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Exploring the impact of a CD ROM on Arabic language learners' acquisition of the Arabic language and culture

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Exploring the Impact of a CD ROM
on Arabic language Learners' Acquisition of the Arabic
Language and Culture

Abdelhak Bouhaja

An Action Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in Education

College of Professional Studies
School of Education
California State University Monterey Bay
May 2010

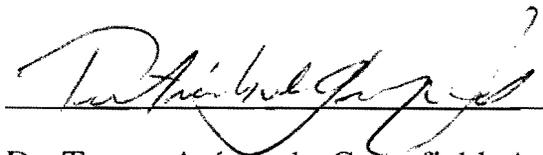
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APPROVED BY THE COLLEGE OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

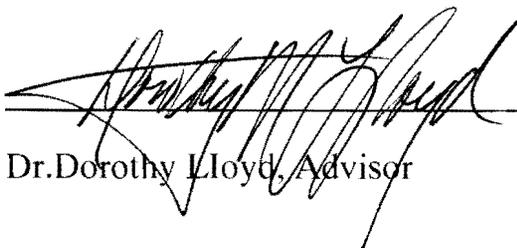
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11 May 2010

Dr. Teresa Arámula-Greenfield, Action Thesis Advisor

Date



May 11, 2010

Dr. Dorothy Lloyd, Advisor

Date

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study and thesis was to determine the impact of using a CD including authentic Arabic material to improve Arabic language learners' reading and listening proficiency, as well as to increase their familiarity with Arabic culture. The CD contained several components including film clips, songs, and short stories reflecting various aspects of Arabic culture and history. An open-ended questionnaire and an interview were administered to elicit students' perceptions of the CD's usefulness or lack thereof in improving their Arabic proficiency. Although students reported an interest in learning the Arabic language using the CD ROM, they seemed to evaluate it based on the test they have to take at the end of the course. Data obtained from the questionnaire, the interview, and the teacher journal, indicate that students found the videos to be the most useful, while there was mixed attitudes regarding the songs and the short stories and their usefulness.

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Chapter 1: Problem Statement

The purpose of this study and thesis was to determine the impact of using a CD including authentic Arabic material to improve Arabic language learners' Arabic reading and listening proficiency, as well as to increase their familiarity with Arabic culture. The CD contains several components such as film clips, songs, and short stories reflecting various aspects of Arabic culture and history.

Introduction and Background

As we strive to create a framework in which multiculturalism might flourish, we are constantly faced with the challenge presented by foreign language pedagogy. This challenge is not limited to teaching linguistic principles such as vocabulary and grammar, but extends to teaching cultural familiarity as well. One way to help students gain linguistic competence as well as cultural familiarity is to provide them with authentic material in written and audio-visual format.

While working as an Arabic language instructor at the School of Languages¹ (SL) for the past five years, I noticed that my students are not exposed to authentic Arabic input frequently. This is due mainly to two reasons. The first one is the fact that they are studying Arabic as a foreign language, where the use of the language is limited to the classroom, and their only access to the language is via textbooks (which are not authentic) in addition to the teacher. The second reason for the lack of exposure to authentic Arabic language input is due to the almost unique situation of the Arabic variant they are studying. My students are studying Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), which is a type of Arabic that is used only in news broadcasts and some documentary films, in addition to written material such as newspapers and books. But day-to-day

¹ Pseudonyms will be used throughout this study

communication in Arabic countries utilizes variants of Arabic including, for example, Egyptian Arabic, which is considered to be a dialect of Arabic used in day to day communications. Based on this perceived need for authentic Arabic exposure, my aim in performing this study was to investigate the impact of authentic Arabic language input on Arabic language learners at the School of Languages. The language input, consisting of both written and audio-visual format, was developed using Power Point software and then hyperlinking each file, whether it was an audio-visual file or a written file. Then the complete package was integrated and saved on a CD ROM. The material was selected for its level of difficulty, so that it is challenging but not frustrating. Its main content tried to provide Arabic language learners with culturally oriented material for practicing reading, speaking, listening and writing in Arabic.

The pedagogic framework articulated by this thesis is influenced greatly by multicultural education concepts (Campbell, 2004) such as *student empowerment, conflict resolution, critical thinking, and historical knowledge*. Through exposure to the Arabic language and culture presented in short stories, a video, and songs, it is hoped that students will gain a knowledge of history and a feel of Arabic literature and arts that can help empower them to better understand their own cultures and to appreciate another culture. Moreover, the activities that were designed for the CD ROM give students a chance to reflect on their own history and arts and to think critically, thereby creating the bridge necessary for making connections between their language/culture and Arabic language/culture.

Through language learning in general, and through Arabic language learning particularly in the “Western World”, it is my hope that mutual understanding between the “Arab World” with its various regions and the “Western World” with its various regions will be reached, thereby improving the relationship between these two entities, within the context of enhancing social

justice for both cultures. To that end, this project is the beginning of the development of a “community of practice” that will consist of myself, as instructor, my future classes, and other language instructors at the School of Languages.

The “Arab World” has long been a center of strategic geopolitical competition due to its geographic location in the middle of what is traditionally considered the East and the West, and due to its natural resources: most recently oil. Consequently, it came to be known as early as 1916 as “the place in which the course of history is to be decided” (Sprengling, 1916, p. 38). Linguistic, cultural, and political differences, among other things, became the defining factors of the relationship between the Arab World and the Western World. In an attempt to justify conflict, both sides concentrated on the differences rather than on commonalities, where misunderstanding and hostility between individuals from each culture became the norm rather than the exception.

One important way to improve the relationship between the “Arab World” and the “Western World” is to encourage language teaching/learning in both worlds. I believe that language instruction deeply rooted in improving students’ cultural competence could be a great step forward in reconciling the peoples in these two areas of the world. For this reason, I provide in this thesis a contextual framework in which Arabic students could learn Arabic as well as get exposure to a culture of the “Arab World”.

Personal Background

As an Arab who immigrated to the United States of America and had to experience the challenges of learning a second language (English), and understanding the nuances and uses of the English language in American society, I can empathize with my students who are facing an

even more difficult situation than my own, because they live far away from where the Arabic language is spoken, and the opportunities for them to use Arabic authentically are extremely limited.

Throughout my five-year experience in teaching the Arabic language here in the U.S., but most importantly my 13-year experience living here in the United States, I came to understand American culture relatively better. This experience allowed me to see the commonalities between Western culture represented by the United States, which is just one manifestation of what is known as “Western culture”, and Arab culture represented by Morocco, the country in which I grew up, which is in turn just one manifestation of what is known as “Arab culture”. Not only was I able to recognize that these commonalities do indeed exist, but I also came to the realization that the potential for bridging these two worlds is reachable especially through language teaching/learning.

As mentioned earlier, my overall goal was to examine the impact of using a CD to improve Arabic language learners’ reading and listening proficiency, as well as improve culture familiarity. This overall goal can be formulated into several specific research questions, including the following:

- 1) What were students’ perceptions of the CD’s usefulness in increasing their proficiency in reading, listening to, and writing Arabic; and which components of the CD were the most or least useful, and why:
 - a. short stories about Arabic culture;
 - b. video clips depicting Arabic historical events;
 - c. songs about how love is expressed in Arabic culture.

- 2) In what ways did students feel that the CD did, or did not, help them learn about Arabic culture; and which components of the CD were the most or least useful, and why:
- a. short stories about Arabic culture;
 - b. video clips depicting Arabic historical events;
 - c. songs about how love is expressed in Arabic culture.

In the next chapter of this Thesis I will present a discussion of the research literature surrounding language acquisition theories. In succeeding chapters I will present the methods used to construct and evaluate my CD, a detailed description of the CD itself, and a discussion of my findings including an action plan for the role the CD will continue to play in my teaching.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The research presented in this chapter is divided into three sections. The first section very briefly discusses the relationship between the “Arab World” and the “Western World” and emphasizes the crucial role language learning/teaching could play in reconciling these two areas. The second section reviews communicative competence theory and its implications for foreign language education. This section also presents three language education theories—D. H. Hymes’ communicative competence theory, Vygotsky’s socio-cultural theory, and Stephan Krashen’s input theory—with each theory’s implications for language pedagogy. The third section suggests a framework based on Krashen’s input theory by which the Arabic language could be introduced using videos, short stories, and songs as media. Included in this section are studies done in which videos, short stories, and songs were used in teaching a language.

“Arab World” and “Western World” Relationships

Great historical events have influenced the way the West perceives Arabs and vice versa. In addition to these events, other factors such as trade and art (e.g., Hollywood), helped shape a relationship that could be described as sometimes positive and other times as negative. These two contradicting relationships reflect some of the challenges faced by multiculturalism and the path to solving social injustices. These issues are addressed by this thesis.

Positive Relationship.

The relationship between Europe (and later America) and the Arab World has witnessed times of cooperation and cultural as well as economic exchange. One would be amazed to discover that so many English and Spanish words trace their origins to the Arabic language, and

even the modern numerals are also of Arabic origin. As argued by Sprengling (1916), the relationship between the Western World and the Arab World is deeply rooted in history as well as in language, religion, and scholarship.

Negative Relationship.

Due to years of colonialism by the European powers and the resulting backlash, the relationship between the Arab World and the Western World has witnessed years of hostility and mistrust (Castlberry, 1959; Fischback, 1985; Toynbee, 1964), which lasted for most of the twentieth century. This hostility has been exacerbated in the United States by Hollywood's depiction of Arabs as "heartless, brutal, uncivilized, religious fanatics" (Shaheen, 2003, p. 172). Moreover, as discussed by Said (1979) and Joubin (2000), orientalists (those who studied the Orient including the Arab world) oftentimes perceived the Arab world in relation to their European identity, thereby depicting Arab society in Western terms and norms and neglecting the reality of these societies which could only be understood using Arab terms and norms.

Arabic Language Acquisition as a First Step to Cross-Cultural Understanding.

Second and foreign language acquisition theories have stressed the need for providing students with language *input* that makes language *acquisition* occur subconsciously (Krashen, 1992). This speaks not only to the need to internalize linguistic structures, but also to the need for the willingness to be subconsciously immersed in the target culture on the part of the language learner, thereby inducing cross-cultural understanding. The importance of target culture familiarity in target language proficiency is greatly emphasized by the literature (Hough, 1998; Savingnon, 1997; Straub, 1999). For example the theory of communicative competence

first developed by Hymes explored this close relationship between language and culture in communication.

Communicative Competence Theory

Based on the fact that members of a community use multiple tools to send and interpret messages, which include more than the linguistic code, Hymes sought to develop a comprehensive theory that takes into account all forms of communication (Savignon, 1997). As discussed by Savignon (1997), Hymes distinguishes between what is possible and what is appropriate; he stresses the importance of the context in which the language is taking place to judge what is appropriate to say or not to say, and to write or not to write, in order for communication to be successful.

Therefore, to be proficient in a foreign language is to be able to use and interpret the language *appropriately*, “which includes not only knowledge of formal grammatical structure, but knowledge also of form/function relationships learned from the embeddness of all language use in social life” (Cazden, 1996, p. 9). The underlying factor in reaching higher competence in a foreign language is the level of knowledge of the culture (Hough, 1998; Savignon, 1997; Straub 1999).

Due to the fact that the concept of culture is very relative and broad, foreign language classrooms should initially negotiate a definition of *culture* (Hough, 1998). Students are encouraged to brainstorm some of the definitions of culture; these definitions should lead them to the following conclusions: culture is the *total way-of-life of a group or society*, and every person has a culture and all cultures are equal (Straub, 1999).

According to Straub (1999), before discussing the target culture, students should be given the chance to think about their own cultures and how they relate to it. This provides them not only with the necessary vocabulary that describes behavior, traditions and values, but also prepares them cognitively for being introduced to the culture of the language they are studying objectively (Straub, 1999). When students start to think about their own cultures, they are faced with deep questions related to identity (Hough, 1998). Moreover, asking questions like these liberates students and teachers from the shackles of stereotyping and prejudice.

Thanks to the Internet and to technology in general, the availability of authentic material is very abundant. However, according to Savingnon (1997), the most difficult challenge perhaps is choosing among all of these materials at our disposal, and adhering to our objective of improving students' communicative competence. The success of the curriculum will depend on whether it treats the "learner as a physical, psychological, and intellectual being with needs and interests that extend far beyond those of the language classroom", and on whether it "involves the whole learner in the *experience* of the language features as a network of relations between people, things, and events" (Savingnon, 1997, p. 169). For maximizing students' involvement and learning, it has been argued (Straub, 1999) that the curriculum should be student-centered, where the students hypothesize, brainstorm, discuss, conclude, and inform the instructor of their findings. This is further supported by Vygotsky's Socio-cultural theory, which holds that learning takes place when the learner constructs knowledge, whether it is language or otherwise, within a social and cultural context.

Socio-cultural Theory

Socio-cultural theory has two aspects that relate to foreign language learning/acquisition, which are namely Activity Theory (AT) and Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), the combination of which summarizes Vygotsky's idea that human development is not separate from its socio-cultural context, and that the main purpose of language is to communicate meanings which are already culturally established (Gifford & Mullaney, 1997).

Activity theory

Activity theory, as articulated by Vygotsky, holds that human behavior is motivated by realizing a certain task. This behavior is not only defined by the individual but includes other participants in the activity (Myers, 2000) and the interaction between these participants is culturally and linguistically determined (Lantolf, 2000).

Furthermore, one could consider Activity Theory as an account of Vygotsky's interpretation of the essence of human development and behavior, especially, "his claim that human behavior results from the integration of socially and culturally constructed forms of mediation into human activity" (Lantolf, 2000, p. 8).

Zone of Proximal Development

Vygotsky defined Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) as the "...distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving, and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky as cited in Gifford & Mullaney, 1997, p. 8).

Thus, it is through human interaction that a person comes to understand and learn. Consequently,

development of proficiency in a foreign language, which could be considered a higher mental ability, appears twice when a student is learning a foreign language: first on the inter-mental plane in which the process of learning the language is distributed between the learner and some other person(s) and/or cultural artifacts (a text in the target language for example), and later on the intra-mental plane in which the capacity to use the target language is carried out by the language learner acting via psychological mediation and the need to fulfill a need such as self expression in the target language (Lantolf, 2000).

Applications for Socio-cultural Theory in the Foreign Language Classroom

While Socio-cultural theory capitalizes on the gap of knowledge between participants in a given activity, it does not require a hierarchy in order for learning to take place. In a foreign language (FL) classroom, the teacher should be a facilitator who guides the student to learn by creating an authentic social environment that requires the use of the FL to communicate and actualize the goals sought after (Gifford & Mullaney, 1997).

Teachers should always prepare materials and tasks that are a little bit challenging for students so that learning can proceed, because if the purpose of teaching is to enable learners to progress through the ZPD, Vygotsky contends that instruction is good only when it proceeds ahead of development (Gifford & Mullaney, 1997). Furthermore, if the desired goal is communicative and cultural competence, the student, the teacher and the curriculum should revolve around the understanding that language constructs thinking, and that it is the principal instrument available to individuals engaged in social interaction, in which human learning and development take place (Donato, 2000).

Therefore, when students decide to learn a second language they are not only making a decision to start using a language that differs from theirs in terms of vocabulary and grammar, they are on so many levels making a decision to “take on some form of ‘second language identity’ and to relate to at least some aspects of the second culture” (Williams & Lanvers 2002, p.506). This transition from one’s language/culture to the target language/culture takes place via a text, which could be in written format, audio format, and or video format, referred to as language *input* according to Krashen (1997).

Input Theory and the Culturally Oriented Curriculum.

It has been argued (Krashen, 1997) that language acquisition takes place when the learner understands the messages, but is still being introduced to new and more complicated linguistic structures. This came to be called the “input hypothesis”. Krashen (1997) also discussed the presence of certain affective factors that influence language acquisition, especially the fact that language acquisition is best achieved when pressure and anxiety are low, which he called the “low affective filter”. Therefore, for language acquisition to happen, Arabic language learners need to be provided with “comprehensible input” in audio form as well as in written form. For example, videos, songs, and short stories not only can provide students with “comprehensible input”, but also can introduce them to some aspects of Arabic culture imbedded in the material.

A Framework for Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language

The rationale for incorporating media such as videos, short stories, and music into foreign language teaching in order to enhance authentic cultural input is supported by various research studies suggesting its effectiveness.

Videos as Linguistic and Cultural Input.

Due to the fact that language is contextual by nature, language learners could benefit tremendously from contextual cues such as gestures and posture in the process of understanding the target language and culture. Video has the potential not only for providing students with these paralinguistic cues, but it could improve their communicative competence (Weyers, 1999) and listening comprehension (Secules, Herron & Tomasello, 1992), and facilitate the retention of cultural information (Herron, Morris, Secules & Curtis, 1995). For example, it has been shown in various studies (Conrad, 1997; Nadar, 1989; Secules et al., 1992) that foreign language learners reported improvement in their listening skills, as well as improvement in their motivation, due partially to a balance between learning and entertainment. In another study, 51 intermediate-level French language students were exposed to eight videos. After each video a test and a questionnaire were administered, both of which indicated an increase in students' ability to retain information and to make inferences. In addition, students perceived a significant gain in cultural knowledge (Cole, Corrie, Dubreil, & Herron, 2002).

Short Stories as Linguistic and Cultural Input.

By incorporating literature in general and short stories in particular into the foreign language curriculum, teachers not only stimulate students' interest in target language and culture study but also excite them in the process because they are introducing the literature that they love (Popkin, 1997). As discussed by Kramersch (2000, 1994), literary texts should not only be approached as a source of linguistic structures, such as vocabulary and grammar, but the reader also should interact with them to negotiate meaning with the foreign language culture. Moreover, literature in general and short stories in particular provide the opportunity to teach a language

through content and therefore could be used as a thematic center around which a teacher could construct language tasks (de Ramirez, 1997). Furthermore, literature inspires students to connect their own culture with the target culture (Popkin, 1997).

A study investigating the use of short stories in foreign language instruction (Wang, 1999) used a reader-response approach to the introduction of literature in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. Students' responses to the literary texts and classroom activities were monitored and interpreted. The findings of this study suggested that the students associated the events and themes in the short stories with their own experiences and involved themselves emotionally with the characters in the stories. In addition, experiencing an active role in learning the language produced greater motivation to read more in English.

Songs as Linguistic and Cultural Input.

In addition to their value as a source of linguistic structures in terms of vocabulary, sounds and grammar (Richards, 1969), songs could provide a taste of the target culture (Claerr, 1984), an escape from repetitious mechanical drills (Jolly, 1975), and an opportunity for language learning to occur in limited conscious awareness while listening to music (Claerr, 1984). Moreover, the use of songs also "gives students the opportunity of acquiring a greater understanding of the cultural heritage which underlies the target language" (Jolly, 1975, p.14).

A study on the use of songs in foreign language instruction investigated the effect of music on text recall and involuntary mental rehearsal, using as subjects the students in four college-level Beginning Spanish classes. Results indicated an increase in recall of text for those who used songs, suggesting "that the use of songs in the foreign language classroom may aid memory of text" (Salcedo, 2002, p xii).

Summary

This chapter has provided a framework in which language *input* could be introduced to foreign language learners, through the use of videos, songs, and short stories. It has been argued that these three avenues are appropriate to assist language learners in general and Arabic students in particular, in acquiring linguistic skills (reading, listening, and speaking) and equally important cultural competence.

In the next chapter, a detailed description of the content of the CD ROM will be presented, in addition to a description of the setting and participants of the study and sources of data.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This study relied on the creation and testing of a product for use in enhancing the teaching of Arabic as a foreign language in my classroom. In performing this study, the intent was to evaluate the impact of the CD ROM by collecting data on my students' perceptions and attitudes with regard to the CD ROM. To accomplish this, I employed qualitative research methods because, per Creswell (1994) and others, they are best suited to answering the type of research questions I asked. That is, qualitative methods use a diversity of related data sources including, especially, detailed information from informants in a natural setting to build a complex, word-based and holistic picture of the problem being studied. Answers are then derived from the patterns, or themes, of meaning extracted from those data sources. Further, a qualitative approach is the ideal method for investigating social issues (McCall & Simmons, 1969).

The type of qualitative research plan I used was action research. Action research seeks to solve a problem of local concern and often is carried out by a teacher in her/his own classroom. In addition, the researcher is involved as a participant as well as a researcher, and therefore can contribute her/his own views as data (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). Action research enabled me to study my own teaching practice centered on the development and use of the CD-ROM I created for my students.

Setting

This research project was performed at the Arabic College in the School of Languages, where the Arabic language is being taught. The School of Languages is one of the largest schools in the United States dedicated to teaching foreign languages, which include Asian, Slavic, and Semitic languages. The school is divided into multiple colleges, such as Arabic College I, Chinese

College II, and the college of “emerging” languages, which includes languages like Urdu and Pashto. Each college includes approximately four departments, and each department consists of about four teams with six teachers each. These teachers work in teams to teach about 30 students who are divided into three sections, each one with 10 students. To conduct this project, I have secured the permission of the school.

Participants

The participants in this action research were my own students at the School of Languages, enrolled in the “Arabic Basic Course”. They consist of 8 students: four females and four males, between the ages of 18 years old and 29 years old. All of the students speak English as a native language. These students have completed 55 weeks out of a 64-week program, which gives them a foundation in MSA.

- “Ghada” is a 19-year old female of Hispanic-American descent. She loves to speak in Arabic without any inhibitions, and she is not afraid to make mistakes. She joined our class in the 35th week after she experienced some personal problems in the previous class.
- “Yusuf” is a 25-year old male of European-American descent who joined the military after serving as a police officer in the state of Louisiana. He is a student who does not worry about learning grammar in detail but prefers to acquire grammar naturally. He is very extroverted.
- “Noor” is a 28-year old female of European-American descent who joined the military after graduating from college. She is a very patient student who is always positive and a global learner. She wants to learn the Arabic language so that she could communicate with people who speak Arabic.

- “Tamir” is a 19-year old male of European-American descent who joined the military right after high school. He is a student who loves to speak about Middle Eastern history.
- “Genan” is a 27-year old female of Hispanic-American descent. She joined the military after working in a lab as biologist. She is extremely analytical and prefers to analyze every sentence and even every word. “Genan” would get frustrated if class discussion gets out of the topic of the passages we are covering. She looks at learning Arabic as a job.
- “Shamssy” is a 22-year old male of European-American descent who joined the military after spending two years in a community college. He is extremely enthusiastic about learning Arabic and enjoys dissecting every sentence and every word. His interest in learning about Middle Eastern history is very high.
- “Hala” is a 24-year old female of European-American descent who joined the military about 3 years after graduating from high school. She is a very enthusiastic student who enjoys speaking in Arabic and asks excellent questions.
- “Sanad” is a 20-year old student who joined the military after high school. He is a very quiet student, but gets frustrated at times with the Arabic language.

Lastly, as a researcher-participant in my own action research project, I describe myself. I am a 33-year old male of Arab descent. I grew up in Morocco where I acquired the Arabic language starting at home and then formally in school.

Materials

In realizing that Arabic language learners are in tremendous need for authentic input, I designed a CD ROM using authentic reading and audio-visual material extracted from media sources such as satellite channels and a website. The format of the CD ROM was created by

hyperlinking files using Power Point. The tasks designed for the CD were structured based on Bloom's (1956) taxonomy of learning objectives². First, for each of the media formats (short stories, video, and songs), I wrote comprehension questions and designed activities to help students learn and practice the four linguistic skills (reading, listening, writing, and speaking) as well as vocabulary and grammar. Second, higher-order thinking skills such as analyzing and synthesizing were also an objective in this project, which was hoped to be achieved through students writing short essays in which they compare and contrast Arabic and American issues, and also through their synthesis of songs. There were questions after each passage (reading or listening) to assess comprehension.

The second step of this research project was to investigate the impact of the CD on the students in terms of the acquisition and learning of the Arabic language in general, and on the degree of their familiarity with Arabic culture in particular. I gave the students the CD ROM to use as a class activity. More specifically, students used the CD three times per week, for five weeks in class activities facilitated by myself

Short Stories.

I obtained five short stories from an Arabic website that publishes children's short stories by anonymous authors (http://7awa.roro44.com/magazine/childrens_stories/page-3.html?show=topreaded). As indicated below, each story narrates events occurring in an Arabic social environment where the major characters are dealing with social events and other characters. The full text of the first two short stories is provided, in Arabic, at the end of this

² I am aware that Bloom's Taxonomy has been revised to include metacognitive dimensions; however, for the purposes of my work, I believe that the original taxonomy is more appropriate because of the age of the students and the type of the content I am teaching.

thesis (Appendix G). English summaries of all stories are provided below along with the rationale for including those particular stories in this study.

(1) *The one with the blue skin*. In this story, a young man painted his skin blue in an attempt to experience what other people with a different skin color experience. A lot of people ridiculed him and looked at him intensely. The only person who sympathized with him was a friend who had a dark skin. After feeling that his experiment had succeeded, he tried to remove the blue paint from his skin, but he was not able to. In addition to its linguistic value, I chose this story because I thought it would provide a glimpse of the fact that problems of race and skin color could exist in multiple cultures.

(2) *Days of the week*. In this story, an exchange between a teacher and a student takes place. The teacher asks a new student to state the days of the week, but he is too shy to speak while other students kept asking the teacher to allow them to state the days of the week in his place. She insists that the new student is the one that should state them. She requested that the new student stand up and speak a little bit louder so that she could hear him, which he did but he ended up mixing the days of the week with the months. At the end of the exchange, the teacher asked the new student to write the days of the week on his notebook and show them to her the following day. I chose this story because it was written by an Arab, which portrays the typical classroom in the Arab World. But most importantly, the theme of elementary school experience could resonate with students from various cultures. Students could read the story and compare it to the classrooms they grew up attending.

(3) *A house built out of stone*. In this story, a rabbit experiencing the beginning of winter with its strong winds, started to build a house out of stones. He placed one stone on top of

another until he constructed a house. After completing the building of the house, he started to dance happily. The wind asked him why he was so happy; he replied because his house was so strong, and the stones he used cannot be crushed. The wind went between the stones and brought down the house, which made the rabbit sad, and he said “the stones are weak if they don’t connect with other stones”. I chose this story because it represents a moral story which could be found in many cultures including my students’ and would give them a chance to compare it with some of their own moral stories they grew up reading. Moreover, the theme of moral stories is a universal one, and students’ exposure to a moral story written by a native Arab person could provide an example.

(4) *The gift*. In this story, an unjust judge and a wealthy merchant tried to make fun of a man named Nassr Alddin who was known for his cleverness. The judge and the merchant asked Nassr Alddin if he would like to go hunting with them, but made fun of him due to the fact that he did not have a horse and a hawk, two animals that are necessary in practicing Falconry. However, he said that he had a donkey instead of a horse and a crow instead of a hawk. When they all went out hunting, Nassr Alddin saw a cow so he released his crow, which flew and landed on top of the cow, then he said “that is my hunt”. The cow happened to belong to the rich merchant, who became mad that he lost his cow. He suggested to Nassr Alddin that they both go to the judge (the same judge mentioned above). Nassr Alddin filled a jar with sand and covered the top with honey and gave it to the judge as a bribe. When the judge received the jar, he was very happy and started to eat the honey until he reached the sand. He became very angry with Nassr Alddin for tricking him. I chose this story because it provides my students with a culturally oriented context (the sport of Falconry).

(5) *The river*. In this story, a young boy with the name “Laith” develops a strong relationship with a river that runs by his town. Every early morning Laith would pass by the river and would greet him. However, for many days Laith did not see the river and did not greet him, which made the river very sad, especially after he found out that the reason Laith was not visiting him is because Laith was sleeping late. Days passed and Laith finally came to visit the river at dawn; the river was very happy that he came to greet him again. I chose this story because it deals with a universal theme, that of the relationship people have with nature. Due to the fact that the story was written by a native speaker of Arabic, it might give an idea on this relationship, which the students can relate to their own culture/experience.

Video Documentary.

I obtained a video documentary *entitled Alqawmia al Arabia: Haqiqa am Wahm (Arab nationalism: reality or fiction)* from Aljazeera channel. The video narrates the historical events in the Middle East during and after WWI through the 1970s, from the perspective of the Arab World, and I used U-lead Video studio to cut it into five segments for the purpose of making it linguistically accessible to my students, as follows.

- Segment 1 includes important events such as:
 1. The fall of the Ottoman Empire and its subsequent break up.
 2. The Arab revolt against the Ottoman Empire, and the important role played by Lawrence of Arabia, who was a British officer, and King Faisal, who became the king of Syria.

3. The creation of the modern Arab states as either British or French mandates.
- Segment 2 includes the following:
 1. The deposition of King Faisal and his transfer to Iraq.
 2. A description of the transformation of the Turkish state from a religious one to a secular state.
 3. A description of the British control of Egypt and the importance of the Suez Canal to the British Empire.
 4. A description of the competition between the United States and Britain in developing the oil resources in Saudi Arabia.
 5. The Balfour declaration, which promised Palestine as a homeland for the Jewish people.
 6. The rise of Arab nationalism and the violence between Arabs and Jews in Palestine.
 - Segment 3 includes the following:
 1. A discussion of the strong relationship between France and Lebanon, and the latter's promotion as a good model for a modern Arab state.
 2. A mention of the beginning of the so called "special relationship" between the United State and Saudi Arabia.
 3. The end of World War II and the increased Jewish migration to Palestine due to the Holocaust.
 4. The end of the British mandate in Palestine in 1948 and the creation of the state of Israel, which lead to the first Arab-Israeli war.

- Segment 4 includes the following:
 1. A description of the importance of oil and the Iranian nationalization of the oil industry.
 2. The establishment of the Non-Alliance movement as a response to the polarization of the world during the fifties as Capitalist and Communist/socialist.
 3. Egypt's membership in the Non-Alliance movement and the rise of Gamal Abdelnasser as a figurehead of Arab nationalism.
 4. Gamal Abdelnasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal and the war of 1956 by France, Britain, and Israel against Egypt.
 5. The establishment of the Arab Union State by Egypt and Syria with strong leanings toward the Soviet Union.
 6. The defeat of the Arab states in the 1967 war by Israel, which led to the control of the West Bank, the Golan Heights and the Sinai Peninsula by Israel.

- Segment 5 includes the following:
 1. Egypt's reclamation of the Sinai Peninsula during the 1973 war with Israel, and the subsequent Oil Embargo by the Arab oil-producing states against the West.
 2. The signing of the Camp David peace treaty between Israel and Egypt in 1978.
 3. The assassination of the Egyptian president Anwar Sadat in 1981 and the rise of the Islamist political current.

Songs.

There were five songs included on the CD ROM, and each was accompanied by the written lyrics as well as brief excerpts from the biographies of the song artists (see Appendices F-J). The first three songs are described briefly below.

- (1) The first song, entitled *every year and you are my love*, is by Kadhem Assahir, an Iraqi artist. The song is about a man expressing his love for a woman. I chose this song because the lyrics are by one of the most famous poets in the Arab World, whose name is Nizar Qabani. His poetry is simple yet it is powerful. It provides an example of modern Arabic poetry.
- (2) The second song, entitled *my wife*, is by Ahmed Abu Khatir, an artist from the United Arab Emirates. This song describes the feelings of a man for his wife. I chose this song because it focuses on the universal feelings of love, especially romantic love. In addition, it is an example of genre of music, in which musical instruments are not used at all. The reason that musical instruments are not used is because it is believed that musical instruments are not allowed in Islam.
- (3) The third song, entitled *sing to me my birds*, is by Marciel Khalefe, an artist from Lebanon. This song describes a person who asks his birds to sing for him. I chose this song because it is an example of the exoteric and esoteric meanings of certain texts. All languages use metaphors, and the purpose for selecting this specific song was the fact that it could have multiple interpretations which would open the door for discussion, thereby learning about Arabic culture while practicing speaking at the same time.

Teaching Procedures

Short Stories.

For each short story, students first reviewed the vocabulary and grammar relevant to the story, and then they read the story and answered the comprehension questions. The particular types of questions for each story were written not only to enhance students' language skills but also to encourage them to think critically about the social and cultural dimensions of the story and how they impacted on the relationships between the characters, or even how they themselves might react under similar circumstances, which in turn might evoke understanding and empathy from the students.

Appendices A-E provide all of the questions used for all the five stories. Examples of the questions associated with these and all of the other stories are provided below.

- *The one with the blue skin.* As this story focused on a person who was “different from the norm”, students were asked to write two to three paragraphs articulating a plan in which they would explore ways to empathize with someone “different” whom they know personally. Through this exercise, students could begin to make connections between Arab culture and their own with respect to how discrimination can easily span geography and culture. In addition to its social and linguistic value, this exercise also provided value in terms of lexicon and grammar.
- *Days of the week.* For this story about a teacher trying to help her students learn the days of the week, students were asked to write a comparison between the classroom they studied in when they were children and the one they read about in the short story. This exercise was designed to help them draw comparisons and contrasts between their own

culture and Arabic culture, particularly with respect to the primary grades educational system.

- *A house built out of stone.* Due to the fact that this story was highly metaphorical, students were asked, after answering comprehension questions, to write a short essay in Arabic in which they expressed their ideas regarding the esoteric meanings of the story. Performing this kind of exercise could help students distinguish between what is implicitly and explicitly stated.
- *The gift.* Because this story takes the students to the world of Falconry, which is a typical Arab sport, it introduces them to lexicon related to this sport. After reading the story and answering the comprehension questions, students were asked to write a short essay, in which they used the vocabulary they learned from the story. In this short essay, students were prompted to compare the importance of Falconry and a typical American sport such as Football. This would help them think about certain concepts such as competition in both the Arabic culture, represented by the story, and their own cultures represented by their experiences.
- *The river.* The theme of this story deals with the relationship between humans and nature. After reading the story and answering the comprehension questions, students are asked to write a short essay, in which they compare their relationship to nature and the relationship of the character in the story (Laith) to nature. On the one hand this gives the students an opportunity to use the Arabic language in a context, which could improve their lexicon and grammar. On the other hand, it discusses a universal theme, that of nature, and how the Arabic culture, represented by the story, deals with such a theme. This could provide a backdrop to which the students could relate their own cultures.

Video Documentary.

On Wednesdays of each of the five weeks, students reviewed the vocabulary and grammar related to the video documentary. As stated earlier, this video narrates the historical events in the Middle East from the beginning of WWI through the 1970s from an Arabic perspective. And as with the short stories, students watched each video segment and then answered comprehension questions as well as other questions designed to target higher-level thinking about both Arabic culture and their own cultures. The complete set of questions asked for all the five video segments are provided in Appendices F-J). Below, examples of the questions associated with all of the video segments are provided.

- (1) Segment 1 focused on the aftermath of WWI and the subsequent political ramifications in the Arab World, which included events and alliances necessary for understanding the modern Middle East, especially for those who are studying the Arabic language and seek to understand Arabic texts. In addition to recall questions, students also were asked to write in their journals three paragraphs (in Arabic) comparing and contrasting the historical events they were introduced to in the video with those that happened in the U.S. during the same period. This exercise was designed not only to encourage making cultural connections but also to help students understand how history written from different perspectives can be very different from that to which they are accustomed.
- (2) Segment 2 focused on the British and French control of the Middle East, including the competition between the Nazis and the Allies in gaining supporters among the Arabs at the dawn of WWII. After the recall-level comprehension

questions students wrote three paragraphs expressing their opinion on Europe's occupation and colonization of the Middle East. The purpose of this exercise was to introduce the students to a theme of colonization, which is one of the central themes in modern Arabic writings. Understanding of this theme by the students would help them understand the current sociopolitical situation in the Arab World because of the strong relationship between the past and the present. In addition, it would help them in understanding news articles which often allude to colonization as a reason for the challenges faced by the Arab World without stating so explicitly.

- (3) Segment 3 focused on the creation of the state of Israel after WWII and the Arab reaction to this development leading to the first war between Israel and the Arabs. The centrality of Palestine in the Arab psyche cannot be overstated, and students learning the Arabic language will often read and listen to material that revolves around this issue. Therefore, understanding the root causes of this conflict would increase students' chances of comprehending texts dealing with this central topic. After responding to the recall-level comprehension questions, students were asked to write three paragraphs in which they analyzed the Arab reaction to the creation of the state of Israel and come up with possible explanations for that reaction. The purpose of this activity was to challenge the students to look at this controversial issue from the Arab perspectives.
- (4) Segment 4 focused on the rise of Arab nationalism represented by the late Egyptian president Gamal Abdelnasser as well as other systems of government, mainly the Gulf kingdoms and emirates. After answering comprehension

questions, students were asked to write three paragraphs in Arabic in which they compared and contrasted the system of government in the United State with that of Middle Eastern countries. The purpose of this activity was to deeply explore the political situation in the Middle East as compared to the students' own political situation.

- (5) Segment 5 focused on the escalation of war between the Arabs and Israel in the late sixties and early seventies with the subsequent signing of the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel. After answering comprehension questions, students were asked to write three paragraphs expressing their opinion on the possibility of achieving peace between the Arabs and Israel. The purpose of this activity was to give the students an opportunity to use their higher order thinking skills while using the Arabic language in writing about possible reconciliation between the Arabs and the Israelis.

Songs.

On Fridays for three weeks, students read a biographical excerpt of the artist they were going to be introduced to, and then they listened to the songs while transcribing the missing words. After that they reviewed the vocabulary and grammar included in the song lyrics, mainly the words they transcribed. Then they decided whether that word was an adjective, verb, or adverb, etc. Then they rewrote the song lyrics using their own words by substituting half of the original verses. All their work was recorded in the journal I provided them with, for me to assess and give them feedback later.

The biographical excerpts, song lyrics, and listening and writing exercises for each of the three songs are detailed in Appendices K-M, in Arabic, and summarized below in English.

- In the first song, entitled *every year and you are my love*, students were asked to listen to the song and fill in the missing words in song lyrics I provided them with but with certain words missing. After filling out the missing words, which helped them practice transcription, students were provided with the lyrics of the song, but only half of each verse. Students were asked to write the other half of each verse. This not only provided them with an opportunity to practice writing, reading, and listening, it also actually introduced them to Arabic music dealing with a universal theme such as love.
- In the second song, entitled *my wife*, and in the third song, entitled *sing to me my birds*, students were asked to basically listen, transcribe and rewrite half of each verse as they did for song1.

Data Collection

Questionnaires.

All the students who agreed to participate in this action research were asked to fill out a hand-written questionnaire, in which they were asked to articulate their impression of the CD ROM. I used an open-ended questionnaire to elicit students' perceptions and attitudes with regard to the usefulness of the different components of the CD ROM. The students were asked to describe the positive and the negative aspects of the CD in terms of its help or lack thereof in improving their linguistic skills (mainly reading, listening, writing, and speaking) and their sociolinguistic competence (mainly knowledge of the history, arts, and society of the Arab countries addressed in

the CD). The questionnaire was conducted in class anonymously at the end of the five-week period of using the CD. The questionnaire is provided in Appendix N.

Interviews.

Based on the data collected from the questionnaires, I conducted a group interview with seven of the students to get them to elaborate more on some of themes I found important for my research. The group interview was performed after students had finished using all the exercises in the CD, which as mentioned above was used over a period of five weeks, with the frequency of three times a week. The interview was used only as a follow up on the questionnaires, so there were no additional questions included; students essentially were given a chance to elaborate further on their questionnaire answers. I used the interview as a method to determine other themes besides the ones mentioned above that might arise during student responses. The interview was conducted after school hours and lasted approximately 45 minutes. The transcript for the interview is provided in Appendix O.

Student Journals.

Because the materials in this project were integrated into a CD-ROM and given to my students as class activities, I provided them with a journal in which to record their responses to the activities for me to analyze later. When analyzing their responses I looked for improvement of their language skills (listening, reading and writing) as the project progressed, using the Language Institute's standard grading rubrics. Moreover, I asked them to write a self-evaluation entry in English for each homework session, in which they expressed whether they felt they had improved as far as proficiency in Arabic as well as their understanding of Arab culture.

Reflective Teaching Journal.

As a researcher-participant in my action research, I kept a reflective teaching journal in which I made observations for each day of my project. That is, I recorded instances in which students expressed positive attitudes regarding the CD ROM in terms of its usefulness in learning the Arabic language and in increasing familiarity with Arabic culture. In addition, I also recorded instances in which students expressed frustration or negative attitudes regarding the CD ROM, and paid close attention to what they said or did in reference to the videos, short stories, and songs.

Data Analysis

As mentioned earlier, the data collected through qualitative research methods consists largely of words, and requires analysis and comparison of the findings from each data source to seek commonalities among them. The commonalities are analyzed further to yield patterns, or themes, that help provide a complex, holistic picture of the problem being studied (Creswell, 1994). In analyzing my findings from my questionnaires, interview, and reflective teaching journal, I first assigned codes to all responses and patterns of responses that I found significant to answering my research questions. To facilitate this process, I recorded the data on index cards, each of which was labeled using the themes I identified. Initially, I codified data based on the themes that paralleled the questions I asked the students, including: a) the impact of the video clips on the students' listening proficiency; b) the impact of the video clips on the students' knowledge of Arabic history, arts, and society; c) the impact of the short stories on the students' reading proficiency; and d) the impact of the short stories on the students' knowledge of Arabic

history, arts, and society. In addition to these themes, I coded the data for other emerging themes. I then combined all these codes and analyses to come up with my overall themes, which will be identified and discussed in the Results section within the thesis.

Summary

In this chapter, I described the content of the CD ROM I developed as the focus of this thesis, and presented a description of the setting, participants and sources of data. In the next chapter the data obtained from the questionnaires, interview, and the researcher observation notes will presented and analyzed.

Chapter 4: Findings

The goal of this research project was to: 1) design a CD ROM that includes culturally oriented video clips, short stories, and songs tailored to be used for teaching the Arabic language as a foreign language, and 2) explore students' attitudes and responses to the CD ROM in terms of its usefulness or lack of usefulness in improving their Arabic language skills and familiarity with Arabic culture. The CD ROM, described in detail in Chapter 3, is attached to this Thesis within a plastic sleeve.

As described in Chapter 3, I created this CD by using five short stories, five video clips from a documentary taken from the Arabic international news channel Aljazeera, and three songs. The short stories, video clips, and songs were linked using Power Point techniques, which allowed the material to be packaged and integrated into a CD ROM. The five short stories, written by anonymous Arab authors, were retrieved from a website (http://7awa.roro44.com/magazine/childrens_stories/page-3.html?show=topreaded). The content of the materials revolved around moral stories in the case of the short stories, important historical events and the ideological landscape of the Middle East in the case of the video clips, and emotional expressions in the case of the songs. The intent behind this diverse content was to provide students with culturally oriented Arab perspectives in written and audio-visual format.

The CD ROM was used three times a week for five weeks: on Mondays, students read the short stories and performed the activities that accompanied the them; on Wednesdays, students watched the video clips and did the activities that accompanied them; and on Fridays (for only three weeks), students listened to the songs and did the language activities that accompanied them.

In this chapter, I will present my findings. First, I will describe my experiences in the classroom as I incorporated the CD into my teaching. Then, I will describe my perspective on the use of the CD, in addition to the perspective of the students, based on my analysis of the questionnaire, the group interview, and the reflective teaching journal.

Using the CD-ROM in the Classroom

After preparing the CD ROM, I informed my students that we will be using a CD ROM for five weeks, with the frequency of three times a week (1 hour for every session). The students were very enthusiastic about doing something new. In my reflective journal, I made a comment about students' initial reaction being "very positive overall". Notwithstanding students' initial enthusiasm, I felt that they were a little bit hesitant in dealing with the material in the CD ROM, especially the short stories and the songs. However, as time progressed, they became more comfortable with the material. I attributed their initial hesitancy to the fact that they were not used to this kind of material (songs, short stories, and video clips), which is very different from what they are used to, which is mainly news articles.

Throughout the five weeks during which the CD ROM was used, I observed the students enjoy and struggle with the material in the CD ROM. They appreciated the vocabulary list each activity accompanied, which made it relatively easier for them to understand the material. I later decided to review that vocabulary list with them before and after each exercise, because I felt that capitalizing on the opportunity to improve their vocabulary and idiomatic expressions would help them increase their proficiency in speaking, listening, reading and writing; most importantly, I felt it would help them become more familiar with the cultural context in which those expressions could be used.

After realizing that the material in the CD ROM was difficult for most of the students, which I did not anticipate in the beginning, I intervened more frequently to assist the students in comprehending the material and relieve some of the frustration I perceived they felt. Although most of the students did not say that the material was too hard, I felt that they were struggling to comprehend the short stories and the songs. So I tried to help them along. Later, when I conducted the questionnaires and the interview, they expressed their frustration with the songs and the short stories, but not so much the video clips.

Student Responses to Use of the CD-ROM in the Classroom

Analysis of student questionnaires, the group interview, and my own reflective teaching journal yielded a number of findings, which could be formulated into the following five themes:

- 1) students found the video clips to be the most beneficial both linguistically and culturally;
- 2) there were mixed attitudes toward the usefulness of the short stories in enhancing students' Arabic language skills and familiarity with Arabic culture;
- 3) songs were the least preferred by the students especially in regard to enhancing their Arabic language skills, although there was some appreciation of their entertainment value and the exposure to Arabic music;
- 4) students felt motivated to practice the Arabic language more using the CD ROM because it broke the daily routine; and
- 5) some students seemed to evaluate the CD ROM based on the proficiency test they have to take at the end of the course.

Each of these five themes will be explored in detail in the next sections.

Theme #1: *Students found the video clips to be the most beneficial both linguistically and culturally*

Students' comments on the questionnaires, the group interview, and the reflective journal indicate that the video clips were the most beneficial both linguistically and culturally. This was mainly due to the fact that it provided a visual context for Arabic, which helped them understand more and get a closer look not only at the language but also at the culturally oriented viewpoint behind the historical events being narrated. One student stated, "[the video clips] allowed us to explore a new background and viewpoint on Middle Eastern culture". Another student stated, "Seeing the things I was hearing about helped me pay a lot closer attention to the Arabic".

Moreover, students felt that the video clips introduced new vocabulary in context, which helped them expand their vocabulary and knowledge of idiomatic expressions. One student commented, "I feel like the videos were a great new, unique, and intelligent way of obtaining vocabulary, especially idiomatic expressions in context so as to enable me to provide a backdrop of learning the words I memorize".

Finally, students expressed possible enhancement of desire to learn the Arabic language due to the interesting topic discussed by the video clips, which is illustrated by a student who commented, "The interesting topic also made the video clips a more fun way to learn", and further supported by another student who stated, "using historical clips was beneficial because it allowed us to explore a new background and viewpoint on Middle Eastern culture".

Entries from my reflective teaching journal supported students' thoughts. For example, following one class lesson I wrote that "students were very engaged and asked a lot of questions and seemed to want to learn more about the Balfour Declaration". After another lesson, in which

a video clip discussed the 1956 war over the Suez Canal in Egypt, I wrote “students liked the vocabulary list and gave great summaries in Arabic about the 1956 war and gave their opinions about the war”.

Theme #2: *There were mixed attitudes toward the usefulness of the short stories in enhancing students' Arabic language skills and familiarity with Arabic culture*

Students were divided on the usefulness of the short stories in enhancing their reading skills. Although some students expressed the feeling that the short stories did help their reading skills, by expanding their vocabulary and knowledge of idiomatic expressions, others felt that the stories were too easy and simple while still others felt they were too hard and complicated. For example, one student stated, “[the short stories] were helpful to understand connotations and usage of the vocab as well as appropriate times for using idiomatic expressions”, but another student commented, “I did not feel that the stories were beneficial because some of them were very short and simple”. This is further supported by two opposing comments in which one student stated, “I found the stories to be entertaining so of course this helped my reading skills”, while another student commented, “the short stories seemed very hard because they used a lot of idioms, and expressions I hadn't been familiar with”.

Moreover, the writing style of the short stories seemed to be different than what they were used to, which was mainly news articles. This was either appreciated as “a nice exposure to a new [type] of reading material” or thought of as unbeneficial because “the style is so different ... that it should not be used”. While one student stated, “the short stories were a little childish for me ... I wish we read more about trade, economy, etc...”, another student commented, “the exposure to a new reading material was nice, and forced me to look closely at the vocabulary and syntax”.

As far as the short stories' usefulness in improving familiarity with Arabic culture, students reported a feeling of being provided with an opportunity "to glimpse at Arabic culture through word usage and the characters used in them", as stated by one of the students and supported by another who commented, "the native authenticity was helpful to understand connotations and usage of the vocab as well as appropriate times for using idiomatic expressions".

My own observations, recorded in my reflective journal, indicated that "students were surprised with the writing style presented in the stories and had a hard time understanding the stories", although I did write in one of the journal entries that "students enjoyed the story after I explained it to them and seemed to interact with the events of the story".

Theme #3: *Songs were the least preferred by the students especially in regard to enhancing their Arabic language skills, although there was some appreciation for their entertainment value and exposure to Arabic music*

Nine out of the ten students in the study expressed lack of favor toward the songs in terms of their usefulness in learning the Arabic language. One reason for this is that students had a hard time hearing individual words and struggled to understand the songs. As one student stated, "the music has been one of the hardest things to comprehend because of pronunciation, dialect, and metaphorical speech". Another commented, "[music is] good for learning culture but ineffective for teaching language". However, one student did express approval of the songs as a learning tool, due mainly to the opportunity the songs provided in terms of listening to unfamiliar pronunciation, which he equated to a "native speaker with unfamiliar accent". So by being exposed to music, as the student stated "you are struggling to hear words [that are] kind of

‘mutated’, so it’s going to train your ears to be able to understand and recognize words in the passage that might be outside your acceptable parameter”.

Some students did express appreciation of the songs’ entertainment value and the exposure to Arabic culture they provided via music. As one student commented, “The Arabic music was very pretty but I think this would be the most helpful in the first weeks of class”, which is further supported by another student who stated, “While enjoyable, I didn’t get much out of this”.

Entries from my reflective teaching journal supported students’ thoughts. For example, after one class session in which we used a song, I wrote in my reflective journal “students liked the music and even asked for a copy of the CD, but had a hard time understanding the lyrics”.

Theme #4: *Students felt motivated to practice the Arabic language more using the CD ROM because “it broke the daily routine”*

As a source for learning the Arabic language and getting exposure to Arab culture, nine out ten students stated that the CD ROM provided a unique opportunity to read, listen, and write in Arabic, because “anything new and different like this is very helpful with learning Arabic, because too much of one thing becomes dull and all of us lose focus”, as one student stated. This thought was further emphasized by another student who commented “I found that the cohesive package of it [was] nice. It contained interesting topics and pieces that gave many different angles from which the language could be seen”.

However, one student thought that there was a gap between the material in the CD ROM and learning Arabic at the School of Languages. This was mainly due to the environment of the school, which the student described as “very regimented” and where “being creative is not fun”.

My own reflections suggested that although the students struggled with some aspects of the CD ROM, the songs for example, they enjoyed the fact that they are doing something different from what they have been doing in the course. My reflective journal contains few comments which indicate that the students were very enthusiastic to use the CD ROM, and actually looked forward to the hours in which we used it.

Theme #5: *Some students seemed to evaluate the CD ROM based on the proficiency test they have to take at the end of the course*

Eight out of ten students thought that there was a gap between the material in the CD ROM and the material they expect to see on the proficiency test they have to take at the end of the course. While, as one student stated, “the test is based mostly on the news”, the student believed the CD ROM to be more focused “on improving cultural knowledge and awareness”. This is further stressed by another student who stated, “I feel it is [the CD ROM] just impractical so like to focus on certain things that I know absolutely will not be on the test, especially the speaking test”.

However, two of the students thought that there was a deeper relationship between the material presented in the CD ROM and the material they expect to see on the proficiency test. This was articulated best by one of the students who said: “I really think that some of the skills, [whether] reading or listening no matter in what form they are, they are going to prepare us for the test”.

My own reflections suggested that the majority of the students looked at the CD ROM and the activities it contained through the prism of the proficiency test they will have to take. This was evident in the questions they asked regarding the test and the activities in the CD ROM:

questions like “does the DLPT5 contain short stories”, “do we have to listen to music in the DLPT5” were recorded in my reflective journal.

Summary

In this chapter, the findings of this study were presented. Overall, students seem to have experienced an increase in the interest to learn the Arabic language and get familiar with Arabic culture using the CD ROM. While the video clips and short stories were both beneficial linguistically and culturally in helping students practice and thereby acquire the Arabic language, the songs seemed to be less beneficial from the perspective of the majority of the students. As an observer, I believe that the students had difficulty understanding the songs because of the wide gap between the level of the songs, in terms of lexicon and structure, and the proficiency level of the students. In addition, the majority of the students seemed to evaluate the material in the CD ROM based on the proficiency test they have to take at the end of the course.

In the next chapter, I will discuss my findings within the context of the literature review presented in Chapter 2. I also will describe how these findings led to the development of an Action Plan for my future teaching.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Action Plan

Introduction

The centerpiece of this study was to explore the impact of using short stories, songs, and video clips on adult Arabic language learners, in terms of proficiency in reading, listening, and writing skills; and familiarity with Arabic culture. To make these materials accessible to students, I created a CD ROM to package the short stories, songs, and video clips. The theoretical framework that guided the selection of these materials was based on multiple language acquisition/learning theories, especially Krashen's input theory, which argued that providing language learners with *comprehensible input* is a requirement for language acquisition (Krashen, 1992).

In addition to providing my students with culturally oriented written as well as audio-visual Arabic language *input*, I wanted to answer the following questions:

1. Which components (the short stories, songs, and video clips) of the CD were the most or least useful as far as language acquisition, and why?
2. Which components (the short stories, songs, and video clips) of the CD were the most or least useful as far as familiarity with Arabic culture, and why?

In this chapter, I will briefly summarize the findings within the context of the literature review presented in Chapter 2, while simultaneously referring to the research questions. Then, I will discuss the limitations of the study before presenting an action plan to overcome the shortcomings of the study in general and the CD ROM in particular, as related to my teaching and foreign language acquisition of students.

Findings

Many language instructors and researchers (Claerr, 1984; Conrad, 1997; de Ramirez, 1997; Jolly, 1975; Kramesch, 2000; Nadar, 1984; Popkin, 1997; Salcedo, 2002; Wang, 1999; Weyers, 1999) have attempted to use short stories, songs and videos to not only teach a language, but to introduce their students to the culture of the language they are studying. While this study supports some of their findings, it seems to contradict some other findings.

The findings seemed to either support the findings of other researchers mentioned in Chapter 2, in the case of the efficacy of using videos to teach a foreign language, or contradict the results of some of the researchers, in the case of using songs to teach a foreign language. While the literature review emphasized the positive aspects of using each of the media proposed by this study (short stories, songs, and video clips), the findings of this study seem to reveal some of the negative aspects as perceived by the students included in the study. These apparent contradictions could be due to the difference in the setting in which the studies were performed, or to the wide difference between the level of some of the materials and the proficiency levels of the students, especially the songs and the short stories.

Finding #1: *Students found the video clips to be the most beneficial both linguistically and culturally*

As indicated by students' comments and my personal observations, and supported by the literature (Secules, Herron & Tomasello, 1992), the paralinguistic cues present in the video clips not only facilitated comprehension of the content, but they also increased the likelihood that cultural information is internalized (Herron, Morris, Secules & Curtis, 1995). For example, as stated by one of the students, "seeing the things I was hearing about helped me pay a lot closer attention to the Arabic". This increase in concentration and probability of retaining information

supports the results of an earlier study (Cole, Corrie, Dubreil, & Herron, 2002), which reported an increase in students' retention of cultural information when videos were used to teach French.

Based on my findings and on the literature, it appears that allowing students to simultaneously listen to a narrative while viewing the corresponding video can increase the probability of their internalizing and recalling the content as well as linguistic features. In addition, relatively young students such as these belong to a technology-oriented generation, which can predispose them to the use of video as a source for literacy as well as entertainment, e.g., *YouTube*, video games, films, etc., and also enhance their connection with video materials.

Finding #2: *There were mixed attitudes toward the usefulness of the short stories in enhancing students' Arabic language skills and familiarity with Arabic culture*

The research supports short stories as a valuable medium not only to negotiate meaning with foreign language culture (Kramsch, 2000, 1994; Popkin, 1997), but also are an excellent thematic center around which language tasks could be constructed (de Ramirez, 1997). However, the findings of this study, extracted from students' comments and my personal observations, seem to support some aspects of this claim and refute other aspects. For example, as indicated in students' comments, the short stories were a good tool for learning new vocabulary and culture but were either too easy or too hard for students to interact with the story.

My own observations indicate that although some students found the short stories difficult to understand due to the writing style, other students felt unchallenged by the short stories but at the same time enjoyed the content of the stories, which they appreciated as good exposure to Arabic culture. This seeming contradiction may be due to several factors. First, the style of the stories was very different from that to which these students are accustomed, in that

the stories tend to be more metaphorical compared to the factual articles they usually read, e.g., articles concerning current events, economic news, etc. Also, the style of the stories is quite different from straight narration in that it is not linear but rather can be more complex and subject to multiple interpretations. In addition, while these short stories were thought to be suitable for students' proficiency level due to their simplicity and short length, they did not actually correlate with the students' intellectual level as the stories were oriented towards children. Finally, these students were focused on learning the Arabic language primarily as a tool for completing their military mission and not for aesthetic reasons, so some may not have realized an immediate relevance of short stories for improving their language proficiency.

Finding #3: *Songs were the least preferred by the students especially in regard to enhancing their Arabic language skills, although there was some appreciation for their entertainment value and exposure to Arabic music*

The literature reports that songs are a great tool for learning a language as they provide a taste of the target culture (Claerr, 1984), and an escape from repetitious mechanical drills (Jolly, 1975); they were also reported to aid in memorizing texts (Salcedo, 2002). My findings somewhat contradict earlier studies, however, in that my students did not express the belief that the songs were valuable as a language-learning tool. This may be because, notwithstanding these students' appreciation of the entertainment value of the songs, they expressed tremendous difficulty in understanding the lyrics.

Students' difficulty with lyrics seemed to stem from at least two sources. One reason concerns the lyrics themselves, which were sometimes difficult to hear and therefore understand. I often watched them struggle to hear individual words and intervened frequently to assist them in comprehending the meanings of the songs. This difficulty faced by the students was translated to a lack of interest in the songs as a source for learning Arabic. Additionally, the gap between

students' proficiency level and the level of the songs was probably greater than anticipated. The lyrics of the songs were basically poems, sometimes with low frequency vocabulary and complex grammatical structures. Even students at the advanced level would still have difficulty understanding these songs, let alone write similar poems.

Finding #4: *Students felt motivated to practice the Arabic language more using the CD ROM because "it broke the daily routine"*

Overall, students liked the CD ROM package because it was different from the daily curriculum they have to use. At the School of Languages, there is a strong emphasis on teaching the Arabic language using news articles dealing with subjects like Economics, Natural Disaster, etc. This is due to the military-related objectives behind which these students are studying the Arabic language, which do not normally move beyond the concrete level.

Perhaps for this reason, students reported a feeling of enthusiasm and interest to learn the Arabic language using the CD ROM. As an observer, I noticed students become very active and ask a lot of questions, whether we were reading short stories or watching a video clip. This appears to indicate that the CD ROM probably contributed in reducing the students' anxiety, which Krashen (1997) referred to as "low affective filter". Therefore, despite the fact that students experienced some difficulties with some aspects of the CD ROM, they welcomed its use as a break from their normal language study routines.

Finding #5: *Some students seemed to evaluate the CD ROM based on the proficiency test they have to take at the end of the course*

One unexpected theme, which emerged from students' comments as well as my own observations, was the fact that the students appeared to be thinking a lot about the proficiency test they have to take at the end of the course. This seemed to inhibit them from putting the

material in the CD ROM (video clips, short stories, and songs) in the wider context of learning the Arabic language. Some students expressed an understanding of the fact that learning the language in all its forms would naturally assist them in taking the proficiency test, as one student stated, “[language input] no matter what form they are in, they are going to help with [test] “. However, other students could not escape thinking about the test, which was exemplified by a statement made by one of the students who said: “Since we have a limited amount of time, I feel it is just impractical... to focus on certain things I know absolutely will not be on the test”.

This finding is not surprising, due to the fact that these are military personnel taking a language course for very specific reasons. These military objectives are stated clearly in the Inter-Agency Language Roundtable (ILR) and must form the basis of every foreign language course taught at my institution. Students would thus be expected to have a strong focus on the practical aspects of learning and using a foreign language, as defined by the ILR, which could have reduced the likelihood of their seeing value in material outside that framework despite their potential interest in it.

Limitations

One of the limitations of this study is the small number of students included. Although there was a clear pattern in students’ attitudes toward the CD ROM, one could not generalize these attitudes and findings to include all those who are studying the Arabic language. Another limitation of this study is related to the type of student. My students were all military personnel, who did not necessarily choose to learn Arabic as a foreign language, and all of whom are have very specific and defined objectives for why they are learning a foreign language. This was not the case with the students in the research reviewed in Chapter 2.

Action Plan

In performing this study, not only did I get a chance to reflect on my teaching by thinking about what type of material I should introduce to students and how, I actually got to know how students feel about learning the Arab language in general, and what they perceive as beneficial in helping them learn the language. I will continue to communicate with my students about what they think is helping them learn and what they perceive as not helpful.

As far as the use of a CD ROM to teach the Arabic language is concerned, my plan is to continue its use. Due to copyright issues, I am unable to use the identical CD ROM in my classes more than once; however, I am able to use the same format to prepare new CD ROMs, and intend to do so for future classes.

In preparing each new CD ROM, I will maintain some aspects that students found to be positive in improving their proficiency and familiarity with Arabic culture. As indicated in the findings, students favored the video clips as an excellent tool for practicing listening comprehension and getting introduced to Arabic history. Therefore, I will continue to download relevant and timely clips focusing on historical and cultural contexts. Because students were divided on the usefulness of the short stories, I will still use short stories periodically, but I will think of other methods in using short stories, not only for reading comprehension. I also will try to select stories better suited to their intellectual level as well as their linguistic ability level. I might use short stories as a template in which I could introduce speaking themes based on the stories and the characters in them. With regards to the songs, I will seek songs with lyrics, themes, and structures that are easier for students at this linguistic level to understand. This might be a little bit difficult due to the fact that the majority of the songs available are either in

dialect or in poetic Arabic. Choosing songs in dialect could be even harder for my students who are studying MSA. Therefore, I will have to be very selective in choosing songs that matches students' proficiency levels.

Finally, I will continue to strive to teach the Arabic language within its socio-cultural context because I believe that language proficiency cannot be divorced from cultural proficiency. And if we are trying to establish a relationship between the “Arab World” and the “Western World” based on “mutual respect”, as stated by President Obama in his inaugural address; then learning the language of the “other” with its cultural inferences and social meanings is only a first step.

APPENDIX A
STORY ONE

"ذو البشرة الزرقاء"

"The one with the blue skin"

PRE-READING:

LANGUAGE: VOCABULARY:

المعنى	الكلمة
Destiny	القدر
To ridicule	سخر من
The essence	الجوهر
God's amazing creation	التكوين الرباني البديع
Consciousness	التقوى
Sympathetic	مشفق
Mistake	ذنب
Lord of the worlds	رب العالمين
Worshippers	عباد
To be content with	رضي بـ
To engage in...	خاض

LANGUAGE: GRAMMAR

Past tense verb conjugation (to go = ذهب) as example:

Conjugation	Pronoun
ذهبتُ	أنا
ذهبنا	نحن
ذهبتَ	أنت

أنت	ذهبت
انتما	ذهبتما
انتما	ذهبتما
انتم	ذهبتم
انتن	ذهبتن
هو	ذهب
هي	ذهبت
هما	ذهبا
هما	ذهبتا
هم	ذهبوا
هن	ذهبن

Story 1

القصة الأولى

ذو البشرة الزرقاء <http://www/> نعم لوني أزرق .. ما المشكلة؟
 مهما يكن يجب أن أعتاد على ذلك، إنه قدرتي .. كان يجب أن أتحملمهم مهما
 سخروا مني، مهما حاولوا التقليل من شأنتي، لماذا يهتم الناس باللون ..
 المهم هو الإنسان الجوهر الحقيقي، كلنا متشابهون من الداخل.. نفس
 التكوين الرباني البديع.. هكذا خلقنا الله، لا فرق بيننا إلا بالتقوى والعمل
 الصالح.. يجب ن يعلم الجميع ذلك .. بل كان يجب أن أعلم أنا ذلك أولاً قبل
 أن أسخر من غيري..؟ وصل بي الحال إلى ما وصلت له الآن.. كان يوماً
 صعباً بل أصعب يوم في حياتي.. الكل تجنّبني الكل سخروا مني حتى زميلي
 الأسمر الذي كنت أسخر منه وقف ونظر نحوي متعجباً.. لا بل مشفقاً فقد
 جرب قبلي. شعرت ساعتها كم جرحته من قبل وكم هو من الصعب أن
 تسخر من إنسان في شيء ليس له ذنب فيهولاً يملك أن يغيره أو يختاره،
 ولكنه إختيار رب العالمين لعباده فهو يعلمنا كيف نرضى بما قسم لنا..

لم أملك إلا أن تقدمت نحوه وطلبت منه أن يسامحني.. لكنه كان أكرم مني حين اقترب وقبل رأسي قائلاً: سامحتك يا صديقي وسأدعو الله أن يشفيك
 أيضاً.. مسحت دمعتي وأنا أراقب بشرتي الزرقاء في المرأة ثم قمت من مكاني وأنا أردد فرحاً: لقد انتهت التجربة.. كان يجب علي أن أخوضها لكي
 أشعر بشعور الآخرين.. وأن الأوان أخيراً أن أتخلص من بشرتي الزرقاء.. وما إن أتممت كلامي حتى قمت من مكاني متجهاً نحو الحمام لكي أغسل
 اللون الأزرق الذي صبغت وجهي في الصباح..! لكني وبعد محاولات عنيفة تأكدت أن ألوان الصباغة التي استعملتها قوية جداً ولا يمكن أن تخرج
 بسهولة.. وأن علي أن أتحمّل نتائج تجربتي فترة أطول مما كنت أظن.

POST-READING

COMPRHENSION QUESTIONS:

Questions	أسئلة
1- How was people's treatment of the person with blue skin?	1- كيف كانت معاملة الناس لصاحب البشرة الزرقاء ؟
2- How did the dark young men treat the person with blue skin?	2- كيف كانت معاملة الشاب الأسمر لذي البشرة الزرقاء ؟
3- How did the one with blue skin explain people's different skin colors?	3- كيف فسّر صاحب البشرة الزرقاء ألوان الناس ؟
4- What did the person with blue skin do at the end of the story?	3- ماذا فعل ذو البشرة الزرقاء في نهاية القصة ؟

WRITING:

Write two paragraphs in which you take on somebody else's situation.	اكتب فقرتين تشرح فيهما خطة تساعدك على تفهم وضعية شخص آخر.
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**APPENDIX B
STORY TWO**

"أيام الأسبوع"

"Days of the week"

PRE-READING:

LANGUAGE: VOCABULARY:

المعنى	الكلمة
Nervously	راجف
Started to + verb	شرع في
Screamed	صاح
Mouth	ثغر
Turned	التفت
Giggled	قهقه
With God's permission	بإذن الله
God willing	إن شاء الله

LANGUAGE: GRAMMAR

Verb conjugation in the imperative:

When conjugating a verb in the imperative, one should add an ' in front of the root of the verb: this when giving a command to someone to do something. However, when asking someone not to do something, لا is placed before the verb which conjugated in the present tense. Look at the example of ذهب = to go.

Negative Command	Positive Command
لا تذهب	اذهب

سكت خالد قليلاً واستمر في كلامه بعد ذلك :
 ثم كاتون الثاني..وشباط.ثم يأتي اليوم الذي تغلق فيه المدرسة أبوابها وبعد ذلك يأتي يوم السبت من جديد
 ضحكت المعلمة وانفجر الصغر مقهقهين. قالت المعلمة :
 حسنا يا خالد عرفت بعض أيام الأسبوع. لكنك خلطت الأيام بالأشهر. عليك أن تحفظ أيام الأسبوع جيداً سجلها في دفترك النهاري. كل يوم بيومه في
 كل يوم سجل اسم اليوم. وفي يوم الجمعة سجل أيام الأسبوع كلها في صفحة واحدة مبتدئاً بيوم السبت ومنتهاً بيوم الجمعة..هل فهمت؟



أجاب خالد :
 نعم يا آنسة فهمت سوف أحفظها بإذن الله وسوف أعيدها عليك في يوم السبت القادم إن شاء الله
 قالت المعلمة :
 حسنا وسوف أراها أراها عندك في الدفتر في يوم السبت القادم..هل اتفقنا؟
 أجاب خالد :
 نعم..يا آنسة

POST-READING

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS:

Questions	اسئلة
1- What did the teacher ask of her students?	1- ماذا طلبت المعلمة من الطلاب؟
2- How did the students answer?	2- كيف أجاب أحد الطلاب؟
3- How did the student address his teacher?	3- ما هي العبارة التي استعملها الطالب عند حديثه مع معلمته؟
4- What advice did the teacher provide her student with in order for him to memorize the days of the week?	4- بماذا نصحت المعلمة ذلك التلميذ كي يحفظ أيام الأسبوع؟

WRITING:

Write two paragraphs in which you compare the class room system in the story and the one you grow up with.	اكتب فقرتين تقارن فيهما بين نظام الصف في القصة و نظام الصف الذي اعتدت عليه عندما كنت طفلاً.
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APPENDIX C
STORY THREE

"بيت من حجر"

"A house built out stone"

PRE-READING:

LANGUAGE: VOCABULARY:

المعنى	الكلمة
To proceed to do something	أقبل على
Excited	هاجت
To pave	رصف - يرصف
Wondering	مستغرباً
Attached	متلاصقة
Cohesive	متلاحمة
To collapse	انهدم - ينهدم
To test	اختبر
Firm	متين
To be furious	اغتاظ
Cohesion	تماسك

LANGUAGE: GRAMMAR

The Haal Construction

The Haal clause (from the word حال meaning "condition" or "circumstance," as in the question (كيف الحال؟) is a clause which modifies the subject of a sentence by using و as a subordinating conjunction. This is a fancy way of saying that و is used sometimes in Arabic to mean "while," as in, "He entered the room while greeting the people inside." The clause after "while" can have a verb, a particle, or it can be an equational sentence. Study the two sentences below, then read the commentary which follows.

سألها الأرنب و هو مستغرباً.

سألها الأرنب مستغرباً.

In the first Arabic sentence you have the و followed by the pronoun هو. A subject pronoun must be used with و and it must agree with the subject of the sentence.

The و and the pronoun can be omitted if the predicate is indefinite. When this is done the predicate is put into the accusative. So in sentence two we now have مستغرباً instead of مستغرباً هو.

Story 3

القصة الثالثة

"بيت من حجر"

أقبل الشتاء فاسودت السماء وهاجت الرياح، خاف الأرنب الصغير وقرر أن يبني بيتاً ينقذه من العواصف. بدأ الأرنب بنقل الحجارة الصلبة وأخذ يرصف بعضها فوق بعض وبعد أيام أصبح البيت جاهزاً ففرح الأرنب وراح يغني ويرقص.

سألته الريح: لماذا ترقص؟



أجاب الأرنب: لأن بيتي قوي يتحدى الريح.

وما أدراك؟

أجاب الأرنب:

لقد بنيته بأقوى الحجارة.

نظرت الريح إلى البيت ثم مدت إليه أصابعها الرقيقة فدخلت بين حجراته بسهولة.

ضحكت الريح وقالت ساخرة:

حجارة بيتك قوية. طبعاً.. طبعاً.. ولكن لا يربط بينهما شيء.

سألها الأرنب مستغرباً: ماذا تعنين؟

أجابت الريح:

أعني حجراته ليست متلاصقة ولا متلاحمة وأظن أنه سينهدم سريعاً.

نظر الأرنب إليها بتحدٍ وقال:

اختبري إذا قوتك.

اغتاظت الريح ودفعت البيت فانهارت حجراته.

قالت الريح للأرنب:

أرأيت؟ الحجارة المتينة لا تصنع وحدها بيتاً متيناً.

نظر الأرنب إلى الحجارة وقال: ما أضعفك أيتها الحجارة إذا لم تتماسكي.

POST-READING

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS:

Questions	الأسئلة
1- Why did the rabbit decide to build the house?	1- لماذا قرّر الأرنب بناء البيت؟
2- Why was the rabbit happy? And how did he express it?	2- لماذا كان الأرنب فرحاً؟ وكيف عبّر عن فرحه؟
3- Why did the house collapse?	3- ماذا كان سبب انهيار بيت الأرنب؟

WRITING

Write two paragraphs in which you discuss the moral behind the story	اكتب فقرتين تتطرق فيهما الى الدرس الأخلاقي تعالجه القصة
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APPENDIX D
STORY FOUR

"الهدية"

"The gift"

PRE-READING:

LANGUAGE: VOCABULARY:

المعنى	الكلمة
To harass	ضايق
To underestimate	استهان
To teach a lesson	لحق
A crow	غراب
To be annoyed	انزعج
To insist	أصرّ
Trail	جيرة
Mouth	فوهة
Gluttony	شراهة
Greed	طمع
To be suffocated	اختنق
To trick	خدع

LANGUAGE: GRAMMAR

The Particle أن

أن also means "that"; it can also mean "to." أن is used with verbs which imply doubt, desire, fear, or some other emotion, or even commands which must be carried out. Example:

هل يستطيع الغراب أن يصيد أرنباً حتى يصيد بقرة يا أيها القاضي العادل؟

Story 4

القصة الرابعة

الهدية

حاول القاضي الظالم بهراج وجاره الغني مضايقة نصر الدين والاستهانة به حين قال له: يسعدنا ان نسطحك معنا للصيد، ولكنك مع الأسف لا تملك من معدات الصيد شيئاً ولا حتى صقراً..



ضحك نصر الدين وقرر أن يلقنهم درساً فأمسك غراباً وقال لهم: غير مهم هذا هو صقري



ذهب الثلاثة للصيد وأطلق نصر الدين غرابه فوقف على ظهر بقرة سمينة، وصاح نصر الدين قائلاً: هي..هي.. هذا هو صيدي ..



انزعج التاجر الغني من ذلك كثيراً حيث أن هذه البقرة تعود له ولكن نصر الدين اصر على أنها بقرته التي اصطادها غرابه، فاقترح القاضي ان يذهب الاثنان إلى المحكمة غداً
ملا نصر الدين جرة بالتراب، وغطى فوهتها بالعسل، وذهب بها إلى القاضي الذي ما إن رأى الهدية حتى طرد التاجر الغني وحكم بالبقرة لنصر الدين



ولشراسته وطمعه حاول القاضي أن يتذوق العسل فأختنق بالتراب .
ها.. لقد خدعتني أيها المحتال، سأنتقم منك هل يلج التراب حتى تقدمه هدية للقاضي؟



فقال نصر الدين: وهل يستطيع الغراب أن يصيد أرنباً حتى يصيد بقرة يا أيها القاضي العادل؟ أم أن منظر الهدية جعل ذلك ممكناً؟!



POST-READING

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS:

Questions	الأسئلة
1- What did judge "Bahraj" and his neighbor wanted to do to "Nassraddin"?	1- ماذا اراد القاضي "بهراج" و جاره ان يفعلوا ب"نصرالدين"؟
2- Why did "Nassraddin" take the crow with him for hunting?	2- لماذا أخذ "نصرالدين" الغراب معه للصيد؟
3- Why did the judge give the cow to "Nassraddin"?	3- لماذا حكم القاضي بالبقرة لصالح "نصرالدين"؟

WRITING

Write two paragraphs in which you discuss the moral behind the story	اكتب فقرتين تتطرق فيهما الى الدرس الأخلاقي تعالجه القصة
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APPENDIX E
STORY FIVE

"النهر"

"The river"

PRE-READING:

LANGUAGE: VOCABULARY:

المعنى	الكلمة
To split	شَقَّ - يَشِقُّ
Plains	السهول
To irrigate	سَقَى - يَسْقِي
Wide fields	الحقول الفسيحة
Reside in	يَكْمُن
Greeting	تَحِيَّة
To rise	نَهَضَ

LANGUAGE: GRAMMAR

كل The Word

كلّ is a noun which means "each" or "every" and sometimes means "all" depending upon the context. When كلّ is followed by an indefinite noun, it is translated as "each" or "every." For example, كلّ لحظة means "each moment" or "every moment." The phrase كلّ لحظة is an idaafa. Example:

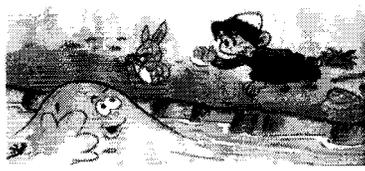
أليسوا جميعاً يستفيدون من مائه العذب في كلّ لحظة؟

Story 5

القصة الخامسة

النهر

يوصل النهر سفره الجميل منذ القدم. يشق طريقه عبر الجبال والسهول والغابات. يمر بالمدن والقرى الجميلة. يسقى المزارع والحقول الفسيحة. يبتسم لكل أولئك الذين يلقون عليه التحية كل صباح ويمضي في طريقه هادئاً.. نشيطاً
شعر النهر هذا الصباح بالفرح أكثر من كل يوم كان سر فرحه يكمن في أن الفتى الصغير ليث استيقظ مبكراً. وجاء ليلقي عليه تحية الصباح مثل الكثيرين. فالنهر يعرف كل أهل المدن وكل أهلى القرى.
مثلما يعرف الطيور والزهور والأشجار.. أليسوا جميعاً يستفيدون من مائه العذب في كل لحظة؟!
وحيث تأخر ليث لعدة أيام عن زيارته حزن النهر كثيراً.. وحين عرف أنه يتأخر في النوم حزن النهر أكثر..
فالنهر يعرف أن الحياة تحب النشاط الذين ينهضون مع الفجر.
حين عاد ليث إلى النهر مع الفجر فرح النهر كثيراً في طريقه إلى قرية أخرى ومدينة أخرى.. ليسلم على أهلها وأشجارها وزهورها.. فالجميع يعرفون النهر ويحبونه.. مثلما هو يعرف الجميع ويحب الجميع



POST-READING

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS:

Questions	الأسئلة
1- Why was the river sad?	1- لماذا حزن النهر؟
2- What is the relationship between the river and the villages?	2- ماهي علاقة النهر بالقرى و أهاليها؟

WRITING

Write two paragraphs in which you discuss the moral behind the story	اكتب فقرتين تتطرق فيهما الى الدرس الأخلاقي تعالجه القصة
--	---

APPENDIX F
ARAB HISTORY

SEGMENT 1

الجزء الأول

PRE-VIDEO VIEWING:

LANGUAGE: VOCABULARY

Secularism	العلمانية	Harmonious	تتآغم
They must	رغما عن أنوفهم	Tax collectors	جباة الضرائب
Did not see the light	لم تر النور	To roar	زمر
A shallow expression	عبارة جوفاء	To push aside	تتحية
Mandate	انتداب	To crown	توج
To delegate	أسند	Wisdom	الحكمة
Found	وجد	Obtained	حاز - يحوز

LANGUAGE: GRAMMAR

NOMINAL SENTENCE:

In Arabic there are two types of sentences, nominal and verbal. In this grammar note I will go over the nominal sentence while the verbal sentence will be discussed on another occasion. A nominal sentence is one which starts with a noun, which is called المبتدأ in Arabic. The second term or phrase is called a predicate known in Arabic as الخبر; both the noun and the predicate are in the nominative case as illustrated in the following example:

الباب مفتوح.

POST-VIDEO VIEWING

COMPRHENSION QUESTIONS:

Questions	الأسئلة
1- What was the structure of the Ottoman state?	1- كيف كانت تركيبة الحكومة العثمانية؟
2- What happened in Turkey in 1908?	2- ماذا حدث سنة 1908 في تركيا؟
3- What did Arab intellectuals discuss in Paris?	3- ماذا كان يناقش المثقفون العرب في باريس؟

4- On what side did the Arabs fight on during WWI?	4- إلى أي جانب حارب العرب خلال الحرب العالمية الأولى؟
5- Who are the following figures: - Prince Faisal - Lawrence	5- من هم الشخصيات التالية: - الأمير فيصل - لورنس
6- How did France and England divide the Arab World?	6- كيف وزعت فرنسا و بريطانيا العالم العربي؟

WRITING:

Write three paragraphs in which you compare between the events witnessed by the Arab World and those witnessed by the US during WWI.	اكتب ثلاث فقرات تقارن فيها بين الأحداث التي شهدها العالم العربي خلال الحرب العالمية الأولى و تلك التي شهدتها أميركا.
--	--

APPENDIX G
ARAB HISTORY

VIDEO SEGMENT 2

الجزء الثاني

PRE-VIDEO VIEWING:

LANGUAGE: VOCABULARY

Tutelage	الوصاية	Crew	طاقم
Priorities	أولويات	Shooters	رماة
Premature signs	ارهاصات	Honoring	تكريم
Political gamble	رهان سياسي	Firmness	صرامة
A rising star	النجم الصاعد	To destroy	سحق
Eloquence	فصاحة	Thrown	عرش
Fate	مصير	Nationalism	القومية
Turn inwards	تقوقع	Modernization	الحداثة
Threads of authority	خيوط الحكم	Caliphate	الخلافة
Ancestors	أسلاف	Elite	نخبة - نخب
Protectorates	المحميات	Druze	الدروز
Feudal system	الحكم الأقطاعي	Rebellion	التمرد
Arabists	المستعربون	Excuse	ذريعة
Oil	النفط	Get tired of...	سئم

LANGUAGE: GRAMMAR

THE PASSIVE VOICE المبنى للمجهول:

Passive conjugations are differentiated from active conjugations by internal vowel changes. You can see from the conjugations below that vowel on the first consonant is always a dhamma and that the stem vowel is always a kasra. These are the only differences. The suffixes are exactly the same as for the active voice. If you write out these passive conjugations without the short vowels, they will look just like the active conjugations. Therefore context is what will tell you what is going on.

1- I studied the book.	1- دَرَسْتُ الكِتَابَ.
2- The book was studied.	2- دُرِسَ الكِتَابُ.

POST-VIDEOVIEWING

COMPRHENSION QUESTIONS:

Questions	أسئلة
1- What happened between France and prince Faisal?	1- ماذا حدث بين فرنسا و الأمير فيصل؟
2- What changes did Ataturk do in Turkey?	2- ما هي التغييرات التي أحدثها "مصطفى كمال" على تركيا؟
3- How was France's colonialism of Lebanon?	3- كيف كان استعمار فرنسا للبنان؟
4- What was the first rebellion faced by France in Lebanon?	4- ماذا كان أول تمرد واجهته فرنسا في لبنان؟
5- What was the importance of the Suez canal?	5- ما هي أهمية قناة السويس؟
6- Why did king Saud favor America over England?	6- لماذا فضل الملك سعود الأمريكيين على البريطانيين في استثمار النفط؟
7- What were the Nazis goals in the Arab World?	7- الى ماذا كان يهدف النازيون في العالم العربي؟

WRITING:

Write 3 paragraphs in which you express your opinion on the European occupation of the Arab World.	اكتب ثلاث فقرات تعبر فيها عن رأيك في الاستعمار الأوروبي للدول العربية.
--	--

APPENDIX H
ARAB HISTORY

VIDEO SEGMENT 3

الجزء الثالث

PRE-VIDEO VIEWING:

LANGUAGE: VOCABULARY

الكلمة	المعنى
انذاك	Then
القوميون	Nationalists
الفرانكفيليون	Francophiles
تمصل	To strain
قصف	To bomb
"وصل السيل الزبي"	"They had enough"
ارض الميعاد	The promised land
بشراسة	With ferocity
فسيفساء	Crucible
هزيمة منكرة	Humiliating defeat

LANGUAGE: GRAMMAR

Preposition ل

This preposition, when used with verbs, usually has the meaning of "to" as in "I listened to the radio." With one exception, whenever this preposition has a pronoun suffix, the vowel of the preposition changes from a kasra to a fatha. See the chart below:

لي لك لك لكما له لها لهما لنا لكم لكن لهم لهم

POST-VIDEOVIEWING

COMPRHENSION QUESTIONS:

Questions	الأسئلة
1- What were the goals sought by the nationalists who won the Lebanese and Syrian elections of 1943?	1- ماذا كانت الأهداف التي سعى اليها القوميون الفائزون بالانتخابات اللبنانية والسورية المدعومة من طرف فرنسا سنة 1943 ؟
2- What were the main points of the negotiations between Saud and Roosevelt?	2- ماهي النقاط التي تفاوض حولها ابن سعود و الرئيس روزفلت ؟
3- What were the first countries that made up the Arab League?	3- ماهي الدول التي شكلت جامعة الدول العربية في بداية الأمر؟

WRITING

Write three paragraphs expressing your opinion regarding these events	اكتب ثلاث فقرات تصف فيها رأيك لهذه الأحداث
---	--

APPENDIX I
ARAB HISTORY
VIDEO SEGMENT 4

الجزء الرابع

PRE-VIDEO VIEWING:

LANGUAGE: VOCABULAR

المعنى	الكلمة
Nationalization	تأميم
Supplies	امدادات
To take for granted	استخف
An urgent matter	أمرًا مستعجلاً
To encroach	توغل
Para shooters	المظليون
Burst	تفردعت
To go along with	يساير
Floury image	صورة وردية
Pure	محض
To tumble	يتهاوى
To step aside	تنحى
To comfort	يواسي
Selfishness	أنانية
Closed	مترمنة
Antithesis	التقيض
Feudalism	الاقطاع

LANGUAGE: GRAMMAR

The Preposition ل Meaning “belonging to”

ل has another meaning in addition to “to.” It is used to mean “to belong to.” Normally, when we want to say the Arabic equivalent of “to have” in English, ل and a pronoun suffix will be used. For example, “I have a car” becomes in Arabic لي سيارة. The Arabic sentence literally means “To me is a car.” The Arabic sentence is an equational sentence. سيارة is the subject of the sentence. ل and its pronoun suffix function as the predicate. This is a different construction and uses different syntax than English does, so Arabic learners tend to get the cases confused in sentences using ل. Just remember that the item owned is the subject of the sentence.

POST-VIDEOVIEWING

COMPRHENSION QUESTIONS:

Questions	الأسئلة
1- What did “Musadaq” do in Iran?	1- ماذا فعل "مصّدق" في ايران؟
2- What is meant by the “New Delhi – Peking” axis?	2- ماذا يقصد بمحور "دلهي- بيكين"؟
3- What was the French and British reaction to Jamal Abdelnassir’s nationalization of the Suez Canal?	3- كيف كان ردّ فعل فرنسا و بريطانيا على تأميم "جمال عبدالناصر" لقناة السويس؟
4- To what side did Egypt switch ideologically after 1956 war?	4- الى أي اتجاه توجّهت مصر ايدولوجيا بعد حرب 1956؟
5- How did the Gulf countries, Jordan, and Morocco differ from the rest of the Arab countries?	5- كيف اختلفت كل من دول الخليج و الأردن و المغرب عن الدول العربية الأخرى؟
6- What did the 1967 war result in?	6- ماذا كانت نتائج حرب 1967؟

WRITING

Write three paragraphs expressing your opinion regarding these events	اكتب ثلاث فقرات تصف فيها رأيك لهذه الأحداث
---	--

APPENDIX J
ARAB HISTORY

VIDEO SEGMENT 5

الجزء الخامس

PRE-VIDEO VIEWING:

LANGUAGE: VOCABULARY

المعنى	الكلمة
To engage in	خاض – يخوض
Hard	متصلب
To mute	خرس
Heresy	زندقة
To be assassinated	اغتيال
To predict	تنبأ
Analysis	تحليل
To blow	هب – يهب
Simply a dream	مجرد وهم
Passover	عيد الغفران
Disturbance of the balance of power	اختلال موازن القوى

LANGUAGE: GRAMMAR

The Particle **إن**

إن is always used with **قال** to mean “that” as in “He said that such and such is the case.” In English we sometimes leave the word “that” out. We cannot do so in Arabic. **إن** must still be followed by a noun in the accusative or a pronoun suffix, or by a prepositional phrase or word such as **هناك** followed by an indefinite subject. In other words, **إن** works the same way with **قال** as it does when it is by itself and has the meaning of “verily” or “indeed.” Note that **إن** will be used with **قال** no matter what form the verb takes, even if the active participle of the verb is used. See example below:

قام قائلاً **إن** اللغة العربية جميلة.

He stood up saying that the Arabic language is beautiful.

POST-VIDEOVIEWING

COMPRHENSION QUESTIONS:

Questions	الأسئلة
1- What were some of the consequences of the 1973 war?	1- الى ماذا أدت حرب 1973؟
2- With whom did Sadat become an ally after the 1973 war?	2- مع من تحالف "السادات" بعد حرب 1973؟
3- What happened in 1978?	3- ماذا حدث سنة 1978؟
4- Who assassinated Sadat and why?	4- من اغتال "السادات" ولماذا؟

WRITING

Write three paragraphs expressing your opinion regarding these events	اكتب ثلاث فقرات تصف فيها رأيك لهذه الأحداث
---	--

APPENDIX K
SONG 1

APPENDIX K1: SONG 1 LYRICS & AN EXCERPT FROM THE ARTIST'S BIOGRAPHY

كل عام و أنت حبيبتني

لمحة عن الفنان:

نزار قباني دبلوماسي و شاعر عربي. ولد في دمشق (سوريا) عام 1923 من عائلة دمشقية عريقة هي أسرة قباني ، حصل على البكالوريا من مدرسة الكلية العلمية الوطنية بدمشق ، ثم التحق بكلية الحقوق بالجامعة السورية وتخرّج فيها عام 1944

التحق بعد تخرجه بالعمل الدبلوماسي ، وتنقل خلاله بين القاهرة ، وأنقرة ، ولندن ، ومدريد ، وكيين ، ولندن. وفي ربيع 1966 ، ترك نزار العمل الدبلوماسي وأسس في بيروت دارا للنشر تحمل اسمه ، وتفرغ للشعر. وكانت ثمرة مسيرته الشعرية إحدى وأربعين مجموعة شعرية ونثرية، كانت أولها " قالت لي السمراء "

كل عام و أنت حبيبتني

كل عام و أنت حبيبتني ... كل عام و أنت حبيبتني ...
أقولها لك على طريقي ... كل عام و أنا حبيبك ...
رافضا كل العبارات الكلاسيكية ... آه يا سيّدي ...
التي يرددها الرجال على مسامع النساء ... لو كان الأمر بيدي ...
سوف لا نشترى هذا العيد شجرة ... اذا لصنعت سنة لك وحدك ...
ستكونين أنت الشجرة ... تفصّلتين أيامها كما تريدن ...
سأعلق عليك أمنياتي ... و تتشمسين ...
و دعواتي و قناديل دموعي ... و ترقصين ...
و كلّ عام و أنت حبيبتني ... و تركضين على رمال شهورها كما تريدن ...

APPENDIX K2: SONG 1 LISTENING ACTIVITY

كل عام و أنت حبيبتني

كل عام و أنت حبيبتني ...
كل عام و أنا حبيبك ...
آه يا سيّدي ...
لو كان الأمر بيدي ...

إذا لصنعت سنة لك وحدك ...
..... أيامها كما تريدين ...
.....
.....
..... على رمال شهورها كما
كل عام و أنت حبيبتي ...
أقولها لك على طريقيتي ...
رافضا كل العبارات الكلاسيكية ...
التي يرذدها الرجال على مسامع النساء ...
سوف لا نشترى هذا العيد شجرة ...
..... أنت الشجرة ...
سأعلق عليك أمنياتي ...
و دعواتي و قناديل دموعي ...
و كل عام و أنت حبيبتي

APPENDIX K3: SONG 1 WRITING ACTIVITY

كل عام و أنت حبيبتي

كل عام و أنت حبيبتي
كل عام و أنت حبيبتي ...
.....
أه يا سيديتي ...
.....
إذا لصنعت سنة لك وحدك ...
.....
و تشمسين ...
.....
و تركضين على رمال شهورها كما تريدين ...
.....

أقولها لك على طريقيتي ...

.....

التي يرددها الرجال على مسامع النساء ...

.....

ستكونين أنت الشجرة ...

.....

و دعواتي و قناديل دموعي ...

.....

APPENDIX L
SONG 2

APPENDIX L1: SONG 2 LYRICS & AN EXCERPT FROM THE ARTIST'S BIOGRAPHY

زوجتي

لمحة عن الفنان: أحمد بوخاطر من مواليد عام 1975 .. اماراتي الجنسية نشأ و ترعرع في إمارة الشارقة و هو من عائلة مرموقة و معروفة على مستوى الدولة. أكمل دراسته الجامعية في عام 1999 و تخرج من قسم نظم العلوم الادارية و يعمل مع والده في مجموعة بوخاطر

زوجتي

لقد أذن الزمان لنا	أحبك مثلما أنت
بوصل غير منبت	أحبك كيفما كنت
سقيت الحب في قلبي	و مهما كان مهما صار
بحسن الفعل و السمات	أنت حبيبتي أنت
نهاري كادح حتى	جلالي أنت لا أخشى
إذا ما عدت للبيت	عدولا همّه مقني

أحقق ما تمنيت	لقبتك فانجلي عني
هنائي أنت قلتيني	ضناي اذا تبسمت
بدفاء الحب ما عشت	تضيق بي الحياة اذا
فروحنا قد انتلنا	بها يوماً تبرمت
كمثل الأرض و النبات	فأسعى جاهدا حتى

يطيب العيش مهما ضاقت	فيا أملي و يا سكني
الأيام ان طبت	و يا أنسي و ملهتي

APPENDIX L2: SONG 2 LISTENING ACTIVITY

زوجتي

أحبك كيفما كنت	أحبك مثلما أنت
----------------	----------------

بوصل غير منبت
سقيت الحب في
بحسن الفعل و السمّت
كادح حتى
اذا ما عدت للبيت

و مهما كان مهما صار
أنت أنت
..... أنت لا أخشى
عدولا
لقد أذن الزمان

أحقق ما تمثيت
..... أنت فلتهنئي
بدفاء الحب ما عشت
..... قد انتلغا
كمثل الأرض و النبت

لقتيك فانجلي عني
..... اذا تبسمت
تضيق بي الحياة اذا
بها يوماً تبرمت
فأسعى جاهدا حتى

يطيب العيش مهما ضاقت
الأيام ان طببت

فيا و يا
و يا و يا

APPENDIX L3: SONG 2 WRITING ACTIVITY

زوجتي

لقد أذن الزمان لنا
.....
سقيت الحب في قلبي
.....
نهاري كادح حتى
.....

زوجتي

أحبك مثلما أنت
.....
و مهما كان مهما صار
.....
حلالي أنت لا أخشى
.....

لَقَيْتَكَ فَانجَلَى عَنِّي

.....

تَضَيَّقَ بِي الْحَيَاةُ إِذَا

.....

فَأَسْعَى جَاهِدًا حَتَّى

أَحْقُقَ مَا تَمَنَيْتَ

.....

بِدَفْعِ الْحُبِّ مَا عَشْتِ

.....

كَمَثَلِ الْأَرْضِ وَالنَّبْتِ

.....

وَيَا أَنْسَى وَ مَلْهَمَتِي

.....

يَطْيِبُ الْعَيْشَ مَهْمَا ضَاقَتْ

.....

APPENDIX M

SONG 3

APPENDIX M1: SONG 3 LYRICS & AN EXCERPT FROM THE ARTIST'S BIOGRAPHY

غني يا عسافيري

لمحة عن الفنان مارسيل خليفة (ولد عام 1950م في بلدة عشييت في جبل لبنان) مؤلف موسيقي ومغني وعازف عود لبناني. يعتبر مارسيل أحد أهم الفنانين العرب الملتزمين بقضية فلسطين، عرف مارسيل دوما بأغانيه التي تأخذ الطابع الوطني، وبأسلوب دمج بين الموسيقى العربية والآلات الغربية كالبيانو.

غني يا عسافيري

غني قليلا يا عسافيري

فاتي كلما فكرت في أمر بكيث

و ليس لي جارٌ أناديه لكي نسهر في الليل

و لا أهلٌ و بيتٌ و بيتٌ و بيتٌ

أكلما. أكلما بنتٌ مساء نسجت ثوبا من الدمع اكتسيث

لا ترفعي صوتك كأسا يا عسافيري من الحزن

فاتي قبل هذه الكأس من قلب التويث. التويث. التويث.

غني....

لا تغني. لا تغني.

انتي غصنٌ اذا مررت على أوراق الریح انحنيت

غني...

غني. انتي علقت روعي نجمة في ليل شعري

و مضيت . و مضيت...

APPENDIX M2: SONG 3 LISTENING ACTIVITY

غني يا عسافيري

غني قليلا يا عسافيري

.....
و ليس لي جارٌ أناديه لكي نسهر في الليل

.....
أكلما. أكلما بنتُ مساء نسجت ثوباً من الدمع اكتسيتُ

.....
فاتي قبل هذه الكأس من قلب التويت. التويت. التويت.

.....
لا تغني. لا تغني.

.....
غني...

.....
و مضيتُ. و مضيتُ...

APPENDIX M3: SONG 3 WRITING ACTIVITY

غني يا عصافيري

غني قليلاً يا عصافيري

.....
و ليس لي جارٌ أناديه لكي نسهر في الليل

.....
أكلما. أكلما بنتُ مساء نسجت ثوباً من الدمع اكتسيتُ

.....
فاتي قبل هذه الكأس من قلب التويت. التويت. التويت.

.....
لا تغني. لا تغني.

.....
غني...

.....
و مضيتُ. و مضيتُ...

APPENDIX N
QUESTIONNAIRE*

1- Describe the extent to which the video clips enhanced, or did not enhance, your listening skill. Give examples.

- At the beginning of the course, video clips were fundamental in my comprehension of more advanced material because I was able to use the context of the video to understand the words. I think after 1/3 or 1/2 of the way through the course however, the videos are detrimental & should be minimized.
- The video clips helped because the topics were new and different; after a full year of [listening to news] from Aljazeera, my mind doesn't focus well because everything uses the same stories and vocabulary. The historical pieces had announcers with varying accents and a lot of new vocabulary and new synonyms for old words. Also, using historical clips was beneficial because it allowed us to explore a new background and viewpoint on Middle Eastern culture, which is valuable for understanding comprehension.
- Video clips were useful as long as new words were reviewed beforehand. When the video clip was only played once this usually wasn't so helpful. To incorporate new vocabulary it helps to hear a passage at least twice, usually broken up the second time to catch what words are around it, how the native speaker pronounces it, how it sounds in the middle of a sentence...
- The video clips definitely enhanced my listening skills, mainly because of their length. In class we are mostly exposed to short audio clips but with the video clips my attention to the details in them for an extended period of time while trying to retain information and not forget what I heard in the beginning. Also the questions that accompanied the video clips helped prepare us for what we needed to listen for, sometimes when we're given detailed questions like numbers or exact times or more than two or three adjectives describing something, it's hard to recall certain things that were mentioned, and this is true even when answering questions to a passage in your native language. The interesting topic also made the video clips a more fun way to learn.
- I feel like the videos were a great new, unique, and intelligent way of obtaining vocabulary, especially idiomatic expressions, in context so as to enable me to provide a backdrop of learning to the words I memorize. Also, because of their cultural relativity to the Mideast region, helped provide examples of common authentic usage for simple words and expressions.
- I definitely think the video clips enhanced my listening skills because it was interesting. The video with the voice helped me because I am a very global learner and seeing the things I was hearing about helped me pay a lot closer attention to the Arabic. The sound quality was also good enough to actually hear the Arabic. Because a list of vocab was provided, I found it very useful so that I knew exactly which words to listen for which enhanced by listening skills & my knowledge of vocab.
- They helped learn cultural words and terms for governments and treaties that I was previously unaware of.

2- Describe the extent to which the short stories enhanced, or did not enhance, your reading skills. Give examples.

- I enjoyed short stories when I understood them but since the style is so different from what we're used to some material was more different than it should be.

* Students' comments are recorded verbatim and not edited for spelling or grammar.

- I did not feel that all of the stories were beneficial because some of them were very short and simple. However, the exposure to a new reading material was nice, and forced me to look closely at the vocabulary and syntax. These would be better activity for beginning of semester 3 or end of semester 2.
- The short stories were a little childish for me, although that I'm sure is simply a matter of preference. I like (prefer) reading about history or current events but that's because I enjoy those subjects and also due to time constraints. We have a limited number of weeks to become proficient in speaking about the economy, trade, etc... and sometimes I wish we read more about those topics in Arabic in order to have more meaningful/well informed opinions about these subjects.
- Well, it's difficult to say whether or not the stories enhanced my reading skill. They may have helped my analytical skills a bit and my ability to comprehend metaphors. They didn't necessarily help my reading skills in the sense that now I can read all styles of stories or publication now, as normally we don't read anything but the news, however the DLPT5 does have some metaphorical stories and novels and folklore at the end. Where deciphering the author's tone and meaning can be quite tricky. So in the end I suppose the stories were somewhat helpful.
- The short stories were a good application of previously acquired reading skills as well as a back drop for vocab learning. Again as with the video the native authenticity was helpful to understand connotations and usage of the vocab as well as appropriate times for using idiomatic expressions.
- I found the stories to be entertaining so of course this helped my reading skills same as with the video, a list of vocab before hand was very useful.
- The short stories seemed very hard because they used a lot of idioms, and expressions that I had been previously unfamiliar with. However, I now remember some of the parables and phrases that I had learned.

3- Describe the extent to which listening to Arabic music while reading the lyrics enhanced, or did not enhance, your reading and listening skills. Give examples.

- I don't really think that listening to the music & reading the lyrics really changed my skills. I believe this exercise needs to be pursued further before I can make any clear judgment.
- This is an intense Arabic-brain workout! Music has been one of the hardest things to comprehend because of pronunciation, dialect, and metaphorical speech. It was very helpful to have the lyrics because they assisted me in training myself to better understand. I had to work extra hard to comprehend the words before ever hearing (or trying) to distinguish individual words in the songs. This is still difficult in the last week of the course.
- The Arabic music was very pretty but I think this would be the most helpful in the first weeks of class.
- For me personally listening to Arab music while reading the lyrics did not enhance my reading or listening skills because I do not learn well this way. I tend to absorb information more through class lectures and note taking as well as vocab lists, quizzing, and repetition. With that said, this was a nice change and maybe beneficial for other student so it would not hurt to introduce into the classroom periodically.
- I feel that, of all the activities, the songs were the least useful as pronunciation was often distorted musically and word usage become too poetically cumbersome for one to apply to my conversation level. In short its good for learning culture but ineffective for teaching language.
- While enjoyable, I didn't get much out of this. I liked listening to some of this music but it didn't make me better in Arabic. I could only understand a few words, not enough to make me better.
- Listening to Arabic music always help me in my studies, it was good to get to listen to it in class.

4- Describe the extent to which responding to the activities on this CD did or did not enhance, your writing skills. Give examples.

- Every chance I get (and they are few) to write in Arabic greatly improves my skills because it forces me to be more precise w/the language. For that reason, it is always difficult to get myself to write on my own & I welcome any forced-writing activity.
- Writing is very beneficial to me because it forces me to use a plethora of vocabulary in order to get my point across and make myself understood. I really enjoyed doing the writing activity at the end of the lessons. I find that writing enhances my speaking, and loved trying to construct abstract ideas and opinions using Arabic.
- I think it was useful as long as only 5-10 min of class was devoted to trying to use the new vocabulary in sentences. But its not possible to be thoughtful about a subject in 15min so I think it would be better for the exercises to be “use these new vocab words in a sentence” than “what are your feelings on the effects of communism on citizens of the Eastern Block countries?”. Trying to jump start my brain on such a huge issue, even if I have the computer to look up an article about the subject will take more than 15min and by the end of class I’ll have written 2 words in Arabic.
- Because I got lazy near the end of the packet and did not respond to all of the writing prompts, I did not take advantage of the writing activities as I should have. Also I can only improve my writing skills if I’m corrected and then I go back and change my mistakes or make a strong mental note to not make those mental mistakes again. Sometimes I am very lazy as a writer and make careless mistakes even in English.
- As always, any opportunity to write in Arabic helps to have the skill of fabricating language as well as cementing grammar and vocabulary. I’d say that the exception to this is again with music. Sometimes I was forced into a smaller lexicon of words in order to try to fit meter or rhyme scheme.
- The activity was good for writing skills but we don’t have to write for our job. It did for us to make opinion and write it down which is good because we have to give our opinion on the test.

5- Which components/activities of this CD best enhanced your understanding of Arabic culture: the short stories, the video clips, or the songs? Give examples and reasons for why you picked those examples.

- I think the video had the greatest contribution on me because it packed a lot of information about a pivotal time in the Arab world into a short period of time and included music and pictures. Vidos are good teaching aids, especially in regards to their informational content because a native speaker can narrate better & faster than we as students can read. Videos also allow for accompanying images & music which enhances the experience.
- The video clips, because they were challenging bur not impossible.
- The video clips because they explained the history of Arabic countries. One, I felt the most motivated to listen to them at home because the speed at which the commentator spoke matched the speed at which people would normally speak in. I had trouble understanding the videos on my computer as I got ready in the morning but there was a lot of vocabulary I was unfamiliar with (as opposed to the news which I usually don’t have trouble understanding if I have it on in the background as I get ready). I think the level the video clips were at was higher than I would understand by myself. I would need the written transcript to go with them or then need to work on them in class with a teacher who could pause the video and walk me through what’s being said.
- The video clips enhanced my skills in Arabic the most but perhaps the short stories enhanced my understanding of Arabic culture more stories always force me to open my mind and I have to think another way otherwise their meaning is completely lost to me. When I first read the stories I did not get why he was hunting with a bird and didn’t understand why he was even being challenged to hunt in the first place. But after the teacher explained that it was simply a cultural challenge and that the judgment made by the ruler was a metaphor showing that someone simply using trickier methods to achieve the same outcome doesn’t

make it right. These types of short stories allow us to glimpse at Arabic culture through word usage and the characters used in them.

- I choose video because of its length, variety of levels, and broad scope of topic. It is also my weakest point in learning Arabic (listening) and therefore receives the most drastic improvement with practice.
- I think the short stories best enhanced my understanding of Arabic culture. The movie was more about history and I didn't really understand the songs all that well.
- I enjoyed the video clips the most because I got to see the actual culture and different places, however I also liked the music because I could hear how certain words and phrases are used in everyday speech and in song.

6- You have already studied the Arabic language for two semesters prior to this one, but did not use a CD like this. Overall, did you find using this CD to be more or less useful in improving your knowledge of the Arabic language? Why or why not?

- I thought the CD was an interesting exercise & was valuable because it introduced unique authentic material we are not normally exposed to: music & lyrics, documentary, & short stories.
- Anything new and different like this is very helpful with learning Arabic, because too much of one thing becomes dull and all of us lose focus.
- I think practically speaking I would have only used the CD for the history video clips. I love fine arts and literature but our schedule here is very limited in the evenings and I don't have time to engage in enjoying Arabic literature/poetry. That's something I can do later. Here, I'm interested in building a foundation and passing, since this isn't me taking university classes for my own pleasure/enjoyment. This is a job, & I must focus on current events and especially listening since that's what my job will entail. If I had time to do both I would but if I write Arabic poems in the evening that would have to take the place of preparing a news article for the next day which I can't afford.
- During the first two semesters, especially in the beginning may not help to improve students' language skills or overall understanding of the language because they must first build a foundation. However when they begin to be introduced to authentic materials this CD and method of teaching could be extremely useful for the following reasons: 1) vocab lists in the beginning reassure understanding of unknown or unexpected words and prevents students from skipping over them or guessing. 2) review of all newly learned words after the lesson ensures memorization for future usage. 3) video clips with history, culture, or even science & politics that are accompanied by questions pertaining to the clips allow the student to focus their efforts on listening properly, they keep the attention of the student (if that student is mature enough) and they allow the teacher to accurately check the student's understanding of the topic. 4) music and short stories brings in culture and although it may not be appropriate at all times, it's important to incorporate different styles into every classroom.
- I found that the cohesive package of it nice. It contained interesting topics and pieces that gave many different angles from which the language could be seen. You wouldn't use the same words and phrases in a story about falconry as you could in a love song or a documentary about the Arab Israeli conflict.
- The CD was really useful for learning Arabic, however I'm not sure it is something that could be used all semester, only because I think variety is very important. I think in this section of our learning of Arabic, vocab is the most important, and the CD definitely gave a good list of vocab and a great way of learning it in context.
- I thought it was very good in improving cultural knowledge and awareness, and I learned a few new phrases and vocabulary, however, since the over goal of this course is simply to pass the Proficiency Test, I don't think it helped in that aspect. But, I do think that the style and layout of the lessons are good, its just that the material is based on culture, which doesn't help with the test.

APPENDIX O
INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Section 1	
Interviewer	Interviewees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first part I would like to discuss with you after reviewing the surveys is, some of you said that the DLPT5 was a concern, there was a big gap between the project and the test, could you elaborate on that a little bit? Anybody can start. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Yusuf” : I think that the packet and the way it was organized was really really good...as far as there was new vocab in the reading and listening. I guess that the only thing that would separate being relative to DLPT5 is [that] the DLPT5 has really tricky questions and its not really measuring your ability to understand or speak Arabic. Its just.... In the packet [CD ROM] it was more straight forward, it was a good learning tool.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I understand, for example the short stories: you don't have passages like that in the DLPT5. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Yusuf”: NO, but the vocab you learned from that because there are passages in the DLPT5 that are related to entertainment and culture. That are presented like the way they were presented in the short stories. So that was good.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thank you. “S2” do you have anything to say about this...? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Noor”: I did not think that in my survey...?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OK 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Shamsy”: I really think that some of the skills, reading and listening . No matter what from they are really going to prepare us for the DLPT5 with the exception to music. Listening to spoken passage whether on the videos we watched or even reading the stories...because you have learned to put the words that we learned in context and then extrapolate meaning from it. The only thing I saw as being kind of detrimental was the emphasis put on writing and music, because the music was very difficult and I did not get a lot of Arabic knowledge from it. I really struggled to learn words in the music but other than that I felt it was preparation for the DLPT.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Tamir”: I agree with “Shamsy” I think no matter what form, if you are practicing the language its going to help one way or another, or even the music because if you are struggling to hear words because they are kind of mutated because of the music, its going to train your ears to be able to understand and recognize words in the

	<p>passage that might be outside your acceptable parameter. For example if I am listening to this singer and he says a word that I know if someone is just speaking it normally like in MSA on the news, but because of the tone of the music and rhythm, it changes the word a little bit and now I have to strain to understand and even recognize the word, and then lets say I am listening to a passage on the DLPT, where there is an interview with a native speaker, and he is speaking MSA with a local accent, but because of his accent and may be he does not speak MSA that often, the word is not as familiar as it is normally [said] this is going to help recognize it with more ease.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I actually...that was the 3rd point I wanted to talk to you about. [The surveys indicated that] the songs were the least useful for the majority of you, that as far as learning, you know it was kind of hard. So if we put the DLPT5 aside, just from the point of view of learning the language, the songs were not useful?, some of you appreciated the music ... that it “calms you down” and appreciation for the culture, but as far as learning the language it was not useful. Do you have anything to say about that? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Yusuf”: Yes, I would say if you put the DLPT5 aside then I have no complaints with anything that was in the packet [CD ROM], I think that it was useful, I would not take anything away.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you suggest to incorporate songs with lyrics in the curriculum and what kind of modification would you suggest if we do that? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Yusuf”: I would say, Yeah but do it in Sem III because people have more of a foundation to work with, because as [Tamir] said you might understand the word but in the songs they would use it in a different context and that is more Sem III stuff, but I do think it would be good and I think you have the transcript there and after you listen to it, while you listen to it you could follow along. So I don’t think it is bad, if you take the DLPT5 the problem with this course is that we are not learning Arabic to learn Arabic but we are trying to pass the DLPT5.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OK, it we do incorporate songs, how frequent do you suggest we incorporate them once/week, maybe twice/month, what do you think? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Noor”: I don’t think once/week would hurt, but I don’t necessarily think it would be that helpful, but during the last hour on Friday because students have a short attention span, incorporating a song during that last hour would be helpful, and if you did, I think you could accompany it with a vocabulary list, or some kind of review the last 10min, as to the words you did pick up and why, it might be helpful, I personally think the songs were not helpful for my learning style but that is because I only

	<p>learn through lists but I don't think it is harmful to incorporate different styles into the curriculum because every student learns differently.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Shamsy": I think like what [Yusuf] said, if we are just going to focus on learning Arabic, the songs are useful as does the writing assignments. When we think about the DLPT5, we tend to focus on some aspects of the language more than others. But, in learning the language the songs can be useful and be effective. Just outside this, my language learning experience, it has been really effective, in moderation I think once/week at the most. The problem I see and have seen generally with Arabic music in learning the language is dialect and idiomatic phrases... There is a disconnect between MSA and learning dialect through the music.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let me move on to the different point, short stories were good for exposure the culture but they were too easy. Some of you thought they were too easy, some others, they thought they were not too easy. What do you think? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Tamir": I thought they were hard. I thought they were too hard because of the style. The short stories' style, at least in Arabic, were completely different from news media. You know I could read level 3 passage in news media, but if you give me a level 0+ kid's story, little words could throw me off to the point when I completely misunderstand the meaning, like that 1st one. I think ..., but for that reason it was useful at least from a grammar stand point because they were short enough where you were not spending too much time on them but because of difference in style you were seeing grammar that you are not used to. If you start reading that a little bit more, that kind of solidify your grammar for the rest of Arabic literature and
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would it help in your opinion in narration (present tense....)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Shamsy": It's the same, where you have a story, which is being narrated and especially what I just said, it's a different grammar style and narration style in the OPI for example it's very basic. The stories, the narration is done in a non-complicated and elegant manner, in that sense if we were able to do the same thing in the OPI [Oral Proficiency Interview] for example, it's beneficial.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OK. How often do you suggest we incorporate the short stories? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Shamsy": I'd say, depending on how much you spend and what you are doing with it, I'd say a total of one hour/week. Even in a homework.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OK, now I am just going to move to the topic of writing prompts. Some of you 	

<p>though the writing prompts were good, because every time you ... a good chance to practice writing is good, practicing vocabulary... others said that the writing prompts were too dry, because writing about Middle Eastern politics was not beneficial.</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Yusuf”: What do you mean writing: answering questions or writing after?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The writing after. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Yusuf”: That’s what I thought, this package is really good for Semester III, where you are supposed to have an opinion I don’t think it’s dry unless you don’t have an opinion on it. Especially now, that you are not only reading an opinion piece but formulating one and having to write about it, is obviously good.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we deal with this issue of not having enough information to express one’s opinion regarding a Middle Eastern topic? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Noor”: I guess you can just have some kind of a dialogue after the lesson, so that some students could learn from other students, and then come up with their own ideas, I think the writing prompts were a good idea, because whenever you get a chance to write is good for any language, even your speaking, because when you are writing a phrase which just don’t sound right, it helps you in knowing how to say it as well.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you see any usage for the internet [in this regard]? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Shamsy”: I think in writing or speaking in expressing your views and opinions on this higher topics, like global and political topics is really difficult because we might have an idea what we want to say in English, and we tend to lean on idiomatic phrases or comparisons or analogies that really work in English, but we don’t necessarily have counterparts of that in Arabic, and those are things you can’t look up in the dictionary, I want to say “this red hairing argument” I don’t know how to look that up, I think that take a lot of time to acquire. I guess this writing assignments, I get to use words and work around the problem. I think [Noor] is right if we can have a speaking before the writing, to barrow from others.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The last point deals with the CD overall, some of you said it was a good break from the routine media? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Tamir”: I like it, I enjoyed it because it’s different from what we are used to. It’s new material, obviously new words not just the regular news media. And honestly the DLPT5 keeps coming up, and I believe it’s related to the DLPT even though it’s not DLPT subject matter because especially the higher levels, the cultural topic start to pop up and if you don’t have

	any idea what the Ottoman Empire ...[then it's hard to put thing in context]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thank you very much I appreciate your time. 	
Section 2	
Interviewer	Interviewees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Let me just start with the 1st point, when I read the surveys, I found that there is some kind of a gap between what is required for the test (DLPT5) and what this CD-project was aiming for, do you want to elaborate on that a little bit more? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Jenan”: Yeah, with the CD, if I was taking a course about Arabic literature, which I would be interested in that I'll be happy with the materials, since we have a limited amount of time, I feel it is just impractical so like to focus on certain things that I know absolutely will not be on the test, especially the speaking test.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you agree, do you disagree? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Ghada”: I definitely agree, the CD was great maybe for some background info, a little bit more in-depth look at the culture, but as far as the exam goes most of it is based on the news, but this requires you to have a great command of the Arabic language. “Hala”: I agree. “Sanad”: I do agree, but also it is a nice change from the routine from every day monotony of doing the same thing over and over again. So it was a good change.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OK, the second point was that the short stories were good for exposure to the culture but too easy, some of you said they were too easy and some others thought they were hard? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Sanad”: I think through out this whole course, pretty much everything that we do is challenging, everything gets harder and harder so it is very nice to go back and so something easier...so it's like a morale booster, confidence booster.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did it help with narration like learning the vocabulary necessary for narrating something in the past, future, present tense or did it not? Because one of the reason for including the short stories, in addition to learning the vocab and culture was to be able to learn the phraseology of narrating something? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Hala”: I think it introduced like something we are not used to, which is the dialogue, like short dialogues, like we hear it but we don't read it. “Jenan”: For speaking, I would say NO just because there are questions that they would ask you that are very specific like what do you do on a typical day, and so that to me is like knowing about the present tense. But I don't think it is a bad idea to introduce the tenses using a story. Like how they switch in and out of past tense, and present...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were they too easy or hard (the stories)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Ghada”: I think they were too easy to understand.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because some other students said they were too hard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Ghada”: I think some of the vocab were out there, but as an activity as a whole, I felt it was geared toward the 2nd semester. Maybe when you are trying to bridge that gap between level 1+ and 2 material, between news and someone telling their

	<p>opinion about the news. That is a good activity, because it requires to look at what the vocab is telling about the story. Because in the story, the meaning was kind of obscure.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you suggest. What is the frequency of using short stories like once a week or once a month if we do something like this in the future? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Ghada”: I’ll say once a week. • “Sanad”: Yeah. Especially on a Friday. Because on Fridays I think the students have a hard time paying attention. If you give an interesting story on Friday, I think that would help.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What activities would accompany the short stories that you can think of in addition to just reading and answering question, can you think of anything we can do with it? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Ghada”: Speaking activities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you guys think of acting? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Jenan”: that’s why I think being in a very regimented environment to switch to being creative, it’s not even fun for me right now “write a song in this class”, I would just be very angry, I don’t want to, I am not in the mood to, especially on a normal day, like today is different, just like being annoyed with your unit, maybe you had to wake up early for PT and you did not have breakfast that morning and you had to turn in a piece of paper, and people you asked they ignored you, and acted like you were not there, and someone stopped you on the way and told you that your uniform was not straight enough, and then you have to come to class.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • And the teacher tells you “write a song” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Jenan”: and the teacher tells you “write a song” and you say “NO, I’ll write a song about how much I hate the world right now”.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think, and this is just my personal opinion, I think it should be voluntary, I would tell write a song if you want but you don’t have to. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Jenan”: Like if you did an acting thing right, if you have a group that is really motivated, then I could see how it could go well.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think that’s why you have to adapt, because every class is different and every student is different. And the main purpose is to find out what people like and what they don’t like. • About the songs, just to emphasize, most people thought they were the least useful, can you say anything about that, how was it the least useful... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Hala”: We had to be walked though the song, because there was a lot of vocab that we did not know and there was some really strange structure that we are not used to. I think if we were more advanced, it would be more helpful, but at our level it was

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When I did read articles about how people use songs to teach languages, I did not just come up with it from my head, they said people like to listen to music, it was not meant for you to know every word. 	<p>hard, especially writing a song.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Jenan”: If I was taking this course in college where I am going every Tuesday and Thursday, I think that would be interesting, I think I would be open to the idea, It’s the environment “Ghada”: I speak Spanish as well and I have learned countless words from listening to music, but in Arabic it’s not just so because the way they pronounce the words, the structure, the vocabulary is like Quranic vocab we have never seen, and probably we will never see, that’s what you are hearing in the songs, there is no way for me to understand it without you telling me about each song. “Jenan”: It’s very pretty.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OK, so, we talked a little bit about the songs. Vocabulary...the majority of you said that the vocabulary was a good thing, you saw different words in different contexts. Especially idiomatic expressions, what made them easier to understand, the videos, the short stories...? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Jenan”: repetition. Because if it’s not repeated it’s hard to remember, but if it’s repeated, people say it a lot, then it sticks.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OK, I have two more points to cover, one is about the writing prompts, what did you guys think, some of you said that the writing prompts, same thing as the songs: “you are asked to write about a conflict in the Middle East suddenly without any preparation, especially at 0800 AM in the morning if it’s early in the morning what do you think about the writing prompts were they “too dry” as some of you said, or what was it...? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Sanad”: I think in respect to learning vocab and idiomatic expressions, if you write them, it just helps remembering them better and they stick. It’s just like the actual writing process that is difficult, I have never being able to sit down and write a paper at the spear of the moment, even if it’s something I don’t like, it’s still useful. “Hala”: I think this writing prompts would have been [better] but it was hard to write on the spot, you watch the video once, then write about it, it was difficult for me. “Ghada”: For me it catered to my learning style completely because I am one of those people that could sit down and write pages upon pages about anything, and to do that mainly after reviewing the vocab and for me [I lose concentration] because of repetition, but if I have to use it and produce a little bit then immediately I learn it so it worked for me. “Jenan”: I think for me if like you “use those words in sentences”, that goes a little bit better you could still, I think you could give both, I think you could do that for different assignments, and that really helps, [you give us a choice] “if you would like to summarize the articles or you would like to write questions about it then write”, because people are different and that’s what I really like is when you give options

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OK, so if there was more time, if you were given extra time, like the option of doing it at home, that could have been better, because you have more time to think about it and articulate your thoughts? 	<p>...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Jenan”: Yeah, if that was a homework assignment, it is real crazy if it’s like “here is the homework and write about it” especially if you have to use the words, and say “you have to use these words”. • “Sanad”: And especially because of the stage we are in right now, it’s important to learn vocab, not necessarily in writing, because we will never have to sit down and write a paper in Arabic...I mean we have to know the structure of the sentence and everything but we never have to write it. You know...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OK, the last point here is the CD overall, some of you said, it was a break from the daily news... and some others said, it was too far from what is expected from you? 	<p>“Jenan”: I think that would have been more helpful to me if it [was] broken up a little... I love that we had the words before hands, and that always helps me and then if we would then listen to it maybe more than once, and then like broken it a little bit...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Hala”: Listen at your pace. • “Ghada”: Breaking it down, would have helped, it’s just a whole part of learning Arabic that we are not exposed to, I think that is the only Arabic history that I have learned in the whole course, in Arabic, so that was very helpful.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank you very much for your time, I really appreciate it. 	

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