways that bring honor to the individual,
family, and community.

Honor in these societies is tied to the idea of “goodness,” of being on the path of
goodness and morality. Honor “is regarded as a matter of compliance with the traditional patterns
of behaviour. In this general sense of the concept, honour is almost tantamount to ‘goodness’ or
‘virtue’...honour is here attained, or rather maintained, by simple and sincere conformity to the
prevailing social norms” (Abou-Zeid 1966:258). By aligning with community expectations,
children demonstrate and bring honor to themselves and their group while reflecting their own
goodness.

Abu-Lughod in her work with the Bedouins of Egypt discusses the relationship between
honor and not just goodness, but also with “moral worthiness” (1993). These Bedouins share
many cultural similarities with the Bedouin ancestors of much of the current Jordanian
population. Abu-Lughod titles one of her chapters “Honor and Shame” to discuss the powerful
forces that motivate Bedouin girls to pursue their education from within a framework of honor.
Honorable education is done by studying and continuing to uphold the traditions and values of the
community (Abu-Lughod 1993). Reflecting on Bedouin morality, one of her informants says of
educated Bedouin girls, “she doesn’t forget her origins or her customs and traditions...she raises
her child with the customs and traditions of the Bedouin, except that she is slightly more
informed” (Abu-Lughod 1993:227). Honoring community by following expectations and
avoiding shame are signs of morality.

The goal of honoring one’s group and avoiding shame were values of the pre-Islamic
tribal populations of Arabia and continue into many Islamic cultures: “A pre-Islamic social code
of dignity was shared by the peoples of Arabia and the surrounding region, binding personal
honour to that of the family and the tribe or community. This was adab, which prized the
cultivation of civility and refinement” (Sajoo 2010:6). Sajoo connects not only Islam with honor,
but *adab* (well-mannered) as a sign of honor. As Islam began to spread and grow in the 8th and 9th Centuries, the tribe even more so than religion was a force for conquest and privilege (Ernst 2004:119). For example, while conversion to Islam and becoming a member of the growing empire came with tax benefits, Non-Arab Muslims received a smaller portion of the spoils of war than the Arab members of the religious community (Ernst 2004:120). This was due to the importance of tribe and family connections. The early Islamic preference for tribal affiliation over religious affiliation has become less ethnically hierarchical over time and with the rise of the concept of a Muslim *ummah* (community/brotherhood). However, in most parts of the Islamicate world, the importance of family and group continued alongside the religious community.

### 3.3.2 The Vocabulary of Shame

Given the age group I worked with, this study focuses on the ordinary, everyday process of disciplining children, in line with the anthropology of ordinary ethics. Sidnell writes, “there is a moral and ethical dimension to all interaction, because interaction is itself a moral and ethical domain” (2010:124). Thus we turn our attention to normal, childhood infractions include hitting, not sharing, breaking things, disrespecting an adult, etc. Focusing on the ordinary process of disciplining helps us to see how children are socialized in a crucial life stage in order to eventually become a productive adult. The project does not focus on the extraordinary challenges of raising children. As Das writes “threats to the everyday will also be seen in relation to this picture of the ordinary” (2015:71). The moments and methods of discipline are intricately embedded within a culture because they are expected parts of raising a child and have culturally patterned responses. By examining these culturally patterned responses, we gain insight into cultural values and beliefs.

In the ethnographic instances at hand, not all shaming discipline strategies explicitly used a label with a meaning for shame. When one was used, there were three common terms used for
shaming this age group. The first is *haram*. It comes from the Arabic root H-r-m (ح-ر-م), the root meaning, “to deprive of, to deny, to exclude, to become forbidden to, prohibited to” (Baalbaki 2006:464-465). Words that come from this root include *haram* (inviolable, taboo), *ibn al-haram* (the unlawful son), and *harami* (thief) (Wehr 1994:201). But there is an additional meaning, which seems quite the opposite and that is “to declare sacred, holy”; this leads to words such as *al beit al haram* (the Ka’ba), *haram al jam’ah* (campus), *ihram* (state of ritual purity and the garment worn for hajj) (Wehr 1994:201). Both the meaning of forbidden and sacred are related to the idea of drawing boundaries - between that which is “allowed” and that which is not, or between behaviors which are sacred and those that violate taboos. In the case of discipline, *haram* will be used here to “refer to any forbidden pattern of behavior, speech, dress, conduct, and manner under Islamic law” (Al Jallad 2008:79), at least as interpreted by a caregiver. However, it is important to keep in mind that the line of what counts as “Islamic law,” and hence shameful because of religious guidelines, is not always clear. As we will see, *haram* is used in situations where either a child has violated some religious prohibitions or enacts an act that may prove to be a serious sign of poor character if it continues into adulthood (such as lying). While lying is a normal part of childhood, it can be problematic and serious as the child grows up. While using *haram* invokes shame for bad behavior, it also resonates with ideas of guilt where the child is meant to internalize the wrongdoing.

The second term used widely for this age group is ‘*aib*. It comes from the root ‘-i-b (ب-ي-ع), which means “to find fault with, to censure” (Baalbaki 2006:740) and “to dishonor,” “to be defective, faulty” (Wehr 1994: 773). The root includes derivations such as ‘*aib* (fault, defect, shame), *ma’ib* (defective, shameful), and *mu’aib* (critic). ‘*Aib* is used to note “shame” “disgrace” or “dishonor” (Al Jallad 2010:41). In his study of honor and shame amongst the Bedouins of Egypt, Abou-Zaid describes ‘*aib* as behavior “not usually requiring severe intervention on the part of society as a whole and any response is usually directed against the
wrongdoer himself. Such response takes a mild form” (1966:246-247). In other words, ‘aib is appropriate for shaming the actions of children, directed at the child and their wrongdoing rather than requiring societal intervention for severe behavior. Given the close mapping on to shame, ‘aib is used most with behaviors that affect others and will reflect poorly on the child, such as when parents tell a child who is seen as using too much of my origami paper, “‘aib, zaalanminik baadain.’” (shame, [Haleema] will be upset with you after).

The final term used to mark shame was the colloquial phrase ma basir (ما بسير). It comes from the root s-a-r (س ا ر) meaning “to move (on); set out” but also “path” or “way of acting” (Wehr 1994:521-522). Ma basir is a way of marking etiquette that is not allowed or things not done in the right way. It overlaps in usage with ‘aib. In the example above with the origami paper, it was immediately proceeded with ma basir.

3.3.3 The Importance of Reason (‘aql)

In order to avoid shameful behaviors, children must reason out their behaviors and the social consequences prior to the action. This ability to apply reason is one’s ‘aql. ‘Aql is described as “a readiness to consider the consequences of one’s actions and to behave as a responsible person, to exhibit ‘social sense’” (Pels and De Haan 2007:78). The Arabic root is ‘-q-l (ع ق ل) meaning “to confine,” “to pay blood money” or, more relevant to this case, “to be endowed with reason,” “to realize, comprehend, understand” (Wehr 1994:737). In the Qur’an it says, “It is He who has created you (khalaqkum) from dust, then from a sperm-drop, then from a leech-like clot, then does He get you out (into the light) as a child; then lets you (grow and) reach your age of full strength; then lets you become old—though of you there are some who die before-and lets you reach a term appointed; in order that you may learn wisdom (‘aql)” (Qur’an 40:67). The Qur’an links ‘aql (reason) to a key purpose of life, the goal of creation. However ‘aql is not
something that is present in a child. ‘Aql is something that children develop, and socialization plays an important role in learning to demonstrate ‘aql.

The derivational connection between khalaq (creation) and akhlaq (ethics) suggests the link between the development of ‘aql and ethics. As Ernst writes, “ethical systems combine both reasoning and authority to come to their conclusions about correct action. Islamic religious ethics rarely took on an entirely authoritarian aspect, since legal theorists consistently sought to find intentions and purposes in sacred text” (2004:110). According to Ernst, Islamic law relies heavily on ‘aql, reason, (often through analogies applied to new situations not relevant at the time of Prophet Muhammad) rather than “authoritarian” principles. Legal scholars (and all Muslims in their everyday lives) have to reason out their choices about right and wrong. This process of thinking and reasoning is often overlooked in the stereotypes of Muslims as rigid and inflexible in religious ideas.

Just as ‘aql is seen as a goal in life, communities of Muslims do not expect it in their children. In her fieldwork with Moroccans, Nutter-El-Ouardani writes that “‘Young children have no ‘aql’ was a constant refrain that I heard in Morocco, in response to both incidents of youthful misbehavior and my questions about the nature of children. In Morocco, as in most places in the world, adults believe that young children are not entirely responsible for their behaviors because they have not yet developed the ability to understand social norms” (2014:28). The belief of the lack of ‘aql in children is rooted in Islamic concepts but takes practical form within Muslim communities (Khan 2006). Reason (‘aql) is essential for morality and ethics of everyday adult life. And as kids develop aql, children are guided to act in line with the manners and expectations of the community through techniques such as shaming.

While I certainly did not hear “children have no ‘aql” as a refrain in my fieldsite, it was a concept that appeared when caregivers talked about child rearing and child development. During an interview in which I asked one mother about how she raised good kids, she explained that she
did not indulge in her children’s demands (for sweets, toys, etc). I asked her how her in-laws treated the children and this led her to contrast her mother-in-law’s understanding of ‘aql with her own. The mother I interviewed said about her in-laws, “they know the children’s ‘aql is still developing so [they say] why aren’t you giving [the children] all they want?” Both mother and mother-in-law parented knowing that children lack full ‘aql. But while the lack of ‘aql led the mother to socialize children through the practice of delayed gratification, for the mother-in-law it meant that she could not expect good behavior and she considered it wrong to punish a child for natural desires.

Ms. Layla, the teacher I worked most closely with, revealed her understanding of ‘aql through her belief the children must have some baseline of readiness in order to be successful in school and learning. While she spoke to me in English without the Arabic term ‘aql, her comments draw on a cognitive readiness which we see in ‘aql. As we were folding laundry at her house, she told me about her worries over her children’s education, especially her youngest son, just beginning the first grade. He had moved to a new school and at this point in the year, he was struggling to adjust to the new environment and the new teacher. She said:

Some kids are not ready to learn. You can try and try to teach them, but they won’t learn anything. Whatever you do, they won’t learn. Like my son. But I’m not worried. One day he will be ready and he will learn everything so fast. I will teach him myself after school and he will be reading in just a short time. But until these children are ready, nothing will work.

According to her logic, some students would be unable to learn, no matter how innovative or superior her methods. While her thoughts do read as a justification to herself about her son struggling at school, they also align with the philosophy that children need time to develop the reason necessary for learning. The comments reassure her that her son is not a lost cause, while also taking for granted that he will be able to catch up. But as her work as a teacher indicates, that belief that a student is not ready to learn does not mean you do not teach. In fact, you continually
teach and reinforce not only information taught at school, but also the cultivation of good behavior.

Ms. Layla used this theory to explain to parents not to worry about their children. After observing a conversation between Ms. Layla and one of the mothers of a kindergarten student, I asked Ms. Layla to reflect on the student’s progress. Like Ms. Layla’s son, this boy also struggled academically:

I think like you know, kids like Miraj will surprise you, in the future. I think he’s brilliant. He’s got* he has his own way of thinking and this is good...okay academically (pause) it’s not [good] because he’s weak. What I think, he’s not ready yet...his thinking, his mind, he...thinks like smaller kids. But I think when he’s ready. He’s so smart. I can see that in his eyes.

Ms. Layla found Miraj, while well-behaved, to be low on his ability to think and use his mind (his reason, his ‘aql). But while his academic performance was not ideal, Ms. Layla did not see the deficit as predictive or determinative of his later success (or lack of it). She even interpreted his future success as positive even academically (“he’s brilliant” “has his own way of thinking”). In parallel, misbehavior in childhood is not predictive or deterministic of later lack of community integration.

Messick expresses similar ideas about the disconnect between challenges in childhood and success in adulthood (1993). In learning the Qur’an, he writes, children need maturity, making them ready for learning the Qur’an, religious ritual, and the moral sense necessary to take on the tasks (Messick 1993:80). One saying Messick quotes is, “when a boy is full of jinn (spirits) as a youth he will have great intelligence as an adult” (1993:76). Whether or not the difficult behavior is explained by spirit possession, there is not a feeling that an out-of-control child will necessarily continue their shameful behavior as adults.

According to Islamic philosophy, learning requires a maturity and responsibility that does not develop in everyone at the same time. As Messick points out, adulthood entails both physical and intellectual development. Physical development (bulugh), is tied to sexual maturity and vocal
articulateness (necessary for Qur’anic recitation and rhetoric). Intellectual development (*rushd*), is associated with practical knowledge necessary for one’s context, so not necessarily school knowledge (Messick 1993). Members of the community who, for various reasons, never reach both physical and intellectual development may be excluded from full community membership (Messick 1993). In Jordan, community members who do not fully mature physically or intellectually (due to learning disabilities) are treated as always dependent on family and unable to reach full independence (Sargent 2016).

According to Ms. Layla’s comments on her son and her student, there is a vague sense of when this development happens. There is simply one day when children are ready. This seems reminiscent of another magical day, that of the start of puberty. On this day, certain responsibilities, largely religious responsibilities, such as daily prayers and fasting during Ramadan become obligatory, meaning that their omission is punishable (most importantly by God at some future Day of Judgment). Younger children are encouraged to pray and fast, but often as good practice for when these rituals are compulsory (Ahmed 2010).

Messick broadens the responsibilities at puberty beyond religion to interactional behaviors. He describes them as “the onset of full responsibility in one’s actions…full capacity with respect to one’s social undertakings such as contracts” (1993:78). Messick touches on social responsibilities related to apprenticing in family occupations. In Jordan, it is common that often before the age of puberty, many girls are expected to care for younger sibling. It is increasingly common, as well, that children of both genders fulfill responsibilities in the house (such as cleaning, running errands, etc).

While young adults take on religious responsibilities around the age of puberty, expectations of adulthood are associated either with marriage or even further with becoming a

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24 Puberty is marked either by a general age (for boys and girls), or exclusively for girls, the start of menstruation.
parent (Maffi 2013; Takash & Al-Hassan 2014; Yessayan 2015). Yessayan writes about female dancers in Jordan who postpone marriage “to extend girlhood freedoms as much as possible to pursue what they enjoyed, including dance.” Marriage in contrast, is seen as a change, where responsibilities are required including those as a “worker, mother, wife, and house manager” (Yessayan 2015:74-75). The association of full adulthood and responsibility with the birth of a child creates a cultural sense that it is essential for Jordanian women to have children (Maffi 2013:179).

Children bring a large responsibility for ethical parenting. “In the Middle East, the child is seen as the crucial generational link in the family unit, the key to its continuation, the living person that ties the present to the past and to the future” (Fernea 1995:4). But having a child is not just about progeny and carrying on the family name25, although those are part of it. Children represent their family - bringing honor or shame. Khan elaborates Fernea further, writing that, “the burden of raising [children] as good Muslims rests heavily on parents not only in the interests of grounding Islamic society but also in ensuring [the parent’s] standing before God. As a child, I was often urged to attend to my Arabic lessons and prayers with seriousness so that my parents might meet their maker without shame or fear of retribution on the Day of Judgment” (2006: 255-256). According to an Islamic parenting manual, “It is hoped that the parents will resolve to train and educate their children according to the Islamic principles as their primary obligation. If they fail in their duty they will have to bear the entire responsibility of children’s deviation from the moral principles” (Aijaz 1989:162). While the responsibility on parents seems to undermine the concept of ‘aql, Aijaz places a heavy burden on parents to raise children well, not just for the sake of their children, but for the sake of their own eternal soul.

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25 In Islamic tradition and common in Jordan, women continue to carry their father’s name even after they are married. While her children will take the name of her husband, she continues to be associated with her own familial line, rather than adopting the one of her husband's family.
Given the heavy responsibility to parent well, Islamic sources have no shortage of parenting guidance. The Prophet Muhammad was reported in a hadith\textsuperscript{26} to have said, “Cherish your children. Treat children with a view to inculcate self-respect in them. Verily a man teaching his children manners is better for him than giving one bushel of grain in alms” (quoted in Fernea 1995:6). Here we see that childhood is presented as a time of “inculcation”—specifically of manners. Manners and good ethics (adab and akhlaq) are also signs that demonstrate morality and goodness. The Prophet suggests that teaching ethics is better than material benefits parents provide for their children.

### 3.4 Participation Framework

Caregivers demonstrate and create unique ways of disciplining children and this creativity is important to entice children to agree to the suggestions or commands of caregivers. But disciplinary interactions are not just dyadic interactions between the caregiver and child. In addition to my own presence in each situation, parents were voicing cultural discourses and often addressing multiple listeners.

Given the complexity of the interaction, I rely on Goffman’s Participation Frameworks to help navigate the various voices and audiences of disciplinary action (1981). For Goffman, a participant's footing, which includes the “participant's alignment, or set, or stance” towards and during an interaction, challenges the notion that interactions are made up simply of a speaker and hearer in dyadic conversation (1981:128). In the examples I use, the child, or the listener in the case of discipline, is often the main ratified participant being addressed. However, the child may not actually be listening to the conversation. In all interactions, I served as a bystander, but at times was also included as a ratified participant. Unratified participants might actually be listening to the conversation, including overhearers or mere bystanders.

\textsuperscript{26} A record of reported sayings of the Prophet traced through his companions
The caregivers who led the disciplinary interaction were the animator, or the source of the utterance (the “sounding box”) (Goffman 1981). However, the utterance might be made up of contributions of others. The utterance may be written by someone else, an author, or reference a principal, the person whose “position is established by the words that are spoken, someone whose beliefs have been told, someone who is committed to what the words say” (Goffman 1981:144). Utterances may also call in a figure or the “character” in the scene who “belongs to the world that is spoken about, not the world in which the speaking occurs” (147). This lamination of speaker roles allows for “some distance between the figure and its avowal” (148).

In the rest of the chapter, I present a variety of examples of disciplinary interactions. Not all are labeled explicitly with the degrees of shame presented earlier. However, when shame labels are used, I will discuss their differing uses. In all disciplinary exchanges, children are perceived to be violating values of the community. In each case, the reaction of the caregiver models a process of ‘aql (reason)—an understanding or logic for why a behavior is not acceptable. I have synthesized four cultural values which are important to ‘aql. They are respect for authority, empathy for others, fear of judgment, and taqwa or God-consciousness. Through discipline, caregivers socialize children to learn these community values and use them to guide the development of the child’s ‘aql and apply it through the child’s behavior at later ages.

3.5 Respect for Authority

In the rest of this chapter, I elaborate on three things: (1) how discipline socializes children into key cultural values, (2) how the concept of ‘aql (reason) influences those strategies, and (3) how labels of shame, when used, draw on the discourse of shame and guilt. The first value is respect for authority. Parents use disciplinary strategies that socialize children into an understanding of a hierarchy of power.
In my interviews with mothers, most told me that the way to teach *adab* and *akhlaq* (manner and ethics) was by watching how parents behave. As one mother said, her children learned respect “*min aihitrami la ummi*” (“from my respect for my mom”). While not all parents are constantly behaving as good role models for their children, they recognize at least in theory that their children copy their actions. Discipline serves similarly as a model for how to exercise reason before acting in a way that might be bad. Parents use behavioral interventions to teach community values, such as the value of respect demonstrated in this section.

While caregivers take seriously their role to emphasize good character and culturally valued actions, I cannot separate out what parents do on a normal, everyday basis and what was being done as a performance for me. I know that many parents might have altered their disciplinary styles, especially punishments, due to my presence. While corporal punishment has become less common in Jordan, I know it was still used in many households. I observed minor physical punishments used both in homes and in schools and many mothers admitted hitting their children, at least in the past. In their interview depictions of their roles as disciplinarians, mothers felt it was not an effective strategy and tried not to resort to hitting. Further, lots of the challenges to obedience came in fact from my presence and the various games, toys, and surprises that were always in my bag. However, from notes from parents sent to the school and from their reflections during interviews, parents were trying to encourage “good” behavior in their kids, but often struggling to get children to act on those good impulses.

### 3.5.1 Example 1: No Sweets for you

Here, I look more closely at punishments used at home. Most parents did not punish their children while I was visiting. Under the theory that children are still developing ‘*aql*, punishment on young children targets a child without the complete ability to reason why the misbehavior was wrong. At least partly for this reason, punishments were less common. Instead parents used
discipline and their explanations to model good reason or, at the very least, to use shame to
discourage the same behavior in the future.

Example 1 came from a day that Farah, 4 years-old, had invited me over to play while her
mother and grandmother chatted. During my visit, the grandmother and I alternated between
being bystanders and ratified participants (Goffman 1981) as we watched Farah’s mom discipline
Farah’s attempts to get some sweets, but then later became the direct audience for the mom’s
explanation. As the interaction unfolded we learned that Farah was in the middle of a no-sweets
punishment from her father. Farah’s dad was, at the time, working in Qatar and communicated
(and here, disciplined) mostly over Skype. The excerpt jumped back and forth in time, which
either confused Farah or she knowingly exploited to try and obtain her mom’s permission for
some sweets.

The central challenge in the timeline was over the word *bookra* (tomorrow). The night
before my observation (day 1 of punishment) Farah’s dad had punished her saying she could not
have sweets all the next day (*bookra*), which would be day 2. In the present tense of this
observation (day 2 of punishment), Farah was not allowed sweets. The mom referenced the
conversation from day 1 in which her father said she could not have sweets *bookra*, which was
actually referring to that actual day (day 2), when she could not have sweets. Day 3 (not
referenced in the excerpt) then becomes when she can have sweets again. Farah kept referring to
the fact that she can eat “*bil subah*” (in the morning). However, she was reading the morning
when she can eat sweets as day 2 (the day of the observation) instead of her mom’s interpretation
of the punishment, as until day 3 (the day after the observation). The excerpt began when Farah
started to open some candy and her mother stopped her:
Transcript 3.1: Example 1: “No Sweets for you.”

1. Mom  
   *la. la-la-la. sakri. sakri.*  
   No. No-no-no. Close it. Close it.

2. Farah  
   *lei? ‘Fi Sabah’ hakeli.*  
   Why? ‘In the morning’ he said to me.

3. Mom  
   *la hakelik ‘bookra mamnu’a*  
   No he said to you ‘tomorrow it’s forbidden’

4. Farah  
   *hakeli ‘bil sabah akul’*  
   He said to me ‘in the morning I could eat’

5. Mom  
   (to grandmother and Haleema)  
   *bembarheh ana bahkei ma Mirza*  
   yesterday I was talking to Mirza (her husband)

6. Farah  
   *fataht packet Mentos wa haut hamsa habel bil thomha*  
   Farah opened a packet of Mentos and put 5 pieces in her mouth

7. Mirza  
   *shaifha bil camera*  
   Mirza saw her in the camera

   (laughter)

8. Farah  
   *gal ‘shu amalti’*  
   He said ‘what did you do’

9. ...  

10. Farah  
    *baba hakeli ‘ukli bil sabah’?*  
    Dad said ‘eat in the morning’?

11. Mom  
    *la*  
    No

12. Farah  
    *bas wahedeh*  
    Just one

13. Mom  
    *lama mama tehkhei la, Farah tisma al kelam*  
    when mom says no, Farah listens

14. Farah  
    *shukran la enti tismeah al kelam*  
    thank you for listening

15. Farah  
    *mama bas wahedeh*  
    Mom just one

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27 Farah’s mom mostly ignored Farah while she whined. Farah repeated some version of “just one” 7 times in a row. The fifth one got a brief “no” but otherwise the mom kept talking to the grandmother and ignored Farah’s demands.
As Mirza was not physically present, his wife had to mediate the punishment. While she was the animator of the punishment, her husband was the author (Goffman 1981). Both Farah and her mother tried to make the father into a character in the scene on their side, or the figure (Goffman, 1981). Farah did so in lines 2, 4, and 9, voicing her father saying she can eat sweets on day 2 morning. The mom voices her husband in line 4, justifying that sweets were forbidden. The conflict was finally resolved when Farah claimed that she wanted sweets because she was hungry. Her mom told her to go get food from the kitchen (leftovers from lunch). At that point Farah revealed that she was not actually hungry and stops asking for sweets. In the end, the mother’s disciplinary strategy was successful as Farah did not get sweets and her punishment ended the next morning.

Throughout the excerpt, Farah tried to reverse the punishment she was given. She repeatedly attempted to gain sweets, re-voicing her father as her source of authority for why she could have sweets. Another strategy that Farah uses is her insistence that she only wanted a little by saying “just one.” This makes it seem like it would not be a big deal to cheat a little on the punishment. But the mother did not give in. Partly through the excerpt we see that Farah recognized her mom’s authority and not just her dad’s who determined the punishment. We see that Farah altering her tactic to attempt to get her sweets through the mother. In line 11 (“In the morning, in the morning. Just one mom”), Farah pivoted from countering her father’s actions and punishment to working on her mom. Her mom had the authority to reverse the punishment, so Farah moved away from forcing a different interpretation of her father’s words. Unfortunately for Farah, her mom held tight to that power.

Even though the mother was enacting the punishment of the father, the mom was not merely a conduit of punishment. The mom only voiced the father at the beginning (line 4) but for the rest of the excerpt, she exerted her authority to enforce punishment throughout all Farah’s whining. Farah also recognized her mom’s authority because she whined to her mom to have
“just one” instead of playing on the absence of her father. In lines 13 and 14 it was the role of mother that motived discipline. Mothers are to be listened to and respected. Even though Farah was not respectful in this moment, the mother should be listened to because she is the mother (“when mom says no, Farah listens”).

Farah’s mom modeled ‘aql by speaking as if Farah was actually cooperating with her mother and displaying good behavior. It was a kind of twist on the strategy of praising good behavior to encourage repeat performances. Here, children were being praised for good behavior while doing exactly the opposite. In line 13, the mother acted as if Farah was behaving in the way the mother would like to her child to behave. In line 14, she thanked Farah for this supposed good behavior. Even though the daughter was not actually behaving, the mom praised Farah’s ideal self in a way that was kind, but firm. This models the respect that Farah should display towards her mother.

Regardless of Farah’s whining, the mother kept her conversation on the punishment instituted by the father, and not on Farah’s misbehaviors. The only time in which Farah’s mom addressed Farah’s past action was to the grandmother and myself, when explaining the reason for the punishment. The mother at no point drew attention to focus on what Farah did or how she should feel about the actions. There was no mention of shame. The only comment about the past addressed to Farah (line 3) was a restatement of the punishment from the father. This kept the focus on the mom’s current dilemma and Farah’s current conditions - not being able to eat sweets.

3.6 Building Relationships: Developing Empathy

As I discussed in Chapter 2, Jordanian children are being socialized to think about the needs of the group over individual needs. An important part of ‘aql (reason) was thinking through the impact behaviors would have on those around you: how will my behavior impact my family?
The ramifications on the family were directly linked to the culture of honor and shame found in Jordan. Abu-Lughod writes that “mastery of needs for and passions toward others” is part of the development of ‘aql, the challenge being that dependencies on self-needs greatly impact honor (1986:90). As children lack ‘aql, disciplinary strategies model attention to the effects on the people being hurt by the child’s misbehavior.

3.6.1 Example 2: Sticker Wars

In the next example, we see a parent use the strategy of thinking about others as one of many strategies with her son to try and convince him to return my pack of stickers. While visiting, I had taken stickers for Azam and his brothers. Azam decided that he would take all the stickers for himself. The excerpt below occurred almost 12 minutes after the mother’s first request to Azam to return the stickers. She asked him a few times in the course of the 12 minutes but the battle over the stickers culminated with this exchange:

Transcript 3.2: Example 2: Sticker Wars.
1   Mom          Azam! Raja’a al stickers mama, ‘Aib.  
                      Azam! Return the stickers son. Shame.
...
2   Mom          khalas Azam
                      enough Azam.
3   Azam         la tulab khalas. Kilema wahideh.
                      For the students enough. One page only.
4   Azam         hai kullu hadha ili
                      This is all mine.
...(mom ignores and returns briefly to conversation with Haleema) (4 sec)
5   Mom          mama hauta fi shanta
                      son, put it in [Haleema’s] purse
6   Mom          atiniya. lama sawi ishi mnnih atiki. Khalas.
                      Give it to me. When you do something good, I’ll give it to you. Enough.

(the mom pries the stickers out of his hand as he giggles)

28 The mother referred to her child as “mama” or “mother.” This is in line with the cultural tradition, seen in the Levant, of reverse role vocatives (Rieschild 1998). In this practice, a relation of higher authority (aunt/uncle, grandparent, parent) refers to the child by the role label for the relation of authority (so “aunt”/”uncle,” “grandma,” “mom,” etc). I translate this practice instead with the role relation of the person being addressed, here the son.
In the end, the mother was successfully able to remove the stickers from Azam and return them to me. However, this occurred only after she pried them from his hands. But she tried other methods before resorting to this method. Over the course of twelve minutes (from when I gave the stickers to Azam to when the mother took them away), the mother tried to persuade the son to return the stickers on his own. She told him that he will get stickers for good behavior (like line 6). She attempted distraction with other toys. She directed him to return the stickers (like line 1). In line 1, she even judged his behavior with the label “‘aib” “shameful.”

One of the approaches that the mother used was to model an empathetic concern for the others affected: the students at the school, who would no longer have stickers. While it did not ultimately help the mom convince him, it was an attempt to connect beyond the individual child to a collective—other affected parties who in the future will be disappointed there were no stickers. The mother did not dwell or force Azam to think about the sticker-less students. Her reference to other students simply modeled a process of reason (‘aql) beyond Azam’s own desires.

Before looking at the mother’s strategies in more detail, it is important to recognize that I was not just a bystander but a ratified participant (Goffman 1981) in the disciplinary exchange. Disrespecting a guest and their things (here me and my stickers) violated cultural values. The mother demonstrated to me, by scolding her son, that she was attempting to correct his misbehavior towards a guest’s possessions. At the same time, she modeled for the explicit ratified participant (her son), respectful behavior and important cultural values of how to treat a guest. The mother went further during this same day when she explained to me how her kids know which toys and things are theirs and play well when alone. “Basait al ‘alam khalas. kul wahad ‘arif shu illo” “the world is simple. Everyone knows what is his.” However when a guest arrives (she made it general not specific to me) the children forget “nnsee” and do not remember what is
theirs. Knowing the family and watching her kids play over the time I visited, there is little chance her kids all the sudden stop fighting when alone. Yet as a child, Azam lacked the ‘aql to always recognize his behavior was inappropriate; ultimately, the mother was responsible for her child’s actions. The mother’s logic in our conversation helped her excuse Azam’s behavior as well as her own inability to get her son to cooperate.

Azam’s mom models ‘aql through the repeated idea that Azam will get stickers for good behavior. She repeated to Azam five times that when he did something good, he would get stickers. The connection between stickers and good behavior had interesting implications for how Azam’s mother was interpreting his current behavior. She most often referred to his sticker-worthy actions as ishi mnnih “good thing” or ishi hlu “pretty thing.” Stickers were to be rewards for good behavior. The very first line from the mom in this matter is directed at me for Azam to hear, “Tomorrow, have it ready to give to Azam when he does something (‘aamil ishi).” In this case the “thing” he does is not modified with an adjective for good, but it does give purpose to Azam receiving stickers. The passage ended with line 6 above that lama (when) he does something good, he will get stickers. She used the stickers as an attempt at delayed gratification, suggesting to Azam that he had to wait for the reward. Thus it is Azam’s future self (tomorrow) who would get a sticker for the things he will do. The attachment of stickers to good behavior models a process of reasoning about behaviors—not only how taking stickers affects other students and the owner of the stickers, but that Azam should only get stickers as a reward.

The mom explicitly labeled Azam’s behavior as ‘aib or shameful. The use of ‘aib highlighted the negative affect of behavior on others. In line 1, the mother brought up ‘aib right after directly addressing the son and pointing out that the stickers were not his and needed to be returned. She also added a term of endearment, the reverse role vocative, calling him mama. It was Azam’s behavior, not Azam, that was shamed. Azam was not meant to feel guilty, only that his behavior violated interpersonal etiquette.
3.6.2 Example 3: A Cup of One’s Own

The value among Jordanians of concern for the community is taught through interactions. Concern becomes integrated into how to apply ‘aql in everyday life. For children, this line of reasoning of ‘aql is modeled through discipline strategies that draw attention to affected others. The following example comes from Farah with her grandparents. Farah’s grandparents kept four plastic cups for their grandchildren to drink from when visiting. Farah, who lived downstairs, was the most frequent guest, visiting almost every day. Farah’s cup was the pink one and she knew exactly where to find it when she was thirsty. On this particular visit, while playing with the cups, Farah decided she wanted to take all four cups home with her.
Transcript 3.3: Example 3: A Cup of One’s Own.

1 Farah 
   *bidi akhoth hathola ili*
   I want to take these for me

2 Grandfather 
   *leish*
   Why

3 Farah 
   *heka*
   Just because

4 Grandmother 
   *lil uwlad hathol ha*]
   These are for the children*

5 Grandfather 
   *\(\text{hatha lil uwlad ili biji endana. enti bas iliki wahada}\)*
   These are for the kids that come to visit. You have your one

6 Farah 
   *\(\text{la}\)*
   No

7 Grandfather 
   *ilik wahada]*
   There is one for you

8 Grandmother 
   *ilik wahada wa khaleha hon (.5sec) ashan tishrab fiha lama tiji hon*
   you have one and leave it here (.5 sec) because you can drink from it when you are here

9 Farah 
   *kul youm ?*
   Every day ?

10 Grandmother 
   *kul youm (.7s) wahada lil Dania. wahada la Rahim. wa wahada lil seedo*
   Every day (.7s) One for Dania. One for Rahim. And one for grandpa

(2.2 sec pause)

11 Grandmother 
   *mashi ?*
   Okay ?

12 Farah 
   (loud sipping sound - imitating drinking coffee)

13 Grandfather 
   *ishrab qahwa yalla ishrab qahwa*
   Drink coffee, come on, drink coffee.

In this example, Farah, began in line 1 to try and take something that was not hers. Throughout the excerpt, she received very reasoned arguments from both grandparents about why she should not. The grandparents successfully prevented Farah from taking the cups while modeling a process of ‘*aql* that was concerned about the impact of Farah’s behavior on others. In the end, Farah went back to playing and stopped asking for the cups. Her grandparents did not rely on any
explicit shame or force, but simply appealed to a reasoned logic that referenced others while also respecting Farah’s own needs and desires.

In this interaction, Farah exerted in a few places a focus on herself and her own needs over those of others. The first time is line 1 where she stated the cups were hers ("ili, “mine"). Rather than reject her claim, her grandfather asked her why she wanted them. In line 6, Farah further focused on her needs by rejecting her grandparents comments. It is unclear what in line 5 Farah rejected or whether it served as a way to exert her desires.

Her grandparents modeled thinking through how Farah’s behaviors affected both her future self and others she cared about. In line 7, the grandfather reaffirmed the focus on Farah by repeating (again after line 5) that she had her own cup. Her grandmother agreed in line 8, but tempered the statement with a gentle reminder to Farah about why the cup was there. In order to drink while at her grandparents house, she needed a cup there. Line 8 allowed the grandmother to support Farah’s concerns and validate her needs. Line 10 demonstrated a great example of the grandmother’s pivot between accepting the child’s concern for herself while also socializing her to think about others. The grandmother began by addressing the child’s concern in line 9 about being able to use the cup every day. But after a brief pause the grandmother transitioned back to the others who “owned” a cup but only when present at the grandparent’s house. Line 10 made those individuals explicit to Farah - her cousin Dania and her cousin Rahim, her favorite playmates, and people she cared about. According to Goffman (1981), Dania and Rahim were figures the grandmother’s utterance brought into relevance in the moment. Farah was not the only one, either who visited or who used the cups. There is little to suggest that Farah should feel shame or guilt for not thinking about her cousins or even for thinking of the cups as her possession. Instead the grandparents were gentle and relied on demonstrates of ‘aql, reason.

Unlike Azam’s mom, Farah’s grandparents did not draw on the label of shame to describe her behavior. While taking the cups would impact others (and Farah the next day), the
cups were not essential to having visitors. The cups were as much an object of play—to stack as Farah had been doing—as objects of use. The grandparents focused on how the cups were useful without negating Farah’s desire to take them home and play.

The cups and the interaction with Farah around the cups are important to marking Farah’s place in her grandparents’ home and Farah’s sense of belonging. Similar to meals being a space for moral socialization (Aronnson & Gottzen 2011, Karrabaek 2012, Ochs and Shohet 2006), the cup served as a part of food rituals to reinforce Farah’s centrality in her grandparent’s home. Not only did Farah “own” one of the cups, specifically for Farah’s use, but this use was frequent. As Farah clarified, her access to her pink cup was “every day” (kul youm). While her cousins Rahim and Dania also have “assigned cups,” these cousins were not daily visitors while Farah was an intimate part of her grandparent’s home and authority over the cups.

The grandparents modeled a deliberate process of thinking through the consequences of her action: Whose cup is it? Who uses it? Who would be affected by its not being here? The process of thinking through the effect of one’s behavior on others is a form of critical thinking that caregivers model for children. However, as we saw in Chapter 2, this process of critical analysis is overlooked even though it forms a valuable, and culturally rooted variety of critical thinking. Not only is ‘aql an important part of being able to carry out this thinking process, but being able to do so is a reflection on the child’s character. Sajoo writes that the Qu’ran’s stress on reason or ‘aql, “means that choices must be informed and thoughtful...Good choices come from a character that cultivates the virtues of mind, body and spirit, for there are countless practical situations that require sound judgment, compared to the specific ‘rules’ about what to do” (2010:5). In this section we saw that an empathetic attention to others helps children develop ‘aql along culturally valid lines.
3.7 Public Shame: Developing ‘aql Through Violations to Honor

In the previous section, I addressed the connections drawn between a child’s behavior and the people in the child’s network affected by bad behavior. However, this awareness of others does not just stop at empathy. Caregivers draw on present and absent figures not just as the victims of the behavior (the students in example 2 and the cousins in example 3) but as witnesses and critics of the child’s behavior. In this section, I look at three examples (4, 5A, 5B), each with a different kind of reference to shame—the first is ‘aib, the second without an explicit label, and the third with haram. Caregivers are socializing children to an aspect of ‘aql: what impact will my behavior have on how others think of me and my family? The social concern of honor-based societies is on one’s identity beyond the individual (Schneider 1971). Concern for one’s perception socializes collectivism but also draws connections between shame and others’ judgments.

Concern over the judgment of others can become a constant feature of self-discipline and reasoning. In Levy’s ethnography Tahitians, he writes of the concern about being seen acting in a way that goes against cultural norms. “[The Tahitian] sees this danger as not just a possibility, but as highly probable. He expects to be visible. He controls himself out of anxiety that he may be seen and that there will then be trouble. The trouble includes violence, physical punishment, and, as one element among several, being shamed” (Levy 1973:330). This parallels the socialization of an omnipresent God in Islamic societies where God will always be the observer and judge of bad behaviors, even outside of the presence of others. This will be discussed later in the Chapter.

Shaming students with the threat that others might see their misbehavior is a popular recourse in the classroom. Threatening that bystanders and passersby will know of their misbehavior and label them as “naughty” (explained in example 4) is a threat to face. Goffman’s concept of face rests on interconnection between interactants, where speakers weigh their own actions and speech against perception. Goffman defined face as “the positive social value a
person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact” (1967:5).

In example 4 below, while the caregivers at school reference outside observers (whether strangers or families) knowing about the misbehavior, the caregivers do not dwell on the consequences of that knowledge. Because school administrators are limited in their ability to discipline students (particularly because some parents are more reactive to this instances than others), the school often avoiding punishments. Students may instead predict punishments when their parents find out about their behavior. Further, the focus is on the judgments of others, not so much on punishments. Teachers are socializing children to think about what parents or others might think about the behavior in question. In example 4, the teacher models the development of ‘agl, by externalizing the regulation of behavior and mapping the misbehavior onto a balloon (that can be popped or displayed for all to see).

3.7.1 Example 4: The Balloon Labeled “Naughty”

In the next example, we see a very innovative method of classroom management, used by Ms. Layla, involving balloons. The strategy was also very revealing about discipline, understandings of childhood behavior, and public shame. Although the strategy was picked up by the Arabic kindergarten teacher, it was only used a few times and discarded. It was common for teachers to try new classroom management strategies but not continue them. Unfortunately I did not capture the teacher’s thoughts on why she did not keep using this particular balloon strategy. The strategy first emerged on the day of the kindergarten field trip to the olive oil factory. There were two boys in particular who caused consistent problems in the classroom, Azam (from Example 2), and his classmate Osman. Their classroom teacher, Ms. Layla, was not going on the trip because she had to teach first grade. However, the teacher came up with a strategy to allow them to still go on the trip, but under pressure to behave well. The strategy unfolded slowly over
the course of the lesson so I have broken it into two segments. In the first, Ms. Layla laid out the
general idea:

Transcript 3.4: Example 4: The Balloon Labeled “Naughty” part 1. “A balloon for Azam and
Osman”
1  Ms. Layla  ana hessa bidi anfookh ballon  
now I'm going to blow up a balloon
2  bidi aktoob alleyha Azam mushaghib  
I'm going to write on it naughty Azam
3  wa wahid Osman mushaghib  
And one naughty Osman
… (distracted for 4 minutes and returns to the topic)
4  Ms. Layla  ana bidi ‘alleq ballon  
I am going to hang the balloon
(1.2 sec pause)
5  la<a>  
for<or>
6  Student  Azam
7  Ms. Layla  Osman
8  Student  wa Azam  
And Azam
9  Ms. Layla  wa Azam  
And Azam
10  itha Osman au Azam (1.1 sec) fil al rehleh  
If Osman or Azam (1.1 sec) during the field trip
11  bidhallo mushaghibeen ma rah ‘afa’a al baloon  
remain naughty, I won't eliminate the balloon
12  mashi  
Okay
13  itha kuntu t’aiir rah ‘afa’a lama ajee bitbuddlu mushajibeen mashi ?  
if you (pl) were to shame yourself, I will get rid of it when you
return, and you change from naughty people, okay?

While children were generally in charge of regulating their behavior (with the feedback of
caregivers) Azam’s and Osman’s behaviors are made visible in the balloon. Ms. Layla hung up a
balloon for each of them, labeled with their name and the word “naughty.” The teacher deemed
that if the child changed his behavior on the field trip (as reported by teachers on the trip), the teacher will pop the balloon when they return. As a representative of “naughtiness,” as long as the balloons existed, they marked Azam and Osman as naughty children, and were on display for others to see. However, the destruction of the balloon removed the label of naughty (at least for a while).

Unlike other examples which target misbehavior in the moment at which they occur, at no point in this lesson did Ms. Layla address the specific behaviors of Azam or Osman that necessitated the “naughty” balloons. Just before the excerpt started, Ms. Layla asked the assistant for the class for who is “akthar wahid mushaghib” (the naughtiest one). Osman and Azam were the names the assistant and teacher listed. The assistant gave two more names, however the teacher never made them balloons and instead Azam and Osman became the typifications of “naughty” and lessons for the rest of the class on the necessity of good behavior. So it is possible Osman and Azam were being punished for being repeatedly in the “naughty” category or it was possible that the misbehaviors were a continuation from a previous issue in the recent past. As Wortham argues, over the course of the school year, some students are given labels that describe their degree and rate of socialization and become a tool for interpreting future behavior (2005). In this case, Azam and Osman’s behavior was read as “naughty” because they were given this label, even when the same behaviors may not be considered or labeled “naughty” when coming from another student. “Naughty” served as a lens for interpreting and evaluating the behavior of these two individual students. Ms. Layla’s lack of clarity on why they were being punished suggested that the balloon strategy was largely an attempt to ensure good behavior on the field trip, as much preventative as punishment.

While not using a term for shame, Ms. Layla labeled the students “mushaghib” which many Jordanians translated for me as the English equivalent of “naughty.” The root of the word sh-gh-b (ش غ ب) means “to disturb the peace, make trouble, stir up riots” (Wehr 1994:555).
“Naughty” captures these ideas on a scale for children. As Ms. Layla in lines 4 and 5 was preoccupied with the balloons, at least some students were clearly paying attention and following along. In lines 6 and 8, two student repeated to the teacher who was to be punished.

Ms. Layla’s strategy of keeping Osman and Azam in check creatively represented theories of ‘aql and honor. The balloon itself served as a means of externalizing the boys’ naughtiness. Each child was separated from his bad actions, which were symbolized and contained in the balloon. Thus the child could return to the path of good when his bad actions were “popped.” Popping the balloon suggested an erasure of earlier naughty behavior - no balloon, no representation of that naughty action. What popped the balloon were Azam and Osman’s deliberate attempts to make changes in their behavior, thus to reflecting signs of being a “good” person (see Figure 3.2 earlier in the Chapter). The balloon became both a representation of the badness (a child who did bad actions), but also a referent to the bad child whose name was on it. Those actions have the potential to make the child a bad person, if this path continues.

One mother in an interview explained her theory of how good children are corrupted. When I asked her to talk about kids in Jordan, she responded that “children are good” (atfal kwayseen). However, she believed the problem was that some children are exposed to bad things, including child abuse. She elaborated that those bad things are not from within the child, they are from others (mish mino, min gher). She said that it was from what those children were exposed to that they become not good. Homes with fighting turn out aggressive kids “yani iza fi a‘unf, daraib, bido yital aggressive” (Like if there is violence, hitting, he will turn out aggressive). Children in homes with poor hygiene turn out dirty, and if there is not an emphasis on learning at home, kids turn out lazy.

Rather than blame behavior on poor upbringing, Ms. Layla at least nominally placed the fate of the balloons (and to some extent the boys) in their own hands. The creation of the balloons put Azam’s and Osman’s behaviors on the field trip under the scrutiny of not just themselves, but
everyone on the trip. However, even with teachers monitoring them and Ms. Layla deciding the fate of the balloon, the boys could decide to behave well on the field trip or not. Ms. Layla used the verb ‘air the root of which means “to blame, to humiliate, to shame” (Baalbaki 2006:788). However she used the reflexive version of the verb by shifting the verb into form 5. This added the meaning that the children were bringing shame onto themselves, “kuntu t’aiir.”

Transcript 3.5: “To shame oneself.”

\[\text{Kunt} \ \text{u} \ \text{t} \ \text{‘aiir}\]
\[\text{You were pl refl root (to shame)}\]

Later in the same line she said “bitbuddlu mushaghibeen” (you change yourself from naughty people).

Transcript 3.6: “To change yourself from naughty people.”

\[\text{bi} \ \text{t buddl u mu shaghib een}\]
\[2\text{nd per refl root pl one who root pl}\]

The root b-d-l (ب-د-ل) means “to replace, exchange” (Wehr 1994:58). She used the reflexive form, form 5 of the verb, indicating that the children must change themselves from naughty to good.

Audience has been of interest from the first excerpt and it becomes even more complex and interesting about 3 minutes later when the principal, Ms. Asma, entered the class to check on field trip preparations. Ms. Layla and her assistant explained, yet again, the strategy behind the balloon. By this time, Ms. Layla had fleshed out the consequences of an unpopped balloon. The excerpt began as Ms. Layla explained what happened to the unpopped balloon:
Transcript 3.7: Example 4: The Balloon Labeled “Naughty” part 2. Even granddad will see.

14 Ms Layla  rah ahothum bur<rh>ah
I will put them (the balloons) outside

15 Assistant  ala al bab
On the door

16 Ms. Asma  haut surahtak
Put your picture

17 Ms. Asma  Tall’a abuk wa ummo
Your father and mother look

18 Ms. Layla  [umo (.5 sec) sitto
Mom (.4 sec) granddad

19 Ms. Asma  shoof al ballon
(you) look at the balloon

20 Ms. Layla  haiyo
Here it is

21 Ms. Asma  bido raih wa jai yigrah Azam mushaghib wa Osman mushaghib, ’aib!
A passerby is going to read Azam is naughty and Osman is naught, shame!

Instead of just Ms. Layla serving as the animator (Goffman 1981) in this disciplinary action, the assistant and the principal, Ms. Asma, joined her. In addition to the classmates who were participants and bystanders in the labeling of Azam and Osman as naughty, these caregivers introduced a new audience. Once the balloon is hung in public, family and random passersby become participants in the shaming process.

The widening of the audience beyond the students in the class modeled the value of concern for public perception. Rather than hanging the balloon in the classroom, where only the students of that class would be reminded that Azam and Osman are naughty, Ms. Layla and the assistant clarified in lines 14 and 15 that the balloons would be hung on the door to the school. The main focus of those that will now “see” and “know” about the naughty children was family members. Both Ms. Layla and Ms. Asma referred to specific family members - not just father (baba or abu) but your father (abuk). Ms. Layla even added in extended family by referring to a
grandfather. Making the misbehaviors known to family members could suggest punishment (although not explicitly stated). Each child can speculate about what his parents might do.

It was Ms. Asma who explicitly connected to the idea of shame (‘aib) through the public awareness of misbehavior. In line 21, Ms. Asma connected to a broader public who would know and who would judge the naughty children. Since she also was not drawing attention to particular behaviors, Ms. Asma seemed to connect the shame to a broader public seeing the label of naughty regardless of the reason for it. She spoke of those that come and go (raih wa jai), that is passerbys who read the names and the label of naughty. Awareness of misbehavior beyond the family can bring shame and dishonor to the individual and family. Being concerned with public perception helped model the development of ‘aql as children learn to make choices that avoid public shaming.

In the end, Azam and Osman attended the field trip with the class and behaved well. The balloon strategy had been a successful method of focusing attention on Azam’s and Osman’s behaviors both by a wider public who may or may not ever see the balloon but also through their own self-regulation of behavior. From my fieldnotes I wrote that with great ceremony, Ms. Layla lifted the boys up to remove the hanging balloons. Using a pin from Ms. Layla’s hijab she popped both balloons as the class cheered. At least for a little while, Azam and Osman had the “naughty” label taken away.

3.7.2 Example 5: Demotions

One of the most common ways to trigger public shame in the kindergarten/grade 1 age range is to threaten to send students back to a lower grade. While often just a threat, it occasionally came to pass and students sat in the back of classrooms for younger students for a class period, listening to lessons they were expected to already know. Then they were taken back to their own class usually with a public speech about how well behaved the student had become.
and how they would behave better in the future. This demotion was publicly known to both students in their original class and witnessed by students in the younger class. Teachers of both classes would comment, making the punished child an example of how not to behave for both the older and the younger class. Being demoted or watching a classmate demoted modeled concern for public perception when making behavioral decisions.

In examples 5A and 5B, the teachers used different labels of shame. While in 5A there was no explicit label, in 5B the teacher used *haram* (religiously forbidden). The differences in usage of shame labels matched the goals of the teachers. While in 5A the teacher was frustrated by students not reading in 5B the teacher read their poor performance in class as a character flaw of not investing in learning. Education is an important value and not taking advantage of it was labeled as *haram*. The label of *haram* might be used as a means by the teacher to call up feelings of guilt in students who do not work hard and do not listen to their teacher. This is a strategy that many teachers use to guilt students into better behavior. In Lo’s study of Korean Heritage Language teachers, teachers brought up their own feelings of anger and disappointment in the children to justify her feelings and reactions “since this cycle of bad feelings was provoked by students’ inconsiderate actions…thus illustrating how children should reason about the potential consequences of their actions and practice restraint in their affective displays to protect the teacher’s face” (2009:229).

While from my observations threats of demotion or removing students were widely used across teachers, from my dataset, Ms. Naseema and Ms. Layla both used the strategy with their students. Ms. Naseema had worked as the assistant for Ms. Layla the year before, perhaps taking the behavioral management strategy from Ms. Layla. Often, the teachers could simply say “*Salma, KG1*” and students had been socialized to interpret this as a threat. Salma understood that

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29 Ms. Tasneem sent a pre-Kindergarten student out of class after he spit at a student. However there was not much discussion around it.
if she did not stop what she was doing, she would be sent to one of the pre-kindergarten classes.

In the example below, Ms. Naseema built on this threat. However no student was actually sent to a pre-kindergarten class (on this day). Ms. Naseema was asking her students to read from the board. She was working with the same kindergarten class that we have seen examples from before, so we will recognize a few familiar “trouble” students. While the assistant was her addressed listener (ratified participant), the students in the class were also participants and meant to hear (Goffman 1981). Prior to the clip, Azam could not read the word the teacher asked him to read and Osman read a word incorrectly. These two back-to-back reading errors led to the following interaction:
Transcript 3.8: Example 5A: “Give me the names of all who did not read.” Demotions for not being able to read.

1  Ms. Naseema  
   *jibeeli billah asma lil kul mish agra hessa*
   Give me billah\(^{30}\) the names of all who did not read just now.

2  Assistant  
   *ashan kullu biruh ala kg1*
   Because you all go to pre-kindergarten.

3  Ms. Naseema  
   *Azam wa meen?*
   Azam and who?

4  Assistant  
   *Azam wa Osman.*
   Azam and Osman.

5  Ms. Naseema (asking another student to read)  
   *Adil. shoo hai al kilema?*
   Adil. What’s this word?

6  Adil  
   “my”
   “my”

7  Ms. Naseema  
   *Farid shoo hai al kilema?*
   Farid what’s this word?

8  Ms. Naseema  
   *Shoo hai al kilema Farid?*
   What’s this word Farid?

(8 sec pause)

9  Ms. Naseema (to assistant)  
   *uktubi ism Farid*
   Write Farid’s name.

10 Ms. Naseema (to class)  
    *itha ma bidku tta’allamu, tinzil ala kg1*
    If you (pl) do not want to learn, go back to pre-kindergarten

11  
    *bidish ya hona bil suff*
    I don’t want you here in class.

Ms. Naseema’s threats were successful, in that no students were sent back to Pre-K. However, students were still struggling to read. Even though Ms. Naseema connected the threat to a larger idea of not wanting to learn in lines 10 and 11 (which we will see built out in example 5B), the focus was on not reading a particular line. We see this from line 1 where the teacher asked for the names of all students who were not able to read.

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\(^{30}\) Billah is an Arabic God-phrase that means “with God” or “through God”, but as will be discussed, God reference often lends power and credibility to the teacher’s statements.
Nowhere in Ms. Naseema’s talk did she use the word “shame,” but she models a concern for others knowing and judging the student. First there is a public declaration for all students in the classroom that names will be taken of those who could not read. The assistant, now the direct addressee, repeated and recorded the names, starting with the two who had not read correctly. In line 9, she added Farid when after two attempts waiting for him to read, he had no reply.

A second way that the teacher touched on the shaming technique was that students were being not just sent out, but sent to a lower class. In line 2, she uses the verb *biruh* with the root r-a-H (ِرِأِحِ) which is a common way to express the meaning “to go” (Wehr 1994:422) especially in the Levant. In line 12 however, she used the verb *tinzil* with the root n-z-l (ِنِزِلَ) which means “to descend” or “to move down” (Wehr 1994:1122). This gave the added quality of “demoting” the student to a class they were supposed to have advanced past. It was a way for the teacher to say that the child’s actions or behaviors are not up to expectations for the age and grade level.

The final way that the teacher highlighted shame in her students was through disappointment. In line 11 Ms. Naseema made it personal - “I don’t want you here in class.” This added a layer of disappointment and rejection that the teacher expressed about the student’s performance. It served as a way for the teacher to point to how others negatively perceived the child’s inability to read. This parallels Lo’s example (2009) of teacher’s justifying their anger from the student’s behavior and suggesting that the child should feel bad as well.

While being sent to a lower grade is certainly a mark of shame on a student, the teacher also addressed the personal responsibility of the student. In line 10, the teacher connected not just reading, but “learning” more broadly. She used the root ‘-l-m (ِلَاخِ) which means “to know” or “to learn”; in the second form of the trilateral root, it means “to teach” (Wehr 1994:743). In this particular usage (*tta’allamu*), the teacher used the reflexive form meaning “to teach” or “to train” (Wehr 1994:743):
Transcript 3.9: “to teach.”

$t \text{ t } a \text{\'allam } u$

2nd person reflex root pl

The reflexive use of the verb referred to effort on the part of the student. However Ms. Naseema’s concentration was on the inability to read. In the next example, we see a contrast in shame labels when the concentration is on the effort that students put into the learning process.

This idea, that students need to be responsible about learning, socialized their students that learning takes efforts on the part of the students themselves as well. The example below with Ms. Layla also connected the lack of initiative to consequences in the future. The consequences with Ms. Layla, were threats to send students to the lower track of the same grade (demotion from the international track to the national track). The example came from Ms. Layla’s first grade class. With students not responding to her question, she began to ask the students if they studied, and then how they studied. The focus here was not on what students could or could not answer, but on their character—not wanting to put effort into learning. Ms. Layla began by directly addressing Malika, with the whole class as bystanders, but expected to overhear (Goffman 1981). But in line 4, Ms. Layla broadened her critique to talk to everyone. Ms. Layla said:
Transcript 3.10: Example 5B: “I am not a magician.” Demotions for not wanting to learn.

1 Ms. Layla

    ana mish sahir {...} biftah mukh wa hota al kelmat ya Malika
    I am not a magician {...} open your head and put in the words, Malika

2 enti lazim tadroosi bil beit
    you (singular) must study at home

3 lazim tadarabi
    you (singular) must drill

4 illo ma baraaaf al haroof, ma busboot tudkhul maai hon
    Those that don’t know the letters cannot enter with me here.

5 {...} misstak tishrah, haram alleyek
    {...} your teacher explains, shame on you

6 kul youm ana bishrahu hatha hakei
    every day I explain this talk

7 bashrahu au ma bashrah.
    Do I explain or not explain.

8 Student chorus

    tishrahi
    You explain

9 Ms. Layla

    itha ma bido yadroos englizi, yitlah ala as saaf al watani
    if you don't study english, leave for the national section

Rather than focus on the shame from demotion (line 4 and 9), the focus was on the responsibility of the students for the learning process. Turning Malika into an example, Ms. Layla reminded students that learning requires action on their parts. Ms. Layla contrasted herself with a sahir a “sorcerer” or “magician” (Wehr 1994:466) who can insert all the knowledge needed without the students’ efforts. Teachers, on the other hand cannot do this. Students have to put in effort.

Learning requires effort and time, and Ms. Layla felt like she modeled this point each day (lines 5 and 6).

As in the previous example, line 4 and line 9 of Example 5B addressed the consequences of removal from the class as a mark of shame. Because the first grade was part of the international track, students were expected to be at a higher level than their peers on the national
track. Like example 5A, the threat of demotion was punishment and a clear sign that the student did not have the intelligence to cope with the work. Shifting to the national section was a shame largely directed at the intellectual ability of the child.

Additionally, Ms. Layla drew her students into the conversations as well. In line 7 she asked them to respond to her claim. She had the students to admit that conversation was something the teacher was forced to explain every day. Of course many students may “play along” with the teacher to appease her. Whether the teacher explained every day or not, the students as a chorus responded that the teacher did explain it (line 8). After the excerpt ended, the teacher involved the students again, asking “do you understand or not” with a small chorus repeating “we understand.”

But it was not just the shame of being sent down to the national section which was suggested. Ms. Layla in line 5 added “haram alleyek” (shame on you). The criticism of the students’ characters not only violated religious commands to seek knowledge, but suggested poor character. The distance that students were behind their peers in early grades multiplied as the students moved through the education system, compounding each year as they fell further behind. As Adely mentions in her book, Jordanian students who did poorly in school were judged morally as well as academically (2012a). The judgment of character makes haram a salient shame word, connecting to the possibility of guilt in the students. Student who did not put in the time to study should feel bad—not just for the possibility of demotion, but for violating religious and social expectations around their commitment to education.

3.8 Because God Says So: Developing an Awareness of God’s Omnipresence

So far the examples have focused on respect for other members of the community: family and others. As the majority religion, Islam is a predominant and universally felt presence in Jordan. Given the influence of Islam, most Jordanians (Muslims or not, religious or not) make
reference to God across all settings and all times. The frequency and the particular types of references (those more closely linked to Islam/the Qur’an) can vary person to person. However, God references are certainly not limited to religious discussions or moments of ritualized prayer. The omnipresence of Allah makes God a bystander to all actions. Even if others are not watching, God is.

Continual reference to God makes God an important member of the community. In this section, I look at how caregivers use disciplinary strategies to model *taqwa* or God-consciousness (Wadud 1999) and for children to better understand the role that God and religion play in everyday lives. Wadud explains *taqwa* as “a pious manner of behaviour which observes constraints appropriate to a social-moral system; and ‘consciousness of Allah,’ that is observing that manner of behaviour because of one’s reverence towards Allah” (1999:37). While in some cases, God-talk can invoke fear, guilt, or shame, these are not always apparent outcomes. Rather, shame combined with God-invocations serve as red-flags for misbehavior. Invocations of God are also used to influence future action or convey potential future punishment, especially if the child continues down a path of misbehavior. Children are learning what behaviors should be repeated in the future (“good” ones) and which to avoid (“bad” ones when God sees them), when they develop the ‘*aql* to make reasoned choices. Caregivers model God’s role not just as a bystander, but as a ratified participant who can judge and punish misbehavior.

With Allah being the 18th most common word in Arabic (Morrow 2006:14), it is not surprising that references to God and religion appear in the verbal expressions of discipline. Methods of disciplining students that include references to God were not the most common form of discipline, but they did appear frequently. God references accomplished a few different tasks as discipline. Some references indicated that the situation the child was embroiled in was serious. For an example, a teacher scolded the children for repeatedly moving seats and messing around on the bus. She yelled at them what translated to “*inshallah* one of you changes seats!” before
returning to her seat in front. While *inshallah* means “God willing,” she did not mean she hopes that God will inspire them to move seats. She seems to mean the opposite, just daring one of the students to test her, but unclear of how she would react. As seen by the fact that all the students stopped their playing and changing seats, they took her vague threat seriously. The *inshallah* used, in almost the opposite of its straightforward meaning, marked her seriousness.

Using the name of Allah in discipline worked to relieve frustrations during a stressful situation. There are some interesting parallels to Ben Bergen’s work on cursing, which cites some studies that find benefits to cursing, such as yelling a profanity upon hammering your finger to reduce pain (2016:13). Interjecting religious oaths could have a release value effect as well, especially to release anger against a child. In the case of the bus, the teacher returned to her seat in the front and did not yell again at the students. While it was unclear whether the religious oath “released” her anger, it did end the disciplinary interaction.

The use of the name of God in discipline can also be part of a threat to stop behaviors caregivers find inappropriate according to their interpretation of religious, social, or cultural guidelines. The rest of this section will explore how children learn what behaviors are good while also learning God-consciousness (*taqwa*).  

### 3.8.1 Example 6 - God is Watching

Before getting to the example, I want to elaborate on cheating within the Jordanian context. While cheating occurs in all regions of the world, cheating is the Arab world is not only common, but so common that the Jordanian Ministry of Education is highly involved in cheating prevention on the end of high school exam, *tawjihi* (Buckner & Hodges 2016). According to Buckner and Hodges, high-stakes graduation exams emerged in Jordan at the end of the colonial era as a means for declaring a system of meritocracy. Tests were idealized as legitimation that the
privilege of education was not limited to the high classes. Bright students of any background had the ability to test well and enter university (Buckner & Hodges 2016:606).

However, in practice Buckner and Hodges argue that while the government works to prevent cheating, parents often legitimate helping their children cheat or excusing cheating in order to ensure the economic advantages in the future. Common ways of cheating included having answers texted to a student before or during a test, or sneaking in notes on their clothes, on water bottles, on paper, or even on their own skin. Girls wearing hijabs can also conceal an earpiece under a veil (Buckner & Hodges 2016:610). Especially for students in poorly resourced government schools, cheating can be read as a fair; it is a means of coping with an unjust system. Students who are able to afford private education or private tutoring outside of school have an advantage that cheating helps to balance out (Buckner & Hodges 2016). It is through cheating on the tests, not the tests themselves, that lower classes find a balance in the nominally meritocratic system.

Parents play an important role in assisting or at least condoning cheating also in earlier grades. At school, instead of punishing children who could not reason about their behavior, fault was sometimes shifted onto responsible adults. When a first grade student submitted a homework assignment that she clearly could not have written herself, I did a quick google search, which revealed the assignment was plagiarized from the internet (see Appendix VII for the student’s assignment and the page on the internet). During a conversation with the student’s teacher, the teacher focused on the role of her parents and only briefly touched on the responsibility of child. The teacher’s reaction to the cheating was to tell the parents to stop:
Transcript 3.11: “Parents don’t help their children this way.” Interview with Teacher about Plagiarized Student Homework.

1 I told [the student] this is not you. She said no this is me. I said no this is not you. …(Haleema explains finding the source on the internet)

2 they're [the parents are] not helping by this way …(Haleema offers to show the site where the student got the essay)

3 I need to* just show it because I need to
call the parents

4 and I'll tell them please yani don't help her this way

5 she* THEY {yani} the parents what do they do

6 they let the kid depend on their mother

7 they don't let them depend on themselves

In line 1 the teacher re-enacted her conversation with the girl. This was the only mention of the child. In line 6 the teacher began to perhaps talk about the student (“she*”) but interrupted to shift to talk about parents. Most of the references to third person plural ‘they/their/them’ (lines 2, 5, 6, and the first they in lines 7 and 8) were the parents who were being critiqued for creating dependency in children.

In the teacher’s reflection on the plagiarism, the focus was on her critique of parents. Even though the child lied about the work (line 1) and submitted it as her own, she never faced punishment or any ramifications. Instead, the teacher turned to the parents as the responsible party. Parents have the ‘aql (reason) to think about the consequences of their actions, such as plagiarism. While the child was still seen as learning, parents should have known. The focus of the criticism is not on the copying from the internet (although that was the evidence I brought forth); the focus was on how the intervention by parents harms children. Parents who do the work for their children not only cause their children to miss the learning experience, but according to the teacher, breed dependency from their children.

In example 6, a teacher reminded students of God’s ever-presence and added fear of God’s punishment to prevent cheating. The teacher was about to begin an English exam in the first grade. She was interrupted, however, by a student looking for a pencil. This distraction in the
classroom led to students squirming and turning around in their seats. With all the movement, the teacher reiterated an earlier condemnation of cheating. While previously she tied her threat to noting that cheaters would get a zero, this time she changed her logic to draw on religious ideology:

Transcript 3.12: Example 6: “This Allah sees.” Avoid Cheating because God is Watching.

1  

\[ \text{khalas. khalas! khalas!!} \]

Enough. Enough! Enough!!

(2 sec pause)

2  

\[ \text{Mahadish yaghush min at thani.} \]

No one cheats from another.

3  

\[ \text{Wallahi itha bita’ala ala bi jampo Wallahi (swear to God), if you look at the one next to you} \]

(1 sec pause)

4  

\[ \text{Hai Allah shaif} \]

This Allah sees

(1 see pause)

5  

\[ \text{Al youm awal ma y’itlah allah y’atebah} \]

Today, before you leave, allah admonishes you

6  

\[ \text{’ala bab al madreseh rah y’atebah. Itha bighush} \]

At the door of the school he will admonish you. If you cheat

The teacher’s threats of punishment in this case did not seem to prevent students from cheating (as I will discuss). The discussion acted as a reminder for what students have heard over and over—God was watching. The teacher modeled taqwa God-consciousness, a reminder that “Allah sees.” This further emphasizes the Islamic ideas of Allah’s omnipresence. She referenced the Islamic worldview of Allah as “the all-seeing.” One of Allah’s 99 attributes is al-basir or all-seeing. A common religious idea that grounded religious discussions was that Allah will see (and record31) all good and bad actions.

The reason that the teacher gave was a fear of punishment. In lines 5 and 6, the teacher uses the verb ‘atb (عَتَبَ) which means “to blame, censure, reprove, scold” (Wehr 1994:688). Another word derived from the same root is ‘ataba (عَتَبَة) which means “doorstep, threshold”

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31 The Qur’an and other religious tradition refer to angels that sit on each shoulder recording good and bad actions for the Day of Judgment. See Qur’an (50:16-18).
This not only connects the “door of the school” to the concept of a space for judgment but resonates with religious ideas around thresholds and judgment on the Islamic concept of a Day of Judgment.

Even though the teacher is the animator of the discipline, God is not merely the bystander. Instead the teacher made Allah into a principal according to Goffman, “someone who is committed to what the words say” (1981:144). Allah was now the one responsible for bestowing punishment on the cheating students, instead of the teacher. The students were also still responsible for not cheating and not looking at the paper of the person next to them.

Usually, when caregivers made references to punishment from God, they were importantly left until some unspecified date in the future (possibly after you die or with the prospect of heaven or hell). However, the teacher here linked it to a very close future, later that same day. The immediacy may be an attempt to add fear and prevent cheating. Instead, the means and method of the punishment were kept vague. Here, punishments were in the hands of God. The teacher instead made threats. Given the condoning of cheating in Jordanian society, it was hard to enforce punishments. Additionally, children were still developing the ‘aql necessary to make good judgment, which even adults in Jordan do not find problematic. In fact, when I assisted her, I was the only one who ever marked down tests for talking or attempted cheating.

As mentioned, referring to God when cheating was occurring was not a very effective shaming technique. The reminder of potential punishment set up an attempt to bring out good behavior once the students started taking the test. However, cheating was quite rampant in most classrooms, regardless of the threat. During the test that continued after example 6, the teacher repeated reminders to students not to cheat. She asked them to cover their papers, she asked a student directly, “are you cheating,” and labeled another three students’ behavior as cheating. Two of the cheating students also were noted as having the wrong answers. But no one was
punished or stopped. During my entire experience in Jordanian classrooms, I never observed a student punished for cheating (for example with grade deductions or having to retake tests).

At least in the grades and classes I observed, rather than punish cheaters, teachers used a series of preventative tactics. Early elementary students were either reminded to stop, told to reposition their bodies, heads, or eyes, or the cheater was moved to a new seat. All these preventative measures focused on preventing cheating moving forward, not on punishing cheating that had already occurred. Of course cheating can be hard to prove and hence difficult to punish.

The teacher never drew an explicit connection to shame. The lack of shame at cheating paralleled the teacher who blamed parents, not the student, for cheating. Cheating was also expected in children, given that even adults with 'aql were fine with cheating. But it was in sharp contrast to other behaviors which were viewed as more problematic, even in children. In this same grade 1 class, Ms. Layla and the grade 1 teacher, Ms. Haneen discovered that a student (Yasir) had tattled on another student (Nishma) for making a mess in the bathroom. Upon investigating, the teachers discover that Yasir did not actually see Nishma. In this case, while lying and cheating can be viewed as normal phases in childhood, Yasir was severely scolded. He was told his teacher was upset, God was upset, his behavior was not okay (ma basir) and he was told haram alleyk (shame on you). In this case, lying was a sign of poor character. Unlike cheating, lying was something that teachers did not want to see continue as the child grew up. The multiple methods of shame, including the haram, suggested not only violations of religious guidelines, and the fact that God judged his behavior as upsetting, but that he should feel guilt and feel bad about his actions.

In his examination of shame amongst the Tahitians, Levy also had some references to an omnipresent God. One of his participants said even if no one saw him steal, he still would not steal “because if you think within your heart you recall God…That is the person who is looking at you—you know that God is up in the sky looking at you. Therefore, you don’t steal” (1973:331).
While Levy points out this is a rare use of God for the Tahitians, it looks like what Jordanian caregivers are trying to induce in their kids. The reminder of God’s omnipresence, that he “sees you when you’re cheating” models *taqwa* God consciousness and one way of developing ‘*aql*.

Al-Ghazali, an 11th Century Islamic philosopher and legal scholar, continues to be influential in Islamic though to this day. He wrote about the balance between the call that “God is watching” and the responsibility on individuals to internally regulate their own behavior. He writes, “You will never arrive at fulfilling the commands of God, my dear student, unless you watch over your heart...[God] observes your inner and your outer man...Let your endeavour be that your master may not see you where he forbade you to be and may not miss you where he commanded you to be” (Al-Ghazali cited in Lapidus 1976:104). Lapidus reflecting on Al-Ghazali says, “Children should be held to praiseworthy deeds, by force if necessary, for the acts themselves impose on the soul and set the pattern of later behavior...most important is self-discipline. Each man is responsible for overcoming the defects of nature and his childhood” (1976:104-105). Al-Ghazali and other Islamic philosophers emphasize the choices and decisions made by the individual but with the help of guidance (although for Al-Ghazali, it might be through force). Lapidus suggests that it should become habitual and patterned behavior, like a ritual. This means that children doing “praiseworthy deeds” may not be self-aware of why something should be done. But practicing making good decisions, even without necessarily understanding why they are good, they can become good habits. They also may later be understood as part of reason (‘*aql*) as children internalize the values that drive when their actions are considered misbehavior. From Al-Ghazali, we see the emphasis is not on regulating behavior out of the “fear of God watching” but rather the individual’s desire to choose how one wants to behave.

As Lapidus reflects on adulthood from an Islamic perspective, “In the Muslim view religious maturity is the integration of the individual with the norms of his religion and culture”
Caregivers are socializing children to many aspects at the same time - building self-discipline, learning to respect and follow religious tradition, and fitting in with different social relationships and responsibilities.

3.8.2 Example 7: **Clean Plates Pave the Way to Heaven**

As discussed earlier in the dissertation, mealtimes serve as an important space for moral socialization. Ochs and Shohet write, “It is striking how not only feasts and rituals but also everyday family meals are rich cultural sites for reaffirming moral sentiments of the family and community. Mealtimes are pervaded by talk oriented toward reinforcing what is right and wrong about both the family and outsiders” (2006:42). Meals are also a space to learn and reinforce political order (Ochs & Taylor 1992). In the examples below, discussions around food socialize children into a social and religious order that places God at the top. While caregivers are clearly the ones judging the actions and behaviors of children, the authority to criticize the actions is deferred to God, reinforcing the power and presence of God in this cultural framework. Further, comments on the child’s food choices signal evaluations of belonging or more importantly, violations in belonging (Karrabaek 2012), such as those who do not eat the right things or the right amounts. Caregivers use awareness and even fear of God to criticize children added moral judgements on those children who choose junk food over their sandwiches, or who do not finish all their food. Over time, this judgment can work to exclude the child from a sense of belonging in the classroom or to the family.

This final set of examples also use discipline to strengthen the awareness of God, while socializing children around eating. Both examples model an awareness of God and religion as well as judgments about what to eat and how much. I will present two similar cases: case 7A comes from the school, and 7B from a grandparent disciplining her grandchild. Example 7A came towards the end of the morning snack break, as Tariq, a pre-kindergartener, went out to buy
snacks from the school shop. In his hand was a little bit of bread that he had not eaten but put
back away in his clear plastic bag. Sugary goodies from the store overpower sandwiches, which
was why students were supposed to finish their sandwich before going to the store. As noted
before, mothers complained that their children were not eating their sandwiches. Responsible for
her students, Ms. Tasneem instituted a sandwich first policy (not always fully enforced) before
going to the store. Because children were still developing ‘aql, they needed more strict regulation
to guide them to eat well. Tariq however did not follow the policy and his teacher said to him as
he walked out of the class:

Transcript 3.13: Example 7A: “God won’t put you in heaven.” Religious References to food at
school.

Ms. Tasneem  


Ms. Tasneem’s response focused on Tariq’s decision not to finish the bread and the
consequences of the decision. The teacher referred to his behavioral choice as “haram,”
suggesting the behavior violated religious law. Declaring his actions haram reflected on his
character—that he was not following good behavior and finishing what he should. The reference
to haram could provoke guilt for religious and social violations, although they are not effective
here. Even though the teacher mentioned a consequence, the consequences was in a likely distant
future--prevention from entering heaven.

Example 7B comes from an interaction between a grandmother and her 12 year-old
granddaughter. Sajidah was the older sister of Faheem whose family I observed. In the interaction
Sajidah had left the dining table to sit on the couch, both located in the same room. Her
grandmother told her to come back and finish what was left in her bowl. The interaction
continued:
Transcript 3.14: Example 7B: “We must eat everything on the plate.” Religious References to food at home.

1  Sajidah  
   ana shibait.  
   I’m full.

2  Grandmother  
   min al sunnah, ehna lazim nakul kul ishi bil saHan.  
   It’s from the sunnah\textsuperscript{32}, we must eat everything on the plate.

3  Sajidah  
   mashi. Lakin ana shibait.  
   Okay. But I’m full

4  Grandmother  
   Next time, give her one spoon only. Like the little ones.

In example 7B, Sajidah remained calm but resolute in her decision to stop eating. Unlike Tariq in example 7A, Sajidah did get some pressure to alter her current behavior. Her grandmother began by asking her to return to the table and finish eating what was still in her plate. However, after an initial attempt the grandmother did not insist.

As animator of the discipline, the grandmother drew in Prophet Muhammad as a figure in her interaction (Goffman 1981). The Prophet Muhammad’s actions validated and gave authority to the grandmother’s position over the granddaughter’s claims of being full and legitimated the moral evaluation of Sajidah’s behavior.

Sajidah was not the grandmother’s only audience. The grandmother’s critique was also directed at the women in the room who initially gave her too much. Since the women had served the food, they were also responsible for Sajidah’s wasted food. As the adults, they must help children who cannot make good decisions (such as how much food to dish out) on their own. To be fair to Sajidah and the women in the room, Sajidah had actually been given the bowl for someone else so was likely served more than she ideally would have been.

The conclusion of the interaction was that the grandmother suggested that because of Sajidah’s inability to behave in the way befitting her age, she should be treated like a child. While Sajidah was 12 and had more ‘aql than Tariq (in pre-Kindergarten), her behavior (according to

\textsuperscript{32} The sunnah is a compilation of stories or anecdotes from the people close to Prophet Muhammad about what he said or did.
the grandmother) was not in line with a responsible adult. In line 4, the grandmother addressed the female adults in the room (Sajida’s mom and aunt) about how to serve food to Sajidah in the future. The grandmother’s guidelines were two-fold. First Sajidah was to be served, rather than serve herself. Second, Sajidah was to be served in the manner of a child. Children only get a small amount of food at one time to make sure they can finish and not waste food. In practice, serving for children minimized the amount parents had to finish for the child. The grandmother’s reaction challenged Sajidah’s belonging or the kind of belonging she held in the family. Instead of belonging as a young adult, Sajidah was placed into a stance of belonging at the level of a child. However, in meals following with the family, this threat about serving Sajidah like a child never did come to pass.

Sajidah’s grandmother in line 2 relied on a vague reference to religious doctrine from the sunnah as her logic. Sajidah however did not alter her behavior due to the reference to the sunnah. Unlike some little children who refuted claims that God wanted them to do something with a “No!” Sajidah agreed with her grandmother. Sajidah responded to the sunnah reference (line 3) with mashi “okay,” as if to agree with what the sunnah says. However, she did not take it as a legitimate reason to keep eating; instead she pushed back telling her grandmother that she had already taken her fill.

Looking at 7A and 7B together, there are some interesting things we learn, especially about the role of ‘aql or reason. In example 7B, Sajidah was significantly older than Tariq in example 7A (12 versus 4). There was an interesting contrast in how ‘aql was used between the grandmother and Sajidah. Sajidah exercised her ‘aql, not to accept the authority of the sunnah and be convinced to finish but instead she exercised ‘aql to assert that being full was a stronger reason than what the sunnah said. The grandmother, on the other hand, interpreted Sajidah not finishing as a sign of a child who does not have the ‘aql to know how much to take and that they must finish what they take. While younger children are also scolded for not finishing (like
example 7A), they are also given some grace in their behavior because this lack of ‘aql is expected. That is why adults have to watch over portioning, such as making sure young kids only get a small amount, requiring children to eat sandwiches before going to the store.

In example 7A (and earlier with example 6), the predominant focus of the caregivers was not to “correct” the behavior. The caregivers never forced young children to keep eating or stop cheating. For the little ones, the attention is on socializing them into good behavior when they do develop that ‘aql. Not only are young children rarely punished, but they are often themselves disengaged from the situation. In example 6 and 7A, the children mostly ignored the warnings. Tariq and the students in example 6 were still much earlier in their development of ‘aql. They should not be punished in this world and at this time, as they are not yet fully responsible and punishment might do little to impact behaviors in a young child. Whether caregivers really believe the gates to heaven close if your plate isn’t clean, or it’s merely a means of persuading children and socializing religion, the focus is on how to behave when they do have reason. Pushing punishment to a distant future like the Day of Judgment (example 7A) allows for kids to see their path if they continue to behave outside of cultural and religious norms even after developing ‘aql.

Both examples 7A and 7B rely on religious doctrine. In example 7A, Ms. Tasneem connected to religion through the shaming term “haram,” suggesting that in her mind it was religious guidelines that were being violated, not just cultural or social norms. In 7B, the grandmother referenced the sunnah of Prophet Muhammad. Religious “guidelines” however, are never clear dos and don’ts. Instead they are interpretations of how to live based on readings of religious texts (such as the Qur’an) or the sayings and doings of the Prophet Muhammad (hadith and sunnah). Claims that behaviors are in violation of religion are used to justify what you can and cannot do. When it comes to food, there are a number of hadiths of Prophet Muhammad that provide something for everyone--some suggest that over indulgence in food is bad, others not to
waste food. The Prophet is reported to have said, “The child of Adam has not filled any receptacle worse than his stomach. It is sufficient for the child of Adam to eat small bits of food that keep him healthy. Now if he wants to eat much any way, he should give a third to the food, a third to the drink and a third (of his stomach) to let him breathe comfortably (Bukhari 2003). In the Qur’an, there is a call to avoid wasting: “It is He Who has brought into being gardens, the cultivated and the wild, and date-palms, and fields with produce of all kinds...Eat of their fruit in season, but give (the poor) their due on harvest day. And do not waste, for God does not love the wasteful” (Qur’an 6:141). So, while there certainly is a call to not waste, there is also a call for moderation. Both in the historical time of Prophet Muhammad and in contemporary Jordan, for most families, food may not be scarce but it certainly is not overabundant. Relying on religious doctrine is one way of expressing an economic concern for wasting food that also socializes into *taqwa*, God consciousness.

In this section, I examined how references to God and religion were used to indicate to children behaviors that were considered inappropriate from the religious standpoint. When we think about this particular age group (4-6 year olds), these disciplinary strategies highlight culturally appropriate behaviors while also socializing an awareness of the omnipresence of God. However, at this age, neither awareness of appropriateness nor divine omnipresence may be fully understood. That does not mean that such awarenesses cannot begin to influence future behavior. At this age, kids are still learning what it means that God is going to see them cheat, or be angry over them lying.

Before ending, I would like to conclude with a short discussion on fear and the use of God. Examples 6 and 7 socialize children to fear God, because He always seems angry or about to bestow punishment. But Islamic discourses are largely about the mercy and beneficence of God, not His wrath and anger. *Bismilah ir-rahman ir-rahheem*, the opening line of the Qur’an and the God-phrase that is said to begin actions (eating, driving, taking a test, etc) means “In the name
of Allah, the most beneficent the most merciful.” So caregivers are also socializing young children to a more forgiving God. The final example of how this socializing emerges comes from a bus ride with two lower elementary teachers and a very vocal bus driver. Ms. Jalilah took the lead. She was a first grade teacher in the Arabic medium classes and not a teacher I worked with during the school day. However, she was the lead teacher on my morning bus route.

On some drives home, like this one, Ms. Jalilah led the students through a discussion to teach them something while also distracting them from misbehavior. After asking students what good behaviors they do at home, Ms. Jalilah asked the students to share something in their lives they did that was not good. She kicked off the question with her own example. “Ana mara akhadat ishi mu illi” “I once took something that was not mine.” She immediately continued, “but I thought about how Allah saw me and I returned it.” Other students gave examples as well, although the audible ones were similar examples of students taking things that were not theirs. The teacher then prompted the students asking if they had ever lied. Three students audibly and excitedly shouted “ana” “me.” She lectured at the students, “hatha la bikedhib allah kan katib wa hella sai’ieh” “the one who lies, Allah wrote it and now it is a sin.” This references the Islamic belief that all actions, good and bad, are recorded for judgment. She continued by asking the students, “shu raiyeh amal baadain” “what do you think happens after [lying.]” One student responds “hauto bil naar” “He put [the liar] in the fire.” And the teacher instead of continuing the build up of fear, immediately contradicts it. She responded with “la ma bin hauto” “no, [He] doesn’t put him [in the fire.]” She added “naheki ana taubit allah subhanahu wa ta’ala, wa amalit ishi mu mmniha” “we say, I repented Allah the most glorified the most high and I did something not good.” The teacher ended with the mercy of God, at the acceptance of the liar that he did wrong, and planned to do better. This example parallels the process of discipline: socializing children into culturally appropriate behavior while also being merciful for the wrong
they committed. The hope is that the child will understand what was wrong and do better in the future.

Unlike other teachers who invoke the wrath of God repeatedly to increase obedience in the classroom, Ms. Jalilah gave a more nuanced view of God as One who sees all, but who is forgiving and accepting of repentance. But the child must take the initiative and admit wrongdoing. Ms. Jalilah’s conversation with the students also began at the assumption that all her students had done something bad. While clearly all children have done at least one bad thing (inevitably much more), Ms. Jalilah went around the bus asking students to answer, not to punish or tell them it was wrong, but recognizing that they all were expected to have an answer. She listened carefully to each student’s response, providing back channeling (“ah” to show them she was listening and following along), and “aiwa” “okay.” She never asked students to feel bad about their past behaviors, and given how excited the ones who admitted to cheating were, they did not seem to be feeling it either. Instead when she commented, it was directed generally, about how stealing or cheating was bad.

3.9 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the way that Islamic ideas about child maturation feed into the implementation of discipline of children in my field site. Having well behaved children is an important part of family pride. Even though childhood misbehavior is a normal part of life, parents love to show off well-behaved children to their guests. Especially prideful were the parents who beamed as their children recited verses of the Qur’an by memory when I visited. In spite of the fact that children are seen as going through a maturation process that continues until they themselves become responsible parents, parents want children who show signs of “goodness” rather than those of badness.
The discipline strategies that I presented in this chapter accomplish two things. First, they introduce children to important Jordanian cultural values, such as respect for authority, empathy, concern for honor through the avoidance of public shame, and God consciousness. Second, as these values are in the process of being socialized and children are still developing ‘aql, they are not expected yet to act in line with these values. Instead, disciplinary methods often include a reason or logic that models for children a process of taking these values into consideration when determining how to act (a process of reasoning). The explanations around discipline model how to enact important cultural ethics and values.

Shame is an important part of most of the disciplinary strategies I presented, even when the terms are not explicitly evoked. Many of the disciplinary strategies drew on Lo and Fung’s definition of shame “a response to the external judgment of others” (2011:170) even without invoking the term. Based on the results from my dataset for this chapter, I argue that the terms ‘aib and ma basir draw specifically on that external judgment and are predominantly used when behaviors impact others, such as taking their things or other people seeing a balloon labeled with your name and the word naughty. ‘Aib and ma basir are also used for etiquette such as chewing with your mouth open or sucking one’s thumb.

*Haram* on the other hand, while also used for inappropriate behaviors, has a more serious connotation. Behaviors labelled haram reflect poor character such as not working hard at school, lying, or taking more food before finishing what one already has. The connection between haram and religious doctrine in addition to the labeling of misbehavior can lead not just to shame, but the feelings of guilt. As parents do not dwell on discipline, forcing children to “feel bad” or “feel sorry” for their actions, using haram encourages some self-reflection and self-internalization of how their behavior is perceived within religious and social frameworks.

As I discussed earlier in the chapter, haram not only means taboo, but sacred. One manifestation of the somewhat contradictory meaning is that haram can label poor behavior while
*ya haram* is said out of pity for someone in a bad situation (divorce, loss of job, etc). When saying *ya haram* out of pity, it also leans on the effect on someone’s character. *Ya haram* and *haram* are used when concerned with how someone will be affected in the future – in the former, because of the pitiful change in circumstance, and in the latter, because if behaviors continue, the person will continue down a path of badness.

Returning to the importance of children in the culture, parents and families are highly invested in their children. Like most parents, they have many ideas about what it takes to raise children and go through many strategies to help those children grow and develop into contributing community members. The goal of discipline is to model a process of exercising ‘*aql* in the hopes of preventing misbehavior in the future and encouraging positive behavior in its place, specifically behavior that aligns with important community values.

One of the side effects of a process of community socialization is a growing awareness of cultural values. Using God as an ever-present bystander and disciplinarian introduces the children to the concept of *taqwa* or God-consciousness. Given that this is a difficult concept to learn, especially for children unsure about God, parents are socializing them into *taqwa*. As one mother in an interview explained, she wanted her children to learn religion from her, at home, before they begin school. Given that “religion” is a big concept that likely is not learned by the age of 5, I asked her what “religion” meant. She listed that religion entailed that her children should understand religion, pray, and fear God (*khaf Allah*). As Wadud explains, *taqwa* is often described as “fear of God” as it encourages “good” behavior. However Wadud argues that God-consciousness is a better manifestation of the concept (1999). Rather than act out of fear of punishment, Wadud argues one acts out of awareness of God’s presence. Unfortunately, I am not sure how the mother meant it other than to know that she used the concept of fear rather than the broader concept of *taqwa*. 
As I presented earlier in the paper, the concept of ‘aql (reason) can be used not to encourage children to learn positive ways to behave, but to indulge children with all their desires. This was seen in the example of the mother-in-law who did not want to deny her grandchildren. During parent interviews, many mothers openly admitted that between themselves, their spouses, and especially the children’s grandparents, there is a lot of spoiling of their children. Rather than hold firm to a punishment as Farah’s mother does in example 1, most of the time parents cave in to a child crying for candy or a kid who will not give back the stickers. Without the reason to understand or know better, children are allowed instant gratification by their family.

But the allowing of children to have most of their desires is a complex issue and not just a result of the theory of ‘aql. Parents of the children at Al-Dawran, as I have discussed in Chapter 1, are mostly in part of a rapidly rising social class. Parents (and grandparents) have access to opportunities for their children that parents did not have themselves as children. And with the money and resources to afford those things, parents want their children not to be denied. Additionally, for mothers raising multiple children, perhaps also working 6 days a week outside the home, and balancing time and responsibilities with their own families, holding firm to punishments is not just hard on children but hard on exhausted mothers.

In the theory of ‘aql, children need time to develop the reason for making good choices. For overworked and overstressed parents, the concept of ‘aql helps reassure them that giving in to a child’s desires when they are relatively innocent (some sweets here, breaking a toy there) is okay. As discussed in the chapter, children are not yet responsible for their behavior, so parents are not worried that their spoiled child will not mature into a responsible adult. Rather in spite of a little spoiling, children have the potential to grown into well-adjusted and contributing members of the community. It is this same theory of child development that encourages the modeling of good parenting and excuses it when it just is not happening.
Chapter 4: School Choice: Getting the Values You Pay for

4.1 Introduction

In Chapters 2 and 3, I looked in detail at interactions between caregivers and children to understand the cultivation of ethical behavior and the broader impacts of the socialization of morality. In this chapter, I step back and look discourses around language and education to understand how parents select a school and how schools recruit and maintain a student body. I argue that religious and linguistic values are commodified to legitimate a search for a school that focuses on local values but also progress, and Al-Dawran draws on both discourses to keep parents enrolling each year.

The lower primary students were especially excited as we loaded the shuttle bus to school on October 2, 2014. Al-Dawran was putting on a miniature version of the upcoming hajj, this version held on the paved parking lot that doubled as a playground. Hajj is the annual pilgrimage to Mecca completed by millions of Muslims each year within a span of about five days. It occurs just before a major holiday, ‘Eid al-Adha, the festival of sacrifice, marked by animal sacrifice and donations to the poor. ‘Eid is also a time of celebration and social gatherings. Usually, on the school bus, the teachers ignored the students. But on that day, the fitness teacher engaged the students in an interaction around social expectations at ‘eid. She said to the students in Arabic, “It’s almost ‘eid. What do you say?” One student responded “kul ‘am wa entum bekhair,” an ‘eid greeting for best wishes and good health. The teacher asked the students on the bus to recite the phrase together, and a chorus repeated it. The teacher then teased, “Who doesn’t know this? Who doesn’t know this?” One student obliged and shouted “Me!” and the whole bus laughed. The teacher ended the exchange on a more serious note, “I want all of you to memorize it.”

The interaction above illustrates the important social and cultural role of Jordanian primary school teachers in the many classrooms I observed. Teachers across the world integrate
the socialization of social, cultural, and national norms into all aspects of the school day. For example, on an English worksheet in a Jordanian classroom, students had to complete the sentence with the superlative form of the adjective: “The king is the _______ person in a country (important).” Questions like this allowed students to practice English while also reinforcing dedication to the king and nation. Further blending the social and academic, Jordanian teachers inculcate in students the religious norms and practices that undergird social, cultural, and national identity. Take for example the morning assembly, *taboor*, occurring at schools all over Jordan, at every grade level. Shirazi describes the practice as “compulsory daily school exercises designed to strengthen loyalty to the Hashemite rule of Jordan and encourage a sense of national belonging” (2012:73). However, the assembly is much broader than just a focus on nation. The assembly features ritual Islamic greetings, physical exercise, recitation of the opening chapter of the Qur’an, and standing at attention for the raising of the Jordanian flag while singing the national anthem. The assembly often ends with a student reciting a poem, essay, or trivia from a class assignment. These practices help create for students the notion that successful community membership is built on the mixing of ethics, values, interactional expectations, and academic achievement.

The ability to navigate ethical expectations and display “correct behavior” across a variety of situations was what Jordanian mothers defined for me as *adab*. As we saw in Chapter 3, *adab* (well-behaved; manners) and *akhlaq* (ethics) are culturally important values and emerge from Islam. One mother defined *akhlaq* thus: “*al deen huwa akhlaq*” “religion, that is ethics …ethics that are good, that’s religion.” Another mother added that *adab* is not only helping those in need, but behaving respectfully when guests are visiting, and listening and obeying one’s mother. Another mother said, “*the most important thing is upbringing (tarbieh). First thing is good upbringing and then comes learning (darasa).*” Demonstrating *adab* and *akhlaq* means integrating religion, culture, nationalism, and intellectual achievement, and highlighting the right
value at the right time. Schools play an important role in teaching values derived from religion, culture, nation, and pursuit of education.

As addressed in Chapter 1, the educational market in Jordan allows parents with the necessary financial resources to make choices about where to send their children to school. As with all parents choosing a school for their child, the mothers of students at Al-Dawran are balancing quality of the school against the cost they can afford. With the enormous growth of the educational private sector, private schools compete amongst each other over potential parents and their children. Private schools are all drawing from the population with the desires for education better than the government school alternative and the economic means to afford it. However private school students do not always end up better prepared for university and jobs than government school graduates. According to an article from Al-Fanar Media, in 2015, 5.5% of all government schools had a 100% failure rate on the high school graduation exam (tawjihī), as did 1% of the private schools (Alkafaween 2015). The overall pass rate was close to 40% meaning most students had to take the exam again (Alkafaween 2015). Passing the tawjihī exam is essential for college entrance and for some jobs, and enrolling in private schools does not guarantee preparation for college. Thus in order to remain competitive in a market of so many private schools to choose from, private schools have to present themselves as directly and continually benefiting the children they serve.

In this chapter, I look at the role of language ideologies in the process of deciding between private schools. Based on the mothers I interviewed, the most common goal was to find a school that helped in the raising of bilingual children: that is, a school that prioritizes English but does not leave behind Arabic and associated Islamic ethics. The parents face the challenge of “how to simultaneously raise children in the proper Islamic way, while educating them in principles of secular nationalism and preparing them for employment in global markets” (Herrera & Torres 2006:13). The parents of Al-Dawran’s students are trying to find a balance where
Islamic values and economic progress (dependent on English fluency) can coexist. As such, bilingualism amongst this segment of the Jordanian population is not just practical, but bilingualism serves as a mark of ethical development balanced with modernity. In this chapter I answer the following two questions:

1. How are language ideologies of English and Arabic used to explain the importance of being bilingual in English and Arabic, and how do they affect how mothers legitimate their choice in school?
2. How are these ideologies used by Al-Dawran’s administration and teachers to attract and maintain enrollment by parents and their children?

In this chapter, I argue that the parents have chosen Al-Dawran because the mothers find it to be a school that attempts to instill adab and akhlaq (associated with the Arabic language), while also providing the prospect for jobs and prestige (represented in the English language). Starting with the tropes of the ideologies of authenticity and anonymity (Woolard 2008) and the tropes of pride and profit (Duchêne & Heller 2012), I examine the values attached to and commodification of both Arabic and English. Both tropes help understand the authority given to Arabic and English and in the justification for raising bilingual children. In addition to being the authentic language of place and local rootedness and adding pride attached to family, people and place, Arabic was valued for its connection to religion and ethics. On the other hand, English drew on some of the ideas of anonymity, as a language of communication across differences (national, linguistic, ethnic), but more so on the association with profits, that is, the language of prestige and economic benefit. In raising bilingual children, parents wanted to provide their children with the positive values associated with both languages. Parents found that overall, Al-Dawran attempted to encompass values attached to both languages. Even though the mothers I interviewed found problems with the school, they selectively prioritized aspects of the school that provided benefits of both Arabic and English. In section 4.5, I lay out the ways that ideologies of both English and Arabic are connected to the value parents find in Al-Dawran.
On the side of the school, the administration capitalizes on the expectations of parents and deliberately markets the school as focusing on both Islamic ethics and English, often intertwined. I argue that the owner of the school emphasizes the focus on English, while the principal adds the focus on adab and akhlaq. Through the commodification of English and aspects of religion, the parents find the balance of both that they are looking for in a school.

Given the competitive environment in private schools, I argue that the school’s administration must be highly focused on brand, i.e., the image created in the minds of the school’s community of current and prospective parents assisted by the stamping of the school’s logo. Branding helps connect, in the minds of the parents, “ideas, values, and even ideologies to commodities” (Lukens-Bull 2008:224). The logo of the school on each document sent home to parents, connected the school to both a strong English program and the teaching of important local values: adherence and respect for culture, religion, and nation. In section 4.6, I present some of the school’s attempts to address the parents. These outreaches encourage parents to consider re-enrolling their students at the end of each school year, and to spread positive comments about the school to their friends. At least some of their friends would be open to transferring schools, yielding a pool of prospective parents.

4.2 Background on Government and Private Schools in Amman

While education in the Arab world has made significant advances in recent years, there is still room for improvement. From 1980-2010, Jordan was in the top ten countries for increasing the mean length of schooling, adding over 4.5 years to the average length of schooling33 (Barro and Lee cited in Assaad 2014). However, this improvement does not imply a drastic increase in the quality as seen in student performance. Performing better than most Arab countries, Jordan

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33 According to Barrow and Lee, the average length of schooling went from 4.58 years (in 1980) to 9.23 years (in 2010) (cited in Campante & Chor 2012).
still lags behind the average international test scores. According to data from the international 8th grade TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) 2015 mathematics achievement test, Jordan’s average score was 386, giving it a rank of 36 out of the 39 countries taking the test (TIMSS & PIRLS 2015). Jordan scored slightly higher than Morocco and Saudi Arabia, but less than United Arab Emirates, Lebanon, Qatar, and Egypt. All the Arab countries, however, scored below the average across all 39 countries. Continual poor performance in the region has encouraged parents with resources to seek out strong education in avenues beyond the government education system.

For parents with the economic ability and desire to seek alternatives, the parents’ own depictions of government schools help legitimate their move to private schools. Government schools serve as a contrast to what parents want for their children. One of the mothers I interviewed, Um Ghazal34, taught English at a government school. She adamantly stated about her own children, “I won’t put them [in government schools]. Ever.” Her descriptions of government school classrooms justified her statement. In her 9th grade class she described that, “out of 48 students, perhaps two can converse in English.” The rest of the students cry out “‘Ms, mish fahema. Ms, tarjameeni. Ms, ashan allah’ ‘Ms I don’t understand. Ms, translate for me’ [in Arabic]. Ms because of allah [help me].” Um Ghazal’s students began learning English in grade 1, but by 9th grade, “were [at] zero,” and still did not know the English alphabet. However she continued explaining that under her guidance, the students who did not know the alphabet were reading by the end of the first semester. By her description, Um Ghazal helped her students accomplish reading in one semester, even though they had been taught English for eight years. Whether this anecdote says a lot about her teaching, or something about the students, her depiction of the poor (initial) quality of students did shed light on her perception of the role government schools played in holding back students. All schools, especially government schools,

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34 The mother of Ghazal. Ghazal’s family was one of the families I introduced in Chapter 3.
face challenges in reaching each and every child. But the story exemplified a way of reading the challenges of government schools as a means of solidifying a desire for private education.

Ms. Layla, one of the teachers at Al-Dawran had a very different description of government schools. Ms. Layla moved her youngest two children from private into government schools in 2014. As opposed to the mother before, Ms. Layla’s description of government schools was much more positive. Without the resources to afford private school, Ms. Layla needed to legitimate to herself that her kids would be okay even after spending a few years in government schools. While she readily admitted that her children’s new English program was weak, saying “al Engleezi mumkin ana bialamuiyah” “maybe I will have to teach my kids English,” she was impressed by the Arabic program. She described how proud she was of her son’s ability in only first grade, at reading and writing in Arabic. But especially remarkable was how quickly he had progressed in Arabic. Ms. Layla said, “My son was in private school for two years. He didn’t learn [at private school] what he learned in one month [in government school].” We see a parallel between Um Ghazal’s and Ms. Layla’s descriptions of rapid success, also at a government school. Both stories, at the heart, are about good teachers who are able to make rapid change in their students. However, the take away is completely different. For Ms. Layla, the story was focused on the progress her children made; Um Ghazal focused on the outstanding handicap the students in government schools face in learning. Ms. Layla was also in awe of the respect for the government school teacher and discipline in the classroom. Her daughter told her, “Mama bitfoot al Ms, walla kilemeh” “Mom, when the teacher enters [the room], there is absolute silence.” Perhaps Ms. Layla’s awe was because this was never the case in Ms. Layla’s classroom; but the

35 In a more recent interaction with Ms. Layla, in March of 2017, I discovered Ms. Layla had switched her two children back into a private school. She wrote to me about the challenges in education in Jordan, “pay good, get good education. Don’t pay, get nothing.” So even though while I was in the field, she had justified the benefit of government schools, her responses shifted when she regained the ability to pay for private education. Now Ms. Layla had the privilege of drawing a connection between cost and school quality.
difference led her to conclude that government schools were a positive space for learning to take place.

Despite Ms. Layla’s somewhat positive experience at government schools, government schools are generally under-resourced, over-crowded, and weak in English (Alkafaween 2015). The government school I taught at in 2008 could not always afford heating fuel, so students huddled in their jackets, often wearing gloves while writing their assignments. The average number of students per government school class averaged around 45 students, sometimes 50 or 60. As a result of the incoming Syrian refugees, some schools exceeded even those numbers. To cope, the government school in the town in Amman where I was staying, shortened the school day and added an afternoon shift. Given the challenges with the government-run education system, those parents with resources justify their desire to look outside.

The choice in the market of Jordanian educational institutions has allowed for significantly more opportunities outside of the government system. According to Ms. Rabia, one of the teachers at Al-Dawran, when she was growing up in Amman, there were only a handful of private schools. Like most of her childhood peers, she went to government school because that was the norm. After finishing college, she got married and moved to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia for her husband’s job. In 2013, her family returned to Amman with two school-aged children. Ms. Rabia found herself navigating an educational market with many private school options. With the economic resources to afford choice, she began a long process of researching what she thought were the merits of a number of schools, based on her children’s needs.

One of the reasons for the increase in private schools is a result of the push by the Jordanian government towards privatization. Beginning around 1999, after a rapid and continuous increase in unemployment\textsuperscript{36}, Jordan turned to the private sector for help building economic

\textsuperscript{36} Assaad (2014) cites a 30 percent drop (60% to 30%) in college graduates obtaining public sector jobs from 1990-2000.
growth (Assaad 2014; Shirazi 2016). As a result, Jordan was able to slow and even decrease the youth unemployment numbers; Egypt, on the other hand was also facing a drop in public sector jobs but did not increase private sector jobs. In contrast to Jordan, Egypt instead saw the unemployment rate continue to increase (Assaad 2014:9-10). One consequence of the turn towards the private sector and neoliberal ideals is a large selection of choices for parents and a highly competitive market for private schools struggling to recruit parents. Ms. Rabia even hoped to take advantage of this market by opening her own school in the future. She had sought a teaching position at a private school herself because she wanted to first gain experience. In an interview with me she told me her biggest challenge to opening her own school was that parents were frequently moving their children between schools. She elaborated:

> There are so many schools! What makes you better than the rest? You are more expensive by 50 dinars? Fine, I’ll go to the cheaper one. People change schools a lot, there is no stability...I talked to a lot of mothers [when looking for a school for my children] and they say “it’s okay, it’s okay. Put them in any school because you can always change.” Two years [at this school], two years [at that school].

Ms. Rabia described the competitive environment that Al-Dawran faces. Parents are not always loyal to a school, especially when there are cheaper alternatives.

Based on cost, Al-Dawran falls into a middle range of private schools. One year of elementary education, per child, runs 1000 Jordanian dinars (approximately $1400 USD).\footnote{According to numbers published in the \textit{Jordanian Times}, the average monthly salary in Jordan is $637 USD. That makes the average annual income $7644 (Azzeh 2017).} Upper grades at the school increase in cost to 1600 Jordanian dinars ($2250 USD). I was told that many private schools cost under 1000 Jordanian dinars per year, and many cost more. According to Ms. Layla, the top schools in Amman cost at least double what Al-Dawran costs, just at the kindergarten level. The cost difference increases for older grades. However in those “elite” schools, English is the primary medium of education, and Arabic is taught as a second language. This elite subset of schools is generally internationally accredited schools, often targeting a
different segment of the population from private schools like Al-Dawran. Most students at elite schools are raised in predominantly English-speaking homes. The elite school can afford to provide advanced technology in each classroom including computers, laptops, and smartboards.

4.3 The Role of English in Jordan

English is a highly visible part of the landscape of Jordan. From advertisements to road signs, English is visibly present. Even rural areas that are somewhat left out of the idealized “world-wide globalization,” have signs in English. Depending on many factors including class, education, experiences abroad, and national origins, many Jordanians often interspersed code-switching into English during ordinary conversations. English was common for technology and medical terms, conversations about the news or popular media, or jargon from school or work. Additionally, in professional settings such as government offices, police stations, and medical centers, workers switched easily into English if they realized their interlocutor was not fully fluent in Arabic. In professional occupations, English was not only necessary to interact with potential non-Arabic speakers (as English was the most common lingua franca), but English was essential for professional development and keeping up with progress in one’s field. English was a language of profit; as Duchêne and Heller write, the legitimacy of a language “is related to structural changes in political economic conditions, and it materially concerns people’s livelihoods, orients their activities and frames how they make sense out of and feel about things” (2012:8).

In addition to areas of the world where English serves as the national language (officially or unofficially), varieties of English can be found across the world. Early models of World Englishes divide English into three concentric circles to take into account emerging English varieties (Kachru 1985). The inner circle includes predominantly English speaking countries where most speakers are native speakers. The outer circle draws in mostly former colonies where
English is often taught as a second language. And finally, the expanding circle includes countries where English is not used for most communication inside the country but is becoming increasingly common for specific domains such as higher education or trade (Kachru 1985).

Other models of the spread of English lean on the colonial history of how the language spread. Frameworks of linguistic imperialism build off the colonial past of many mostly Western countries around the world (Phillipson 1992). The dominance of English is seen as arising “as an instrument of the foreign policy of the major English-speaking states,” first with England as a colonial power and currently with technology, communication and media through the social and cultural power of the United States (Phillipson 1992:1). Phillipson defines linguistic imperialism as the process by which “the dominance of English is asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages” (2006:347).

In contrasts to Phillipson’s persequites, Brutt-Griffler and others have noted, the strong adherence by analysts to the influence of colonial history puts power and control over language in the hands of colonial legacy and remaining colonial institutions. But it is the speakers of English in these countries that have spread, innovated, and raised the importance of English (Brutt-Griffler 2002; Pennycook 1998). Non-mother tongue English speakers hold agency because not only do they believe in the value of English, but create and build its value as they use and further spread English. Additionally these speakers help innovate English into different varieties specific to groups of people or places (Brutt-Griffler 2002). Mufwene points out that as products (including languages) travel across the world, there is an increase in diversity as local features are added (2010). Rather than standardization, Mufwene argues that as English spreads, the result will be increasing diversity.

But it is not just the colonial past that ties Jordan to English. Large-scale migration has been a big part of the fabric of the Arab World made worse by war and politics (Abu-Lughod
Additionally, Antoun writes, migration for higher education is an important driver for migration out of Jordan yet commonly overlooked by much of the research on transnational migration which focuses on labor migration (2005:10). As Jordan has very few advanced degree programs, many students pursuing PhDs or studying in certain fields must do so outside the country (Pedersen 2010:291).

Amongst middle and upper classes, like the families that attend Al-Dawran, English holds increasing linguistic capital for Jordanians, especially for the prospect of migration abroad. Those that travel to non-English-speaking countries often spend the first year learning the language, and even those who travel to English-speaking countries need a short course in English before starting school (Antoun 2005). For some Jordanians, economic success necessitates leaving Jordan when they are unable to find jobs inside the country. Given that unemployment rates increase as education increases (Assaad 2014), many educated professionals are part of the emigration for jobs. For this crowd, English may be a necessary part of their future employment.

Regardless of the draw of English for opportunities abroad, English is also gaining importance within Jordan itself. Even the discourse of the government about English is rooted in using the language to benefit Jordan and the possibility of economic success in Jordan. There is a prestige and economic benefit of being an English speaker in Jordan. One sign of the expansion of English in the local Jordanian context is the growth of a branch of study called English for Specific Purposes (ESP). According to Al-Salman, ESP can be found in most institutions for higher education across the Arab World. ESP includes English-specific courses for a variety of different career fields. This includes English for medicine, nursing, science and technology, business and economics, etc. (Al-Salman 2007:145). Al-Salman links the emergence of ESP to the specialized knowledge and specialized research of each field. The necessity of English for these fields not only provides the foundations necessary to study in one of the fields, but
demonstrates the importance of English both to education (in order to attend university) and to employment in that field.

In order to better understand the development of English in Jordan, this Chapter looks at the experience at the level of the speakers of the language. Speakers must negotiate and make decisions about which languages to choose, and they negotiate the values and opportunities associated with the languages. The mothers at the school have “bought into” the necessity of English, seeking out a school and paying money for the privilege of raising children who are hopefully fluent English speakers by the time they enter the workforce. In this chapter, I examine the metalanguage that these mothers, who are consumers of global ideas about English, and how ideas about language motivate their decisions about which school to send their children to in order to have their children taught both Arabic and English.

Even with the growing influence of English, most Jordanians do not seek after English at the sacrifice of Arabic. English is added alongside other languages rather than replacing them (Brutt-Griffler 2002:12). Many mothers strong in English choose not to use it as the primary means of communication at home. The mothers maintain Arabic in spheres such as the home, while at the same time, putting pressure on schools to teach English. In this chapter, I use language ideologies to help break down the various values associated with English and Arabic to examine not only why parents want to raise bilingual children, but also how the school plays a role in this decision.

4.4 Methodology

In order to answer my opening research questions about ideologies of language and the rationale used by parents use to explain what they find most important in and through education, I rely on interviews with mothers of current students at Al-Dawran. Based on my field experience with families, mothers most often took the lead within the family in regards to how the children
should be educated, specifically, what school they should attend, as well as day-to-day oversight of the children’s progress in class and communication with the teacher. The interviews also revealed concerns the mothers had about their children’s future and what they hoped for their children. From my discussions with mothers about what they want for their child’s future, their conversations revealed “knowledge about the world” (Haviland 1977; Hymes 1974) illustrating what each mother in particular cared about, what values she hoped to instill in her children, and how she thought about herself and her relationship with her children.

The perspectives of mothers in this chapter come from 10 semi-structured interviews. All of the interviews were conducted near the end of my fieldwork, between January and March 2015. Each of the mothers had at least one child in lower elementary school at Al-Dawran. In addition to asking mothers to explain why they selected Al-Dawran and what they thought of the school, I also asked for the mothers’ thoughts on education, child-rearing, and the role of English and Arabic in the lives of their children. The interviews were conducted in the local dialect of Arabic, although some of the mothers integrated English into their responses.

In order to examine how the school played on language ideologies to maintain and recruit parents, I used observations and interviews with the school’s administrators and teachers. The interview with the principal of the lower elementary school, Ms. Asma, allowed me to better examine the school’s philosophy on early primary education. I also included fieldnotes from observations and group interactions with the owner of the school, Dr. Hussein. While I heard a lot about Dr. Hussein, the owner, I was unable to conduct an interview with him. In order to add other perspectives on the school, I integrated interviews with the school’s lower elementary English teachers. These teachers often provided a different perspective on the ideas that the

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38 Early in my fieldwork I was able to talk to Dr. Hussein informally or in meetings with other teachers. However, as he became busier with logistics on the construction of the new school building, I saw Dr. Hussein very sporadically. A few months into my fieldwork I tried with the help of Ms. Layla to set up a time to talk to Dr. Hussein, but he remained vague or did not show up when we had planned to speak, so I stopped pushing for a meeting.
principal conveyed. The interviews with teachers from February 2015 included their reflections on the school and thoughts on what the school was trying to accomplish.

In this chapter, segments of interviews include a mix of Arabic and English. Italics were used to mark Arabic text as well as Arabic translated into English. Interview material spoken in English in the original remains un-italicized.

4.5 Language Ideologies and Linguistic Authority

The difference in quality and outcome at graduation of private school students versus government school students is a driving force for why mothers sought out private school education for their children. Al-Dawran was among the private schools that were strong in both Arabic and English, a desirable quality for mothers who believed that their children should be prepared for the necessity of being bilingual. Given that Al-Dawran was competing with other schools in a fairly similar quality, the school worked hard to please parents and be the school that parents wanted. At the same time, parents looked at the school from the lens of the values and outcomes they hope for for their children. Through an examination of linguistic ideologies, I argue that mothers attach different values to Arabic and English justifying the importance of both languages.

Language ideologies provide a way to better understand how the mothers think about the most common languages in Jordan (Arabic and English). Language ideologies are “any sets of beliefs about language articulated by users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use” (Silverstein 1979:193). Using interviews with mothers on their view of early education in Arabic and English, I explore beliefs about each language in relation to cultural values and power. In addition, the perceived value of each language affects how parents make educational decisions for their child. As Woolard and Schieffelin discuss, varieties of a language that have come to index a particular kind of speaker come to be thought of not just as
identity markers but as an way of signaling political stance or social, intellectual, or moral worth (1994:61). Ideas about a language create associations about a speaker or non-speaker of the language. Thus, the mothers’ desire to raise bilingual children reveals the implications those languages have for the children who speak them.

Before exploring the language ideologies that parents at the school expressed, we must look at how the context of Jordan shaped ideologies. As Woolard and Schieffelin point out in examining the various definitions of language ideologies, “a view of ideology” is “rooted in or responsive to the experience of a particular social position” (1994:58). Although ideologies are “partial, contestable and contested, and interest-laden,” the fact that they are incomplete is often lost or ignored, making ideologies seem “universally and/or timelessly true” (Woolard & Schieffelin 1994:58). The ideas about languages seen in the mothers’ interviews have emerged partly as a response to the current situation in Jordan. The king of Jordan placed emphasis on all students learning and becoming conversant in English. The necessity of a strong English approach to language education was echoed in how mothers spoke about English. These mothers were thinking ahead to their child’s ability to succeed in a competitive job market.

Further, the perspectives on education that parents hold are influenced by their own history of language learning. For many mothers, the memory of being unable to cope with the demands of understanding or speaking English drove them to prevent this discomfort for their children. Seven out of the ten mothers I interviewed brought up challenges in their personal lives from poor English skills. For some mothers, the challenge began at the first semester in an English medium course at university, when they were unable to understand their professors.39 Even those who had not attended university had problems. One mother watched her husband,

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39 Given the sole determinant for university entrance was the *tawjihi* exam score, students can gain entrance to higher education without strong English skills. Additionally, most government schools (and English exams) focus on reading and grammar, not as much on oral comprehension and conversation. The latter skills are more important for success in a university course.
who could not speak English, struggle to find a better job than as a taxi driver; without English, his job mobility was severely limited.

Arabic is by far the most common language in Jordan, and the official language of the country. Like most languages, Arabic is not a single language but includes varieties of the language. The Arabic language was one of Ferguson’s classic cases of diglossia. Ferguson describes diglossia as “where two varieties of a language exist side by side throughout the community, with each having a definite role to play” (1959:232). In Arabic, a Classical or Standard (“High”) variety, co-exists with a regional dialect (“Low”) variety. The High variety of Arabic includes both the Arabic of the Qur’an and Modern Standard Arabic. Arabic speakers generally collapse the distinction and refer to them together as FuṣHa (see also Haeri 2003). The term FuṣHa comes from the root f-s-h (ف ص ح) meaning “to be eloquent” (Wehr 1994:837). FuṣHa is taught in schools and common across most Arabic speakers across the world.

The Low varieties of Arabic, referred to by Jordanians as ‘ammiya, include regional variations that may or may not be intelligible across the Arabic speaking region. The term ‘ammiya comes from the root ‘-m (ع) which means “common, vulgar” and “ordinary” (Wehr 1994:751). While overlapping with FuṣHa in terms of lexicon, grammar, and phonetics, ‘ammiya is a simplified version of FuṣHa. Jordanian (or Levantine) ‘ammiya shares much of the lexicon of FuṣHa but with the addition of some locally specific vocabulary or choices amongst the vast vocabulary in FuṣHa. For example, Jordanians tend to use r-a-H (ح-ا) instead of dh-h-b (ذ-ح-ب) for the verb “to go.” Grammar rules are also simplified in ‘ammiya including the pattern of conjugating verbs with the Arabic letter baa (ب) and determining more precise meanings from context. There are also regional differences in the pronunciation of certain Arabic letters in the Arabic alphabet. The Arabic letter qaf (ق) in Jordan varies in pronunciation. It sometimes sounds
like the traditional pronunciation in *FuṣHa*\(^{40}\) /q/, sometimes as a glottal stop (common in Amman) and sometimes /g/ (in rural areas).

Within an Arabic speaking region, other varieties of Arabic may exist, and may signal a particular class or ethnic background. In contemporary Jordan, there is not as strict a compartmentalization between the high and low variety as Ferguson’s diglossia suggested. Instead which variety is used depends on setting, context, interlocutors and many other factors. *FuṣHa*, is the language taught in schools. Most speakers default to ‘*ammiya* at home.

In addition to the high and low varieties of Arabic, knowledge of English is a growing source of power and authority found in everyday interactions and in institutions of authority. English holds economic value, as the top jobs in urban areas increasingly hire only bilingual speakers (most commonly Arabic and English).

In order to explore the relationship between the ideologies of linguistic authority, I rely on two tropes: authenticity and anonymity (Woolard 2008) and pride and profit (Duchêne & Heller 2012). According to Woolard, based on the beliefs that speakers of a language hold, authenticity and anonymity give authority and legitimacy to a language based on differing values. The ideology of authenticity places a language’s value on the “rootedness” of a speaker, as a true representative of a particular community. The variety is marked as coming “from somewhere.” On the other hand, the ideology of anonymity uses the public “voice from nowhere” to sound like everyman - “a common, unmarked standard public language” (Woolard 2008:304-306). Here, marked/unmarked is used to contrast language that is expected and goes unnoticed (unmarked) versus language that triggers particular identities or associations (marked).

In addition to the trope of authenticity and anonymity, I examine the trope of pride and profit (Duchêne & Heller 2012). Similar to Woolard’s argument connected to the nation-state, the ideology of pride in language and the paraphernalia of the nation-state infrastructure (flag,\footnote{The *FuṣHa* pronunciation is common with religiously associated words like Qur’an.}
literature, map etc) allow for competent speakers to “claim access to political and economic power” (Duchène & Heller 2012:5). That is, speakers of the language are judged not only linguistically, but along moral dimensions. Knowing the language is important to accessing and succeeding in the society. Further, “Securing control over defining what counts as legitimate language thus became an important means for securing access to, and maintaining, positions of power within modern nation-states” (Duchène & Heller 2012:5). On the other hand, profit builds out the idea of language as capital. Under the ideology of profit, a language or languages (such as the ability to be bilingual) become commodified as a “technical skill” providing access to the economic realm (Duchène & Heller 2012:8). Pride and profit work together to make a language or languages both “a source of symbolic added value, and as a mode of management of global networks”; this allows a language to work as pride in the commodification of national identities and profit in the “marketing of authenticity” (Duchène & Heller 2012:10).

The Arabic speaking mothers I interviewed, use differing values to explain the importance of raising both Arabic and English speakers. Irvine uses the concept of linguistic differentiation to explain that “speakers, as agents in social (and sociolinguistic) space, negotiate their positions and goals within a system of distinctions and possibilities” (Irvine 2001:23-24). The tropes of authenticity and anonymity and pride and profit help explain the distinction and differing values placed on Arabic and English. In this section, I use these tropes as a starting point for examining linguistic authority to understand how mothers talk about each language and why each is important to learn; I also relate these ideas about language to why mothers selected Al-Dawran as the school for their children. I argue that Arabic is important to the mothers as the language of pride and authenticity, connecting children to the family and to their local rootedness. But these tropes are not the only important ideologies that mothers refer to: Arabic is also connected to broader associations with the Arab world and through the Qur’an to ethics and correct behavior (adab and akhlaq). Mothers find value in Al-Dawran because of the attention the
school places on local culture and values such as love and respect for children. English, in many ways takes on some characteristics of both profit and an anonymous language. Mothers look for a school that can prepare their child for English as the language of economic success.

4.5.1 Arabic: The Language of Authenticity, Pride, and Akhlâq

From my interviews with mothers, the authenticity and pride in Arabic comes from the interconnectedness between speaking Arabic and ideas about the family. Arabic ties the family together and helps to build and maintain family identity. Most Arabic speakers begin informally learning a local spoken variety of Arabic at home (‘ammiya). The use of a local variety of Arabic links speakers to particular nations, localities, classes, or ethnicities, distinguished by nuances in the variety of ‘ammiya. It is not until starting school that most children begin learning standard Arabic or ḤaṣHa. Two mothers explained that since children were surrounded by Arabic, they would inevitably pick up the language, relying most particularly on key family relationships. The logic that Arabic would be learned by listening conflates the distinction between ‘ammiya (colloquial Arabic) and ḤaṣHa (standard Arabic). Children raised in Arabic speaking environments are exposed to ‘ammiya but not much ḤaṣHa, and so will be socialized into using only ‘ammiya.

In spite of the fact that most children learned standard Arabic at school, the mothers placed the ultimate responsibility for learning Arabic on themselves. Four of the ten mothers explained the responsibility through claims like, “mothers are responsible for teaching Arabic,” or “I can teach [my daughter] Arabic, but I cannot teach her English.” While the mothers turned to the school for English, even mothers who were not teachers themselves, felt up the task of teaching Arabic, if necessary. Being native speakers, these mothers felt qualified, but the same could not be said for English. The idea that language is rooted in the bonds of family draws on the ideology of authenticity or the belief that a language marks a speaker as coming from a particular
place and the language’s value come from roots to a particular place. Arabic is the language spoken and learned in the home, with family.

The family association is so culturally ingrained that some of the mothers drew on the idea of Arabic as the language of the home to critique Arabic speakers who travel abroad. One mother said “low ana methalan aisht fi America au tull ’umri fi America…” “If I, for example, lived in America or all my life in America…[then] the mother must (lazim) try to keep her children remembering (bidhakar) Arabic, so they don’t forget it (ma nisee). [The children] speak to all their friends (kul ashabhom) in English, so at home, that’s it (khalas), they speak Arabic. The mom, she’s the leader. If she wants to teach them English and they forget Arabic, it’s her choice (ya hurah)” The mother suggested that even for Arabs who move abroad, the mother was responsible for making sure her children did not forget Arabic. Specifically, Arabic should be the language of the home, given that children will speak the local language with peers. This mother used the idea of remembering (dh-k-r), the same root that gives the Islamic concept of dhikr or remembrance or invocation of God or the names of God (Wehr 1994:358). Early in the quote, the mom used the concept of remember (dh-k-r) and forget (n-s-a), not learn or teach. This assumed that children already learned and were now starting to forget as they talk to their friends in English. She did however switch to teach at the end of the quote, and there the mother left freedom in the hands of each mom to decide how to raise her children (ya hurah).

An implication of the pride and authenticity in Arabic is that Arabic serves as the predominant means of communicating with family. All ten of the mothers I interviewed, even those with strong English skills and/or a desire to raise children who could speak English, addressed their children primarily in Arabic. One mother said that she had wanted her husband to speak in English with their children so they could learn English much like they learn Arabic: by hearing it around them. She herself did not know English so could not expose them to English. In
the end, her husband was so rarely home and so tired when he did come home, that it never happened in practice.

While the ideology of authenticity draws on local rootedness and family, there are other ideologies that are linked to Arabic. One idea is pride in an “Arab world” united by *FusHa*, which gives a universality beyond the local. Many Arabic speakers talk about their language with not just local pride, but an ethnic loyalty. Ms. Rabia, one of the teachers at Al-Dawran addressed the ethnic link in her interview. Ms. Rabia began raising her children in Saudi Arabia in what she described as a “predominantly English-speaking home.” When her son was only a few years old, she realized that he was not responding to her when she spoke in Arabic. The son only reacted when she spoke in English. Fearing a language shift (Kulick 1992) where the son would only learn to use English, she decided to make a change. She stopped speaking English at home and switched to Arabic. The reason she gave was “because we are Arab and we’re proud of our language.” Speaking Arabic was important; thus she wanted her son to respond to (and in) Arabic. While initially, Ms. Rabia did not feel that Arabic had to be the predominant language in her home, in the end, Ms. Rabia changed her practice when she realized her predominantly English-speaking home seemed to be interfering with her child’s ability to learn Arabic. Perhaps because Ms. Rabia spent much of her life in Saudi Arabia, Ms. Rabia identified the Arabic language with an ethnic identity as Arab not a more local part of the Arab World. For her, the Arabic language was a common identity (“we are Arab and we’re proud of our language”). In effect, her experience as an Arab speaker tied her to the larger Arab community. Partly because of the universalizing force of *FusHa* (standard Arabic) at least ideologically, speaking Arabic does not just identify you as an authentic member of a local population or local tribe (*’ammuya*), but also as a member of the Arabic-speaking world (through *FusHa*). This ideology holds for at least that section of the Arabic-speaking world that shares Arab ethnicity. Arab identity becomes
especially salient for Ms. Rabia in the face of her fear of her son’s loss of identity through loss of Arabic.

Arabic also gains authority beyond the tropes of authenticity and pride through the link to religious authority. *FusHa* (specifically Classical Arabic) is the language of the Qur’an. As Haeri writes, “there is no Islam without Classical Arabic. There would also be no Classical Arabic without Islam” (2003:2). The revelation received by Prophet Muhammad is taken by Muslims as proof itself of the authority of Classical Arabic. The beauty of Qur’anic Arabic was seen as a sign of the Qur’an’s genuineness as the word of God (Ferguson 1968:378). Additionally, many Muslims believe that Prophet Muhammad was illiterate, turning his ability to deliver Qur’anic revelations in such a high variety of the language into an example of a clear miracle (Haeri 2003:10). Hirschkind notes the relationship between the word of God and the believer: “as the miraculous word of God, the divine message convinces…by its own perfect unification of beauty and truth” (2006:34).

For Muslims, learning Arabic is essential because learning the Qur’an and ritual prayers is essential. We saw the connection between Arabic and the Qur’an in the mother whose son was unable to memorize verses of the Qur’an. This same mother told me that mothers are responsible for teaching Arabic. However, either for lack of trying or in spite of her attempts, she was not successful. Neither were her son’s teachers. During our interview, the mother called her son over and asked him to recite Surah Al-Fatiha, the opening chapter of the Qur’an. He responded with a “mmmm” sound as he sealed his lips and would not recite anything. He quickly ran out of the room as his mother elaborated that the son could not recite any of the commonly memorized short verses.41 Just a minute before, the son had sung parts of a “good morning” song in English, although it was far from perfect, and he needed prompting from adults to guide him through it.

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41 Most of the students in kindergarten, like this child, were already reciting Surah Al-Fatiha (and other short sections of the Qur’an) from memory. In fact, many students could recite a few Qur’anic passages prior to beginning school.
While clearly not perfect in English memorization, it was the struggle to memorize Qur’anic passages which weighed heavily on the mother’s mind. In her opinion, her son was fine in some areas of Arabic, “from [work in] the book, I know he’s smart, but in memorization, no.” Qur’anic recitation in Arabic holds a power that goes beyond Arabic grammar and learning from the book, which her son could not access yet.

The religious authority held in the Arabic Qur’an manifested in the belief that the Qur’an teaches how to live. The Qur’an is the source of adab and akhlaq (manners and ethics). One mother said that the Qur’an “teaches everything you need to know.” There is a belief amongst Muslims that while rote memorization is essential for daily prayers, memorization is also a way of instilling “good moral character” (Moore 2006). According to Moore, learning and memorizing religious texts is not seen as demonstrating “proper religious feeling but rather a means for developing it” (2012:219). In the work of Fader and Moore, in the religious traditions of Judaism and Islam respectively, teaching recitation of religious texts through memorization is just as much about imbibing “religious feelings” or embodying a moral character and respect for the words, as it is learning the text (Fader 2008; Moore 2012). This practice is a way of teaching that religious ideologies are part of being a member of the community, of cultivating faith as a way of life (Moore 2012). From Islam and the Qur’an, children learn adab, how to behave, in the right situations. Adab includes how to pray, eat, interact, and engage with others socially.

According to the principal Ms. Asma, acquiring adab, or good manners was an important goal of the school and a foundation for learning. Ms. Asma believed that teachers taught ethical behavior first by ensuring that students loved their teacher. Ms. Asma used the language of family to talk about her relationship with her teachers and the teachers’ relationship with students. She explained, “zai al family yani el um wa bintha wa al atfal” “like the family…[I’m] like a mom, her daughters, and the children,” describing the teachers as her daughters and the students as their children. She also said that her teachers should behave “like the mom does at home.” Some
of the students, she continued, see their teachers more than their own mothers. Not only is Arabic the language of the family, but much of the classroom interactions (during English class) around teaching ethical behavior are carried on in Arabic with some English code-switching. Creating an environment that is like a family provides the necessary foundation for learning to take place. Ms. Asma explained, “if the students love me, they accept everything from me. If students are frightened by me, that’s it. They won’t want to come to school, they won’t listen. They might sit in class, but they won’t listen. They won’t get anything from me.” Some examples of what the principal lists as things students “accept” from a good teacher include “you must wear your uniform,” “keep the classroom clean,” and “write neatly.” When students love their teacher, teachers can convey messages about how to interact with each other, how to behave in class, and how to be a good student.

The school’s focus on correct behavior (adab) was not always an explicit criterion for why the mothers selected Al-Dawran, but most mothers touched on ethics in more subtle ways. The mothers talked about the teachers they loved not only because they taught ethics, but because they modeled ethical behaviors in their interactions with the children. Their favorite teachers treated students with a mother’s love and helped the children learn good behavior and academic material. Some of the mothers in interviews told me that they would either follow a particular teacher to another school, or leave the school altogether if she left. Having a teacher that not only teaches her subject well, but helps instill ethics, was a value worth following.

But it was not enough to assume the school instilled good ethics. Two of the mothers used their children to “investigate” the ethics of the school, monitoring the alignment between what the mothers wanted and what the school was providing. One mother checked up on the school by observing how her daughter behaved when “playing school.” By watching her daughter’s performance as the teacher while playing school, the mom was able to determine that the child’s teacher this year was more patient and kind, while last year’s teacher yelled loudly at
the students. Her daughter went from yelling at her dolls (and her little brother), “‘ma takheki swai. kun sareah. ‘bas! uskout!’” “she doesn’t speak slowly. It’s fast. ‘Enough! Be quiet!’” to “‘habibti, enti lei mu fahimah?’” “‘My dear, why don’t you understand?’” The mother concluded, “from this, I know her teacher is good (muadaba – one with adab).” The mother quoted the daughter using the term of endearment (habibti) “my love” common between loved ones (parents and children, lovers). The daughter’s pretend play signaled to the mother that the daughter had a good teacher, one who modeled and taught adab (good behavior).

Schools play an important role in teaching Arabic. However, “Arabic” is not just the ability to speak the language. Knowing Arabic gives children access to reading the Qur’an, focus on religious rituals and practices. By extension, Islam connects students to Islamic ethics and proper ways of behaving (adab and akhlaq) which the mothers wanted instilled in their children. The tropes of authenticity and pride help better understand the authority in Arabic, but miss the religious authority inherent in the language.

4.5.2 English: The Language of Anonymity, Profit, and Prestige

In this section, I look at the perspectives on English and the effect these ideas have on school selection. While English can certainly be used, and is, to teach good ethical behavior, the ideologies and beliefs about English focus on English as a means to prestige and a better economic future, not as the primary means to an ethical life. The strength of the English program was one of the most important factors in why the mothers selected Al-Dawran. In this section I argue that English serves as a “common language” that allows communication across various differences. However more so, English was associated with modern necessity especially for economic success and profit.

English was seen as an anonymous language (Woolard 2008), a lingua franca common across various national and linguistic differences. While I did meet Jordanians during my
fieldwork who had a strong preference for British English or American English (seeing one as more prestigious or just sounding “better”), this was not universal or common. For the mothers I interviewed, English was not rooted to a particular authentic geographic space. The mothers were drawing on the idea of a “global English” (see Mufwene 2010) that could allow for world-wide communication. The mothers explicitly linked the importance of English beyond a specific geographic location. Specifically, two mothers talked about how English made travel or working with people from other nations possible - “wherever you go, you know, you can work with all nationalities.” Four mothers talked about English as “lughat al ‘alam” “the language of the world.” When I challenged one mother that there are more native Chinese speakers than native English speakers in the world, she responded, “No. [English is] the language of the world, end of story.”

English allows for people of different cultures to maintain their authentic languages while still communicating across differences. One mother explained with a parable that includes a French speaker, Italian speaker, German speaker, and Arabic speaker who do not understand each other’s languages. However, the diverse speakers can still communicate through English. Interestingly, the mother did not list an English speaker among these. English serves not as the language of a particular place, but as the tool that allows for communication across different languages and cultures. Based on the parable, the French, Italian, German, and Arabic speakers speak English with each other but also continue to still speak their authentic language with roots in nation and identity. The continuation of national languages in spite of the pull of English echoes arguments of Mufwene that English is not a “killer language” that will result in monolingualism (2010). The various speakers are not expected to learn each other’s languages because they have an anonymous language with which to communicate across differences. English serves as the lingua franca where communication is made possible.
One of the mothers had a real-life example demonstrating a similar message as the parable but the opposite outcome. One mother explained a recent encounter with her husband’s Japanese colleague who came over to her house for a meal. The wife explained, “I was so excited but I couldn’t speak with him...I’m already shy, so even if I spoke English, maybe I wouldn’t have spoken to him. He spoke to me in English about the food…” you’re welcome’ [was all I could say].” With the mother not speaking Japanese, and the visitor not speaking Arabic, English, an anonymous common language not linked to either Jordan or Japan, served as the potential medium for communication. However, she did not know English. While having a foreign guest was a mark of honor, her inability to communicate made her feel like she was unable to be a good host.

One of the strengths of the school, according to the mothers, was the focus on language in use. In order for English to be a common language, students must be comfortable using English in interactions. Unfortunately, while Jordanian students “learn” English, not all are comfortable using English in everyday interactions. The mothers I spoke to wanted to raise children to use English, to be able to understand, read, write, and speak English. As one of the teachers explained, “government schools teach only grammar...they don’t care if you know how to ask and answer a question.” In the perspective of government schools, “if you teach grammar, you teach English. If you aren’t teaching grammar, you aren’t teaching English.” At least in the perception of the mothers, government schools place much less emphasis on speaking and conversations, compared to Al-Dawran. Most of the graduates of government schools, in my experience, struggle to use English in conversation or understand lectures, but are okay reading and quick to describe various grammar rules. Parents of students at Al-Dawran were proud and impressed by their young child’s abilities in English. Some mothers told me how much more English their children demonstrated compared to their neighbors’ children. Parents watched in awe as their
kindergarteners read simple words. Early reading was read as a sign of a strong English student, and hopefully a strong English conversationalist in the future.

Though universality and anonymity allow English to be a language of communication across difference, English gets its authority in Jordan because of the ideology of profit, the economic power accessible only to speakers of English (Duchêne & Heller 2012). For most mothers, English was explicitly connected to finding and getting a well-paying job. One mother said, “ay shughal, ay darasa bil university kulha English” “any work, any field of study in university, it’s all in English.” The mother continues “if you don’t have English, forget it, you don’t get work. English is very important.” While in the field, I helped a number of people apply for jobs and prepare for interviews. Application materials (cover letter and resume) were often written in English, and interviews were often conducted at least partly in English.

The mothers also tied economic power and English together through access to technology, computers, and research. The ability to use computers and technology is of great benefit to economic and job security. The technology sector in the Middle East is expanding rapidly, from medicine, social media, transportation, and technologies related to natural resources (Inhorn 2014). Many of the mothers were tuned in to this rapid change and wanted their children to be ready for whatever came next. The mothers said that children have to learn English because English is necessary to use computers or do research on the Internet. One mother who worked in a pharmacy explained that all her continuing education was done in English. “If I need to look up a drug, the information is in English. All my workshops are in English.” She continued that she even explains the drugs to her patients in English. It was essential for her to know English to safely perform her job.

The authority of English was also linked to the concept of modernity or a modern day necessity. Two of the mothers linked English to how the world is now. One of the mothers said, “it’s the language of our time now...if you can’t speak English it’s like you are way behind.” The
association of non-English speakers with the past underlies the necessity of learning English, marking Arabic speakers who are unable to speak English as uneducated and behind.

The association of English with modernity echoes Chapter 1’s discussions of Jordan’s tourism promotions mixing the modern and traditional. The traditional is exemplified by the figure of the Bedouin; but the representation of the tradition is next to the benefits of the modernity of Jordan. Massad points out the Bedouin serves as the icon of the past, not just for tourists, but also for Jordanians. “The Bedouin is produced as a desert tent-dweller living far away from urban modernity, and as living in a past time, a traditional time, an other time” (Massad 2001:77, emphasis in original). Even the “native” Jordanians whose ancestors were nomadic Bedouins distance themselves from this connection to the past. Ironically, some Bedouins work at tourist sites and speak English very well out of necessity and exposure to foreign tourists. Clearly, the stereotype of Bedouins being stuck in the past is not entirely true. And yet even as these Bedouins learn English and thus take on a mark of modernity, they use English for the purpose of making money off celebrating the past through tourism. To move away from the Bedouin past, Jordanians focus on English as an emblem of modernization. English workers help boost the ability for the tourism sector to reach a wider audience, making English an important commodity (Heller 2003).

The association of English with modernity impacts the perception of English language teaching strategies and techniques. English and English classes are seen as the space for innovation, creativity, and fun. When I first traveled to Jordan, I began by teaching English in a government school as a Peace Corps Volunteer. One of the objectives of the Teaching English as a Foreign Language program was to share ideas about making the classroom more student-centric. The Jordanian Ministry of Education had invited Peace Corps Volunteers to influence the
English teachers at the school. The perspective that innovative activities are centered on the English class was a view also represented by Al-Dawran’s principal. Ms. Asma rooted the teaching pedagogy not in the knowledge of the West but in local ideas about English. Many Jordanians express the idea that English is difficult to learn. Ms. Asma countered this challenge through the integration of activities that helped students learn. “For this reason, we start when they are small. We give them stories, we give them coloring, we give them the projector to see films, cartoons, and things like that. It makes English familiar to them.” Activities were most common in English, but activity-based learning was also used in other subjects. One of the mothers said that she felt her son was more successful in English over Arabic because of the integration of activities, “English is play, based on not just memorization, so it’s fun.”

Activities were an important factor for why parents selected the school, even when the school fell short in other ways. One mother began my interview with her by telling me that she loved the school because her sons were always talking about what fun things the teacher did with them and how much the sons loved their teachers. But in the very next utterance she started to narrow in on the experiences of the older son. After talking about how the son liked his teacher less this year, she said, “But what can you do in the middle of the semester?” Just over six minutes later the mother revealed a much bigger issue; her son was being seated next to people he did not like and the teacher ignored her son when he tried to ask for a different seat. The mother wanted her son’s opinion respected, but it was not until her husband complained that the son was moved. While this mother clearly had many struggles with the school, she was able to overlook them in her initial and overall assessment. The school provided activity-based learning, and it became something she valued. Activities helped her justify her choice of school, in spite of the fact that some of the teachers were not behaving as she wanted. In Block’s examination of the

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42 Based on a website affiliated with Peace Corps Jordan, one of the main goals of the program was that “school resources and facilities will be developed or upgraded to provide enriched learning environments for students and teachers” (http://pcjordantefl.weebly.com/about-us.html). Teachers were as much a target audience as students.
influence of Western methods of language teaching abroad, some of the techniques stand out as common in Jordan. For example, the Council of Europe promoted “a change in the way language was conceived” from a focus on grammar to “communicative competence” (Block 2010:289). While this is often more in theory than in practice in many Jordanian classrooms, there is a belief among mothers that their children should be able to use English and not just learn grammar. A second idea is the focus on practices, such as “interaction-based activities carried out exclusively in the target language” (Block 2010:290). As discussed, Jordanian English teachers are more likely than Arabic teachers to lean on activities as one of the means of learning English.

Another consequence of the widespread exposure to English is American and Western media reaching Jordan leading to negative perceptions of the associated culture and ethics of English. English is often associated with ethical values that conflict with the desired ethics of the local community. Some mothers I interviewed alluded to fears of English conflicting with the ethical values of adab they wanted to instill. Three mothers explained that students should “learn the language, but not take the culture.” From Arabic, students learn the culture, ethics, and morality associated with the language and accompanying religion. However, the same association between language and culture/ethics is not extended to English. For English, the ideology of anonymity helps justify the ability for a language to be “disembodied” from the native speakers of English and the problematic ethics those speakers are associated with. The mothers assumed that culture could easily be divorced from the language, saying, “take the language but not forbidden (haram) things” or “take only what is beneficial (mufeed).” The mothers describe English as a language that can be completely separated from a system of ethics, morality, and perspectives about the world. However, as we saw in earlier chapters, English teachers integrated adab and good ethics into English class. This was done with some codeswitch between Arabic and English, but coaching and instructing children in how to behave appropriately are integral parts of the English lesson.
While most of the mothers drew on an anonymous English that serves as a lingua franca for communication and economic interactions, there was, however, one mother who distinguished “kinds” of Englishes. In the literature on global English, some researchers distinguish between the anonymous ‘global English’ and the creation of multiple ‘world Englishes,’ or indigenous varieties of English (see Mufwene 2010). The mother was particular about sending her children to Al-Dawran because the school had an international track. In her opinion, even Jordanians who learn English may not be understood; she told me, “the problem is the accent.” She believed that in the international track of Al-Dawran her children would learn an accent that would be understood (similar to a ‘global’ English as opposed to a local variety of English).

In order to provide their children with a better chance in the future, parents were drawn to the strength of the English program at Al-Dawran. Rather than struggle when they reached university and could not understand their professors, the parents hoped that an education at Al-Dawran would prepare their children for university and a job. In addition to speaking across national and linguistic differences, English provides access to technology and research and economic stability (profit).

4.6 The Administration at Al-Dawran

From interviews with mothers, we saw that they were looking for an education focused strongly on English, but with local values such as religion and ethics integrated into the education. In the rest of the chapter, I look at how the administration of the school worked to match the expectations of parents. I argue that the administration and teachers regulated the messages that parents and potential parents received about the school in order to align the messages with parental expectations. In this section, I pay attention to the school’s branding and the careful focus on how observers will judge the school. As exemplified in the two lead administrators, the school sought to match the expectations of parents by presenting the school as
a good start to a successful economic future by excelling in English (the focus of the owner, Dr. Hussein), and as a place where Arabic and culture are important in order to teach important ethical values (through the work of the principal Ms. Asma).

The most influential administrator during my fieldwork was the owner and general manager of the school, Dr. Hussein. He was involved in many aspects of the school, though he did leave day-to-day management to two principals (one for lower elementary and one for the other grades). As owner, he had invested a lot of his own money to fund the cost of running the school as well as building the new school building.

While Dr. Hussein was certainly trying to build a school that produced students strong in English and all their academic subjects, Dr. Hussein was facing a competitive private school market. Herrera and Torres write about the educational market for private tutoring in Egypt, and explain that the market was seeing a “trend and a growing ‘neoliberal mentality.’” This mentality was creating “the expansion of profit-driven schooling whereby students and parents become customers and teachers, exploitable workers, but the very vocation of teaching, so revered and put upon a pedestal, is in fact becoming increasingly based on business exchanges through private lesson” (Herrera & Torres 2006:15). Private lessons become a space for corruption with teachers desperate to gain more students and increase their profits; one teacher described that some desperate teachers even resort to marketing lessons “like the bargaining that takes place in the vegetable market” (Farag 2006:129). Jordan similarly faced a competitive market where schools were bending to their customers (parents) and exploiting their workers (teachers). The competition pushed Dr. Hussein and Ms. Asma’s energy, cost, and attention onto how to keep parents happy and how to draw in more parents; in the perspective of the teachers, this was done at the teachers’ expense, with the school blaming them when parents complained or siding with parents (against teachers) to keep parents happy and re-enrolling. As I develop in this section, the
competition led to a focus on superficialities of a good education and what felt to teachers like exploitation.

In order to succeed in the market, Al-Dawran’s administrators capitalized on the desires of the parents. But the school did not just create a strong English program and integrate Islamic ethics into their curriculum. The school packaged these benefits into commodities that they could display to parents and prospective parents. In the case of English, the school associated itself not just with the language, but with superior quality and fluency. The school created a branding campaign that included high quality English-only documents for parents to see. The commodification of English represented the school with an elite group of English speakers which some of the parents could not even access. According to Heller, “commodification of a language” is a process by which a language is made “amenable to redefinition as a measurable skill, as opposed to a talent, or an inalienable characteristic of group membership” (2003:474). Al-Dawran packaged English as an elite object and associated with an elite group that students would eventually enter into. Homework, tests, and weekly planners always were written exclusively in English (as the Arabic teacher did her own). Most parents knew enough English to help with their children’s homework, but many had to contact the teacher for assistance even for kindergarten level assignments. This made English more desirable and encouraged parents to remain at Al-Dawran in the future, hoping to provide their children with the full command of English that they lacked.

The school also commodified Islam and Islamic ethics. As Hasan writes about the commodification of public Islam in Indonesia, “Commodification which occurs in tandem with rising market demands for Islamic products does not primarily mean commercialization. It is more an attempt to offer and package Islam so that it can be accepted by a broader market” (2009:247). In the case of Indonesia, the commodification is of public signs of Islam (dress, integration of Arabic into speech, etc) which become a marker of elitism. Al Dawran’s
administration worked to commodify signs and symbols of their attention to religion and ethics in order to demonstrate this attention to parents. As I discuss below, the school put on a *hajj* recreation and reinforced their concern for ethics in documents sent home to parents like the *hajj* passport and report cards. These displays target current parents as reminders of the elite education they are paying for, but they are meant to appeal to a broader audience as parents share about the school with their friends.

The first time I met Dr. Hussein, he told me that he founded the school to fill a need for strong, English-focused education. In order to display this to the audience of parents and potential parents, the first step was to highlight his and the school’s credibility as excelling in English. Dr. Hussein was always referred to by his title of doctor. When I asked Ms. Layla about the title when I first arrived, she explained that he also held a job as a professor at a university in Amman, and the school was, as she called it, his “side project.” I assumed he held a doctorate in education. I later found out the doctorate was in accounting. All the teachers, parents, and students referred to him by the title Dr, indexing his qualifications, but unclear what exactly the qualifications prepared him for.

Beyond the owner of the school, for a middle-tier school like Al-Dawran, the big-ticket commodity was having a native speaker teaching at the school.\(^43\) Dr. Hussein added to the school’s credibility by publishing in the 2014-15 recruitment flier that a native British English speaker led the English department. He was capitalizing on the prestige associated with hiring a native English speaker (Herrera 2006:40). While many Jordanians speak English well *and* have training in teaching, Ms. Thoraya’s legitimacy came through a native socialization in and authentic connection to an English speaking country (born and raised in England). She was not, however, trained as an educator. Ms. Thoraya assumed she was the unspecified “native speaker”

\(^{43}\) Most native speakers of English who worked in schools ended up at more elite schools than Al-Dawran. Ms. Thoraya, the school’s native English teacher, eventually ended up at one such school in the 2014-15 school year.
being advertised. And she was furious: “Dr. Hussein is using me to market his school, but he never asked for my permission or whether I was returning to the school next year!” The unauthorized misuse of her to market the school was one of the main reasons Ms. Thoraya did in fact leave the school for the 2014-15 academic year. In an interview she told me she felt the school administration over-used her because of her language expertise, and she was under-appreciated for the extra work she did after school (that others did not have to do). Even unidentified, her skills became commodified as a tool to broaden the school’s appeal.

To back up the school’s credibility in English, Dr. Hussein worked to build a strong English program especially through symbols of innovation and English success (as I discuss below including projectors, worksheets, etc). In fact, half of the mothers I interviewed said they “heard good things” about the school before they enrolled. One mother said before she enrolled, she met her neighbor’s child who was a student at Al-Dawran. “I saw her writing, reading…and she astonished me.” This led her to seek out the school for her own children too. As Ms. Layla told me during an interview, “[The administration] wants better education because it’s better advertisement for them.”

The biggest selling point of the school was the brand new building. Sending their children to a clean, large, and new space was one draw that parents mentioned. The new building suggested high class, high quality and modernity. To the new space, technology was also an important addition. One of Dr. Hussein’s symbols was the purchase of a projector for the elementary school. Previously students crowded around my laptop to watch educational materials. The videos and songs helped students learn and enjoy English. I often watched the projector become a highlighted item to show prospective parents on a tour of the school. The tour guide highlighted features such as the potential to watch videos to make learning fun. Having a projector was not only for the English program. However, I rarely saw teachers who taught other subjects use it, perhaps a few times each academic year. The easiest way to use the projector required a laptop. Thus most of the English teachers relied completely on me and my laptop for showing videos. Without me, videos were rarely, if ever, used in class.
projector was not common at most schools in this tuition range. However, as I was one of the only people at the school with the time to set it up, the projector was essentially unused by the rest of the school staff.45

Dr. Hussein also added drama class to the school’s curriculum, a rare course at most middle and lower tier schools. From my fieldnotes after my first meeting with Dr. Hussein, I wrote, “[Dr. Hussein] told me that the benefits of drama class were better English fluency; understanding and learning the story in a play helped with comprehension, and the acting encouraged the emotionality and performance dimension of language.” However, none of the teachers who taught drama were trained or had a background in drama. Most of the time, the drama class consisted of the students strong in English reading lines from their papers, while everyone sat in their seats—no one got up and acted the part of their character.

Textbooks that came from Western publishers instead of the books commissioned by the Hashemite Kingdom were also important signs of success in English. Not all private schools justified the cost of imported textbooks, including the private school in Irbid where I spent the first few months of fieldwork. While textbooks and trainings are an important part of carrying over the hierarchical power dynamics between colonial power (and colonial languages) and their former colonial empires (Phillipson 1992), in the case of Jordan they were also associated with prestige. In the 2014-15 school year, at the instance of Ms. Layla, Dr. Hussein purchased a more expensive English text for the international section of kindergarten. Ms. Layla believed a different textbook would help boost reading skills and reading comprehension. The new textbook focused on phonics and the integration of reading. However, the switch in textbook came at a cost and a tradeoff. I overheard Ms. Layla talk to mothers about the new focus on phonics and reading through the new textbooks, however Dr. Hussein did not approve of the cost of the big books (the

45 The school’s playroom had a computer on a rolling cart that could be rolled into class and connected to the projector. However, the set up was more challenging and time consuming than with a laptop. I only saw it used to show lengthy movies on days with poor attendance (usually due to rainy weather or upcoming holidays).
versions of books designed to be very large for story circle) affiliated with each lesson that reinforced the connection to reading. Also, as part of an agreement with the kindergarten teachers, to cover the additional book costs, Dr. Hussein did not purchase a math and science textbook for the kindergarten. Instead teachers had to find their other sources for math and science lessons (usually worksheets or by photocopying old workbooks from past years). With parents more focused on the English curriculum, good textbooks for English were more important than the loss of a textbook for math and science. Further, the content for math and science were viewed as repetitive with the same subjects taken in Arabic.

In Ms. Layla’s comments, the administration’s focus on good education in order to advertise the school was actually couched in the objective of making money. She said, “[The school cares about] money. Money, yeah. [The administration] wants better education because it’s better advertisement for them. But what they care about is money.” There was certainly evidence that the administration was attempting, with some success, to increase the English comprehension and proficiency of the students. However, the administration did so by focusing on the most demonstrable and marketable flags of quality education, such as textbooks and projectors, even though the benefit of these items was hardly proven.

The second important administrator was Ms. Asma, the elementary school principal. Ms. Asma had been at the school since it opened. Prior to working at Al-Dawran, Ms. Asma taught English. Unlike Dr. Hussein, Ms. Asma was frequently in the classrooms, engaging with and encouraging students. She was always willing to help a student put on a jacket, or tie a shoe. Ms. Asma kept stickers easily accessible for a student who needed positive reinforcement; she also had shame at the ready for a student without adab (as we saw with the balloon example in Chapter 3). Ms. Asma’s presence in the classroom also meant that she was continually monitoring her teachers, watching what they said and how they behaved with students. This monitoring put
pressure on teachers to keep their students behaving and, given her expectations about cleanliness, for the classrooms to always be clean and in order.

When Dr. Hussein was not occupied with disciplinary issues in the higher grades or school construction issues, he focused on the English side of the curriculum. Ms. Asma monitored the content for all the subjects in the elementary grades (requiring and reviewing weekly plans and semester outlines). But Ms. Asma also added a strong focus on ethics and cultural values as the basis for learning. Ms. Asma was well-respected by the students and parents. Students enjoyed showing off for her when she came into class; students ran up to hug Ms. Asma when she entered the classroom. Two of the mothers specifically noted that their interactions with Ms. Asma were part of the reason for choosing Al-Dawran.

Ms. Asma placed a lot of emphasis on religion. She began answering my first interview question about Al-Dawran’s philosophy by saying not only that she was Circassian, but that “we are all Muslim here.” Her point was that these aspects of her identity influenced how she ran the school. She was in charge of the mini-hajj I examine later in the chapter. She also often led the morning assembly, frequently integrating the recitation of additional verses of the Qur’an and common prayers (du’a) (such as what to say before reading or traveling) that she wanted students to learn.

Like Dr. Hussein, Ms. Asma strove to convey a positive image of the school. Under Dr. Hussein’s guidance, she enforced a branding policy for all documents and materials sent home. All notices for parents and student worksheets and workbooks had to have the school’s logo at the very top, the first thing that you see when looking at any document (Appendix VIII shows a sample worksheet). The logo was added even if the worksheet was taken from the internet. The school branded all documents with its logo, a sign that the school believed that every document it released was a chance to represent a particular image, a commodification of the school. Ms. Thoraya used to cut out any links or references (usually at the bottom of worksheets) to the
worksheet’s original source, reinforcing the link between the product (worksheet) and the school whose logo was on top. The effect was that the logo associated the school with high-quality academic materials (worksheets) and thus, strong academics, and every form or worksheet from the school solidified this association whenever a parent saw it.

As a means of ensuring a positive depiction of the school, Ms. Asma added an additional step of administrative oversight over teachers. In the 2014-15 school year, all worksheets had to be approved by the principal prior to printing. In general, this process reinforced the authority and power of the administration over the teachers. Additionally, the approval process ensured not only that the school’s brand (logo) was on each worksheet, but also that the material on the worksheets was acceptable with the school’s standards and image. Worksheets that did not have the logo or included “unacceptable” items were not approved. I had worksheets rejected because they left out the logo, the images were of poor quality, or the worksheets included the word “pig,” or an image of a pig. “Pig” is an easy word in English and a common sample word for phonics worksheets on the letter “p” or the short “i” sound. (Appendix IX shows examples of how worksheets were altered at the request of the administration). Given that pork is forbidden in Islam, the principal said that pigs could not be included. Even though we were not encouraging students to eat “pig,” even teaching the word went against the values of the principal and her creation of a school rooted in Islamic values. While parents would not notice the lack of pig, the school was more concerned about what would happen if the pig had remained.

4.6.1 The School’s Perspective: The Case of the Winter Workbooks

About four months into my time at Al-Dawran, I was asked to help look over winter workbooks designed by the English upper elementary teachers. Hundreds of pages of the workbooks had already been printed. However, the English department supervisor, a little late in the process, sought out help reviewing the workbooks. The supervisor sent them to Ms. Thoraya,
as mentioned before, the only native English teacher at the school. When Ms. Thoraya began to find many errors, she roped me in to help. Between Ms. Thoraya and me, we found errors on almost every page of the 30+ pages in the workbook. In my fieldnotes I wrote, “We corrected definitions, inserted missing articles, corrected word choice and grammar, capitalized letters, and added missing punctuation. Thoraya and I laughed at some of the errors such as, ‘he is on the store’ or ‘Nephew means sun of your brother or sister.’”

But what Ms. Thoraya and I were taking as typos and the “funny” errors of non-native English speakers, Dr. Hussein took as a very serious matter, even though they had not gone out to any students. In my fieldnotes I wrote, “A few hours into working on the notes, Ms. Layla came in to the teacher’s lounge and said that Dr. Hussein was furious about the large quantities of errors in English.”

Dr. Hussein reacted by penalizing the source of the errors, that is, the teachers. He told Ms. Layla (and sent the message out in a memo to all teachers) that he would deduct one Jordanian dinar from the teacher’s salary for each mistake she had made. Even as Ms. Layla relayed the message, she tried to mitigate the problem, declaring that Dr. Hussein would not really go through with the deductions. Indeed, in the end, he did not. Regardless, Ms. Thoraya and I felt partly responsible, because we had compiled the list of errors. Ms. Thoraya was upset that she noted errors in the first place, saying that she would not have marked even a single error if she had been able to predict Dr. Hussein’s reaction.

Dr. Hussein met with the teachers the next day to clarify the reason for his concern, linking the concern to his broader objectives for the workbooks and the school. In my fieldnotes about the meeting, I wrote, “During the meeting, Dr. Hussein kept saying that one mistake, two mistakes, no big deal. But so many was not okay!” A few errors were easy to overlook as typos. Frequent errors were read as signs that the teachers were not proficient in English. My fieldnotes continue, “[Dr. Hussein] repeatedly stated (three times) the idea that he wanted people to look at
the kurasats (workbooks) and say, ‘allah yatik al ‘afiya’ (God give you health/well-being) to the person who wrote them, regardless of whether the observers were foreigners, parents, other teachers, etc. They should say, ‘mashallah’ when they saw the workbooks.”

During the meeting, Dr. Hussein also added a process for making workbooks that he believed would increase their quality moving forward and prevent the current issue in the future. In my fieldnotes I wrote, “Dr. Hussein insisted that the worksheets should always be downloaded from the internet (and not created by the teacher herself) and, whenever possible, specifically a worksheet downloaded from the website of the English textbook.” Preventing teachers from writing their own worksheets was intended to improve the quality of the worksheets. Using worksheets from other sources hides from observers the various challenges in the English abilities of the teachers, that is, their inability to create a worksheet without a lot of errors.

Dr. Hussein’s comments about the workbooks revealed his worry that an observer would judge the academic quality of the school based on errors in the workbooks. Dr. Hussein wanted people to look on the work of the school and praise it (saying “mashalla” and “allah yatik al ‘afiya”). Poorly edited workbooks negatively reflected on a school and its ability to teach English. Given that the school’s logo was at the top of every page, the error would be clearly associated with the school. A poor workbook seems more likely to be associated in the minds of parents with a bad school; an impeccable workbook, on the other hand, may be read as a sign of a great school (or otherwise go as unmarked and unnoticed). The former was what the owner nearly experienced in this case, but the latter was his ideal in the case that it was an object of notice. Either way, having teachers designing their own worksheets would not help with how the school was judged. Dr. Hussein’s comments revealed that he saw a wider audience for his workbooks than just parents and students. He mentioned not just guests to the school, but specifically “foreigners”

46 “It is God’s will.” Ma sha allah serves as a way of giving praise by recognizing God’s will in the action and outcome.
coming in. Based on the market of parents looking to send their children to private schools, the most prestigious clients are foreigners who move to Amman for work, particularly those from Western countries. The school did have a few students with parents who were raised outside of Jordan, but the majority of students were not in this category. A more international crowd might be looking for schools with an exceptional English program. To attract this kind of customer, Dr. Hussein could show the workbook as a sign of the school’s high quality.

One of Dr. Hussein’s first reactions to the errors, the proposed monetary penalty, represented the tendency of the school to blame and disassociate itself from teachers who made errors. In fact, the whole issue came about because the current English supervisor (the school’s administrator) was not capable of reviewing the English in the workbooks, resulting in blame on the teachers. The worksheets demonstrated that most of the teachers at Al-Dawran were weak in English. However, rather than provide support to teachers to improve their English or to oversee their work, Dr. Hussein’s invalidated all their previous work by throwing out their workbooks and asking Ms. Thoraya to create the workbooks from scratch (with material not produced by the teachers). His reaction dissociated the teachers from the school and from a sense of belonging to the school. The teachers made the errors, and hence the teachers must be penalized, but not the school. After the meeting, the teachers sat in the teacher’s room unable to work, upset by how Dr. Hussein had treated them and his dismissal of all the many hours of work they had put into the workbooks. Similar to how Ms. Thoraya felt that the school only valued her as a symbol for marketing purposes, the teachers felt underappreciated for their actual contributions because their English skill fell short of Dr. Hussein’s marketing goals. While full of errors, the workbooks were a product of a lot of time and effort, and in the end they were scrapped without recognition of that labor. Instead, the school reprimanded the teachers for their work. Some of the teachers were also upset that the supervisor for English, the one who originally sent the workbooks to Ms. Thoraya,
was not held responsible. As supervisor, she was to oversee the English program, yet she was unable to correct mistakes and the teachers took all the responsibility and blame.

In the immediate aftermath of the meeting with Dr. Hussein, Ms. Thoraya created all the packets for the teachers whose work we had checked. The teachers were crying and distressed after the meeting, unable to do much work. Ms. Thoraya and I downloaded review worksheets for each unit from the textbook’s website. Using the collection of worksheets from past years, we tried to match the grammar drills in the original workbooks with similar grammar drills from the internet. The next day Ms. Thoraya looked exhausted as she had stayed up late in the night finishing.

Overall, workbooks were an important part of Dr. Hussein’s educational philosophy. Workbooks served as a way of practicing and reinforcing learning. The process of branding with the school’s logo commodified the school’s worksheets for a broader audience and for public exposure. Worksheets served as a way to demonstrate academic success to the key target market (parents). Worksheets of high quality can be shown to friends of current parents in the hopes of encouraging them to transfer to the school. However, Dr. Hussein’s focus remained on the teacher’s errors and how observers should instead praise the workbooks. Sending workbooks home with errors, especially for parents who were strong in English, threatened the school’s attempts to promote a strong English program. Parents investing money in their children’s education expected quality and expertise in their children’s teachers.

4.6.2 The Mini-Hajj

In this section, I look at the school’s performance of a hajj recreation as a demonstration of the values that parents are looking for in a school. The actual hajj pilgrimage is inarguably one of the most valued rituals in all of Islam. Out of the five pillars of Islam, the metaphorical markers of “Islamic-ness,” hajj is the most difficult to accomplish, and the only one that is
required only once during one’s lifetime as opposed to multiple times a day or with other regular frequency. Even for individuals living in Jordan, a country relatively close to Saudi Arabia, going on hajj is an arduous process, from arranging transportation, to permissions and visas (due to limits on the number of visas from each country), and the cost of the trip, any of which can be prohibitive.

Ms. Layla explained Al-Dawran’s mini-hajj as a way of “teaching about the hajj and the purpose” behind it. However, the school kept the teachers so busy preparing for the day, that there was little discussion or introduction as to the hajj’s purpose or rituals. Ms. Layla instead kept her students busy with a coloring activity. Each student colored a paper doll wearing hajj clothing and a sheep which were later added to a bulletin board as part of the hajj display.

Even for a secular school in Jordan, religion is an important part of the curriculum. All schools are required to provide formal religious education, which for the bulk of the country is focused on Islam; Christian students can be exempt from these classes (Adely 2012). At Al-Dawran, all the students in the lower elementary school were Muslims.

One of the reasons for all the hype in preparing for the hajj was that it coincided with a kind of “open house” for the new school building. The administration had all the teachers working on decorating and preparing the school which was still in the process of being decorated and filled. The additional décor helped ensure that parents had a positive experience on their first visit to the new site. The new elementary building had only opened one month before. Aligning the opening with a religious event made religion symbolically central to the school’s mission and objectives. As the new building and large, clean classrooms were reasons that many mothers told me they chose Al-Dawran over other schools, the school had to look nice. So instead of talking about the hajj with the students, children were kept busy with things like coloring while the teachers decorated the many still blank bulletin boards in the hall and in their classrooms.
The “practice” hajj brought to life a ritual that some students may never accomplish in their lifetimes. The mini-hajj in many ways resembled the religious rite-of-passage that is the hajj. Young boys were wrapped in white to look like men on hajj, and girls put on child-sized prayer covers (see photos in Appendix X). When I asked one kindergarten student why he was wearing white, he said to me, “because it’s the clothing of the world.” He seems to have taken away some notion that everyone dons the same outfit, regardless of where they are from. Class by class, the students took turns at the circumambulation of the ka’aba (the large, black, cube-shaped building inside the mosque in Mecca). In the school’s version though, the ka’aba was a box three-feet high painted black, with a gold border at the top. And as the children walked, they recited “labaik allah humma labaik” meaning “Here I am, O Allah, here I am.” Even parents like the mother concerned that her son still cannot recite Surah Al-Fatiha can watch her son participate proudly in this religious event, the son’s mumblings lost in the crowd of his peers.

Al-Dawran’s mini-hajj certainly resembled the religious pillar of hajj, but a closer look reveals that it was part of the school’s process of commodifying religion in order to sell the school. The event demonstrated a much broader definition of ethics and “being good” than one limited to religion. The school rooted the mini-hajj in religion, centering religion and religious practice as a core principle in the school’s focus. While the actual hajj is about blending in with the rest of the Muslim community, the school’s hajj highlighted the goal of achievement and success. As students stopped their circumambulations around the ka’aba to wave to their moms and have their photo taken, parents wanted to see their children stand out, not fade into the crowd. A few lucky students were given the chance to “perform” for the crowd - songs, prayers, and Qur’anic recitation. Some students were pulled up to the mic to recite “labaik allah” and have the chorus of students follow their lead. Rather than the universality and equality of the hajj, the school used the gathering to highlight the school’s attention to individual achievements and success.
As the hajj continued, the reminders of the school became more and more present. The towels the boys were wrapped in were slipping off, girls tripped on their too long prayer garments. With each slip and trip, the school’s blue uniforms with the Al-Dawran logos grew more visible.

The school’s hajj bulletin board integrated Islam with national pride and academics, but more specifically English (see Appendix XI). In the middle of the board were ka’abas with letters spelling out “‘Eid Mubarak” or ‘eid greetings. Below that was the nationalist sentiment in English of “I heart Jordan.” In the bottom left was a slightly larger ka’aba and a sheep, symbols of the sacrifice of animals at ‘eid. Across the bottom of the board and surrounding the larger ka’aba and the sheep was an English alphabet train, reminding the observer that English is an important part of the school’s mission. Not only is English not to be forgotten with the focus on Islam for the day, but English can play an integral part even for Muslims. Prior to the day before, this board displayed student work from the kindergarten classroom. The ka’abas, sheep, and patriotic love of Jordan were all made in the day leading up to the hajj. The alphabet train (even with the letter “b” missing) was previously inside the classroom, but moved to be on the board front-and-center for visiting guests. The bulletin boards inside the classrooms (see Appendix XII) were also completed and fully decorated so parents were bombarded with the ubiquity of English at the school. One bulletin board was a mix of English (another alphabet chain), classroom routines (reciting the month, day, and year), and math (learning shape names). The second board features the seasons, the concepts of day and night, and a list of sight words the students would regularly practice reading. The final picture showed the door decorations for the “Rainbow” section of kindergarten.

4.6.3 The Hajj Passport
In this section, I want to look closely at one of the accoutrements of the mini-hajj, the passport accompanying the pilgrims on the mini-hajj. This document was handed out to students on the day of the hajj as they took a journey for the hajj, and was ultimately sent home for children to show their parents (images of the passport can also be found in Appendix XIII). This document served as a physical manifestation, encapsulating the school’s values, communicating what the school was trying to accomplish through their project of socialization. The passport’s text integrates multiple aspects of being “good.” Being good is linked to dedication to academics, religion, culture, and nation. The passport was a single piece of paper, printed, and folded into a little booklet, drawing from the necessity for a traveler to have a passport to enter Saudi Arabia for hajj (or any other reason). The passport was intended to be stamped and dated for each child after completing the hajj. Thus, the passport combined a travel document and certification of accomplishment of the hajj into a single whole - government sanctioning and religious validation, all under the auspices of the school.

![Image of Al-Dawran’s hajj passport]

Figure 4.1: Front page of Al-Dawran’s hajj passport.
On the front cover, school and nation are tied together. At the top appear the school’s logo and motto. At the bottom of the passport is written “The Hashemite kingdom of Jordan” and jawaz as safar: “passport.” While the school logo makes up the biggest part, the reference to nation is still present. The combination of school and nation is obvious in Jordanian schools, as seen in the school assembly and in the ‘eid bulletin board (photo in Appendix XI). On the bulletin board beneath the ‘eid greetings, made of little ka’abas, was an “I heart Jordan” slogan in glittery letters. Also on the board are sheep and a large ka’aba (symbolic of Islam, prayer, and sacrifice) and an English alphabet train. The interweaving of nation, religion, and the focus on English reflect the school’s integration of and emphasis on respect for all three, as part of a cohesive practice. To be a good student requires dedication to all, not just one or two. The school demonstrates that being a good Muslim requires obedience to school and country.

Figure 4.2: Center page of Al-Dawran’s hajj passport.
Returning to the passport, the entire middle of the booklet focused on demographic information and the idea of a contract, much like the behavioral conditions accepted by one on hajj (such as not swearing, wearing certain clothing, etc). At the top, we see that a teacher had hastily written in the personal information for one student, including the name of the person on hajj, age (5 years), gender (male), and religion (Islam). Even though all the elementary kids at Al-Dawran were Muslim, and even though no non-Muslim can go on hajj, the school reinforced their attention to religion and religious values by noting religion on the passport.

On the bottom half of the middle of the passport was the following text in Arabic:

The requirements for the simulation of the performance of hajj
1. Obedience to the lord and his love
2. Following the model of the holy messenger
3. Honoring one’s parents
4. Doing school work
Date of Issue / Valid until / the stamp

From the text itself, the school clearly distinguished between the hajj and the “simulation” of the hajj. Clearly distinguishing the two allowed the school to use the hajj as a space for teaching about religion and about ethics, without acting in a way that might be considered sacrilegious. The recreation was a way to affirm commitment to positive values (religion, good behavior,
respect for parents, and dedication to education) without suggesting that the school was distorting the purity of the actual hajj.

Under that, we have a clear articulation of the idealized values of the school. Religion, family, and academics all are intricately connected to what the school is, who the teachers want their students to be, and how they are socializing the children that attend their school. The passport was a reflection of the school’s values, which do not separate religion from social life, nor nation from academic progress. The idea that Islam is “a way of life,” a way of living and being and not of simply discrete ritualistic actions, like praying five times a day, is seen here. Islamic values are seen as integral to all aspects of living. Just as the real hajj is a social, cultural, and intellectual journey and not purely a religious one, the students of Al-Dawran are taught that there is not a distinction between being a good Muslim and a good neighbor, between being a good Jordanian and a good student. Akhlaq, Islamic ethics, is about addressing all of these aspects of life, and the school is a medium for an education centered on akhlaq.

4.6.4 Commodification of the Hajj

In addition to the religious celebration of the hajj through re-creation, the school also introduces parents to the school’s mission at an event that is essentially the school’s housewarming party. Centering on the importance of Islam, the school displayed their values and successes (both students and the school), and sent parents and children home happy. Performances such as the mini-hajj are part of the way that school administrators keep parents pleased and willing to re-enroll each year.

Al-Dawran’s hajj recreation uses the hajj and the hajj passport to turn the hajj into a commodity to benefit the school. The hajj became a way of integrating religious values with other culturally important values. The hajj served as a way to increase appeal for the school. As Hassan explains, “religious commodification has in fact very much to do with the way religion, in this
case Islam, is packaged and offered to a broader audience and how this has served to produce a framework for the moral order of society through the objectification and systematization of Islamic values and practices as a normative model” (2009:242). As I explain, the school uses the religious association of hajj as a sign for their moral stance, centered on religion.

The hajj is a sign of the school’s inculcation of ethical values in the students. The English wall decorations make the school’s emphasis on English obvious as well. The balance is seen through having both English around the room but also holding performances of Islamic ethics, such as the hajj. The passport brought together multiple values that the child is responsible for: religion, family, nation, culture, and academic success. The school embodied well-roundedness in a proud display of both school and students for parents, guests, and for parents to tell prospective families.

When we look more closely at the life cycle of the passport, we see even more clearly the ways in which the hajj is commodified as a tool for the school. The morning of the mini-hajj, the classroom assistant was in a frenzy preparing a last minute addition by the administration - the passport. The teachers quickly scribbled names just in time to hand to the students heading outside. However, the passports were quickly collected back by the teachers who realized the students were just going to lose the papers. Instead, the passports were sent home in the files that parents are supposed to look at. So, this document that encapsulated the school’s values became a document primarily for parents not for the experience of being a pilgrim on hajj. Most parents would eventually see the passport, either when their excited children reached home and talked about their day, or perhaps one day weeks later when cleaning out their children’s backpacks. Seeing it would reinforce the particular values that the parents loved about the school and why they selected it in the first place. Parents would find the values they wanted to see (any from the various ones listed), justifying and legitimating the money they were spending, and overlook for a little while the areas of improvement they found in their child’s school.
4.6.5 Report cards

There are many ways to better understand the way the school communicates its values to parents. One is to look at the categories on which the students are evaluated. In this section I look at what the report cards suggest about what kind of students Al-Dawran is trying to mold. The categories listed are done with a particular audience in mind, and that is the parents. The report card thus becomes a way to demonstrate the school’s attention to both academics and ethics, even if the categories are idealized and aspirational. This section comes from the first grade English report card (see Appendix XIV for Al-Dawran’s final report card). While I did not play a role in the creation of the report card, one of the primary teachers used samples that I downloaded from the internet in order to create the report card. The sample report card from Nashville was a much longer evaluation of student performance. Therefore, what parts of the sample appear on the version created by Al-Dawran, and what changes were made, can reveal how the school is trying to represent their educational philosophy to the parents (see Appendix XV for a look at the example report card that the school based their report card on).

The report card at Al-Dawran was divided into four sections as follows:

1. “Academic results”: a chart of the scores (out of 25) on the months one, two, three, and final exam, as well as their sum total (out of 100). This table included courses such as English language, math, and science.
2. Learning Objectives: behavioral and interactional measures called “Student Responsibilities for Learning.”
3. “Suggestions for Helping your Child”: a set of prescriptive advice for parents (in English) about what they should be doing outside of school to help—primarily with the task of learning and fluency of English.

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47 While an Arabic course was also listed on the English Report Card, the grade 1 classroom teacher, who taught most of the Arabic language and Arabic-medium courses (math, science, etc), also provided parents with a report card in Arabic for the subjects she taught.
48 “Report card” was the English term picked up by the school. A mix of letter grades (A+, A, B+, etc) and percentage scores (out of 100) were used for pre-kindergarten on up. The use of a report card played an important symbolic role in the validation of learning.
49 One of the primary teachers asked me for “American” report cards and so I downloaded and printed copies from multiple states in the nation available free on the internet. One of the samples, a kindergarten template from Nashville (see Appendix XV) most closely resembled the teacher’s final product.
4. Sign-off: “Congratulations” in large, stylized font and the name of the English Teacher.

The first category on the report card, academic results, prioritized academic performance. Students were measured only through their performance on four exams (one each month, and an overall final exam). So even though students completed homework and work during class, the only performance that “counted” was the exam. The end of high school exam, the tawjihi, also relies completely on exam scores.

Behavioral measures, which made up the second section under “Student Responsibilities for Learning,” are also important to learning. Knowing how to behave in the right situation (adab) is linked to these measures of school success. All six of these measures reflect aspects of adab for school. Additionally, adab was an important feature of socialization for parents at the school. Behavioral measures are generally standard on primary school report cards, especially given that most schools all over the world take on the task of teaching not only academics, but also socializing students into areas that are behavioral, social, and psychological (Mehan 1979a).

There were six items listed under “Student Responsibilities for Learning:”

1. Follows school rules
2. Participates in class discussion
3. Works well independently
4. Complete work on time
5. Organizes materials and workspace
6. Display good manners

By looking at what measures the school decided to include, we see that the school presented to parents that it was concerned with three important cultural values—respect for authority, academic performance, and concern for others. The very first item on the list, “follows school rules” indicated to parents the school had rules that the students were expected to follow. From Chapter 3 we saw that parents hesitate to strongly enforce discipline. Although most of the classrooms I observed lacked clear rules that students had to follow, the report card suggested that the school would take on this important part of learning.
The next few categories focus on student engagement in learning: participates in class discussion, works well independently, and completes work on time. “Class discussion” in Jordan referred to participation in the choral learning style of the usual class. From Chapter 2, we see that choral learning was a central part of how learning took place. Students were also expected to complete their own work, although the work generally involved a lot of support and guidance from their peers. (Semi-) independent work was central to a student demonstrating understanding and learning to the teacher. Completing work on time was part of demonstrating responsibility towards learning. All three of these show parents that the school is focused on academic performance and achievement.

The final item under Student Responsibilities for learning was around cultural values and concern for others. The school placed a lot of attention on manners and politeness and reflected this on the report card as well. Even in the English class, socialization of manners, cleanliness, and respect were an important part of the school practice. English greeting routines reflected respect and politeness for their teacher. Thus, including manners was not surprising. “Displays positive attitude” in the template became “display [sic] good manners.” The change aligned with the teacher’s focus on behavior and frequent discussions around “bad” behavior such as cheating, making the classroom dirty, or distracting other students instead of paying attention during the lesson. Adding manners to “responsibilities for learning” showed parents that the school made manners an important part of classroom expectations, a deliberate acknowledgement to parents that manners were not only expected but also evaluated.

There were a number of tweaks made to adapt the report card for Al-Dawran’s purposes, which were telling about the focus on academics and ethics. The first tweak was to eliminate a separation between behavior and academic performance. The template report card distinguished between “responsibility for behavior” to “responsibility for learning.” However, in the report card for Al-Dawran, items from both lists were under the category “responsibility for learning.” Just as
we saw that ethical messaging and teachings were integrated into academic content in Chapter 2, behaving well was intricately tied to learning. Including items that were behavioral and those that were academic also tells parents that the school was attentive to both.

An examination of the score on the academic results section and the student responsibilities for learning section further reinforced a connection between behavior and academic achievement. High behavioral grades on the report card corresponded with high academic grades. There were no students with all A+s in academic subjects but not all A+s in behavioral categories. The pattern was that as students got fewer A+s on their behavioral grades, the student also got fewer As and more Bs and Cs in the academic subjects listed on the report card. The correlation between being a good student in academics and in one’s behavior helped explain why “student expectations for learning” and “for behavior” were collapsed on the report card. Though this pattern does not necessarily mean that teachers assume that strong academic students are also well-behaved (or vice versa), it does indicate that teachers might see the two as interconnected. Parents looking for a school that considers good behavior to be a part of formal education will find this reinforced in the report card.

The third section of the report card, “Suggestions for Helping your Child,” suggested that the school was concerned about parental involvement, often in a way not expected or found in Jordanian government schools. One of the mothers in my sample who taught at a government school said that when she asked mothers what they do with their girls, she found out that the mothers “don’t open the English book, ever.” Al-Dawran however, explicitly addressed the parents’ role in education, distinguishing the school from the lack of parental involvement assumed in some other schools. The challenge was that almost all of the materials—from homework to weekly planners—were sent in English. Parents had to be relatively strong in English even to help their children decipher what the homework was. But the fact that materials
were sent in English was an important signal to the parents. Using English suggested that the school took English education seriously and so should the parents.

4.7 Conclusion

The parents featured in this chapter, based on their interviews, are looking for a school that will instill in their children both academic excellence and akhlaq (ethics) and adab (good behavior). The school administration is attempting to meet those expectations, but in a tough market, it sometimes only succeeds nominally. During interviews with teachers, two of them reflected on the school’s objectives. One said, “I have no idea what the school is trying to accomplish! I really want to know. But I think it’s money. And students getting good grades.” Based on parent interviews, kids are learning and picking up some positive ethics and what seems to many parents like an impressive amount of English. But not all of them are sure that the school is living fully up to their expectations. While currently happy, and initially happy in interviews, talking about the school revealed a lot of areas for improvement. As parents began to list their concerns with Al-Dawran, many moms by the end of their interviews opened up the possibility of moving their kids to another school.

The first question explored in this chapter looked at how language and language ideologies drove parents to select Al-Dawran. Given that these parents had the means to turn away from government-run schools, they follow particular priorities. The focus on English is an important piece, but parents claim they like Al-Dawran because of the values the school teaches about being a good community member and citizen. This means the school must have a good English program, but not to the detriment of the Arabic and ethical focus. The strong English program was important to the parents because it presumably set up their children for economic success, access to a universal language, and the ability to navigate new technologies. While these mothers realize the necessity of learning English, they hold tight to the ethics and values they
want to instill from Arabic. Going beyond local rootedness, Arabic’s authority comes from Arabic’s connection to values of family and tribe, morality, and connection to Islam. Thus, an Arabic speaker is well connected to their tradition, home, family, and nation. Looking at Arabic from the broader lens of value, we see the connection between learning Arabic and learning how to live.

There was one unique perspective from a teacher which challenged the central authority driven by the link between Classical Arabic and the geographically authentic root in the Arab World. In her opinion, the language of the Qur’an was chosen by coincidence to be Arabic. As the Qur’an was revealed to Muhammad, it was revealed in his language, Arabic. She pointed out that the other Holy Books (the Old and New Testaments) were written in the language of the prophet or the people for whom the message was intended. In this teacher’s opinion, the fact that Muslims speak different languages other than Arabic is essential. “If you know English, you can deliver a good message about Islam to other people…people have mistaken Islam. We should all advertise Islam in a good way.” She talked about Islamophobia and how Muslims have a responsibility to use their own languages to convey a positive, and more accurate, perspective on what Islam means to them. In order to defend Islam, Muslims must be familiar with at least some Fusha in order to speak about what is written in the Qur’an. For this teacher, Islam was an equalizing force across at least the Muslim community. “Islam came for everybody. Yes Islam came in Arabic…Islam does not separate Arab from non-Arab.” The teacher challenges the underlying connection between Islam and Arabic speakers, and thus the elite connection between religious authority and the Arab World. By extension, Muslims can learn ethical values by learning the Classical Arabic of the Qur’an, and then carrying those values over into other languages that they speak.

The second question explored in the chapter is how the school uses the ideologies of the parents to draw them to the school. From building a new school building, to purchasing
technology and resources for the classroom, Dr. Hussein spent a great deal of time and money investing in the school. But at the end of the day, he needed to focus on what would bring in parents. Dr. Hussein focused on commodities that are signs of an attention and excellence in English without necessarily being asked to prove the benefit. Given the educational market, he needed to concentrate on superficial advantages in education to signal high quality English. The workbook, in Dr. Hussein’s ideal image, became one exemplar of the school’s success in English education. Parents and prospective visitors would hopefully look on and see school’s high quality reflected back.

What the school does during hajj or through the report cards is to attempt to demonstrate alignment with the parents’ values – a focus on religion but through the broader lens of Islamic ethics. This means that a good Muslim is also a good family member, citizen, student, and neighbor. Not all parents see the same qualities in the school. However, the various desires of the mothers turn into an advantage for the school. The school can promote a mixture of values represented by the mini-hajj and the accompanying handouts, and parents can find the particular values that they are seeking - whether religion, individual attention to their child, good family values, or even strong English education within a local cultural context. The school’s focus on values is a selling point for choosing Al-Dawran, justifying to mothers that their children should remain at the school for another year.
Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1 Dissertation Summary

Not long after beginning my fieldwork in Amman, I was chatting with the lady I lived with and talking about a regular topic of ours, religion. She had already told me that the best way, in her opinion, to improve my Arabic was to read the Qur’an. She asked me if I knew Surah Al-Nas, the final chapter of the Qur’an, and I read it for her. The translation is as follows: “Say, ‘I seek refuge with the Lord and Cherisher of Mankind, the King of Mankind, the God of Mankind, From the mischief of the Whisperer (of evil), who withdraws (after his whisper), (the same) who whispers into the hearts of Mankind, among Jinns and among Men’” (Qur’an 114:1-6).

Afterwards she asked me “t’arifi ma mana al waswas?” “Do you know the meaning of waswas (whisperer)?” I replied, “shaytan?” “The devil?” And she told me that in addition to shaytan, we may be our own devil.⁵⁰ We may give in to the little voice that tempts us to skip prayers or say bad things. In her ethnography Mitzvah Girls about a Hasidic Jewish community, Fader writes, “Each individual has her own struggle to become an ethical person” (2009:46). Learning the morals and ethics of one’s community is a lifelong process. Moral education is a process of learning to ignore the whispers that encourage acting against the values of the community. Adults do not always get explicit recognition that their behaviors are negatively affecting others. Children on the other hand, are disciplined in their speech, their body, and their actions so that when they become adults, they have an easier time learning to dismiss the waswas (whispers) that they hear.

In this dissertation, I examine the process of socialization into morality of children just beginning school in Amman, Jordan. Moral education entails learning how to behave in ways that

⁵⁰ Qur’anic commentary agrees with her interpretation and reading of the text. According to my Qur’an, the exegesis adds, “The power of evil may be Satan or his host of evil ones, or evil men or the evil inclinations within man’s own will…They secretly whisper evil and then withdraw, to make their net all the more subtle and alluring” (Ali 2002:1810).
align with cultural values of the good. Children learn ethical values of the good by and through ordinary, everyday language and interaction (Lambek 2010; Schieffelin & Ochs 1986). The talk and interactions that this dissertation focuses on are classroom interactions, disciplinary interactions, and parental beliefs about language, education, and schools.

The context of contemporary Jordan makes the question of moral education salient. Jordan is a country with poor natural resources; remittances make up the largest sector of foreign currency income, and the United States has been giving aid to Jordan since 1958 (Shirazi 2010b). High unemployment has forced many Jordanians to leave the country in search of jobs (Antoun 2005). Regional conflicts (historical and contemporary) have encouraged immigration into Jordan, especially the current influx of Syrians, adding strain to an already high unemployment rate. Islam, the religion of majority of Jordanians but also an important force legitimating the monarchy’s power, faces negative perception in many parts of the world. Not only are some Jordanian Muslims turning towards re-definitions of piety (Adely 2012b), but the Jordanian Monarchy is promoting their own modern interpretation of Islam. In the face of all these challenges, the Jordan monarchy has turned towards education as the solution (Shirazi 2010b).

Educational reforms in Jordan are promoted as a means of preparing the next generation of Jordanians for the competitive workforce, both domestic and international. A USAID analysis of the Jordanian education system found that a “mismatch between skills taught in schools and workplace needs, uneven teacher to student ratio, outdated teaching methodologies, and limited use of technology” were barriers to employment in Jordan and abroad (quoted in Shirazi 2010b:58-59). The government’s current attempts at educational reforms strive to prepare Jordanians for a “knowledge economy” where Jordanian students are human capital, not just workers but an innovative and adaptive workforce that stimulates economic growth and investment (Shirazi 2010a). The perspective of Jordanian schools as lacking may be of benefit to capitalize on international aid dollars, however it minimizes the kinds of critical and evaluative
thinking that children are being modeled by caregivers and taught to exercise on their own. In Chapter 3, I elaborate on the development of ‘*aql* or “reason” in children, a process which relies on the thoughtful examination of how one’s behavior impacts those around you (family, community, and one’s future self). This is a form and practice of critical thinking overlooked in the value that it brings to community, relationships, and engaged thinking.

Not only do changes in the practice of education based on educational reforms impact the moral education of Jordanian students, but explicit moral education, centered around Islam, remains central to the mission of schools. The meeting of educational reforms and traditional perspectives can lead to tensions (Adely 2012; Hodges 2015), the prioritizing of one system over another (as I demonstrate in Chapter 2), or an attempt at balancing both perspectives (Chapter 4).

In this dissertation, I examine the process of the socialization of morality from classroom interactions (Chapter 2), discipline (Chapter 3) and ideas about bilingualism in Jordan and school choice (Chapter 4). In Chapter 2: “Good” Responses: Socialization in the English Language Learning Classroom, I examine interactions between Ms. Layla and her kindergarten and first grade English language learning students. In this chapter, I argue that the predominant interactional moves or patterns that Ms. Layla uses with her students not only teach students to be “good” students by joining the collective classroom, but encourage collective ways of being and acting.

Chapter 2 is framed in the midst of educational reform in Jordan. While the monarchy and the Ministry of Education attempt to integrate trendy topics of education, Jordanian teachers are unable to make them practical in the classroom. Trending topics in the field of education, such as critical thinking and group work, are pedagogical theories. When applied in practice, critical thinking and group work are not just altering the conduct of students. Teachers are also the objects being molded in educational environments and adjustments in interactional practices are necessary. In order for teachers to benefit from educational theories, the theories must have some
practical application in the classroom. However, as Hodges (2015) and Innabi and El Sheikh (2007) point out, the teacher trainings that have emerged from the reforms have not successfully impacted practice in the classroom.

I conducted an interview about Jordanian teaching pedagogy with a 70+ year old teacher who had been teaching most of his life. As a Palestinian-Jordanian he spent much of his formative education in Jordan. However, graduating from university he began teaching in Saudi Arabia. Now, he teaches in Jordan and has been for more than 15 years. He currently teaches the history and politics tawjihi section at the Amman Academy, one of the most prestigious schools in the country. The school is known for IB curriculum and high rate of admission to universities outside of Jordan, especially in Europe and North America. Regarding his experience working at a variety of schools, he said:

> All the schools, in Amman and elsewhere [in Jordan], [the classes] are memorize, memorize, memorize. Even tawjihi, they memorize only…after the exam, they forget everything. The way of teaching here is wrong…Even reading, there is no reading. When I went to school, we had to discuss the books we read with the teacher…Now [the students] go on the internet and ‘copy paste’ and give that in. This happens in all classes…I heard of one student who took a picture of a book and submitted that as homework. Ridiculous!…The workers at the Ministry of Education are not qualified. They got the job because they had wasta (connections).

What this teacher pointed out is the ingrained pattern of memorization in teaching pedagogy across most of Jordan. Interactional patterning that encouraged rote repetition, memorization, and precise answer align with the findings of Chapter 2. For the teacher quoted above, those same patterns discourage discussion. Instead he uses the analogy from computers of “copy paste” to describe literally how homework is done and for the kinds of learning that lean only on recall. As I argue in Chapter 2, the entrenched patterns of interaction that rest on repetition and role learning make critical thinking and non-traditional ways of learning difficult to implement.

In Chapter 2, I introduce four interactional moves (IRE, Chorus, Guided Repetition, and Follow the Leader) embedded in classroom interaction. Each move socializes the children into
providing the teacher with very particular responses and a process of choral repetition. The focus on repetition of answers, in addition to the teacher seeking specific answers discourages the innovative, creative responses that are central to critical thinking. The four interactional moves encourage a strongly teacher-led classroom where the teacher maintains control over learning and the learning environment. Reforms in education will have to take into consideration the ingrained ways that teachers and students interact as they turn theory into practice.

Chapter 2 also explores the way interactional patterns guide moral development. Children are encouraged to stand out in the class, but they are also required to be part of the chorus, learning to balance both individual and collective desires. And finally, teachers embed discussions about how to behave and act outside the class, and by using the same interactional patterns that drill the alphabet, new vocabulary, and science terms, teachers encourage students to follow disciplined ways of being good members of the community.

In Chapter 3: Have Shame!: Shaming as Discipline and Ethics in the Socialization of Children, I look at how caregivers respond to ordinary infractions by children and what children learn from those disciplinary interactions. I argue that children, who are seen as still developing their reason (‘aql) are given a model of how to employ that reason as they develop. The disciplinary interactions between children and their caregivers model how a child might employ ‘aql as they develop it. At the heart of the modeling are culturally important values such as respect for authority, concern for others (both as empathy and as avoidance of another person’s negative opinion), and taqwa (God-consciousness) and the awareness of their relationship with God.

Additionally, in this chapter I look at the role of shame and guilt in the socialization of children. Shame, the “response to the external judgment of others” (Lo & Fung 2011:170) is widely used explicitly and implicitly in disciplinary strategies. Children are shown models for how to demonstrate concern for the effect their behaviors have on others, but caregivers also use
the external judgment of others to draw children away from behaviors that bring dishonor on the child and larger family connections. Arabic shame terms such as ‘aib and ma basir suggest violations in etiquette and respect for others. The use of either term indicates violation of expected behavior towards others. On the other hand, haram invokes religious violation and can provoke feelings of guilt through a more internalized feeling of wrongdoing (Lo & Fung 2011:170).

Finally in Chapter 4: School Choice: Getting the Values You Pay for, I look at the role of language ideologies in motivating parents with financial resources to seek out private education. Parents seek to raise bilingual children, fluent in both Arabic and English. The Arabic language holds value not only in its tie to the local and sense of family (authenticity and pride), but through its connection to Islam and how to live (adab). English on the other hand draws some of its value from being a language of anonymity: a language of communication across difference. But it is also the language of profit, of economic opportunity and higher education. I also look at how parents use the values attached to both languages to justify and validate the school they have chosen. Schools also use these discourses to encourage parents to keep their children at their school.

English in early elementary school has become increasingly important not just for Jordanians who in the future will seek jobs and education abroad, but also those who will stay within Jordan. English confers not only symbolic capital to moderately fluent speakers, but is also increasingly essential for understanding medical reports or making attending professional development workshop in order to function at work. Parents want to raise children who have access to opportunities, from financial to social to academic, and English is seen as part of that process.

But parents also want to raise strong and confident speakers of Arabic. Arabic is not only connected to home and family but is the language of religion and the Qur’an. From Islam, parents
derive ethics (akhlaq) and ideas about how to behave (adab).

Schools, including Al-Dawran, capitalize on the priorities of parents, marketing a strong English program with attention to ethics, values, and religion. The school attempts to create the story of a strong English program, while not leaving behind local values. And though the school may fall short on these promises, the draw of English is a powerful motivator for parents. Many parents were disappointed with the school’s Arabic program and how little progress their children had made in learning more of the Qur’an. But while parents could help their children learn Arabic, many did not feel confident teaching English. Parents tolerated a school with a weaker Arabic program in exchange for the greater long-term benefit of a stronger English foundation.

5.2 Future Directions

This dissertation explores three angles on the socialization of morality of which there are many more. As I end, I address two additional areas that I hope to explore to further this research.

The first is the role of gender in moral education. As we saw in Chapter 3, both boys and girls are scolded for not following directions, not listening to what their parents say, or trying to take someone else’s things. However, as Shirazi writes (2016), there is a discourse that “boys are wild” that influences social practices and gender equity. Ms. Layla relied on a method of classroom management where she involved the most disruptive students in classroom tasks as a form of distraction and encouragement for good behavior. Taking on responsibility for distributing pencils, or guiding the class to the playroom become a reason for assisting the teacher instead of distracting the class. While not systematically examined in this paper, in my fieldnotes I made observations that the practice of selecting out disruptive students fit the discourse that “boys are wild,” and rarely were girls given such opportunities. In most Jordanian schools (such as government schools), genders are segregated after about third grade. However, private schools continue to remain mixed until higher grades or all the way through to the end of high school.
While I do not have longitudinal data, I would like to analyze the effect of gender on classroom interaction and classroom behaviors.

As Shirazi points out, the question of gender is interesting because although Jordanian women have surpassed men in entrance to college, unemployment rates for young women are much higher than those for young men (about 47% for women and about 26% for men) (2016; Assaad 2014:13). Overall, girls are succeeding in higher education, and schools are an important site for “gender struggle” (Adely 2012a). By examining my data from the lens of gender socialization, I will be able to delve deeper into the intersection between gender and education.

The second area for further exploration in the ethics of ordinary language is the use of Arabic reference terms and terms of endearment with children. In Chapter 3, I referred to the process of reverse role vocatives. In the case of Jordan, adult caregivers refer to children by the term for the child’s relationship to the adult. For example a mother refers to a child as “mama,” a grandfather refers to a grandchild as “seedo” (grandfather), or a maternal aunt refers to her niece as “khalto” (aunt). In addition, most of the children I met were referred to by a nickname or a term of endearment such as habibi/habibti (my love) or ya hayati (my life), ya ‘umri (my lifetime). Habibi comes from the root (H-b) (حـبـ) meaning “to evoke love …to endear” (Wehr 1994:179). Ya hayati comes from the root (H-i) (حـيـ) meaning “to live” (Wehr 1994:256). Ya ‘umri comes from the root (‘-m-r) (عـمـر) meaning “to live long” (Wehr 1994:753). Each of these terms have moral and affective implications in their use.

But it is not just caregivers who use terms of affection for children. Farah, my 4 year old downstairs neighbor and favorite playmate while in Jordan, used to call her mother habibti. She even used the term on her caregivers, including me. The reverse role vocatives and terms of endearment socialize children into deferential and respectful ways of referring to caregivers while also calling on concepts of love and devotion. In further study, I would like to examine the variety of terms of endearment used towards and by children to better understand the contexts of
their use.

5.3 Implications for Research

In looking at education in the Middle East, Mazawi has argued that what is missing is in-depth analysis of the role of schools in the formation of ideas of being (2002). As Shirazi reflects, “In neglecting the narratives and individual experiences embedded in daily practices of schooling, approaches to education in the Middle East overlook a critical dimension of what schools produce and how they produce it” (2012:72). My dissertation adds to a growing body of ethnographic investigations of daily practice in Jordanian schools (Adely 2012a, 2012b, Hodges 2015, Shirazi 2016). I focus specifically on the younger members of the community and their parents, and through a rapidly growing and expanding private school market in Amman. By focusing on ordinary, everyday interactions, this dissertation examines how religion and ethics feed into behavior and interactions to learn what it means to be “good.”

In-depth studies of the place of English in the Middle East are also lacking. This project, and further papers that emerge from it, can contribute to the dearth of knowledge about English education. The English language plays a dominant and increasing role in Jordan in helping citizens to prepare for and cope with the future, especially in light of the monarchy’s expectation that Jordanians become pillars of the Arab role in the global economy. But examinations of how English is taught and how Jordanian speakers innovate and change the language through use are important areas for further study. This project can contribute to the former.

As discussed in Chapter 2, this project contributes to the anthropology of education through the examination of how interactions make educational reforms more challenging. Even with discourses and trainings around critical thinking, reforms are difficult in the face of ingrained teacher-centric interactional moves in the classroom.

This dissertation adds to the anthropology of Islam a broader understanding of moral
development. This is especially interesting in the context of Jordan. The monarchy has taken a strong stance on education as a space for both modernity and Islam. The country is in the midst of negotiating what that mix means and the ranges of possibilities for what it can look like. For the Hasidic women that Fader described in *Mitzvah Girls*, being “with it” entails an “alternative religious modernity” (2009:17). Given the negative perception facing Islam globally, Muslims around the world are being questioned not only for their morality, but also for their ability to be part of the modern world.

In addition, the linguistic anthropology methods of close analysis of interaction contribute to the anthropology of Islam an examination of ethics in everyday life. Instead of focusing from the perspective of deliberate self-cultivation of piety, I look at religion through ordinary behaviors. Children are learning through their interactions with caregivers, not only important moral values of the community, but how to cultivate ethics in their everyday lives.

In conclusion, this dissertation reveals some of the complexities surrounding the moral education of the next generation of Jordanians. By looking at spaces of socialization, we see not only what ethics are taught to children and how, but we better understand moral concepts of the good in the ordinary lives of Jordanian families.
APPENDIX

Appendix 1

Al-Dawran International Schools’ logo
Appendix II

Jordan First Campaign poster
Appendix III
The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
Ministry of Education

The Mission:

“To create and administer an education system based on ‘excellence,’ energized by its human resources, dedicated to high standards, social values, and a healthy spirit of competition, which contributes to the nation’s wealth in a global ‘Knowledge Economy.’”

The Vision:

“The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has the quality competitive human resource system to provide all people with life-long learning experiences relevant to their current and future needs in order to respond to and stimulate sustained economic development through an educated population and a skilled workforce.”

The Philosophy and Objectives of Education:

“The philosophy of education in the kingdom stems out of the Jordanian constitution, the Islamic Arab civilization, the principles of the great Arab Revolt and the Jordanian national experience. This philosophy is manifested in the following basics:

(a) The intellectual bases:
1- Faith in Almighty God.
2- Faith in the higher ideals of the Arab Nation.
3- Islam is a system of intellectual behavioral ideology that respects man, exalts the mind and urges for knowledge, work and morality.
4- Islam is a system of wholeness that provides virtuous values and principles that from the consciousness of both the individual and the group.

(b) The national bases of pan-Arab and human:
1- The Hashemite kingdom of Jordan is parliamentary, hereditary and monarchic state where loyalty is for God, the homeland and the king.
2- Jordan is a part of the Arab Nation and the Jordanian people are indivisible from the Islamic and the Arab Nations.
3- The Arabic language is an essential pillar in the existence of the Arab Nation: its unity and renaissance.
4- The Palestine cause is crucial to the Jordanian people.

(c) The social bases:
1- Jordanians are equal in political, social and economic rights and responsibilities and are distinguished only by what they contribute to their society and their belonging to it.
2- Respect for the individual’s freedom and dignity.
3- Education is a social necessity and a right for all, each according to his intrinsic abilities and potentials.

(d) General Objectives
The general objectives of education in the Kingdom emanate from the philosophy of education,
and are exemplified in shaping a citizen: believer in God, adherent to homeland and nation, endowed by virtues and human aspects, and mature physically, mentally, spiritually and socially so that each student, by the end of the educational cycles, shall be able to:

1- Use Arabic language in expressing himself and in communicating easily with others.
2- Vigilantly comprehend facts, concepts and relations connected with the natural environment both locally and globally and effectively use them in life.
3- Comprehend Islam as an ideology and sharia’ and vigilantly exemplify its values and trends.
4- Vigilantly comprehend technology and acquire skills of using, producing and developing it, and subjugate this technology to serve the society.
5- Think objectively and critically and adopt scientific methods in observation, research and problem-solving.
6- Adhere to citizenship rights and shoulder the related consequential responsibilities.
7- Invest personal potentials and free time in developing knowledge, innovation, invention, and the spirit of initiative, towards work and its completion and in innocent entertainment.

(e) The educational policy principles
The educational policy principles are manifested in the following:

1- Orienting the educational system to have better suitability to both individual and societal needs, and establishing a balance between them.
2- Emphasizing the importance of political education in the educational system, and enhancing the principles of participation, justice and democracy and their practices.
3- Enhancing scientific methodology in planning, conducting and evaluation of the educational system and developing research, assessment and follow-up system.
4- Expanding educational type in the educational institutions to have them involve programs for special education and others for gifted learners and for those with special needs.
5- Emphasizing the fact that teaching is a message and a career that has its own ethical and occupational basics.
6- Enhancing pride in the scientific and social status of the teacher for his distinguished role in building-up the individual and society.”
Appendix IV
The Educational System: Basic Education

*The basic education cycle:
(a) Basic education is compulsory and free in the government school.
(b) a child is accepted in the first year of the basic education at completing six-year of age by the end of December of the school year he is enrolls in.
(c) A student is not to be expelled from school before completing 16 years of age, except for those with health problems stated in a report and signed by a specialized health committee.
(d) Basic education is the base for education and the cornerstone for building-up national and pan-Arab unity, developing intrinsic potentials and attitudes and orienting students accordingly.
(e) This cycle aims at realizing the general objectives of education and preparing the citizen in all aspects of his personality; physical, mental, social and spiritual so that he shall be able to:

1- Vigilantly acknowledge Islam’s history, principles, provisions and values and exemplify them ethically and behaviorally.
2- Acquire the basic skills of the Arabic language so that he becomes able to use it easily.
3- Realize essential facts relevant to the natural and geographical environment on the Jordanian, Arab and world levels.
4- Exemplify the social behavioral basics and respect the traditions, habits and sound values of his society.
5- Love his homeland, feel proud of it and hold the consequent responsibilities.
6- Acquire the basic skills of at least one foreign language.¹
7- Comprehend scientific basics of all exposed types of technology and exploit them in daily life.

¹ In the objectives for secondary education (the final two years of tawjihi), the students command of this foreign language goes to “Master at least one foreign language” (Ministry of Education)
Appendix V

Creative Thinking exercise – Arabic class homework assignment

Arabic text at the top of the assignment:
School name
“Let your child imagine what shapes he can draw with these circles”
Thought bubble: “You are creative and innovative”
دعى طفلة تشكيل ما هي الأشكال التي يمكن أن يرسمها باستخدام هذه الالوان؟

دعى طفلة تشكيل ما هي الأشكال التي يمكن أن يرسمها باستخدام هذه الالوان؟

دعى طفلة تشكيل ما هي الأشكال التي يمكن أن يرسمها باستخدام هذه الالوان؟
Appendix VI

Transcription Conventions

Codes for Interactional Structure
T = Teacher
S = Student

Interactional pattern labeled to the left of the transcript
Initiation: Teacher initiates a response from students
Response: Single student responds to initiation from teacher
Evaluation: Teacher’s evaluations of student responses.
Chorus: Multiple students respond to initiation of teacher (may contain an explanation of the amount of the chorus)
Guided repetition: Response being repeated by a chorus of students
Follow the leader: Chorus of students repeat immediately after another student
T evaluation + initiation: An utterance by the teacher has qualities of both initiation and evaluation

Other transcription markings
[ : used to mark an overlap between an utterance on one line and the utterance above or below it,
also marked with the [ symbol.
] : marks the end of an utterance overlap
… : indicates a section skipped in the interaction
/i/ : the phonetic sound inside the / / is being said
ex<ex>cellent : the word or sound inside the < > is stretched or lengthened
(.4 sec) : indicates a pause – the length is indicated inside the parentheses
(reading) : an explanation of things happening in the excerpt that are not in the spoken text
. : brief pause
? : rising intonation at the end of the word, may or may not indicate a question
{…} : passages that are unclear. Any text inside the { } is the best guess of what was heard
“A” : the name of the letter is said OR quoting text or stories
* : self-interrupted speech
! : indicates emphasis
Appendix VII

Student Essay and Internet Source

A trip to the jungle.

A tropical jungle is an awesome place for a trip. I had the opportunity of visiting one last year with my family and some friends.

The moment we entered the jungle a sort of semi-darkness enveloped us. The sky almost shut out by the canopy of leaves high above us. At the ground level, thick vegetation grew in every direction. The air was wet and had a peculiar smell to it.

All around us were the sounds of insects, birds, and animals. Though we could not see them. After a while, for the first time in my life, I saw strange birds, insects, huge snakes, trees, flowers, and various animals; lions, elephants, crocodiles, etc. When we came out from the jungle, I felt...
A tropical jungle is an awesome place. I had the opportunity of visiting one recently.

My friend Rahim, who works as a forest ranger, took me along on one of his trips into the jungle. I had wanted to experience for myself first-hand what he had always spoken about.

The moment we entered the jungle, a sort of semi-darkness enveloped us. The sky was almost completely shut out by the canopy of leaves high above us. At ground level, thick vegetation grew in every direction. The air was damp and had a peculiar smell to it.

All around us were the sounds of insects, birds and animals. Though we could not see them, except for some birds, we knew they were there. The sounds echoed all over, making the jungle feel eerie and strange.

I had no idea how Rahim could find a way through the bushes and trees. He said he was just following a path used by the aborigines. As far as I was concerned, I could not see any path. I realised then how easily an inexperienced person could get lost and perish in the jungle.

Nevertheless I followed Rahim as we trudged along slowly. The most uncomfortable thing about being in the jungle were the leeches. These little bloodsuckers never gave up. Despite thick boots and clothes, they still managed to bite me.

For the first time in my life I saw strange birds, insects, huge spiders, snakes, trees, flowers, vines as thick as a man's hand and various animals. The experience was unforgettable. I was awestruck by the might of nature.

When we emerged from the jungle I felt as though a great weight had been lifted from me. The clear blue sky was a welcome sight. Outside, the world was definitely easier to cope with. The jungle made me feel hemmed in and helpless. It was a good experience but I would prefer to remain outside it.

**damp**  slightly wet

**trudge**  to walk slowly with a lot of effort

Appendix VIII

Sample worksheet
Worksheet sent home for students with school logo on top. Worksheet was sent as a full page. Border marks original page border.
Appendix IX

Original and Amended Worksheets at the request of the school.

Two sets of original worksheets followed by amended versions as the request of the administration. Both worksheets were altered to cut out the image of the pig, and the word “pig”

Original version

Name: _______________________

**Short I Words**

Circle the short _i_ words.

- pig
- time
- it
- five
- big
- red
- mom
- him
- her
- side
- sit
- did

Write the words in ABC order.

1. _________________________
2. _________________________
3. _________________________
4. _________________________
5. _________________________
6. _________________________
Short I words

Circle the short i words.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>dig</th>
<th>time</th>
<th>it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>five</td>
<td>big</td>
<td>red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mom</td>
<td>him</td>
<td>her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>side</td>
<td>sit</td>
<td>did</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Write the words in ABC order.

1. __________________________
2. __________________________
3. __________________________
4. __________________________
5. __________________________
6. __________________________
My name is _______________.

Trace the letter P p. Start at the dot.

Color the things that start with P p.
Al-Dawran International School

Name: ____________________________

Date: ____________________________

My name is ____________________________.

Trace the letter P. Start at the dot.

Color the things that start with P.

[Images of objects starting with P, such as a sun, a pizza, a parrot, a lemon, a windmill, and a clown.]
Appendix X

Images of children at the hajj
Appendix XI

Bulletin Board at Al-Darwan – only for the time of hajj
Appendix XII

Bulletin boards inside the classroom – complete in time for the hajj
Appendix XIII

Images of the school’s passport for the hajj simulation

Front cover
Middle of the passport

Close up of middle
The requirements for the simulation of the performance of hajj
1. Obedience to the lord and his love
2. Following the model of the holy messenger
3. Honoring one’s parents
4. Doing school homework
Appendix XIV

Grade 1 English report card created by Al-Dawran

Al-Dawran International school  
Grade one international \ final report cards  
First semester

Student's name : [INSERT FULL NAME]

ACADEMIC RESULTS :

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject \ month</th>
<th>First month</th>
<th>Second month</th>
<th>Third month</th>
<th>Final</th>
<th>sum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English language</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic drama</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>A+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR LEARNING :

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Follows school rules</td>
<td>A+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participates in class discussion</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works well independently</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete work on time</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizes materials and workspace</td>
<td>A+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Display good manners</td>
<td>A+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SUGGESTIONS FOR HELPING YOUR CHILD:

- Attend to school regularly.
- Arriving on time.
- Being prepared to learn (e.g., well rested, proper nutrition, has all materials).
- Completing homework.
- Reading stories daily at home.
- Practice speaking English at home through having conversations together.
- Watch and listen to educational C.D.'S in English language.

CONGRATULATIONS

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHER : [INSERT NAME]
Appendix XV

Downloaded Sample Report Card from Nashville Public Schools used as a guide for the school report card (found in Appendix XIV). Zoomed in versions of the report card are below.
ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance and promptness is essential for success in school.
A note dated and signed by the parent or guardian is required each time a student is absent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading Period</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Days Enrolled</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Days Present</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Days Excused Absent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Days Unexcused Absent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Days Tardy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR LEARNING

A (✔) indicates your child needs to improve in the following grade level expectations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listens and follows directions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works well independently and cooperatively in groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completes work/assignments on time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returns homework and/or signed notes on time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizes materials and workspace</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses time productively/stays on task</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Displays positive attitude</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participates/interacts in learning activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR BEHAVIOR

A (✔) indicates your child needs to improve in the following grade level expectations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Follows school rules</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates self-control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accepts responsibility for actions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respects the rights and property of others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respects authority</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interacts well with peers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SUGGESTIONS FOR HELPING YOUR CHILD

A (✔) indicates your child can be helped by:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attending school regularly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arriving on time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refraining from early dismissals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being prepared to learn (e.g., well-rested, proper nutrition, has necessary materials)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading daily at home</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools 06/2012
ATTENDANCE
Regular attendance and promptness is essential for success in school. A note dated and signed by the parent or guardian is required each time a student is absent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading Period</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Days Enrolled</td>
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<tr>
<td>Days Present</td>
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<tr>
<td>Days Excused</td>
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<td>Days Absent</td>
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<td>Days Unexcused</td>
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<td>Days Tardy</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

COMMENTS AND REQUEST FOR CONFERENCE
A check (9) in the box indicates a conference is requested.

Reporting Period

TEACHER COMMENTS

____ Notice of Concern enclosed
____ Conference Requested

Parent/Guardian Conference Requested
________ Signature

_____________________

Current contact information ____________________________________

Reporting Period

TEACHER COMMENTS

____ Conference Requested

Parent/Guardian Conference Requested
________ Signature

_____________________

Current contact information ____________________________________

Reporting Period

TEACHER COMMENTS

____ Notice of Concern enclosed
____ Conference Requested

Parent/Guardian Conference Requested
________ Signature

_____________________

Current contact information ____________________________________

Reporting Period

TEACHER COMMENTS

____ Notice of Concern enclosed
____ Conference Requested

Parent/Guardian Conference Requested
________ Signature

_____________________

Current contact information ____________________________________

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR LEARNING
A (9) indicates your child needs to improve in the following grade level expectations:

- Listens and follows directions
- Works well independently and cooperatively in groups
- Completes work/assignments on time
- Returns homework and/or signed notes on time
- Organizes materials and work space
- Uses time productively/stays on task
- Displays positive attitude
- Participates/interacts in learning activities

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR BEHAVIOR
A (9) indicates your child needs to improve in the following grade level expectations:

- Follows school rules
- Demonstrates self-control
- Accepts responsibility for actions
- Respects the rights and property of others
- Respects authority
- Interacts well with peers

SUGGESTIONS FOR HELPING YOUR CHILD
A (9) indicates your child can be helped by:

- Attending school regularly
- Arriving on time
- Refraining from early dismissals
- Being prepared to learn (e.g., well-rested, proper nutrition, has necessary materials)
- Reading daily at home

Effort Code
(E) Exceptional Effort
(S) Satisfactory Effort
(N) Needs Improvement in Effort

Standards Code
(3) Meets with Proficiency - Demonstrates acceptable achievement of the targeted benchmarks/standards.
(2) Developing Proficiency - Is approaching acceptable achievement of the targeted benchmarks/standards.
(1) Not Yet - Requires more time and experiences; shows limited achievement of the targeted benchmarks/standards.
(/) Indicates an area not assessed at this time. A score will be given by the end of the year.
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