INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN THE INSTRUCTION OF ARAB STUDENTS BY WESTERN TEACHERS

By

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INSTRUCTION OF ARAB STUDENTS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Of all the memorable times during the summer of 1986 which my wife and I spent in Tunisia, I especially recall one Friday in July. Early in the morning six of us jammed into my friend Joel's dusty blue Citroen station wagon. Ahmed, Joel's landlord, had volunteered to lead us to a small village west of Tunis, not far from the Algerian border, where we planned to have tea with Ahmed's aunt and return to Tunis that evening. Gary, a Los Angeleno visiting with his junior high school daughter Carrie, wanted her to experience authentic Arab village life and culture. My wife and I joined the group for the day, which also included a scheduled stop at Dougga to tour Roman ruins.

The first part of the trip went smoothly, and we reached Dougga by mid-morning. After a leisurely exploration of the well-preserved city, we reboarded Joel's car and continued west. As the North African sun heated up, we stopped for something to eat, settling for watermelon and warm bottled water by the side of the road. After another stint in the car, we came to Kef, a city on the side of a mountain. Ahmed went to a mosque for the Friday noon sermon, and the rest of us toured more ruins. Once our

guide returned, we visited an old fort overlooking Kef and Ahmed led us to a cafe for a round of coffee and water. By now we were well into our day, and the aunt's village wasn't close yet. As we sat at the cafe, Gary wondered out loud, "What are we doing here?" Ahmed was obviously in no hurry and had little regard for the schedule we Americans were operating on. He was apparently living from one moment to the next.

After a long stay in Kef, we eventually took to the road again. But we kept stopping: Ahmed pulled Joel over at a water well, and sometime around six o'clock he needed to stop at another mosque where, unfortunately for us, he met an uncle who invited us to his home for a meal.

At this point Gary took control. It had been a long, hot day with one stop after another. We weren't far from Ahmed's aunt's home, but after tea we would still have about a four-hour drive back to Tunis. And it could be hours before we would sit down at the uncle's table. So Gary claimed his rights as the eldest of our entourage and said that for the sake of our weakened women passengers he demanded we go home.

Ahmed was reluctant to turn around, but after some discussion (Joel interpreting for Gary) Ahmed finally returned to his uncle to announce that we wouldn't be staying for a meal after all. We pointed the Citroen toward Tunis; and, after a supper stop and yet more prayers for Ahmed at another mosque, we returned to Tunis at ten or

eleven that evening.

We Westerners obviously were not accustomed to dealing with time in the same way as Ahmed. He, on the other hand, had his explanation for our behavior, as he told Joel the next day: Americans apparently don't visit people.

Both sides sought to explain the other's behavior, to pinpoint just why the other culture thinks and acts as it does. Edward T. Hall suggests that we were not the first to struggle with these problems: "In spite of over two thousand years of contact, Westerners and Arabs still do not understand each other" (1966, p. 144). This road trip to Kef and beyond was not an isolated incident, but merely a minute piece in the larger puzzle of Arab-Western relations, only one example of the differences which probably have existed since these two cultures first began to attempt to successfully communicate.

Our interaction with Ahmed is an example of intercultural communication, defined by Gudykunst and Kim (1984) as "a transactional, symbolic process involving the attribution of meaning between people from different cultures" (p. 14). These authors go on to say that it is immaterial whether the attempt to communicate was successful or not: "To say that two people engaged in intercultural communication is not to say they understood each other" (p. 14). This definition coincides with Condon and Yousef (1975) who see communication as "any behavior that is perceived and interpreted by another, whether or not it is

spoken or intended or even within the person's conscious awareness" (p. 2). They prefer such a definition over the often used "agreement" or "understanding." Prosser (1978) writes that our intentions have nothing to do with it. When we relate to others, we communicate. Thus intercultural communication applies to both verbal and nonverbal behavior and successful as well as unsuccessful attempts at communication.

Intercultural communication is the subject of this thesis which focuses specifically on relations between Arab students and Western instructors. The issues discussed here should be of particular interest to teachers of English as a second language since they make up the large majority of Westerners teaching in Arab countries.

One such instructor was John Bagnole, an American who taught English at the University of Garyounis in Libya during the 1970's. Bagnole's (1977) experience gives us some insight into the problems that surface when Westerners teach Arabs. For instance, Bagnole discovered that Arabs and Westerners view privacy very differently. Arab students, acting within legitimate Arab cultural bounds, would walk into American and British professors' offices without knocking on closed doors. Teachers excused initial intrusions, but eventually exploded angrily "and many an unsuspecting student was embarrassed" (p. 26). In addition, the clothes teachers wore and the cars they drove took on new importance as lifestyles which were acceptable in

America became unacceptable in Libya. These and other factors resulted in a high turnover rate among American and British instructors and, we can infer, confusion and annoyance on the part of the Arab students.

Bagnole's experience is both interesting and informative, but unfortunately too few other scholars discuss the interaction between Western teachers and Arab students. For instance, Barattini (1983) explores the influence of Islam upon both students and teachers in the ESL classroom; and Meloni (1984) considers a variety of problems which Arab students have in American institutions. Attention has also been focused in a more general way on cross-cultural questions in the classroom (see Wong, 1983). While no one study can make up for this dearth of inquiry, the following investigation aims to begin filling the gap in our understanding of this area and hopefully will be one small step toward better understanding of Arab students by Western instructors.

This thesis begins with a review of literature which concentrates first on Arab culture in general and then looks at potential problems in Arab-Western communication, focusing on areas of misunderstanding between Arab students and Western teachers. The approach parallels that of Adelman and Lustig (1981). The second part of the thesis presents the findings of a questionnaire administered in Tunisia to Tunisian students of Western instructors.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

To understand the factors involved in the communication between Arab students and Western instructors, we need to establish a framework within which we might discuss the two groups' interaction. To that end, this survey will initially focus on Arab culture in general in order to sketch a broad picture of the cultural background of the Arab student since culture determines behavior in the classroom. Condon and Yousef (1975) write that "'normal behavior' means behavior according to the norms of our culture" (p. 34). Once the norms of Arab culture have been considered, we will concentrate on specific barriers to successful Arab-Western communication, noting how these barriers affect the relationships of Arab students and Western teachers.

One note of caution is necessary: Though most researchers and scholars agree on the following basic features of Arab culture, some do not. Their criticisms will be discussed after we consider the main thrust of the literature.

Before moving into the overview of Arab culture, however, it is important to define Arab. Though there are a

number of definitions, I prefer a simple one: "anyone who speaks Arabic as his own language and consequently feels as an Arab" (Jabra, 1971, p. 174). Egypt's Nasser also believed an Arab to be "anyone whose mother tongue is Arabic" (Iseman, 1978, p. 38). However, since this paper focuses on Arab-Western relationships in Arab countries, rather than in Western or other countries, I am most interested in the Arabs of a specific geographical area--the Middle East and North Africa--an area labeled "Middle Eastern culture continent" by Patai (1969, p. 15).

Arab Culture

Literature on Arab culture attests to the overriding importance of the family in Arab life (Parker, 1976). Hamady (1960) writes:

> The individual is primarily part of a family, in which he is committed to definite obligations and entitled to certain rights. These duties and privileges are sacred and compelling, and the devotion to the family remains a moral and religious principle. (p. 28)

Similarly, Marr (1978) states that individual "wishes and desires are often subordinated to those of the family" (p. 59). Lee (1980), speaking of Saudi Arabia, agrees: "Personal gain is considered secondary to family loyalty, and family honor is sacrosanct" (p. 14).

Another key element of Arab culture, and a very visible one to Westerners, is religion. According to Parker (1976), Islam is the underpinning of today's Arab culture. Observers especially note the way religion affects

practically every aspect of Arab life. Berger (1962) points to the merging of the secular and the religious under Islam, Hamady (1960) and Yousef (1982) concurring. Looking at a specific country, Saudi Arabia, Lee (1980) also sees Islam's dominating influence, and Shaker (1979) labels this state a "contemporary theocracy" (p. 5).

Growing out of the Arabs' religious orientation is another important aspect of their culture--fatalism (Adelman and Lustig, 1981). The Koran states that "naught befalleth us save that which Allah hath decreed for us" (<u>The Meaning of the Glorious Koran</u>, IX:51, p. 150). <u>Inshallah</u> is the Arabic equivalent of "God willing," and to the Arab everything depends on whether God wills it (Hamady, 1960). Patai (1973) writes: "The Arab world still sees the universe running its predestined course, determined by the will of Allah, who not only guides the world at large, but also predestines the fate of each and every man individually" (p. 147). Hall (1959) tells of an Egyptian farmer who was highly offended by an American who asked him what kind of yield he expected. Only those who are a little crazy would dare tread on what is obviously Allah's territory.

Along with family and religion, Arabs value hospitality. As a result of religious imperatives (Lee, 1980) and their past in the desert (Almaney & Alwan, 1982; Hamady, 1960), hospitality is very important to Arabs (Berger, 1962; Hamady, 1960). Patai (1973) labels it "a

general custom that one is expected to practice throughout one's life" (Patai, 1973, p. 86). Yousef (1974) cites a tale which he believes epitomizes this cultural trait:

> Hatem At-Taei, who lived in ancient Arabia . . . had the fastest and the most beautiful and powerful horse in his time. Hatem loved his horse and knew that it was the most talked-about object in Arabia. One day, around dinner time, an unknown visitor stopped by Hatem's tent. Hatem asked and insisted that the visitor stay for dinner. After the meal, Hatem inquired about the visitor's business and was told that the king, having heard so much about Hatem's horse, wanted to have it. In anguish, Hatem cried that, having had nothing else to offer the guest, Hatem ordered his boy to have the famous horse slaughtered and cooked for dinner. (p. 385)

Whereas Arabs may exercise hospitality out of necessity, their love for Arabic is a passion, not a prescription, a passion which other people may share for their respective languages. Campbell (1983) notes the Arabs' love of speech, and Hamady (1960) writes: "Arabs love their language as vividly today as they did thirteen hundred years ago. They enjoy its floweriness and power. They speak it with distinction and precision and play with its characteristic eloquence" (p. 204). Arabs believe that other languages are inferior: "Throughout the vast Arabic language area, people hold with relative uniformity that Arabic is superior to other languages because it is beautiful and has a strong appeal, especially for the recitation of classical poetry and for formal or semi-formal oratory" (Patai, 1973, p. 44). In fact, according to Arab myth, Adam first spoke Arabic. His sin, however, cost him that honor, and God then forced him to speak Syriac

(Almaney & Alwan, 1982).

The Arabs' relaxed approach to time is also a distinctive feature of their culture. References to the concept of time in Arab culture are numerous (Bagnole, 1977; Hamady, 1960; Lee, 1980; Patai, 1973; Setian, 1972), but Hall (1959, 1976, 1983) probably has devoted more effort to explaining the Arabs' view of time than any other author. He writes that Arabs see time as either "no time at all," "now," or "forever"; and they cannot, for instance, distinguish between "a long time and a very long time" (Hall, 1959, p. 176). Hall (1983) places Arab culture alongside other cultures that use what he terms _polychronic time_, in which "many things [happen] at a time" (p. 43). P-time, as Hall calls it, emphasizes human interaction and "completion of transactions rather than adherence to preset schedules. Appointments are not taken as seriously and, as a consequence, are frequently broken" (p. 43).

Perhaps more oblique than the Arabs' concept of time, but nevertheless as real a cultural trait, is the idea of _face_. Patai (1973) defines face as "the outward appearance of honor, the 'front' of honor which a man will strive to preserve even if in actuality he has committed a dishonorable act" (p. 101). Hamady (1960) writes of the Arab's overwhelming concern with what others think of him or her. The opposite of honor is shame, which, according to Glidden (1972), comes about not from "the commission of an act condemned by the value system; instead, it means the

discovery by outsiders that a given individual or group committed such an act" (p. 985).

A final feature of Arab culture to be discussed here is the Arabs' view of privacy, or rather the absence of it, in Western eyes (Hall, 1966; Hamady, 1960; Marr, 1978). Arabs don't want to be left to themselves (Hall, 1966; Marr, 1978), and Middle Easterners find it strange that someone would prefer to be alone (Marr, 1978). Consequently, closed doors are ignored at work (Lee, 1980). An Arab proverb says: "'Paradise without people should not be entered because it is Hell'" (Hall, 1966). "Their [Arabs'] way to be alone is to stop talking," a practice that is allowed and not seen as antisocial, writes Hall (1966, p. 148).

The literature almost unanimously delineates the cultural features discussed above; however, as indicated earlier, there are those who take exception to these commonly held views. Berger (1962) states that the family's role is declining. Said (1977) believes that Western scholars overemphasize the role of religion in the Middle East: Not everything can be traced back to Islam. Bagnole (1977) interprets Inshallah less seriously than most, calling it "often a 'yes' with a safety valve" (p. 23). And Patai (1973), while pointing out the Arabs' fatalism, also notes that they do attempt to alter the course of their lives, though this may appear to be contradictory to their belief in Allah's control over the future.

Criticism of the methodology of the literature also

exists. Safran (1974) states that it appears that Patai (1973) "started with some widely shared impressions about typical Arab traits of mind and then proceeded to find underpinnings for them in Arab culture and history" (p. 16). Put simply, Patai is here accused of taking stereotypes of Arabs and then attempting to find the causes of these stereotypical traits. Rodinson (1979/1981) writes that we have no empirically verified definition of Arab personality, only research which has dealt with small, disparate samples. Moughrabi (1978) also questions the validity of some of the research:

> Some of the works (Hamady) rely on anecdotal reports and these in turn are based mainly on village populations. Growing up in Silwa [an Egyptian village] is not the same as growing up in Cairo or Beirut. It is also erroneous to generalize about the entire Arab population in the Middle East on the basis of such a study. (p. 105)

Moughrabi also believes that the rate of change in the Arab world has not been taken into consideration by researchers.

Criticism of the methodology used by some researchers and scholars does seem justified. Looking back at the sources for the distinctives of Arab culture, its distinguishing features, I find several examples of just the kind of problems that Rodinson (1979/1981) and Moughrabi (1978) are speaking of. Bagnole (1977) supports his assertions concerning the Arabs' view of time mainly with anecdotal evidence, supplemented with quotes from Hall (1959). Yousef (1974) describes the Middle Eastern guest-host relationship with only an old Arab tale as an

outside source. Patai's discussion of the Arabs' fatalism at least includes reference to a study done by Tannous (cited by Patai, 1973), but it apparently is restricted to village life alone and was done 46 years ago. Other sources cited by Patai in this section include the Koran, an older book (1947) by Granqvist which discusses views of Arab villagers during the 1930's, and a work by Lane which gives insight into the thinking of residents of Cairo over a hundred years ago. Though Patai's research appears to be the most thorough of anything I came across, including a long reference list of works in at least four languages, he seems to have been limited by the resources he could draw from. Most of the empirical studies he mentions seem to have been done in villages and are sometimes dated.

Thus far we have discussed the sources and evidence from which the literature has drawn its conclusions. If the researchers' methodology is suspect, however, it follows that their conclusions will also be questioned. Consequently, some of the literature is criticized for its overgeneralizations:

> The social-psychological literature on the Arab basic personality is inadequate in its attempts to explain the nature of Arab collective behavior. The use of terms such as the 'Arab mind' or the 'Arab basic personality', unscientific and demeaning to the subject of research, reveals a dangerous and misleading tendency toward categorical and sweeping generalizations which are not conducive to an enlightened search for better understanding of collective behavior. (Moughrabi, 1978, p. 112)

Moughrabi's statement on the surface seems contradictory since on the one hand he attacks those who would make

"categorical and sweeping generalizations," while he at the same time affirms his belief in the existence of "Arab collective behavior." Can we describe collective behavior without generalizing?

In looking at Arab culture, we are faced with a fundamental question: Is it possible to speak of Arab characteristics or Arab traits in light of the diversity among the Arabs? I believe it is. We can discuss Arab behavior since "any sociological environment impresses the individuals who grow up within it with its own stamp: its values, its behavior patterns, its accepted and approved varieties of actions and reactions, as well as its culturally channeled needs and goals" (Patai, 1973, p. 18). There is enough commonality in the sociological environments of the Arab world to allow us to speak of an Arab "stamp."

Though we can describe group behavior, however, what is dangerous (and here I side with those who are concerned with overgeneralization) is that we become too narrow and rigid, attempting to predict too much or rely too heavily on our generalizations in individual cases. For instance, we found that Ahmed, our guide in the anecdote narrated in the introduction to this thesis, conformed to the generalizations concerning the Arabs' view of time. Interestingly, his roots were in village life. However, we also had a Tunisian friend who had lived in Los Angeles for five years and was much closer to the American than the Arab model of time in relation to punctuality.

I like what Parker (1976) has to say when he cautions against lumping all Arabs together:

> Avoid looking at the Arab World as a homogeneous mass from Morocco to Arabia. There are Mediterranean and mountain peoples as well as Bedouin; there are Christians, Zoroastrians and other religious groups as well as Muslims; there are the city-dwellers, the farmers and the nomads. Its ethnic mosaic is rich, from Berbers and Taurage in the West, to the Nubians of Upper Egypt, to Armenians and Kurds in the East. While seeking the commonality among them, the variations must not be forgotten. (p. 12)

We also can learn from the words of Polk (1976): "The further removed we are from another people, the more they seem merged into a single category whereas the more we know them, the more differentiated they become" (p. 116).

Arab-Western Communication

With this general introduction to Arab culture in mind, I want to look at areas which researchers and scholars consider to be potentially problematic when Arabs and Westerners attempt to communicate successfully. Unfortunately, this literature must be viewed with an awareness of the dangers of overgeneralization, a shortcoming of the literature dealing with Arab culture in general, and ethnocentrism.

According to many researchers and scholars, one area of distinct cultural contrast is that of time (Campbell, 1983; Gudykunst & Kim, 1984; Hall, 1959, 1976, 1983; Setian, 1972). I have already discussed the Arabs' polychronic concept of time (Hall, 1983). In contrast, Americans (Hall, 1976) and Northern Europeans (Hall, 1983) see time as

monochronic, with "events scheduled as separate items--one thing at a time" (Hall, 1983, p. 43). M-time places great importance on appointments, agendas, and punctuality. Clearly, these two concepts of time are incompatible: "The two systems [monochronic versus polychronic time] are logically and empirically quite distinct. Like oil and water, they don't mix" (Hall, 1983, p. 43). For instance, Arabs and Westerners view tardiness very differently (Hamady, 1960); another "problem is meeting deadlines and schedules" (Marr, 1978). Americans are frustrated by the way P-timers deal with appointments (Hall, 1983).

The literature goes on to point out that Arab students and Western teachers will have their difficulties communicating because of radically different concepts of time. Setian (1972) suggests that those teaching English in Arab countries constantly remind themselves of how diametrically opposed the two cultures' concepts of time are, in order to clearly instruct students and also to preclude disagreements with them over tardiness, attendance, and deadlines. Bagnole (1977) writes that Arab students frequently turn in work up to two weeks late, or they will wait until the end of the semester to give the teacher an accumulation of assignments. I. Hoffman, an acquaintance, writes (personal communication, April 14, 1987) that his Tunisian students resist strict attendance policies and do not come to class on time or submit homework on time. He adds, however, that he doesn't believe that all Tunisian

schools are as lax.

Another area where Arab and Western cultures differ, according to researchers and scholars, is the approach each group takes toward criticism. Probably as a result of the importance of face (Marr, 1978), Arabs dislike criticism. There is a "sensitivity to criticism" (Berger, 1962, p. 155), and "public criticism is . . . intolerable, since it causes a loss of dignity and denies the respect that is everyone's due" (Lee, 1980, p. 34). Other forms of criticism are also frowned upon: Parker (1976) writes that Arabs refuse to write bad letters of recommendation and, in fact, believe it wrong to do so. Campbell (1983) adds that Arabs consider "bluntness very disrespectful" (p. 16). Westerners, on the other hand, approach criticism very differently. Americans, for instance, "are more direct, explicit, and exact . . . . Good and competent communicators are expected to say what they mean and to mean what they say" (Gudykunst & Kim, 1984, p. 143).

Because of these two very different approaches to criticism, according to some authors, Western teachers may have difficulties if they continue to operate as if they were on their home soil. Marr (1978) writes: "An American dealing with the Arab student should always be aware that, because of this concept of face, Arabs are much more sensitive in their feelings than are most Americans. This particularly applies to criticism, and especially public criticism" (p. 63).

Perhaps also related to face is the Arabs' concern with appearance (Yousef, 1974). Hichem Djait (cited in Rodinson, 1979/1981), while attempting to describe the modern Tunisian, identifies one important part of the Arab character as "an anxious search for the approval of others, strongly emphasizing status values based on appearances" (p. 173). According to Yousef (1974), clothes matter to Arabs. For instance, blue-collar workers wear one set of clothes on the job, but when traveling between work and home frequently dress like their white-collar counterparts. Admittedly, appearance is also a priority for many Westerners, but there may be a difference in the ways in which teachers' dress and other aspects of their image are perceived in the two cultures. Bagnole (1977) writes: "Eccentricities may be fashionable in American universities, but the appreciation of 'characters' and colorful idiosyncracies will very likely be lost on students and administrators in the Arab world where teachers are held in very great esteem" (p. 39). Bagnole consequently advises caution when choosing clothes, haircuts, and even transportation. For instance, a teacher should not ride a bicycle to class in most Arab countries: "In a country like Libya where many students own cars, including a large number of Mercedes Benz, to roll up in even a jalopy or motorcycle would be to risk ridicule" (p. 39).

The literature pinpoints another barrier to successful intercultural communication as the very different way that

the two cultures reason. Condon and Yousef write that "what is 'reasonable' is likely to be that which sounds like what *we* would have said" (1975, p. 210). Logic is said to be culture-bound (Kaplan, 1966); and to Westerners, Arabs sound illogical. Arabic itself may be blamed for what sounds to Western ears like irrationality (Almaney and Alwan, 1982) and vagueness (Almaney and Alwan, 1982; Shouby, 1951). Raban, a non-scholarly observer, considers Arabic "a language of inherent, logical ambiguity . . . . To live in Arabic is to live in a labyrinth of false turns and double meanings" (1979, p. 22). But while we do not understand the Arabs' thinking, they may feel the same way about us: "What is reasonable, logical, and self-evident to an American may be unreasonable, illogical, and not self-evident to an Asian or a Middle Easterner. We may often sound just as illogical to them as they do to us" (Campbell, 1983, p. 9). In a study involving both Saudi Arabian and American managers working for a multi-national corporation in Saudi Arabia, "both groups [Saudis and Americans] targeted differences in the organization of ideas as a major intercultural problem" (Adelman and Lustig, 1981, p. 359).

Brislin (1981), citing Glenn, Witmeyer, and Stevenson (1977), offers a possible explanation for the Arabs' and Westerners' failures to understand each other: Americans negotiate with a factual-inductive approach, moving from the concrete to possible solutions; Arabs, on the other hand, deal with people from an intuitive-affective approach in

which "facts seem to take second place to feelings" (Brislin, 1981, p. 153). Those "who use the intuitive-affective style in a country where the factual-inductive style is more common are labeled 'unpleasant hotheads' and 'poor thinkers'" (p. 153).

How are these communication problems related to the classroom? Kaplan (1966) analyzes the rhetorical patterns of Arab students' written English, attempting to demonstrate how their parallel grammatical constructions prevent them from building proper expository paragraphs in English. And if Arabs have this problem with their writing, perhaps a similar manifestation exists in the classroom relations between students and teachers.

Other scholars, however, have questioned Kaplan's contrastive rhetoric theory. Hinds (1982) sees flaws in the theory: He believes researchers should read students' work in their native languages, rather than in English as Kaplan did. Hinds also believes that Kaplan's description of English rhetorical patterns is "ethnocentric" (p. 5). Mohan and Lo (1985) too criticize Kaplan, failing to "find evidence for Kaplan's claim of negative transfer of organizational patterns from Chinese to English" (1985, p. 521).

Since Arabs and Westerners are said to reason differently, it should not surprise us that they also supposedly "_learn to learn differently_" (Hall, 1959, p. 71). Researchers and scholars write that Arab schools emphasize

memorization and rote learning (Bagnole, 1977; Cowan, 1978; Hall, 1959; Marr, 1978; Parker, 1976). Marr (1978) writes: "Traditionally, education in the Middle East stressed memorization . . . . Our concept of knowledge as something to be discovered . . . is new to the Arab and not widely accepted" (p. 65). While Americans may often appear ignorant to Arabs because we have to look things up (Hall, 1976), Arab students struggle with our approaches to learning (Marr, 1978). Levine (1982) writes that Saudis studying in America have difficulty with the way we learn. They want the teacher to hand out packaged truth and feel uncomfortable when forced to reason out problems on their own. Many struggle with questions that require more than repeating the textbook or lecture. Miller (1972) says that in Morocco, French and American teachers frequently explore new methods of learning, but students can't adjust to non-traditional methodologies. An American teaching in a Tunisian university writes:

> In this system, the teacher is only a source of knowledge adequate to pass an examination. Feed-back has nothing to do with learning from mistakes, only the results of the test. It's difficult for a Western teacher to operate. His expectations are definitely not fulfilled. (I. Hoffman, personal communication, April 14, 1987)

Another area of cultural difference which the literature describes is one that might be labeled formality/informality. Berger (1962) and Parker (1976) both allude to the formality of Arabs, and Yousef (1982) writes that in the Middle East "at a very early age children are

taught that in public one looks serious and acts somberly" (p. 94). In public, Middle Easterners' "friendly behavior" is still formal, according to Yousef, while Americans are much more apt to be informal. For instance, Americans feel free to joke with each other about social errors and faux pas, behavior which is unthinkable to Middle Easterners who are concerned with respect and dignity. In fact, they have little use for American-style friendliness in the Middle East. Americans, on the other hand, do not see any relationship between respect and informality (Lee, 1980).

It seems that this question of formality/informality could have serious ramifications for the classroom. Yousef (1976) writes that in the Middle East the student-teacher relationship is "usually of a formal nature where role, status, and rank are clear and definite" (p. 231). The insight of my acquaintance (I. Hoffman, personal communication, April 14, 1987) also sheds light on the question:

> If the professor tries to be 'friendly' and 'open', it is not always understood as we would in the West. Friendliness, openness, [and] humility are sometimes understood as weakness and vulnerability. Being friendly, open and humble can have a good effect, but this is an area which needs exploration.

Parker (1976), writing about Arab students studying in the United States, believes that Arabs initially work better under a paternal relationship where their professors keep a tight rein on them. Only after a period of adjustment will they prosper in American fraternal relationships. Marr (1978) concurs.

Two cultures may also view privacy quite differently, and Arabs and Westerners are said to have radically different definitions of privacy. While Westerners value the privacy of their offices with doors closed, Saudi Arabians see only open doors (Lee, 1980). The introduction to this thesis mentioned the problems which Bagnole (1977) encountered in Libya. The British and American teachers there were extremely frustrated by their Arab students' failure to honor the sanctity (to Westerners) of closed doors.

Another possible barrier to successful Arab-Western communication, according to the literature, lies with the Arabs' fatalistic outlook, discussed above, which runs counter to the approach of most Westerners. Lee (1980) writes that Americans believe that we alone determine the course of our lives. In his experience teaching in Libya, Bagnole (1977) came to see Inshallah ("God willing") as "a cultural reflex , [which] should probably be interpreted as a more innocuous 'if possible' or 'if all goes well' or 'I hope so'" (p. 23). Parker (1976), however, writing about Arab students in the U.S., accepts Inshallah at face value.

At the close of this section dealing specifically with the literature on Arab-Western communication, it must be noted that these are the works of Western observers and researchers or Arabs most likely educated in the West. Hence, this body of work is open to charges of cultural bias and enthnocentricity. For instance, how can an American

teacher consider Arabs to be chronically tardy when American students themselves are often late? Or can Westerners accuse Arabs of refusing to write bad letters of recommendation when Westerners themselves do not? If Arabs supposedly dislike criticism, does this mean that Americans or the British enjoy blunt criticism? We must remember that these authors are Westerners, or perhaps a few Middle Easterners with Western mind sets, writing about Arabs.

Obviously, the aim of all good scholarship is that it be free from any bias whatsoever. It seems, however, that a truly impartial observer in these matters is impossible to find. First, is there anyone who is "acultural"--someone who has managed to grow up in this world without the influence of any culture? And second, only Westerners and Western-educated Arabs appear to be interested in Arab-Western intercultural communication. It is a Western question.

Looking at the question of bias from another perspective, perhaps we may be guilty of throwing the baby out with the bath water, as the saying goes, if we dismiss all of these authors' assertions because of some apparent inconsistencies. For instance, I've taught American freshmen and know the group to include chronic late comers. Perhaps tardiness in Tunisian classrooms occurs with the same frequency as it does here. However, I do know from experience that Tunisians and Americans view time differently. The task then becomes one of determining if

this does carry over into the classroom or if we Westerners merely find what we expect from our experience with other members of the culture outside the classroom.

Perhaps one benefit of the survey which follows is to give just a bit of a voice to Arab students. Most of what is written comes from the other viewpoint, from the perspective of Western teachers. How do Arab students view their relations with Western instructors? Maybe we can balance some of the Western bias with a little Arab bias.

The review of literature gives some clues where we might look for possible problems and failures in communication between Arab students and Western teachers. Because of the seriousness of the criticism of this body of literature for its overgeneralizations, lack of empirical basis, and unavoidable ethnocentricity, however, "clues" is the most that can be said for the books and articles surveyed. In order to build an objective case for the existence of specific barriers to successful communication between Arab students and Western instructors, this thesis will next survey Tunisian students studying with American and British teachers in Tunisia.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

Subjects

The study surveyed 46 Tunisian students drawn from two Tunisian institutions: the University of Kairoaun (32 students) and the Institut Bourguiba des Langues Vivantes (14 students), the language arm of the University of Tunis. All students involved in the study had studied under American and/or British instructors.

The Questionnaire

The survey is modeled after an Oller (1977) survey which, among other questions, asked Chinese students to rate Americans, on a Likert scale, using adjectives such as *modest*, *kind*, *teachable*, and *businesslike*. My three-part questionnaire asked the students to consider how well a list of 20 words and phrases describes three types of teachers: Tunisian teachers in general, American and/or British instructors whom the students had studied under, and the students' idea of the ideal teacher. In response to the 20 items, students circled numbers from 5 (*very well*) to 1 (*not at all*). Table 1 (p. 27) lists the items, and the complete survey appears in the Appendix.

TABLE 1

QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS

1. Tactful
2. Hurried, rushed
3. Sensitive to Tunisian issues and values: social, cultural, and political
4. Available out of class
5. Rigid, inflexible
6. Acceptably dressed
7. Respectful of the teachings of Islam
8. Approachable
9. Informal, relaxed
10. Logical
11. Critical
12. Stubborn
13. Kind
14. Helpful
15. Calm
16. Reasonable
17. Direct, blunt
18. Patient
19. Task-oriented
20. People-oriented

The questionnaire items were selected primarily from three sources: features of Arab culture, potentially problematic areas in Arab-Western communication (both sources derived from the literature), and Oller's (1977) survey. For instance, Item 7, "respectful of the teachings of Islam," appears in the survey because of religion's importance in Arab culture. Item 9, "informal, relaxed," relates to the intercultural question of formality/informality. And Item 14, "helpful," is drawn from Oller's questionnaire. At times two of the three sources overlap. Item 6, "acceptably dressed," is the only item drawn from all three sources: Arab cultural features ("face"), intercultural communication (the importance of appearance), and Oller's survey ("fashionable").

Why were certain key elements of Arab culture, such as the Arabs' love of Arabic and the importance of family, not considered by the questionnaire? These cultural features must affect Arab-Western communication, but their influence would seem to be indirect, making it difficult to write questionnaire items tied directly to these areas. In the case of Arabic, perhaps the language itself contributes to the differences in what seems logical to the Arab and what seems logical to the Westerner. Hence, the survey items reading "logical" and "reasonable" could be said to be indirectly tied to the Arabs' love of Arabic. As far as the Arabs' deep attachment to family, I do not know how to frame an item which would probe the influence this cultural

distinctive might have on Arab-Western relationships.

The survey was translated into Arabic to avoid any problems which might result from the Tunisian students' lack of proficiency in English. Four translators worked at the task, the final translator being Professor Raymond Habiby of the Political Science Department at Oklahoma State University. Born a Palestinian in the Middle East, Dr. Habiby has taught in English at Oklahoma State University and in Arabic in Saudi Arabia, so he was more than adequately qualified to handle the translation.

Obtaining an accurate translation may not be easy, but it is possible for most investigators. What is beyond the control of both researcher and translator are the different cultural connotations and meanings attached to words by Arabs and Westerners. For instance, "tactful" may not carry the same meaning for a Tunisian and an American. Unfortunately, we have nothing better than words in translation with which to attempt to find meanings and answer questions such as those asked in this study.

Procedure

Questionnaires were mailed to Elizabeth Thornton-Hatira (Bourbuiba Institute) and Irving Hoffman (University of Kairoaun) who oversaw the administration of the surveys during the winter and spring of 1988. Unfortunately, students experienced some difficulties filling out the surveys. Irving Hoffman (personal communication, March 23,

1988) noted two problems. First, some students were confused by the two columns, English on one side and Arabic on the other, and believed they needed to mark both sides of the page. Second, and more importantly, I had inadvertently reversed the Likert scale in Part II: 1 (not at all) to 5 (very well) was used in Parts I and III while 5 (not at all) to 1 (very well) appeared in Part II (For the complete survey, see Appendix). This change, wrote Hoffman, "confused the students even after constant explanation on my part." This confusion was visibly evident in some questionnaires where students crossed out and reversed whole pages of answers in section II.

In order to assess the damage, I compared the answers in Part II of the students in Kairoaun with the Bourguiba students, wondering whether Hoffman, who had administered most of the surveys at the University of Kairoaun and had apparently struggled to correct my mistake, had succeeded to the extent that the Kairoaun students had answered the questions in Part II very differently from the Bourguiba students. If this were true, the answers to all the questions would be very different: 2 becoming 4 and 5 becoming 1, for instance. However, after using a regressive analysis of variance, I found that only three (kind, helpful, and calm) of the twenty variables were found to vary significantly ($p < .05$) between the two groups of students.

This variation between the two groups may be due to the

differences between the two schools. The Bourguiba Institute appears to be isolated from the usual temper of Tunisian universities. Student strikes are not unusual in Tunisian higher education. In fact, Hoffman had a difficult time administering the questionnaires at the University of Kairoaun because of strikes and student unrest. The Bourguiba Institute, on the other hand, seems to be relatively free from such disturbances, its physical distance from the rest of the University of Tunis perhaps being a metaphor of its unique character.

The two groups of students also may differ because of their disciplines. I believe that the Bourguiba Institute students are devoted to language study, but the University of Kairoaun group includes at least some students who are forced to study English as a part of their scientific disciplines.

Of course, the possibility exists that despite Hoffman's efforts, students from both schools may have been confused by Part II; but it seems more likely that both groups in general adapted to the quirk in numbering of the second section of the survey.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data were first analyzed to determine mean scores for each variable, such as the tact of Tunisian teachers, Western teachers, and the ideal teacher (See Table 2, p. 33). Since the Likert scale was reversed in the section of the questionnaire which asked the students to rate how well a word or phrase described Western instructors, I recoded (reversed) the answers for those same ratings so that the answers for all three parts of the survey would reflect a scale of 5 (*very well*) to 1 (*not at all*).

Results

I will begin by discussing the students' profile of the ideal teacher since we need to know which traits the students value when we look at the responses to Tunisian and Western teachers. Table 3 (p. 34) rank orders the means for each of the twenty variables in Part III of the survey. The subjects were most concerned that their teachers be logical, available out of class, approachable, and not stubborn. At the other end of the spectrum, students desired a calm, acceptably dressed, flexible teacher, but were not nearly as insistent that the instructor possess these qualities. In

TABLE 2

RATINGS OF IDEAL, TUNISIAN, AND WESTERN TEACHERS

	Trait Means:	Ideal	Tunis.	West.
1.	Tactful	4.478	3.065	3.783
2.	Hurried, rushed	1.978	2.733	2.977
3.	Sensitive to Tunisian issues and values	4.348	3.400	3.622
4.	Available out of class	4.630	3.348	3.978
5.	Rigid, inflexible	2.043	2.913	2.609
6.	Acceptably dressed	3.978	3.609	3.326
7.	Respectful of the teachings of Islam	4.217	3.378	3.500
8.	Approachable	4.609	3.478	4.065
9.	Informal, relaxed	4.348	2.804	3.733
10.	Logical	4.652	2.956	3.630
11.	Critical	3.326	3.227	3.391
12.	Stubborn	1.413	2.978	2.370
13.	Kind	4.217	3.109	4.130
14.	Helpful	4.457	3.078	4.022
15.	Calm	3.957	3.022	3.667
16.	Reasonable	4.500	3.457	3.609
17.	Direct, blunt	4.500	2.891	3.609
18.	Patient	4.196	2.978	3.522
19.	Task-oriented	4.196	3.413	3.935
20.	People-oriented	4.326	2.935	3.391

TABLE 3

THE IDEAL TEACHER

	Traits in Rank Order	Mean
1.	Logical	4.652
2.	Available out of class	4.630
3.	Approachable	4.609
4.	Reasonable	4.500
4.	Direct, blunt	4.500
6.	Tactful	4.478
7.	Helpful	4.457
8.	Informal, relaxed	4.348
8.	Sensitive to Tunisian issues and values	4.348
10.	People-oriented	4.326
11.	Respectful of the teachings of Islam	4.217
11.	Kind	4.217
13.	Patient	4.196
13.	Task-oriented	4.196
15.	Acceptably dressed	3.978
16.	Calm	3.957
17.	Critical	3.326
18.	Rigid, inflexible	2.043
19.	Hurried, rushed	1.978
20.	Stubborn	1.413

addition, students appeared to slightly favor a critical teacher (3.326), but a standard deviation of 1.23 on this item indicates that the subjects did not agree whether they wanted their ideal teacher to be critical. Finally, students apparently did not consider it a priority that the ideal teacher be sensitive to Tunisian issues/values and respectful of the teachings of Islam.

Overall, the Tunisian students' ideal teacher would be logical, approachable and available out of class, reasonable, direct and blunt, tactful, helpful, informal and relaxed, sensitive to Tunisian issues and values, both people- and task-oriented, respectful of the teachings of Islam, kind, patient, acceptably dressed, calm, flexible, unhurried, and not stubborn (I have omitted "critical" from the profile because of the reason stated above.). These standards do not for the most part appear to be that different from the responses I would expect from American students.

The ratings of Tunisian teachers, rank-ordered in Table 4 (p. 36), indicate students' general approximation of the relative strengths and weaknesses of Tunisian instructors. Using the standards from Table 3 (p. 34), we find that the subjects scored the teachers highest in dress, approachability, reasonability, and task-orientation; and lowest in their stubbornness and failure to be direct and logical. Means are all bunched around 3, from a high of 3.609 to a low of 2.733.

TABLE 4

TUNISIAN TEACHERS

	Traits in Rank Order	Mean
1.	Acceptably dressed	3.609
2.	Approachable	3.478
3.	Reasonable	3.457
4.	Task-oriented	3.413
5.	Sensitive to Tunisian issues and values	3.400
6.	Respectful of the teachings of Islam	3.378
7.	Available out of class	3.348
8.	Critical	3.227
9.	Kind	3.109
10.	Helpful	3.078
11.	Tactful	3.065
12.	Calm	3.022
13.	Patient	2.978
13.	Stubborn	2.978
15.	Logical	2.956
16.	People-oriented	2.935
17.	Rigid, inflexible	2.913
18.	Direct, blunt	2.891
19.	Informal, relaxed	2.804
20.	Hurried, rushed	2.733

One group of means remains, the scores for Western teachers. Table 5 (p. 38) indicates that the students rated Westerners highest for their kindness, approachability, helpfulness, availability out of class, and task-orientation--an odd combination since the first four traits are very people-oriented. Lowest ratings were given for "respectful of the teachings of Islam," "people-oriented," and the item on which Tunisian teachers scored highest, "acceptably dressed." It appears that the subjects had difficulty with two items, "people- and task-oriented"--a problem which I'll wait a bit to discuss.

Means for items dealing with the ideal teacher give us an idea of the traits which students value and those which they would not like to see in their teachers. The means for Tunisian and Western instructors, however, are less valuable for the purposes of this study, offering only some insight into the subjects' views of what each group of teachers does best--a relative approximation. For instance, the students may believe that kindness is the Westerners' strongpoint only in the sense that they are "least weak" in this area. For more precise and substantial evaluation, we need to turn to three *t*-tests: one pairing individual students' responses to the ideal and the Tunisian teacher, another comparing the ratings of the ideal and the Western instructor, and a final *t*-test matching the Tunisian and Western teacher.

Comparing the subjects' ratings of the ideal teacher and Tunisian instructors, we find that the students

TABLE 5

WESTERN TEACHERS

	Traits in Rank Order	Mean
1.	Kind	4.130
2.	Approachable	4.065
3.	Helpful	4.022
4.	Available out of class	3.978
5.	Task-oriented	3.935
6.	Tactful	3.783
7.	Informal, relaxed	3.733
8.	Calm	3.667
9.	Logical	3.630
10.	Sensitive to Tunisian issues and values	3.622
11.	Direct, blunt	3.609
11.	Reasonable	3.609
13.	Patient	3.522
14.	Respectful of the teachings of Islam	3.500
15.	People-oriented	3.391
15.	Critical	3.391
17.	Acceptably dressed	3.326
18.	Hurried, rushed	2.977
19.	Rigid, inflexible	2.609
20.	Stubborn	2.370

TABLE 6

RATINGS OF TUNISIAN AND IDEAL TEACHERS

	Trait	Mean Scores				
		Tunisian	Ideal	Difference	*T*-Score	Prob.
6.	Acceptably dressed	3.609	3.978	-0.370	1.710	.094
11.	Critical	3.227	3.326	-0.114	.475	.637

apparently have been disappointed with the performance of their Tunisian teachers. In *t*-tests pairing students' answers in sections I (Tunisian teachers) and III (Ideal teacher), only items 6 ("acceptably dressed") and 11 ("critical") registered probability levels (p > .05) which indicate that the difference between the two variables is *not* statistically significant, meaning that there is no difference between the students' rating of Tunisian teachers and the ideal instructor in regard to those variables (see Table 6, p. 39). Remember that "acceptably dressed" was near the bottom of the list of students' priorities and "critical" was the one trait on which the subjects apparently failed to reach consensus. In general, the Tunisian teachers fared poorly in the eyes of the students surveyed.

Did the subjects also judge Western instructors

TABLE 7

RATINGS OF WESTERN AND IDEAL TEACHERS

	Trait	Mean Scores		Difference	*T*-Score	Prob.
		Western	Ideal			
11.	Critical	3.391	3.326	0.065	.308	.759
13.	Kind	4.130	4.217	-0.087	.418	.678
14.	Helpful	4.022	4.457	-0.435	1.842	.072
15.	Calm	3.667	3.957	-0.267	1.245	.220
19.	Task-oriented	3.935	4.196	-0.261	1.071	.290

harshly? Though they failed to match the students' profile of the ideal teacher, Westerners did satisfy the students' standards in a number of areas: *T*-tests pairing students' ratings of Western teachers and the ideal instructor (Table 7, p. 40) registered sufficiently high probability levels ($p > .05$) on five items to indicate that the difference between the two variables is again <u>not</u> statistically significant, meaning that there was no difference between the students' rating of Western teachers and the ideal instructor in regard to those items: Items 11 ("critical"), 13 ("kind"), 14 ("helpful"), 15 ("calm"), and 19 ("task-oriented").

Comparing the subjects' ratings of Tunisian and Western

teachers in relation to the ideal teacher, we find that both Tunisian and Western teachers fit the students' ideal of a critical teacher (Item 11). Whereas Tunisian instructors met the ideal criteria in only one additional area, dress, Western instructors matched the ideal instructor's profile at several other points: They were considered kind (Item 13), helpful (Item 14), calm (Item 15) and task-oriented (Item 19).

Looking at comparisons between the students' appraisals of the ideal versus Tunisian teachers as well as the ideal versus Western teachers leads us to the final comparison: Tunisian and Western teachers (Table 8, pp. 42-43). *T*-tests pairing individual students' responses to Tunisian and Western instructors yielded statistically significant (p < .05) differences on thirteen of the twenty variables: Items 1 ("tactful"), 4 ("available"), 8 (approachable"), 9 ("informal, relaxed"), 10 ("logical"), 12 ("stubborn"), 13 ("kind"), 14 ("helpful"), 15 ("calm"), 17 ("direct"), 18 ("patient"), 19 ("task-oriented"), and 20 ("people-oriented") (see Table 8, p. 42-43). In each case, the subjects rated Western rather than Tunisian instructors more favorably, in light of the ideal teacher criteria.

Subjects judged Western teachers to be far more kind, helpful, and informal and relaxed than Tunisian teachers. These traits--Items 9, 13, and 14--have the greatest difference between means (1.022, .935, and .911). In addition, Western teachers were considered less stubborn

TABLE 8

RATINGS OF TUNISIAN AND WESTERN TEACHERS

Trait	Mean Scores Tunisian	Western	Difference	*T*-Score	Prob.
1. Tactful	3.065	3.783	-0.717	3.978	.000
4. Available	3.348	3.978	-0.622	2.213	.032
8. Approachable	3.478	4.065	-0.587	2.368	.022
9. Informal, relaxed	2.804	3.733	-0.911	4.790	.000
10. Logical	2.956	3.630	-0.667	3.276	.002
12. Stubborn	2.978	2.370	0.644	2.593	.013
13. Kind	3.109	4.130	-1.022	6.053	.000
14. Helpful	3.078	4.022	-0.935	5.127	.000
15. Calm	3.022	3.667	-0.667	3.359	.002
17. Direct	2.891	3.609	-0.717	3.243	.002

TABLE 8 (Continued)

Trait	Mean Scores Tunisian	Western	Difference	T-Score	Prob.
18. Patient					
	2.978	3.522	-0.543	2.282	.027
19. Task-oriented					
	3.413	3.935	-0.522	2.136	.038
20. People-oriented					
	2.935	3.391	-0.457	2.695	.010

and more tactful, available, approachable, logical, calm, direct, patient, task-oriented, and people-oriented. The last two traits, Items 19 and 20, apparently confused the respondents, since they considered Western instructors to be both more task-oriented _and_ more people-oriented than their Tunisian counterparts--a conclusion that seems to be a logical impossibility. However, this conclusion may only be a reflection of Western logic: In framing the item, I was thinking of how certain cultures seem to place more importance on personal relationships rather than jobs or tasks at hand. For example, if a Tunisian is studying for a test and a cousin comes to visit, will the Tunisian prioritize the study or the conversation with the relative? The problem with these two items is that Arabs may not see

these items as an either--or situation as I intended, but as a logically compatible possibility.

On the *t*-tests pairing Tunisian and Western teachers, only seven of the twenty variables registered probability levels which were too high ($p > .05$), that is, there was no significant difference between groups: Items 2 ("hurried, rushed"), 3 ("sensitive to Tunisians issues and values: social, cultural, and political"), 5 ("rigid, inflexible"), 6 ("acceptably dressed"), 7 ("respectful of the teachings of Islam"), 11 ("critical"), and 16 ("reasonable"). Interestingly, there was no statistically significant difference on Items 3 and 7, items dealing with Tunisian issues and values and religion. We might sooner expect definitive differences.

The subjects overwhelmingly preferred Western rather than Tunisian teachers. In light of the students' clear-cut preference for Western rather than Tunisian teachers, it is important to remember, however, that the Western instructors still fell short of the subjects' criteria for the ideal teacher in the majority of the traits presented.

Discussion

Western academics value certain kinds of evidence over others. Results gained from empirical research, for instance, are generally considered more worthwhile and trustworthy than conclusions supported by anecdotal evidence alone. Similarly, though perhaps to a lesser extent,

scholars give great weight to the body of literature dealing with a particular subject. In the case of this study, relevant research and scholarship were surveyed prior to the administration of the survey, and definite expectations arose out of the dominant themes of the literature. However, the results of the questionnaire ran counter to the bulk of the scholarship. The clues--as the articles and books dealing with Arab culture and Arab-Western communication were earlier termed--deceived me.

Because of the main thrust of this literature and my experience in Tunisia, I expected that the results of the questionnaire would strongly support the view that East and West do not meet: The survey's subjects would most certainly have registered their rejection of the strange ways of the foreigners, preferring rather the manners and customs of the Arab teachers, their cultural brothers and sisters, under whom they had studied all of their lives. Instead of supporting this conclusion, however, the results overwhelmingly point to radically different findings.

The literature suggests that Arabs and Westerners approach the concept of time very differently, and my experience in Tunisia coincided with that view. Consequently, Arabs and Westerners should fail to communicate because of this difference. However, the students surveyed saw no significant difference between Tunisian and Western instructors on Item 2, "hurried, rushed." The literature also points out that Arabs dislike

criticism, yet students considered Westerners more tactful than Tunisian teachers and saw no difference between the two groups on Item 11, "critical." Concern with appearance is another area in which Arabs and Westerners supposedly differ, and again the survey results showed students viewing Tunisian and Western instructors similarly in terms of acceptable dress. The possibility exists, however, that the students hold different standards for the dress of the two groups: "Acceptable" may be different for Tunisians and Westerners.

Another supposed barrier to successful intercultural communication is the Arabs and Westerners' very different approach to reason and logic. However, the Tunisian students rated their Western teachers higher than Tunisian ones on the item dealing with logic. Arabs are also portrayed as more formal than Westerners, and the Tunisian students concurred: They rated Westerners as more informal and relaxed than Tunisians. However, the students listed "informal, relaxed" as one of the criteria of the ideal teacher. And finally, the Arab and Western worlds do not see Islam from the same perspective, Arabs cherishing the religion as one of the cornerstones of their culture. And yet here again the students saw no difference in the two groups of teachers' respect for Islam.

What guesses--and this will be conjecture, "possibilities"--might I offer to account for the findings? Why did the data turn out so differently from what I had

expected? One possible explanation of the subjects' choice of American and British teachers over Tunisian instructors lies in the concept of "marginality." Robert E. Park (1928), a sociologist, introduced the term:

> There appeared a new type of personality, namely, a cultural hybrid, a man living and sharing intimately in the cultural life and traditions of two distinct peoples; never quite willing to break, even if he were permitted to do so, with his past and his traditions, and not quite accepted, because of racial prejudice, in the new society in which he now sought to find a place. He was a man on the margin of two cultures and two societies, which never completely interpenetrated and fused. The emancipated Jew was, and is, historically and typically the marginal man . . . . (p. 892)

Park considered a person of mixed races to be the typical marginal man, but "the Christian convert in Asia or in Africa exhibits many if not most of the characteristics of the marginal man" (p. 893). Nine years later, Park (1937) blamed the creation of the marginal man on Europeans who, in his view, had moved into all corners of the earth.

Stonequist (1937) took Park's work and expanded on it, differentiating between "racial" and "cultural hybrids": "persons having a mixed culture" (p. 54). Like Park, Stonequist traced the source of marginality to the West:

> The Europeanization of the globe has involved changes in thought as well as changes in modes of living. The first contacts of culture often result in a simple exchange of material objects . . . . Further contacts lead to deeper changes, particularly in the native culture: in language and government, morals and religion. In the course of time the weaker group falls under the influence or control of the stronger group. (p. 55)

I will let the historians and sociologists determine just when it was that the process of Westernization began in Tunisia. Tunisia, or what was to become Tunisia, traded with Europe as early as the thirteenth century. In the seventeenth century, France, in response to the raids of Tunisian corsairs, imposed commercial treaties on Tunisia, including the construction of a French trading post. In 1881, 30,000 French soldiers moved into Tunisia, and in 1883 the La Marsa Convention designated Tunisia as a French protectorate. Colonization had begun and would officially last until France gave Tunisia its independence in 1956 (Perkins, 1986). In essence, however, the colonization continued.

In North Africa's French Legacy, David Gordon (1962) studies the cultural ties between France and three North African countries: Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia. Gordon writes that the French sought everywhere to create the évolué:

> The évolué [to the French] is the person who has literally evolved from a lower state of existence to a higher one after adopting the French language, French dress, and French ways. An implication of the term is that the person to whom it is applied has become not only French enculturated, but also civilized. The notion dies hard with many Frenchmen, and also with many of the évolués they have trained, that there are alternative and equally valuable kinds of civilizations other than that of Europe and of France in particular. (p. 4)

Gordon goes on to label the évolué as a "marginal man" (p. 55).

Nor is this marginality a thing of the past. More

recently, Munson (1986) writes:

> The exposure of Muslims from very traditional families to secular western-style [sic] education may well engender some degree of anomie and alienation. Such people, whether born in a city or a village, are often caught between two cultures, belonging fully to neither. (p. 216)

A supporter of the current Islamic movement in Tunisia says: "Everyone wants to do things the way they're done in France, or in America" (Waltz, 1986, p. 667).

During two summers in Tunisia, I observed this fascination with the West, especially in terms of popular culture: It would not be surprising to see a young Tunisian girl wearing European jeans with a Whitney Houston tape under her arm. Aida, a Tunisian teenager, was in love with America and all things American. She wanted badly to come to the United States to study English. Another young Tunisian, Shokrai, asked that some lyrics of his favorite group, the Beatles, be written down so that he could, with his limited English proficiency, better understand the songs.

Though many observers both within and outside the cultures of marginal peoples wish it were not so, marginal peoples often perceive Western ideas as better and develop feelings of inferiority, perhaps understandable when the culture they are exposed to is technologically superior to theirs. At times, wrote Stonequist (1937), non-Europeans fail to oppose the process of Westernization, and "the native takes over some of the white man's customs without any pressure

being exerted" which may signify that the native has come to consider Western culture "as superior or more desirable than his own" (p. 57). An inferiority complex arises. Assimilation may occur, writes Stonequist, or the natives may reject Western culture and begin a "nativistic or nationalistic movement" (p. 59).[1]

Like Stonequist, Gordon blames colonialism for a "complex of inadequacy" (1962, p. 55). And Patai too sees this psychological change brought about by Western influence:

> While they [Arabs] rarely admit to 'loving' Western culture, it exerts upon them an irresistible attraction, because it comprises so much they want to have as soon as they learn that it exists. It is the very presence of the West, with all the enticements its civilization contains, with all the new values it introduces, and with all the genuine improvements in everyday life it makes possible that produces in the Arab world a cultural inferiority complex" (1973, p. 300).

Shokrai, the Beatles fan, also exhibited this inferiority complex. At an outdoor cafe one morning he told us that the good breakfast pastry we were praising was Italian (and not Tunisian). To Shokrai, it couldn't be Tunisian since nothing Tunisian was good. An American friend tried to convince Shokrai that Tunisian jeans were well made, but he disagreed: He wanted American jeans!

Along with feelings of inferiority, the marginal man may also exhibit ambivalence. According to Gordon (1962), Morocco and Tunisia have tried to teach the young both Arab culture and language, but side by side with this drive there has been a hesitancy to surrender the

traditions of French culture and language, traditions which were the doorway to this century for the majority of North African leaders: "The _évolué_ of North Africa remains ambivalent in his attitudes toward the problem of cultural decolonization" (p. 5).

How does the concept of marginality, with its accompanying feelings of inferiority and ambivalence, account for the students preferring Western rather than Tunisian teachers? Born into a country steeped in French language and culture--a country where French rather than Arabic is the language of business in the capital--and studying as elites (Only about 13% of the high school seniors passed the college entrance examination in 1986.) in a Western-style system of education, Tunisian students are indeed cultural hybrids, "living and sharing intimately in the cultural life and traditions of two distinct peoples" (Park, 1928, p. 892). Whether they come from very Arabic villages or Westernized upper-class neighborhoods, the students feel the pull of two cultures, two traditions, without necessarily being aware of this ambivalence--at least consciously.

From the students' chemistry textbooks to their television sets with French and Italian programming, however, the Western influences are stronger, more pervasive for these students, and "the weaker group falls under the influence or control of the stronger group" (Stonequist, 1937, p. 55). Though the students are

marginal--torn between two worlds--the scales are tipped to the Western side, and these Tunisians too become évolués seeking to rise "from [what they consider] a lower state of existence to a higher one" (Gordon, 1962, p. 4). They want "to do things the way they're done in France or America" (Waltz, 1986, p. 667). Hence the preference for Western rather than Tunisian teachers is understandable.

Though the scales may be tipped to the Western side, remember, however, that the Western teachers did not meet the students' profile of the ideal teacher. Students may prefer Western to Tunisian teachers, but the Western teacher is <u>not</u> ideal. This result perhaps indicates that the students are not subscribing to any "Western is ideal" dogma. In fact, the students' picture of the perfect teacher may combine elements from each stereotype, "Western" as well as "Tunisian." Or the "ideal" may be just that, an ideal which can never be realized. It is impossible to tell how close to that unrealizable goal a student might rate any teacher, no matter how admired the instructor might be.

In discussing marginality, we also must look beyond the students and question whether the American and British teachers are not themselves somewhat marginal. Perhaps those who are willing to leave their own cultures for extended periods of time are less "Western" than teachers who work in England or the United States for all

their lives. Those who do go abroad would seem to indicate by their willingness to do so a certain openness to other cultures.

Earlier, I labeled this theory of marginality a "possibility." There may be alternative explanations for the survey's results or other "possibilities" which might even operate along with the marginality. Perhaps the subjects also preferred Western over Tunisian teachers because of their teaching styles. Narjess Boubakri (Personal communication, April 24, 1987), a Tunisian graduate student at Oklahoma State University, says that Tunisian university classes are very large and teachers for the most part very authoritarian, "little gods." They don't care whether students come to class or not, and students would not dare approach a professor. Some instructors, however, dress informally and have a personal relationship with the students. This new kind of teacher is in the minority, but students enjoy this type of instructor very much.

Boubakri's analysis represents only one person's viewpoint of a complex question, certainly not supporting evidence, but at least part of what she says fits with the findings of the questionnaire: The students surveyed considered Westerners much more kind, helpful, informal, and less stubborn. The students also rated Western instructors as more approachable and available, one of the concerns mentioned by Boubakri, though the

statistical differences between Tunisians and Westerners on these items were not as great as in the above categories. In addition, Western teachers were rated "ideal" for their helpfulness and kindness, certainly not characteristics of the classic authoritarian teacher, Arab or Western.

I have been suggesting "possibilities," searching for answers that seem to make at least a little sense. Now I'd like to move from "possibility" to firmer ground, the realm of "probability" or even "certainty." This thesis closed the section reviewing the relevant literature with a brief survey of those critics of the broader picture of Arab culture who point out the dangers of overgeneralization. Probably the questionnaire's results can also be explained by the fact that the North African Arabs, though sharing many common denominators with other Arabs, are unique. Excessive generalization will always mislead observers. In this case, Tunisians have been influenced by Western nations and thought to a degree not paralleled in all Arab states. Though Saudi Arabia has seen and continues to experience tremendous Western influence, this Arab nation probably feels the weight of Europeanization to a much lesser degree than does Tunisia or other North African countries. Traditional Arab culture has not been eroded to the same extent as it has been in North Africa.

This problem of overgeneralization is a cultural

question, as are marginality and teaching style[2]--the two other explanations for the questionnaire's results. And it makes sense to speak of cultural factors since this thesis is about intercultural communication. But it seems that other factors--outside the realm of culture--may also enter into the question of Arab-Western relations, and to ignore them for the sake of "sticking to the point" is to distort reality and perhaps misinterpret the survey's results. Just as a simplistic, overgeneralized view of Arabs led me to expect far different results from the survey than those which I found, so also can we limit our understanding of Arab-Western relations by restricting our focus to intercultural questions.

When I first wrote Irving Hoffman asking him to help administer the survey in Tunisia, he answered that he would assist me and began a long discussion from his perspective as a Western teacher in Tunisia:

> When we speak of intercultural communication, we should also realize that some of this experience is situational. 'Intercultural' tends to compartmentalize while man can also be viewed as a unity with common needs, expressions, etc. Therefore, some of what I'm going to say concerns the situational which emphasizes the unity of man. (Personal communication, April 14, 1987)

The situation Hoffman described, though bleak from a prospective teacher's standpoint, is one that should be considered since intercultural communication does not take place in an antiseptic laboratory but in a constantly changing, complex world. Neat little

hypotheses do not always lead to "yes" or "no" answers, and this study is proof of that fact if nothing else.

Part of the "situation" in Tunisia involves political motivation, one factor that affects Tunisian students:

> Anti-western factions are always present. Since the bombing of Libya we have seen that in spite of tourism, commercial ties to the West, there is a current of suspicion and reservation on the part of many students toward western professors. (Hoffman, personal communication, April 14, 1987)

Hoffman went on to say that students do not become violent, but rather resort to "baiting tactics" at times. Later, Hoffman (personal communication, April 27, 1988) reported a student strike at his university as a result of low grades and "many other issues, personal and pedagogical" (Students asked that one Westerner be fired, a man with 17 years experience in Iran, Lebanon, and Tunisia.)

What does the experience of this professor tell us about intercultural communication? At the very least we need to be aware that relationships between Arabs and Westerners perhaps do not hinge solely on their cultural backgrounds. For instance, while Hoffman's analysis is filled with complaints about the problems he encounters, I met in Tunis a British ESL instructor who had immensely enjoyed his students at the Bourguiba Institute, calling them "very keen." Perhaps situational factors, the inherent differences between students who never strike (Bourguiba students) and those who do (Kairoaun), account

at least in part for the two teachers' divergent experiences, more so perhaps than even intercultural factors. Also, as I mentioned earlier, there seems to be another difference between the students of the two schools: The Bourguiba students concentrate on language study, but at least some of the Kairoaun students study English because their degree requirements stipulate such study as a part of their scientific disciplines. Hence, their attitudes to both classes and teachers might differ substantially from the Bourguiba group.

Irving Hoffman wrote of the compartmentalization which the term _intercultural_ brings about. Lloyd (1987), a professor of counselor education in the United States, in his way also stresses the commonality of the human experience. In fact, he believes that knowledge of others' cultures can at times actually hinder intercultural relationships.

As part of a Fulbright lecturing assignment in Malaysia, Lloyd attended orientation sessions intended to familiarize newcomers with the three culture groups of Malaysia: Malays, Chinese, and Indians. He found the background knowledge useful in regard to mores, religious rituals, and social niceties. Often, however, this information became a barrier:

> On many occasions when I made assumptions based on the multicultural information I had received, the progress of learning more about the colleague, student, or person being counseled was inhibited. The relationship tended to become stilted to the same extent that I presumed understanding the person

> based on "truths" about specific groups (e.g., Malays, Chinese). The axiomatic message that kept echoing back to me from counseling, teaching, statistics, and other disciplines of my education was the frequent finding that "differences within groups can be greater than differences between groups." (pp. 165-166)

Lloyd goes on to describe how clients volunteered cultural information that was important to them, often accepting insights which ran counter to the cultural profiles, "stereotypes" to Lloyd. How, he asks, can one portrait be drawn for a people that includes tribal as well as urban men and women? Finally, Lloyd concludes:

> An approach to multicultural counseling that emphasizes the differences between groups and attempts to teach simplistic views of cultural traits, characteristics, and beliefs does not seem to be the type of instruction that should be part of teacher education or counselor education. (p. 166-167)

Is knowledge of cultural values not really important then to successful intercultural communication? No--Lloyd's point of view echoes rather the warnings of those who caution against sweeping generalizations, "simplistic views" in Lloyd's terms. The literature dealing with Arabs provides ample evidence of the pitfalls of such generalizations.

How can group cultural profiles be tempered with allowance for individual variation? There appears to be no simple answer, but the results of this study do suggest that American or British teachers leaving for their first assignments in Arab countries could combine a number of possible approaches. First, they might study

Arab culture in general. One of them might be the next Bagnole, facing new students barging into the teacher's office without knocking. Second, it would seem wise to attempt to look beyond the cultural generalizations, to explore the specifics of the region where they will be living and teaching. These instructors might be teaching Tunisians with a real desire to be Westernized. And third, since it may not come naturally, these American and British instructors should make a conscious effort to treat each student as an individual. The classes may have a few Ahmed's with no sense of time whatever and a few Kamel's with a stricter idea of time than some Westerners. Finally, it might be of some value for these instructors to periodically consider Polk's (1976) words which concluded the earlier discussion of Arab culture: "The further removed we are from another people, the more they seem merged into a single category whereas the more we know them, the more differentiated they become" (p. 116).

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The findings of this study may or may not prove to be of value. The reader will weigh the worth of the research reported here, and the brief summary which follows will hopefully aid such an evaluation. There remains, however, a third possibility when judging this or any other study: To some readers the research may be less important for its results than for the further questions it raises or hopefully the path it clears for further investigation. In the event of either alternative, suggestions for additional research follow the summary.

Summary

This investigation of the role intercultural communication barriers play in the instruction of Arab students by Western teachers begins with a literature review divided into two segments, one discussing Arab culture in general and the other focusing on Arab-Western communication.

According to the literature, the importance of the family and the religion of Islam are two key elements in

Arab culture. Related to the Arabs' religious beliefs is another important aspect of their culture: fatalism. Along with family and religion, Arabs value hospitality and passionately love Arabic. Three other cultural distinctives are the Arabs' approach to time, their idea of face, and their view of privacy.

Some scholars object to the majority's analysis of some of these cultural features, and others find fault with the methodology of the literature. Critics also consider the main body of literature to be overgeneralized. A number of these concerns appear to be valid.

In terms of Arab-Western communication, the literature discusses various areas where the two groups may or do encounter difficulties when they interact. According to scholars, Arabs and Westerners view the concept of time as well as criticism differently. Arabs are more concerned with appearance, and the two groups do not reason or approach pedagogy similarly. Arabs are also pictured as being more formal and holding a different view of privacy. A final potential barrier to successful Arab-Western communication is the Arabs' fatalistic outlook.

This literature is open to criticism for overgeneralization, like the scholarship dealing with Arab culture. In addition, the authors dealing with Arab-Western communication seem guilty of ethnocentric bias.

Following the literature review, the method of the study itself, detailed results, and a discussion of their

implications appear. The study consisted of a questionnaire administered in Tunisia to 46 Tunisian students studying in two universities under British and American professors.

In analyzing the results of the survey, I first summarize the subjects' profiles of Tunisian teachers, Western teachers, and the ideal teacher, and then discuss the results of the t-tests pairing the three types of teachers, discovering that overall the students preferred Western instructors. However, both groups fell short of the criteria for the ideal teacher.

A number of possible explanations exist for the Tunisian students' surprising preference for Western teachers. Marginality, along with feelings of inferiority, may partially account for the students' attitudes. Western culture has long held a firm grip on some North Africans. Preference for a less authoritarian teaching style as well as the excessive generalizations of the literature which tend to give observers false expectations may also help explain the results of the questionnaire .

In addition to cultural issues, however, other factors, such as political motivation, seem to enter into Arab-Western relationships. Since all humans share some common ground, regardless of our backgrounds, we should attempt to avoid judging everyone strictly on the basis of his or her culture. Culture is important in communication between peoples, but it is not everything. People also must be seen as individuals.

Recommendations for Further Study

This thesis has focused primarily on intercultural communication. However, while the importance of the subject should be readily apparent to anyone attempting to relate to people of other cultures, the problems inherent in conducting such a study may not be as obvious. Out of my experience researching this topic, following are a few suggestions concerning the research process for those interested in studying intercultural communication.

Such a researcher faces two important questions: _Where_ and _how_ should the study be carried out? In terms of the locale, those conducting studies in countries other than their own may face a number of problems if they choose or are forced to supervise their studies from their native countries. First, they have to deal with the questionnaires' mailing. Some countries may be sensitive to incoming mail, and investigators may have their surveys opened and confiscated by government authorities if they suspect sinister motives. If sent surface mail, the questionnaires may take months to reach their destination, so time may become a factor. A better alternative is to send them by air mail, which leads us to another problem: expense. If there are a large number of long surveys, the expense may be considerable. Add to the mailing costs international phone calls to questionnaire administrators, and the expense of such studies can mount rapidly. Finally and most importantly, the distance involved prohibits the

normal face-to-face exchange between survey designers and administrators which can resolve difficulties such as I encountered with the inverted Likert scale on Part II of my survey.

In order to avoid such problems, researchers should reside in the areas where their surveys are being administered. They may still face difficulties. For instance, I found a better translator in Stillwater than I was able to locate in Tunis. And I arrived in Tunis during the summer, when most university students and regular faculty were recessed. Also, the expense of a trip abroad obviously far outweighs air mail and telephone costs. However, the advantages of physically accompanying the surveys are greater than the disadvantages.

If investigators choose to survey foreign students in the researchers' countries, they can avoid a number of problems, including logistical ones. My institution, Oklahoma State University, for example, enrolls about 1800 foreign students. If I had chosen to conduct my study at OSU, the mechanics of the research project would have been much more easily handled here. In addition, administering a survey in Britain or America would allow investigators to study responses from students who had been exposed to a broad cross section of Westerners, rather than the small and perhaps unrepresentative samples the students might encounter in their native countries.

If research is done outside the native population's

country, how do we then account for the natural acculturation that takes place when foreign students arrive in the host country? If questionnaires are administered as soon as students initially arrive in the host country, perhaps the results of the survey will be more valid. However, how do we know that homesick students will not see their native teachers in an unrealistic light? Additional questions need to be addressed. For instance, how do we determine that the students' willingness to come to the United States to study does not of itself signal a stronger affinity for Western culture than that of those students remaining in their native countries to study?

There are other alternatives for the testing site which could be explored. Perhaps a compromise between "abroad" and "at home" test administrations might be struck: Give the survey to similar samples in both places at the same time, in an Arab country and here in the United States.

Leaving the question of where research should be conducted, let us consider how the question of intercultural communication might best be studied. First, it would be interesting to administer my questionnaire again with the Likert scale consistent throughout. With the questionnaire already framed and translated, this administration would be easy to carry out.

Intercultural communication might also be studied with a tool used in communication research for exploratory probes: the focus group interview (Cragan & Shields, 1981).

The researcher would first devise a series of questions and scenarios in order to explore the hypothesis. These questions and scenarios would seek to identify specific "themes" (Cragan & Shields, 1981, p. 318) which run throughout the group, these themes coming from the subjects' attitudes and experiences in regard to intercultural communication--in this case their relationships with American and British English teachers. It would be necessary to interview two separate groups to obtain "validation across groupings" (Cragan & Shields, 1981, p. 319). Once a common theme or themes have been established within the two groups interviewed, Q-sorts can be used to empirically validate the interviewer's impressions and conclusions.

One advantage of the focus group interview is its flexibility: Interviewers who come into sessions with open minds are free to explore areas they might not have considered. In my study, for instance, I was certain that the students would prefer Tunisian rather than Western teachers. Had I sensed the truth in an interview, I might have been able to frame further questioning more productively. A drawback of this technique seems to be that it would require some experience using it. Initially, it would be best to work with someone who is comfortable with the approach.

Another method of exploring intercultural communication questions would be the approach used by Adelman and Lustig

(1981) in their study of communication problems of Saudi Arabian and American businessmen. A questionnaire was drawn using several sources: answers by Americans and Saudis to this lead-in phrase--"In communicating with Americans, I think Saudi Arabians have problems in the following areas . . . ."; a review of literature; personal experiences (of the authors, I assume) training Saudi Arabian managers to interact with Americans; and the input of several ESL teachers experienced with Saudi Arabian managers.

Adelman and Lustig then wrote a 25-item questionnaire which was administered to both Saudi Arabians and Americans. Among the items were the following:

9. Express ideas clearly and concisely
13. Know appropriate social rules and forms of address for individuals of different status
14. Perform social rituals: "small-talk," greetings, and compliments
19. Display forethought and objectivity in decision-making (p. 356)

This approach utilizes one of the advantages of the focus group interview: Asking the respondents to complete the open-ended phrase allows them the freedom to steer the research in appropriate directions. Asking the wrong questions will result in no correct answers.

Finally, researchers carefully avoid the kinds of problems which generalizations can lead to. This study has shown how localized the North African experience is.

It might be interesting to compare two disparate samples: study Tunisian-Western relations and Syrian-Western relations, for instance. However, even within one country or area, differences may exist, such as those between the students at the Bourguiba Institute and those of the University of Kairoaun.

Whatever the locale or method, research into intercultural communication problems can be extremely complex. In this relatively new field, investigations may often land in uncharted territory. Though it may at first seem strange that English teachers should participate in these expeditions, perhaps such research is in line with the spirit of James Alatis' (1974) now famous LAPSE theory which focuses on the "interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary nature of the TESOL profession" (p. 9). Remember that the A of LAPSE stands for cultural anthropology.

If TESOLers get off by themselves and wander a bit in new territory, as I have done in this thesis, the blame rests more with those scholars and researchers from other disciplines who have failed to provide the answers ESL teachers need. TESL researchers and scholars do not study intercultural communication merely out of academic interest. Rather, they ask questions in this area because the answers affect the way English is taught both at home and abroad. TESL methodology focuses on what is taught. We also need to understand who is taught.

ENDNOTES

1. The present Islamic movement in Tunisia (Waltz, 1986) encompasses fierce anti-Western sentiment. There were a number of bombings of tourist hotels in Tunisia last summer, though it's hard to determine if they were bombed because of what Islamic fundamentalists see as the decadent lifestyles which European visitors lead or because tourism is a key point in the government's economic policy, a government which the Islamic movement wants to overthrow.

2. Considering teaching style as a cultural factor may be debatable. However, the review of literature here dealing with Arab-Western communication includes (pp. 22-23) a discussion of the different ways Arabs and Westerners learn, one aspect being the role of the teacher as fountain of knowledge. This description parallels Boubakri's "authoritarian" label.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire استبيان

Part I الجزء الاول

This survey is part of a study aimed at improving the performance of Americans teaching in North Africa and the Middle East. Your answers are confidential; no teacher will see them. Please do not write your name on this form.

Below is a list of words and phrases that can be used to describe teachers. Think of each word or phrase as it might describe Tunisian teachers in general. Circle the appropriate number to indicate how well the word or phrase describes Tunisian teachers.

Very well 5 حسن جدا	4	3	2	Not at all 1 لا شيء

هذا الاستبيان جزءمن دراسة هدفها تحسين اداءالاساتذة الامريكين الذين يعملون في شمال افريقيا والشرق الاوسط . ستحاط اجابتك بالسرية التامة ولن يتطلع عليها اى من الاساتذة . الرجاءعدم كتابة اسمك على هذا الاستبيان .

فيما يلي عدد من الكلمات والعبارات التي يمكن ان تستعمل في وصف الاساتذة . فكر اولا في الكيفية التي يمكن ان تصف الكلمات او العبارات الاساتذة التونسيين عامة ثم ارسم دائرة حول الرقم المميز للكلمة او العبارة التي تصف تماما الاساتذة التونسيين.

1. Tactful — لبق

   5 4 3 2 1 — ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

2. Hurried, rushed — متسرع ومتعجل

   5 4 3 2 1 — ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

3. Sensitive to Tunisian issues and values: social, cultural, and political — متفهم ويحترم قيم المجتمع التونسي الاجتماعية والثقافية والسياسية

   5 4 3 2 1 — ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

4. Available out of class — متواجد ويمكن الاتصال به خارج القسم

   5 4 3 2 1 — ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

5. Rigid, inflexible — صارم وغير مرن

   5 4 3 2 1 — ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

6. Acceptably dressed — صاحب هندام مقبول

   5 4 3 2 1 — ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

7. Respectful of the teachings of Islam — يحترم تعاليم الاسلام

   5 4 3 2 1 — ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

	English		Arabic
8.	Approachable		ســهل الـتحدث الـيه
	5 4 3 2 1		١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
9.	Informal, relaxed		غير مقيد بـالـشكليات ، بشوش
	5 4 3 2 1		١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
10.	Logical		منـــطقي
	5 4 3 2 1		١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
11.	Critical		انتـــقادى
	5 4 3 2 1		١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
12.	Stubborn		عنـــيد
	5 4 3 2 1		١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
13.	Kind		لطـيف الـمعـاملة
	5 4 3 2 1		١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
14.	Helpful		خـــدوم
	5 4 3 2 1		١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
15.	Calm		هـــادىء
	5 4 3 2 1		١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
16.	Reasonable		عـــاقل
	5 4 3 2 1		١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
17.	Direct, blunt		صـــريح
	5 4 3 2 1		١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
18.	Patient		صـــبور
	5 4 3 2 1		١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
19.	Task-oriented		يعـــطي عمله الاولـوية
	5 4 3 2 1		١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
20.	People-oriented		يـأتي الانســان لديه في الـمرتـبة الاولى
	5 4 3 2 1		١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

Thank you for your help with this project. شكرا على مساعدتكم في هذا المشروع.

Questionnaire

Part II

This survey is part of a study aimed at improving the performance of Americans teaching in North Africa and the Middle East. Your answers are confidential; no teacher will see them. Please do not write your name on this form.

Please circle the appropriate number below:

Number of years studying under American teacher(s):

0 1 2 3 or more

Number of years studying under British teacher(s):

0 1 2 3 or more

Subject(s) studied under American or British teacher(s):

English Other .

Number of American teachers studied under:

0 1 2 3 or more

Number of British teachers studied under:

0 1 2 3 or more

Below is a list of words and phrases that can be used to describe teachers. Think of each word or phrase as it might describe American or British teachers. Circle the appropriate number to indicate how well the word or phrase describes American or British teachers.

Very Well				Not at All
1	2	3	4	5

ا ستبيا ن

الجزء الثاني

هذا الاستبيان جزء من دراسة هدفها تحسين اداء الاساتذة الامريكين الذين يعملون في شمال افريقيا والشرق الاوسط . ستحاط اجابتك بالسرية التامة ولن يتطلع عليها اى من الاساتذة . الرجاءعدم كتابة اسمك على هذا الاستبيان .

ارسم دائره حول رقم الاجابة المناسبة

عدد السنين التي درستها مع مدرس امريكي ٠ ١ ٢ ٣ او اكثر

عدد السنين التي درستها مع مدرس بريطاني ٠ ١ ٢ ٣ او اكثر

المواد التي درستها مع مدرسين امريكيين او بريطانيين انكليزى مواد اخرى

عدد المدرسين الامريكيين الذين درست معهم ٠ ١ ٢ ٣ او اكثر

عدد المدرسين البريطانيين الذين درست معهم ٠ ١ ٢ ٣ او اكثر

فيما يلي عدد من الكلمات والعبارات التي يمكن ان تستعمل في وصف الاساتذه . فكر اولا في الكيقية التي يمكن ان تصف الكلمات او العبارات الاساتذة الامريكيين او البريطانيين ثم ارسم دائرة حول الرقم المميز للكلمة او العبارة التي تصف تماما المدرسين الامريكيين او البريطانيين .

١	٢	٣	٤	٥
حسن جدا				لا شيء

1. Tactful

   5 4 3 2 1

لبق

١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

2. Hurried, rushed

   5 4 3 2 1

متسرع ومتعجل

١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

3. Sensitive to Tunisian issues and values: social, cultural, and political

   5 4 3 2 1

متفهم ويحترم قيم المجتمع التونسي الاجتماعية والثقافية والسياسية

١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

	English					Arabic
4.	Available out of class					متواجد ويمكن الاتصال به خارج القسم
	5	4	3	2	1	١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
5.	Rigid, inflexible					صارم وغير مرن
	5	4	3	2	1	١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
6.	Acceptably dressed					صاحب هندام مقبول
	5	4	3	2	1	١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
7.	Respectful of the teachings of Islam					يحترم تعاليم الاسلام
	5	4	3	2	1	١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
8.	Approachable					سهل التحدث اليه
	5	4	3	2	1	١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
9.	Informal, relaxed					غير مقيد بالشكليات ، بشوش
	5	4	3	2	1	١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
10.	Logical					منطقي
	5	4	3	2	1	١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
11.	Critical					انتقادى
	5	4	3	2	1	١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
12.	Stubborn					عنيد
	5	4	3	2	1	١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
13.	Kind					لطيف المعاملة
	5	4	3	2	1	١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
14.	Helpful					خدوم
	5	4	3	2	1	١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
15.	Calm					هادىء
	5	4	3	2	1	١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
16.	Reasonable					عاقل
	5	4	3	2	1	١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
17.	Direct, blunt					صريح
	5	4	3	2	1	١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
18.	Patient					صبور
	5	4	3	2	1	١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
19.	Task-oriented					يعطي عمله الاولوية
	5	4	3	2	1	١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥
20.	People-oriented					يأتي الانسان لديه في المرتبة الاولى
	5	4	3	2	1	١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

Questionnaire استبيان

Part III الجزء الثالث

This survey is part of a study aimed at improving the performance of Americans teaching in North Africa and the Middle East. Your answers are confidential; no teacher will see them. Please do not write your name on this form.

Below is a list of words and phrases that can be used to describe teachers. Think of each word or phrase as it might describe the ideal teacher. Circle the appropriate number to indicate how well the word or phrase describes what you consider to be the perfect teacher.

Very Well				Not at All
5	4	3	2	1
حسن جدا				لا شيء

هذا الاستبيان جزءمن دراسة هدفها تحسين اداءالاساتذة الامريكيين الذين يعملون في شمال افريقيا والشرق الاوسط . ستحاط اجابتك بالسرية التامة ولن يتطلع عليها اى من الاساتذة . الرجاءعدم كتابة اسمك على هذا الاستبيان .

فيما يلي عدد من الكلمات والغبارات التي يمكن ان تستعمل في وصف الاستاذ المثالي . ارسم دائره حول الرقم المميز للكلمة او العبارة التي تصف بها الاستاذ المثالي .

1. Tactful — لبق

   5 4 3 2 1 — ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

2. Hurried, rushed — متسرع ومتعجل

   5 4 3 2 1 — ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

3. Sensitive to Tunisian issues and values: social, cultural, and political — متفهم ويحترم قيم المجتمع التونسي الاجتماعية والثقافية والسياسية

   5 4 3 2 1 — ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

4. Available out of class — متواجد ويمكن الاتصال به خارج القسم

   5 4 3 2 1 — ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

5. Rigid, inflexible — صارم وغير مرن

   5 4 3 2 1 — ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

6. Acceptably dressed — صاحب هندام مقبول

   5 4 3 2 1 — ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

7. Respectful of the teachings of Islam — يحترم تعاليم الاسلام

   5 4 3 2 1 — ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

8. Approachable — سهل التحدث اليه

   5 4 3 2 1 — ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

9. Informal, relaxed — غير مقيد بالشكليات ، بشوش

5 4 3 2 1 — ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

10. Logical — منطقي

5 4 3 2 1 — ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

11. Critical — انتقادى

5 4 3 2 1 — ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

12. Stubborn — عنيد

5 4 3 2 1 — ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

13. Kind — لطيف المعاملة

5 4 3 2 1 — ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

14. Helpful — خدوم

5 4 3 2 1 — ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

15. Calm — هادىء

5 4 3 2 1 — ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

16. Reasonable — عاقل

5 4 3 2 1 — ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

17. Direct, blunt — صريح

5 4 3 2 1 — ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

18. Patient — صبور

5 4 3 2 1 — ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

19. Task-oriented — يعطي عمله الاولوية

5 4 3 2 1 — ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

20. People-oriented — يأتي الانسان لديه في المرتبة الاولى

5 4 3 2 1 — ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥

Thank you for your help with this project. • شكرا على مساعدتكم في هذا المشروع

a

VITA

Duane A. Ratzlaff

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Arts

Thesis: INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN THE INSTRUCTION OF ARAB STUDENTS BY WESTERN TEACHERS

Major Field: English

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Hutchinson, Kansas, September 9, 1945, the son of Paul and Margaret Ratzlaff.

Education: Graduated from Alhambra High School, Alhambra, California, in June, 1963; attended Tabor College, Hillsboro, Kansas; awarded Bachelor of Arts degree in English from California State College in December, 1968; attended University of Toledo, Toledo, Ohio; completed requirements for the Master of Arts degree at Oklahoma State University in December, 1988.

Professional Experience: Teaching Assistant, Department of English, Oklahoma State University, August, 1985, to December, 1988; Research Assistant, Bilingual Education Multifunctional Resource Center, Stillwater, Oklahoma, June-December, 1988.

Professional Organizations: Oklahoma Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, 1985-1988.

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