An exploratory study of the cultural experiences of expatriate English teachers working in higher education and living in the Middle Eastern Gulf States

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To

The University of Exeter

For the degree of

Doctor of Education in TESOL

December 3, 2019

I certify that all material in this thesis which is not my own work has been identified and that no material has previously been submitted and approved for the award of a degree by this or any other University.

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ABSTRACT

This exploratory study investigates the experiences of expatriate English teachers working in higher education and living in the countries of the Gulf Cooperative Council (GCC), or the Gulf States. The growth of higher education there has necessitated the wide-scale recruitment of expatriate faculty for the region's higher education institutions (HEIs). While this study acknowledges some level of national difference, termed *large cultures*, it rather embraces the more dynamic concept of *small cultures* as the means for members to function within their context (Holliday, 1999). Thus, the expatriate teachers in the study encounter myriad different cultures from their beginning orientation; in the HEIs interacting with students, colleagues, and management; and in their personal lives outside of the HEIs.

To investigate those English teachers' cultural experiences, this research was undertaken as an exploratory study with data collected through a two-step process beginning with focus groups, enabling potential themes to emerge for a series of in-depth semi-structured interviews with 20 participants – expatriate English teachers (from a wide range of countries) working in HEIs across the GCC.

The findings suggest newly-arrived English teachers experience great inconsistencies within HEI's orientation programs, as most participants report broad support from new colleagues as an informal induction, but formal orientation to teaching and students was generally lacking, amplifying their feelings of uncertainty. Regarding institutional cultures, the participants' students mostly come from the local populations, towards whom teachers felt positive and empathetic on a personal level, yet were mixed regarding students' academic aptitudes and pessimistic towards the standardization of teaching and assessments. Horizontal collegiality was characterized just as positively as vertical collegiality was negatively: top-down leadership and short-term contracts meant teachers felt their positions in the HEIs were tenuous, resulting in feelings of "permanent temporariness". Those feelings extended outside the workplace due to a separation between the expatriate and local populations. This led to a general aversion to learn about the local cultures, particularly the language. The results have implications for expatriate English teachers and administrators, who can both work to improve aspects of the cultures within HEIs to facilitate teaching and learning.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The process of the doctorate has been long and arduous, as well as engaging and fulfilling. Throughout, I have not been alone, and I have a great deal of appreciation for many others who have been a part of this journey with me.

Special thanks go to Dr. Salah Troudi, my supervisor and the head of the TESOL Ed.D. program. Even before you became my advisor, you have been so giving of your time and expertise. Your guidance during the thesis phase has been invaluable. It has been a privilege being your student.

Sincere appreciation for all of the participants in the study. This paper would not exist without your contributions. I know how busy teachers can be, yet you all gave so generously of your time, sharing your experiences, your emotions, your joy, your pain. I have done my utmost to be faithful to your voices when portraying them.

I would also like to thank all the other teachers who have contributed to this work in myriad ways big and small. My colleagues at work have been very supportive and inquisitive as to my progress. My classmates at Exeter have made being a student again such a positive experience. Particularly in my cohort, I have made friends for life through this program.

Most importantly, this could not have been accomplished without the love and support of my family. To my parents, thank you for instilling a curiosity and interest in learning from an early age, and for continuing to be supportive of my adventures around the world. To my kids, Lily and Filip, you are my greatest adventure and the motivation for all of this work. Finally, to my wife, Ania, I know this has been a trying journey at times, but you know I could never have taken a single step without your encouragement and devotion.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to Mohammed Al-Shehhi, who has worked in the library at HCT in the men's campus in Ras al Khaimah throughout my time there. Mohammed was a constant source of encouragement as I worked on my studies, even as he battled cancer and the effects of the treatment. When I would walk past his desk, he always made light of his own suffering, saying, "What are you doing? Go write! I'll be dead before you finish the doctorate!" That is some serious motivation, and I'll always be grateful for his humorous, selfless support in the face of such adversity.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

CRCM	Culturally responsive classroom management
CQ	Cultural Intelligence
EFL	English as a foreign language
ELF	English as a lingua franca
EMI	English as a medium of instruction
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GNP	Gross national product
HEI	Higher education institution
HR	Human Resources
IELTS	International English Language Testing Service
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
NFO	New faculty orientation
NNST	Non-native speaker teaching
SLA	Second language Acquisition
TESOL	Teaching English to speakers of other languages
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
UAE	United Arab Emirates

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Issues for expatriate EFL teachers

Teachers may be considered “expatriates” when they work in a foreign country for a contract of limited length (Thiollet, 2011). Expatriate teachers at institutions of learning, whether primary, secondary, or tertiary, are typically expected to adjust to novel surroundings and become integrated into their new roles in a very short amount of time, becoming what Boice (1991) calls “quick starter faculty” (as quoted by Scott, Lemus, Knotts, & Oh, 2016, p.15). Upon beginning a new position, their task is two-fold. New teachers are socialized into the organizational culture of the school, “the distinctive blend of norms, values, and accepted modes of professional practice, both formal and informal,” while also undertaking a full teaching load with the concomitant responsibilities and duties (Kardos, Johnson, Peske, Kauffman, & Liu, 2001, p.252-254). To facilitate this transition, most organizations organize new faculty orientation (NFO) programs to smooth such a dramatic shift and assist new teachers in becoming fully independent faculty members “as quickly as possible” (Gregory, 1998, as cited in Robinson, 1998, p.3). While not the case for all, the sink-or-swim approach to new teacher induction can be more complicated for many teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). This is because of cross-cultural aspects and the necessity to learn “about the new culture, the various ethnic groups, patterns of acceptable and unacceptable social behaviour, forms of politeness, educational philosophies and practices and language” (Troudi, 2005, p.124) in order to interact with students appropriately.

For any NFO, the context of the teacher induction process has a powerful influence long into the teacher’s tenure (Huling-Austin & Murphy, 1987); however, for

EFL professionals, the effect is more palpable since the small cultures in the institution are not the only aspect of the teacher's new context, comprising the large culture of a new country. Such teachers encounter Pratt's (1991) concept of a *contact zone*: "the social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other" (p.34, as quoted by Atkinson, 1999, p.632), apt not only for the academic setting but for their entire experience, as they also adapt to life in a foreign country. Depending on the policies of the institution, that move carries the elevated stress of logistical arrangements such as obtaining accommodation, furniture, Internet service, transportation, etc., as well as the necessary paperwork for legalizing one's residence, particularly for teachers travelling with families and children. After an initial settling-in period, the expatriate English teacher must grapple with the realities of living in a new country, interacting with different people who in some parts of the world may speak different languages, as well as adapting to their customs, norms, food, etc.. Goodenough (1994) indicates that these activities serve to define myriad small cultures:

> I have found it theoretically helpful to think of both culture and language as rooted in human activities (rather than societies) and as pertaining to groups. (…) There is a different culture of the activity for each set of role performers, (…) a mélange of understandings and expectations regarding a variety of activities that serve as guides to their conduct and interpretation (pp.266-267, as quoted by Holliday, 1999, p.250).

Therefore, the diverse understandings and expectations of these members dictate the activities which construct the different cultures and complicated reality that expatriate teachers may experience in their current contexts.

1.2 Cultural issues in TESOL

The popular view of culture is what could today be termed as *large culture*, seen through the lens of "'ethnic', 'national', or 'international'" established and fixed boundaries (Holliday, 1999, p.237), and used to explain behavior and differences between groups that people have little control over. A key aspect of the concept of large cultures as determining behavior is commonly referred to as *essentialism*, meaning that large culture (national or ethnic) membership dictates certain essential, representative traits (Holliday, 1999). The perception of large, monolithic cultures means a prescribed reality that can remove members' individuality and may reduce individuals to stereotypes (Holliday, 2011). This essentialist interpretation of culture can be contrasted with Holliday's (1999) concept of *small cultures*, which are not imposed, static, or necessarily connected with nations or ethnicity: "small culture is thus a dynamic, ongoing group process which operates in changing circumstances to enable group members to make sense of and operate meaningfully within those circumstances" (p.248). Considered *non-essentialist*, they are not a judgment on size, but on the connections and similarities that bring certain groups together, interacting and overlapping in multiple ways. Therefore, rather than one blanket identity, small cultures are concerned with activities and the process of making meaning, and could include business culture, education, sport or other hobbies, or even the distinct culture of one school, a department, or a team, for example. In light of large and small cultures, language learning and its connections to culture take on different dimensions.

Learning a language, on a fundamental level, means learning aspects of the associated culture one should abide by when interacting with a native speaker of that

language: greetings, conversational norms, manner of referring to others, among various others (Wierzbicka, 2003). The inseparability of language and culture remains true for learning languages for populations which are predominantly isolated; however, such a philosophy is growing more difficult with the global intermingling and diversity of peoples, particularly concerning the English language (Canagarajah, 2005). This is seen in the theory of *languaculture*, cultural meanings created by the speaker in each interaction, a theory popularized by Agar, who describes confusing encounters between speakers of different backgrounds as “rich points.” Similar to the concept of contact zones, differences that arise in such interactions require a form of translation, demonstrating the relational nature of cultures (Agar, 2006, p.5). Cultures interact through individuals, termed *individual-cultural* or *individuals-in-context* by Atkinson (1999), making those translational interactions a key focus for teachers of English to speakers of other language (TESOL). Therefore, it is not tenable to include strict definitions of culture or inviolate “cultural norms” when teaching English, but instead students develop sensitivities and abilities to “navigate between various cultures” (Kramsch, 2014, p.249). This sort of teaching enables students and teachers to both learn in cross-cultural classroom environments, and to look at their own cultures as seen by others in a *zone of interculturality* (McKay, 2002). As part of that process, teachers and students constantly exchange languacultures, shaped by individuals’ own experiences. This “transcultural flow” emphasizes the fluidity of English today, and how it is ideally used, not to promote one culture over another, but as a vehicle to interchange and mold ideas and identities (Pennycook, 2007, p.6).

The fluidity of English means it is not owned by one nation, but is used by people from all cultures. Much of the interactions in English are between non-native

speakers of English, exposure to which could assist students in broader understanding and developing “a multilingual awareness in a global perspective” (Risager, 2005, p.187). In light of culture’s seemingly endless complexities, there is less teaching of “target cultures,” those of the United States, the United Kingdom, etc., and a more vigorous movement in TESOL for increased importance of knowledge of students’ cultures in curricula and in teacher education (e.g. Atkinson, 1999; Corbett, 2003; Troudi, 2005). Not only is there more appreciation of students’ cultures, but there is also more understanding of the potential effects that the proliferation of English can have on indigenous societies. Cultural identities may be impacted through the continuation of colonial relationships or the “narcotic” of English as it embodies opportunity and modernization (Baker, 2009; Kumaravadivelu, 2006b; Phillipson, 2016).

1.3 New teacher orientation programs

As a form of teacher education, institutions conduct various forms of orientation for newly hired teachers, with goals and standards depending on the needs and leadership of the school or higher education institution (HEI) (Hope, 1999). The most important concepts for such programs are *orientation*, *induction, and socialization*. Mish (1986) defines orientation as an “introduction to an unfamiliar situation, an activity of a new kind; a *program* set up for the benefit of new employees (p.832, as quoted by Robinson, 1998, p. 3). Robinson (1998) stipulates that orientation begins with a teacher’s preparations and continues until one starts teaching. The definition of induction is similar: “exposure to something unknown” (Mish, 1986, p.815, as quoted by Robinson (1998, p.3), yet induction

as a process in education subsumes orientation, extending past the teacher's arrival, through their first year (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). Socialization refers to the general process of transmitting "the skills, behavior patterns, values, and motivations needed for competent functioning" in a given context (Maccoby, 2015, p.3). All these terms are used similarly in this paper.

Schools and students benefit when new teachers develop the competencies required for in their roles; teachers benefit by adapting to the new workplace and its many cultures. That is a key feature of formal induction programs (Lortie, 1975, as cited by Kardos et al., 2001, p.255). The most effective induction programs welcome new teachers into "a community of practice where teachers, working together, clarify the meaning of standards and their implications for improved teaching and learning in day-to-day interactions with students and colleagues," because "some of the most important knowledge they (new teachers) need is *local*" (Feiman-Nemser, Schwille, Carver, & Yusko, 1999, pp.15, 17) (my emphasis). For expatriate English teachers, this local knowledge includes the broader large culture of the new country or region, imparted through activities including "orientation sessions, faculty collaborative periods, meetings with supervisors, developmental workshops, extra classroom assistance, reduced workloads, and, especially, mentoring" (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011, p.203).

1.4 Rationale for the study

The initial rationale for the research is personal: I have lived in several countries over recent years, working for various HEIs, each with different approaches to induction, as well as varying levels of collegiality and support within the institution's culture.

Those distinctions had enormous effect on my levels of stress and the length of time my socialization process took, influencing my overall job satisfaction and outlook. I believe this also has implications for many expatriate ESL teachers, whose lack of contextual and institutional knowledge affects their long-term interactions within HEIs. The issue is acute in the Gulf States, where the rapid growth of Western-style universities has led to mass employment of expatriate faculty (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015; Caldwell, 2018). As a result, there is still a potential of culture conflict in the classroom. This is particularly due to expatriate faculty's "teaching methods, pedagogical material and learning and teaching theories" which may be rooted in the "epistemic traditions of the dominant Western societies" (Diallo, 2012, p.215). Therefore, focusing on teachers' experiences of the various cultures should ultimately benefit all HEIs' stakeholders, most importantly students.

Examining teachers and the small cultures of the institutions in which they function is particularly salient in the modern academic environment, epitomized by central control and managerialism, which can "deprofessionalize" teachers, eroding their status and ability to perform (Day, 2002, pp.6-9). As budgets are being cut and teacher education programs are being eliminated throughout academia (Hill, 2007), it is sensible to pay greater attention to how effectively orientation programs smoothly transition new ESL teachers. A culture that welcomes newcomers and makes them feel comfortable and accepted facilitates the uncertainty reduction and sense-making processes that new employees undergo. That welcoming culture is created by "organizational insiders" (Bauer, 2010; Woodrow & Guest, 2019). By examining teachers' experiences of the small cultures facilitated by organizational insiders, we can better understand the issues facing them and assist administrators and head

teachers to more effectively inculcate the institution's culture and values in those teachers so they can function independently, identify with the institution, and avoid any feelings of isolation (Boyden, 2000).

Expatriate teachers' experiences within their institutions, however, only provide a partial picture of their experiences in a foreign country. The full sociocultural context of teachers, both profession and personal, can have broad effects on their teaching and professional fulfillment (Syed, 2003). This is particularly important in the context of teachers working in the Gulf States because of its distinct expatriate lifestyle (Schoepp & Forstenlechner, 2010). Many educators report that the draw to work in the region is primarily tax-free salaries and benefits, such as accommodation, education, and travel allowances, all of which concern life outside of the classroom (Chapman, Austin, Farah, Wilson, & Ridge, 2014; Austin, Chapman, Farah, Wilson, & Ridge, 2014). Teachers, especially those fitting the stereotypical Western mold, enjoy a relatively lavish standard of living and a high social status, respected "for their physical appearance, education, their 'developed' country origins, and their modern liberal outlook to life" (Mohammed, 2003, p.21). Despite this status, many Western expatriates in the region choose accommodation in foreign enclaves, gated and separate from the local population (Glasze, 2006; Salama, Wiedmann, & Ibrahim, 2018). With such a large percentage of the workforce in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) being expatriates, making up as much as 88% of the population of Qatar and the UAE, and as little as 37% in Saudi Arabia (Central Intelligence Agency, 2019), and a tendency of cultural segregation amongst foreigners, how non-local teachers experience the local culture and feel about their living situations is under-researched and deserving of study.

Finally, entering into any such study must also entail a level of reflection on my own positionality, most importantly regarding my relationship with the participants, their context, and the issues being researched. As a middle-class, white, American male in the international environment of English teaching, I am arriving with a position of “relative privilege” (Cousin, 2010, p.9), which I must acknowledge and make efforts to understand how that may impact others’ views of me, as well as my own approach to them and the various elements of this research project. Those aspects of my identity do not strictly define me or dictate my values. However, an awareness of that privilege and a “color-conscious epistemology” (Milner, 2007) can aid in limiting my own biases and better interpreting the lived realities of the participants, varied as they are. As a researcher, my experiences working and teaching as an EFL teacher abroad (particularly in the GCC) can provide some guidance in investigating the experiences of the participants. That identity and those experiences may grant me “insider” status in many respects with the participants, aiding in rapport, yet they (and other factors, such as my doctoral studies, which could also be interpreted as a position of privilege) may actually engender a perception as an “outsider”, particularly considering the diversity of backgrounds of the participants (Banks, 1998). Both elements may influence my interactions with the other teachers, while neither are essential for conducting research on them (Milner, 2007). More significant are issues of race and power relationships, with the participants, but perhaps more directly, with the HEIs, as well as the local population. This is particularly important when considering certain issues regarding academic leadership, short-term employment contracts or feelings of separation that may evoke strong emotional responses in myself, not merely the participants. Mindfulness of this aspect of my relationship with

the participants' experiences is potentially one of the most noteworthy in my approach to the research.

1.5 Significance of the study

My original contribution to knowledge pertains to both expatriate faculty members' experiences within their institutions, as well as those outside of their professional contexts. The research context of the GCC is particularly important due to recent decades' expansion of the higher education sector and English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) (Nicks-McCabe, 2005). This provides an environment rich in opportunities for studying the education and experiences of ESL teachers regarding the cultures of their institutions, students, and adopted communities. As the research examines the organizational socialization experiences of new faculty members, it furthers the postmodern conceptualization of induction or orientation, viewing the process as multi-directional and showing an appreciation for the actions of HEI administrators, veteran faculty, and the new faculty members themselves (Fetherston, 2017; Graybill, Carpenter, Offord Jr., Piorun, & Shaffer, 2011). The thesis will underscore the importance of a comprehensive, supportive induction program. Taking into account new teachers' individual differences, stress levels, and feelings of vulnerability, the results demonstrate the role that veteran faculty members can play in supporting new colleagues, ameliorating many of the gaps in the official program in the form of informal induction (Fenton-Smith & Torpey, 2013; Tuzlukova & Stead, 2016).

Those cross-cultural experiences and teachers' feelings about them are quite salient in their nascent stages. Thus, new-teacher orientation provides an excellent

avenue to investigate them. Morin and Ashton (2004) call it an important area in need of more research, while explaining the dearth of academic studies: “The finding that orientation programs are infrequently investigated might be due to confounding variables that influence the interpretation of findings” (p.247). Much of the research that has been conducted on new-teacher orientation is large-scale and positivist, while also limited to that process specifically (Perry & Hayes, 2011); while research outside of academia typically focuses on the actions of the employer (Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2006), expatriate employee work performance (Lee & Sukoco, 2010), or sociocultural adjustment (Farh, Bartol, Shapiro, & Shin, 2010). Hence, there is a clear need for interpretive research exploring the personal and professional experiences of expatriate English teachers, coupled with the impact of socialization processes, living and working amongst cultures distinct from their own.

The results of this research also hold significance for both expatriate ESL teachers and their HEIs in the GCC, building on the research of Austin et al. (2014). By employing Bourdieu’s theories of habitus, field, and capital, as Swartz (1997) refers to them: “cultural theory in action,” I examine expatriate teachers’ relationships with their students in terms of their worldviews and expectations for their interactions, together with their struggles for academic capital, and the teachers’ successes in adjusting their expectations, through utilizing a concept of culturally responsive classroom management (CRCM), advocated by Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clarke, and Curran (2004). Habitus provides the means for analyzing teachers’ positive interactions with colleagues, considered horizontal collegiality (Banerjee, Stearns, Moller, & Mickelson, 2017), and their propensity to gather with those from similar backgrounds, inside and outside of their HEIs. The research also furthers the view of

higher education as a field, an arena of competition, in light of the negative vertical collegiality most participants experienced: faculty members and administrators compete for academic resources (Mendoza, Kuntz, & Berger, 2012). Such interactions take the form of performativity and managerialism (Ball, 2003), resulting in feelings of insecurity and temporariness, extending to their private lives and the separation from the local population many feel there (Romanowski & Nasser, 2015).

1.6 Aims of the research

Like the rationale, the primary aim of the study is personal and guided by my own experiences of teaching abroad for over a decade in HEIs and living arrangements I might characterize as supportive, uncomfortable, or otherwise. Every position I have worked involved extremely taxing and frustrating circumstances, as well as positive, engaging episodes with students, colleagues, or those outside of my work environment. Based on these experiences, I want to better understand the cross-cultural dynamics between other expatriate teachers and the lives they lead in my current context, the Gulf States of the Middle East. This aim is naturally influenced by my own beliefs and values, as "such a framework of ideas and beliefs is not, as it were, in the world waiting to be absorbed. It is what we bring to our observations of that world. It shapes the observations we make" (Pring, 2014, p.77). In an abstract sense, I believe most strongly in fairness, that all people should be treated equally, however unrealistic that ideal actually might be. This is coupled with an equally dominant belief in right and wrong, both beliefs may be characterized by some theorists as culturally based on my upbringing in the United States (Hall, 1976; Hofstede, 2011). Such values also include an understanding that not all people share

the same beliefs on fairness, equality, or a right/wrong dichotomy. Ultimately, I believe my role as teacher and researcher is a moral one, guided by those values, however juxtaposed with my growing belief that EMI or an international/American approach to higher education may not be beneficial to all students. An awareness of my own background and values is vital when examining the outcomes of the research, since “the biographical journeys of researchers greatly influence their values, their research questions, and the knowledge they construct. The knowledge they construct mirrors their life experiences and values” (Banks, 1998, p.4).

The spread of such approaches to education mean that this goal should also be relatable to other researchers, since for academics, the world today can be characterized as one of shrinking spaces, shrinking time, and disappearing borders (UNDP, 1999, as cited by Kumaravadivelu, 2006a, p.4). Globalization is seen by some as cultural homogenization (a blending of cultures and a loss of distinct identities), and reciprocally, it can mean a counter movement of cultural heterogenization, where local identities and cultural symbols are strengthened in the face of the “threat posed by globalization” (Kumaravadivelu, 2006b, p.6). TESOL professionals are arguably at the center of such processes, so investigating how they experience those dynamics should provide a substantial contribution to the research literature.

In developing such an *idiographic* exploration, the research aims to fully understand the experiences of the teachers in these contexts, not to make any generalizations about classes of situations (Babbie, 2010, p.21). Still, as a result of individuals’ capacity to “share a world of meanings” and “practical understandings” (Pring, 2014, p.18), the study should become useful for other TESOL practitioners

because another objective is to provide interpretations and conclusions that they may find akin to experiences in their own lives and practice. I believe that each person has their own individual values, personality, motivations and idiosyncrasies, yet we are also bound by “social facts” that impact how we think, not necessarily dictating behavior, but aiding in our interpretation of a “public and thereby objective world of social rules and language through which their intentional behavior makes sense” (Pring, 2014, p.102). Thereby, educators and students may benefit beyond the immediate scope of the study. This holds particular personal importance when considering the stress and uncertainty experienced by many expatriate teachers when relocating to a new HEI or a new country. By examining those experiences, I hope this study may assist administrators both in their general relations with teachers, and more pointedly when designing and implementing induction programs for newly hired faculty. Additionally, I aim to provide those teachers more of the tools needed to adapt and adjust to their new contexts, as well as to enjoy longer-term personal success in their professional and personal lives there.

1.7 Methodological orientation and research questions

As an exploratory research project, this study embraces the interpretivist philosophy of research: first, there is the small sample size; next, the researcher is also a teacher and associate of the participants, not an objective observer, but rather in the middle of the research, influencing and being influenced by the results of the study (Richards, 2003). The study assumes certain characteristics of the participants as individuals, governed by their own morals, with an ability to experience their reality and a recognition of social relationships influenced by their social environment (Pring,

2014). Within that framework, we can investigate *how* participants experience the multiple cultures in their context, examining their feelings and the manner they construct their reality. Consequently, the study will collect qualitative data in hopes of accruing “rich material for the research report” in the form of *thick* descriptions that will then be interpreted by the researcher in hopes of deeper understanding (Dörnyei, 2007, pp.39-40). Through a series of interviews, the approach is “a person-centred enterprise” (Richards, 2003, p.9) to explore these expatriate English teachers’ experiences of the cross-cultural dynamic of their time working and living in the Gulf States; hence, the research is guided by the following questions:

1. How much are expatriate English teachers prepared for their new positions through the orientation they receive from higher education institutions in the Gulf States?
2. How do the teachers experience the small cultures of their HEI in their context?
3. How do the teachers experience the large cultures of the Gulf States in their context?
4. How interested are those teachers in understanding and learning about the large cultures of the countries they are residing in?

The means of exploring these research questions can also begin to take more focus in the forms of specific research objectives, which may be refined and altered during the research process (Gasson, 2004) and through which the subsequent data collection and analysis will do the following:

- To examine participants’ motivations and attitudes during the anticipatory socialization phase, in light of HEIs’ actions and manner of communicating.
- To identify the most common orientation activities in HEIs as reported by participants.
- To evaluate how new teachers experience those orientation activities, especially their effect on uncertainty reduction.
- To investigate participants’ collegial relationships – both horizontal and vertical.

- To characterize the relations teachers have with their students, as regards classroom management and assessment.
- To determine the influence of HEI administration's actions on teachers' experiences, emotions, and sense of professionalism.
- To understand participants' personal relationships with GCC citizens or other expatriates outside of work.
- To investigate other aspects of participants' private lives, with particular focus on language, everyday tasks, and lifestyle.

With explicit objectives, the research project can begin to take shape. It should be clear, since the objectives are concerned with motivations, attitudes, emotions, understanding and relationships, that a qualitative approach is appropriate (Kumar, 2014). Since much of the experiences the research is concerned with occurred in the past, qualitative data regarding them cannot be collected via observation (Greener, 2011). Furthermore, the words of the participants would provide data closest to those experiences and feelings, and semi-structured interviews offer an efficient means of covering the breadth of experiences, yet with emotional depth (Babbie, 2010).

1.8 Organization of chapters

This research study addresses the posed questions over the course of seven chapters. Following this first, introductory chapter, I describe the research context in chapter two, elucidating the current state of higher education in the Middle Eastern Gulf States, the role of English, and the evolving status of TESOL professionals there. Chapter three features a critical review of the literature on new-teacher orientation and organizational socialization practices, generally and internationally; culture in TESOL, focusing on the cross-cultural communication aspects, particularly teachers' interactions with students; as well as teachers' experiences in international institutions and the broader society. In the fourth chapter, the theoretical framework

and methodology are explained, additionally providing a description of methods regarding the data collection, interactions with participants, and ethical considerations. Analysis of data is also explicated in this chapter. The actual analysis of the data follows in the fifth chapter, where I present the results of the analysis in detail, with a discussion of the meaning of the main themes emerging from the data subsequently reflected in the literature in the sixth chapter. The seventh and final chapter brings the study to a logical closing, in which the implications are discussed; certain conclusions are drawn; and recommendations for teachers' practice and administrative policies, along with future research, are finally made.

CHAPTER TWO: CONTEXT

The study takes place in higher education institutions within the countries of the GCC, commonly referred to as the Gulf States. The GCC consists of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the UAE, and Oman. The council was founded in 1981, and it comprises all of the Arabian Peninsula except the south-western area of Yemen. Saudi Arabia stands out from the rest of the Gulf States by dint of population and geography; the other countries are relatively similar in their small territory and population, occupying an area smaller than the state of California (Lamb, 2002) and a combined population of just over 20 million (Central Intelligence Agency, 2019). The population of Saudi Arabia is much greater, nearly 34 million, and the country's land occupies four-fifths of Arabia, including Mecca and Medina, the two holiest sites in Islam (Kort, 2008; "Saudi Arabia Population 2019", 2019)

Beyond geography, the members are connected by a shared language in Arabic, religious practices in Islam, social and cultural similarities, and economic development (Sagynbekov, 2014). As an economic bloc, the GCC countries are most distinctly set apart from the greater Middle East. According to Pappé (2014), "the Gulf States' per capita GNP is incomparable to that of their neighboring countries, or other members of the Arab world that share similar cultural patterns and topographical features with the Sheikdoms, but without oil" (p.49). These six countries possess as much as 70 percent of the region's oil reserves, and according to Lamb (2002), since so many of their concerns are similar, it is the only part of the Arab world projecting a semblance of unity (p.238). As so-called *rentier* states, in which governments' revenues are generated mainly by oil rents rather than taxation, the GCC countries similarly distribute monies to their populations through government employment,

subsidies and services, developing infrastructure, and nationalized business enterprises (Herb & Lynch, 2019; Kaya, Choucri, Tsai, & Mezher, 2017).

2.1 Recent history of development and sovereignty

The region has a long, ancient history, but for the context of this study, the most important aspects of that history pertain to foreign, particularly Western, influence in the region, as well as the pace of development since the discovery of oil.

From the sixteenth to the early twentieth centuries, the Ottoman Empire subsumed much of the Middle East, extending its reach along both coasts of the Arabian Peninsula. According to historians, the Ottomans managed and retained such a massive, longstanding empire was largely through a “disregard of ethnicity,” a practice which developed a level of social tolerance within the local Arab populations (Pappé, 2014, p.17). Through much of that time, the British Empire was present, initially through traders and later as a political force. Lamb (2002) states that of all the colonial powers, “the most lasting foreign imprint was left by the British” (p.238), who signed treaties with most of the tribes along the coast from Kuwait to Oman, which became British Protectorates in the 20th century.

After WWII, the exploration for oil intensified swiftly, initially in Saudi Arabia and then further afield; British colonial interests waned, and the rest of the states in the Gulf federated. The twenty-year period from 1951 to 1971 saw each of the GCC countries declare independence, yet the Gulf States were still not independent from the colonial powers: the flow of technology and capital flowed nearly exclusively from the “industrialized world to the Arab world” (Pappé, 2014, p.51). For example, one of the first two banks in Dubai was the British Bank of the Middle East; two British firms

provided the infrastructure for the electrification of Dubai; and the Dubai port was largely built by UK-based Sir William Halcrow and Partners Limited (Kort, 2008).

2.2 Economic modernization of the region since the discovery of oil

From its discovery in the 1930s until the 1970s, no sector of the economy saw this unilateral relationship with the West more than oil production and distribution. This had political as well as economic ramifications: despite the fact that Sheikh Shakhbut of Abu Dhabi had given oil concessions to British companies in the 1950s, the British still supported his brother Zayed in deposing him, due partly to Shakhbut's refusal to initiate "massive spending projects such as airports, roads, and harbor works merely at the behest of British advisors and companies" (Kazim, 2000, p.261). In addition to spearheading the formation of the new country of the United Arab Emirates, Sheikh Zayed established the bureaucracy to oversee various infrastructure projects and the development of a modern nation-state, employing mostly members of his family in ministerial positions and reciprocating a large percentage of oil revenues back to British companies in the form of government contracts (Kazim, 2000). Saudi Arabia pursued a similar relationship with the United States. The location of Dhahran was transformed by American intervention, including the country's first airport, which also doubled as a military base (Rossi, 2008). In barely ten years, oil revenues in Saudi Arabia for Aramco (the Arabian-American Oil Company) increased exponentially, from one billion United States dollars (USD) in 1969, to 110 billion USD in 1981, leading to the nationalization and rebranding of the company as Saudi Aramco (Kort, 2008).

Such an increase in GDP had immediate effects on the governments and populations in the Gulf; construction and infrastructure development has been ongoing since. Most of the development has focused on much-needed modernization and improved the standard of living for the citizens of the Gulf States. GCC citizens generally receive education and medical care from their governments free of charge, along with benefits like interest-free housing loans, free plots of land, a large number of high-paid, low-stress government jobs, or even private company quotas and high minimum wages. In the 40 years since 1970, regional infrastructure spending tops 2 trillion USD, tripling literacy rates to 75% and adding 20 years to life expectancy ("Waking from its sleep", 2009).

Despite such progress, future success is not a certainty. Weir, Sultan, Metcalfe, and Abuznaid (2011) examine the changing economic fortunes of the region and the failed efforts to diversify the economies, stating that "at $45 a barrel, all the GCC economies will be in deficit" (p.87). Gulf States are now facing such a scenario, as oil prices have dropped nearly 50% since a high of 100 USD per barrel in 2014 ("Crude oil", 2019). In turn, governments have cut spending, in addition to investigating untapped revenue sources. Although the region has long been a draw for its tax-free lifestyle, GCC nations introduced value-added taxes in recent years (Saadi, 2017).

2.3 Expatriate employment

The economic and infrastructure boom in the GCC has meant multitudes of expatriate workers to facilitate the region's transformation. This has led to an outsize population of expatriate workers in the GCC states: for example, in Kuwait, 69.6% of

the population are foreigners; in Bahrain, it is 54%; Oman, 45% (Central Intelligence Agency, 2019). The majority of these workers hail from Asia and do low-skilled jobs under abhorrent circumstances. In Saudi Arabia, for example, they "are treated as second-class citizens; (…) they are indentured servants for the period of their contracts" (House, 2012, p.158). This *kafala* system is much the same throughout the region (Ali, 2010).

The modern, diverse economy developing in the Gulf States has a comparable dependence on expatriate labor; however, these professionals, typically Western, receive much better treatment. Employment packages are highly competitive, tax-free, and generally include other financial benefits; extravagant lifestyles have long been the draw for many expatriates (Ali, 2010). Yet it is not what it used to be. Coupled with rising living costs, growing unemployment amongst GCC citizens and sagging oil prices mean that expansion is slowing, the results being redundancies, a hiring slow down, and a decrease in real salaries ("Employment and salary trends in the Gulf", 2016). The leadership in each Gulf State, therefore, continues the push to employ more of the local population, utilizing different schemes for processes of Bahraini-ization, Kuwaiti-ization, etc. (Randeree, 2012). At the same time, many of the local job seekers in the region are notoriously fickle (Gebriel, 1999; House, 2012). For the careers that many indigenous Gulf State residents desire, the solution is to be better educated and qualified: thus, to develop the local populations for the modern economy, GCC governments pour money into education on all levels, most ostensibly higher education (Davidson, 2011).

2.4 Higher education and ESL in the GCC

The Gulf States have made great strides in education since the discovery of oil. Prior to that time, children's education was generally limited to the study of the Koran and religious subjects (Abir, 2019). However, since the oil boom of the 1960s and 1970s, over 50,000 public and private schools have been established in the region ("Education sector shows upward trend in GCC", 2016). While the Gulf States have invested extensively in education, much of the education that children receive is teacher-centered and consists of memorization (House, 2012), and there is still an undue influence of extremist religious views promoted in many lower schools, particularly in Saudi Arabia (Kort, 2008). Although the education sector is still relatively young, there have been major reforms to replace the rote learning and "unhealthy emphasis on strict, almost bigoted religious agendas" with "critical thinking, science and even vocational training" (Seznec, 2009, p.199). Since the 1990s, much of the focus of GCC governments has shifted from developing primary and secondary schools to the expansion of tertiary education (Deghady, 2008).

Tertiary education includes "all types of studies, training or training for research at the post-secondary level, provided by universities or other educational establishments that are approved as institutions of higher education by the competent state authorities" (UNESCO, 1998, p.19, as quoted by Ahmad & Hussain, 2015, p.2). In the GCC, HEIs can be classified into three groups: *federal universities*, fully staffed and governed by the state (Zayed University in the UAE; King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals in Saudi Arabia, for example); *private institutions*, which are independent of federal governing bodies (e.g., the American Universities in Dubai, Sharjah, and Kuwait); as well as *international affiliates* typically

associated with Western institutions (New York University, Abu Dhabi; Middlesex University Dubai; Virginia Commonwealth University Qatar, etc.). The growth of higher education in the region has been dramatic: for example, Saudi Arabia was home to only eight universities in 2003, but six years later to over 100 (Romani, 2009).

As with most major projects in the Gulf, the growth in higher education is driven by oil revenues in the form of massive government spending. Examples include Dubai's International Academic City, with costs estimated between 138 and 500 million USD. Overall, in the first decade of the new millennium, GCC countries spent over 50 billion USD on higher education in attempts "to buy these traditional societies a place in the global knowledge economy" ("Waking from its sleep", 2009, p.14). Expenditures have led to the development of impressive facilities: "Lavish constructions and big budgets have ensured a pleasant educational environment and good resources for learning" (Davidson, 2011, p.107). Most universities in the Gulf have also spent large sums cultivating relationships with universities in the West, particularly the United States. Beyond associations, many follow an American model or seek American accreditation in order to bring universities and the region prestige and recognition (Coffman, 2015). The approach is ironic since one of the goals of the educational revolution in the Gulf is that in the future the region will be independent of foreign interests (Seznec, 2009). There is also the issue of faculty: the majority of higher education faculty are expatriates, many Western, with few from the local population (Ali, 2010; Coffman, 2015).

Faculty are a key component of the goal of Gulf countries in the modernization of the region. In evaluating the state of education in the Gulf States, Fakhro (2009)

states that modernizing education should center on “improving the quality of teachers and their profession as a whole” with the end result that teachers hold a “respected position in society and a commensurate salary” (pp.295-296). In addition to salary, expatriate teachers’ benefits include accommodation, annual vacation allowances, health care/insurance, and education allowance for dependents were listed as a draw for teachers (Chapman et al., 2014, p.142). There is also the issue of inequitable treatment of teachers based on nationality, as “Asians and Africans are paid significantly less” than Western faculty members (Ali, 2010, p.77). Overall, salaries are not the boon they once were, as Gulf governments are cutting fuel subsidies, increasing the price of gas for residents and having a “knock-on effect on other goods and services” contributing to inflation and rising costs of living across the region (“Employment and salary trends in the Gulf”, 2016).

The traditional pillars of the role of university faculty comprise teaching, research and service. Faculty are generally required to remain on campus for much of the week, with an expectation of longer hours in the classroom than in most Western universities, as much as 70-80% of a teacher’s time (Austin et al., 2014). For faculty in the Gulf, service is often ignored except as “service to the institution” (Austin et al., 2014, p.549), and research has also not been broadly supported (Romanowski & Nasser, 2015). Syed (2003) points out that there is not a culture of research in regional HEIs, yet Wilkins (2010) provides a qualified update to this contention, stating that in UAE, there is a renewed direction “to produce high quality, world-class research”; however, limited budgets and restrictions of research on “religious, cultural and ethical issues” continue to hold the region back in this regard (pp.392, 398). Academic freedom is granted by an institutional culture of criticality,

yet in the region, expatriate faculty work on the basis of renewable multi-year contracts (Austin et al., 2014), a tenuous position which does not encourage critique of institutions' programs or policies, meaning that teachers are less likely to "innovate or initiate change" in their departments (Shaw, 1997, as cited by Syed, 2003, p.339). A reticence to speak up is exacerbated by the "top-down" manner of management (Austin et al., 2014). According to participants in another study (Chapman et al., 2014), in the UAE, professional development seems to be treated similarly to research, encouraged but not materially supported, and although there are no mentoring programs generally offered, collegiality is strong in a horizontal sense, between colleagues at a similar hierarchical level, but weak vertically.

Most important is the relationship that teachers in the Arab Gulf States have with their students. Despite increasing international numbers of students, the indigenous population still predominates; for example, in the UAE, Emiratis are a large majority in tertiary education, numbering over 100,000 in 2014 (UNESCO, 2015, as cited in Khamis, 2016). Of the total students, females represent over 60% of the total student body in the region (Abouammoh, 2010). This coincides with the improvement of women's rights and economic opportunity, but both still lag behind men (Al-Kitbi, 2010). A greater focus on conservative religious and family values can also have an effect on students' approach to their studies (Rapanta, 2014). Student motivation is an oft-cited issue for teachers in the region (Elyas & Al Grigri, 2014; Aubrey, 2014); a common explanation concerns students' intentions of public versus private employment after graduation, or whether to work at all (Abdulla & Ridge, 2010). Finally, "there exists considerable pressure on faculty to satisfy their students,"

thus students will commonly attempt to argue or “plead” for higher grades (Wilkins, 2010, p.396).

Although most students’ native language is Arabic, the language of instruction in HEIs is generally English. Throughout the GCC, there is a sort of “linguistic dualism” where Arabic is associated with “localism, tradition, emotions, religion,” while English is associated with modernization and development, and is used in the public sphere for education, business, shopping, etc. (Findlow, 2006, p.25). Such a use of English and imposing its necessity on often underprepared students may represent forms of cultural and symbolic capital, in the view of Bourdieu (Lareau & Weininger, 2003, as cited by Edgerton & Roberts, 2014, p.196). Therefore, higher education broadly employs EMI, meaning that many students need additional preparation to raise their mastery of English to the necessary level, necessitating foundation year programs at many universities. At UAE University, in 2013, for instance, 77 percent of incoming students needed additional English training due to a lack of proficiency in English (Al Hameli & Underwood, 2014). Despite its prevalence, many students do not view English as important as Arabic for their culture and identity (Diallo, 2014). Oftentimes, there is a lack of required cultural capital which may be seen as “an adaptive set of cognitive skills – such as verbal, reading, writing, mathematics, and analytical reasoning skills – and behavioral skills (…) that are associated with academic and, subsequently, occupational success” (Farkas, 2003, as cited by Edgerton & Roberts, 2014, p.197). With limited means of communication, there is a great potential for cultural conflict in tertiary education classrooms, as many faculty members are lacking the necessary knowledge of their students, their lifestyle, religion, and language (Hudson, 2012; Karmani, 2005). This underlines the need for

comprehensive professional development programs for expatriate teachers, particularly in the form of induction.

2.5 Participant contexts for the study

This study focuses on expatriate English teachers working in higher education across the Gulf States. Participants mostly hail from countries in Kachru's (1992) inner circle: the United States, Canada, Ireland, the United Kingdom, and South Africa, yet there are also participants from Asian countries: Syria, Lebanon, Iran, and Pakistan. Each holds a Master's Degree or higher, with degrees in English, Education, or TESOL. The language of instruction in each HEI is English, and these teachers are tasked with either foundations-level teaching for first-year students or English for Academic/Specific Purposes courses for upper-class students. HEIs range in size from quite small (student enrollment of 1,000 or fewer) to very large (10,000 or more), and include all three types of tertiary institutions. Names and locations of HEIs are being withheld for ethical reasons; however, there is at least one participant working in each Gulf State. The teachers have been at their current institutions from one semester to several years, so they have generally settled into their positions and their lives in the country.

Most participants were hired for their current positions from abroad, yet there is a small number who were hired locally. Each is signed to a short-term contract, ranging from one to three years. They are all employed full-time, mostly teaching English courses 20-24 hours per week, and their responsibilities include lesson planning, organizing content delivery in class or on an online delivery platform, conducting lessons, as well as concomitant administrative duties like recording

attendance and tabulating grades. Based on their time spent with the institution, they have all experienced the cycle of receiving their class assignments, scheduling, teaching for a semester, and administrating final exams. Outside of their HEIs, amongst the participant teachers, there is a balance of single, married, and married with children, and their living arrangements run the gamut from segregated on-campus housing or gated communities with predominantly foreign residents, to stand-alone villas or small apartments within the local communities.

2.6 Summary

Chapter 2 provides an in-depth description of the broader contexts for the present research. By examining the historical and economic background of the region, the reader can better understand the dynamic nature of the environments of the study. It is also necessary to recognize the commonalities of the participants' circumstances: although results of such studies are not generalizable, participants' experiences can be viewed as typical of expatriate faculty working in the region. The subsequent chapter, the literature review, likewise aids in context, demonstrating this study's place in the larger body of knowledge within a critical analysis of relevant research literature.

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

This study explores expatriate English teachers' experiences working in higher education and living in the Gulf States. This chapter examines the established literature broadly concerning cross-cultural dynamics both inside and outside of schools. More specifically, first, since expatriate teachers must adapt to novel and foreign environs, new teacher orientation programs are discussed: commonly referred to as orientation, induction, or organizational socialization, the literature generally highlights what schools or employers do and how those institutions benefit from such programs. The second part of the chapter reviews studies concerning cultural aspects of expatriate teachers working and living in foreign countries: the cross-cultural dynamics of their relationships with students, with a particular eye on methodology and behavior; the adjustment to and experiences of the small cultures within Gulf State higher education institutions (HEIs), focusing on interactions with colleagues (collegiality) and leadership; concluding with research on expatriate experiences living abroad in light of current trends of manpower fluidity and globalization. The review will demonstrate a need for research in the above areas focused on the experiences and attitudes of expatriate English teachers.

3.1. Organizational Socialization

While the terms orientation or induction are used to refer to the programs in place to acculturate new teachers into their workplace, organizational socialization is a more general term used across the literature referring to "the process by which an individual comes to appreciate the values, abilities, expected behaviors, and social knowledge essential for assuming an organizational role and for participating as an

organizational member" (Louis, 1980, pp.229-230). In light of such changes, socialization has implications for teachers' identity (Romanowski & Nasser, 2015); it subsumes orientation and induction, and addresses the learning process of newcomers well in advance of their arrival in an organization until their ultimate assimilation, meaning that its purpose is uncertainty reduction (Berger, 1979, as cited by Bauer, Bodner, Erdogan, Truxillo, & Tucker, 2007, p.708), encompassing three aspects of newcomer adjustment: resolution of role demands, understanding of job tasks creating role clarity; task mastery, building confidence leading to self-efficacy; adjustment to one's group, fitting in with peers, or social acceptance (Feldman, 1981, as cited by Bauer et al., 2007, p.708). Huling-Austin (1988) lists similar goals for new-teacher orientation, with only slight variations, including increased retention, promoting well-being of new teachers, and enculturation. Organizational socialization draws on Zey's (1984, as cited by Ingersoll & Strong, 2011, p.203) mutual benefits model, from social exchange theory, and states that both parties engage in the activity because they both benefit, and they remain in the relationship as long as they both continue to benefit.

The relationship between teachers and their institutions is of critical importance for this paper, and new-teacher orientation provides an excellent avenue to investigate the relationship between teachers and their institutions. Morin and Ashton (2004) call it an important area in need of more research because of the "confounding variables that influence the interpretation of findings" (p.247). Additionally confounding is the theoretical perspective with which to view organizational socialization. For decades, the prevalent theory of this process was known as "structural functionalism". Originally proposed by Merton (1968, as cited by

Trowler & Knight, 1999), the theory of structural functionalism views socialization as a formal, collective, fixed process that is “transmissive”: newcomers focus on “acquiring” the necessary skills, knowledge, behavior, values, etc. to assimilate into the culture of the new organization (p.180). Tierney (1997) refers to this as a “modernist” perspective of socialization and instead advocates a “postmodern” approach, one with a greater appreciation for the background experiences and agency of newcomers. In this view, it is not merely a one-size-fits-all “series of planned learning activities;” it is a cultural act, “an interpretive process involved in the creation – rather than the transmittal – of meaning” (Tierney, 1997, pp.5-6). Therefore, induction processes are viewed as complex, less mechanistic and rigid, taking into account individual differences in the learning process, placing more responsibility on the newcomer in information seeking (Fetherston, 2017), yet acknowledging the importance of give-and-take between newcomers and the institution: in non-academic contexts this view is called the interactionist perspective (Zou, Tian, & Liu, 2015). Such a postmodern theory of organizational socialization guides this research on NFOs due to its dynamic approach to culture, the broader view of newcomers’ interactions with institutional insiders, embracing their individual differences and backgrounds, as well as their agency in the socialization process.

Bartell (1995) states that induction is “one phase of the teacher development continuum,” which starts at recruitment, includes the induction process, and continues through their career (p.6), an outlook which reflects the long-term, comprehensive and supportive nature of an induction program (e.g. Graybill et al., 2011; Morin & Ashton, 2004; Wong, 2005). The process of recruitment begins with teachers’ motivations to move abroad in the first place. Personal choice is a common

response, whether for a fresh start or to do something exciting and different (Chapman et al., 2014; Richardson & Zikic, 2007). Thompson (2017) describes her own perspective working abroad: “(I)t is an act of self-determination and can often be an act of self-preservation” (p.6). Beyond factors of lifestyle or economics, the organizational culture and reputation of the management of the school or institution can also be a strong determining factor in applicants’ choice (Al-Neimi & Amzat, 2012; Catanzaro, Moore, & Marshall, 2010). From the institution’s perspective, a key point when considering new applicants is prior international experience (e.g. Selmer, 2002). However, the relationship between experience and the new home environment is actually more complicated when investigated in depth, though it moderates work adjustment (Richardson & Zikic, 2007; Takeuchi, Tesluk, Yun, & Lepak, 2005). New teachers begin the socialization process prior to departure in a sort of anticipatory adjustment based on their expectations or, more importantly, information provided by the employer (Kondakci & Hacer, 2012). The more employers can provide newly-hired teachers with information that is clear and topical, the better-prepared they will feel when arriving (Genrich & Pappas, 1997; Tuzlukova & Stead, 2016).

After arrival, newcomers that are made comfortable and accepted by peers undergo more uncertainty reduction and sense-making processes more immediately. That welcoming culture is created by *organizational insiders* (Bauer, 2010; Saks & Ashforth, 1997; Woodrow & Guest, 2019). Therefore, it is vital that veteran colleagues make newly-arrived colleagues feel like a part of the team as soon as they arrive (Wong, 2004); the activity of “acquiring encultured knowledge” in a “less mechanistic learning process” leads Trowler and Knight (1999) to call socialization

and induction as separate but “intertwined” processes (p.179). It is a slippery slope similarly identified by Louis et al. (1983, as cited by Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2006):

> This is an important issue for organizations to consider, since these more informal sources are under less organizational control, and will give personal and individualized information that may not match what the organization wishes to convey. Yet the quandary for organizations is that it is likely to be this very personalized learning that makes these sources most useful for newcomers. (p.506)

Department or institution-organized events like ice breakers, lunches or other types of meetings can provide opportunities for this type of informal information exchange, while also communicating new faculty members’ research agendas or academic backgrounds to better facilitate bridge building (Chen & Klimoski, 2003, as cited in Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2006, p.506; Morin & Ashton, 2004).

Informal socialization activities facilitated by colleagues help newcomers identify with the organization, gaining a sense of “ownership” of their new departments (Schrodt, Cawyer, & Sanders, 2003, p.26), and avoiding any sense of isolation or being an outsider (Ingersoll, 2012; Lager & Bertolini, 2018; Romanowski & Nasser, 2015). A formal approach to avoiding newcomer isolation is the assignment of a well-trained and motivated mentor, which, according to the literature, is one of the most critical aspects of the induction process for teachers to adapt to their new situation swiftly and fully (Lumpkin, 2011; Mann & Tang, 2012;). Allen (2013) advocates an approach in which inexperienced teachers receive guidance from others who have previously undergone the same induction program, referring to the process as “multi-generational mentoring” (p.83). Also called “peer-coaches” or “buddies”, mentors combat the feeling of isolation encountered by many new

teachers as long as the relationship that is built between the mentor and the mentee is characterized by supportiveness, availability and frequent two-way communication (Smith, 2011). Although mentoring may be the most popular and commonly associated part of the induction process, for it to be effective, mentors must receive training and time release (Kardos et al., 2001), and it must be included in a larger program and an overall culture of support given to new teachers (Ingersoll, 2012). Training and oversight can ensure a positive, equitable relationship nullifying the main criticism of mentorships, the unequal power status (Savage, Karp, & Logue, 2004, p.22). The best induction programs welcome new teachers into “a community of practice” in which veteran teachers function as local guides (Roxa, Martensson, and Alveteg, 2011).

With a local guide, new teachers can more explicitly understand the cultures of the institution as well as that of the broader community, helping them to “learn the hidden rules and the elements of the culture that are taken-for-granted” (Romanowski & Nasser, 2015, p.667). In environments which are foreign to the new hire, everyday activities like bureaucracy such as setting up a bank account, illness, schooling for dependents or other family concerns become major sources of stress (Welch, 2003); all areas which experienced expatriate colleagues can provide invaluable counseling, particularly since they have faced similar tasks (Fenton-Smith & Torpey, 2013; Tuzlukova & Stead, 2016). Advice from colleagues is also key in preparing new teachers for the classroom (Bean, Lucas, & Hyers, 2014; Nelson, Anis-Abdellatif, Larson, Mulder, & Wolff, 2016), as student behavior or aptitudes are regularly listed as surprising or a cause of frustration amongst expatriate teachers in the Gulf region (Al-Issa, 2005; Al-Neimi & Amzat, 2012; Sonleitner & Khelifa, 2005). Thompson

(2017) discusses the need for expatriate teachers to have a clear picture of what to expect before they enter the classroom, which may result in an unnecessarily stressful situation for new teachers. More importantly for institutions, omitting or misrepresenting such classroom dynamics can cause teachers to leave shortly after they arrive: “They leave because when they enter schools, they find the combination of behaviour and working conditions are not what they expected or what they are used to” (Gardner, 2002, p.1, as quoted in Thompson, 2017, p.8).

This underscores the responsibility of employers to furnish applicants with a *realistic job preview*, which includes potential disappointments (Murray & Cunningham, 2004, p.35; Saks & Gruman, 2010, p.15). Hence, the induction process requires honesty and candor, “far more than just a traditional ‘information dump’ if it is to be successful” (Gregory, 1998, p.17, as quoted by Robinson, 1998, p.3), since information *overload* is commonly reported by inductees (Bowman, Mazerolle, & Kilbourne, 2018; Genrich & Pappas, 1997). Vittek (2015) further states that effective induction programs are worth the expense due to the benefits to new teachers and schools. However, institutions can save money and produce a supportive, effective program of organizational socialization by tapping veteran teachers’ knowledge and encouraging this type of collaboration (Scott et al., 2016), including administrators or even students as stakeholders in the process (Cook-Sather, 2016). Unfortunately, at many schools, there is a “sink or swim” mentality in which new teachers enter the classroom with little contextual preparation, whereas an effective induction program gives teachers the tools and the positivity to persevere and succeed (Ingersoll, 2012, p.47; Stupnisky, Pekrun, & Lichtenfeld, 2016, p.1182). To achieve this, an observation component must be included in induction programs where new teachers

can observe others' lessons, be observed themselves and given feedback that can be reflected upon (Perry & Hayes, 2011; Yang, 2009). In comparing teachers receiving induction and those who have not, several studies reviewed in both Huling-Austin (1988) and Ingersoll & Strong (2011) indicate that new teachers receiving induction either perform better in class (observed) or have students with higher scores on standardized tests (e.g. Bauer et al., 2007; Kardos et al., 2001).

Generating job satisfaction and higher job performance amongst new faculty require a comprehensive induction program that also takes into account teachers' workloads (Murray & Cunningham, 2004). Because teachers must accomplish additional tasks outside of school, work/life balance, or time management, during that period is a common cause of stress (Fenton-Smith & Torpey, 2013; Stupnisky, Weaver-Hightower, & Kartoshkina, 2015). Institutions should address this in orientation programs by clearly detailing new faculty members' on-campus responsibilities (Tuzlukova & Stead, 2016), while Sorcinelli (1992) proposes strategies for new teachers themselves to limit stress, along with institutions' contributions to the process, most significantly that of feedback on teachers' progress and experiences in the induction program. This approach of continuing improvement of induction programs by tapping the experiences of the teachers is persistent throughout the literature (Schonwetter & Nazarko, 2008; Yang, 2009). However, few studies address socialization as a learning process: "rather than thinking about what new hires need to know and overwhelming them with information," employers should facilitate "newcomers' self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience" as individuals develop social networks and learn to thrive in their new environment (Saks & Gruman, 2010, p.23). Under the auspices of professional development, it is clear that

individual differences must be considered, meaning that the adjustment for each newly-hired teacher will be different, so the literature suggests it cannot be one-size-fits-all as a program, but must be learner-centered and tailored to individuals (Bauer et al., 2007; Scott et al., 2016).

The ultimate goal for institutions' induction programs is a higher retention rate of teachers, coupled with better teaching amongst those who continue to work there. Ingersoll and Smith (2004) use data from National Center for Educational Statistics' (NCES) *Schools and Staffing Survey* in the United States; controlling for variables such as teacher education and school poverty level, they show that in the 1999-2000 school year, a teacher receiving no induction support showed a 40% likelihood to leave the profession, while those receiving multiple induction components had a turnover probability of just 28%, a number which dropped in relation to the amount of induction teachers received. Many other studies show similar moderating effects of supportive induction on teacher burnout or attrition (e.g. Huling-Austin, 1990; Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004; Watlington, Shockley, Guglielmino, & Felsher, 2010). However, many such studies concern beginner teachers working in primary or secondary schools; there is a shortage of long-term studies examining induction's relationship to turnover amongst faculty in higher education, particularly internationally. Notwithstanding, the effect is so universally recognized that it is surprising how many studies reveal that institutions either do not offer any induction or only offer a short-term, administrative orientation (Chauvin, Anderson, Mylona, Greenberg, & Yang, 2013; Kearney, 2014; Schonwetter & Nazarko, 2008). Relative to the cost of teacher turnover (e.g. Watlington et al., 2010), the literature shows that supportive teacher induction programs, particularly those involving the low-cost

informal elements of teacher collaboration or mentoring, are worth the investment to assist new faculty members in their adjustment to the cultures of their new work and life environments.

3.2 Cultural issues in TESOL and international education

Research into the cultural dimension of TESOL has seen an increase in recent decades (Baker, 2009), due largely to the proliferation of English and its effects on learners and entire societies, potentially altering worldviews and affecting their identity and their sense of self. It may leave speakers in “a third place that is not part of any one defined culture,” neither that of a culture associated with their L1 or their L2 (Baker, 2009, p.585). Phillipson (2016) calls the belief that English is a lingua nullius, that “English is ideologically neutral,” a myth that serves colonial interests in a form of linguistic imperialism, intensifying the gap between global haves and have-nots (p.4). Whether or not the spread of English is as nefarious as Phillipson contests, there is an unequal cultural relationship. Post-colonial themes persist in the relationship between “Western culture” and the L2 speech community (Kumaravadivelu, 2006a, p.12). Colonial/post-colonial or East/West dichotomies additionally contribute to the question of ownership of English, examining Global Englishes (Galloway & Mariou, 2015; Pennycook, 2007), leading to a more pertinent issue for many TESOL educators: so-called native speakers and non-native speakers (Higgins, 2003; Ma, 2012; Park, 2012). Kubota and Lin (2009) argue that such divisions are a more acceptable form of racism, where certain groups (non-white, non-Western) are still excluded or otherized through the more sanitized lens of culture. Overall, according to Kramsch and Hua (2016), it is the recognition of such

cultural issues, both pedagogical and political, that drives the heightened research interest in English language teaching and culture.

3.2.1. Teachers and students' culture: Cultural conflict

My initial research approach to cultural issues in TESOL was the inclusion of cultural topics in lessons: "'Culture' in language teaching and learning is usually defined pragmatically as a/the culture associated with a language being learnt," (Byram & Grundy, 2002, p.193). Generally regarded as teaching the target culture, it may either involve introducing cultural norms of interacting with native speakers (Wierzbicka, 2003), or a broader process of enculturation (Corbett, 2003; Kramsch, 2014). Such a view addresses teachers' identities, first as representatives of target cultures, recalling the issue of native compared to non-native speakers of English, and second as professional educators. As professionals, notwithstanding their countries of origin, expatriate TESOL educators' identities are additionally formed by their educational backgrounds, their motivations for working abroad, and their experiences in their positions (Austin et al., 2014; Lorimer & Schulte, 2011; Xu & Connelly, 2009). Identity is a dynamic construct, which for many English teachers can also be affected by the native-speaker/non-native-speaker dichotomy, colored by racial, sexual, and ethnic backgrounds (Liu & Xu, 2010). This is particularly acute in higher education in the GCC, as many positions are advertised as "native speaker only" or to "passport holders from Canada, New Zealand, Australia, US or UK" (Ali, 2009, p.36, as quoted by Selvi & Yazan, 2017, p.71) Although the concepts of native-speaker ownership of English has become contentious in recent years (Higgins, 2003), because of the prevalence of American-style educational institutions and a teacher shortage, a large number of the faculty working in the GCC are expatriates "nurtured in Western Anglo-

American higher educational systems" (Altbach & Levy, 2005, as cited by Romanowski & Nasser, 2015, p.654). Thus, most prevalent teaching methods are concerned with communication, incorporating "interactional and sociocultural norms" (Hymes, 1972, as cited by Kumaravadivelu, 2006b, p.61), which may not be accessible for certain cultures or individuals, a shortcoming that Moore-Jones' (2014) study in the UAE points to explicitly, in which participants revealed they do not exploit much of the techniques acquired in their CELTA training. Those results echo Troudi's (2005) contention that TESOL professionals must "develop critical knowledge of students' home cultures" in attempts to "provide their learners with more meaningful learning experiences" (p.125).

There have been a number of studies examining alternative means of teaching that better suit English language students (Atkinson, 2003; Kumaravadivelu, 2003; Swales, 1990); however, the gap between teachers' expectations and those students' aptitudes make up a more relevant portion of the literature within the GCC region. Student motivation is oft-cited as a key difference by expatriate teachers. Sonleitner and Khelifa (2005) report that students' lack of motivation was a prime cause of teachers' frustration, or even confusion, as students who seemed disengaged would then occasionally submit work of exceedingly high caliber. Other researchers recount varying attitudes to results and grades: ranging from dismissive or apathetic to results (AlAamri, 2013) to demanding or pleading for higher marks (Ashour & Fatima, 2016; Wilkins, 2010). Both polarities point to students' preparedness for studying, particularly studying in a foreign language (Austin et al., 2014; Troudi, 2009). Beyond language, students' backgrounds may contrast with many HEIs' western-style educational system, particularly the English language

classroom, resulting in potential issues with extensive reading, independent study, as well as open class discussions (Hatherley-Greene, 2014; Moore-Jones, 2014; Palmer, 2015).

An aversion to speaking up in class could also be related to students' communication styles or their own standards of behavior. Palmer (2015) surveyed teachers and students in the UAE to categorize specific cultural conflicts related to behavior in class, identifying Arab students' trend towards collectivism (thus an indirect speech pattern) as an area that teachers must be aware of; similar to findings of Al-Issa (2005) and Feghali (1997). On the other hand, AlAamri's (2013) study in Oman shows that younger generations are in fact growing more individualistic, while still retaining elements of tribalism and tardiness, pointing to the ever-changing, dynamic nature of culture and norms. Over time, students' lack of punctuality is an ongoing cause of consternation for many expatriate teachers in the region (AlAamri, 2013; Sonleitner & Khelifa, 2005), in the same way that teachers' general ignorance of Islam and local religious traditions might be frustrating for many students (Ahmed, 2011; Burkett, 2016; Palmer, 2015). Touching both topics of collectivism and religions, a different attitude towards cheating amongst many Arabian Gulf students is also an issue (Fawley, 2012; O'Sullivan, 2014); however, Hosny and Fatima's (2014) research with students in Saudi Arabia points to a number of factors, such as family pressure, an over-emphasis on high grades, and not being taught proper use of sources, as well as practical approaches for students and teachers to avoid cheating or plagiarism.

Still, a large majority of students (85%) in Hosny and Fatima's (2014) study say they have never copied answers in an exam: even assuming a measure of

response bias, this result still demonstrates the need for caution when generalizing. The potential to generalize or stereotype is lessened when adopting Holliday's (1999) small-culture paradigm, yet liberal, open-minded educators working in international contexts can still resort to stereotypes when attempting to characterize their students, for reasons of "aversive racism," "social identity," post-colonial constructs of East and West, or the fact that TESOL professionals are typically faced with complex, unknown situations; stereotypes are a way of organizing an unmanageable reality, according to Kumaravadivelu (2003). The nature of the dissemination of English means that the East/West post-colonial social construction of otherness, Said's (1979) concept of "Orientalism", is similarly far-reaching. Notwithstanding, a dissection of our own possible motives in stereotyping or othering coupled with efforts to interact and view students as individuals as well as involving local educators can hopefully improve the situation in TESOL programs (Ahmed, 2011; Palfreyman, 2005)

Encouraging teachers to show greater empathy for their students by attempting "to understand their personal, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds" is a main conclusion of Bashir-Ali's (2006, p.637) study on ESL students' identity formation and the myriad pressures they experience throughout their education. The requirement of learning in a foreign language and the "linguistic dualism" present in higher education in the Gulf States being foremost among those pressures, teachers must be aware of the conflict that many students feel "between two value sets (community and heritage versus individualism and opportunity)" (Findlow, 2006, p.33). This has implications on students' identity, a "double-edged sword" that Hopkyns (2014) states can lead to either a greater local ownership of English or

feelings of alienation, resistance or rejection (see also Canagarajah, 2006). Overall, the conclusions across the literature are clear: TESOL professionals need to understand and be aware of their own biases in methods and approaches, to actively learn about the local contexts (Sowden, 2007) and mold their approaches to better suit those situations, while also working to empathize and see students as individuals.

Hence, much of the interactions between TESOL educators and their students may be viewed utilizing the theories of Bourdieu, which provide a framework for their analysis. Swartz (1997) calls Bourdieu's concepts "a cultural theory of action," touching on their appropriateness for this research. The first is *habitus*, being "systems of durable, transposable dispositions (…), that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes" (Bourdieu, 1990, p.53). Habitus guides behavior of individuals and groups by adjusting our expectations and interpretations based on history, our past experiences. However, it does leave space for individuals' agency or freedom of thought, and can be altered, either over time or through "unexpected situations" (Navarro, 2006, p.16, as quoted by Diaz Maggioli, 2014, p.190). Therefore, expatriate educators would have varying habitus, different from those of their students, different expectations and worldviews, potentially resulting in conflict.

The space where teachers and students interact, where they express or actualize their habitus, according to Bourdieu, would be termed a *field*. There are a multiplicity of fields, many overlapping, each with its own "logic of practice": rules applicable only to that field specifically. Conceptualizing higher education as a field has special implications for students, as Bourdieu (1990) stated,

> Practical faith is the condition of entry that every field tacitly imposes (…) by so arranging things, in practice, that the operations of selecting and shaping new entrants (…) are such as to obtain from them that undisputed, pre-reflexive, naïve, native compliance with the fundamental presuppositions of the field (p.68).

This suggests that entrance requires an uncompromising acceptance of the logic of practice, possibly without a full understanding or a "feel for the game", which can be to the detriment of the newcomer, since fields are sites of a constant competition for power: "Field struggle pits those in dominant positions against those in subordinate positions" (Swartz, 1997, p.124). Bourdieu refers to those various forms of power as capital, defined differently (economic, cultural, intellectual) depending on the logic of practice (May, 2011).

3.2.2 Institutional culture

Bourdieu's theories additionally provide a useful conceptualization for research into the faculty's horizontal and vertical interactions, as habitus would similarly have an impact on individuals' practices, evoking similarities in some colleague and heterogeneity in others. Perhaps more significant is the aspect of institutions as fields, where habitus intermingles with that conflict: in Bourdieu's theory of habitus, people's preferences or standards are "routinized as part of their worldview", leading to a marginalization of others, in the case of HEIs regarding the various departments or other forms of hierarchy (Mendoza et al., 2012, p.560). Higher education represents a complex, competitive arena, with the struggle for power not necessarily regarding economic capital, but rather cultural or symbolic power. Becher (1989) argues that reputation, as symbolic or scientific capital, is the "most highly prized commodity" in academia, both internally and externally (as cited by Mendoza et al., 2012, p.561). Academic capital is the control of academic resources, also seen

between departments or between faculty and administration, yet it is typically uneven, as “the struggle for position in fields opposes those who are able to exercise some degree of monopoly power over the definition and distribution of capital and others who attempt to usurp the advantages” (Swartz, 1997, p.124).

A general approach to investigating activities and relationships in HEIs turns to the small culture paradigm. Small cultures refer to the “cohesive behavior within any social grouping,” with the recognition that individuals are part of multiple cultures depending on the time and context (Holliday, 1999, pp.247-248). The study of the small culture of a set, established institution often invokes *organizational* culture, for which Schein (1984) identifies several levels for analysis: artefacts (including behaviors), beliefs and values, along with underlying assumptions. Examining the organizational culture of schools, Barth (2002) characterizes it as “historically transmitted pattern of meaning” dictating “the way we do things around here” (p.6). On the other hand, Saphier and King (1985) posit a multi-directional model of school cultures, for which they identify twelve norms. Those norms can be encapsulated in four key areas: interactions with other teachers, interactions with administrators and school leadership, the position of teachers, and the organization/orientation of the institution. This model provides an avenue for the investigation of institutional cultures.

Teachers typically walk a tight rope between isolation and independence. The freedom to research, to innovate, and to interact with students according to one’s own judgment are often highly sought features of an academic career (Chapman et al., 2014); however, this can also lead to feelings of isolation (Roby, 2011). Knight and Trowler (2000) pinpoint teachers’ working space as a primary cause for isolation,

since it does not offer opportunities to interact with colleagues. In her study of several urban American elementary schools, Little (1982), on the other hand, identifies several aspects of teachers' interactions that drive collegiality: these include *reciprocity*, an equal effort to collaborate, *inclusivity*, and *expectations for* both *shared work* and *continuous improvement.* Implied in Little's conclusions is the concept of trust, which emerges as a key driver of collegiality in the literature (Moiseyenko, 2005; Pogodzinksi, Youngs, & Frank, 2013; Van Maele & Van Houtte, 2011). Invoking Wenger's (1998) "communities of practice", Roxa et al. (2011) examine the role of trust in building networks amongst colleagues: utilizing network theory, they conclude that networks in HEIs grow organically, rather than being dictated by management, and that academics are more likely to form connections with similar members of the community (see also Nasser & Romanowski, 2011). Diversity of background and experience have an effect on collegiality in the context of the UAE, according to two recent studies, which show a large amount of collegiality, albeit potentially superficial, among academics in HEIs there (Austin et al., 2014; Chapman et al., 2014). Collegiality is a vital research area because of the positive effect that it can have on school's culture, mitigating teachers' job dissatisfaction and improving student outcomes (Banerjee et al., 2017).

Beyond horizontal collegiality, vertical collegiality (the relationship between teachers and management) and trust are likewise of vital importance in academic culture. Firstly, since management often dictates terms of interactions, it can lead to "contrived collegiality" (Hargreaves, 1994, as cited in Knight & Trowler, 2000, p.72). Indeed, there has been a trend in educational management to de-emphasize the role of teachers as professionals, limiting their ability to make individual judgments on the

needs of their students (Day, 2002). Such a trend has coincided with a rise in managerialism, viewing teachers as line items on a budget, and has introduced monitoring systems and other performative measurements historically limited to markets, creating a sort of “academic capitalism” (Ball, 2003; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012; Levin, 2006). Academic capitalism has drastic repercussions for academia as it “closes off opportunities for full academic citizenship by producing and consolidating a large disenfranchised and casualised underclass” (Shore & Davidson, 2014, p.24). Casualization of academic labor has grown in the United States, for example, with temporary adjuncts representing just 22% of appointments in 1970, but more than double that by the late 1990s, following the trend of corporatization of universities (Entin, 2005).

This has extended to higher education in the GCC, with a valorization of so-called Western leadership and education models (Macpherson, Kachelhoffer, & El Nemr, 2007; Miller-Idriss & Hanauer, 2011), and a large number of studies where teachers lament a lack of voice or influence in decision making, as faculty disenfranchisement and a top-down manner of academic leadership persists (Ibrahim, Al-Kaabi, & El-Zaatari, 2013; Austin et al., 2014; Troudi & Alwan, 2010). Those studies also generally advocate improving management by tapping faculty’s expertise (see also Louis & Wahlstrom, 2011, p.54). Sahl’s (2017) study of faculty job satisfaction relative to appreciation and recognition shows the significance of recognition (from superiors as well as colleagues), and while not its focus, the study demonstrates a contextual link between acknowledgement and faculty’s satisfaction and job retention.

In investigating teachers interactions with management, we can see that educators experience an “intensification of their working lives, extended bureaucratic and contractual accountability, (and) decreasing resources,” increasing their workload outside of the classroom and affecting their primary duty of teaching (Day, 2002, pp.6-9). Murray and Cunningham (2004) state that teaching duties and number of students can be overwhelming for faculty in American community colleges, in similar ways to expatriate faculty working in the UAE (Austin et al., 2014; Chapman et al., 2014) or school teachers in Oman (Al-Neimi & Amzat, 2012). The roles of academics are generally considered tripartite: teaching, service, and research. Advising may be added to teaching responsibilities, as faculty are often expected to be mentors on topics ranging from course materials to personal life (Adams, 2002). Service ethic is a key component of teachers’ professional identity (Adams, 2012); however, Austin et al. (2014) report that in the UAE, “the term refers almost exclusively to service to the institution” (p.549), meaning service on institutional committees (see also Chapman et al., 2014). Research as a means of increasing institutional/national prestige is listed as highly important by administrators (Austin et al., 2014; Chapman et al., 2014); however, participants working the UAE in each study refer to research as an “afterthought”. Abouchedid (2006) declares that “most universities in Arab countries are not research oriented” when examining research budgets and the number of academic journals in the region (p.4). Besides lack of financial support, tight state control over research agendas and a perceived lack of academic freedom also serve to restrict research output in universities (Kraince, 2008; Romanowski & Nasser, 2010; Romanowski & Nasser, 2015). Overall, heavy workloads have great implications for teachers’ place in their institutions, as does a

lack of academic freedom and overbearing institutional control, both typical of expatriates' interactions with management in the region.

Such interventions can be felt across multiple aspects of academia in GCC universities: in a recent large-scale survey, faculty described issues pertaining to university governance, academic freedom, and a top-down decision-making process, leading the researchers to remark, "It was apparent that while academics ascertained that academic freedom exists, that did not mean that democratic processes prevailed in the governance of these universities; moreover, accountability and transparency left much to be desired" (Costandi, Hamdan, Alareeni, & Hassan, 2019, p.84). Not necessarily limited to the Arabian Gulf, Bourdieu (1988) writes about HEIs as sites of struggle for power in efforts to maintain the status quo, as touched upon previously. Accordingly, school cultures are generally seen as conservative, making innovation and change more difficult while preserving the status quo (Bartell, 2003; Barth, 2002; Zhu, 2015), whether that be EMI and pedagogical practices (Syed, 2003), testing protocols (Troudi, Coombe, & Al-Hamly, 2009), or the separation of the genders (Lay, 2005). Sporn (1996) contends that a resistance to change is dependent on the orientation of the organization's culture, either internal or external; however, the close state involvement in higher education limits the applicability of that framework in the GCC. On the other hand, Sporn's (1996) approach to researching culture is applicable across contexts since it acknowledges the difficulty of objectivity due to the "taken-for-granted, shared values and beliefs of individuals and groups in the organization" and can best be examined through the perspectives and attitudes of university members (p.48). Finally, multiple studies of expatriate faculty members reveal not only a lack of professional growth, but also a strong sense of job

insecurity, since in the GCC there is no concept of tenure for faculty, teachers usually employed on multiple-year contracts, exacerbating any feelings of risk or unease from living in a foreign country (Austin et al., 2014; Chapman et al., 2014; Richardson & Zikic, 2007).

3.2.3 Working internationally: Sociocultural adjustment

There is a wide array of literature in business and management studies pertaining to the experiences of expatriate employees, particularly expatriate managers. Most important for this paper are studies regarding sociocultural adjustment, which "deals with the ability to 'fit in' or to negotiate interactive aspects of the host culture as measured by the amount of difficulty experienced in managing everyday situations in the host culture" (Ward & Kennedy, 1996, as cited by Selmer, 2002, p.73). Mendenhall and Oddou's (1985) review of the literature, although dated, referring to the process as "expatriate acculturation" and preceding popularization of the term globalization, demonstrates the complexity of the process, pinpointing several dimensions of sociocultural adjustment which should be considered: for example, individuals' adaptability and stress reduction, ability to make friends and communicate, and cultural toughness, which they describe as the level of difference between the culture of the home and new countries. While apt in identifying the multi-dimensional characteristic of expatriate adjustment, through the action of categorization or dimensionalization, there is a trend in that study and others of over-essentializing cultures (e.g. Hall, 1976; Hofstede, 2011; House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004).

This essentialized conceptualization of culture as fixed and unchanging is an issue in much of the literature that attempts to score, measure, or predict cultural

difference. Shenkar (2001; 2012) criticizes his and others' positivist research methodology using Kogut and Singh's (1988) "cultural distance index," proposing instead a less rigid or prescriptive (positive or negative) metaphor of cultural *friction*, yet still with the intention of empirical, quantitative measurement. In their introduction to a special issue on "culture in international business research," Tung and Verbeke (2010) enumerate ten common assumptions in all such studies, questioning whether much of the empirical research is truly representative or generalizable, as well as the supposed rigidity of the culture being measured, either over time or across nations. They further question why cultural difference must be seen to "systematically engender negative outcomes" (Tung & Verbeke, 2010, p.1267; see also Shenkar, 2012). Taken together, these criticisms echo the 'fixity' of Bhabha's (2004) "ideological construction of otherness," which is both rigid and negative, and is thus repeated to construct stereotypes (p.94-95). In attempts to move beyond "sophisticated stereotyping", their term for cultural dimensions like those of Hofstede and the GLOBE project, Osland and Bird (2000) examine cultural paradoxes, promoting a "model of cultural sensemaking," a contextual view of culture similar to the six principles of culture in TESOL forwarded by Atkinson (1999).

Issues raised by Atkinson and colonial themes discussed by Bhabha are reflected in a large body of research concerning both the dissemination of English and its use as a Lingua Franca (ELF) (Findlow, 2006; Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 2013; Troudi, 2009), as well as what could potentially be termed an Americanization or internationalization of education (Findlow, 2005; Miller-Idriss & Hanauer, 2011; Noori & Anderson, 2014). Minimal research into the broader expatriate experiences of ELF exists; such a focus is typically limited to the classroom or learners'

intercultural communication (Baker, 2009; Holliday, 2011; Kramsch, 2009). Internationalization, of education and business, however, has led to continued and growing interest in expatriate experiences across the globe. In a change from much of the international business research, Yagi and Kleinberg (2011) make the case for interpretive ethnography as a valid methodology to more fully understand expatriates' "boundary spanning as a nuanced process" on an individual level, which is "shaped by multiple cultural phenomena at other levels" depending on the context (p.649).

In the context of the UAE higher education, Chapman et al. (2014) examine several aspects of expatriate faculty's boundary spanning experiences. Participants listed similar motivations for going abroad to work pertaining to lifestyle, whether it be for adventure, familial connections, or quality of life, linked to an attractive, tax-free salary package. The government-mandated three-year contracts and Visas, however, provide a measure of flexibility for expat teachers, at the cost of stability or of feeling settled (Chapman et al., 2014). Similar sentiments are seen in the research of Richardson and Zikic (2007), in which participants in Turkey, the UAE, and Singapore also talked about the adventure and flexibility of an international academic career, but "that it also meant accepting a good deal of transience" (p.170). This feeling of transience is similarly linked to short-term contracts; however, its effects are additionally investigated, taking an "emotional toll", creating feelings of being an outsider, perceiving "barriers to creating friendships with host nationals," and thus not building any relationships for fear of being rebuffed by locals or of new expat friends leaving (Richardson & Zikic, 2007, p.173-174).

Expatriate social network theory applies to how expatriates create friendships and seek emotional or informational support while abroad. The associated stress and

anxiety are the focus of the study of Fish (2005), who calls for international organizations to decrease the prospect for those anxieties by providing opportunities for expatriates to develop relationships and social and emotional support. Farh et al. (2010) propose a five-stage mode for this process, in which they notice that expatriates typically form support networks with those "actors" who are culturally similar to them, unless the expatriate exhibits a high degree of "cultural intelligence" (CQ). CQ is "defined as the capability of an individual to function effectively in situations characterized by cultural diversity" (Ang & Van Dyne, 2015, p.3). Assessed via standardized tests and viewed as a multi-dimensional "statelike individual difference" that can evolve over time, CQ is paradoxically affected by context, at least in the intermediate term. Ang and Van Dyne (2015) typify CQ as an ability or capability, distinguishing it from other individual differences: interests or personality (pp.7-8).

Other research has focused on different moderating factors, like personality. The Big Five personality traits and their relationship with expatriates' adjustment is the topic of the research of Huang, Chi, and Lawler (2005), who studied American expatriates in Taiwan and found positive correlations with adjustment and the traits of extroversion and openness to experience. However, despite attempts at generalization, the study is limited by the method of self-reporting in a questionnaire, the relatively small sample size, and restricted context and demographics, issues noted by the authors (Huang et al., 2005). Fink, Neyer, and Kolling (2006) propose examining personality traits in light of *cultural standards*, a more holistic, yet specific observation of different cultures. The authors examine specific cross-cultural situations in context, which they refer to as "critical incidents" (similar to Agar's (2006)

“rich points”); however, the conclusions point to a general flexibility, empathy, or openness-to-learn on the part of the adjusted expatriate, making much of the dimensionalizing of foreign cultures unnecessary. Another moderating factor, prior experience abroad, is described as context-specific and multi-dimensional in much of the literature, largely depending on the nature of prior experience, the location related to the current location, and the expatriate’s personality traits regarding that experience (e.g. Lee & Sukoco, 2010; Selmer, 2002; Takeuchi et al., 2005).

3.3. Summary

Through this chapter, we can see that there has been an extensive amount of study touching the themes of the given research questions. However, the literature trends in the direction of quantitative, positivist studies with an essentialized view of national cultures with an East/West dichotomy. There is additionally a shortage of research on orientation with a postmodern theoretical viewpoint, especially cross-culturally. While there is certainly commonality between expatriate experience across a spectrum of contexts, business, management, or academia, there is a distinct lack of research involving expatriate participants from a broader spectrum of home countries, working in higher education and living in the Middle Eastern Gulf States. It is an area of tremendous growth, in the internationalization of higher education and expatriation, as well as the TESOL industry, meaning that expatriate English teachers’ cultural experiences in this region can provide a suitable subject for research of this scale and provide useful insight into those areas.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

In the prior chapter, the relevant themes and concepts were discussed in light of the established research literature, clarifying this study's place in the research community. The literature review has assisted in setting several standards for the methodology: as much of older research into orientation (e.g., Huling-Austin, 1990; Ingersoll, 2012) was large-scale, collecting quantitative data, and not addressing induction as "cultural act", according to Tierney (1997), there is a clear need for a smaller-scale, qualitative research instrument for this study. Furthermore, Bartell's (1995) view of the "teacher development continuum", as well as Saphier and King's (1985) conceptualization of school cultures establish an appropriate breadth for the data collection. Finally, much of the research into teacher experiences in the Gulf States (Chapman et al., 2014; Moore-Jones, 2014; Romanowski & Nasser, 2015) demonstrates the efficacy of an interpretive approach involving semi-structured interviews as a means of studying such cultural dynamics, as opposed to the over-essentialized large-scale survey approach of others (Hofstede, 2011; Tung & Verbeke, 2010).

With the published studies and theories in mind, this chapter clarifies and justifies the approach of the study as an exploratory research project. The underlying philosophies of knowledge and learning are first expounded, with the following sections growing more specific. The general research questions are again explained, now given more direction, as they precede the description of the participants and the research design; the subsequent sections encompass the description of the myriad ethical considerations undertaken to ensure the participants, their data, and identities

are fully protected. The close of the chapter involves self critically reviewing the limitations of the study and all that entails.

4.1 Research framework

When considering an issue to be researched, a framework for the study must be established. This involves determining an ontology and epistemology, which will thus dictate an appropriate methodology with concomitant forms of a data, quantitative or qualitative.

4.1.1 Theoretical framework

There are effectively two contraposed paradigms in social and educational research: positivism/post-positivism and interpretivism. Post-positivism suits quantitative, large-scale research endeavors; however, for this study, an interpretivist approach is appropriate, as it is small-scale in number of participants, requires a great deal of reflection on rich, qualitative data, and the researcher is intimately involved in the project along with the participants The philosophy of interpretivism has been viewed as anti-positivist, and the paradigm's development was generally fueled by frustrations with positivism's shortcomings and researchers' desire for an alternative. Initially in 1967, Glaser and Strauss defined qualitative inquiry, which is closely associated with interpretivism, as the first challenge to the hegemony of quantitative research (Newby, 2014). This coincides with Strauss's (1966) contention that researchers have a dialogue with or even interrogate data, and then consider and reconsider possible answers, further positing the notion of researcher as *bricoleur*, or jack-of-all-trades, a concept which emphasizes the diverse views of interpretivism

and that researchers operating within this paradigm must perform any number of tasks or roles (p. 18, as quoted in Crotty, 2009, p.51).

The rejection of positivism is where interpretivism draws many of its key characteristics. Rather than an objective reality existing independently of the observer, in interpretivism, rather than a singular truth, multiple realities are constructed and interpreted by social actors (Newby, 2014). However, there is a recognition of a degree of universality in individuals' interactions and experiences. Fish (1990) states that many of the ways in which we make meaning are shared, "social and conventional", and that a "public system of intelligibility" allows individuals to interpret and create meanings (p.186, as quoted in Crotty, 2009, p.52). The key is that meanings are actively constructed, so people are not passengers in life; they are the intentional creators of their own reality, through an ongoing process (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). In light of this constant state of flux, reality is sophisticated and not as simplistic as positivism might purport; furthermore, each individual and event is distinct and not suited to generalizations (Cohen et al. 2011).

Thus, epistemologically, as there is no objective, ordered truth for interpretivists to discover, their emphasis is not on explaining with a view to predicting, but rather on understanding. Objective, detached empiricism is replaced with subjective, value-laden study from within (also termed *emic*), performed by a researcher looking at social actors as individuals, attempting to understand their actions in their terms (Grix, 2019). This form of subjective interpretation is employed because of the transient nature of social beings with their own biographies, goals, moods, etc. in an ever-changing social world, in which researchers must navigate (Poni, 2014). When accounts are formulated, they provide deeper insight into

participant's reality and are more naturalistic because the data produced is in their own words, not "categories or tick-boxes that researchers have designed" (Greener, 2011, p.3).

To reiterate, for my study, interpretivism is the most suitable philosophical outlook, considering that I am an English teacher like the participants, living and working in higher education in the GCC, and thus share some of the small cultures in which they are immersed in, so the participants and I may have similar experiences. The thick descriptions produced in interpretivism also suit this research since it seems more appropriate for participants to use their own words to describe their cross-cultural experiences and how they felt.

4.1.2 Exploratory research

As one of the four possible objectives of research, according to Kumar (2014), exploratory research investigates a subject area which is need of exploration, i.e. one that is not well known or understood. It utilizes an *inductive* methodology, "a 'bottom up' approach to generating theoretical insight" which begins without a preconceived hypothesis so that any theory or conclusion is not "imposed on their data" prior to the research (Greener, 2011, p.3). This inductive/exploratory approach has its origins in Glaser and Strauss's (1967, as cited by Denscombe, 2014) concept of Grounded Theory. Accordingly, researchers begin with an 'open-mind'; theories are not developed at a high level of abstraction, but are built up over time through systematic analysis; and the approach has its roots in pragmatism, so there is an emphasis on the practical situation in question, as participants "are trying to explain and make sense of their experiences," which "out of these multiple constructions, analysts build something that they call knowledge" (Corbin, 2009, p.39).

It is acknowledged that researchers within the interpretivist paradigm inevitably impose their own personal, subjective categorizations on their methods and data, in an assumption of "*subjectivist epistemology*" (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017, p.13). Exploratory research, therefore, may touch upon other methodologies, notably Phenomenology, investigating the meaning that individuals impute to their everyday life; as well as Symbolic Interactionism, focusing on the dynamic nature of the construction of meaning as an active process, investigating how participants negotiate behavior and identity in a particular context (Cohen et al., 2011). Thus, although researchers undertake exploratory studies with an open mind, it is not an empty mind; the approach still acknowledges the personal background and experiences of the researcher, who are encouraged to make real efforts to temporarily shed any preconceived notions or beliefs about the phenomena being investigated (Perry, 2017). It is generally employed "to satisfy a researcher's curiosity and desire for better understanding" of "persistent phenomena" (Babbie, 2010, p.92) or when the subject of study "has been relatively ignored in the literature or has been given only superficial attention" (Goulding, 2002, p. 55, as quoted by Denscombe, 2014, p.113). Exploratory research typically seeks to answer "What type questions," which may gauge the importance of understudied phenomena or simple relationships between phenomena (Perry, 2017, p.5).

4.2 Research questions

The process of research progresses from a central topic or central question to more focused, specific research questions. The research questions for this study are as follows:

1. How much are expatriate English teachers prepared for their new positions through the orientation they receive from higher education institutions in the Gulf States?
2. How do the teachers experience the small cultures of their HEI in their context?
3. How do the teachers experience the large cultures of the Gulf States in their context?
4. How interested are those teachers in understanding and learning about the large cultures of the countries they are residing in?

As can be seen, the research questions acknowledge a relationship between the foreign educators and the cultures in which they are immersed, and that there could be additional factors affecting that relationship. The interest is in exploring that relationship without any preconceived conditions, imposed theories, or judgements of positive, negative, or neutral, which may or may not arise from the data analysis. The questions asked are *What* type, as they explore simple relationships, allowing any insights to grow out of the data (Perry, 2017). More specific objectives (see section 1.7) have also been elucidated to give even greater focus to the direction of the data collection process.

4.3 Research design

As described in 4.1.2., the project is an exploratory study, meaning that much of the process will materialize as the research develops, producing qualitative data. It will delve deeply into teachers' experiences and how they construct and interpret their own identities and realities; however, the results will only be applicable in this context and will be open for others to interpret and apply to their own contexts but will not be generalizable (Grix, 2019).

4.3.1. Sampling

When selecting participants for any research project, Cohen et al. (2011) recommend five key factors to consider: the representativeness and the size of the sample, together with access, affecting the sampling strategy, and finally, the kind of research undertaken. By reflecting on each factor, researchers can arrive at an appropriate number and composition of participants for a given research project. Upon reflection and through discussion with my supervisor, I determined that the because of the methods of data collection, focus groups and interviews, the amount of data would become unwieldy if the number rose to more than twenty. As such a small sample cannot be representative, the results will not be generalizable regardless, but they will be more transferable if applied to a wider variety of participants working and living in different countries within the GCC, a decision I reached after some thought on issues of validity and sampling bias. Such an approach is nonprobability sampling, meaning that participants are not selected randomly or a similar manner producing representative samples in accordance with probability theory, but rather with a different strategy (Babbie, 2010, p.192).

The three nonprobability sampling strategies utilized in this research were purposive, convenience and quota. The first step in selecting participants was a "judgement of their typicality" to construct a sample that suits the purpose of the research (Cohen et al., 2011, p.156). In this case, the research is investigating expatriate English language teaching professionals employed in higher education in the Gulf States, so purposive sampling dictates participants based on that standard. Especially for the focus groups, the access to participants was the key basis for selection. Shank and Brown (2007) refer to this action as a "convenience sample

from a specialized population" (p.124): accessible English teachers whose working schedules are amenable for the focus group and/or individual interview sessions. Lastly, quota sampling ensured participants from a wide range of backgrounds, spread throughout the GCC, ensuring that each Gulf State is represented when describing participants' experiences, though such a sampling strategy could not be considered representative of the overall population of English teachers (Denscombe, 2014). This broader sampling approach is important in light of the research objectives, since although they are concerned with values, understandings, attitudes, and experiences, with a sample as large as 20, the commonality of such influences will be an important result.

In practical terms, the sampling process was as follows: Since the focus groups were conducted first, they were the first participants to be sampled. Access was paramount, so the main criteria was availability of English-teaching colleagues working on the same campus, a population of over 50, teaching in the bachelor's program or in English Foundations, the program to develop newly-arrived students' English language skills. Secondly, I only approached teachers who I had already some measure of rapport with; the initial approach was informal, in the faculty offices or the hallways to gauge interest. This was followed by a more formal email which included the interview guide topics, the consent form and the information sheet. Most of the teachers who I approached agreed to participate, although a few declined either due to disinterest or scheduling conflicts. In the end, fifteen teachers participated in the focus groups: 5 women and 10 men, from North America, the British Isles, South Africa, and the Indian Sub-Continent. However, as the focus groups were a preliminary data collection instrument and not used in the analysis,

these participants are generally not included in table 1. Of those teachers who took part in the focus groups, five also participated in the semi-structured, individual interviews, therefore they are included in the table in the following section.

For the individual interviews, greater care was taken in the sampling process, as I wanted a wider range of backgrounds and teaching contexts (HEIs across the GCC). Hence, I began to build a list of potential participants based on my own network (current- and former-colleagues, classmates, friends, or other associates), with special attention paid to diversity of backgrounds (not all from the same countries), experience (having worked in a variety of countries inside or outside of GCC), and contexts (at least one working in each Gulf State). As the interviews required not just a commitment of time but also of emotions, I additionally considered my impression of teachers' openness, clearly a subjective judgment. The compiling of the complete list ran concurrently to the process of contacting others and beginning the data collection process, and both affected the other as they proceeded (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.28, as cited by Richards, 2003, p.249). Once I had established a participant, I gauged their interest informally in person, if possible, or by email or text message in other cases. After an informal commitment, I emailed the teacher the interview questions, the consent form and the information sheet, asking them to read the questions in advance and return the signed consent form to me prior to the interview. The entire process, from contacting the first teacher to participate through to completing the interview with the twentieth took around eight months.

4.3.2 Participants

The participants are all expatriate TESOL professionals working in higher education in the GCC, specifically the countries of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia,

and the UAE. Employing institutions range in size from small (student enrollment of 1,000 or fewer) to very large (10,000 or more), and include federal universities, private universities, as well as international. Names and locations for the HEIs are being withheld for ethical reasons. Names, ages, and specific home countries of the participants are also confidential (for ethical considerations, see section 4.5). Each teacher has a master's degree in Applied Linguistics, TESOL, or a similar field; a small number also have a doctorate. The majority have more than ten years' experience of working in tertiary education in international settings, inside and outside of the GCC region. Despite diverse backgrounds and experience, it is their shared identity as English teachers that qualifies them for this study.

Table 1: Participant biographies

Name (Pseudonym)	Home region	GCC countries (approximate years) experienced	Type of Institution: (Federal, Private, International)
Abdullah	USA/Canada	UAE (10), Qatar (5)	Federal, International
Ali	Southwest Asia	UAE (10)	Federal, Private
Bobby	USA/Canada	UAE (10), Bahrain (5)	Federal
Chris	British Isles	Qatar (10), UAE (10)	Federal, International
Fahad	Southwest Asia	Saudi Arabia (10)	Federal, Private
Harley	S.Africa/Australia	UAE (5)	Federal, Private
Hanna	USA/Canada	UAE (5)	Federal
Hussein	Southwest Asia	Saudi Arabia (5), UAE (2)	Federal
Jeff	USA/Canada	Oman (2), Saudi Arabia (5)	Federal
Kara	USA/Canada	UAE (10)	Federal
Kelly	USA/Canada	UAE (5)	Federal
Louis	USA/Canada	Oman (1), UAE (5)	Federal
Nour	Middle East/North Africa	UAE (10)	Federal, Private
Peter	British Isles	UAE (5)	Federal

Pat	British Isles	Bahrain (10)	Federal
Shaikha	Middle East/North Africa	UAE (10)	Private, International
Sheila	Middle East/North Africa	Kuwait (1), UAE (10)	Federal, Private
Tahmina	Southwest Asia	Saudi Arabia (10)	Federal
Tim	British Isles	Bahrain (5), UAE (2)	Federal
Zahra	Southwest Asia	Oman (4)	Federal

As can be seen, time spent in their position ranges from several months to multiple years, and each Gulf State is represented, i.e., there is one or more participant residing in every GCC member state. While still not generalizable, drawing from a range of locations in the region better exemplified the phenomena being researched, specifically their experiences of the local cultures (Perry, 2017); thus, the additional consideration of a wide range of participants, whose home countries include the United States, Canada, Ireland, the United Kingdom, South Africa, Syria, Lebanon, Iran, and Pakistan. The number of participants is kept relatively low (20), as the practice for “information-rich” studies is to include the maximum number of cases that are can be managed within the constraints on the researcher and participants (Perry, 2017) but that will provide “sufficient data to represent the experience you are investigating” (Mears, 2012, p.171).

4.3.3 Data Collection

As an approach for greater understanding, exploratory research is more of an outlook or attitude towards the research process; therefore, the methods of data collection will be similar to various other strategies of social, educational research, only with an open mind as to what is being studied, without any theory imposed on the data prior

to analysis. This is in line with the beliefs of Shank and Brown (2007), who state that qualitative research is “much more tactical” and that “researchers need to allow things to unfold in front of them” (p.138). Such an outlook can also include the formulation of instruments; in this research, there is a hierarchy of instruments, each resulting in greater focus, the formulation of the subsequent instrument or data collection encounter, and heightened understanding. The data collection consisted of focus groups followed by semi-structured interviews.

4.3.3.1 Focus groups

Focus groups were conducted to find a more distinct direction for the research. As a preliminary instrument, focus groups are a sensible approach to give direction to the research and aid in formulating more appropriate interview questions based on experiences beyond my own. Since my own collegial relationships, for example, may be an outlier in the region, developing the instrument would have necessitated much greater scrutiny in the next phase of the research. A focus group, in the words of Babbie (2010) can also be referred to as “group interviewing,” and is “typically 5 to 15 people (…) brought together in a private, comfortable environment to engage in a guided discussion of some topic” (p.322). In a focus group, a “series of topics introduced by the focus group co-ordinator” lead to a discussion amongst the participants, with a structure that is not limiting, meaning that the discussion flows naturally from one topic to another (Newby, 2014, p.366). In view of the group dynamic, or rather the potential for a group to be swayed or even bullied by one member or an overall issue of group conformity or “groupthink”, Babbie (2010) recommends multiple focus groups on a single topic (p.323).

Beyond the number of participants, the trigger of the focus group also differentiates this instrument from semi-structured individual interviews. Instead of a series of questions, researchers develop “loosely developed” interview guides, identifying the key issues or topics to be explored; thus, the emphasis is on topics, not questions (Kumar, 2014, p.195). The interview guides for this research are included in Appendix C. The discussion amongst participants is expected to develop more organically after being prompted by the researcher, demonstrating that the purpose of a focus group is to explore. Since “this collective format leads to a deeper exploration of issues by participants” (Shank & Brown, 2007, p.63), it is sensible, then, to use this method prior to more penetrating individual interviews. Other benefits of using focus groups at this stage are the more naturalistic environment, since the researcher’s role is diminished and the participants generally control the discussion, meaning that a measure of the power imbalance inherent in qualitative interviews is also diminished (Greener, 2011). Further advantages to researchers utilizing focus groups include the flexibility they enable, the high face validity they entail, and the efficiency of time and expense (Krueger, 1988, p.47, as cited by Babbie, 2010, p.323).

While focus groups feature certain benefits, they are still complicated to manage. As discussed in section 4.3.1., participants were selected based on purposive and convenience criteria, meaning that they were all English lecturers at the HEI where I am a faculty member. However, as it is a preliminary instrument, these participants are not included in the biographies in Section 4.3.2. The entire process of the focus groups began with development of the interview guides, based on my own experience and prior literature reviews I had conducted. After reflection

on manageable numbers and the data to be collected, I arrived at a total of five participants chosen for each focus group, and three focus groups to be conducted. Two groups consisted of male teachers, and one of women, to encourage open communication in the group in case any potentially sensitive topics arise. Prior to the focus groups, each participant was emailed the interview guides, the consent form, and the research information sheet. Organizing a meeting time around all of the participants' teaching schedules was an involved process, as was finding and reserving an available room (Greener, 2011); in the end, based on participants' teaching schedules, two groups agreed to meet during a gap on Tuesday morning, and one group of men chose Thursday morning. The Tuesday morning groups met in an available classroom on the women's campus of my own HEI, while the Thursday group used a conference room on the men's campus. For the focus groups in the classrooms, I arranged the desks to form a square table so that all six of us could sit around one focal space. The conference room had one table, which everyone sat around. Some participants arrived with the emailed materials printed and signed, whereas others signed the consent form at the start of our meeting.

Regarding the actual collection of data during the focus groups, I asked the members for a time commitment of one hour, yet the focus group sessions each lasted between 45 and 65 minutes, the timing being determined by the depth of discussion and engagement by the participants, although one focus group was interrupted by a fire drill and had to be restarted after a 20-minute evacuation. I received permission to record the session from each focus group member, and for the sessions I used a microphone borrowed from a colleague, with my own iPhone as a back-up. I began each focus group by asking the participants to glance at the

interview guides which either they brought or I provided, and then I asked participants who started at the HEI more recently to begin by recounting their orientation experiences and then expanding the conversation amongst the group. The forthcoming discussion followed the interview guides in a natural pattern, from orientation, through their experiences in the HEI, and then in their personal lives outside of work. The conversations were predominantly positive and I only decided to interject in moments when certain participants looked as if they did not have the opportunity to speak or contribute, or to move the discussion forward if time was becoming a factor. Upon completing each focus group, I transcribed the discussions (see Appendix D for an excerpt) using Microsoft Word and the Windows Media Player. I listened to each recording twice, writing all that was said, as I understood, differentiating between different speakers, but not who was actually speaking, providing added anonymity to the participants. The major topics of discussion were then summarized. Via email, the summaries were distributed to participants for member checking, and they were encouraged to dispute or provide additional input for any topics. Finally, those themes informed the creation of the questions and format for the individual, semi-structured interviews.

4.3.3.2 Individual interviews

The main research instrument was semi-structured interviews, which can be defined as a “directed conversation” (Lofland & Lofland, 1984, 1995, as cited by Charmaz, 2003, p.312), exploring participants’ lives and constructed world in a free-flowing manner. Unlike other qualitative research methods, interviews provide the researcher with “more analytic control over their material” (Charmaz, 2003, p.312). According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2015), qualitative interviews are one of the most popular

research methods in the social sciences because of the means provided to explore the experiences and understandings of participants, in their own words. The key benefit of such interviews is that they allow us to explore a situation in the exact words of participants, leading to an ever greater understanding of the deeper significance of their experiences (Pring, 2014). Such an approach may limit the generalizability of the results, however it brings the research closer to the reality constructed by the participants (Pring, 2014), which is the dictate of the research questions and the objectives, examining how teachers experience multiple facets of their lives in the region.

The design of qualitative, semi-structured interviews is “flexible, iterative, and continuous, rather than prepared in advance and locked in stone” (Herbert & Rubin, 1995, p.43, as quoted by Babbie, 2010, p.318). Thus, after establishing areas of interest for the interviews, questions were formulated, but instead of a hard-and-fast plan, the questions loosely guide the interviews, allowing fluidity based on the responses and the interests of the participant. The goal of this “interview guide approach” was to keep the encounter “conversational and situational” (Patton, 1980, p.206, as quoted by Cohen et al., 2011, p.413). The interviews centered on the themes of the research questions: the new-teacher orientation, the small cultures of the institution, the large culture of the country, and the teachers’ interest in learning about those cultures. This echoes Evetts’ (2012) assertion that “in sociological research on professional groups the focus is the occupation, the work, practitioners, work cultures and identities” (p.2) (see Appendix E for interview questions). Before contacting participants, the interview format was piloted in-person with a teacher similar to the participants (Turner, 2010). The piloting was productive as a few key

issues lacked development in the interview questions; it provided practice of the semi-structured interview dynamic, and established the flexible timing for the interview at around an hour. As the participants are working across the Gulf States, some of the interviews were conducted via Skype or a similar Internet communicator. Denscombe (2014) states that telephone interviews have similar validity to those face-to-face, and Rowley (2012) lists several benefits of conducting interviews through computer-mediated communicators, but also warns that "something of the rapport and richness of the interaction may be lost" (p.265). An online interview was not additionally piloted because I had conducted multiple online interviews for prior research projects, thereby building an understanding of the technical and practical aspects associated with them, and I felt it was unnecessary since the in-person pilot aided in working through interview- and topic-specific issues. Ultimately, six interviews were conducted online, while fourteen were conducted in person, at various locations across the UAE.

After participants' initial interest was gauged (see section 4.3.1), consent forms and the research information sheet (see Appendix B), together with the interview questions, were emailed to the participants prior to their interviews so that they could familiarize themselves with the topics and reflect on their experiences. Time and location for the interview were negotiated with participants in attempts to make them as comfortable as possible: the online interviews were conducted using either Skype or Google Hangouts, while the face-to-face interviews took place in classrooms or offices on various campuses across the UAE. The final interviews lasted between 60 to 90 minutes, depending on the breadth of the conversation and the willingness of the participants to extend the time. Although I wanted to keep

interviewees at ease, I typically dressed professionally for the interviews, similar to most of the participants. In efforts to put them at ease, each interview began with small talk and chit chat before I informed that we were beginning and asked permission to start recording our conversation. Recordings were made using an iPhone. I further attempted to ease participants into the interview by first asking about their teaching background and establishing some of their overall experiences prior to beginning the interview questions. Once we began to cover the material on the interview question list (see Appendix E), I kept to a flexible approach, allowing participants to discuss topics in their order of choosing, with only small notes being taken on whether topics had been discussed or not so that we could return to them before finishing. This was an endeavor to ensure a more natural conversation, yet I often included follow-up or probing questions in order to pursue greater elaboration (Babbie, 2010). I also kept notes on the timing of the interview so that I could inform participants how long we had talked and allow them to decide to extend the time or not (Kvale, 2006). Each interview was concluded with an entreaty for their final, general thoughts, asking if there was anything that they felt we missed or that they would like to explain in greater detail, followed by profuse thanks for their time.

The recordings were personally transcribed as rapidly as possible for analysis (see Appendix F for a sample). Participants were subsequently sent the transcription of their own interview for member validation (Kvale, 2006). Only two participants had much input as to their transcripts and offered many clarifications or changes, with one participant, citing privacy concerns, requesting to see the data analysis upon completion, which I gladly forwarded to their satisfaction. After beginning the analysis process, in certain cases, follow-up questions seeking clarification or greater detail

were either emailed to participants or taken up in a short, supplemental interview. Those responses were added to the transcription of the main interview and treated as part of the whole.

4.3.4 Approach to data analysis

What follows is more of an "historical record of the tactical efforts needed to bring about the research" (Shank & Brown, 2007, p.141), rather than an account of the predetermined plan of analysis. Transcribing the focus groups concentrated on the accuracy of the information conveyed, not who was speaking, as touched upon in section 4.3.3.1. I listened to each recording an initial time to transcribe, and then a second time to confirm my understanding. The first step in analysis was summarizing the discussions, effectively creating pattern codes, organizing the data "into smaller and more meaningful units" (Punch, 2009, p.176). Using the Microsoft Word documents, I ordered the data into general topics and larger themes to allow participants to conduct member checks, ensuring a measure of internal validity. After that initial step, which included the member checking, I next used NVIVO to more closely analyze the focus group transcripts. With the transcripts divided into large chunks based on general topics, I developed more specific, domain and taxonomic coding in order to identify "the cultural knowledge people use to organize their behaviors and interpret their experiences" (Spradley, 1980, pp.30-31, as cited by Saldana, 2009, p.133). This step involved re-reading each transcript and drawing out certain aspects that arose in my perception as more common across the three focus groups. However, as it was a preliminary instrument, the analysis was less rigorous than the following steps, as it was intended to assist in the preparations for the primary data collection. Rather, the results of this coding enabled a more developed,

comprehensive list of topics and issues comprising an interview guide for individual, semi-structured interviews.

The semi-structured interviews represent the bulk of the data collection and analysis. Interviews were transcribed using a similarly rigorous method to that of the focus groups: on my personal HP laptop, I used Windows Media Player to play the recordings, while I typed on Microsoft Word. This kept both hands on the keyboard, and provided for a more efficient process. I listened through each recording once quickly, pausing sporadically, and generating a rough transcription. When listening an additional time, I employed a much more stop-start approach in order to confirm details and finalize the document. After transcription and member checking, the data was analyzed through a number of steps. Participants' basic demographic information was noted separately, prior to the interviews, so as to provide an additional buffer of confidentiality. After member checking, the transcripts were uploaded onto the NVIVO program to facilitate coding. Similar to the focus group transcripts, the data was initially categorized in pattern codes, based on the categories of the research questions and chronology: anticipatory socialization, encounter phase of socialization, orientation period, internal cultures in HEIs, and experiences outside of HEIs.

Once the data was organized on a basic level, domain and taxonomic coding was used to see "the cultural knowledge people use to organize their behaviors and interpret their experiences" (Spradley, 1980, pp.30-31, as cited by Saldana, 2009, p.133). I was able to get closer to those interpretations by periodically stepping back and reflecting on the data, comparing participants' transcripts in relation to one another, to earlier or later remarks, as well as to the theme of the code itself, in order

to highlight any developing patterns that begin to emerge (Strauss & Crobin, 1998, p.45, as cited in Babbie, 2010, p.308). These reflections were facilitated by the use of a research notebook, in which I recorded my thoughts and observations throughout the process.

Many of the semantic relationships emerged during subsequent analyses; characteristic of an exploratory study, as the detailed codes and themes were not previously dictated, but rather took shape from the data as it was analyzed inductively (Greener, 2011). See Appendix G for a sample of the coding. As I proceeded to read and re-read the larger chronological themes, they gave way to more specific codes: anticipatory socialization was initially narrowed into positive and negative experiences, as was encounter and the orientation. At the same time, orientation was also coded according to the individuals whom the participants interacted with: students, colleagues, administrators, or those outside the HEIs. This naturally then moved to coding according to preparation for and starting teaching, informal orientation and mentoring, administrative sessions for orientation, and accomplishing tasks outside of the HEI/accommodation. The coding of teachers' initial encounters with students flowed naturally into participants' impressions of their overall relationships with students: students' work, their preparedness for higher education, motivation, classroom management and mobile phones, and then students' grades.

By this point in the analysis, the writing of Chapter Five would have begun, as Kumar (2014) describes a "do-it-yourself" approach to qualitative research as "one that involves 'tacking' back and forth between the different components of the design, assessing their implications for one another" (p.132). Thus, writing and analyzing

took place concurrently, as an iterative process. After the early stages of the teacher development continuum had been analyzed (Bartell, 2003), Saphier and King's (1985) model of school culture provided guidance in the next phase of coding – interactions with colleagues, interactions with the administration, teachers' position, and the organization of the HEI. This also seemed to fit an initial positive/negative approach to coding, which then I was able to break down into more specific codes centered on the means of assistance from colleagues. As far as the rest of their experiences within HEIs, certain codes came to light concerning pressure, communication, institutional values, and contracts/feeling temporary. Participants' experiences outside of their workplace constituted the final large theme, and that continued the theme of feeling temporary, which was based more on the interactions with locals and use of language. The final steps of the research process were intermingled with the writing process, moving back and forth between the two, having a conversation with the data as I wrote, with even more decisions being made through the editing process, as certain sections needing to be shortened or developed further. This review provides a brief glimpse into the process of analysis, with such a wealth of data resulting from the thick descriptions of the twenty participants, yet what should become apparent is the rigorous, cyclical approach to my interactions with the data, and the inductive nature of themes emerging through multiple interrogations of that data over time.

4.4 Ethical dimensions

Clarity in the ethical dimension is of utmost importance in social or educational studies because of the research's interpersonal nature. As Richards (2003) states,

“Good QI (qualitative inquiry) discovers things about people they didn’t know themselves and might not want others to know. It can hurt; a lot; and for a long time” (p.139). Individuals’ privacy or worse can be adversely impacted by poor research, but the contribution to knowledge by quality research can expose painful truths for “public institutions such as schools, local authorities, government departments and committees,” meaning that ethical principles and procedures must be rigorously adhered to, in order that the research proves valid, remains independent, and continues its “pursuit of truth” unhindered (Pring, 2014, p.147). With that aim in mind, the research has been conducted with strict adherence to the University of Exeter’s ethics policy.

4.4.1 Informed consent

The nature of participants’ involvement in the study must be voluntary because such studies mean “an intrusion into people’s lives;” participation must be obtained openly and honestly, ensuring that no participants are forced to take part (Babbie, 2010, pp.64-65). While this approach sounds straightforward, as the given study involves colleagues and other professional associates, there could also be social pressure exerted by the researcher, other colleagues, or even by superiors. The ethical norm for research participation is obtaining informed consent, “in which subjects base their voluntary participation on a full understanding of the possible risks involved” (Babbie, 2010, p.66).

For this study, a consent form (see Appendix B) delineating potential risks was prepared in line with the University of Exeter’s ethical guidelines. Participants are colleagues and associates and could be made to feel social or even professional coercion, or even intimidation in the worst case scenario. Participants were

approached socially to gauge their interest, with a follow-up email reminder and a request for an interview time. After an interview time and location were agreed upon, what Pring (2014) refers to as “negotiating access” (p.150), the consent form and other documents were distributed to participants, making clear the type of information that will be requested and how such information will be used, along with the possible risks and how I ensure their protection from such risks, as well as the voluntary nature of participation (Newby, 2014).

4.4.2 Risks of participation in research

As a researcher, serious reflection is required before beginning such an involved undertaking. Bentz and Shapiro (1998, as quoted by Richards, 2003) outline three questions for researchers to consider as a study is being formulated:

- What good or harm may come from this project for myself or others?
- What changes in my life or the lives of others may occur as a result of this research?
- How will my skills as a scholar-practitioner be enhanced by this research? (p.242)

These three questions are a guide for this subsection, as a clear understanding of risks and benefits is a prerequisite when initiating a project that intrudes into others’ lives.

For volunteers who agree to take part in a research project, a researcher’s most important responsibility is ensuring that they will not be harmed. In educational research, there are very substantive dangers for participants: certain topics may make participants feel uncomfortable or even “injure a fragile self-esteem” (Babbie, 2010, p.66). To limit this, questions were distributed in advance so that participants could consider the issues and prepare themselves. The process of negotiating access is also beneficial, since participants determine the time and location of an

encounter so they feel more comfortable, not fully relinquishing control (Pring, 2014). Moreover, Babbie (2010) warns that probing questions or difficult topics may “force participants to face aspects of themselves that they don’t normally consider” (p.66). Researchers must be perceptive when interacting with participants to prevent any such harm from occurring, a skill which I have developed during the module phase of the doctorate, experience being the prime manner of fostering such skills (Babbie, 2010; Kvale, 2006).

4.4.3 Privacy, anonymity and confidentiality

In giving informed consent, participants are also informed of their right to privacy and confidentiality. As far as answering sensitive questions, participants are informed of their right to avoid answering but are also assured that all responses are kept in the strictest confidence. All necessary steps were taken to protect the identities of participants. The transcriptions of the focus groups were done in such a way that individual speakers were not discernible: it was only the conversation, i.e., the things said, not who said them, which was transcribed. Individual interviews were simply recorded via ordinal numbers, so the first interviewee was number one, etc. After receiving the transcriptions back from member checking, the file names of the transcripts were converted to the pseudonyms used through the remainder of the research, and potentially identifying information was redacted during coding.

4.4.4 Data management and storage

The handling of the data was of utmost concern, since it involved participants’ commentary on their country of residence and their employers, which could put their positions at risk. As a result, every step was taken to protect the raw data of their recordings: initial recordings were immediately transferred to the University of

Exeter's U:Drive, where they were protected by password, to be deleted upon completion of the study. Emails with participants were deleted to ensure no digital record on my end connecting participants with particular transcripts. The storage of the transcriptions was also in the University of Exeter's U:Drive, and they were only to be kept beyond the life of the study with participants' permission (Pring, 2014).

4.4.5 Ethical approval

The University of Exeter has clear standards and procedures for research ethics. Abiding by the university's guidelines, I applied for ethical approval well in advance of beginning my data collection, submitting my anonymized application form through the proper channels, according to the form. I was assisted in the form's completion by my supervisor, who advised on a few key points, most importantly regarding the breadth of the information included. The form itself was quite involved and required a great deal of reflection on the nature of consent, considering my associations with the participants, and the possible harms that could result from such a research project (Richards, 2003). Approval was received on 2 May, 2017, and the approval reference number is D/16/17/39 (see Appendix A).

4.5 Validity

To ensure the validity of the qualitative analysis, Guba and Lincoln (1989, as cited by Greener, 2011) recommend several categories: *credibility*, the length of time and depth of investigation; *transferability*, the thickness of the descriptions; *dependability*, clear and consistent research methods; *confirmability* and *reflexivity*, achieved via transparency and availability of research materials and notes (pp.105-106). In light of these classifications, several theorists have developed checklists to illuminate the

standard of research; however, many involve subjective evaluations asking “How well (…)?” or “How clear (…)?” serving to illustrate the slippery nature of ascertaining the quality and rigor of interpretivist research (Spencer et al., 2003, pp.22-28, as quoted by Babbie, 2010, pp.417-418). As a researcher, I have performed the checks mentioned above to ensure consistency throughout the research process, but each reader must be alert to the need to ask certain questions and check for themselves in order to be fully confident in the results.

4.6 Limitations

Focus groups, according to Kruger (1988, p.48, as quoted by Babbie, 2010) feature several disadvantages. Less control by the researcher can be troublesome but should yield more naturalistic responses, assuming that the researcher-as-moderator has developed the necessary skills. The purposive sampling ensured that the environment for the discussion was predominantly positive; a portion of the criteria in selecting participants was their collegial natures, with the group dynamic of this data collection instrument in mind.

Interviews additionally feature multiple limitations, according to Cicourel (1964, as quoted by Cohen et al., 2011), which are as follows: confounding factors creating variance between interviews, unease on the part of the respondent, meanings may be misunderstood, and much of the interaction is outside of the control of the interviewer. The differences between one interview and another can be a strength of the method, since that suggests the data is closer to participants’ individually constructed realities. Concerning the second point, a well-practiced interviewer should be able to put the interviewee at ease enough to open up, with the

understanding that this is a potential risk. I also tried to avoid directing participants' or encouraging narratives of any sort, but there may also be an issue of *response bias*, with a participant responding in a way that they believed I might want to hear or because they may have been afraid to tell the truth if they thought it was embarrassing or shameful (Villar, 2017).Though difficult, attempting consistency in data analysis is a key responsibility of a researcher. While complete lack of control would negatively affect an instrument's reliability, interpretivism accepts that human life is not ordered and predictable and allows for some variability.

4.7 Summary

Chapter 4 presents the theoretical foundations of the research, broadly as a study within the interpretivist paradigm, and more narrowly as an exploratory project within interpretivism, producing qualitative data. In light of the given frameworks, the research questions are expounded, leading into a description of the research design, which includes explanation of sampling methods, the participants, as well as the manner of data collection and data analysis. The chapter is nearly completed with a detail examination of the ethical issues of such a study, together with the processes of ensuring compliance with the ethical principles of the University of Exeter. Finally, a clear understanding of the limitations of the study and its methods is demonstrated. The following chapter presents the findings and the process of data analysis.

CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

In light of the context described in Chapter 2, initial questions and broad topics were developed from the data from the focus groups, and the experiences of participants were analyzed, with concurrent themes or commonalities between the different teachers emerging throughout the data analysis process. Those themes are discussed in this chapter, exemplified by direct quotations from the participants themselves, and organized via the framework established in the Literature Review (chapter 3), rather than addressing each research question directly, as seen in the following table:

Table 2: Themes and sub-themes for analysis

Main theme	Sub-themes
1. Orientation	Motivation to move to the region, recruitment process, welcoming culture, help from new colleagues, completing tasks outside of HEI, use of time during orientation, orienting to the classroom, new teachers' individual needs
2. Interactions with students	Preparedness for higher education, grades as main motivation, student power, giving in to students, assessing students, approaches to teaching, classroom management, potential cultural conflicts, genders
3. Cultures in the institutions	Interactions with colleagues, support from management, teachers' position within the institution, organizational culture
4. Cultures outside the institutions	Lifestyle, socializing, daily interactions

Thus, this chapter examines participants' cultural experiences, effectively following Bartell's (1995) "teacher development continuum": starting with teachers' recruitment, arrival and initial orientation (section 5.1); moving on to their encounters with students and their other experiences of the cultures within the institution (sections 5.2 and 5.3); and finally, because of the international context, exploring teachers' lives outside of the institution: how they perceive their interactions with others and the manner in which they have adapted to living in the GCC (section 5.4).

5.1 Orientation

The 20 participants have all been living and working in the region for years, so the research relies on their memories of the orientation they received at the start of their time in the Gulf States. However, over half of the participants changed jobs at least once through their time in the region, meaning their experience of induction may be fairly recent, also increasing the total number of incidences of recruitment and orientation amongst participants to 30.

Although the literature is clear on the importance of orientation, several participants reported receiving no formal induction when starting a new position. Like others, Jeff reported arriving at the HEI one day after an international flight and being thrust into the classroom almost immediately: "We went into work – they were doing assessment week – and we started, we started right away, like the next day, in the classroom, doing assessments for the incoming students. No orientation, nothing." Of those participants, their employing institutions were located in multiple Gulf States and varied amongst the three main types: federal, private, and international. Three participants were working as adjuncts, the reason they interpreted for receiving no

orientation, a status as “second-class citizens” within the institution (Hoyt, 2012; Wallin, 2004). Three others arrived after the start of the semester (for various reasons); another was a local hire, with only one teacher being hired from abroad and arriving before the start of the semester still not receiving any sort of orientation. Therefore, we can see that HEIs prioritize conducting some form of orientation for *full-time* faculty who arrive *en masse* at the start of the academic year. The comprehensiveness and effectiveness of the programs, in the eyes of the new teachers, will be considered in the ensuing subsections.

5.1.1 Reasons for teaching in the GCC (“You go where the money is”)

Participants had varied reasons for applying for their current positions, or rather, for choosing to move to the GCC. Only one volunteered that it was because of a fascination with the region’s culture and language, whereas four others said it was for a change in lifestyle or to do something new and different. The majority admitted or intimated that their choice was financially dictated, for example, Hanna:

> “The job paid 70% more than what I was earning in my last job, so I had one thing on my mind. And that was pretty much it. I can do a lot for 70% more pay. That sounds shallow, but (…) you go where the money is sometimes.” (Hanna)

These findings echo those of Chapman and colleague’s (2014) study of academic staff in the UAE, in which many participants listed “reasonably good salary and benefits” as one of the key factors for their choice (p.139). A consequence of the predominantly economic motivation is seen in participants’ preparations prior to arriving: many had positive feelings about their move but described superficial actions to research the area, the culture, or the laws. One even referred to herself at that time as “naïve”. While this may have implications regarding potential employees’ commitment (to the HEIs or to enculturation), it is worth noting that most participants

spent several years in their positions and more than half have lived and worked in the region for over a decade, honoring their contracts and contributing to the well-being of innumerable students.

5.1.2 Recruitment ("didn't take my stress into account")

The actual job search was only reported as an issue for the so-called non-native-speaker teachers (NNSTs) amongst the participants. In fact, while none of the other teachers mentioned frustrations with finding a job, six out of the eight NNSTs raised the issue:

> "I struggled because I was a non-native. I was a non-Arab, and it really frustrated me in the beginning that, you know, there is no value of my skills, my qualification, nothing. And so I worked in schools, you know, (…) in my beginning years. I was really fed up with it, but then I got the job." (Tahmina)

Those participants discussed monumental, ongoing efforts made to merely be considered for positions. Tahmina and Shaikha explained that it took them several years to be offered a full-time contract, despite their qualifications and extensive experience in the region. Nour, who has dual citizenship, admitted that when she has applied for new jobs, she uses the passport of her adopted country, not the one of her birth: "An Egyptian passport teaching English? Are you kidding me?" Not an endorsement of the status quo, more as a recognition of the reality facing teachers who do not fit an expected mold, she also explains that during interviews, she discusses her birth country because she feels that she would not be true to herself if she did not. These experiences are similar to others reported in the literature (Selvi & Yazan, 2017), and it is an issue that HEIs and governments in the region will have to address in light of the teacher shortage (Demirjian, 2015) and increasing cost of living, potentially making it more difficult to recruit qualified teachers.

The actual process of recruitment was similar for most participants. They typically applied online, were interviewed online, communicated with the institution and received a contract offer via email, all prior to arriving at the start of the contract. The other corresponding characteristic was the tedious nature of the security clearance process and the general lack of information and responsiveness that participants reported:

> "Well, the initial hiring process I found a bit stressful because it was very drawn out, and there wasn't a lot of feedback from them. (…) I kind of knew what to expect, but I did find that I was having to ask a lot of questions. (…) So that was a bit stressful because I had to make decisions about my other job." (Abdullah)

An extended process is understandable, considering the size of many of the HEIs together with government bureaucracy and the numbers of new expatriate workers being processed. However, many participants expected more transparency. They were generally positive regarding their contact people, particularly since they were not in communication with decision makers but with HR administrators or secretaries. We can assume that those employees were familiar with the process and the timing of contract approval, security clearance, etc., and were letting the process unfold at it normally does. However, if there was a lull in communication longer than a few weeks, participants seemed to interpret that as being kept in the dark: feelings of uncertainty which led to stress. Although there were some similar complaints about the process of the government paperwork, most were accepted as a requisite for living and working in GCC countries, and not considered an undue burden. Overall, participants reported the recruiting process, from applying to arriving, averaged about 6-8 months, a tolerable space of time contingent on the regularity of contact and information received from the HEI.

5.1.3 Welcoming culture (“We didn’t need to be worried”)

The initial success of the orientation program was largely dependent on how welcomed new teachers felt by their new institutions. This began with their first in-person encounter with a representative of the HEI, together with feelings of being taken care of, for example:

> “They told me that I didn't need to be worried about teaching during the first week. (…) Upon my arrival, somebody, you know, from the center was waiting for me and (…) I felt welcome. She was so warm, so friendly, and immediately, they took me to my apartment.” (Zahra)

An immediate meeting at the airport was reported by several participants as a key aspect of being welcomed. That initial goodwill can provide long term benefits for institutions as new employees are spared a potentially stressful situation and generally reciprocate in their approach to the orientation process and their new positions. Paradoxically, for three others, when issues arose with their arrival, it was brushed off as a mere annoyance, for example, Tim stated, “It’s not ideal, but it’s an hour and a half out of my life, (…) and I was in my hotel after, you know, three hours later.” For his personal flexibility, Tim credited his extensive experience traveling and working abroad, but also that he was traveling alone.

Those arriving with family tended to have stronger emotions connected to their travel arrangements and airport service. Peter and Abdullah were both grateful for the HEI’s efforts and amount of help with their family’s flights and short-term accommodation. Jeff, on the other hand, was quite frustrated that the institution’s staff was not prepared for his family on arrival, while Louis discussed the emotional tumult and personal expense involved in bringing his own family at the start of his employment, as in his case, travel expenses for faculty’s family is only provided after six months of employment:

> “That was just, for me, I felt kind of harassed, frustrated, cost a lot of money, you know? (…) The whole thing was a fight, every step of the way. They didn't want to help and they actively kind of resisted everything.” (Louis)

Participants described a need to feel taken care of. Particularly when relocating one’s family to such locations, new employees want to have confidence that they have made the right decision in coming. Many discussed their positive feelings as they started their new positions; in contrast, Louis talked about his immediate desire to leave. Judging from his comments, we can see how that sentiment developed. New employees would have been made aware of such policies before arriving, but when they experience a turbulent start that generates such negativity, a seamless transition to a fruitful professional relationship seems unlikely.

A more positive transition to a teacher’s new position results when they are well-received and the early stages consist of an organized, well-planned orientation program making them feel welcomed and appreciated. Besides local hires or adjuncts, the rest of the participants reported that they were housed immediately, either in accommodation provided by the HEI or in a temporary hotel. The hotel stays ranged from one week to one month and were generally appreciated by the newly hired teachers, who widely reported that as encouraging. Once arriving at the institution, participants had varied impressions of the organization of their induction programs. Zahra, for example was impressed:

> “They gave all of us a ride from one building to another building and they took care of everything like the resident card, driver's license, housing. (…) They place different desks, different booths in a very large hall, and each stand is for one particular purpose. (…) It was so smooth. We didn't need to be worried about anything.” (Zahra)

Hussein was also pleased, calling the orientation “very organized, very systematic.” As new faculty will probably experience various stresses during this period of

extensive change, the participants revealed that such stress could be enhanced or alleviated merely by the appearance of effort by the institution on their behalf, particularly the level of organization and attention given to the induction process and new teachers' situation.

Nine other participants, while not disappointed with the overall program of orientation, experienced stress from the evident lack of preparation or seeming concern with the new teachers' induction into their new workplace. As a fairly extreme example, Harley discussed how representatives of the institution were surprised by her arrival:

> "When I actually started here (in September), (the manager) said they weren't expecting me until spring, which means I had to go through all the penalties of my ex-institution, which was traumatic for me because they wanted me to give four months' notice, (…) so that was more stressful." (Harley)

Thus, the lack of organization can have effects beyond new faculty's emotions, including financial ramifications. This situation points back to the clarity of communication from section 5.1.2, as Harley was unable to get direct answers to her specific concerns about arriving in January (as previously arranged) but continued to get the stock emails for all new recruits emphasizing an August start date. The lack of direct, personal communication could be interpreted as a lack of concern for the specific circumstances of individual new arrivals. Other programs, mentioned by only two participants, tailored specific events for the purpose of socializing newly hired faculty members: Pat talked about having a traditional meal with students, and Zahra, a "ladies'" dinner with new colleagues. Key aspects of their experience are the involvement during orientation of students as a positive feature for multiple reasons (Cook-Sather, 2016). Unfortunately, this was the only occasion described by participants as actively involving students in the induction process. The second point

regards informal induction, veteran teachers providing insider knowledge. Through social ice breakers, HEI administrations can facilitate the mixing of formal and informal orientation.

5.1.4 New colleagues ("You just want simple questions answered")

Despite the fact that administrations rarely manufactured such encounters between newly arrived teachers and their veteran counterparts, participants overwhelmingly described new colleagues as their greatest resource, as if being welcomed into a community of practice (Feiman-Nemser et al., 1999). Bobby, for example, talked about how two specific colleagues addressed her own issues:

> "(Colleague 1) gave me a shell of a course that he had developed and he didn't have to. He could have just said, "There's the book." So it was super helpful. (…) (Colleague 2) just answered questions. (…) Clearly, he knew what I needed to know for the first few weeks, so he was really smart in that way." (Bobby)

The actual importance of these colleagues' support only becomes clear after her response to a question about what her early days in the institution would have been like had these and other colleagues not gone out of their way to contribute: "I don't know if I've ever started with as little 'official' guidance as I did this year, but thank goodness for them. Yeah, if I hadn't had them, it would have been really ten times worse." Thus, it is possible to see the sizeable impact that veteran faculty members can have during new teachers' socialization processes. Particularly when there may be gaps in the official orientation as Bobby described, faculty members can supplement the induction that new teachers receive. Despite a paucity of official engagement between new and veteran faculty members, every participant talked positively about the support they received from colleagues. Peter even reported that a colleague loaned him money for the deposit for his accommodation. The vast

majority of the participants discussed how they actively sought answers from their new colleagues and how hospitable they were, as well. It appears the greatest difficulty most of them faced in that endeavor was knowing which questions to ask.

Much of that welcoming atmosphere and personal responsiveness can be traced back to the actions and culture of management. Several participants talked about how supportive their new supervisor was and the effect that had on them and their experiences:

> "Team leader was very supportive and accommodating all the time, available, and all of the teachers, all of the faculty members, not even English, but other people, as well. They were very welcoming. I could have stopped anybody and asked anything and they would always reply." (Hussein)

This alludes to multiple issues that management can address simply by the example that they set. The first is being accommodating and never too busy to address the concerns of new faculty. Several participants were appreciative of how many colleagues took the time to share their knowledge or help, regardless of other duties. This is connected to a transparent sharing of information and openness. In conjunction with those clear informational channels, the second issue is an appreciation for the situation of the new faculty and their needs. As Kelly reported about his early experiences: "I was asking the team leaders who have been here for years, and they don't even know what's going on" He affirmed that he was encouraged to ask questions by other teachers and administrators, and that he felt very comfortable in pursuing information, only to be frustrated by the deficiency of available information for everyone. As a new teacher, Kelly lacked the awareness that the situation was usual for the institution, as well as the specific information that he should have sought. At the start of the next year, he learned that the "chaos" in that period was typical, and he felt much less stress, but it took a year within the

system to generate that understanding. In her first few weeks, Hanna, on the other hand, remembers being reassured by colleagues: “Don’t work too hard. Don’t stress. It will all settle down and it’ll be fine,” helping her to have a better understanding that her experiences were not unusual. Similar to Kelly, she had been vexed as she tried to navigate through her first month in the position, but was able to settle in more easily due to colleagues showing a bit more recognition of her stress.

Several participants spoke about colleagues or supervisors demonstrating an appreciation of their situation. One of the starkest examples is Bobby’s experience of her new manager emailing her six months prior to arriving in order to help her prepare:

> “The program manager at the time contacted me in March and asked me if I could teach these two different courses, and I ended up being scheduled for those. So that part was really exceptionally good, in that I knew from March what I’d be teaching in September.” (Bobby)

The action of providing a mode of support or preparation that a very experienced teacher such as Bobby had never seen before had a positive effect on her initial arrival. It points back to the notion of being welcomed and appreciated. Harley was also very impressed with her new manager, who she met on her first morning: “He said I must talk to this person, that person, so he seemed to know exactly what was going on and exactly where to steer me and all the connections to set up for me, as well.” The managers’ actions helped both participants move from a state of stress and frustration to adaptation and acclimation.

This reflects another manner that a manager may contribute to new faculty’s socialization: assigning a veteran teacher to provide support, popularly referred to as a mentor. Although the literature is clear on the benefits of mentoring, just four participants received one, with terminology varying from “mentor”, “minder”, or

“buddy”. Three other participants said they would have appreciated having a mentor. Of those four who were given mentors, only Zahra was assigned the mentor before arriving:

> “It was around June. I was in contact with my buddy for two months, at least, you know, for two months. So I had plenty of time to ask my questions, whatever I had in mind. So that's, yeah, that gave me confidence. So it was not like a shock to me when I arrived. (…) So I knew what I would expect.” (Zahra)

By providing Zahra with a buddy before her arrival and giving her a source of information within the institution, the typical uncertainty that one encounters during such a transition was proactively reduced. It is that uncertainty reduction which is actually the underlying goal of an orientation program (Berger, 1979, as cited by Bauer et al., 2007), which her buddy provided after her arrival, as well. Establishing contact so early meant a ready-made friend once Zahra arrived, which would understandably be comforting to a new faculty member. Tim discussed his thoughts: “Because you don’t want to go to management or the administration every time. You just want simple questions answered.” A mentor, therefore, actually has a two-fold benefit: uncertainty reduction for the new faculty member and alleviating some of the pressure for managers during the pivotal start of the academic year.

5.1.5 Tasks outside of the institution (“that was the most negative part of it”)

During an orientation period, many of the pertinent issues concern faculty members’ lives outside of the institution. Generally, the most pressing is legal status in the country, typically involving some sort of medical test as part of a broader residence Visa application process, only completed after entering the country. Participants reported that their new institutions typically assisted with the process, for example:

> “If you’re in a situation where you had to take care of it yourself, you’d find it really difficult, so I’m grateful for that. (…) Maybe it could have been handled

> better, but I don't know how. Obviously, bureaucracy is difficult, and I was pleased (they) took care of that." (Peter)

These comments are representative of others who were appreciative of the assistance for such a crucial aspect of life abroad. That help is sensible on the part of the institutions, either for reasons of language or familiarity with the process. Institutions would most likely be receiving new faculty biannually, and sporadically throughout, as we have seen with some of the participants. Consequently, it is a service that institutions can readily provide for new faculty with little outlay of time or expense. However, when a participant's circumstance deviated from the expected arrival manner and timing, issues arose. Bobby revealed an antagonistic exchange with her human resources (HR) representatives for coming into the country with the wrong Visa due to administrative error. She was very off-put by the administration's reaction, but still expressed appreciation for the help she received along every other step in the process, saying that the Visa officer "went above and beyond", a representative comment by participants who seem well-aware of the difficulty they had avoided.

On the other hand, finding accommodation was as urgent and bewildering a task, yet participants reported receiving little assistance in this aspect, and accordingly, being quite annoyed:

> "I'd say on a 1 to 10, it was a 1; in that he showed up and took us some places, but I don't think anyone ended up staying in the places he took us, or that we were taken to. I thought it was a garbled way to do it. Just to put everyone in the van and take us around didn't make sense." (Kelly)

Kelly was one of the few participants who reported receiving much help finding housing, although he was not impressed with the approach of driving the new faculty around the city to show them various options, particularly considering the diversity of

the cohort of new teachers and their accommodation needs. Some were single, looking to live in an apartment downtown, and others were married with children, wanting large villas in quieter parts of the city. Hence, in his recollection, they were all disappointed with the “inefficient” support they were given.

Although those provided with a hotel were appreciative, most of them had less than two weeks to find suitable long-term accommodation, agree a contract including financing (which can be daunting as rent in the region is often paid yearly), and then move in, a task which includes connecting utilities, and buying furniture and appliances, all in a foreign country, with a two-week limit, while the new teachers adapted to new working conditions. Abdullah was frustrated that the administration did not seem to appreciate the time strain for the new teachers, as he was told, “It’s plenty of time. Two weeks is plenty of time.” However, his experience led him to believe differently, stating, “I’ve been in the Gulf a long time; it’s not enough time. So that was the most negative part of it for me.” The teachers’ experience supports that view: several participants either had to extend their stay in hotels or lodge with other teachers, which could create feelings of instability when they began teaching.

Overall, the participants were in concurrence of the negativity of the housing aspect of their induction process, yet the disapproval was not limited to participants independently searching for housing; Zahra and Jeff were provided accommodation directly upon arriving. The sight-unseen aspect creates issues itself, as both stated the proffered homes did not suit their needs. Because of the proximity to the campus mosque with its loudspeaker, together with the villa’s size relative to his large family, Jeff stated, “I was really disappointed.” Zahra, who was overwhelmingly positive about the orientation, nonetheless revealed that the apartment was “the only thing

I'm not happy about," largely resulting from the lack of choice and the poor condition of the unit, which she now feels stuck in: "Once you are given an apartment, (…) you cannot give it back." Since arriving, both have taken steps to try to move house, but have found their efforts frustrated within the institution's bureaucracy. Thus, accommodation can be a major cause of stress for new teachers during induction.

5.1.6 Use of time during orientation ("Nothing was accomplished")

As seen in the prior section, many participants felt a great deal of pressure to accomplish all of the necessary tasks during the time allotted. Very few participants talked about receiving a clear schedule delineating when they could spend time searching for accommodation or other personal tasks, yet most discussed various sessions outlining HR rules or administrative duties making up a large part of their orientation. Perceived as a necessary aspect, participants did not have strong emotions concerning those sessions. Nonetheless, large-scale, institution-wide meetings were fiercely targeted by seven participants as an impediment to the orientation process. Chris described a workshop "the first day before we started teaching" focused on faculty developing strategies and plans:

> It was a full-day workshop with hundreds of people, (…) and we just wanted to prepare our lessons, so at the end of this whole day, then the dean stands up and goes, "Right, this is what we're going to do." (…) Almost everybody in the room was pretty much in agreement: This was a complete waste of time." (Chris)

Though such meetings took place at different institutions, the reaction of participants was similar. Because of other, pressing duties, many of the new teachers went into those meetings with a skewed perspective, believing that they should be elsewhere, particularly as the meetings were not seen as beneficial, as Bobby remarked, "Nobody talked about students or teaching." Afterwards, frustrations intensified, with

participants saying, for example: “Nothing was accomplished,” “I was none the wiser,” or “One of the worse days of my life.” An implicit purpose of such meetings or conferences would be welcoming and socializing new faculty members, yet if the broad reaction was so negative, it is not having the desired effect, and could hasten new teachers’ departure rather than their adjustment.

5.1.7 Orienting to the classroom (“There was nothing about the actual teaching.”)

Similar to accommodation, an acclimation to the classroom would be an expected priority for expatriate teachers. However, only two participants felt well-prepared when they started teaching; eighteen said there was little helpful orientation to the classroom, the curriculum, or the students. When asked about such preparations, Bobby responded:

> “There was no link, whatsoever. I think orientation was all about admin, like what happens when students dispute their grades, and we were assured that there were rubrics for everything, but there was nothing about the actual teaching.” (Bobby)

This was a common sentiment amongst the participants: they learned about the administrative side of their job, but not the teaching side, leaving most to begin their classes underprepared for their specific contexts. Several admitted the necessity of an administrative orientation and talked about sessions explaining policies for attendance, assessments, grades, and other rules; however, those sessions did not address teachers’ core duties: day-to-day classroom interactions, exemplified by the 11 participants who were surprised by their students when classes began, resulting in frustration. Still, the stress levels reported were more modest compared to accommodation, largely due to the teachers’ experience, to which many credited their adaptability.

The contrast is stark between most of the participants' experiences and those of Louis and Chris, who both reported a more complete orientation to their teaching:

> "Within your teaching team, that's the serious orientation. I worked under a guy (…) who brought me into his class, had me observe the class for two or three days. He said, 'Just get the feel of it.' Then he said, 'Ok, you teach a little bit.'" (Louis)

Observing veteran teachers' classes as part of an orientation program are a useful means of introducing new teachers to typical classroom dynamics, thus reducing uncertainty before starting teaching. Under normal circumstances (a cohort of teachers arriving at the start of the semester), observations are a large, complicated aspect of induction to undertake, yet are worth the effort: the slight delay beginning teaching, the extra work for colleagues to teach and observe different classes, and the possible early disruption for students. That may be an explanatory factor in this case, as Louis arrived when classes were in session, providing various options for observations, helping him feel supported in the classroom, rather than being isolated or abandoned (Perry & Hayes, 2011). The circumstances for Chris were also unusual because the curriculum was being shifted, and the academic leadership was introducing the program to the entire department. The needs of the entire faculty necessitated such an orientation, so Chris and other new teachers benefited as a corollary. However, it is an illustrative corollary.

Taking the time to directly introduce the curriculum, assessments, teachers' roles, etc. was beneficial for Chris and his colleagues, yet avoiding that introduction can result in a less confident, potentially less effective teacher:

> "Students are rarely an issue with me; it's making sure that I'm teaching them as best as I can, and not spending time thinking about how to create materials to get them to do what I want. (…) That got me worried. And I did, I spent an

> awful lot of time questioning what I was doing. You know, 'is this the right'…?" (Tim)

Thus, lack of orientation can actually amplify uncertainty. In this case, a teacher with extensive years of experience was unsure of his teaching through the entire first semester and extending into the next, as he explained a preoccupation with remedying his prior mistakes. Hence, not orienting new teachers to the materials and modes of presentation can have long-term repercussions for them and their students. Tim admitted that the students may have been shortchanged: "I think I could have done better. I think students could have learned more, yeah, definitely." While lack of materials orientation is the antecedent to Tim's uncertainty, the underlying issue of this situation is the isolation in the classroom that many new teachers feel. Accordingly, induction does not finish at the start of the semester; it continues until teachers' activation as fully independent faculty members. Only two teachers mentioned ongoing, regular contact concerning their teaching: a professional development program that was part of the new teacher probation. Several teachers touched on their own probation, but said there was little follow-up. With more regular contact with their managers, there may have been different outcomes for seven participants with early issues with students or six who struggled with course materials.

Whereas isolation in an unfamiliar teaching situation may be difficult enough, several participants felt they were treated differently because of their status as a newcomer. In his first position in the region, Fahad was made to work in an affiliated primary school for several weeks; at his second institution, as his schedule changed regularly, his teaching load ballooned from 20 to 29 teaching hours a week, which is clearly excessive and potentially exploitative. He received little explanation from

management why his *he* was being moved to different groups and being made to work so many hours. This was similar to Abdullah's experience, as he explained the schedule change with little notice meant no opportunity to prepare, saying "you look like an idiot in front of the students." In an already unfamiliar situation, negative feelings can be more easily augmented. For both participants, that negativity also created perceptions of unprofessionalism, preventing new faculty from identifying with colleagues and management. Four more participants had similar experiences regarding schedules and course loads, while two others discussed feeling disadvantaged regarding their work spaces, all potentially leading to maladjusted teachers feeling isolated shortly after arriving.

5.1.8 Individual needs ("The orientation was for everyone, whatever they were teaching.")

The literature for onboarding (e.g. Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2006; Bauer et al., 2007), a more extensive type of orientation, advocates a realistic job preview so that new employees are fully introduced to all aspects of their new job roles and socialized into their new environment, rather than a "traditional 'information dump'" (Gregory, 1998, p.17, as quoted by Robinson, 1998, p.3). Thirteen participants discussed issues with the presentation of the information regarding their roles, responsibilities, and duties. For example:

> "It would be a good idea if they could tell, the HR could, "This is the information you must read now. This information you can do, consult later." (…) There was training with a presentation from HR, two presentations by HR. Then different departments, facilities, student services, counselors, academic services, IT." (Hussein)

Hussein's particular issue was not with the manner or the number of the presentations, which others spoke about, but rather that there was little clarification of

the hierarchy of that information. The sheer volume to absorb requires clarity, as well as variation in the manner in which it is presented. Hanna spoke of several presenters in a row during one long day:

> "We had five people in a row, five or six people in a row come in and talk to us, and they each asked us our name. (…) We knew each other's names by the end of two and half hours, but that's all we knew." (Hanna)

Her experience shows the issue with abutting orientation sessions on multiple subjects, delivered by a revolving door of presenters. The materials are presented, but the manner makes it difficult to retain them all. Thus, as Hussein mentioned, it would be advantageous if it was made clear which information was needed for the orientation period or for later, so that teachers can prioritize it themselves, or as Abdullah suggested, utilizing various methods of delivery, including online.

More importantly, however, the narratives reveal a lack of systemic planning for orientation programs. Part of the problem organizers encounter is the size of the groups participating in orientation, as several participants started in cohorts as large as 25. Ali illustrated that the orientation needed to cater to faculty in every department: "I don't think there was much focus really on individual courses because the orientation was for everyone, whatever they were teaching. So think about engineering faculty, (inaudible), everyone!" Large cohorts of new faculty across multiple departments necessitate an institution-wide, one-size-fits-all orientation, at least for administrative purposes; however, it is clear that such an orientation does not address many of the distinct needs of these participants, evident in how they described their cultural orientation. It mostly encompassed "standard" rules of interaction, which because of their experience, the participants did not find useful. Zahra said, "I was pretty familiar with the do's and don'ts," whereas another called it

“superficial”. A few admitted that inexperienced colleagues needed such rules, like Bobby, who contributed to others’ learning, illustrating her own agency in the process:

> “I kept asking questions I knew the answers to but I knew my colleagues didn’t. For example, “Well, here’s the number for the nurse.” And I said, “Is it OK for us to touch students if they are sick?” And she said, “Oh, no.” And so the male colleagues asked, “Well, what do we do?” And she was able to explain.” (Bobby)

These and other comments show that a “general orientation” for the entire new cohort regardless of their backgrounds can potentially leave certain teachers uninformed as to key aspects of their jobs and leave others frustrated at time wasted on well-versed topics.

Tailoring orientation to each teacher is in line with the modern philosophy of individual differences and learner-centered teaching, leading to pedagogical justifications for creating department-level, even course-level orientation sessions, suited to each new teacher (Scott et al., 2016). The dearth of attention is unsurprising as participants reported that their supervisors had innumerable duties when they arrived. In actuality, the informal induction filled much of that void, yet it was unsettling for many of the participants who felt they were bothering new colleagues. Sheila, for example, talked about her experience: “I was a pain in the neck, actually, you know, begging everyone for information.” Those actions demonstrate new teachers’ agency in their socialization; however, without an official venue for such interactions, participants may have felt less confident about the information they received or their own role in pursuing such information.

5.2 Interactions with students (“I don't think I've had any negative experience really with students”)

In most scenarios, English teachers’ interactions with students dominate their experiences in an institution. Researching their experiences in this way generates a picture of how teachers feel about their students and about their experiences in the classroom, but not a definitive picture or generalizations of GCC students. Regardless of the small sample size, there was little consensus on specific aspects of teacher/student relations. Thus, what follows is an account of the beliefs and attitudes of the teachers regarding the classroom encounters with their students.

Most participants reported that they teach students from the local population, and their personal relations are predominantly positive. In fact, the majority discussed their classroom interactions in glowing terms:

> “Teaching in class, being with the students is probably the best, the most positive I feel during any part of my day at work. (…) I don't think I've had any negative experience really with students, any individuals to, or classes, you know, I think generally it's, we can have a bit of a laugh. (Kelly)

Others used similar language, saying they are “great to teach”, “fun”, “lovely kids”, and “very polite.” Thus, on a personal level, most of the teachers enjoy working with students. Even when reporting their frustrations, participants would regularly interject comments about the positivity of social interactions with students. For example, as Sheila described motivation as a “big problem,” she also included, “but the kids were so nice.” In Kelly’s case, for example, he was surprised at how sociable and “outgoing” many in his classes of all girls were, counter to his expectations and stereotypes. Others seemed to embrace certain stereotypes:

> They think it's impolite to ask questions. Maybe in their culture, asking questions is frowned upon. I'm not sure, but this is my understanding, maybe

> in their families. So they respect, you know, um, people who are older than them. (…) Respect is a big word in this culture." (Zahra)

This positive generalization can be difficult to avoid when speaking of students overall, but was introduced as Zahra's interpretation of students' behavior: her students do not generally exhibit critical thinking or a willingness to ask questions or "challenge each other." In her view, the students seem to accept what they are told, due in part to a cultural deference to older generations. However stereotypical, she takes advantage of this feature because she highlights it (respect) to ensure a quiet and orderly classroom. There will certainly be exceptions, as Harley exemplified, talking about one of her first groups: "I've never actually had anything quite as bad as this. (…) They'd disappear and do all kinds of things, you know. I think, just really blatantly rude and bad mannered." Besides the stress and frustration she experienced during that class, this affected her beyond the semester. She revealed the dread she felt each new semester, worrying that she would have them in her class again. Such overly stressful classroom encounters are rare, though, according to the participants.

5.2.1 Making the leap to higher education ("I get frustrated students")

Those students seemed to be an outlier for Harley, who characterized many of her students as "fabulous", and as an exemplar, spotlighted a divorced, female student with children yet is managing to complete her studies. In this aspect, Harley is similar to several of the other participants who expressed empathy for the students' situations, whether their scholastic or cultural backgrounds, home life, or their context of linguistic dualism, speaking Arabic at home and English in class (Findlow, 2006; Hopkyns, 2014). Sheila was the most direct in that acknowledgement, using the word "sympathize" when discussing her students:

> “These are people who received their entire education in government schools, speaking a few words of English with the lousiest teachers, okay? And all of a sudden you want them to join an English-speaking university (…) and sit for the IELTS within four cycles or two cycles. It's impossible!” (Sheila)

It is clear to see the understanding that the participant has for the difficult position the students find themselves in both educationally and institutionally, an untenable viewpoint for a rank-and-file teacher ensconced in the system. Other teachers discussed their frustrations with the program and program leadership (see section 5.3.2); however, it additionally influences their relations with students. For example, Nour remarked on students’ own frustrations:

> “I always feel that I get frustrated students, (…) in our program, he takes English class over a period of 14 weeks for three hours a day. Imagine! Imagine you have to see me five days a week, every day, three hours. And you do nothing in your life except English.” (Nour)

Such understanding can greatly affect a teacher’s approach to classroom management and to their students, particularly for Nour, whose first language is not English and may better relate to her students’ experiences. She empathized with students who are not focused on English and simply want to get past the foundation period and study topics of interest. For her and others, there is some consternation that English classes and standardized tests are the gatekeepers for a university education. Such feelings can assist teachers in more effective communication and interactions with students.

The converse is unawareness or a lack of understanding of students’ context and background, leading to a belief they may be socially or academically inferior to students in teachers’ home countries. Only two participants compared university students in their places of origin with their counterparts in the Gulf States, and just two teachers showed an overarching negativity without appreciation for students’ own

contexts. Considering Sheila's comments about the linguistic and academic leap that many students make between high school and university, it requires patience and understanding on the part of teachers, particularly those teaching in first-year foundation programs. Although affecting their practices in different ways, many of the participants revealed patience and understanding when characterizing their relations with their students.

5.2.2 Grading the students ("This whole fixation that they should all be A")

Hearkening to students' experiences in high school, several participants believe that students' motivation is dictated almost entirely by grades and tests. Others divulged feelings of surprise when first faced with this observation, but more so the impression that students generally expect to receive top marks. Harley, for example, stated, "I didn't expect it, this whole fixation that they should all be A. I don't know where this has come from." Many, however, have their own theories. Hanna, who has also taught in a local secondary school, believes that students' feelings regarding grades originate prior to arriving in higher education in an environment where:

> "(…) if you do the work, you've got a good grade - automatically - and so they're just convinced, 'Well, I worked really hard on it, therefore I deserve an A.' (…) They're never given the opportunity to make mistakes and learn from those mistakes, to think critically." (Hanna)

As discussed in section 5.2.1, many of the participants believe the students' issues are systemic, developing through inferior curricula throughout their formative years; hence, it could be viewed as students' habitus, developed over their years in the local school system, with the demand of As a form of cultural capital (Smyth & Banks, 2012). There may be truth to such beliefs; however, a perspective such as this could potentially lead teachers to diminished expectations regarding their students, most detrimentally a reductionism of students' diversity, abilities, or their *actual*

expectations. Despite declaring that she thinks “the students have so much more potential that we’re not tapping,” Bobby admitted that she only “tries” to have high expectations. Although she is aware of the problematic nature of stereotyping students, Bobby concedes that she lets her own standards slip but feels it is more a result of the institution’s lack of guidance on curriculum and grading that victimizes both “the student and teacher at the center.”

Half the participants disclosed a belief that their HEI’s academic system disadvantaged students in some way. The absence or ambiguity of a grading system means that students will be unclear on expectations or assessments, and a lack of clarity is apparent when participants discuss students expecting unjustifiably high marks. Such an insistence on a higher grade regardless of teachers’ rubrics indicates that some students either ignore the grading system or do not understand it. The first issue is the nature of assessment rubrics, which Hanna called “open to interpretation,” and Tim, who referred to the rubrics as “Double-Dutch”, stated that they “are very hard to decipher, even for teachers.” In light of these appraisals, rather than the stereotyping students’ expectations, several participants revised the provided rubrics so the language is simpler and the requirements clearer. They reported positive results of those efforts; for example, Tim said that in his class, “they know how to achieve a good grade.”

The process of grading student work was further discussed regarding participants’ approaches and how they altered them as a reaction to their environment. The environmental factor of students attempting to re-negotiate their grades is very real to many participants:

> “They come to your office. They asked you why they haven't gotten the full mark. What the reasons are. And no matter how you try to convince them or

> how we try, you know, to explain, they usually do not accept. But very nicely." (Zahra)

The teachers who described such actions also revealed how they have changed their own practices. Harley has become much more flexible in her approach to assessments, particularly in allowing students to re-submit. Her attitude changed after a group of students went to the department chair saying that Harley's test was "too difficult." She confessed that she found the entire episode "a bit strange," but after making adjustments, she has not faced similar situations since.

Harley has also attempted to be much more transparent with her marking, first, in her approach to grading: "I write copious notes, any kind of evaluation I give, I actually explain why and with rubrics. 'That's an A; this is a B; this is a C'." Secondly, she is now more willing to discuss grades with students, even offering "a special session, and I will take each one through how I've marked the assignment, (…) and we can negotiate anything they're not happy with." She now gives students more voice in their own studies; it is an approach to grading and providing evidence for marks that has become a part of her repertoire, in her words, making her "a better teacher." Bobby, who has been in the region much longer, called it a "teachable moment" and has a similar approach: "I always insist on them communicating with me by e-mail, with specific reference to a rubric and then I have a dialogue. (…) I never engage in that unless they make that effort." This approach would likely eliminate many frivolous requests for higher grades and encourage a greater sense of ownership on the part of students for their learning. Finally, such a policy can provide an educator with the justification of allowing students to negotiate grades, without adverse effects on their sense of professionalism.

A possible, unfortunate resolution involves not merely adapting the grading process, but adjusting grading standards, as well. Chris bemoaned teachers who are too empathetic and "indulge" the students, and Bobby spoke extensively about a process of "indigenization of the curricula that we take from Western modeled higher ed, so people in the UAE, for example, use terms like dumb down, simplify, and cut (…)." Such an approach may be simple enough to fall into, particularly when occurring in co-workers' classroom. Zahra spoke of her colleagues, but also interpreted their rationale as students' course teaching survey:

> "They're nervous about, or worried about the marks, I mean, the percentages that they get at the end of the semester. So they try to be, some of them, this is what I've heard, to be too nice to the students. So the marks that they give are not very realistic. They do not represent students' actual work." (Zahra)

In the apprehensive manner that she opens the topic, her trepidation is clear. It is not a subject she seems readily prepared to discuss, and that unease is understandable. In Zahra's experience, students hold some power over their teachers through the course evaluations, leading to students receiving grades they have not earned. She later admitted that she herself may be softer in her grading, saying that the student evaluations "overshadow everything." This softening of standards that she and others reveal has serious ramifications for teachers' professionalism and role as educators, as well as the efficacy of the institution, the very validity of the course or graduate outcomes.

5.2.3 Pressure on grades ("Not feeling good professionally")

That pressure is not limited to one participant or institution: five other participants discussed similar experiences. Peter believed that the students "know they've got that power" to avoid work or manipulate the teacher because the teacher can in turn "fail on the actual marks they give you." Shaikha spoke of trying to balance "between

satisfying the students who are used to (teachers) being very lenient, you know, and teaching them as well as I used to" in her previous HEI. Harley discussed the stress with a class in which two-thirds of the students scored her very poorly in the course evaluation: "They just went all the way down, 'never'. They hated me. 'Never, never, never! Never, never on-time!' So I mean, they just… 'Never fair – never!'" She was quite alarmed at the possible ramifications, yet her supervisor was very understanding. Coincidentally, although Zahra declared that "teachers worry" about the evaluations, she was unaware of any teacher terminated on the basis of the course teaching survey, meaning that it is a source of consternation with potentially less actual danger for teachers than believed.

Grades that do not match requirements were a regular topic. Outside of the student evaluations, several participants also talked about receiving pressure from management to improve grades or push students through. Abdullah said that a major topic in his orientation was avoiding grade inflation, but by the end of the semester, the focus of the leadership was very much on helping students progress: "They are like, 'What are you doing? Why are you marking them down?'" Bobby talked about an institution insisting more directly:

> "I've had to adjust my students' grades for the first time in my entire career and that's been painful. (…) Not feeling good, professionally, about having changed grades, when I claim that I keep this high standard. But really, changing a 45 to a 60 isn't maintaining high standards, but I had to." (Bobby)

In this case, the participant was forced to make a difficult decision with major implications for her self-image as a professional educator, together with her view of the professional environment of the institution itself. Both seem diminished in light of her comments. Calling it "a disservice to the students", passing those who did not deserve it generated "a lot of negativity" directed at the institution. More importantly, it

shaped her opinion that the HEI may not even care if the students are receiving an education, which she felt complicit in.

Ultimately, such negative feelings regarding the institution and her role became too great, and she resigned her position between the two interviews:

> "I find that soul sucking: I live a lot through my job. (…) I don't like who I am as a teacher here. And that's kind of my identity, you know? (…) Normally, if I complain, I chastise myself and say, 'Well, do something about it or leave.' So my option is leaving." (Bobby)

Other participants talked about such professional frustrations, but perhaps less personal freedom or willingness to take a similar stand. For example, shortly after joining a new institution, Shaikha was shocked at being told, "You are a harder grader, and they are complaining." She insisted that she had marked according to the rubric, yet she confided, "I needed the work, so (…) I told her, 'Take the grades and change them.' (…) She made some changes, and then I submitted the grades." Similar to Bobby's experience, actions such as these can serve to *deprofessionalize* teachers, as her confession of "I needed the work" implies. As a stark contrast, in the interest of appearing more professional, Nour was encouraged to grade more strictly to improve the reputation of the institution: "They keep saying, 'Don't give an easy A. Don't pass the students. Don't do this, don't do that, because we need to move it up higher, you know, our ranking.'"

5.2.4 Assessing students ("They don't trust the students.")

Regarding assessments, despite the importance of A's and a reputation in the region (Fawley, 2012; O'Sullivan, 2014), surprisingly few (3) of the participants discussed cheating as an ongoing issue amongst their students. Fahad was the sole participant who admitted "we do have many cheating issues in the exams." He discussed an incident where students shared answers on mobile phones. However, the episode

seems to have improved faculty practices regarding test preparations, so it can be viewed in a similarly positive vein to Harley's conclusions in section 5.2.2. On the other hand, Louis witnessed students sharing answers, punished it himself, and reported it to the institution. However, the institution was not receptive to that approach, so Louis dealt with the discomforting situation comparably to Shaikha's experience (see section 5.2.3), saying, "I'm going to give them a zero. If you want as a manager to change that, that's up to you." When his stance on cheating was overturned by the institution, the teacher was left feeling unsupported and less likely to intervene again. Based on participants' overall experiences, it is difficult to draw any larger conclusions about cheating in the region than perhaps the reputation is overblown (Hosny & Fatima, 2014) or that HEIs have curtailed it more or less successfully.

Only three participants even mentioned situations of students attempting to bribe teachers or teachers helping their own students during exams, yet the approach to managing assessments seems to be designed to protect against those and similar types of cheating. Thirteen of the participants reported that the exams in their institution were standardized, large-scale affairs, generally with overly controlling protocols to prevent cheating, as Sheila clearly feels:

> "They don't trust the students. (…) It's Alcatraz! And I said this in a couple of our meetings, I said, 'What the heck is this? I'm sorry to say, but when you treat students this way, they would never, ever come back! I would never come back.'"(Sheila)

In Sheila's view, the intense security and oversight placed on exams is detrimental to students and their engagement with teachers or the institution in general. Abdullah and Harley had similar feelings to Sheila concerning the extensive control in exams, yet they were more indignant about the focus on teachers, as Harley stated, "I felt like

I'd been back in high school. (...) They're watching you, monitoring you. I mean, I've been invigilating for years and years and years, but I've never seen anything quite like this before." Abdullah felt like teachers were receiving the brunt of the pressure being placed on middle management to bring different departments or campuses in line with a central assessment strategy. In each case, the teachers reported feeling unnecessary pressure and lack of trust.

Additionally, standardization without transparency can be detrimental to teachers and students together as they prepare for the exam, with students' learning the most important casualty. Kara spoke of teachers' confusion concerning exam materials: "They didn't even know what was going to be on the test for the class that they were teaching a lot of the time. So I think that kind of over controlling is not helpful." The effectiveness of the standardization and other processes was lacking for Tim, who called it a "shoddy academic system" and admitted that he would not be renewing his contract when it expired: "If you think you're doing real work here, you're deluding yourself. (…) So I'm not going to continue here." Overall, the standardization has diminished participants' sense of professionalism, as the teachers' role in assessments has been so severely minimized.

5.2.5 Teaching ("You do struggle with coming up with your own materials.")

When participants discussed their teaching practices, there was a juxtaposition between standardization and autonomy in the classroom. Teachers' roles in the classroom seem to be polarized: completely standardized with little freedom to innovate or complete autonomy with little support. Twelve participants talked about having standardized materials, five reported an autonomous situation, and two said there was a positive balance.

In the standardized environments, some participants spoke of being provided with all of necessary materials:

> "We have the course books, and then we have some extra practice materials, so extra standardized materials. (…) As a teacher, you do struggle with coming up with your own materials sometimes because there are certain parts of the course that you, you have to follow, you have to cover." (Fahad)

In Fahad's institution, the course work and "flex" activities are all set for the teachers, and the pacing schedule is stringent enough that teachers "struggle" to find time to include their own materials. Although he himself does not create his own materials, Fahad observed others who created their own supplementary materials, as he stated, "Some teachers, very few though, they were innovative." Jeff spoke in similar terms, saying that "there's too much material that we have to cover in the amount of time that we have." Both participants did not have strong feelings regarding standardization, merely believing it is an acceptable limitation for teachers.

Over her first few years in the institution, Tahmina believed that the standard curriculum was beneficial for students, yet because it was out of teachers' control, it later became a vehicle for lessening the standards:

> "They had to work hard, the students, and they learned a lot. By the end of the year, you were so pleased to see that, how transformed, the students. But then, with the passage of time, they wanted the curriculum to be easy, more students to get through, to pass the exams." (Tahmina)

In Tahmina's experience, the negative aspects of standardization were twofold: first, lower expectations and an institution altering curricular requirements in order to pass more students, in line with the experiences of several other participants (see section 5.2.3). Likewise, softening the demands on students constituted an affront to Tahmina's professional identity: beyond remarking on a prior feeling of achievement, she refused to comment more on the changes, declaring, "I won't go into that, but in

the beginning, it was good." Second, Tahmina also stated, "When there's no challenge in the classroom, I don't think you have that motivation left," making clear her belief that when students no longer feel challenged, motivation decreases, potentially feeding into the stereotype of unmotivated students, or more importantly, that the change itself actually demotivated them.

Only two teachers reported a balance of standardization and individual freedom in their classrooms. Pat said that standardization was fairly new, but she was still able to adapt and develop the materials based on her decisions and her students' needs:

> "It's been designed for the lowest common denominator, so those teachers who need extra guidance about what they should do or who do not have the willingness to plan anything of their own: 'Here's a set of materials that will basically run by themselves, for you to teach'." (Pat)

In Pat's circumstances, management endeavors to support teachers during the process of standardization with meetings providing guidance, so she does not view it as necessarily negative. However, her comment about "the lowest common denominator" indicates that she believes it is developed to assist a small minority of teachers who could not produce their own materials. While it might be inferred that she feels resentment towards standardization, this is not the case. She stated that prior to standardization, "there was literally no coherence" to certain courses; therefore, she recognizes a need for coordination. Chris had a similar outlook, reporting that their curriculum is standardized around a course book, accounting for half of the coursework for students but giving teachers the freedom to develop much of their class activities. Importantly for Chris, within this flexible curriculum, English teachers "can use a bit of their creativity. They're not bound by too much micromanaging."

At the opposite end of the spectrum, several participants reported minimal guidance. Kelly was asked if that lack of standardization was a positive aspect of the program for him:

> "No, because I'm creating too much now. Whereas before, what I meant, before is that the university chose some learning outcomes and a book that met those learning outcomes, and so I had a core of information, (…) and I can incorporate that how I like, but here we don't." (Kelly)

In Kelly's experience, this lack of standardization has a negative effect on teachers, who seem overwhelmed by the amount of preparations and the mystery about what to prepare, saying that there is no guidance. As they are working towards an external standardized test (e.g. TOEFL, IELTS), he lamented that the teachers are in the dark about how exactly to do that: "It's a toss-up. Which words do you choose? (…) How much can you teach in six weeks that will get you to pass that test?" Kara pointed to another problem with the lack of standardized, clear learning outcomes, saying that she is also only preparing her students to pass an external test, but with such a short-term outlook, the students are ultimately disadvantaged: "We are trying to do only things that will help them learn more vocabulary, grammar, reading, and writing, so I don't know if that's really going to do the job in the end." Both teachers strongly believe that the lack of guidance adversely affects teaching and learning.

All of the participants talked about wanting their students to learn and be successful in their academic careers. Standardization of curricula is one way that HEIs attempt to ensure some consistency in the classroom, but similar to standardization of assessments, it is not the only means. Several talked about wanting to be observed in the classroom, but it occurs rarely, if it at all. For instance, Ali said, "Our observation so far has been limited to a renewal observation. Renewal purposes. So it's only been that." Thus, additional means of ensuring a high standard

of outcomes are available, but rarely utilized for reasons that the participants did not explore. However, for many teachers, classroom observation is an important aspect of professionalism, as Bobby said, “I won’t be observed this year, as far as I know. I’d like to get some feedback on my teaching. I always like that, and I think that’s part of being a professional.” As with many issues regarding teachers’ interactions with students, teachers’ professional identities hang in the balance.

5.2.6 Classroom management

In the classroom, there are a number of matters that participants discussed as foremost in their experiences. Despite a range of experiences, these issues were predominant: student accountability, student engagement and motivation, teacher authority, and the prevalence of mobile phones.

5.2.6.1 Student accountability (“They’re not used to that.”)

For several participants, the strictness of student attendance reflects the larger issue of student freedom and responsibility. Abdullah, for example, talked about his evolved policy:

> “I'm big on the accountability thing. (…) If they're absent, they're absent, but if they come in late and then they catch up, I'm being a lot more relaxed. (…) If they know they're going to be absent, they write to me, and I say, ‘Look, I've got four sections of the same class, so can you come to one of my other sections?’” (Abdullah)

He encourages students to take responsibility for being present but is flexible with how he enforces institutional policies, an attitude he implied had developed over time. That attitude suggests that perhaps he does not believe in the attendance policy as written, similar to consternations expressed by other participants. Hanna disagreed with the policy entirely: “From my perspective, they’re adults. (…) I shouldn’t have to be taking attendance.” Sheila echoed that: “They treat them like

kids.” On the other hand, Shaikha, for example, thought her institution’s 25% absence policy was too permissive: “It’s a lot, you know. They’re missing a lot.” Clearly, Shaikha believes that some students would not attend without strict rules. Attendance policies can also impact on teachers’ sense of professionalism: In Bobby’s opinion, the fault lies with the curriculum and the teachers, including herself: “I’d rather a student chose to be in my class. But the way I've taught a lot of the time, I wouldn't blame them for not wanting to be there.” Thus, student attendance is clearly a complicated issue in many participants’ experiences.

Participants also discussed student responsibility in the classroom: asserting that teaching English involves more than language lessons. Some try to provide life lessons and emphasize student responsibility:

> “I decided at the beginning, I'm going to tell the students, ‘I am not your dad, I'm not your older brother or your uncle. I will guide you, but you have to do the work, and the more work that you decide you're going to do, the better your grades are going to be.’” (Jeff)

Jeff makes it explicit, effectively informing them that the responsibility of passing or failing is theirs. Chris takes a similar approach in his first speech to students, but with acknowledgment of the difference from high school: “I'm teaching everyone the same, so if you don't pass then why? You have to take some responsibility for it,’ and they're not used to that.” Both believe the transition from high school to university can be very challenging for students; however, Chris talked more categorically about their needs:

> “We can't teach English the way we want to teach it unless these students have some basic skills. So when they come to us without these skills, we need to incorporate them so that we can then do more exciting things with them and also prepare them better for what's coming next.” (Chris)

In his estimation, teachers and administrators assume that students arrive with more skills than in actuality, stating that the students don't know how to use email or Microsoft Word, for example, and that if teachers don't include them in their teaching, then the transition will be even more difficult for the students and they will not be able to function in the HEI. Other participants spoke more pejoratively about students lacking similar skills or "background knowledge", the most common being that the students do not read or enjoy reading, a belief with serious implications for students' academic potential and classroom interactions.

5.2.6.2 Student motivation ("They can literally do nothing in my class.")

That conviction implies that conducting classes would be exceedingly difficult; however, nine participants said that classes either were easy to conduct or were manageable. Those participants fall into two categories: those who place some blame on materials or external circumstances, and those whose beliefs about students evolved over time. In the first characterization, Pat takes issue with institution-mandated paperless classrooms, yet maintains that her students were "enthusiastic as a whole." Her opinion is distinct from many of her colleagues that regularly complain about the students, "how they were unenthusiastic, how they would never do homework, how they would always speak in Arabic." Pat's circumstance demonstrates a real danger of the negativity and stereotyping that can pervade a department, akin to Kelly's experience: "I have some colleagues here who really trash them, trash them good, call them stupid, basically." Likewise, this participant avoided generalizing, saying the root of such issues could be systemic; namely, the number of English classes the students must attend within their program, similar to Nour's empathy for her own students (section 5.2.1).

Others also believed that the institution or the educational system played large roles in students' motivation or engagement. Abdullah and Peter both felt their class sizes were too large, with groups of 30+ of low-level learners who needed more individual attention than they could proffer, particularly with the limited scheduling options and courses available. The materials were the issue for Tim in his assessment of their potential effect on students' engagement:

> "The only time that I'd ever have problems would be because the content is either pointless, boring, uninspiring, nearly derogatory, and condescending. (…) I feel awful as the Westerner trying to teach the natives how to do things, you know? (…) 'Let's do an IELTS essay about obesity! Because you're the fattest people in the world!'" (Tim)

While other teachers were critical of materials and teaching methods for different reasons, Tim was alone in this particular, cultural line of criticism; however, it is logical. First, there are issues of the repetitiveness of such materials; students would likely have seen similar tasks multiple times preparing for standardized tests like IELTS. Second, similar to the observations of Bobby and Chris, it does not push the students to excel: "there's nothing inspirational," in Tim's words, so for students, it can have the effect of "putting them down." Thus, any perceived lack of motivation or engagement may have its roots with materials developers or teachers whose lessons are unengaging or even condescending, with the actual effect of demotivating students.

To better engage their students, several participants spoke of changing their approach over time, leading more positive experiences in the classroom. In particular, Bobby, Chris, and Zahra spoke of wanting to "push" the students; however, Zahra addressed her approach culturally:

> “I'm familiar with this culture, so I know what to do, so it cannot be done, like, with anger. It can be done nicely, softly, kindly, little by little, gradually. This is how I did that, (…) very diplomatically!” (Zahra)

There is a clear emphasis on being gentle with the students, which Zahra believes is a cultural necessity in the region. Others, like Kelly and Louis, also talked about not getting angry or raising their voice; Louis walks out of the classroom to send the message to the students that they are behaving poorly, which he does rarely. Abdullah admitted that he tries to stay positive throughout the semester, giving attention to students putting in the effort and ignoring others: “I also do not waste my time with people who are not here to learn. I don't get mad at anybody. (…) They can literally do nothing in my class. I'm not going to waste my time.” He seems to have accepted a certain classroom dynamic, which may not have been acceptable in his past experiences.

However, 6 participants had formed negative generalizations concerning students’ lack of motivation or work ethic. Hussein, in particular, said that he had little success in the classroom: “Whatever you do, you can’t make *them* work.” However, he was in his first year in a new institution, so his experiences there were limited, perhaps leading to a hasty generalization based on others’ narratives. Hussein was also frustrated by his contract situation, just as Peter was, which he referred to directly:

> “They don't want to do the learning that will help them get the good mark. That's my experience. It’s not every single student, (…) but I'd say most of them are looking just to get the piece of paper. (…) All of this is anecdotal, and it’s taken from the rather negative viewpoint I have right now.” (Peter)

Although frustrated with a general dearth of engagement, Peter recognizes that the students are not monolithic and have different work ethics, but more importantly he

acknowledged the non-generalizability of his anecdotal observations, combined with his current “negative viewpoint” concerning ongoing difficulties with management regarding job stability. Understandably, those frustrations can have a direct effect on teachers’ job performance and experiences, as Peter discussed being made to wait for his new contract: When asked if that impacts his teaching, Peter replied, “It affects everything.” Hence, any analysis of teachers’ experiences must take such issues into account to ensure a balanced view of their narratives, particularly regarding their students.

5.2.6.3 Mobile phones in class (“If the class is doing fine, why focus on it?”)

A modern challenge for teachers concerning their authority is constituted by students’ use of mobile phones in class (Campbell, 2006; Ugur & Koc, 2015), which may constitute a major obstacle to learning. 10 participants considered mobiles in class a very serious issue, 6 did not think them such a major problem, and 4 others were non-committal.

Several participants went into great detail describing the frustrations they feel with the level of distraction that mobile phones create for students. Zahra described her experiences:

> “You try to put them in groups, to supervise groups, to give each person in a group a role, but if you do not do that, they usually do not make any effort. They just take the phones out; they start using WhatsApp. They go to Instagram, and they just play around. (…) They're glued to their mobile phones.” (Zahra)

Zahra was not alone in that description. Pat also mentioned the apps specifically, “Yeah, well, particularly, my present group, um, Snapchat, WhatsApp, social media in general is pinging off all the time. They're getting lured into the telephones.” This idea of being “lured” into their phones was one that arose repeatedly amongst many of the

participants, who compared it to addiction. Others take it personally, like Shaikha, who said checking phones “makes me crazy.” However, for teachers, the ultimate issue is how mobile phones affect learning. Peter chronicled the effort it took him to follow his lesson plan due to the constant distraction of mobile phones: “One activity would take a whole class sometimes; most of it was just taking their phones off them every five minutes.” While there may be some exaggeration, the frustration that Peter feels with mobile phones and their effect on accomplishing tasks in class is clear.

Participants had a variety of classroom management approaches regarding mobile phones. Only one teacher, Tim, said that he made a clear rule at the beginning of the semester and students followed it: “Phones in the bags, bags on the floor. That's the system in my classroom, so I don't have an issue there, really.” He also discussed how boredom or weak materials can compel students to take the phone out, but overall, he reported that keeping firm rules and engaging the students worked with this students. Nour similarly empathized with the students who may be uninterested, admitting to her students: “I get bored sometimes,” but if they want to check their phones, she says, “I don’t want to see it.” Other teachers talked about varying policies, including taking the phones away from students, but that was generally frowned upon, as Hanna explained her policy:

> “Take their phone and turn it over and leave it on the desk. Because it's almost like they have this anxiety of ‘you're taking my property from me’, (…) so the moment you take it from them, they're not focusing on anything else the rest of the class, they're just focusing on, ‘I need my phone back. I need my phone back.’” (Hanna)

She also detailed her concerns with taking students’ personal property, which several others similarly considered something off limits. Nour, for instance, described taking a student’s phone as “an act of war,” which may not necessarily have the desired effect

in the classroom. Many participants believe they are distracting from the lesson when overly fixating on phones. Instead, Hanna's approach is actively monitoring, "wandering around" during activities. Overall, results indicate that teachers' attitudes towards mobile phones often reflect their willingness to alter their expectations. Teachers who are able to let go some measure of classroom dominance and accept that some students, usually a small number, may choose not to engage in the class, are generally better able to focus on the higher performing students and provide a more positive environment for learning for the majority of their students.

5.2.7 Potential cultural conflicts ("I have to interact, but I police it very much")

In trying to challenge students and expand their perspectives, several participants mentioned limits on topics in in class. Kelly explained how his limitations are "self-made" and regularly on his mind:

> "I have to interact, but I police it very much, the interactions that occur, information I provide. Things I put it on the board or things I hand to them. I'm very conscious of particular words or settings in a particular reading or something like that." (Kelly)

As Kelly outlined, those restrictions were generally self-imposed, based on his own estimations of what is not proper in his context. He did not suggest it was because of a more restrictive environment: "I think that's just natural." Many of the participants reported a discomfort speaking about politics or religion in class, with an inferred "line that can't be stepped over," as Tim called it. However, only Bobby disclosed a moment of tension in class as that line was approached: a student shut down a class discussion that had moved to Karl Marx, telling her, "'We have to change the subject now'." Apparently, after the class, the student told her, "'If that were to continue, you would be in deep trouble'," a message Bobby interpreted as concern for her wellbeing, rather than a threat. Several participants also mentioned that there were

ways to discuss current events or social aspects, and that students were even enthusiastic to debate potentially sensitive topics touching on religious or cultural norms. Harley, for example, recounted a lesson in which the all-male students freely spoke about arranged marriages versus marrying for love, wives covering or not, and other related subjects.

Multiple teachers in the study suggested that they introduced topics or activities to encourage critical thinking, yet few professed an awareness of how that might challenge students' worldview, as Tim did: "I'd like them to kind of reflect on new information, and if it conflicts with their present stance, that's OK. That's something that they have to deal with, you know? But I'm never out to offend them." In a way, encouraging students to question their own established worldviews is at the heart of higher education. For example, part of the American University of Sharjah's Vision of the Founder (2017) states: "The purpose of higher education is to reshape the minds of our youth in order for them to address personal and social challenges using the scientific method." Lofty rhetoric notwithstanding, governments in the region are not renowned for a commitment to academic freedom (Romanowski & Nasser, 2010), with academics being blacklisted or worse, as exemplified recently by the jailing and subsequent pardoning of British PhD student Matthew Hedges (Matthew Hedges case, n.d.). Expatriate teachers working in the Gulf States would most likely be aware of such high-profile newsmakers, as well as the reputation, so even without overt censorship in class, many would be wary of crossing any invisible lines, as several participants revealed.

In many cases, participants moderate discussions in class but have little control over curricula. Tahmina discussed efforts by her institution to remove inappropriate materials from the curriculum:

> “It changed, you know, how things are, it became political. (…) They didn't want the students to go through those books, or there was a lot of stuff which they said it's not culturally appropriate. (…) So by the second year, they were many differences.” (Tahmina)

Although others discussed the process of standardization for course content or learning outcomes, Tahmina was the sole participant who detailed external editing of course materials for cultural appropriacy. In her account, the editing process had greater complexity than merely limiting potentially offensive items, as she hinted at a complicated dynamic between the HEI and the organization managing the foundations program. It was merely one aspect of the control which the university exerted, as she delineated multiple changes, most notably reducing the level of difficulty of the materials (see section 5.2.2), not merely those concerning cultural sensitivity.

Similar to classroom discussions, other participants discussed self-regulation when designing or choosing their own materials. Pat spoke about keeping in mind what may or may not be appropriate for the students, avoiding photos showing “too much flesh” as well as alcohol or betting, for example. However, amongst participants, the more common method was adapting materials to better suit students’ context, as Zahra explained:

> “So whatever topic we have in the book, like in our listening/speaking book, in our reading books, whenever we do this, I try to relate to Oman, their culture, to the places, you know, they come from. This is the major thing I do and it has helped me a lot, and they like it.” (Zahra)

By approaching the course books in this way, the teacher attempts to make the materials more accessible for students. When she elicits students' contributions regarding their own contexts, they can feel more involved and better internalize the material. Additionally, linking materials to Omani culture also provides an avenue for Zahra herself to learn more about her surroundings to improve her relations with her students. Regarding set materials, Sheila recalled an exchange with the providers of the course content when she exclaimed, "Guys, all of your examples are companies in the UK! Really?" She called the course materials "ineffective" because they were limited to a British context, generally inaccessible for her students. As a result, she spent a lot of time adapting the materials herself. On the other hand, no participants took time to "Anglicize" their curriculum or spoke of enculturating their students to any sort of "target" culture.

5.2.8 Students and genders ("Male and female students have a lot to learn from each other")

Internal cultures of institutions are generally considered conservative (Lay, 2005), and regional rules for genders are similarly conservative. Accordingly, a large majority of participants, 14, reported teaching separate genders. However, half of the participants, 10, also said that they teach or have taught in institutions across the region where men and women learn together.

The segregation of the genders required some adjustments by the participants. Hanna became visibly upset when discussing the disparate treatment of students, as boys in her institution are allowed to come and go freely, whereas the girls are not: "More particularly with the girls, the fact that they have to scan in and scan out. Seriously? I mean, some of these girls are married with children, and they

have to have permission to come to school?" Abdullah talked out his experiences with students' freedom of movement: "The guys generally are absent more because they're allowed to leave the college when they want, but a lot of these girls are stuck here all day." There may be a risk of overgeneralizing, but both participants have had to adapt to the differences they see. In that vein, Zahra called the extent of separation in her HEI "absurd": students learn in the same classrooms, but never intermingle: "The lifts are separate. (…) Even the stairs, you know, are. (…) Each class has two doors." Despite describing the culture of her home country as similar, she found the complete separation of genders "very strange", admitting it took her some time to adjust.

Overall, participants were mostly non-committal in expressing opinions on the status quo, questioning their position to judge, as Fahad exemplified: "I respect their culture. It's part of their culture, and, well, this is the way they want to go." Some, like Tim, remained irresolute, believing it will likely change in the future because of Westernization: "I don't know if it's a good thing or a bad thing, but I'd say that's the way it will go. Yeah, no real concerns about it." Participants firmer in their judgments were generally split in their assessment of that as a policy.

One of the participants against the policy, Kara, touched on several aspects of the debate for ending the separation:

> "Well, I hope they get to a point where they stop doing that so much because the male and female students have a lot to learn from each other and a lot to learn about the world, (…) and when they reach the professional level, a lot of them do have to do that." (Kara)

To Kara's point, she would like to see students exposed to new experiences, particularly considering they will have to intermingle once they enter the workforce, so they should be prepared in college. Others were similar, with Peter declaring, "I

don’t see the gain. I only see the loss. And how do you expect communities to interact properly as they get older?” There is an awareness of the conservative, cultural justification, as Kara, for instance, acknowledged traditional familial pressure. Nour believes families’ desire to keep the genders separate, particularly girls, is the reason her co-educational institution does not “really get a lot of those local girls.” However, Sheila claimed that her students themselves did not believe in the policy, as she recounted a student saying, “’No, Miss, this is not good because when we go to the field of work, we will be dealing with women every day’.” Finally, as discussed previously (section 5.2.7), there is the question of the purpose of higher education, which may include putting the students in challenging positions to encourage personal growth.

Despite those points, several participants opined that the separation of genders is preferable. Kelly questioned why a university would bring both sexes together “if they’re never going to mix before marriage in any other situation.” He also considered the academic outcomes, wondering how focused students might be if co-ed classes were introduced: “So the idea of putting them in a mixed classroom with females, it’s not going to help.” Abdullah, who has also taught mixed classes, concurred that concentration was an issue, saying, “You know how the ladies are always checking their shaylas here just for the ladies; imagine if there were guys in the room.” Furthermore, Hanna spoke of the separation as a possible benefit since her students may be more at ease without the pressure of being near young men: “If they’re separate, then I can joke with the girls, and not worry. (…) They’re certainly, the girls are, they feel more comfortable. They’ll speak up.” Therefore, despite certain limitations, it is conceivable that the separation encourages greater openness

amongst students, who might be less forthcoming if surrounded by members of the opposite sex.

Still, those who have taught co-ed classes in the region reported that it had little influence on students' learning. Harley spoke of her experience, saying that her co-educational groups self-segregated initially, but it eased over the semester:

> "I taught combined classes, (…) and they seemed to be able to be OK in a class together. Often, by the end of the semester, some of the girls would still want to be in girl groups, but otherwise, they didn't actually care if they were in guy groups." (Harley)

Harley's experience is complicated by the international nature of her students, with standards in their home countries influencing their willingness to intermingle. Regarding their studies, however, she declared, "I don't think it really impacted on it." Whether students intermingle or self-segregate, classes functioned appropriately, according to the teachers, as described by Ali, who teaches on a men's campus that occasionally allows students from the women's campus: "I've had up to three, four, five girls attending boys' classes. It's fine, really. Nothing ever feels, really an issue. It's fine; they're fine." Despite the peculiarity of the situation in that context, Ali reported that the students behaved suitably, focusing on their work. Chris, with extensive experience teaching in the GCC, said, "I've worked in institutions which moved from single sex to co-ed, and people maybe think that it would've been more difficult than it actually is." A sensible comment because of the impossibility of predicting how students, as individuals, might react when actually in that situation, again highlighting the risk of generalizing.

5.3 Internal culture of institutions

Like the exploration of interactions with students, this approach is similarly complicated since it is not an analysis of one institution's culture but of a diverse group's experiences within various HEIs, recognizing corollaries or outliers. Following Saphier and King's (1985) norms of school culture, there are four main facets: interactions with faculty peers, interactions with administrators and those in leadership roles, the position of teachers, and the organization of the institution.

5.3.1 Interactions with Colleagues ("You try to be as supportive as they are to you.")

Interactions with colleagues represent a facet of participants' institutional experience that is almost unanimously positive. Only Shaikha reported a generally isolated environment: "The system does not really work well, so everybody works alone, and everybody has his or her own way of teaching." However, the other nineteen participants had favorable feelings regarding co-workers, using words like "friendly", "warm", "sympathetic", or "professional" to describe them. Tahmina and Hussein, in different HEIs, called their colleagues a "family". The most common description, though, was being supportive or helpful:

> "I think people are pretty willing to help other people. Even outside of our own department, interactions with colleagues here has been about as pleasant as I could have imagined, especially with all the different people and different cultures." (Kelly)

Kelly described a working environment characterized by a willingness to help others, "almost too much." This naturally leads to further helpfulness, as Tim explained, "That's kind of the starting block, and then, you know, you try to be as supportive as they are to you." In such institutions, there is a pay-it-forward attitude, as colleagues

appreciate the support they receive during orientation, for example, and provide it to others, continuing the cycle. One possible explanation is each HEI consists of predominantly expatriate faculty, as Fahad explained, “Most of the teachers are in theory in the same mold,” so they are in a similar situation and might relate to others’ needs or stresses, leading to greater empathy and supportiveness. Fahad’s comment that it “has been about as pleasant as I could have imagined” implies that the collegiality exceeds expectations, suggesting it surpasses that of HEIs in his past experience, which is interesting, especially considering the diversity amongst the faculty.

Notwithstanding, Kelly’s description of support and integration across disparate groups is not in accord with others’ experiences. In fact, many participants recounted two clear distinguishing factors amongst faculty: different departments and nationality. Several teachers talked about a difference between departments, exemplified by Chris’s reported conversations with other faculty: “They even say to us, ‘Your department, you're so close; you're so tight. You're like a family. We don't have that in our department’.” A larger distinction pertains to nationality, and how faculty from different parts of the world do not tend to socialize. Nearly half the participants discussed a separation based on countries-of-origin, whether a Western-Eastern or an expatriate-local distinction. Fahad described his experience:

> “Teachers come from many different parts of the world, so yes, teachers, they do feel comfortable, I mean, Westerners feel comfortable getting along with the Westerners, and the Asians feel comfortable getting along with the Asians. (…) So I have noticed, you know, that people of the same nationalities mostly feel more comfortable.” (Fahad)

Fahad not only noticed a cultural divide amongst those from different regions, but that those differences may also manifest in their approach to the institution or the system

of the institution, which can also dictate who faculty members fraternize with. The use of the word “comfortable” several times is illustrative, suggesting a *preference* for similarity rather than an *aversion* to difference, and a situation of cliques that perhaps develops more organically over time.

Tim, on the other hand, felt the wall of separation between expatriates and local faculty was imposed: “They don't want us to interact with them, you know, there's none of that. If that's the way they want it, that's fine. They make the rules; you abide by them.” There is a recognition of strict cultural norms in his current context, although none of the other participants described such an impassible distinction. In fact, a small number talked about their success in bridging that gap:

> “I've connected quite a bit with ‘Mahra’, she's the chair of the (…) committee that I'm part of. (…). The faculty around here, I've had informal chit chats with them. I think, had we taught more formally with our local lecturers, maybe our faculty would maybe interact more with them.” (Harley)

While acknowledging a cultural gap, Harley’s comments also point to the issue of lack of integration between departments. Five of the participants revealing more integration discussed events organized by management, serving as social gatherings, encouraging faculty to come together. Those events ranged from potlucks to sports events. Zahra described a “culture club” in which different faculty members “brought different handicrafts, food, music,” and “it was fun for the students, for the teachers, for the whole center.” Such events can serve as icebreakers for faculty from different countries or departments, facilitating interactions, but they may also improve the morale amongst faculty, increasing their buy-in and their identification with the institution.

5.3.2 Management and educational leadership ("A truly authoritarian, top-down model")

Participants' relations with management were bifurcated: immediate superiors or department chairpersons were generally viewed positively, yet there was a broadly negative view of the holders of higher positions in the HEIs and their approach to leadership.

Participants described their interactions with their immediate supervisors or department chairpersons with near unanimous praise, as Kara described two of the "several different levels of management":

> "Right now, I'm teaching level 4, and that is just wonderful because it's really a team effort. (…) And then one level above (…), overseeing us all, and she is so easy to talk to and has an answer immediately. I don't know how she does the multi-tasking that she does, but extremely helpful and understanding." (Kara)

Kara's comments further demonstrate the positivity towards colleagues, which may also reveal a rationale for the feelings regarding supervisors: they are generally more like the faculty members in both cultural and academic backgrounds. Many participants feel confident of their supervisors' acumen and expertise because they are similar in approach and language; i.e., they look and sound like teachers. However, there is not an automatic acceptance and approval of department chairs with similar backgrounds as the teachers, as Pat's assessment of one department head shows that it is based more on competence than identity: "You couldn't actually tell what they were talking about because the terminology didn't mean what she was suggesting it to." Still, only Pat and Shaikha reported negative experiences concerning line managers; others generally identified with and showed an appreciation for their immediate supervisors.

In contrast, Jeff said, “There’s definitely a separation” between top management and everyone in positions below: “No dean level can be a foreigner; (…) no foreigner, no matter how qualified and how experienced and how effective that person would be would ever be placed in those positions.” Not merely different in nationality, upper management and those in decision-making positions were viewed unfavorably by over half of the participants, for example:

> “They’re using a sort of authoritarian, militaristic approach to managing education, in a field that’s moving in the opposite direction. It’s using an industrial model, but it’s using a truly authoritarian, top-down model by people who don’t actually know about education, and it’s the commodification of education.” (Bobby)

Bobby’s denigration of the top management as “people who don’t actually know about education” also reflects that separation discussed previously. Overall, the appraisal as authoritarian developed into two strands: the first as the treatment by human resources, and the second was the top-down style of the leaders.

Trust was a recurring theme regarding HR: HR’s trust in the teachers versus teachers’ trust in HR/management to be fair. Several of the participants did not feel trusted as professionals (see also section 5.2). This was seen in participants’ evaluations of how institutions monitored their working hours, with nine participants from multiple institutions working across the region explaining their hours were controlled via a biometric scanner to check in or out on campus. Three participants were unbothered by that monitoring, whereas most thought it was an affront to their professionalism, for example, Harley: “Look, I've never fingered in and fingered out my whole professional life, ever! (…) I went home last night, and I kept on working, so I added another two hours of work.” As can be seen, many academics expect greater flexibility with their time outside of class since the work they do is rarely

limited to their time on campus. Professionals also have an expectation of fairness in terms of human resources and personnel issues; the most common experience was a perception of being treated unfairly, in contract renewals (see section 5.3.3) and in other ways. Sheila recalled being penalized because she "missed five minutes out of the 40 hours":

> "They actually deducted 320 dirhams, and (…) the HR lady said, 'Do you know, you can talk to your supervisor and tell him that, to sign this?' And I said, 'You know, I won't even bother. This is ridiculous. This is ridiculous, okay? This is very humiliating.'" (Sheila)

Sheila revealed her antipathy, referring to the HR department as "the police" when describing this and other interactions, adding that poor relations with HR were not unusual for her. Other participants recalled similar frustrations. For example, when his contract was restructured, Peter said, "They got angry at me for asking and wanting to know. Of course I wanted to know! You can't implement something like that without clear reasons." The lack of communication from HR, combined with interpreted resentment when seeking clarifications, eventually led many to effectively disconnect themselves from that key department.

The "authoritarian, top-down model", which Bobby condemned, was the most broadly agreed-upon description of upper management. Sheila described it as "Lots of dos and don'ts: Don't do this, and do that. Teachers' voices are not heard in any way." Bobby was similarly disappointed because of the colleagues' knowledge that was not being tapped. Any semblance of giving faculty more voice was a façade, in participants' experiences. Pat recalled one meeting:

> "We were challenged to come up with our ideas, and we presented our ideas about where we thought the direction of our courses should go based on the feedback (…), and then, the then-dean said, 'Well, actually, thanks for that, but I've decided that we're going to do this'." (Pat)

Chris related a comparable episode, a workshop for teachers to develop their learning outcomes which the dean immediately supplanted with his own (see section 5.1.6), yet he was also the only participant who discussed an HEI in which teachers could freely voice opinions: “Where I work now, I think it’s more honest. People can talk openly with the management.” Conversely, several others described an environment of fear, where faculty are afraid to speak up. Hanna, for example, characterized her experiences after resigning as freeing, enabling her to speak more honestly with management: “And people do come to me and say, ‘I have a question for you to ask at the next meeting, please’, because they're afraid to. They don't want to.” This reflects many of the participants’ experiences asking questions of HR, as does a general feeling of mistrust, which Kelly disclosed, “I feel like at the top, there’s a real, um, puts on a nice face and then has different intentions behind closed doors.” Effectively describing a person as two-faced suggests a serious problem with trust. Believing that management either will not or cannot be transparent in communications, Kelly felt “in the dark” concerning decision-making, resulting in a disinterest in messages from management and a general disconnect from the institution.

5.3.3 Position within the institution (“You know, ‘this is going to end now’.”)

As examined in section 5.1.1, salary and benefits are a key rationale for many participants decision to work in the Gulf States. While several appreciated the remuneration they receive, more than half were generally negative about their contract situation. Five teachers talked about changes being made (or attempted) to their contracts before even arriving in the country. Hussein’s was the most dramatic, as he recalled his interactions shortly before arriving, five months after the initial

agreement, that he would be moving departments and he needed to sign an entirely new contract with a new title:

> “First, I was supposed to join them on 13th of August. They said, we want you to come here on third of August, ten days before. (…) The change in the joining date was the major excuse to change the whole contract. (…) I was really pissed off to join as an instructor, and from assistant professor to instructor.” (Hussein)

In his experience, Hussein felt victimized through his contract. He had left a position as an assistant professor and agreed a contract with another institution at the same level, but then agreed under duress to sign a new contract because he felt pressured with no other late-term options to find an alternative position. Although he was the only teacher in the foundations program with a terminal degree, he was ultimately told he could not pursue promotion: “HR says that (…) foundations teachers can teach only as instructor. There is no way for promotion. I can’t apply for promotion.” This experience reflects that of others who, after initial assignments, were given novel demands regarding location, departments, reporting dates, or even subjects to teach, all counter to their agreed-upon contracts.

The helplessness that those teachers recalled is palpable and similar to the feelings that a few other participants discussed when they were made to sign an addendum to their current contracts. Abdullah talked about how he came to his position for a certain package and how after a year he was made to agree to contractual changes: “She said if I don't sign that amendment that it's, you know, I'm making the decision to give my notice. Well, I'm not in the position that I can do that just now.” In his situation, leaving without making necessary preparations is not possible because of his familial responsibilities, which led him and others to feel

victimized by the nature of contracts at the institution, feelings which could inevitably have a negative influence on other aspects of their professional and personal life.

The customary process of contract renewal, however, was also generally viewed negatively or as a cause of stress. Several participants reported a lack of transparency combined with a drawn-out manner of delivering new contracts. Peter, who was still expecting a new contract during the interview, talked about the stresses:

> “It's about 2 months late, so I can't book flights for my family. I don't know if I should register my children for school here. (…) I don't know if I should buy a piece of furniture if I'm going to be here, or if I should start selling my stuff. I don't know anything.” (Peter)

This uncertainty could be contrasted with the experience of Zahra, for example, who was offered a new contract in October during the final year of a 3-year contract. She reported a much less stressful academic year, and that would likely manifest in her teaching and her commitment to the institution. Peter, on the other hand, said that the negative contract situation “affects everything” and that it was particularly taxing on his family throughout the final year of the contract. Tahmina had worked in such a circumstance but moved to a different institution for a lower salary to avoid the heightened stress: “I feel safer because they told me that this is a rolling contract. You don’t have to come every year to sign it. That’s why I sacrificed the monetary thing, and that is a huge thing for me.” Family issues or job changes illustrate the elevated levels of anxiety generated by contract renewals and their repercussions for expatriate teachers.

The contracts themselves also emphasize the impermanent nature of the work in the region, as Harley recalled:

> “It's very transient. It's not connected to teaching and all that, but I'm very mindful of the fact that I've only got 15 months to go, (…) and that does affect you. (…) I think it does give you a sense of, well, you know, 'this is going to end now' you know?” (Harley)

Fifteen of the participants confirmed that they feel temporary in their current positions regardless of the time in those positions. Even Tahmina, who has been working in the region for over ten years, talked about feeling temporary and unsettled, and how it is not limited to teachers: “This is a kind of *permanent temporariness*. Uncertainty all the time.” While the causes of those feelings may be multifarious, ranging from the contracts, to interactions with management, housing, or even personal choice, with many of the participants, the effects can be seen in their attitude towards their work. Tim admitted that he is not “terribly interested” in the institution’s long-term plans because of such feelings: “If you think you’re going to be gone in a year and a half, as a lot of us do, the commitment isn’t there.” Such feelings can detract from teachers’ professional identity, as Tim said, “It’s not education; it’s a contract.” In a similar light, other participants referred to themselves as “mercenaries” or even a “prostitute”.

Although many participants encountered stress with their contracts and their tenuous status within their institutions, only three believed that they were working too much. Most of the participants said their workload was largely restricted to teaching, as Nour exemplifies: “We are lucky we don’t have a lot of paperwork. I teach, I do my stuff, but I don’t need to deal with other things, so that’s also on the good side of it.” On the other hand, a small number of participants felt limited in their role and wanted more opportunities for research, professional development, or promotion. Bobby lamented that untapped potential:

> “I honestly believe there's a great deal of potential (…). I think you could do much more, people like ‘Paul’ who really do care and would like more of an opportunity to have a greater impact. I know I would like to have more impact.” (Bobby)

For Bobby, the institution did not provide a channel to contribute to the improvement of the curriculum, nor an impetus to develop professionally or conduct research, for example. This has parallels with several participants’ unsettled, transient feelings and lack of commitment to their institution. However, it is not universal across the region: Chris discussed his current HEI and the many opportunities to contribute beyond teaching, including a social activities committee, a community service committee, and “a very active PD committee.”

5.3.4 Organizational culture (“too bureaucratic and too hard to get anything done”)

School culture, at its core, according to Gruenert and Whitaker (2015), is “the way we do things around here” (p.6). The results show no consensus on the general approach to how things are done in the various HEIs, but multiple participants characterized their institutions’ management style as top-down or authoritarian. Together with that, several added the moniker “industrial model”:

> “KPIs and, you know, it's ridiculous to me because it seems like it's factory talk, it’s directives, and hit your targets, and your line manager, and approval here and approval there, and it just feels very industrial to me, (…) too bureaucratic and too hard to get anything done, and that's from the top down.” (Kelly)

For Kelly, the industrial approach applies to the communication and bureaucracy involved in everyday work activities, like the concept of KPIs (key performance indicators). He assessed the management of the HEI as more like a production company, which is similar to Abdullah: “We are being run like a corporation.” On the

other hand, while Bobby similarly called the approach “the commodification of education,” she provided a scathing judgment of the HEI’s management and educational standards, saying “their measures of success are bums in seats.”

Other participants felt entire groups within the HEIs were treated differently, particularly the so-called non-native speakers. For example, Tahmina reported, “Somebody came in the management, and they’ve decided within a week, they decided no non-native teachers.” Tahmina’s experience demonstrates a top-down approach, as one individual unilaterally made a large-scale staffing change with no notice. It also seems personally dictated with little forethought, as Tahmina explained that shortly after the move, the decision was reversed due to faculty numbers. Sheila’s opinion was also much more likely impacted by a negative experience with one individual, leading her to generalize that “unfortunately, in the Arab world, there is no system.” Like Sheila (see 5.3.2), many of the participants’ broader opinions look to have been influenced by interactions with a small number of individuals; particularly when those interactions evoke strong negative emotions, they can lead to stereotyping and generalizations.

Concomitant to how “things are done” are the values evident and promoted in institutions. Though not an explicit topic for most participants, values of institutions were generally implied through discussions of their experiences there. While a few participants like Chris and Harley felt “support” and “respect”, the majority had negative feelings towards the values they saw espoused in the culture of their institutions. One camp believed the primary value was that of progressing students rather than educating them, as Tim expressed, “It’s about getting them in the door and getting them through, you know?” Those teachers also used terms like

“industrial” or “corporate” and talked about grade inflation (see Bobby’s comments, section 5.2.3), for example, which can adversely influence teachers’ professional identities. The second camp generally lamented divisions maintained by their HEIs, whether a lack of integration between departments or amongst faculty members, divided by professional status or nationality. Tahmina felt discriminated against due to her nationality: “If you have this much education and this passport, here’s your salary.” She admitted that this “set hierarchy” led to an “inferiority complex” that she struggled to overcome. The experiences of both groups may adversely affect their professional identities. Such effects can lead to feelings of isolation, possibly encourage teacher turnover, or even diminish teachers’ efficacy in the classroom (Romanowski & Nasser, 2015; Watlington et al., 2010).

5.4 External cultures: Experiences outside of the institutions

The cultures within institutions only provide a partial picture of expatriate teachers’ overall experience living and working in a foreign country. Thus, the full sociocultural context of teachers will be investigated in the coming section. Participants’ experiences are examined in light of their lifestyle; the manner that living in the region impacts them and their family, day-to-day and long-term; as well as their interactions with the local population and the associated cultural norms.

5.4.1 Lifestyle (“My kids all call it home.”)

For professionals adjusting to life abroad, Mendenhall and Oddou (1985) refer to a process of “expatriate acculturation” which includes measures of adaptability, stress reduction, and “cultural toughness.” However, the large majority reported being very happy with their living conditions, needing very little adaptation, for example

Nour: “We live in a nice house. (…) The kids have their friends here. Kids like it here. It feels safer here for kids.” The participants seem quite satisfied with their lives across the region, regardless of where they live. Jeff stated, “I like living on the university campus. It’s very safe.” Pat lives in a standalone villa and enjoys the quiet and peace being away from the city. On the other hand, Harley lives in a gated expatriate community, which a visitor described as “normal”: “She was saying, ‘Oh, it’s like being back home’ to have that sort of more Western experience.” That concept of “like being back home” also pertained to participants’ free time: most described few limits on what they could do for fun outside of work, whether taking nature walks when the weather is not too hot, playing sports like basketball or golf, or socializing in bars or elsewhere. Although satisfied with their free time, some participants also reported a shortage of available activities or “entertainment facilities” as Fahad called them, outside of shopping malls or restaurants. Therefore, based on the ability of the participants to settle into their living arrangements sufficiently, much of the requisite adaptability when living abroad may not be needed, particularly for the Western teachers.

However, the lifestyle for many of the participants from Asia was not nearly as positive. Their living and working arrangements were less amenable generally because of institutional preferences for “Western,” native-speaker faculty, and the resulting difficulties after finding a position. Ali talked about an initial, exorbitant amount of commuting time between campuses in his first position: “It’s five and a half hours on average, so that’s 22 hours per week of commute time. That’s more than your teaching hours!” Tahmina could not find a university position in the city where her husband was working, so she accepted a position in a different city, saying “You

know how it is. A woman living alone here? Yeah, it was not good, but I had to work, and it was a good opportunity for me professionally. (…) Weekends we used to meet." Shaikha worked as an adjunct for years but needed to find a stable, full-time position because of the political situation in her home country: "It was, you know, a matter of life or death at some point. So, yeah, with my job, now I feel more secured, you know?" Those situations took their tolls on the participants. Ali spoke of the ongoing discomfort he still suffers from due to the long hours driving, "Six years on, I'm still suffering neck and shoulder pain." Tahmina talked about the difficulty, after years of marriage, of having to adjust to life as a woman alone in a strange city: "I couldn't imagine a life without my husband. (…) I was living with the teachers. (…) Within a year or two, I got used to it." After more than five years apart, she was finally able to find a position closer to her family where she earns half of her prior salary, which she called "hard choices" but also a "huge relief." Due to the extreme stress she experienced seeking work, Shaikha had panic attacks and now takes several medications for anxiety: "I'm getting now, you know, physically tired and sick. (…). Now I'm taking Valium to sleep. I'm taking Xanax. I'm taking something else." Although most of these participants also said they were happy to be in the region, where they experience similar benefits regarding their families and a sense of normalcy, it is important to note that the flexibility and openness that many participants reported does not necessarily extend equally.

The prior comments from Nour and Jeff also touch on the positive familial aspects of life in the region; for the majority of participants, despite certain differences from their home countries, they are generally pleased. Abdullah recalled that he feels at home, as do his children: "I like it here. (…) My kids all call it home. Like, 'I gotta

head back home'." Others talked about how happy their children are with their lives there. However, schooling is becoming an increasingly challenging aspect for some teachers. Abdullah also said, "They can't keep jacking up the price of schools. Even the cheaper schools in Dubai cost more than the top private schools in (my country)." The education benefits that many employees receive from their employers are a large draw, yet that benefit varies greatly. The education fees and lack of institutional support were the most difficult aspect of life for Louis and his family: "They give you less than what you need for one kid. They give me 30,000 dirham," which is not sufficient for his large family, so his plans are to leave: "I'm just going to work this one year and then leave. It's not tenable." His situation underscores the importance of research prior to accepting a position, but it also touches on the risk that is involved when moving one's family. As he said, "it's an experience," which several other participants also discussed either as regards their children and their upbringing. This includes the opportunity to experience even more travel, as Kelly described: "Since I got here, I've probably been to ten places, really. I mean, Budapest, Croatia, Jordan, Nepal, (…) being three hours from a lot of interesting new places is pretty cool." While the situation with education at international schools was problematic for some, the exposure to new places or traditions is a rewarding aspect of the lifestyle in the region.

Nevertheless, some participants were wary of the "typical expat experience" or becoming too accustomed to their life there. Pat seemed very happy with her "quiet" and "peaceful" life, however different from other foreigners: "So we are kind of removed from what is the typical expat experience, I suppose. I think the more general expat experience would be going to all your brunches and living in very

glamorous houses." Pat's comments imply a financial aspect to the expat experience, which Sheila addressed even more directly:

> "You get used to a certain lifestyle that is actually not reality. (…) They pay you good money and then you think that this is life. This is not life! You know, this is temporary. (…) My husband, yes, he was always reminding me and the girls that this is not reality: 'Guys, you have to wake up. We can lose this at any time'." (Sheila)

She believes the "expatriate lifestyle" is "not reality", which, when contrasted with life in many expatriates' home countries, is an understandable assessment. To illustrate, Abdullah remembered the difference between paying bills in his home country and then coming to the Gulf States: "I didn't pay utilities until two and a half years ago. (…) I would leave my ACs on in my villa when I left in the summer. I don't pay for it, you know?" Abdullah's comments also reveal an important change in the region, particularly for teachers in the public sector, which he called the "*golden handcuffs"* in place years ago when Western expatriate workers "couldn't leave because they were just paying us too much money." Several participants mentioned additional expenses such as VAT that are already affecting their ability to save money, which they believe could affect recruitment of new teachers or influence their own decision to stay longer.

Sheila's second point that life in the region is temporary, that "we can lose this at any time" was a powerful feeling with most participants (see also section 5.3.3). Fifteen of the participants discussed the issue of "permanent temporariness" as Tahmina coined. Zahra talked through her thoughts:

> "Are we going to stay here like for a long time? We don't know. Even if we want to, will it happen? What will happen next? So we don't know. So this feeling temporary, yes, is with us, is with all the teachers, I should say. It might be a deterrent, too, like whatever they do, their motivation towards learning the culture, history, people. Even the commitments." (Zahra)

Zahra's comments highlight the effect of limited-term contracts on faculty's commitment, yet it extends to how settled they actually feel in their lives abroad, as well as their willingness to settle in. As can be seen, expatriate teachers may question major expenditures based on their insecure status, as Kelly also exemplified: "You can't buy that. Where are we going to put it? What if we have to move?" There was an acute awareness of this aspect of expatriate life that Jeff's family actively resolved against, saying, "We talked about that and we decided that we're not going to live that way. (…) We're going to make this place our home, and we're going to live here like it's going to be a comfortable place." Zahra also admitted the challenge of making plans, which was a common refrain, as Nour described her difficulty when asked about long-term plans: "This sometimes hurts me that I don't know. Maybe I won't be here." Thus, expatriate teachers could be constricted to a series of short-term plans, as Tim described: "It's never home, and everybody is always looking over their shoulder. Where's the exit? Have I got enough money to go, to retire, to get back to where I belong, you know?" Tim's comments attest to the lack of security that the temporary feelings expose. It is a complicated juxtaposition that most of the participants enjoy their lives in the GCC, yet at the same time feel powerless to decide for themselves the length of their stay.

5.4.2 Socializing ("I'd say we're friends, but he's different.")

All of the participants said they were able to make friends, while several admitted certain difficulties or limitations. For example, Kelly and Pat both prefer to stay with their spouses, while Hussein referred to himself as "not a very extrovert person." One participant complained of a shortage of friends because of other expatriates leaving the country (Richardson & Zikic, 2007), Hanna said, "This sounds sad and pathetic; I

don’t really have any friends here anymore. They’ve all left.” However, participants seemed satisfied with their social lives overall. Regarding their circle of friends, the majority (14) usually socialized with others from their home countries or similar countries (e.g. other Anglophone countries for participants from the British Isles). Participants from Egypt, Lebanon, Iran, etc. said that their closest friends were from the same country, but participants from the United States, or England, for instance, spoke more of “Western” friends.

Regarding the local population, participants were evenly divided, with ten participants saying they had no local friends, although two said they had local “acquaintances”, and ten saying they socialized with locals to a limited extent. As part of the group with no local friends, Peter exemplified the sentiment, saying, “When I see the neighbors, I say hello to them and they’re very friendly and very nice, (…) but I think you can never really get close to them.” Notwithstanding similar pleasantries, only two participants retained a number of friends from the local population, and those two both made most of those friends years earlier during their studies. Others spoke of having a handful of local friends, but more importantly, that they consider those friends to be different from most of the local community, as Abdullah described:

> “I play cards with this one Emirati guy. I'd say we're friends, but he's different. He's not your traditional Emirati guy, but I can count on one hand the people I’ve had meaningful conversations with that are Emirati, and I’ve been here for years.” (Abdullah)

Five participants who spoke of local friends described those friends as atypical compared to other GCC citizens. For example, Tim also called his local friends “very Western.” This also implies a linguistic connection, as these friends would be more competent and comfortable speaking English socially. Thus, according to the experiences of the participants, the opportunity to make friends with locals seems

confined to those depicted as either more like the expatriate themselves or dissimilar to most of their countrymen, as Pat described, “You can be acquaintances, very collegial, but there’s a boundary that’s not stepped over in terms of friendship.” While that boundary is not inviolate, the experiences of the participants demonstrate that it feels real for many expatriate residents.

5.4.3 Separation in day-to-day interactions (“I was expecting this immersive experience”)

Beyond friendships, sixteen participants perceived some form of everyday separation between expatriates the local population. There were different observations of why there is such a divide and what it means. Primarily, the consensus was that expatriates do not encounter locals during their daily lives; they encounter other expatriates. For example, Pat said, “Everyone who serves you, of course, its' the same in the UAE, is Sri Lankan or Filipino.” Several participants mentioned that because of the large number of expatriate workers, they do not regularly see locals. Kara called her experience one of “expat culture”. She was disappointed not to be exposed to novel, local cultures, as was Bobby, who lamented, “I was expecting this immersive experience.” The separation was detrimental to her motivation to settle down or integrate. Although Louis said there were large numbers (“60-75% South Asian”) of expatriate workers in Oman, he was the only participant to mention seeing locals during their day-to-day activities: “There’s a massive push for Omanization. (…) There’s Omanis that work as taxi drivers, work in hotels, so there’s a lot of jobs taken up by an Omani at entry level.” The other participants all talked about a dissociation between foreign and native inhabitants, with sometimes very distinct lines.

The effects of that daily separation can be disappointment, as with Kara or Bobby; there may be social isolation, as Tim described: “It’s exhausting thinking about how isolated you kind of are here, really. You’re never going to be a part of this.” However, most participants were comfortable in their lives, often due to the diversity of the expatriate population. Ali stated, “I don’t feel like an outsider. (…) It’s the circle of friends from (my home country).” The separation of disparate groups can lead to a hierarchy of those groups, which a majority of participants recognized. Chris described his own understanding of it: “So, yes, there is a pecking order. I guess as Westerners, professional Westerners will be seen as just below the locals. (…) I think it's quite common across the different countries; it's quite similar.” A few others, however, disagreed that it was any different from other places, as Harley stated, “It happens in all societies, and will always be around.” On the other hand, unequal treatment was a sensitive topic for diverse reasons. Kelly resented being treated preferentially because of his nationality: “Sometimes we’re ushered to a different line or we’re just expedited in certain ways that other people are not. (…) I don’t like to be treated differently at all.” Other participants, like Pat, were emotionally impacted by the disrespect certain groups receive, “That's been one thing that I should mention, as well, that I've just found really challenging. Just the mistreatment of people.” Regardless of the manifestation, comprehensive separation was noticed by most of the participants.

Only two of the teachers admitted feeling discriminated against: Tahmina talked briefly about the issue of different pay scales according to the passport, which Hussein also raised, yet he additionally explained his feelings of mistreatment:

> “People don't respect you. People don't respect your privacy, don't respect your personality. They don't respect you as a human being. (…) They won't

> say anything, but their eyes, their behavior, their body language; that makes you uncomfortable." (Hussein)

Hussein was very clear about the contempt he would regularly feel, and how that influenced his desire to hide. The result was an aversion to going shopping, socializing, or pursuing a driver's license, with effects on his familial relationships. He spoke very emotionally concerning the need to not be "prominent" because "it's not something safe. You have to be a part of the crowd, always remain invisible." Tahmina mentioned her dissatisfaction towards groups' unequal treatment because "this place represents Islam. It gives a negative picture," but she would not engage with it personally, also saying that many people, including locals, do not like the status quo, "but they can't help it. It is like a fixed thing, like a structure and everybody had got used to it, so they say it's the culture." Several participants also felt they were passive actors in the fixed culture of separation or hierarchy.

Participants were quite limited when discussing other social aspects of the local cultures. Interestingly, the separation of the genders was of minimal importance to the majority. Bobby, as a single woman arriving over a decade ago, admitted to feeling like "an object" in that context: "I really saw how the separating the sexes, and the sublimation of the sexual urge and all that, how it manifests in a day-to-day environment." She described regularly being followed and made to feel extremely uncomfortable, yet she no longer has such experiences. Other participants, particularly in Saudi Arabia, spoke of needing to re-acclimatize when returning to mixed-gender environments, as Jeff recounted, "I've really kind of struggled in knowing what is a normal relationship with a work colleague who is female." However, norms of driving were actually a more discussed topic. Half the participants revealed varying levels of unease with the way others drive, as Kelly described:

> “There's a lot of me-first attitude and impatience. (…) It could just be because there's so many different people from different places with different driving norms, styles. (…) Because nobody's really policing the roads, it doesn't look like.” (Kelly)

Kelly explained two personal theories of the discomfort of driving: first, the diversity of drivers leads to a disjointed driving culture, and second, the enforcement of laws solely through traffic cameras leads to excessive speeding. Jeff called it “terrible” but was positive about licensing changes and their eventual effect, whereas Fahad admitted that he does not drive in the country because he’s “scared”. Kelly said that he was surprised by the aggressiveness of the driving style of many locals because of “it’s the complete opposite of what you would get in a face-to-face situation from what I’ve experienced.” Respect and politeness are the most common descriptions of locals either in public or in government offices, since that is one location that will regularly be staffed by nationals, according to the participants.

Despite the paucity of regular interactions with locals, most participants said holidays, both national and religious, had an impact on their lives. Political holidays such as national day were the least discussed, and all five of those participants had unfavorable impressions. Hussein called the celebrations “shallow”, whereas Tim and Peter both disapprovingly referred to the show of flags and regalia as “nationalistic”. Religious holidays, most notably the month of Ramadan, were generally discussed in more positive terms. Some of the non-Muslim participants were curious by the practices during Ramadan, and several had taken part in an Iftar dinner (when the fast is broken). In fact, only Bobby revealed frustrations with the restrictions on public consumption: “I was dying not being able to drink my coffee.” On the other hand, the Muslim participants were divided in their appraisals: two enjoyed the prevalence of

fasting, as it was a contrast from their home countries, yet two others did not view the practices as strictly Islamic. Hussein was nonplussed because of the drastic effect Ramadan had on the pace of life and availability of services: “Islam doesn’t say if you’re fasting, you stop everything. It’s just a part of life. Just take it as normal.” Sheila said that she felt uncomfortable because of the over-the-top extravagance of Iftar, saying, “They have feasts for Iftar and after Iftar. (…) They spend lots and lots of money. To my family and our friends, Ramadan is a holy month where we are calm, we pray, we feed the poor.”

Concerning religion overall, participants mostly felt a freedom to practice unconstrained by any local religious customs. Fahad and Tahmina both described being welcomed in the mosque, with Tahmina even saying, “I like the openness here. I can walk into any mosque and pray. It’s not so in (my home country).” However, Hussein’s experiences were different, leading him to believe Arab Muslims have a “sense of superiority.” He feels as if he and other non-Arabs are treated as “secondary Muslims,” particularly when praying in the mosque. An additional practice that Hussein took issue with was the closing of shops during Muslim prayer times. Tahmina concurred:

> “It gets very inconvenient at times, but then I’ve been living here for so long that when I go (home), I have this, ‘Oh, it’s prayer time – hurry up, hurry up!’ And then they’d tell me, ‘No, the shop is not going to close here!’” (Tahmina)

Similar to his reaction to Ramadan, Hussein called the practice “not Islamic”, saying that it is a “personal obligation” to find time to pray. Other religions were widely practiced across several GCC countries, and the Christians participants spoke warmly of their churches, as well as their church’s place in the community. Louis described the arrangement of the churches near the grand mosque: “Grand mosque

is on one end of the street; the Catholic and Protestant churches are on the other end of the same street," but he said that the churches did not display crosses on their exterior "out of respect for the community." Interestingly, Nour clarified that the church she attends does have a cross, and "during Christmas and Easter, the police would come and make sure everything is safe." She added that she has made most of her friends through the church, much like Jeff's experience in another Gulf State.

The diverse international populations in each of the Gulf States leads to the use of English as a Lingua Franca, limiting the opportunities to learn or practice Arabic. Only Sheila, living in Kuwait, said that use of Arabic is common: "Arabic, all the way. Even the Filipinos, the Indians, the Pakistanis, the Afghanis, they all speak Arabic. (…) No, English is not spoken at all." It may be true that much less English is spoken there than in other GCC countries, but this is not a review of the country's practices, rather a description of Sheila's experiences in her first year there. In other Gulf States, English is so prevalent that Arab participants like Nour said that her children are more proficient in English than in Arabic. That extends to the other expatriates, as Peter described:

> "There's no point, really, learning much Arabic because no one in the service industry, in the encounters that I would actually have, speaks Arabic because they're all from the Philippines and Malaysia and Indonesia and Nepal and India, (…) and they all speak English." (Peter)

Peter admitted that he would be more motivated to learn if the situation were different, yet few others were more interested in learning. Some talked about trying to learn when they first arrived but eventually became discouraged. Louis and Jeff were the only non-Arab participants who continued to practice their Arabic: Jeff recalled growing up near Arabs in his hometown and developing a fascination with the culture

from an early age. Louis was the only participant interested in going to places like local souks (‘markets’), where he attempts to converse in Arabic.

They were not the only ones to admit to being curious about the culture or history of the region, however. The Muslim participants had all learned about the history of the region as part of their religious education, and several more had bought books on the region prior to arriving, like Chris, for example: “I've read books on history of the region. And some of the business books about doing business in the Gulf and so on and so forth.” There was more interest in the history than in learning about the culture because of the cultural separation previously discussed, as Kelly explained:

> “How much are you willing to invest when you are almost certain to, that there's no return involved. Return being, having relationships with Emiratis of a deeper meaning. (…) On a personal level, it's, I wouldn't get a chance to even use it or learn about it more personally.” (Kelly)

Kelly’s lack of motivation for learning about aspects of the culture was similar to his justification for not learning much of the language. The separation of expatriates and locals was a common theme throughout the data collection process; however, Jeff and Louis’s narratives demonstrate that it is a surmountable boundary if expatriates themselves put in the effort to bridge the gap and extend themselves, potentially leaving their comfort zones.

5.5 Summary

It is clear from the analysis that the participants demonstrated a wealth of diverse experiences. When arriving at their HEIs, the orientation the participants received was generally welcoming yet lacking in a realistic job preview. The informal orientation was pervasive and well-received by each participant. Once settled in the

classroom, interactions with students generated both positive and negative feelings for the participants, yet most were unable to reconcile the satisfaction they felt towards their careers with their dissatisfaction towards their limited contract and their feelings of temporariness. Outside of their professional lives, many were willing to engage with local residents, yet described limited opportunities due to clear separations between them. This had an impact on participants' willingness to learn the language, as well as engage with the culture or history of the region. Overall, participants were broadly satisfied with their lives in the Gulf States, however disappointing certain discrete aspects were.

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION

Although the experiences of the 20 participants across the spectrum of contexts (different HEIs in the six Gulf States) were diverse, several themes emerged from the data relating to those experiences. Despite teachers' extensive professional qualifications and varied backgrounds, they all appreciated support during orientation and resented when the induction demonstrated lack of organization or care. During their socialization experiences, the most consistently beneficial aspect for each participant was the help and backing they received from their new colleagues through informal orientation. The teachers' relations with students was the area most in need and most lacking during induction, as well as the most dynamic after the participants had settled into their positions, evoking both frustration and enjoyment. In turn, a casualization of employment status in the form of limited contracts and insecure positions within the HEIs led to feelings of *permanent temporariness*. Additionally resulting in feelings of unsettlement was the separation from local citizens that participants experienced, regardless of their own interest in learning about the locality. The ensuing sections further explore these themes through the participants' experiences with reference to the established research in the relevant fields. The themes are discussed as they have arisen in the data analysis, with the research questions directly addressed in the summary of findings in the subsequent chapter.

6.1. Organizational socialization: Comprehensive and supportive orientation programs?

Chapter 5 began by considering the participants' experiences when first joining HEIs in the Gulf States. During the pre-arrival period, most participants described a stressful period of "anticipatory socialization" (Kondakci & Haser, 2012, p.4396) or "anticipatory adjustment" (Black et al., 1992, p.123, as cited by Fish, 2005, p.225). According to both studies, this period requires extensive and clear information for newcomers, yet participants described a lack of clarity. Such a shortfall creates an unnecessarily anxious situation for new teachers when they are uncertain of their standing and the status of preparations. While some of the participants, notably those without families, exhibited a level of ease and flexibility which they credit to their experiences abroad, others felt a manner of uncertainty amplification and began to develop negative feelings towards the process and the institution before even arriving on campus. Similar to participants in Kondakci and Haser's (2012) study in Turkey, sentiments of "decreased trust and disappointment" as well as questioning the professionalism of the HEI grew from an early stage (p.4396), yet is seems a simple missed opportunity to improve morale and generate positive feelings based on two participants who were personally contacted by colleagues before arriving. Both expressed appreciation of the gesture (Graybill et al., 2011). Indeed, from a very early stage, it is beneficial for new teachers and advantageous for HEIs to utilize long-serving teachers to establish rapport and answer questions, catering to the individual needs of new teachers; however, the participants' experiences show a lack of official involvement by veteran faculty members, notably in the absence of useful orientation packets with digestible forms of information (Tuzlukova & Stead, 2016).

In such international contexts, the *encounter* phase of socialization, when new faculty members first arrive, is much more complicated. Most of the participants were flown in to join their new institutions, effectively being thrust into unfamiliar surroundings, where they are potentially more vulnerable to stress, as participants with children emphasized. An awareness of that vulnerability on the part of the HEI is essential for making new teachers feel welcomed and well-taken-care-of upon arrival (Fenton-Smith & Torpey, 2013). This is a key aspect of the induction process because the results show new faculty members are more likely to identify with an employer they see as supportive. Even participants who were disappointed by other aspects of the induction process spoke very appreciatively about having their initial needs addressed. Thus, the more welcoming an HEI is seen to be, with unique efforts (one participant mentioned a stocked kitchen upon arrival) catered directly to each new faculty member, the more appreciative the employee feels, creating longer term benefits in terms of identification with or commitment to the organization (Graybill et al., 2011). On the other hand, the participants with more experience working abroad were more at-ease during that period, contrasting earlier experiences with later ones, describing how much more capable they felt.

The appreciation that participants felt due to the initial warm welcome contrasts sharply and widely with their experiences regarding accommodation. In seeking suitable housing, the majority of participants received minimal assistance from their new employers, which most deemed unsatisfactory, similar to Fenton-Smith and Torpey's (2013) results of expatriate teachers' experiences of the "civilian domain" in an orientation in Japan (p.236). This is clearly an issue for new faculty members that requires greater understanding by HR administrators for two key

reasons: The issues of the ticking clock on the hotel stay and the unfamiliarity with the rental market both create a great deal of stress for these new teachers, reflecting the issues reported in Fenton-Smith and Torpey's (2013) study. Being unsettled in unfamiliar surroundings amplifies teachers' uncertainty, which affects teachers' professionalism, understandably distracting from teaching and other duties. Such a situation also has the potential to undo the positive bridge building achieved, especially regrettable because much could be accomplished by tapping the knowledge of veteran teachers (Welch, 2003).

The preceding issues demonstrate a clear need for a supportive induction program; however, the issues of housing were compounded for many participants because of their unclear responsibilities during the induction period. Most lacked a comprehensive, well-planned orientation program. Only one participant described an "induction committee" who "do a very good job," which also seemed to have a hierarchy of information for new faculty, a clear schedule, and actively facilitated informal induction. The onboarding literature advocates "clear and concise communication" delivered in "small doses" (Graybill et al., 2011, p.202), yet most participants still described long, arduous administrative sessions taking the form of an "information dump" (Gregory, 1998, p.17, as quoted by Robinson, 1998, p.3). Such one-directional delivery of administrative information does not show appreciation for teachers' agency in the socialization process as they form new identities (Fetherston, 2017; Trowler & Knight, 1999). Also generally absent was a realistic job preview, considering all the stakeholders and the needs of the new teachers themselves, laying out the path for teachers to be successful and contribute to their new institutions, taking into account the different cultures of various departments, as well

as faculty members' individual differences (Scott et al., 2016). A critical inclusion for participants, then, was their informal interactions with veteran teachers, who provided much of the information that the formal induction sessions omitted, coinciding with much of the literature (Wong, 2004; Bauer, 2010). This is a key aspect of orientation from a postmodern perspective because it embraces new teachers' agency to seek out information, shaping their induction process themselves (Teboul, 1984, p.191, as cited by Ongiti, 2012, p.36). For the participants, most glaringly absent was a clear and honest introduction to curricula, teaching materials, teaching standards, and student profiles, with many reporting surprise or disappointment once stepping into the classroom, contradicting the results of a study by Tuzlukova & Stead (2016) at an Omani university, whose participants felt very prepared to teach because of the comprehensive induction received. However, many other studies (Boyden, 2000; Kondakci & Haser, 2012; Murray, 2008) similarly reveal new faculty members' broad unmet expectations concerning the realities they faced in their new positions, particularly regarding teaching.

6.2 Teachers and students: Cross cultural relations

Participants' interpersonal relations with students were largely positive, although also involving frustrations with students' motivation, engagement, and study skills (Austin et al., 2014; Sonleitner & Khelifa, 2005). However, participants were speaking generally, often qualifying judgments or introducing contradictory examples to avoid over-simplifying and unfairly stereotyping students or student behaviors (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). Similar to Kumaravadivelu's contentions, there were occasional attempts to attribute student behaviors to the culture or cultural patterns of

Gulf students, but that was rare. In recognition of potential stereotyping, participants were encouraged to give concrete examples when describing their experiences in the classroom, which proved difficult, some relied on broad generalizations and the use of 'they' to describe their students as a monolithic group. Certain participants demonstrated more empathy for their students, regarding the jump to tertiary education, studying entirely in English, or even issues at home. Those teachers embraced Atkinson's (1999) approach to viewing TESOL students individually, "a notion of culture in TESOL that takes into account the cultural in the individual, and the individual in the cultural" (p.648).

This is not to suggest that there are not trends or reoccurring behaviors. Although the seriousness varies, a majority of participants report issues with motivation, classroom engagement, and distraction by mobile phones, which are all real for them. In the current research, it is unfeasible to assess how actually widespread such issues are; however, through participants' descriptions of their experiences, it is possible to assess different approaches and their effects on teachers' job satisfaction. There is reportedly greater job satisfaction amongst participants who promote "student responsibility" and avoid generalizing students as unmanageable, recognizing the diversity within the cultures (McKay, 2002). For example, many of the participants have students who may become distracted by mobile phones, yet the teachers who view that as an individual issue and attend to the engaged students reported more positive experiences within the classroom.

Like Atkinson's (2003) assertion about approaches to teaching, it comes from "*somewhere*" and is "social action" (p.60), similar to Bourdieu's concept of habitus, by recognizing that a teacher's beliefs regarding classroom management is related to

their backgrounds and often have cultural origins (Borg, 2005), a teacher can better tailor their lessons to the abilities and aptitudes of their students and more successfully react as needs arise. This is similarly advocated by Weinstein et al. (2004) in their culturally responsive classroom management (CRCM), which acknowledges teachers' biases and background, and how they shape expectations. An unfortunate extension of CRCM is the self-censorship that several participants described, a practice they began with little guidance from the HEIs, akin to Romanowski and Nasser's (2015) contention of expatriate teachers operating in a "sink-or-swim" navigation of the cultures of their students (p.668). However, none of the teachers in this study reported the same degree of pressure that Romanowski and Nasser (2015) describe: adverse effects on a faculty member's "career, family, and financial status" (p.668).

On the other hand, some participants worried about students' course evaluations, believing that students used them as a means of coercion, particularly as the evaluations can impact contract renewals. This distrust of student evaluations as a primary assessment of teaching quality echoes the participants in Murray's (2008) study, who showed concern that they "open the door for students to retaliate against teachers with high standards" (p.123). A fear of the student evaluations represents an inversion of the power dynamic typically present in academic fields, one which was borne out in the experiences of one participant, who actually admitted to softening their grading standards, just as in Wilkins' (2010) study, which pinpointed students' course evaluations as one cause of grade inflation. Grades and standards were a common concern amongst the participants, with serious implications for their professional identities. How teachers see themselves and their behaviors builds their

sense of professionalism (Evans, 2008), so actions counter to their image of professionalism can detract from that sense, deprofessionalizing teachers in their own estimation.

6.3 Colleagues: The role of horizontal collegiality to develop institutional culture

According to the research, colleagues play a key role in expatriates teachers' experiences throughout Bartell's (1995) teacher development continuum: recruitment, induction, and further career. In the early stages, colleagues can play an outsize role in the orientation process: pre-arrival, "buddies" are a ready-made friend with valuable information catered to the needs of the new faculty (Caligiuri & Lazarova, 2002). After arriving, "organizational insiders" (Bauer, 2010) are able to provide an honest and practical picture of their new positions, as well as a realistic description of the cultures of the institution or department (Trowler & Knight, 1999). Participants reported limited benefits mostly because they needed to seek out the information themselves, rather than administrative facilitation of such exchanges (Morin & Ashton, 2004). However, contrary to older research (Boice, 1991; Sorcinelli, 1992), the participants described supportive colleagues as the best aspect of their early time in the HEIs, similar to the results of more recent studies (Boyden, 2000; Kondakci & Haser, 2012; Murray, 2008). The horizontal collegiality was supposedly so strong that much of the necessary coping or cultural adaptation (Feldman, 1997), or the resulting alienation, that new faculty felt (Romanowski & Nasser, 2015) in other studies was a non-issue for the participants in the study. The two-way nature of the socialization

that most participants reportedly experienced accelerated their adjustment, allowing them to embrace their new identities as fully fledged members of the faculty sooner.

Beyond their induction periods, participants described their experiences of positive horizontal collegiality, with some noted limitations. Most characterized those relations as involving a sort of pay-it-forward attitude amongst the faculty, resembling the findings of a recent study in UAE higher education (Chapman et al., 2014). Hage (1974, as cited by Dill, 2012, p.226) believes that such horizontal collegiality shapes organizational culture through continuous, verbal communication regarding professional issues. The similarities in backgrounds amongst many participants, as well as a large number of their colleagues, especially in their departments, may indicate similar habitus amongst them, yet it is also possible that such a positive culture within their HEIs or departments perpetuates itself, influencing faculty habitus (Bourdieu, 1990). There were similar feelings of approval regarding participants' immediate superiors or team leaders, likely due to their proximity both in a hierarchical sense and culturally, as they are also predominantly expatriates. In fact, certain participants reported a stronger collegiality within their own departments, reflecting Austin et al.'s (2014) study of expatriate faculty in Emirati HEIs, which was similar regarding positive collegiality, especially within participants' own departments.

The development of such supportive cultures within HEIs in which participants described generally negative attitudes towards management is interesting. There is a rationale for such positive attitudes in the similarities that faculty members may see in each other, rather than the difference between themselves and the administration, who may not be academics or expatriates. Additionally, the enmity that many feel towards the HEIs' administrations may also facilitate bonding amongst faculty

members as they direct their shared ire towards a common adversary, much like the faculty members in Murray's (2008) study, who developed a "we-they" relationship with the administration (p.121). This is contrary to the conclusions of Hargreaves (1994, as quoted by Knight & Trowler, 2000), who contends that "hard" managerialism results in "contrived collegiality", as opposed to the supportive environment described by many participants. That contention is further contradicted by participants' descriptions of events or committees organized by the administrations for the purposes of faculty integration. In fact, such events, together with committee work or rotating leadership roles, may actually serve as a means of managing academic culture through social integration, reinforcing values promoted by HEIs like diversity or tolerance (Dill, 2012). Those effects are limited since most participants actually reported a lack of peer observations or other professional opportunities suggested by Dill, yet they still overwhelmingly described communities of practice in their HEIs, in which networks of professionals that are supportive and trusting have developed organically or otherwise (Roxa et al, 2011).

6.4 Relations with Management: The teachers' place in the institution

Most participants described the leadership style in the HEIs as top-down, complaining about faculty's lack of voice. Although a few participants said they have freedom to develop their own materials and assessments, most reported little flexibility in the classroom and centrally planned, standardized assessments. Some lamented this as detrimental to their teaching and their identity as teachers, similar to past research (Costandi, et al., 2019; Day, 2002), and a representation of Bourdieu's struggle for control of academic resources in the field (Mendoza et al., 2012). The

trend towards greater central control and faculty disenfranchisement, also seen in other studies (Romanowski & Nasser, 2010), can deprofessionalize teachers and diminish their commitment towards the HEI. Participants discussed feelings of lack of fairness in their treatment, humiliation, mistrust, and fear, together with monitoring systems and performative measures (Ball, 2003), which multiple participants called an “industrial model”. This reflects the “sense of persecution” participants in Romanowski and Nasser’s study (2015, p.658) described upon being monitored in an institution in Qatar. Feelings of persecution are exacerbated by the top-down manner of direction, as participants interpreted a lack of empathy from management, and even a sense of authoritarianism (Chapman et al., 2014). What is interesting is that such apprehension towards management does not have adverse effects on horizontal collegiality and faculty members’ willingness to support each other, potentially the result of adversarial vertical relations, which Murray (2008) describes as a “we-they” relationship” (p.121)(see section 6.3).

A “we-they” dynamic between faculty and management may be intensified by the power held over faculty members in the form of limited-year contracts. Revealed as an ongoing source of worry or frustration (Austin et al., 2014), there is little trust in the contracts since several participants explained that theirs were changed during their contract period with a take-it-or-leave-it message from the HEI, evoking Swartz’s (1997) recognition of “those who are able to exercise some degree of monopoly power over the definition and distribution of capital” (p.124) within the struggle in the field. Even in regular intervals, contract renewals were universally characterized as stressful. Other regional studies have shown similar frustrations for academics: 43% of expatriate professors in the UAE were dissatisfied with lack of tenure and long-

term job prospects (Spender, 2009, as cited by Romanowski & Nasser, 2015, p.662). Whereas only one participant addressed the tenure she might receive in other countries, others thought they were “expendable”, resulting in feelings of being unsettled or as one participant called the constant uncertainty: “permanent temporariness.” Transience and risk are two of the greatest drawbacks amongst expatriates in Richardson and Zikic’s (2007) study, with the UAE one of the countries highlighted. As faculty members’ place within the HEIs seems quite tenuous, the frustrations and casualization require teachers to have greater tolerance for upheaval, akin to a lower score on Hofstede’s (2011) ‘uncertainty avoidance’ dimension. The results show that feelings of being expendable and temporary can influence faculty’s identification with the institution and its long-term aims, as well as the teachers’ professional identities, and unfortunately, even their commitment to the profession and their teaching.

6.5 Locals: Separation in the external cultures

Outside of their HEIs, most participants spoke very positively about their experiences and lifestyle. According to their narratives, many reported high standards of living in the GCC. Particularly those from “Western” countries, they seem to enjoy a lifestyle akin to that in their home countries, which participants called “normal” or “like being back home.” Hence, while much of the research on expatriate workers details efforts to fit in or negotiate interactive aspects of the host culture (Selmer, 2002), participants in this study revealed little need for coping strategies or “cultural toughness” (Mendenhall & Oddou, 1995, as cited by Richardson & Zikic, 2007, p.174).

Together with safety and quality family life, lifestyle indicates a significant trade-off for the frustrations teachers experienced within their professional lives. Coupled with a relatively high salary (though not the exorbitant “golden handcuffs” of years past, according to one), these benefits underscore teachers’ decision to relocate to the region, despite feelings of transience and being temporary. Such feelings complicate long-term plans or even major purchases, as many participants keep in mind the limited nature of their time in the region, or more anxiously, that their stay in the region is out of their control. This is amplified amongst many of the non-native speakers of English who have struggled to find and keep employment or be treated fairly once in positions.

The participants described living arrangements in which they predominantly live amongst and interact with other foreigners, as there tends to be a separation between expatriates and the local citizenry. This explicates participants’ feelings of being “at home” in their living arrangements since their exposure to different cultures is limited, based on their narratives. In forming support networks, expatriates naturally gravitate towards others who are culturally similar to them (Farh et al., 2010); due to the large expatriate population, teachers have voluminous opportunities to develop comfortable support networks (Salama et al., 2017). Such a familiarity has its explication in Bourdieu’s habitus, as those from similar backgrounds share a common history, which “enables practices to be objectively harmonized without calculation or conscious reference to a norm and mutually adjusted in the absence of any direct interaction or, *a fortiori*, explicit co-ordination” (Bourdieu, 1990, pp.58-59, emphasis in original). The converse of the harmonizing effect of similar habitus also points to the heterogenization most participants experienced with those

from other backgrounds. Although half the participants reported limited friendships with locals, they mostly depicted a social separation from the local population, just as other studies have reported “cultural constraints” on relationship forming with “host nationals” in general (Caligiuri & Lazarova, 2002, p.766) or about GCC citizens, in particular (Devitt, 2014; Rodriguez & Scurry, 2014; Romanowski & Nasser, 2015).

A common reason given for separation is the lack of public interactions since most service encounters involve other expatriates, leading to one participant to refer to her experience as one of “expat culture” rather than Gulf culture, and another to lament the absence of her desired “immersive experience”. Such observations are unsurprising in light of a survey by HSBC Bank which ranked the UAE near the bottom of the list of 37 countries for integrating and making local friends (Al Hameli, 2014). Some participants revealed feelings of resentment or isolation, reflecting the alienation from the local population reported by teachers in Qatar: “(W)hile it seems in the beginning you are welcomed there is always the sense that you remain an outsider” (Romanowski & Nasser, 2015, p.667). Although accepting of this status quo, ongoing perceptions of being an outsider will contribute to participants’ feelings of being unsettled and temporary.

6.6 Learning about the culture: A reflection of the separation

The feelings of separation and temporariness have an unquestionable effect on expatriates’ motivation to learn about the region’s history, culture, or language. The lack of interactions with native speakers of Arabic limits the applicability of speaking Arabic; thus, most of the participants have not pursued learning Arabic. That includes non-Gulf Arab participants, who admit that they speak much less Arabic in their

current context, which they believe is an issue, particularly concerning their children's L1 proficiency (Al-Rubaie, 2010). Participants in Devitt's (2014) study of teachers in Dubai discussed the importance of learning the local language to "expedite cultural acceptance and integration" in an abstract sense, yet they were similarly unwilling to learn Arabic in their specific context (pp.166-167). Likewise, some of the teachers in this study reported that they had made greater efforts at learning the language during other overseas placements, but the preponderance of English in daily life and the near-total separation from the local population in their GCC context dissuaded them (Troudi & Al Hafidh, 2017). Surprisingly, however, no participants mentioned any benefit to the classroom, though the majority of their students are native Arab speakers. Not necessarily to use Arabic in class, but to show an interest in the students and their culture, as a participant in Devitt (2014) describes: "using their language, or showing some knowledge of the culture buys you tremendous goodwill" (p.125).

When it comes to culture and history, however, the participants were much more open to learning. As noted in section 5.4, a majority read about the history generally due to interest in history or reading, rather than a specific desire to learn about their context. Additionally, very few endeavored to read any specifically cultural materials, implicitly because of the cultural separation from locals and the "normal" expatriate culture many of them report (Devitt, 2014), as well as the predominantly financial motivation for relocating there. Only four participants enjoyed venturing out to explore the locality to learn or experience the culture. They may believe that learning is unnecessary because they can rely on their own personal flexibility and previous experience abroad (Selmer, 2002) during any "critical incidents" where

cultural knowledge is needed (Fink et al., 2006). As a majority of the participants have long been living abroad, it follows that they may be more detached from their own cultures and thus find it easier to adapt to new cultural surroundings (Earley & Mosakowski, 2004). Their practices, however, do not suggest that those features have aided them in successfully integrating, or even motivated them to do so, which can only contribute to feelings of being an outsider and temporary. Nonetheless, the participants are ultimately in the Gulf States as teachers, with most students coming from the local citizenry, providing ample opportunity to learn and utilize specific cultural knowledge. Few discussed learning cultural norms to avoid conflicts with their students, and only one participant said they actively pursued such knowledge to better engage with their students (Palmer, 2015; Troudi, 2005).

6.7 Summary

Through the emergent themes, I have explored the teachers' experiences of the varied cultures across their contexts in the Gulf States. Similarities across those experiences have arisen, from the need for a supportive, comprehensive induction process involving organizational insiders, to certain classroom dynamic with students. Horizontal collegiality is as largely positive as vertical collegiality is negative, affecting teachers' professionalism and resulting in feelings of *permanent temporariness,* which also developed through the separation from local population, demotivating participants from learning the language or about the local culture.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS

This research set out to address the broad issue of cross-cultural relations by exploring the experiences of twenty expatriate EFL teachers living and working across the Arabian Gulf States. Although their experiences were diverse, as were the feelings evoked, several conclusions can be reached. This chapter will first examine the multiple findings regarding each research question. Next is an explication of the implications those findings have for expatriate EFL teachers, administrators, or other professionals practicing in the GCC and farther afield. Furthermore, examining both the findings and the implications leads to multiple recommendations for those individuals. There are also recommendations for future research in the fields touched upon in this paper. Finally, the personal journey of the thesis-writing process is reflected upon.

7.1 Main findings

The findings of the research have been organized according to the research questions initially set out in section 1.6; thus, there are four ensuing subsections. The findings are based on the themes which emerged through the analysis of the data collected through the series of semi-structured interviews with the participants.

7.1.1 How much are expatriate English teachers prepared for their new positions through the orientation they receive from higher education institutions in the Gulf States?

New faculty orientation begins with the recruitment process and how prepared the participants feel even before arriving. The majority felt they needed more open

communication or transparency of the process, yet their experience or personal adaptability made this a minor issue. A warm welcome and feeling appreciated were the general perceptions of the participants, as most were well-received and provided for upon their initial arrival, being received personally and provided some form of accommodation immediately. When those initial stages of induction go smoothly and the administration demonstrates some level of empathy for the new faculty members and their unfamiliar circumstances, the more they identified with their new institutions and the more quickly they settled into their new positions.

The majority of participants felt the formal orientation they received was lacking in overall planning or coordination, with time wasted or key aspects (of the job or the culture) neglected. While almost all of the teachers received exemplary assistance with their legal status, residence Visas, etc., the attention to accommodation was largely problematic, whether for those participants who had accommodation provided without their input, or more commonly, those participants required to procure accommodation in a foreign, unfamiliar environment under a strict time limit. The majority of the orientation programs seemed disjointed, without clear scheduling, coordination, or well-defined responsibilities for the new teachers themselves. Yet the most conspicuous deficiency was an orientation to the classroom addressing new teachers' individual needs. They reported a gap in their induction regarding aspects of the curriculum, teaching materials, and most importantly, any introduction to the students and the typical classroom dynamics in the HEI. These had the reverse effect of an orientation; rather than uncertainty reduction, much of the experiences amplified teachers' uncertainty.

On the other hand, the informal orientation that participants reported was quite beneficial, often filling gaps left by the formal induction program. New colleagues were the most fulsome source of information and assistance during socialization, possibly providing that assistance because they empathized with the new teachers or even remembered the uncertainty they felt in their place. However, several participants were frustrated at having to seek out help from those veteran faculty members, admitting to being unaware of what or who to ask. While longer-standing teachers represented a useful resource for the participants, the new teachers were unable to fully exploit that resource due to the absence of administration-sanctioned contacts in the form of mentors or buddies, or ice-breaker events to socially mingle with established faculty members.

7.1.2 How do the teachers experience the small cultures of their institution in their context?

Teachers' interactions with students comprised positive feelings and feelings of frustration. On a personal level, students were generally seen as warm, friendly, and respectful, but a source of consternation was their overall approach to academics, whether engagement in class, attention levels, work ethic, or study habits. Participants had varying views on the roots of students' issues regarding their studies, yet several were wary of stereotyping and aware of the limits of their own perspective. They made serious efforts to empathize with their students and change their classroom-management practices in a culturally responsive manner, avoiding emotive reactions while developing a tendency to ignore unengaged students (on their phones or otherwise). Participants did not feel limited by any differences with students since cultural rules tend to be implicit and easily observed. Despite little

impact on their experiences, the separation of genders in HEIs was the most explicit aspect of culture most teachers discussed; however, many expressed a respect for local traditions, whilst also revealing personal beliefs that the practice was disadvantageous.

The teachers had varied experiences regarding pedagogy, curricula and assessments. Although two participants found developing engaging teaching methods for their context too arduous, the majority considered it a minor issue, some even expanding their role to cultivate students' study skills or responsibility. Many teachers believed their students were predominantly motivated by grades, with often unrealistic expectations of all A's. This, combined with the power exerted on teachers through course evaluations, made grading work a stressful experience for several participants. They further admitted that either educational leadership or they themselves softened course requirements or assessments to expedite student success, with ramifications for the teachers' professional identities. Another aspect of professionalism discussed was the lack of classroom observations, which most participants believed was supplanted with bureaucratic monitoring or standardization as a more superficial means of maintaining standards. This contrasted with a small minority of teachers who felt they received too little guidance in the classroom but were still expected to prepare students for standardized tests.

Outside of the classroom, participants overwhelmingly described an environment of positive horizontal collegiality, yet a general disappointment with vertical collegiality. Interactions with colleagues were favorable, most participants characterizing those relations as supportive, involving a pay-it-forward attitude amongst the faculty. There were similar feelings of approval regarding immediate

superiors or team leaders, most likely because of their proximity hierarchically and culturally, as they are also predominantly expatriates. In contrast, vertical relations were typified as top-down, exhibiting lack of voice for faculty, resulting in an environment of distrust or even fear. The fear extended to teachers' tenuous place in the HEI, due to short-term contracts, which exacerbated expatriate teachers' feelings of "permanent temporariness" and were an ongoing source of stress. Overall, many participants found it difficult to identify with their institution and any long-term aims, generally only seeing a short-term goal of moving students through the program, rather than more professional or lofty values.

7.1.3 How do the teachers experience the large cultures of the Gulf States in their context?

Most of the participants, regardless of their backgrounds, characterized their lifestyle in the region as pleasant, evoking feelings of normalcy. Experiences were different amongst a few of the participants from southern Asia, however, as they experienced more difficulties settling into their lives or accomplishing day-to-day activities. Driving was listed as the most frustrating task, while religious practices were largely unencumbered. In the majority of participants' experiences, they minimally encounter the local citizenry, with more exposure to other expatriates. In fact, a clear separation between expatriates and the local population was noted, and although half the participants attempted to bridge such gaps, they experienced little success, and thus mostly socialized with other expatriates. Participants were aware of the social hierarchy which developed as a result, including for different genders, yet the influence on their own experiences was insignificant. Ultimately, though, participants

had a largely insecure connection to their host countries, with a strong feelings of temporariness and a view to eventually leaving.

7.1.4 How interested are teachers in understanding and learning about the large cultures of the countries they are residing in?

The participants predominantly discussed coming to the Gulf States for financial reasons, though also showing interest in the region's culture, history, and language. Over half talked about reading books on the history, language, or ways of life in the region. The majority were additionally interested in traditional events, with several attending weddings or visiting locals' homes. Conservatism in the form of gender segregation, unknown cultural rules, or linguistic barriers were the most common discouragements to those efforts. Few participants whose first language was not Arabic took serious steps to acquire it; most admitted that since the Lingua Franca was English, they had limited opportunities to speak Arabic, leaving them unmotivated to learn. This extended to the native speakers of Arabic, as two participants revealed difficulties encouraging their children to speak Arabic. More than language or cultural norms, participants largely advocated developing a greater sense of flexibility and patience in order to adapt, yet little was necessary due to the predominance of expatriates in the Gulf States.

7.2 Implications

As a contribution to knowledge, this study has provided a novel approach to much of the research into new teacher induction, in its international nature, as well as in the collection of qualitative data, extended well past the orientation programs to see longer term effects. Results further support a postmodern view of organizational

socialization as multi-directional and embracing new faculty's information seeking and agency (Fetherston, 2017), yet additionally demonstrating the need for comprehensive, supportive induction programs (Graybill et al., 2013). Participants' accounts show new teachers' high levels of stress and feelings of vulnerability when moving abroad, especially regarding families and settling in (Stupnisky et al., 2015). The thesis particularly sheds new light on informal induction and the mitigating impact of colleagues (Fenton-Smith & Torpey, 2013; Tuzlukova & Stead, 2016), both during the orientation stage and throughout their time working in the region (Banerjee et al., 2017). Linking the phases of the research, as faculty members are socialized into their HEIs and departments, developing a "professional habitus" that inculcates "shared perspectives, norms, strategies, and practices" (Mendoza et al., 2012, p.561), which in most participants' contexts include a positive, pay-it-forward norm.

Teachers' interactions with their students are highlighted, as differing habitus amongst teachers and their students can produce conflict within the classroom, especially considering that both groups or classes have moved outside of their "relatively constant universe of situations tending to reinforce its dispositions" (Bourdieu, 1990, p.61). However, those participants who demonstrated more flexibility in their approach to teaching and an empathy towards their students had a more positive experience and sense of professionalism, furthering the concept of culturally responsive classroom management (CRCM) by Weinstein et al. (2004). The pressure many teachers felt regarding grades reflected others in the region (e.g., Wilkins, 2010), also pointing to the conceptualization of higher education classrooms as a field, according to Bourdieu. Students compete for the cultural capital of all As

and exert some dominance, or a strategy of pressure, in an inversion of traditional roles of subordination in education (Mendoza et al., 2012).

Several participants also found their familiar elite status, either due to their backgrounds, profession, or education, inverted in their interactions with management of their HEIs. The professional environments of the participants often take the form of a Bourdieusian field, with faculty members and administrators competing for academic capital, in the forms of material and symbolic resources, with those in control of resources utilizing strategies to retain or enhance them (Mendoza et al., 2012). The research demonstrates the persistence of academic managerialism in the region in the form of performativity and monitoring, furthering the work of Ball (2003). Faculty members describe their positions as precarious due to authoritarian management styles and the short-term contracts, creating feelings of insecurity and permanent temporariness (Austin et al., 2014; Chapman et al., 2014). Those feelings of being temporary extended to participants' private lives, yet contrary to the work of Selmer (2002), sociocultural adaptation seems to be a much less urgent necessity for expatriates in the GCC due to the separation from the local populace (Romanowski & Nasser, 2015). There are practical rationales for the separation, notably the proliferation of other expatriates in service roles, yet there is also the issue of habitus, that people who share (similar) backgrounds with similar forms of capital tend to group themselves together, either consciously or unconsciously (Mendoza et al., 2012). The results have significance across the Gulf States, as well as for teachers or expatriates farther abroad.

7.2.1 Expatriate teachers

The implications for teachers follow Bartell's (1995) "teacher development continuum," starting at recruitment, through the induction process into their professional practice (p.6), while additionally acknowledging the context of their experiences external to their institution. The findings suggest a correlation between the extent of professional experience and level of preparedness prior to arriving, although family responsibilities can complicate the adjustments. Well-traveled teachers seem to rely more on their own established adaptability in a new context, and the experiences of the participants suggest that the limited timeframe available for settling in, particularly pertaining to life outside of the HEI, may not be sufficient. Once arriving in a new position, faculty members should generally not expect a comprehensive, well-organized formal orientation program presenting all important aspects, especially the students and the curriculum, and instead, they should be prepared to proactively seek out the needed information or assistance. However, faculty are generally well taken care of on arrival, and the informal orientation by veteran colleagues provides a greater level of practical information and preparation.

Within their professional practice, the research indicates that teachers need to remain flexible with respect to their work in the classroom as well as their place in the institution. Apparently, many students in the region are respectful and amiable, yet also frustrating due to issues such as engagement or study skills. The teachers who have developed a culturally responsive classroom management style seem to have adapted the most successfully. There are a range of approaches towards materials and curricula, from fully regulated with little flexibility to allowing teachers virtual autonomy in the classroom; however, in most cases, assessments are centrally

planned, meaning students must be prepared for standardized assessments regardless. Within many institutions, there is a similar managerialism, or top-down leadership style, making faculty members' place within the HEIs tenuous and leading to feelings of temporariness, possibly requiring tolerance for upheaval and uncertainty. On the other hand, perhaps because of the clear division between management and faculty, collegiality in many of the HEIs in the region seems very positive; colleagues are quite helpful and supportive.

Outside of their institutions, expatriate teachers can expect certain standards of living. Since most foreigners live amongst and interact with others like them, a separation between expatriates and locals and should be anticipated, yet with an awareness that it is not an inviolate distinction for those willing to extend themselves. This has implications for learning Arabic because the service industries are staffed by non-Arabs using ELF, impacting a foreigner's motivation to learn. Expatriates are generally unencumbered in their daily lives, most importantly regarding individuals' religious practices, with cultural rules limited to some gender segregation and restrictions on public eating during Ramadan. Despite the fact that many expatriates may feel "at home", the separation from the local population and the transience leaves many fixating on their exit and their finances, which can contribute to feelings of being insecure and temporary.

7.2.2 Higher Education Institution Administrators

The findings indicate that although many HEIs in the region conduct orientation programs, they are apparently not prioritized, so they fail to rapidly socialize new faculty members. This suggests induction programs are either not conducted by individuals with an awareness of their potential benefits, or institutions do not place

similar value on the uncertainty reduction that supportive induction programs provide. Additionally, many teachers find themselves cooperating with colleagues absent much official direction, so it follows that management is generally removed from the actual work of teachers. Teachers' lack of voice in decision making, the mode of leadership as top-down, and the short-term contractual relationship all impact faculty's identification with the institution and its long-term plans or aims. Hence, administrators may actually be unware of the drastic effect management can have on teachers and ultimately, teaching and learning in the classroom.

7.3 Recommendations

The implications for teachers and for administrators lead to recommendations for both groups, as well. Due to the exploratory, interpretive nature of the study, the results are not generalizable; however, the emergent themes suggest that certain experiences are more widespread than others and worthy of greater focus. Thus, the following should be considered in light of the readers' own context, but the application of these recommendations should aid in the development of better adjusted expatriate teachers, more effective and culturally responsive teaching, positive working environments, and contribute to the long-term viability of higher education in the GCC.

7.3.1 Faculty preparations

As Robinson (1998) states, the induction process starts with new teachers' preparations; accordingly, a more interactive process prior to their arrival could better reduce the stresses and uncertainty throughout their orientation period. A pre-arrival packet developed in coordination with teachers who have undergone orientation

could facilitate teachers' preparedness. This should include recommendations of books or videos to aid in their familiarity with the Gulf States' history or culture. Additionally, providing a buddy or a mentor in advance of teachers' arrival would provide additional local knowledge that new teachers need (Feiman-Nemser et al., 1999), as well as a warm welcome and support. If teachers and administrators are in more immediate, regular contact regarding accommodation, it would improve the process, greatly alleviating the stress that many participants experienced.

7.3.2 Comprehensive, supportive orientation programs

Most of the participants discussed being made to feel very welcomed and supported on immediate arrival, yet for them to actually become fully activated faculty sooner, that supportive environment must extend into their first year of teaching, including class observations, professional development, and efforts to provide new expatriate teachers release time to settle into their new environments inside and outside of the HEI (Kearney, 2014). Both the academic and international business literature clearly advocate comprehensive and supportive orientation programs for newly hired team members (Boyden, 2000; Morin & Ashton, 2004), and the results of this research lead to similar conclusions. Graybill et al. (2011) recommend utilizing technology and veteran faculty members as part of the process, an approach also suggested by participants. Through ice breakers or question-and-answer sessions, HEIs should exploit the accumulated experience of both expatriate and local academics to provide a more authentic picture of the institution and life in the country. A well-organized orientation program that taps the knowledge of other teachers will effectively reduce uncertainty through a realistic job preview, ensuring that new teachers are not surprised by any aspects of their new positions, especially the teaching and

classroom dynamics. Involving students is a novel approach, but more critical cultural or diversity training is a necessity (Troudi, 2005; Wurtz, 2014).

7.3.3 Facilitate horizontal collegiality

Mentoring should be a key part of new teachers' socialization process (Caligiuri & Lazarova, 2002; Kearney, 2014), with mentors receiving appropriate training and release time (Smith, 2011). Due to the positive effect that veteran colleagues, so-called "organizational insiders" (Bauer, 2010), can have on new faculty's socialization, it is also vital to provide venues for informal information exchange (Morin & Ashton, 2004). This bridge building is essential upon arrival, but also throughout teachers' first year as a means to avoid any sense of isolation that they may feel (Romanowski & Nasser, 2015), to initiate teachers into professional communities of practice (Kearney, 2014), as well as to promote and inculcate institutional values, managing academic culture (Dill, 2012).

7.3.4 Address vertical collegiality

As most participants report a top-down management style, vertical collegiality seems lacking in many Gulf HEIs, and must be addressed. School cultures are generally considered conservative (Bartell, 2003), so change is understandably difficult; however, academic freedom and management culture will become key issues as institutions strive to receive accreditation and become more recognized internationally. This also regards improving teachers' job security and the current practice of multiple-year contracts (Austin et al., 2014), resulting in widespread feelings of temporariness, which must also be resolved. If teachers' positions become more secure, their identification with the institution and its goals and values should increase and extend to the classroom, curricula, and assessments.

7.3.5 Develop a support system

As expatriate teachers make efforts to settle into their lives in a foreign country, the necessity of social support is clear. Institutions can extend the induction period to provide different avenues for integration and cultural awareness: communication-focused Arabic classes or cultural activities like locally produced movies with English subtitles may facilitate socialization as well as the means to interact with the citizenry. Either within the HEI or outside of it, it is advised that expatriates seek out social support. Participants and their families who were able to make more connections, whether with locals or other expatriates, felt more at home, combatting the feelings of permanent temporariness that can arise in the GCC.

7.4 Suggestions for further research

The results and limitations (see section 4.6) can provide guidance for future research, conducted by alternative methods, taking into account various perspectives, or with a narrower focus.

First, studies into any of the themes that have emerged would contribute to the knowledge base by utilizing different approaches to data collection or analysis. To sample more of the population of expatriate teachers, larger-scale surveys might better explore how pervasive many of these issues actually are throughout the GCC region. Additionally, observations, either in the classroom or elsewhere, could provide valuable insights in a more naturalistic way, just as discourse analysis would be useful means to examine orientation materials, HEI official communication, or curricula. Action research would also be a means to investigating some of the issues pertaining to orientation, especially the informal induction or mentoring, as well as

teacher/student interactions, including engagement or classroom management, for instance. Additionally, an ethnographic study might more fully illustrate the daily lives of expatriate teachers in the region, through triangulation and thicker descriptions (Richards, 2003).

A second manner of further research pertains to altering the sampling or the perspective of the research. As an expatriate English teacher, my study has provided an emic viewpoint into the experiences of similar teachers, but there are multiple viewpoints to consider in this context. A clear difference would be to study students, to understand their experiences learning in such environments, from the use of EMI to the cross-cultural dynamics in the HEIs within their own countries. The administrators and academic leadership were discussed at length by participants in this study; hence, exploring their experiences within the same system could be informative. Furthermore, future research into cultural issues at HEIs in the Gulf States should involve local employees or faculty, as they may be neglected within organizations (Toh & DeNisi, 2005). Local involvement in additional research projects, either in higher education or Gulf societies at-large, would be a welcome addition to the knowledge base.

As the study examines various aspects of expatriate teachers intercultural experiences, future research could apply a narrower focus, investigating specific themes. Each research question could provide guidance for future research: First, investigating individual aspects of new teacher orientation in the region, such as the welcoming culture, the level of comprehensiveness, the informal orientation provided by colleagues, or how new expatriate teachers are introduced to the culture of the HEIs, the students, the curricula, etc.. Next, facets of the internal cultures of HEIs in

the Gulf States, such as pedagogy or curriculum development, horizontal or vertical communication, casualization of faculty in HEIs and feelings of transience, and potentially even how a predominantly local management can develop academic culture and inculcate values within such diverse institutions, as discussed by Dill (2012). Finally, expatriate teachers' lives outside of their institutions has been under-researched within the literature, and certain facets make for compelling studies, such as the feelings of permanent temporariness, the local/expatriate separation, as well as the prevalence of English as a Lingua Franca and the diminished use of Arabic.

7.5 Personal reflection on the thesis journey

I entered into graduate studies later in life than average, beginning my Master's degree in my mid-thirties and my doctorate in my late-thirties. As I reflect on the process, I've had two thoughts on that timeframe. The first is that being older, I have more focus and a greater level of interest in the subject, and hence more willingness to put in the extensive hours required. On the other hand, with age has come more responsibilities, as my studies have coincided with the births of my children and two moves abroad. The push and pull between academics and family obligations has been a substantial hurdle for this process, during which I have tried to keep balanced.

The journey of the doctorate has been an interesting one. Starting out, I had been living in Saudi Arabia for a year, having already taught in Poland for a decade, yet I had not considered myself an "academic". Beyond the specific aspects of my studies and research, I am proud of the progress that I've made in areas of reflection and professionalism, becoming someone quite different than when I began. This is

most palpable in my understanding of the concept of culture, moving from a one-dimensional “software of the mind” conceptualization to a much more complicated and nuanced understanding. A large part of that has been the experience of being a student again because being in class with peers in the Ed.D, together with the diversity and the blend of backgrounds has been quite rewarding. Our persistent, regular communication is a testament to the bonds we developed as a cohort. I am certain we all still feel the loss of our classmate Amel Treki, who passed away during this period. Her passing brought the group closer together and showed us how fleeting life can be, leading to a renewed focus on moving forward.

As I near the end of the process, rather than resolution, I find more questions. I hope that becomes part of my identity, this constant seeking, as I reflect on the thesis and my own teaching practice. I also hope that I retain a modicum of criticality, but remain flexible and adaptable enough to live and work more-or-less comfortably in various contexts. As a teacher and a researcher, it has been a strenuous task to dislodge myself from the experiences of the participants because I felt like I was living their experiences as I analyzed the data; it would have been easy to let their stories jumble with my own, which was a quite difficult rigor of the writing process. Personally, the two most challenging aspects were participants’ overall attitudes towards feeling temporary and the varied approaches to classroom management, particularly the permissiveness for students’ use of mobile phones in class. Overall, the growth that I have experienced through this rigorous dissertation process has touched multiple aspects of my life (professional and personal), which I expect will drive my curiosity and sustain my research agenda for many years to come.

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CERTIFICATE OF ETHICAL APPROVAL

Title of Project: New TESOL faculty orientation: How informal organizational socialization can supplement formal induction programs

Researcher(s) name: David Knott

Supervisor(s) name: Salah Troudi

This project has been approved for the period

From: 25/05/2017
To: 30/06/2018

Ethics Committee approval reference:

D/16/17/39

Signature: Date: 02/05/2017
(Dr Philip Durrant, Graduate School of Education Ethics Officer)

APPENDIX B – Consent form and Research Information

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Title of Research Project: Intercultural experiences of TESOL faculty: How expatriate English teachers experience the large and small cultures in their context in the Gulf States

CONSENT FORM

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project.

I understand that:

there is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw my participation and may also request that my data be destroyed.

I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me.

any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications or academic conference or seminar presentations.

if applicable, the information, which I give, may be shared between any of the other researcher(s) participating in this project in an anonymised form.

all information I give will be treated as confidential.

the researcher(s) will make every effort to preserve my anonymity.

.....…….. .....
(Signature of participant) (Date)

……
(Printed name of participant)

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher.

Contact phone number and email of researcher: +971 56 366 5071 / dk304@exeter.ac.uk

If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact:

Dr. Salah Troudi, S.Troudi@exeter.ac.uk
…….
OR

Dr. Shirley Larken, S.Larkin@exeter.ac.uk
…….

* when research takes place in a school, the right to withdraw from the research does NOT usually mean that pupils or students may withdraw from lessons in which the research takes place

Data Protection Act: The University of Exeter is a data collector and is registered with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner as required to do under the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for research purposes and will be processed in accordance with the University's registration and current data protection legislation. Data will be confidential to the researcher(s) and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties without further agreement by the participant. Reports based on the data will be in anonymised form.

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Revised March 2017

Title of Research Project: Intercultural experiences of TESOL faculty: How expatriate English teachers experience the large and small cultures in their context in the Gulf States

INFORMATION SHEET

The project is an exploratory study, meaning that much of the process will materialize as the research develops, producing qualitative data. According to Day (2002), "macro-oriented analyses (…) cannot tell the whole story, for, by their nature, they do not investigate individual realities of teachers at local levels" (p.11). , the research will delve deeply into teachers' experiences and how they construct and interpret their own identities and realities; however, the results will only be applicable in this context and will be open for others to interpret and apply to their own contexts but will not be generalizable (Grix, 2019).

Focus groups will be used initially to generate topics for formulating questions for the more in-depth semi-structured interviews. Through those interviews, the approach will be to investigate every phenomenon related to the participants' experiences in their own words and narratives, allowing themes to emerge inductively (Greener, 2011, p.3). To provide a rigorous and in-depth interpretation of the cross-cultural dynamic of the lives of expatriate teachers during their time working in the Gulf States, the research is guided by the following questions:

1. How do expatriate EFL teachers experience the large cultures of the Gulf States in their context?
2. How do those teachers experience the small cultures of their institution in their context?
3. How are those experiences reflected in the orientation they received upon arriving at their institution?
4. How interested are the teachers in understanding and learning about the large cultures of the countries they are residing in?

For participants, the questions will be distributed in advance of the focus groups or interviews so that teachers can spend some time reflecting on the topics. I will meet with the teachers either in focus groups to generate topics and give the research more direction, or individually for one or two interviews, in which we will talk through their experiences and the overall feelings about their time in their position and the region, with a practical approach to the effects that it had on the teachers and their teaching (see Denscombe, 2014). Focus groups or semi-structured interviews should take between 45 to 60 minutes, with follow-up interviews a possibility for individuals, taking no more than 5-10 minutes.

As the research involves investigating a wide variety of teachers' experiences, as well as how that affected the teachers' practice, some emotional stress may be evoked if teachers recall an especially negative experience. However, the participants are free not to answer questions if they would rather not talk about a particular issue. Participants will be audio recorded with their permission, and those recordings will be transcribed by the researcher only. All audio material will be kept on a University of Exeter cloud server under password and will be deleted upon completion of the study. All transcriptions will be kept digitally under password, recorded via a pseudonym, and will only be kept beyond the life of the study with participants' permission.

APPENDIX C – Interview Guides – Focus Groups

Focus Group – Research Questions and Topic Guides

Please share moments, general attitudes, shorts stories/anecdotes, heresy: positive and negative feelings

1. How are those experiences reflected in the orientation they received upon arriving at their institution? (What kind of orientation did you receive upon arriving at the current position?) **[10 minutes]**

Formal – by the institution/HR

Informal orientation – colleagues/cohort

Cultural preparations?

2. How do those teachers experience the small cultures of their institution in their context? **[15 minutes]**

Experiences inside the institution

Management

Colleagues

Students/classes

Materials/assessments

3. How do expatriate EFL teachers experience the large cultures of the Gulf States in their context? **[20 min]**

Experiences outside of the institution

National bodies/Visas/Immigration/Police

Daily/regular interactions (shopping, eating out, driving?)

Holidays/special events

Other nationalities

4. How interested are the teachers in understanding and learning about the large cultures of the countries they are residing in? **[10 minutes]**

Special preparations before you arrived

Any studying or reading about the area/history

Language training/practice

Sightseeing/museums/heritage

Making friends

How much did any of the above affect your teaching?

How have your attitudes changed over time here?

APPENDIX D – Focus Group Transcription Excerpt

I = Interviewer, P = Participant (no distinction between different participants)

I – all right, we're getting off into the weeds, sorry, um, just before we finish, because I want to finish, but have you made many inroads? You say you're not finding ways into, to get across that boundary – what efforts have we made, has anybody made in learning history, or language, or trying? Just to wrap it up, let's take a minute or so…

(51:00)

P – Well, if I may answer, in sort of the increasingly limited scope that we have as teachers to actually develop our own materials, if I may be so frank…

P – No one wants your stuff, (Casey)!

P – (laughs) … no, but I mean, I've worked at other places where I just got creative all the time, and I like that, you know, just give me a pen. I like to think about things, create things, put them out there. You've seen what I do for better or worse. And here, OK, what have I done to cross that bridge, you know? Open it up to them, ask them about their history, ask them about the hockey sweater that what's his name (inaudible), the little boy that wanted a hockey sweater and his mom ordered him the wrong team, OK? Now, the boys can probably identify with it pretty quickly, whether it's Manchester United or Barcelona, or whatever, but then I put it to them, and I say, "Girls, remember something in your childhood," without getting too Freudian, "and tell me about something that was really memorable about that, and maybe touch on some of the local color, as well, like this guy had the Montreal Canadien shirt, and it wasn't the Toronto Maple Leaves, that's specifically Canadian, but in our course, you know, we talked about, like, myths, what is that called, archetypes, right? And they can have access to that, academic reading and writing, same thing: how has life changed in the last 50 years, hundred years? Whatever, and use specific examples. Now, is central services providing that to us, maybe in some courses, like Intercultural Studies, perhaps, but otherwise, we do have, in Foundations and General Studies, we do have access to that at some points, right? To sort of say, now have some buy-in, let's look at it, for better or worse, you know? How is the UAE better now, or Ras Al Khaimah, before you got electricity, right?

P – I pick out culture almost like a tourist, where I go from place to place, reading about these (inaudible)…

I – Travel guides and things like that?

P - … go there and research on the Internet, and in a touristy way, but not in any great depth: I haven't learned the language. My job feels temporary. I feel my home is somewhere else, like Hong Kong, so I'm still learning Chinese and Cantonese, and I'm learning no Arabic, which I feel a bit guilty because now it's 4 years and I know so little Arabic, but there's a strong sense that my job is temporary, and don't hold on too much for here because it's a transition, and I remember in Hong Kong, so many people didn't learn Cantonese because they had the same feeling, and I remember thinking, shouldn't you learn something, just to get by, just to feel you're part of the culture, but now I 'm in the exactly same situation where this particular place is temporary for me. It feels temporary. And they were temporary for 15 years, and they didn't learn the language or culture, and it may be the same here: I may be here for 15 years, but still the sense of, but I am moving soon, so I won't go into too much depth…

P – But we all are. You can't become Emirati. My kids were all born in Qatar; they're not Qatari. So I think there is that there is a difference where you might be able to get permanent residency that is just different. The thing I was going to say about… I think we also have to look at the nature of the students that we get in here. Regardless of what anyone else wants to say, we're not getting the top Emirati students here. Most of the students that are coming through here are getting… they want that piece of paper to move on to something else. They're not necessarily… there are a few that… And you almost look at them like, "did you wander into the wrong place?", but that really want to interact, and when you ask them, "What do you want?" "Oh, I want to make my country better." They have a stock response they've picked up through foundations, through whatever. They want to get to the end of the line. Maybe it's the nature of the courses we're teaching. You're teaching creative writing, maybe you get a bit more freedom to open those things up, but it's few and far between those that I speak to who want to interact with you on a real, maybe it's a man/woman thing, but we're not getting the students here who are here to have their 'college experience'.

I – Another one? Away from the students, I mean, you can stay on the students if you want, but more about your attitudes or whatever learning about the culture, integrating, thoughts on…

P – They say travel and living in another country broadens your horizons, but I say this with utmost respect because the Middle East has been very good to me financially, but it definitely shows me from living here how different we are from one another. And that sounds awful because they're lovely people. I absolutely, I love my students! But they're very different. I'll never be one of them, and as (chip) said, I'm here to earn money, you know. It's temporary. I'm somewhere else in my head, all the time. Now that's a terrible way to live in some respects, so, yeah.

P – It's that mindset that's hard to get out of because it does feel like, OK, what's next, where? It's a stepping stone to another place rather than "I'll be here forever", so I can invest that time and energy. It's like how much time you've got in your life. I guess for us, it's a little bit like this is the time for us to make money, but actually do I have time in my life to learn something so much and yet that is going to disappear and I'll be somewhere else in two-year's time. It's how much you want to invest…

P – I'm more or less similar… I have read the history, Islamic history during my school days and college days, and I have a personal interest, as well. Also I share many cultural similarities, as well, because of the same religion, so it's not something completely innovative to me, but yet, there is this feeling of temporariness: I'm not here for good or for a long period, just for financial reasons, so I don't feel much attachment.

P – And that kind of feeling has a knock-on to your job, as well, you know? The fact that you're preparing a course or you're preparing materials knowing that you're not going to be here in two-year's time, there's a certain resentment, I feel resentment. And that's a strong word, yeah. Resentment towards… Because you know, my job is affected, my professionalism is affected, the fact that I'm not accepted, my post here is temporary, and all that, and then of course, that's my own choice, but I think that it could be different.

P – You receive ambitious emails from the management, higher management, "We are doing this. We want to do that." You think, "OK, but why should I contribute to this? What for?"

P – I'll be gone soon any ways, so by the time your five-year plan is done, I won't be in this country.

I – You look like you're bursting to say something…

P – No, no, no, just one last thing. It may be slightly different for you or I who have kids here in school, or we actually… they come home having learned Arabic, and they sing the national anthem every day. It is slightly different, ok? And I actually, I kind of know the national anthem, in terms of like, slurring along with it, but it is a totally different thing of my kids were all born in the region, they've all grown up here, I feel more of a connection to it…

APPENDIX E - Interview Questions – Semi-structured Interviews

Interview questions - English teachers' experiences of the culture

Orientation

1. Pre-Orientation:

A. Tell me about the hiring process. (contracts, logistics)

B. What did you do before you came to prepare yourself?

C. How did you feel before arriving? Did you feel more or less ready/confident?

D. Did someone meet you at the airport?

E. Did you know where you were going before you arrived?

F. How did you feel when you arrived? (Were there major stresses *before* the orientation?) Did you feel welcomed when you first got here?

2. What kind of orientation process did you receive? Which did you feel were beneficial? …stressful?

A. HR sessions – contract, paperwork,

B. Facilities/Technology – Workstations, libraries, classrooms, computers

D. Legal – Residence Card, Residence Visa, Driving license, etc.

E. Housing - How did you find somewhere to live? Did you get help?

Did you feel pressure to find a place to live? Personal/family STRESS?

How long did it take? What took the most time?

F. Teaching/Cultural/Student (level, motivation) orientation

G. Professional Development

H. Networking

I. Did you feel like you were well-taken care of during that period?

3. What about your private life/personal time during that time? Moving around the city? Getting to and from work? Buying furniture and other necessities?

4. At the end of orientation, what did you expect that first week of classes?

B. How prepared did you feel before classes started?

C. What did you think of your students when you started?

5. What do you remember about your first week of classes?

A. How did they go? Did they go smoothly? Did you have problems?

B. Did you get extra help from other teachers during that period? Did you pursue extra help? If so, from whom? How? When?

C. How did you feel during that first week of classes?

6. How long did it take you to settle in and feel more comfortable with your classes and students?

A. What sorts of things helped you with this?

7. Did you have a probation period?

8. How much contact did you have with your supervisor or management?

A. What kinds of teaching support did you receive in the first semester?

Institutional experiences

1. About how long have you been working at your current institution?
2. What are your initial, general thoughts about the culture of the institution?
3. What would you say is the management style?
    a. What kinds of examples can you give of it?
        i. How is the communication within the hierarchy? Tone?
    b. What do you know about the head of the institute? Opinion?
        i. What about your other superiors?
    c. How is employee attendance managed?
    d. What sorts of benefits do you receive?
4. How would you describe the working environment? (positive/negative?)
    a. What contributes most to that?
        i. Examples?
    b. Do you have an office/private space?
    c. Are there many meetings?
    d. What are you typical working hours?
    e. What other sorts of duties do you have?
        i. Do you have enough time for all of your work?
        ii. Do you take work home?
    f. What can you say about your colleagues? *Collegial? Helpful? Hardworking? Reliable?*
        i. Examples? Stories?
        ii. What nationalities do you work with?
            1. Opinions/trends?
    g. Is there a culture of quality in your institution? Do people seem to care about the students and their progress?
5. What do you teach?
    a. Opinion/thoughts on separation of the genders?
    b. How are your courses organized? Streaming students?

c. How much freedom do you have in building your course/materials/assessments?
d. How standardized are your courses?
e. How much work does each course require of you?
f. What do you like or dislike about your teaching here?
g. Are you regularly observed in your class?

6. Tell me about your students.
    a. Motivation
    b. Quality of work/Quantity of work
    c. Your general interactions with them/classroom management
    d. Exceptional students?
    e. Unsatisfactory experiences with students?
    f. Mobile phones
    g. Topics of discussion in class/things not to speak about?
7. How would you compare the working environment and how you feel about yourself in your current situation with that of former situations?
8. Do you consider yourself a professional in your current situation?
    a. How does this job affect that view? *Hard work? Extra hours? Passion for teaching? Pride in work? What has the most important effect on that view?*
    b. Do you feel like you are productive in your time at work?
        i. What contributes to that?
9. How do you deal with frustrations? What sort of outlet do you have? (advice?)
10. Do you feel taken care of in your position? Do you trust your superiors to do the right thing for you, your employment situation and your future?

External/Community experiences

1. Legal/Residence issues
    a. Tax
2. Other government agencies
    a. Ministry of Education - attesting documents
    b. Post office / Police / Ministry of Foreign Affairs
3. Housing/ accommodation –
    a. Contracts/lease?
    b. Bills?
4. Car
    a. Finding/Registering/insuring/inspecting

    b. Driving – any issues?
5. Religion/holidays
    a. Ramadan
    b. National day – flags everywhere
    c. Eids
    d. Weddings? Other special events?
    e. Haram / halal
6. Community – encounters with the local population? Dining out? Shopping? Neighbors? Other activities – sport, corniche, beach, mall, cinema, etc.?
7. What are your thoughts on local concepts of modesty?
8. Which nationalities do you interact with most on a regular basis outside of work? (positives/negatives?)

Interest

1. How much would you say you know about the local Arab culture?
2. Have you ever been to an Emirati's house or taken part in a special event?
3. Do you know much of the language?
    a. Ever take lessons? Read a book on it?
4. How much do you know about the history of the region?
    a. Ever read a book about it? Ever gone to a museum here?
5. Where are most of your friends from?
    a. Do you have many local/Arab friends?
6. Local cultural aspects you are curious about/interested in?
    a. …that you find uninteresting/negative?

APPENDIX F – Semi-structured Interview Transcription Excerpt

I = Interviewer, B = Participant

I – When in the semester did that kind of flare up with the students?

B – Probably five or six weeks in. And I went back and corrected all of my 8 am lates. And I had to go through Ian for that so it was all... so the relationship with the students got better with the 8:00 ones, and we discussed the other ones, and I said, "I actually am following the rule. **This** is the rule." And she was fine, they were fine after that, that little pocket, um. I just found it interesting, it was drilled into us; that was one of the main things in orientation: all admin and all punitive about students, and "when students make a complaint, this is what happens, and when students dispute their grade, this is what happens."

I – Stuff about students disputing grades in orientation?

B – Yeah, so there was no orientation, at all… There was no **cultural** orientation, by the way.

I – Nothing?

B – Nothing. We did get a tour of the campus, and because I'd been here before, I kept asking questions I knew the answers to but I knew my colleagues didn't. For example, "Well, here's the number for the nurse." And I said, "Is it OK for us to touch students if they are sick?" And she said, "Oh, no." And so the male colleagues asked, "Well, what do we do?" And she was able to explain, "Especially, da da da, but nobody should…" but that wasn't part of the orientation.

I – But that was you kind of, not taking the reins (is the wrong word), but as somebody who, you know, wanted to help your colleagues a little bit and give them information that they (admin) wouldn't. OK, so what about, you said "punitive" when they talked about what to expect in the class or what to do in the class?

B – They kept saying how lovely the students were, however… And that was always followed by a however or a but, um, but nothing about teaching…

I – Nothing? So you had no idea what to expect from the students besides what you'd heard?

B – No, and the standard, "Don't talk about religion, politics, or sex," but that's… Anywhere you go; you're going to get.

I – That doesn't count as a cultural orientation?

B – No. No.

I – So what would you like to have had as a cultural orientation?

B – Just, I think back to all the mistakes I've made, and when I taught boys, I asked a lot about their family, their sisters, and everything, and I forced them to talk about it as a get-to-know-you activity for four or five years, till finally a boy came and said, "In our culture, it's not appropriate to talk about our family, especially our sisters, in public." And I used to, I remember for years, I'd go home and say, "God, families don't really know each other very well." I'd ask a brother what his sister was studying, and he'd just shrug his shoulders and say he didn't know, and I'd say, "Imagine that, your sister's studying in the next campus and you don't know!" Well, now I know that he avoiding talking about his sister publically, so small things like that, but I would put those in an orientation session.

I – What about the way that the students are in class? Or?

B – Yeah, I would have put that in an orientation session, absolutely. Yeah, I think especially for colleagues who are coming truly from the outside. Yeah, um, I can send you, you probably already have these articles, I've had a lot of 'ah ha!' moments these last couple of years for my studies in the indigenization of the curricula that we take from Western modeled higher ed, so people in the UAE, for example, use terms like dumb down, simplify, and cut to describe, let's say you're a media studies teacher, and you bring the course that you taught at Michigan University… This one study, here, they said they cut things by 2/3s and they use the term dumb down, and they put everything in a power point. There's no course book. But nobody actually hears that prior to coming. And it's not systematic, so there's a surface level curriculum: we teach the same accredited course as in Michigan, ah, yeah.

I – Um, do you think if you'd had more contact with teachers that they could have… Er, had you known to ask, because that kind of blindsides most people because you don't know to ask, "Do the students actually do the work?" or "What's their attitude, their general attitude, towards their studies?"

B – Yeah, in (previous post), I remember one really good session where teachers came in and talked about the strengths and weaknesses of the students, and then they had student work all around that I could look at, for writing, for example. They have an entry exam there that's country-wide, like the CEPA used to be called the COPE, so I had all the COPE scripts that I could read. And I was like, "Oh, so this is an entry level, for this level, and I'm going to be teaching level 4 so this is what their writing looks like." And it was a huge help for me and the teachers were allowed to speak honestly about the students, their weaknesses and strengths. That was hugely helpful. I remember at (previous post) there was a sort of a Majlis event where Western teachers talked about the culture and what was a surprise for them. So that was very helpful…

I – But not, but not Emiratis?

B – Correct. Yeah, and that was an intentional move by management/

I – Kind of like, "here's what we've learned. Here's what you should know."

B – Yeah.

I – As opposed to getting a more authentic… Because maybe they don't know what you don't know, kind of thing. Interesting. I'm learning. So, you mentioned just as you were doing the facilities, you were walking around and doing all of that. Everything go fine with your workstation?

B – I was never taken to the workstation. It was just to show us where we could get supplies and just once around the ground floor. So I found my workstation on my own.

I – Did it already have your name on it?

B – I think so. I had a desk number, I knew. What sticks out in my mind that was really problematic for me was we just stuck our heads in a classroom, but nobody showed us how, for example, the digital projector worked. And I asked them about that, and they said, "Oh, you'll probably get a session." I've used them before, but that's always a… Yeah, and within a week, I wrote to the IT people and said, "Could someone come and show me…?" Because I like it to be interactive rather than just a project.

I – Not just a PowerPoint and that's it?

B – Yeah. And that person sent me like a 50-page manual of the thing, and said, "There's no training. You got it in orientation." So again, as a teacher, I want to be set up for success, and that means, first day things, how does it work…

I – So you would've appreciated a more practical kind of session than just, "There's the IT room. There's the projector."

B – Yeah. I mean, I'm an experienced person, but I still, there's something about my mindset in a new environment… Maybe even to see what I already know. But it's the (institution) and I thought, "Oh, I don't want to look bad on my first day, have colleagues walk by and I haven't got a clue what to do, and students more importantly see that I…

I – So you already knew what to expect, or did you have a teacher help you with it? Did you just fumble about with it on your own?

B – I figured it out. Yeah, I figured it out. I still don't know how to use it interactively, but I've asked one or two people, who didn't know how, either. And it's just on my to-do list, but here I am after almost a whole year.

I – We see so many of them that are disconnected anyway. I think it's a very expensive pull down screen. Anyway getting your computer and connection with photocopiers and all that, what was your experience with that?

B – Very smooth. A lot of that was my own being proactive and just going around and asking how it works.

I – Uh huh. Who'd you ask?

B – I just went to IT for the first while because people were super busy when I first came – in terms of colleagues.

I – Uh huh. Were there many teachers around the first week?

B – Ah, no, no. But when we were out of sessions and able to start doing things independently people started to trickle in, but they seemed really busy.

I – Mm hm. And you said, with the, with the Emirates ID and that sort of stuff that went well?

B – Yeah, I worked directly with the gentlemen on the men's campus who takes care of that. Great guy. He went above and beyond. He was very helpful.

I – But nobody helped with the phone or that stuff?

B- No.

I – Interesting.

APPENDIX G – Semi-Structured Interviews Coding Sample

Codes: Induction – Teaching – Starting Teaching

<Files\\1.Bobby.UAE.Bahrain> - § 1 reference coded [0.33% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.33% Coverage

I – OK, so another good example of that. And so what about when we started the semester, how did the first week of classes go?

B – Um, on the surface fine, but I had no idea where I was going with my courses. I had enough material; I've taught research before; I've taught business English before. Um, but I had no idea where I was going! (laughs) I found it really stressful. Probably for the first six weeks, combination of both courses.

<Files\\2.Pat.Bahrain> - § 1 reference coded [1.01% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.01% Coverage

F - So by the time I'd got into the classroom, I'd already pieced together a scaffolding for the semester, including, you know, based loosely on what was happening, what I saw, what I interpreted as the learning outcomes, so for me, I was presenting a cohesive course to the students. The students themselves were, I mean, they were a delight, particularly in the courses I was doing because I was doing visual design and web media, these are largely enthusiastic, creative students that, they're really ready to go with what you have to offer. So, yeah, I didn't encounter any problems on entering the... If anything, I was pleasantly surprised.

<Files\\3.Abdullah.UAE.Qatar> - § 4 references coded [2.27% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.14% Coverage

C – Yeah. A couple of teachers helped me, like, getting ready for the classes, that term, I felt very good. I had a good relationship with my classes; I felt very good.

Reference 2 - 0.69% Coverage

C – At the very, very beginning, on the first day, and then the next day I got switched to something else, and that first, my first class with that new thing I had 15 minutes to prepare for them, and it was nothing close to what I thought it was going to be, and that's the worst feeling as a teacher to go into a class and you don't know what 's going on, you don't know what to expect, you don't know what to have done, like you're wasting that first day; it sets a bad precedent for how you're going to run the class. Like, if I don't feel like I have enough stuff to fill their time, and not just waste their time, fill

their time to get something from them, either assess their level, introduce them, do something with them, um, it's so, like, I was sweating, not just because it was hot. I was really sweating…

Reference 3 - 0.54% Coverage

C – I… Between… I got my first schedule August 23; I know because I just looked over it today. And between then and September 10, I had about 40 different schedules. Hourly, it was (inaudible)... I had schedules change when I was in the class. Nothing came to me, but the students got an update on their phone and were like, "Teacher, this class has just been cancelled." And I've never had that happen before. You look like a, you look like an idiot in front of the students, and they found it funny because they're used to the volatility of that program and they're just, "Ha ha, we can go!" And I'm like, "No, no you can't go."

Reference 4 - 0.90% Coverage

C - The first semester was so ridiculously not what I was, what I had signed on for. Teaching those (English for Specific Purposes) classes to *massive* classes of just kids who just had no interest in whatsoever in being here. Like, I'd been an IELTS examiner for 12 years at that point, and I was like, not one of these students can get what I'm supposed to get them to. "No, just do your best. Do your best." And as we got closer, it was like, "Well, what are they getting? What are they getting? What's their marks? What's their marks?" I'm like, I can't... I had ninety-, whatever, -five, -eight students, only two got the IELTS from my first semester. And it's like, they got the IELTS like it's some kind of certificate, but they didn't, they got like a 5! That just means that you barely, like you can get by in English. Like, I can't do that, that's worse than what I was doing back home, and to have a 2% or under graduation rate, or success rate, you can't hold onto any job with that. Yeah, I would have been gone. And, like, yeah, it wasn't really what it was sold to be, you know?

<Files\\4.Kara.UAE.Al Ain> - § 1 reference coded [3.51% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 3.51% Coverage

how quickly did you start teaching when you got here?
K - Um, pretty quickly. (Kristin) gave me about a week to do paperwork and that kind of thing and then she gave me sort of a patchwork schedule where I had pre-foundations, level 1, level 2, level 3 and level 4 didn't exist yet, at that time. so I had all four levels, mostly it was level 2, so there was one section that i was seeing 4 days a week, I think. So I kind of got to know them. I didn't really get to know any of the rest of them at all. I think there was a level 1 section I saw twice a week. yeah. So I

was in the classroom but it's not what I would call actual teaching, (laughs) because I really did not understand what the curriculum was and what exactly I was even expected to be doing in the classroom, so I would just go online and, say, OK, this is level 2, I pretty much know what their level is, uh, here's a good lesson from the BBC, not BBC, um, British Council, and I just did stuff like that all the time. I did have the list of vocabulary words, which seemed to be the only curriculum that existed. Um, there was kind of a scheme of work for level 2, so I tried to follow that, um. It wasn't really a curriculum, it was a scheme of work. and the textbooks that went with it were very difficult to access...

<Files\\5.Harley.UAE.Sharjah> - § 6 references coded [2.07% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.47% Coverage

P – And, as (Ted) said to me when he met me, he said they weren't prepared for me, there was nothing for me to teach. Um, and that's why I did the (course), which collapsed as well, and then I only had two classes, and then I never had enough hours, so it was all that whole big mess up. And then I got the (course) – I got that one big class, and then Ian said, OK, we'll make it up once the foundation people finish in week 9. I would get them for (course) and it would fill up my time table because it would be more intensive teaching, so that all worked out.

Reference 2 - 0.28% Coverage

P – Um, I did. Like I said, with the collapsing of this one course – it went from five classes, and collapsed into two classes, and I had them, (Course), so I needed another two, and that's when they brought in the extra ten periods a week, during the week 9 to the end, I had the extra (course), intensive – my hours went to 24.

Reference 3 - 0.36% Coverage

P – Yeah, so he was also helpful. Both of them were. So they were really great. I mean, (course) was fine because of all the material available and… Catching up was a bit stressful! Because, um, I think I started in the end of week 1 in September. I think you'd already been going about two weeks at that point, and then to catch up a bit with my horrible class that I had. The guys, yeah, I had a group of 5 or 6, and they were my worst nightmare.

Reference 4 - 0.21% Coverage

did you feel like you were prepared for a group like that? Did you have an idea that you might have students like that?

P – Do you know, David, I've been teaching for ages. I've had difficult students, but I've never actually had anything quite as bad as this. It was like…

Reference 5 - 0.38% Coverage

P – I came on the Monday; I started on the Wednesday. So I had a day's grace to try and find my feet and get started, and then the, what was stressful about that was by week 2, which was now week 4 nearly, they collapsed the course and no one told me why. What was happening? I thought, "Oh, my word, I'm a bad teacher." Everyone's leaving the course, and some I hadn't seen yet. Seems like they had done, they had another course, and then no one said to me, "No, just don't stress. It's fine."

Reference 6 - 0.37% Coverage

P – Nobody said that to me. I thought, "Why are they all leaving?" Like millions were leaving and I saw all these emails coming through about people leaving who were leaving the course, and I haven't taught some of them yet, you know? And then it seems like they'd done a similar lecture and they didn't have to repeat it with this one, so they had enough credits, and then they kept the media group together and they put all the rest into one group, and then my hours came down.

<Files\\6.Hanna.UAE> - § 3 references coded [1.96% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.67% Coverage

And how well would you have settled in if you hadn't had that help? Those people just helping you out of the goodness of their hearts?

H – Well, I would have figured it out pretty quick (laughs), or not! (laughs) I had been teaching for a while. If I were a newbie teacher, I probably would have felt hopeless, but, you know, a little bit older and you know what you're doing, or you'd like to think you know what you're doing. That's the only difference.

Reference 2 - 1.00% Coverage

Did you feel like you were ready to start the classes?

H – Yeah, as much as I could. Every year. Every year, there's going to be bumps at the beginning of a class; it doesn't matter where you are, what you do, there's always bumps in the road. I wasn't worried about that. In terms of materials, knowing what I had to teach.

I – So how did your classes go in the beginning of the semester?

H – Confusing because they changed classrooms, they changed dates, times, um, I had a class, I lost a class, I was added a class, that class changed days, um, so the first couple of weeks were a bit non-descript. (laughs) You just ride the wave, and you know it will all settle down, but…

Reference 3 - 0.29% Coverage

H – Yeah, as a new teacher you think, hmm, gosh, I think the organization could have been better. To say the least. And it had nothing to do with me, it was just the whole process, the whole system…

<Files\\7.Tim.UAE> - § 3 references coded [2.32% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.98% Coverage

T – Material was the big issue. Students are rarely an issue with me; it's making sure that I'm teaching them as best as I can, and not spending time thinking about how to, you know, how to create materials to get them to do what I want; I should be spending time thinking about how I teach them, you know? So when you don't have a solid, or what I felt, was a course where you can look at, OK, in week 12, and I can figure it out, or in week 6, and I can do that. I can survey the course from the very beginning. That got me worried. And I did, I spent an awful lot of time questioning what I was doing. You know, is this the right…? And consequently, having taught the second semester, I did change an awful lot of stuff. Possibly, I shouldn't have, but I did because I just didn't feel what I was doing was the right way.

Reference 2 - 0.73% Coverage

I – Do you think that the students suffered at all through that, since they didn't get the full benefit of your teaching, planning?

T – Yeah. Yeah, possibly. Yeah, possibly, they did because there were times going into class where I was unsure about what I was teaching. I was unsure, and then not just unsure about what I was teaching, but unsure about how to deliver it properly, so I'm going in there and I'm kind of… there was a bit of makey-up stuff there in that first semester. Um, yeah, so I think… Suffered? I think I could have done better. I think students could have learned more, yeah, definitely.

Reference 3 - 0.62% Coverage

T – Ah! No, no, no. No, no, no. I mean, it's just, as teachers, it's something you do, every teacher. No matter how long you're teaching something, you're always kind of questioning yourself and trying to do things better. Or you should be, at least. Um, so, I just knew it was a matter of time before I got used to it and figured stuff out. It was the same for all the teachers that were here, you know? So I knew I wasn't an isolated case; I had been speaking to other teachers, and they've… Some of them felt the same.

<Files\\9.Peter.UAE.Al Ain> - § 5 references coded [4.08% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.63% Coverage

P – Quite simply. Because when I started like marking students' work, when I actually started and they're like complaining like crazy, even though they hadn't lifted a finger, and there's this expectation of lifting the marks up and pushing people through. I think that's all the wrong way of doing it, and that wasn't explained. I knew it a bit because I'd worked here before, but for example, (Tommy) was really surprised by that, and a lot of people were surprised. You wouldn't have been, you'd worked in the Middle East before…

Reference 2 - 0.89% Coverage

P – Well, not very well because there was no time to… Well, there was time to prepare stuff and go to the library and look for books, but you didn't know until the first classes; you only knew on the morning you got here what your time table'd be, so that was rubbish. (11:30) Second thing is, I was given level four, so I stayed here until 8pm one night the first day preparing for this level four stuff, this IELTS stuff, only to like go in the next morning to teach them and be moved off because somebody else wanted to teach level four instead of level one. So I got moved to level one after two days, which I was really, really unhappy about. I won't mention names, but one teacher engineered a change because they didn't want to teach level one.

Reference 3 - 0.83% Coverage

P – I was moved, but she was new as well. And I said no. I was asked by (Sue), and I said I was quite happy where I was, but then that person went to ask (Asma) who then moved me, now if you look at our experience, it's not like she's loads more experienced and qualified than me; she's not, so I didn't like the way that someone being pushy got the nod over, changed over someone who was flexible. I felt like my flexibility and my sort of easy-going nature got taken advantage of, and I didn't like it. I told them, as well.

I – And nothing came of it.

P – No, but you know, I got moved from level four… I only knew I was doing level four on a Sunday, and the next minute I'm doing level one.

Reference 4 - 0.82% Coverage

P – Well, they were rubbish because they were level one, and they were like CEPA scores like zero, and most of them didn't know how to behave, so I was a little bit ticked off. I don't want to sound arrogant, but I know I can teach, and I've done a lot of it, at a pretty high level, so being with these people who couldn't speak a word of English and just screaming and shouting the whole time, level

one. I just wondered why I was there, what they were doing there. I didn't understand why they'd been allowed in because I think you've got to have some standards of who can come and who can't because it's just a waste of time. Some of those students are still in level one, and it's May.

Reference 5 - 0.91% Coverage

P – I was really negative for like the first three months, until I got moved to level three. Now they're no angels; they're still on their phones and doing other things all the time, looking at movies on their iPads. All of these sorts of things, they would do it, but it was a bit more positive because you could actually have conversations with them and stuff like that. You know, so I would say, I'd look at their levels, and level one, it seems to me like a pointless level. You know, I had thirty-plus, I had thirty in the classes, and it went down to like twenty-two at one point, but it was packed and it was just, the behavior was poor, and I was just constantly going to (Asma) and saying, "What am I going to do with these girls?" It was just crazy, you know.

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